

CAUSE-RELATED MARKETING AS A CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY INITIATIVE: CONSUMER PERCEPTIONS OF THE CAMPAIGN

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ABSTRACT

As society becomes more and more socially conscious, corporate social responsibility may be one of the factors influencing the decision to buy. In the 21st century, cause-related marketing as one of the possible initiatives of a socially responsible approach became a common part of building a relationship with customers. But what are the differences in the perception of a cause-related marketing campaign among consumers with different levels of donation size with regard to gender distribution? Using existing studies, the responses concerning the perception of the campaign supporting a collection for the Zoo in the Czech capital were evaluated through a questionnaire survey. The data were factor-analyzed to determine the dimensions of the perception of the cause-related marketing campaign. The results show a two-factor solution: consumer attitudes towards the product and the company involved in the cause-related marketing campaign and consumer attitudes towards cause-related marketing in relation to a non-profit organization. The impact of donation size and gender on the resulting factors is assessed after.

KEY WORDS

campaign, perceptions, attitude, donation size, factor analysis, Czech Republic

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1 INTRODUCTION

Over the past century, marketing has developed into the concept of social marketing (Kotler et al., 2007), where companies identify the needs, wishes and interests of their target markets and are able to satisfy their customer's needs

more effectively than their competitors so as to maintain, or even increase, the benefit to the customer and society as a whole. Their focus is therefore on solving the current problems of society in order to improve the quality

of life, social responsibility and achieve social change (Truong and Hall, 2017; Truong, 2014). Corporate social responsibility is the expression of how business entities can influence the interests of society and corporate interest groups responsibly while taking into account sustainable behavior (Kvasničková Stanislavská et al., 2020; Ashrafi et al., 2020).

1.1 Cause-Related Marketing as One of the Dimensions of Corporate Social Responsibility

Interest in the topic of corporate social responsibility is not a recent phenomenon; it attracts the attention of not only practitioners, but also scholars (Hahn et al., 2017; Duarte et al., 2010). Corporate social responsibility can be also described as a combination of social benefit and economic gains, in which a certain situation in society is improved as a result of the efforts of businesses (Davis, 1973). Corporate social responsibility can be characterized as ensuring social benefit beyond the interests of the company and what is required by the law (Ali and Anwar, 2021; McWilliams and Siegel, 2001) and includes matters related to the behaviour of the company in its social environment, and not only within the sphere of its economic activity (Ahmad et al., 2021; Parada Daza, 2009). The benefits of CSR for businesses and society are widely recognised by consumers, non-profit organizations (Kerr et al., 2008) and employees (LeBaron et al., 2022), and are an appropriate vehicle for the marketing efforts of most businesses (Hildebrand et al., 2011).

Corporate social responsibility initiatives can take many forms (Chapple and Moon, 2005). One of the ways to meet the corporate social responsibility principle is to link the product with the cause, which is named cause-related marketing (Brønn and Vrioni, 2001; Nan and Heo, 2007). Cause-related marketing campaigns are often the first form of corporate social responsibility initiative that is used (Chapple and Moon, 2005) in order to increase customers' interest in buying a product and influence their positive perception of the company (Patel et al., 2017) and the brand (Mora and Vila, 2020), as

well as to improve the image of the company using it (Rosak-Szyrocka et al., 2022). Cause-related marketing is a specific form of corporate social responsibility that can operate on the principle of "win-win-win": for the company, the cause, and for the customer (Folse et al., 2010; Nejati, 2014). The terms corporate social responsibility and cause-related marketing are conceptually different but closely related to each other and are often treated as being synonymous with one another. Cause-related marketing is one of the dimensions of corporate social responsibility (Chaabouni et al., 2021; Heydari and Mosanna, 2018), which can be called a specificity (or causal specificity) of corporate social responsibility. While cause-related marketing may constitute part of corporate social responsibility, it cannot, in itself, fully embody corporate social responsibility (Sheikh and Beise-Zee, 2011).

The origins of cause-related marketing date back to the 1980s, with American Express (Du et al., 2008; Chang and Liu, 2012). In the period from 1980 to 1984, American Express used the principle of cause-related marketing to support more than forty-five local or national projects (Daw, 2006). A large number of studies on the topic have already been performed in developed countries such as USA, Great Britain and Korea (Baek et al., 2020; Wei et al., 2020), while the topic is also being given an increasing amount of attention in South Asia (Amawate and Deb, 2021) or North Africa (Chaabouni et al., 2021). The phenomenon of cause-related marketing is influenced by cultural specificities and traditional factors related to specific geographical areas, and it is therefore not possible to generalize the results for all countries (Natarajan et al., 2016).

From an academic point of view, cause-related marketing was first characterized in 1988 by the authors Varadarajan and Menon (Svensson and Wood, 2011; Christofi et al., 2014), who stated that "cause-related marketing is a process of formulating and implementing activities that are characterized by the company's offer to contribute a specific amount to a specified cause, and where customers engage in this process, which provides income (value)

while at the same time satisfying organizational and individual goals". This partnership supports the profits and interests of both parties involved (Furman and Maison, 2020; Christofi et al., 2014).

Cause-related marketing is a mutually beneficial collaboration between a company and a non-profit organization (Hartmann et al., 2015; Liston-Heyes and Liu, 2013). The most frequent example is the offer of company products with the contribution of a specific amount for a given cause in order to increase the company's performance (e.g. sales) as well as to help a suitable cause so as to make them useful (Du et al., 2008; Pracejus and Olsen, 2004). Cause-related marketing involves cooperation between a commercial company and a non-profit organization (Liston-Heyes and Liu, 2013), where donation is conditional on the sale of a certain product, i.e. the company donates a sum to the charity every time a consumer makes a purchase (Chaney and Dolli, 2001; Nan and Heo, 2007). The specific objective of a cause-related marketing campaign is to generate sales. The amount donated may be variable and depends on the volume of sales (Polonsky and Speed, 2001).

Cause-related marketing campaigns can be viewed from different perspectives. From the customer's point of view, it depends on whether the consumer has to participate in the transaction with the company or not – and it is precisely through the transaction that the campaign is realized (Folse et al., 2014). From the point of view of cooperation between a company and a non-profit organization, transactional programs, message promotion programs (Berglind and Nakata, 2005) and licensing programs can be used (Berglind and Nakata, 2005; Liu and Ko, 2011). With this transaction type, the commercial company undertakes to donate a specific sum of money as a direct share of the proceeds from a sale (the company's contribution is proportional to the sale of the products). Information type means a combination of a commercial company and a non-profit organization in order to promote a common topic. With this licensing type, a non-profit organization authorizes the use of

its logo or name to a commercial enterprise (usually in return for payment), for example, for advertising purposes, a licensing agreement (Adkins, 2011). Other formats may include sponsorship or in-kind donations (Wymer and Samu, 2003; Liu and Ko, 2011), but it is the transactional programs that describe the essence of cause-related marketing campaigns due to the use of a financial contribution (Ye et al., 2021; Till and Nowak, 2000).

Researches identify customer participation as a primary variable in donation (Ye et al., 2021; Gadhavi et al., 2014) which is why the authors endeavour to understand consumer's intention to participate in a campaign (Ross et al., 1992; Sen and Bhattacharya, 2001), because the success of a cause-related marketing campaign depends on the involvement of consumers, which depends on their perception of the cause (Singh et al., 2020; Singh and Duque, 2020).

1.2 Determinants of Cause-Related Marketing Consumer Perceptions

1.2.1 Donation Size

Donation size is defined as the absolute amount in a specific currency provided by a company for charitable purposes for every transaction made by a consumer (Folse et al., 2010), while it also affects the consumer perception of the cause (Rapert et al., 2021; Huang and Fitzpatrick, 2018). The donation size can be expressed as a fixed amount paid to the non-profit organization for each purchase made by the consumer or as a percentage of the sale price (Chang, 2008). According to previous findings (Dahl and Lavack, 1995), the acceptance of cause-related marketing campaigns by consumers is relatively high, but it depends on the sensitivity of customers to the price and their purchasing behaviour (Li et al., 2021).

Several studies have assessed the impact of donation size in cause-related marketing. Donation size affects consumer awareness and attitudes to a given cause (Wei et al., 2020; Moosmayer and Fuljahn, 2010), or the success of the campaign (Natarajan et al., 2016). A number of studies indicate that consumers

rate cause-related marketing campaigns more positively if the company donates a higher amount (Dahl and Lavack, 1995; Chang, 2011). A lower donation size may give the impression of misuse of a non-profit organization by the company (Dahl and Lavack, 1995), raises skepticism, and may be perceived as a marketing trick (Strahilevitz, 1999; Natarajan et al., 2016). According to other researchers (Natarajan et al., 2016), consumers tend to develop a favourable attitude towards a campaign with a higher donation size. Customer loyalty to products that support cause-related marketing campaigns also increases. However, recent research indicates that higher donations may encourage customer skepticism and, conversely, they rate a lower amount better (Terblanche et al., 2023; Chaabouni et al., 2021; Tsiros and Irmak, 2020).

Based on previous studies, the following research question is formulated: What is the perception of the cause-related marketing campaign by consumers in the Czech Republic with regard to different levels of donation size?

1.2.2 Consumer Demographics: Gender

The impact of gender on consumer response to marketing activities has been addressed in a number of studies over the past three decades (Nelson and Vilela, 2017; Galan Ladero et al., 2015), with men and women showing significant differences in the purchasing decision process (Wood, 1998). Consumers' attitudes and willingness to participate in a cause-related mar-

keting campaign are affected by their gender (Chéron et al., 2012; Moosmayer and Fuljahn, 2010). Women are more likely to participate in cause-related marketing activities than men (Amawate and Deb, 2021; Moosmayer and Fuljahn, 2010). The attitude of women towards the company and a charity using cause-related marketing was more favourable than that of men (Ross et al., 1992), and at the same time, it was identified that women perceive cause-related marketing campaigns more positively than men (Amawate and Deb, 2021; Chéron et al., 2012). However recent studies on the topic of cause-related marketing indicate that gender has no significant impact on attitudes toward a campaign and its credibility (Thomas et al., 2022; Patel et al., 2023).

Based on previous studies, the following research question is formulated: What is the perception of the cause-related marketing campaign by consumers in the Czech Republic with regard to gender distribution?

Our study is the first to deal with the perception of the cause-related marketing campaign from the perspective of consumers in the Czech Republic. The results of the study discuss gender and donation size as determinants of the perception of a cause-related marketing campaign towards other variables. A total of 223 respondents participated in the study, which identifies the factorial structure and evaluates the perception of the campaign with regard to different levels of donation size and gender distribution.

2 METHODOLOGY AND DATA

This study replicated the experiment by Moosmayer and Fuljahn (2010), which was based on the studies of Ross et al. (1992) and Dahl and Lavack (1995). The study by Ross et al. (1992) investigated gender and proximity effects in cause-related marketing. This study analyzed the consumer's attitudes toward the company that sponsors a local cause compared to the firm that sponsors a national cause. The questionnaire survey contained 6 items about the firm/cause, which were adopted in

Moosmayer's and Fuljahn's experiment (2010). These items are presented in Tab. 3 or Tab. 4.

The study by Dahl and Lavack (1995) investigated the impact of the size of corporate donations and the size of cause-related promotion on consumer perceptions and participation. This study assessed the perception of cause-related marketing from the point of view of exploitation of the non-profit organization considering donation size and corporate promotion, of the relation between donation size a corporate pro-

motion and from the perspective of consumer perception of the product considering donation size. The scenario of the study made by Dahl and Lavack (1995) presented to consumers was that a new product would be introduced across North America, and they were soliciting consumer opinions on some aspects of this new product (product characteristics were listed as flavours, price, size, and availability). The scenario explained that every product that was sold throughout the campaign donated to Rainforest Survival. The questionnaire survey contained 12 items from which those used in Moosmayer’s and Fuljahn’s experiment (2010) were selected. These selected items are presented in Tab. 3 or Tab. 4.

In this study, through an online survey, consumers’ opinions on the said cause-related marketing campaign were investigated. Consumers were presented with a new creamy dairy dessert made by a popular Czech producer. The advertising campaign explained that for each cup sold, the manufacturer would donate a pre-determined amount to support a collection for the non-profit organization Zoologická zahrada Praha (Prague Zoo), which is very popular in the Czech Republic. The donation size was either 0.25 hellers or 10 hellers. Respondents were asked to rate the six items from the study by Ross et al. (1992), see Tab. 3 or Tab. 4. After this first step, respondents were presented with the same advertising campaign again, together with additional information on the product replicating the scenario by Dahl and Lavack (1995): the product would soon be launched, one cup contains 130 g, the sale price is 39 CZK per three-pack, the product would be available in all large retail chains in the Czech Republic, the product is made from Czech milk, did not contain artificial colorings, and had reduced sugar content. Subsequently, respondents were asked to rate the six items applied by Dahl and Lavack (1995), see Tab. 3 or Tab. 4. This approach is summarized in Fig. 1 and Fig. 2.

Many previous studies on cause-related marketing have used “student samples” (Dahl and Lavack, 1995; Moosmayer and Fuljahn, 2010; Chéron et al., 2012; Heidarzadeh Hanzae et al., 2019), which allows the comparison of the

results with previous research. Students are a suitable research sample that has relatively low sociodemographic variation compared to the general public (Moosmayer and Fuljahn, 2013). As part of the study, a link to the questionnaire survey was sent via e-mail to students who attended seminars specializing in marketing, marketing communication, marketing research, and public relations at a university in the Czech Republic in the 2021/2022 academic year. A link was sent in August 2022, and it was accessible in September 2022, too.

Two surveys were conducted as part of the research, these were two independent sample surveys. The first survey with a donation size of 0.25 hellers and the second survey with a donation size of 10 hellers. In total, 223 people participated in the survey, including 108 people in the first survey (48.3%) and 115 people in the second survey (51.7%). From the list of potential respondents, the sample was collected randomly with regard to gender distribution. The total average age of respondents was 22.9 years. The description of the respondents is presented in Tab. 1.

Tab. 1: Description of respondents

Gender	Donation size					
	0.25 hellers		10 hellers		Total	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Women	55	50.9%	62	53.9%	117	52.5%
Men	53	49.1%	53	46.1%	106	47.5%
Total	108	100.0%	115	100.0%	223	100.0%

Data were processed within the IBM SPSS Statistics 23 software. The study evaluates the perception of a cause-related marketing campaign, respectively whether the perception of a cause-related marketing campaign by the consumer differs between genders. And the second perspective combines the perception of cause-related marketing and donation size, respectively whether this perception differs in the case of two different donation sizes.

The following hypothesis is formulated:

- H_{10} : Perception of the cause-related marketing campaign does not differ between two donation sizes.



Krajanka ZOO - a fair creamy snack. Now available in vanilla flavour!

Whenever you decide to buy Krajanka ZOO with illustration of Prewalski's horse, 10 hellers of every cup's price will be automatically donated to his account at Prague Zoo. The donation is valid until December 31, 2022. With every spend heller you help to improve his living environment and raise public awareness about home protection of endangered species.

Fig. 1: The first presentation of the advertising campaign: Manipulation of donation size 0.25 or 10 hellers, presentation of the first scale (Ross et al., 1992; Alimpex Food, 2017)



The product will be launched on the market soon.

The volume of one cup is 130 g.

Available as a single product or a special offer - three products for 39 CZK.

The product will be offered in all large retail chains across the Czech Republic.

It is made of Czech milk, no artificial colorings are added and the sugar content is low.

Krajanka ZOO - a fair creamy snack. Now available in vanilla flavour!

Whenever you decide to buy Krajanka ZOO with illustration of Prewalski's horse, 10 hellers of every cup's price will be automatically donated to his account at Prague Zoo. The donation is valid until December 31, 2022. With every spend heller you help to improve his living environment and raise public awareness about home protection of endangered species.

Fig. 2: The second presentation of the advertising campaign: Supply of additional product information, presentation of the second scale (Dahl and Lavack, 1995; Alimpex Food, 2017)

- H_{1_1} : Perception of the cause-related marketing campaign differs between two donation sizes.
- H_{2_0} : Perception of the cause-related marketing campaign does not differ between genders.
- H_{2_1} : Perception of the cause-related marketing campaign differs between genders.

The gender distribution between the surveys was compared using Fisher's exact test. Fisher's exact test assesses the independence between two variables between two groups. It assesses the null hypothesis, that is the variables are independent (Molnár et al., 2012). The questionnaire concerning consumer perception of cause-related marketing campaign is composed of 12 questions. All questions are evaluated on the seven-point Likert scale, where 0 = "does not apply at all" up to 6 = "thoroughly applies" (Moosmayer and Fuljahn, 2010).

Since this is an ordinal variable, the basic statistical characteristics were first calculated for individual variables. Differences between groups according to donation size and gender were tested using statistical tests. A non-parametric two-choice Mann-Whitney test was applied to ordinal variables (for two independent selections, to verify the same level of two small selections from unknown distributions, also applicable to ordinal variables). The test hypothesis monitors the concordance of the medians or the concordance of the level of distribution, and is verified by comparing the resultant p -value with the level of significance, which is most often $\alpha = 5\%$. If the p -value is higher than the level of significance determined by us, the tested hypothesis of the same level in the monitored groups is not rejected (Pecáková, 2008).

The test criterion U is the number of all cases in which, in ascending order of all observations, the values of one sample precede the values of the other sample. Finding the number of these cases for both selections (U_1 and U_2) is as follows. If in the set consisting of both samples (groups) with the range $n = n_1 + n_2$, each value is assigned an ascending ordinal number and these orders are then separately added up in each sample (the sums of R_1 and R_2 for

each group), then the following equations apply (Pecáková, 2008):

$$U_1 = R_1 - \frac{n_1(n_1 + 1)}{2},$$

$$U_2 = R_2 - \frac{n_2(n_2 + 1)}{2}$$

and that

$$R_1 + R_2 = \frac{n(n + 1)}{2},$$

than applies

$$U_1 + U_2 = R_1 - \frac{n_1(n_1 + 1)}{2} + R_2 - \frac{n_2(n_2 + 1)}{2}.$$

For larger samples (more than 20 units), the normal approximation with mean and variance can be used (Pecáková, 2008):

$$E(U) = \frac{n_1 n_2}{2} \quad \text{and} \quad D(U) = \frac{n_1 n_2 (n + 1)}{12}.$$

Subsequently, the data were factor-analyzed to determine the key dimensions of the perception of cause-related marketing campaigns. Factor analysis is one of the methods of data reduction. It is based on the covariate or correlation matrix of the original variables, and thus monitors the relationships between them. The aim is to create uncorrelated groups of strongly correlated variables based on the interpretation of common factors that are considered to be hidden causes of correlated variables. Factor analysis tries to derive and create common factors (defined as linear combinations of original variables) so as to explain and elucidate the observed dependencies in the best and simplest way possible. The factor analysis procedure is not applied to the examined basic set, but only to the selection from this set, and therefore the results of factor analysis are only estimates of actual factors (Hebák, 2013).

The prerequisites for using factor analysis are numeric variables, low cross-correlations, and non-zero correlations. The task of factor analysis is the estimation of factor loadings. The factor analysis model expresses each observed variable X_j , $j = 1, 2, \dots, p$ as a linear combination of R common factors F_1, F_2, \dots, F_R

and describes the observations by the following equations (Pecáková, 2008):

$$X_j = \mu_0 + \gamma_{j1} F_1 + \gamma_{j2} F_2 + \dots + \gamma_{jR} F_R + \epsilon_j,$$

where X_1, X_2, \dots, X_j are the observed variables; $\epsilon_1, \epsilon_2, \dots, \epsilon_j$ are the specific factors representing random deviations; γ_{jk} , $j = 1, 2, \dots, p$ and $k = 1, 2, \dots, R$ are the factor loads; μ_0 are constants.

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) metric and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity are used to assess the suitability of factor analysis. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin is among the most common statistics used to assess the suitability of data in factor analysis (Abba et al., 2020). The KMO coefficient, the most commonly used indicator, can theoretically take values between 0 and 1. KMO values between 0.9 and 1 are excellent for use in factor analysis (Abba et al., 2020; Hebák, 2013):

$$\text{KMO} = \frac{\sum_{j \neq k} \sum r_{jk}^2}{\sum_{j \neq k} \sum r_{jk}^2 + \sum_{j \neq k} \sum p_{jk}^2},$$

where $\sum_{j \neq k} \sum r_{jk}^2$ is sum of the squares of the correlation coefficients and $\sum_{j \neq k} \sum p_{jk}^2$ is sum of the squares of partial coefficients.

Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is a statistic used to verify the null hypothesis, representing a variation between 0 and 1. Lower values indicate that factor analysis would not be appropriate because other variables cannot explain the correlations between pairs of variables (Rojas-Kramer et al., 2015). Based on the above tests, using the breakdown of questions according to factor scales, factors were identified and marked, and the Varimax method was chosen as the rotation method. The Scree fence, in which the difference between a group of sharply decreasing large values of characteristic numbers (specific characteristics used to calculate the main components) and the rest of tiny (meaningless) characteristic numbers (Hebák, 2013) is visible, is then introduced. For individual factors, the internal consistency coefficient (Cronbach's Alpha) is expressed. Cronbach's Alpha represents a coefficient that is oriented to determine the reliability of the data. The

value of this coefficient ranges from 0 to 1, and the analysis criterion is that the closer the value is to 1 the greater the reliability, where the acceptable level of reliability begins at 0.80 (Rojas-Kramer et al., 2015).

In our study, two factors emerged from the factor analysis. With regard to the results of Cronbach's Alpha (factors have a high internal consistency), the gross scores were subsequently expressed as averages of items in a given factor. These gross scores of individual factors (gross score of consumer attitudes to the product and the company; gross score of consumer attitudes to cause-related marketing in relation to a non-profit organization) have the character of a numerical variable, therefore the Shapiro-Wilk test was first used to verify the normality of the data. The tested hypothesis in the Shapiro-Wilk test is that the numerical variable is normally distributed (Pecáková, 2008). Due to selections from unknown distributions a non-parametric two-sample Mann-Whitney test is applied to verify statistically significant differences.

The H_{10} (H_{11}) hypothesis is further formulated:

- $H_{1.1_0}$: Consumer attitudes to the product and the company participating in the cause-related marketing campaign do not differ between two donation sizes.
- $H_{1.1_1}$: Consumer attitudes to the product and the company participating in the cause-related marketing campaign differ between two donation sizes.
- $H_{1.2_0}$: Consumer attitudes to cause-related marketing in relation to a non-profit organization do not differ between two donation sizes.
- $H_{1.2_1}$: Consumer attitudes to cause-related marketing in relation to a non-profit organization differ between two donation sizes.

The H_{20} (H_{21}) hypothesis is further formulated:

- $H_{2.1_0}$: Consumer attitudes to the product and the company participating in the cause-related marketing campaign do not differ between genders.

- $H_{2.1_1}$: Consumer attitudes to the product and the company participating in the cause-related marketing campaign differ between genders.
- $H_{2.2_0}$: Consumer attitudes to cause-related marketing in relation to a non-profit organization do not differ between genders.
- $H_{2.2_1}$: Consumer attitudes to cause-related marketing in relation to a non-profit organization differ between genders.

To test the hypotheses $H_{1.1_0}$ ($H_{1.1_1}$), $H_{1.2_0}$ ($H_{1.2_1}$), $H_{2.1_0}$ ($H_{2.1_1}$), $H_{2.2_0}$ ($H_{2.2_1}$), the General linear model (GLM) was used. For use to variables that are not normally distributed, the model refers to the dependence on potentially more than one explanatory variable (Turner, 2008):

$$y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_{1i} + \dots + \beta_p x_{pi} + \epsilon_i,$$

3 RESULTS

The gender distribution between the surveys is statistically insignificant (Fisher’s exact test; p -value = 0.689), so the null hypothesis in Fisher’s exact test cannot be rejected. Average results and median values by donation size and gender and differences between groups are shown in Tab. 3. In the case of differences between groups according to donation size, based on a comparison of p -values with a significance level of $\alpha = 5\%$, the tested hypothesis H_{1_0} can be rejected only for the statement: “The NPO is acting responsibly by using cause-related marketing to raise funds” (p -value = 0.038; Effect size 0.154). In this case, respondents more often agree with the statement on the campaign with a donation size of 0.25 hellers. In the case of statistically significant differences between groups by gender, the tested hypothesis H_{2_0} at the level of significance $\alpha = 5$ can be rejected only in the case of the statement: “The product will do a very good job of supporting and promoting the NPO” (p -value = 0.049; Effect size 0.146), where the statement is more often agreed with by men. In general, the perception of the cause-related marketing campaign by consumers based on the assessment of individual issues does not differ between gender groups

where the response y_i , $i = 1, 2, \dots, n$ is modelled by a linear function of explanatory variables $j = 1, 2, \dots, p$ plus an error term.

In our study, two GLM models were done:

Gross score of consumer attitudes
to the product and the company
~ donation size + gender,

Gross score of consumer attitudes
to cause-related marketing in relation
to a non-profit organization
~ donation size + gender,

where consumer attitudes to the product and the company and consumer attitudes to cause-related marketing in relation to a non-profit organization = individual factors; donation size = 0.25 hellers or 10 hellers; gender = women or men.

and it does not differ between two donation sizes, except for the two statements above.

The input values can be considered very suitable for use in factor analysis. The KMO criterion is higher than 0.9 and Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity is also suitable (p -value < 0.001).

Tab. 2: KMO criterion and Bartlett’s test

KMO criterion	0.915
Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity	
test criterion	1673.4
degrees of freedom	66
p -value	< 0.001

The result of factor analysis based on our own (characteristic) numbers are two factors: the consumer attitudes towards the product and the company (Factor 1) and the consumer attitudes towards cause-related marketing in relation to a non-profit organization (Factor 2). The breakdown of questions by factor scales is given in Tab. 4. Cronbach’s alpha achieves very good reliability and internal consistency in both resulting factors (Attitude to the product and the company – value 0.916; Attitude to cause-related marketing in relation to a non-profit organization – value 0.805). Fig. 3 presents Scree plot.

Tab. 3: Summary table of average results and median values by donation size and gender

	Overall sample (<i>n</i> = 223)		Donation size						Gender			
			0.25 hellers (<i>n</i> = 108)		10 hellers (<i>n</i> = 115)		Effect size	Effect size	Women (<i>n</i> = 117)		Men (<i>n</i> = 106)	
	Mean	Median	Mean	Median	Mean	Median			Mean	Median	Mean	Median
1. Cause-related marketing is a good way to raise money for this cause (Ross et al., 1992).	4.4	5.0	4.4	5.0	4.4	5.0	0.035	4.5	5.0	4.3	4.5	0.068
2. The NPO is acting responsibly by using cause-related marketing to raise funds (Ross et al., 1992).	4.5	5.0	4.6	5.0	4.3	5.0	0.154*	4.6	5.0	4.3	5.0	0.096
3. The firm is more interested in supporting than in exploiting the NPO (Ross et al., 1992).	3.9	4.0	3.9	4.0	3.8	4.0	0.090	3.8	4.0	3.9	4.0	0.066
4. The firm is acting in a socially responsible manner (Ross et al., 1992).	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.0	0.030	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.0	0.086
5. After reading this advertising, I am more willing to support the NPO (Ross et al., 1992).	4.1	4.0	4.2	4.0	4.0	4.0	0.091	4.2	4.0	4.1	4.0	0.020
6. The ad makes me more willing to purchase the product (Ross et al., 1992).	3.9	4.0	3.9	4.0	3.9	4.0	0.048	4.0	4.0	3.9	4.0	0.012
7. The product is very appealing to me (Dahl and Lavack, 1995).	3.6	4.0	3.7	4.0	3.6	4.0	0.031	3.5	4.0	3.7	4.0	0.090
8. I would be very likely to purchase the product if I saw it on sale in a supermarket (Dahl and Lavack, 1995).	3.8	4.0	3.8	4.0	3.9	4.0	0.027	3.8	4.0	3.9	4.0	0.082
9. Based on what I know so far, I would expect the quality of the product to be very high (Dahl and Lavack, 1995).	3.7	4.0	3.6	4.0	3.9	4.0	0.099	3.7	4.0	3.8	4.0	0.064
10. The product will benefit a lot from the relationship with NPO (Dahl and Lavack, 1995).	4.3	4.0	4.4	4.0	4.3	4.0	0.054	4.4	4.0	4.3	4.0	0.008
11. The product will do a very good job of supporting and promoting the NPO (Dahl and Lavack, 1995).	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.0	4.0	4.0	0.095	3.9	4.0	4.2	4.0	0.146*
12. The NPO will benefit a lot from the relationship with the product (Dahl and Lavack, 1995).	4.3	4.0	4.4	4.0	4.2	4.0	0.083	4.3	4.0	4.3	4.5	0.069

Note: * Statistically significant differences

Tab. 4: Factor score for two factors

Items	Factor	
	Attitude to the product and the company	Attitude to CRM in relation to NPOs
1. Cause-related marketing is a good way to raise money for this cause (Ross et al., 1992).		0.857
2. The NPO is acting responsibly by using cause-related marketing to raise funds (Ross et al., 1992).		0.860
3. The firm is more interested in supporting than in exploiting the NPO (Ross et al., 1992).	0.760	
4. The firm is acting in a socially responsible manner (Ross et al., 1992).	0.689	
5. After reading this advertising, I am more willing to support the NPO (Ross et al., 1992).	0.651	
6. The ad makes me more willing to purchase the product (Ross et al., 1992).	0.648	
7. The product is very appealing to me (Dahl and Lavack, 1995).	0.802	
8. I would be very likely to purchase the product if I saw it on sale in a supermarket (Dahl and Lavack, 1995).	0.837	
9. Based on what I know so far, I would expect the quality of the product to be very high (Dahl and Lavack, 1995).	0.827	
10. The product will benefit a lot from the relationship with NPO (Dahl and Lavack, 1995).		0.585
11. The product will do a very good job of supporting and promoting the NPO (Dahl and Lavack, 1995).	0.711	
12. The NPO will benefit a lot from the relationship with the product (Dahl and Lavack, 1995).		0.563

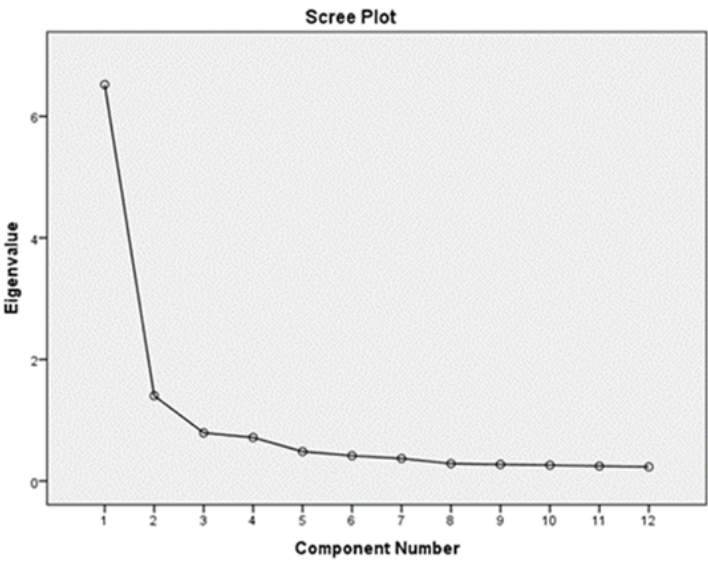


Fig. 3: Scree plot presenting eigenvalues

Tab. 5: Descriptive statistics of gross scores by gender and donation size

	Overall sample	Donation size		Gender	
		0.25 hellers	10 hellers	Women	Men
<i>Attitude to the product and company</i>					
<i>n</i>	223	108	115	117	106
Average	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	4.0
Median	4.0	4.1	4.0	4.0	4.3
Standard deviation	1.1	1.3	0.8	1.0	1.2
Standard error average	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
<i>Attitude to cause-related marketing in relation to NPOs</i>					
<i>n</i>	223	108	115	117	106
Average	4.4	4.5	4.3	4.4	4.3
Median	4.5	4.7	4.5	4.5	4.5
Standard deviation	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.8	1.1
Standard error average	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1

Tab. 5 shows the rating of gross scores according to donation size and gender. Respondents agree to a greater extent with the benefit of cause-related marketing for the non-profit organization than that the campaign would have an impact on their positive attitude towards the product and the company participating in the campaign.

The results of data normality verification are shown in Tab. 6 (p -values < 0.05).

Tab. 6: Shapiro-Wilk normality test

Factors	Test criterion	Degrees of freedom	p -value
<i>Attitude to the product and company</i>			
0.25 hellers	0.941	108	$<0.001^*$
10 hellers	0.952	115	$<0.001^*$
<i>Attitude to CRM in relation to NPOs</i>			
0.25 hellers	0.893	108	$<0.001^*$
10 hellers	0.945	115	$<0.001^*$
<i>Attitude to the product and company</i>			
Men	0.955	117	$<0.001^*$
Women	0.942	106	$<0.001^*$
<i>Attitude to CRM in relation to NPOs</i>			
Men	0.931	117	$<0.001^*$
Women	0.930	106	$<0.001^*$

Note: the data are derived from a non-normal distribution at a significance level of $\alpha = 5\%$.

The evaluation of attitudes towards the product and the company that are involved in the cause-related marketing campaign and the evaluation of attitudes towards the cause-related marketing in relation to the non-profit organization involved in the campaign do not differ between donation sizes and genders. In general, the attitudes of consumers towards the product and the company and the attitudes towards cause-related marketing in relation to a non-profit organization do not differ between gender groups and do not differ between the donation sizes.

The results of Mann-Whitney tests are shown in Tab. 7. The tested hypothesis $H_{1.10}$, $H_{1.20}$, $H_{2.10}$ and $H_{2.20}$ cannot be rejected.

Our study did not confirm that the larger the donation size, the better the perception of the campaign by the consumer (respectively, the more positive the consumer attitudes to the product and company participating in the cause-related marketing campaign and the more consumers agree to the extent of cause-related marketing for a non-profit organization). Our study did not confirm that compared to men, women have a more positive consumer perception of a cause-related marketing campaign (respectively, women have a more positive attitude to the product and company participating in the cause-related marketing campaign and are more likely to agree with the extent of cause-

Tab. 7: Results of Mann-Whitney tests

Factors	Donation size		Gender	
	Test criterion	<i>p</i> -value	Test criterion	<i>p</i> -value
Attitude to the product and company	5755.5	0.345	5553.5	0.178
Attitude to cause-related marketing in relation to NPOs	5504.0	0.141	6053.0	0.757

related marketing for a non-profit organization).

Donation size and gender have been discussed as determinants of consumer attitudes to cause-related marketing. The results of the GLM method confirm the above results of our study. Donation size and gender do not determine the attitudes towards the product and the company (p -value = 0.932; p -value = 0.815)

and the attitudes towards cause-related marketing in relation to a non-profit organization (p -value = 0.616; p -value = 0.675). In the case of comparing the differences of group means, the differences are obvious in both individual factors, as we show in Fig. 4 and Fig. 5, and these results are interesting. But the effect of donation size and gender is insignificant, and this impact is indeed limited for all respondents.

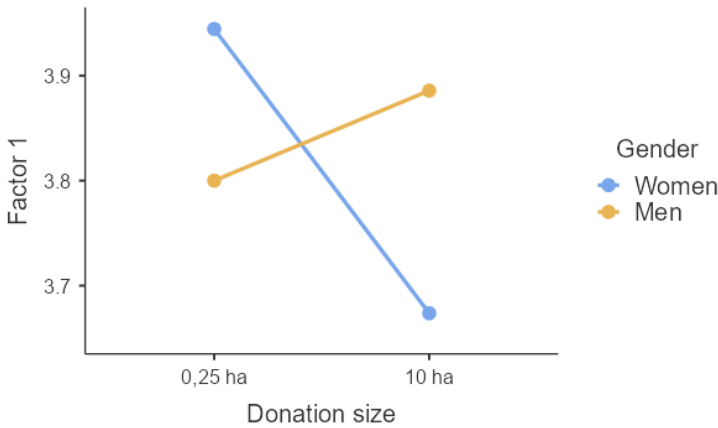


Fig. 4: The moderating effect of gender on donation size impact: consumer attitudes to the product and the company

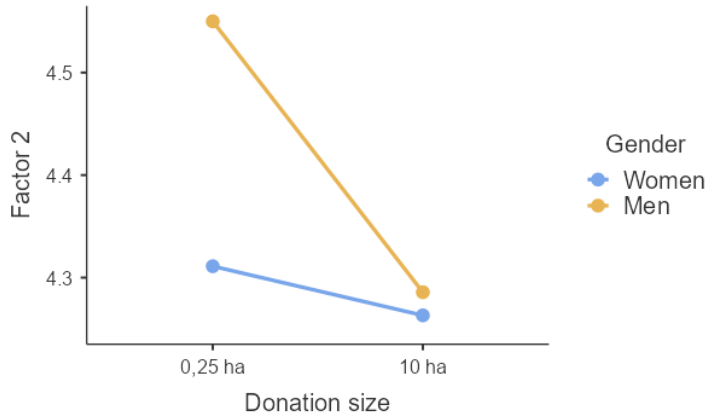


Fig. 5: The moderating effect of gender on donation size impact: consumer attitudes to cause-related marketing in relation to a non-profit organization

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The goal of the study was to evaluate the perception of a cause-related marketing campaign by a specific group of consumers in the Czech Republic, which were university students. Using unchanged items from Ross et al. (1992) and Dahl and Lavack (1995) a factorial structure was identified and the effect of gender and donation size on the attitudes of consumers to the product and the company involved in the cause-related marketing campaign and the attitudes of consumers to cause-related marketing in relation to the non-profit organization involved in the campaign was assessed. These factors present dimensions that are used to understand the perception of the cause-related marketing campaign by consumers in the Czech Republic. This study thus reflects studies regarding cause-related marketing that claim that it is not possible to generalize the results found for all countries (Furman and Maison, 2020; Natarajan et al., 2016). Respondents from the Czech Republic agree to a greater extent with the benefit of cause-related marketing for a non-profit organization than that the campaign would have an impact on their positive attitude towards the product and the company. While the Moosmayer and Fuljahn study (2010) identified five factors used to understand the perception of cause-related marketing by consumers in Germany (consumer perception of company behaviour, consumer attitude to product, consumer goodwill towards the cause-related marketing campaign, consumer perception of the benefit to the non-profit organization and consumer attitude toward cause-related marketing), in the Czech Republic two factors mentioned above serve to understand the perception of the cause-related marketing campaign. In this case, customer attitudes can be divided into those who perceive the benefit of the campaign in relation to a non-profit organization, and only then do potential customers focus on the company and the product involved in the campaign.

Contrary to the results of other research (Ross et al., 1992; Moosmayer and Fuljahn, 2010; Chéron et al., 2012), this study did not

confirm the effect of gender on the attitudes of consumers to the product and the company involved in the cause-related marketing campaign and on the attitudes towards cause-related marketing in relation to the non-profit organization participating in the campaign. The attitudes of consumers towards the product and the company and the attitudes towards cause-related marketing in relation to the non-profit organization do not differ between gender groups and between the different levels of donation sizes, which is pointed out by current research (Thomas et al., 2022; Patel et al., 2023).

The results of some studies (Dahl and Lavack, 1995; Strahilevitz, 1999; Chang, 2011; Natarajan et al., 2016) show that consumers rate cause-related marketing campaigns more positively if the company donates a higher amount. Previous studies investigated three levels of donation size and discovered that larger donations did not result in “greater positive behavioral intentions” (Holmes and Kilbane, 1993). According to another study, a higher donation size gives the impression that the company is supporting a good cause than a lower donation amount (Dahl and Lavack, 1995). However, the implications were minimal, and cause-related marketing’s importance has grown dramatically since then.

Conversely, some studies express a degree of skepticism about donation size. Customers rate lower donation sizes much better (Terblanche et al., 2023; Chaabouni et al., 2021; Tsiros and Irmak, 2020). These results do not support a single position in the debate. The above claims are not confirmed by the fact that donation size does not affect attitudes towards the product and the company or attitudes towards cause-related marketing in relation to a non-profit organization. This also makes it impossible to confirm previous studies, which claim that donation size affects consumer awareness and attitudes toward a cause (Wei et al., 2020; Moosmayer and Fuljahn, 2010). This study thus confirms the specific assertions that a higher donated amount may not increase the willingness of consumers to pay for products

involved in a cause-related marketing campaign (Koschate-Fischer et al., 2012) and the assertion that a higher donated amount may not lead to positive results for cause-related marketing (Müller et al., 2014).

Our study presents the dimensions of the perception of cause-related marketing campaign in the Czech Republic, the results related to a specific group of respondents (university students) in a specific country, and extends the existing literature on understanding consumer attitudes toward cause-related marketing. The study has shown that there are two groups of resulting areas of interest to respondents, which can be divided into a group more focused on the benefit of the non-profit organization, which they contribute to through donations. The second group is then more focused on the company using cause-related marketing and its products. Many previous studies on cause-related marketing have used “student samples” because of relatively low sociodemographic variation compared to the general public (Moosmayer and Fuljahn, 2013). The average age of the respondents in our study was 22.9 years, therefore they can be included (Weiss and Zhang, 2020) in the so-called “young people” group (20–39 years). Therefore, the obtained results of our study cannot be generalized for the entire population in the Czech Republic. Our results can be applied to a specific group of consumers.

The study offers insights for companies to design their cause-related marketing activities with respect to important elements of the

campaign in order to increase their overall effect. Companies can monitor the importance of consumers’ attitudes towards themselves and their products involved in the campaign and the importance of attitudes towards the perceived benefit of cause-related marketing for a non-profit organization. The study reports findings on how the size of the donation and gender influence the perception of a cause-related marketing campaign. Gender and donation size do not affect respondents’ attitudes towards a cause-related marketing campaign in the Czech Republic. At the same time, even a higher amount donated will not give a better impression of the use of cause-related marketing.

A possible starting point for further research would be a comparison of the results of different generations over the past three decades, which could reveal generational differences in the perception of donations as a cause-related marketing tool for consumers. Future research could focus on the perception of the cause-related marketing campaign among customer segments who are a specific target group for purchasing a product that would be presented as part of a cause-related marketing campaign. Related to this is the possibility of expanding the study to provide direct evidence regarding purchase decision making, i.e. whether a cause-related marketing campaign leads to a direct purchase of a product. This proposed research project would contribute to companies making decisions about choosing a non-profit organization as a partner in cause-related marketing or communication strategy.

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