Consumers’ Response to Cause-Related Marketing
(A Case Study among Customers of Iranian Chain Stores)

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Abstract
Over the last decade, cause-related marketing (CRM) has become a popular marketing strategy for companies. In today’s fiercely competitive world, cause related marketing plays an important role in business. It is seen as an effective way to build brands, create product awareness, revitalize corporate values and make corporate social responsibility and community involvement visible. Academic research suggests outcomes of CRM campaigns are generally positive for companies as well as for causes. For companies, CRM has been noted to increase sales and enhance companies’ image. As for causes, they received greater funding and publicity. Overall the impacts of cause-related marketing on consumers’ response are significant. This paper investigates (1) the impact of cause-proximity on attitude toward CRM and consumers’ response. (2) The effect of cause’s participation on consumers’ response to CRM. Also determine the moderating role of gender on the relationship between cause’s participation and consumers’ response. The results indicate that cause-proximity and cause’s participation have a significant positive impact on consumers’ response, also gender has an influence on the consumers’ response in CRM and The Impact of cause-related marketing is not the same for male and female consumers in CRM.

Keywords: Cause-related Marketing, Cause-proximity, Cause’s participation, Iran

1. Introduction
Cause-related marketing (CRM) is an increasingly common form of promotion. Expenditures on this form of communicating with customers are expected to surpass $828 million in North America in 2002 (IEG, 2001). As defined here, CRM involves the contribution to a cause by a firm which is “linked to customers’ engaging in revenue producing transactions with the firm” (Varandarajan and Menon, 1988). Cause-related marketing (CRM) has emerged in recent years as a new form of corporate philanthropy based on the rationale of profit-motivated giving. Corporate involvement in social well-being began as voluntary responses to social issues and problems, then evolved into a phase of mandated corporate involvement, and is now evolving into a phase in which social responsibility is viewed as an investment by corporations (Stroup and Neubert, 1987).

Cause-related marketing (CRM) is a common and popular form of CSR. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives have become increasingly popular among companies in many parts of the world. CSR is defined as ‘recognizing that companies have a responsibility to a range of stakeholder groups which include; consumers, employees, suppliers, shareholders, the political arena, the broader community, [and] the environment (Adkins,2005).

As a multi-disciplinary concept, definitions of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) abound. the European Commission defines CSR as “the firms’ voluntary integration of social and environmental concerns to their commercial activities and relationships with their stakeholders” (Lapeyre and Bonnefont, 2005).

Since the 90’s, the study of CSR has been inscribed in the general stakeholder theory (Clarkson, 1995; Donaldson & Preston, 1995), stating that firms allocate their resources and make decisions in order to satisfy stakeholders (shareholders, lobbies, employees, consumers,…). Though largely ignored as stakeholders so far, consumers are now under focus, as they become a more critical and powerful pressure group under the influence of consumer movements or NGO. Eventually, in a context where brands added value is increasingly challenged, societal communication can be a key strategic lever for brand management.

However, cause marketing programs have been criticized (Drumwright, 1996) and may run the risk of consumer backlash (Osterhus,1997) if households question the validity, relevance, or appropriateness of a firm’s offer (Schwartz, 1977). When consumers focus upon specific cause marketing programs, rather than cause marketing in general, the attributions they make of the company’s motives for conducting the program may influence how they respond.
Attribution theory, which describes how people make causal inferences about the behavior of others, has been successfully applied to the business context in a variety of situations (Folkes, 1984). Consumers may use aspects of the offer to make inferences about the motives of the company. These inferences may, in turn, affect their evaluation of the offer. Applying the most common conceptual framework for categorizing behavioral attributions, consumers may further assess whether the company is extrinsically- or intrinsically-motivated in a CRM effort (Kruglanski, 1975). Extrinsically motivated firms seek rewards from the environment. In contrast, intrinsically motivated behavior is enacted because the task itself is rewarding; the behavior is seen as an end in and of itself.

Marketing a product, service, brand, or company by tying it with a social cause (such as breast cancer detection and treatment) is the essence of CRM. Typically, a portion of sales from the marketed item is donated to the cause. Over the last 20 years, CRM has evolved from a niche marketing tool and curiosity into an established and prevalent form of corporate philanthropy.

Business managers note the benefits of building brands, improving corporate reputations, and generating more revenues, while heads of not-for-profit organizations (NPOs) appreciate the increased funding for, as well as heightened public receptivity to, their causes (Papasolomou and Kitchen, 2011).

Although positive associations between corporate social responsibility and various economic and profit measures are not consistently found, large businesses have long exhibited interest in social responsibility (Arlow and Gannon, 1982; Larson, 1995). Businesses consistently rate social responsibility as an important goal, often just following responsibility to shareholders, customers and employees (Smith and Alcorn, 1991). Although many corporations are interested in social responsibility, conflicts with other corporate goals can emerge and the meansends debate continues (Paul and Lydenberg, 1992).

Several CRM’s structural elements such as product type (Subrahmanyan, 2004; Strahilevitz and Myers, 1998), cause-type (Cui et al. 2003; Ellen at al. 2003), cause-proximity (Grau and Fols, 2007; Ross et al. 1991), Cause importance (Petty and Cacioppo, 1984; Ellen at al. 2003) and fit between sponsoring company and the cause supported (Hou et al, 2008) have been postulated in the literature to influence consumers’ response to CRM.

Their findings suggest that these structural elements do influence consumers’ response to the CRM campaigns. Among these elements, the effect of cause-proximity and Cause importance on consumers’ response warrants further exploration as studies that examined the effect of CRM supporting an international cause on consumers’ response still rather limited.

Controversy exists regarding supports of local, national or international cause. Although, the survey conducted by Cone Roper (2000) shows that consumers prefer local as compared to national and global cause. Previous studies found the contrary (Cui et al., 2003; Ross et al., 1992). Additionally, in reality, regardless of the cause-proximity, companies support causes at various levels; local, national, regional as well as international.

In essence, it is important for marketers to understand why some consumers participate in CRM and others do not and how best to structure the offer to maximize participation. There are some consumers who will always participate primarily due to the effect of high levels of cause importance. When cause importance is at the highest, consumers focus on the cause. In this case, the structure of the offer means very little because attitudes and intentions are dictated by cause importance. However, when there are lower levels of cause importance, the structure of the CRM may become very important in influencing consumer attitudes and intentions.

The present study aims at: (1) understanding the effect of cause-proximity (local and international CRM campaigns) on consumers’ response towards CRM (2) understanding the effect of cause’s participation on consumers’ response towards CRM and (3) examining the role of gender on the relationship between cause-related marketing and consumers’ response towards CRM.

2. Literature Review

There has been growth and interest in CRM over the past few years. (Fallman, 1999; Dupree, 2000; Kitchen and Schultz, 2001; Vallaster and de Chernatony, 2005; Berger et al., 2007). CRM is growing and its growth is due to several factors such as favorable consumers’ response and consumers’ purchasing intention towards CRM (Hou et al., 2008; Brink et al., 2006; Gupta and Pirsch, 2006; Lafferty and Goldsmith, 2005; Ross et al., 1992), growing companies concern to support causes (Brink et al., 2006) as well as to increase companies’ profits (Varadarajan and Menon, 1988). Dupree (2000) suggests that growth of interest in CRM is due to consumers’ growing social consciousness, whereas Fallman (1999) argues that companies are taking a more strategic approach to community involvement efforts, and are seeking ways of benefitting community organizations while simultaneously furthering company business goals. In fact, many of the world’s most admired corporations maintain a sustained commitment to various forms of CRM (Demos, 2006).
CRM may be viewed as a strategic positioning and marketing tool, which associates a company or brand with a relevant social cause or issue, for mutual benefit (Pringle and Thompson, 1999). It has been defined as ‘the public association of a for-profit organization with a non-profit organization, intended to promote the company’s products or services and to raise money’ (Polonsky and Macdonald, 2000; Demos, 2006).

The corporate income benefits of successful CRM initiatives include the following: attracting new customers, increasing product sales, creating and sustaining a positive brand identity (Kotler and Lee, 2005); enhancing corporate image, differentiating products and organizations, increasing brand loyalty and sales (Adkins, 2005); motivating employees and teams, bringing business values to life, building relationships and loyalty, adding value, demonstrating organizational values and enhancing reputation and profile (Adkins, 2005; Berger et al., 2007; Dowling, 2001).

Berger et al. (1996) found that CRM led to favorable attitude toward the product involved. On the basis, Strahilevitz and Meyers (1998) researched moderating role of product types to CRM and consumers’ purchasing intent. Pracejus and Olsen (2004) used experimental methods to explore the role of fit between brand and cause on choice and purchasing intention when the cause is well-liked, and found brand/cause fit substantially can amplify the CRM’s effect above. They also replicate and extend previous research findings using choice-based conjoint. Their two studies involving 329 respondents show that fit between brand and charity can impact choice. In terms of trade-offs against price discounts, donation to a high-fit charity can result in 5-10 times the value of donation to a low-fit charity. They also find, however, that in both studies, the value of CRM does not justify its cost, at least in terms of short-term sales.

Kalligeros (2005) considered CRM is a strategy that links a company, brand, or product to a NPO for a mutually beneficial purpose, and it can enhance the reputation of a corporate entity, differentiate a brand, and build the emotional bond between the consumer and a brand.

Deshpande and Hitchon (2002) used experimental study to comparatively analyze the influence of three ads to brand image, the results shown CRM ads produced more favorable responses than brand ads prior to PSAs. Varadarajan and Menon (1988) suggested that causes can be categorized into three levels, national, regional and local. The survey conducted by Cone Roper (2000) shows that consumers prefer local as compared to national and global cause.

Ross et al. (1992) found that CRM had a positive impact on perceptions of the sponsoring firm and these effects were stronger for women than for men. This positive impact of CRM was also found to be greater when the association was presented as a local, as opposed to a national ad.

Today, there are also companies that support causes at international level. CRM campaigns often mentioned or communicate to the consumer specific donations distributed to cause. It represents one specific cue that can influence consumers’ purchasing intention to a particular CRM campaigns.

2.1 Cause-proximity effects on consumers’ response to CRM

As we known, in order to attempt to maximize their self-interest, individuals are most concerned with issues that will impact their lives directly. So there is a distance between the donation activity and consumers’ purchase impacted by these donation activities. And whether consumers can enjoy and participate in a cause linking with a firm or not would influence directly consumers’ purchase intention to this firm’s product and/or service. In general, consumers may consider local causes more important to them than national causes due to the direct impact to their community. If donations support an overall cause on a local basis, it is more likely to impact the consumer directly than if the donations are provided on a national basis. That is so called cause proximity in our research.

Varadarajan and Menon (1988) suggested that cause-proximity refers to the distance between the donation activity and the potential consumers that would make the donation. Prosocial behavior literature provides a good theoretical explanation about consumers’ involvement in helping behavior and donation decision-making behavior. Prosocial behavior refers to acts that are perceived as voluntary without any expectation of external rewards and having positive social consequences. Physical distance is an important variable studied in prosocial behavior, it has been suggested that the physical distance has strong impact on the helping behavior of consumers; the physically closer the recipient of donation to the potential donor, the more likely it is that the potential donor will engage in some form of helping behavior (Bar Tal, 1976). In the context of CRM, the same logic can also be applied; CRM campaign that supports a local cause is more likely to be evaluated more favorably by the consumers than CRM that supports an international cause.

Signaling theory (Spence, 1974) suggested that cues provide employers with tangible information that are often necessary to evaluate unobservable factor. Where an employer has to make hiring decisions under an uncertain situation, an employer normally looks at certain attribute of an applicant such as level of education to assess the applicant’s capabilities. Similarly, consumers in the marketplace use certain cues in order to make an evaluation.
about a particular product. Several factors such as price, warranties and advertising expenditures have been used by consumers as signals or cues that assist them in evaluating a company’s product and help them in their decision making. In the context of CRM, CRM’s structural elements act as cues that consumers can use in their evaluation and judgment about a particular CRM campaign. Consumers use the support of for example local or national cause in order to evaluate a particular CRM campaign. A CRM campaign that support a local cause might signal greater or better offer for the consumers compared to support of national and international cause. As highlighted earlier, one recommendation in formulating CRM strategy is for companies to develop partnership with local cause. Cause-proximity represents one of the important elements of CRM’s structure that has been proven to significantly influence consumers’ response to CRM (Grau and Folse, 2007; Landreth, 2002). Past study focused on how cause-proximity influences the less-involved consumers’ response towards CRM. They found that the impact of cause-proximity is significant; company supports of local rather than national cause generates more favorable attitudes among the consumers. Likewise, older studies on cause-proximity impact on consumers’ response to CRM (Hou et al., 2008; Smith and Alcorn, 1991; Ross et al., 1991) found similar results. In addition, Cone Roper (2000) survey found out that 55% of consumers surveyed indicated that local causes as most important, followed by national causes (30%) and global causes (10%). While these papers highlight the importance of cause-proximity on generating consumers’ favorable response towards CRM, the impacts of cause-proximity on consumers’ response are mixed. Past studies (Cui et al., 2003; Ross et al., 1992) found out that the impact of cause-proximity is not significant. The non significant results in their studies may be due to factors such as the type of cause used in their researches. In Cui et al., (2003), the use of disasters cause for national cause and an on-going cause for local cause is one important reason of why the result is not significant. The support of disaster cause compared to an on-going cause may generate greater concern among the consumers. This is because the immediacy of supporting disaster cause plays greater role in influencing consumers’ to support the national cause instead of local on-going cause in Cui et al., (2003) study. In Ross et al., (1992), although they found that the impact of cause-proximity is not significant, the results of their study show that the support of local cause is slightly more favorable than the national condition.

Based on the prosocial behavior literature, it is proposed that the cause-proximity cue communicated in a CRM campaign will influence consumers’ response to CRM. Consumers will response more positively towards CRM campaign that supports a local cause as it will have more direct impact on the consumers compared to CRM that supports an international cause. Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

**H1:** There is a significant correlation between cause-proximity and consumers’ response in CRM.

### 2.2. Cause’s participation effects on consumers’ response to CRM

Cause’s participation is defined in this research as the amount of effort the consumer can participate in the CRM program.

Folse et al (2010) demonstrated that the effects of purchase quantity on firm inferences and subsequent participation intentions are moderated by consumer participation effort where higher participation requirements (e.g., mail-in proof-of purchase) yield more negative purchase quantity effects. They argued that higher than expected consumer participation effort may activate persuasion knowledge (Friedstad and Wright 1994) that give rise to more consumer suspicion of the firm motives for the purchase quantity requirements (Campbell 1995; Campbell and Kirmani 2008; Rifon et al. 2004).

Most research has determined propensity and intentions toward CRM but has not varied the amount of participation effort required from the consumer. For example, some campaigns simply ask the consumer to make the purchase and the donation is made by the company. Other campaigns (e.g. Yoplait’s Breast Cancer campaign) need the consumer to actively participate in the campaign, thus duplicating the amount of effort on the part of the consumer.

Yoplait is currently busy in a campaign that needs consumers to return tag from empty yogurt containers by mail. Yoplait then donates ten cents from each lid to breast cancer research. This program builds a heightened level of effort for the consumers.

Whilst there is ample evidence that CRM programmes require employee participation (Drumwright and Murphy, 2001; McAllister and Ferrell, 2002; Peloza and Hassay, 2006), there is little knowledge about the extent to which they are preoccupied in the decision-making phase of the CRM campaign.

Liu et al argued that some firms allow for direct participation or ‘immediate personal involvement of organization members’ in CRM decisions whilst others restrict this involvement to ‘indirect participation’ which relies on employee representation (or filtered participation) and/or individual representation where employees apply for funds on behalf of a charity of their choice. They stated that that Individual participation appears to exert a less
concentrated impact on corporate legitimacy but is used as a means of catering to diverse preferences that may not be accounted for by the general CRM strategy. Doing so allows firms to send the message that they are supporting the values of specific employees even when these may not be ‘mainstream’ and/or directly part of the CRM strategy (Yoon and Lim, 1999) and heightens perceived organisational support triggering a sense of belongingness and a feeling that the company shares similar social values (Allen et al., 2003; Eisenberger et al., 2004).

Ellen et al (2000) investigated the effect of the firm’s effort on consumers’ attributions of CSR. They defined effort as the amount of power put into a behavior. Using gift belles lettres, they retouched the level of effort as whether the company gives money, stating low levels of effort or products, indicating higher levels of effort. They hypothesized that donations need higher levels of effort were perceived more positively and found evidence to patronage this. Consumers feel more positive about higher levels of participation by the company than lower levels of participation.

Participation in cause-related marketing can be either inactive or active. Inactive participation is simply compliant to purchase the product whereby the company transits along the grant. This level need low levels of effort on the sector of the consumer. Active participation need a higher level of effort on the sector of the consumer. Consumers are required to mail something back to the firm, allegorically, in order to create the donation. Based on the earlier conversation of the interests accrued by consumers through the utilization of sales promotions, it should follow that consumers should have more affirmative feelings about the participating firm and about their purpose to purchase the product or participate in the CRM program if the situation is active compared to inactive.

Generally, different campaigns have created in the marketplace that needs increased effort on the part of the consumer (e.g. Kellogg’s and American Airlines Race for the 80 Cure).

All the studies that have been done each manipulated a various level of effort on the part of the consumer. Each study gave Different results, but interesting results. Active participation was hypothesized to yield positive results for attitudes and intentions due to the hedonic benefits often gained from shopping (Chandon, et al, 2000). However, when compared along with dimension of complication, inactive participation should yield more positive tendency toward the firm due to a more detailed survey of the company’s motives.

Based on the theories mentioned, it is proposed that the cause’s participation will influence consumers’ response to CRM. Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: There is a significant correlation between cause’s participation and consumers’ response in CRM.

2.3 The moderating role of gender

Because, it is not clear how gender influences the impact of cause’s participation on consumers’ response toward CRM. Hence, survey the moderating effect of gender is important as to realize how gender influences the relationship between cause’s participation and consumers’ response to CRM. Generally, gender and cause’s participation discussed as determinants of consumer perceptions of CRM campaigns.

Gender influences have been largely discussed in consumer response to socially relevant marketing activities in general (e.g. Meijer and Schuyt, 2005; Paul et al., 1997) and to CRM campaigns in particular (e.g. Ross et al., 1992).

Studies further indicate that some factors like gender and donation size, the type of non-profit cause and personal relationship with a cause can influence Consumers’ attitudes and consumers’ response (Farache, 2008).

Research has found that differences are not biologically rooted but are relied more on diversities in socially ascribed gender roles. Men and Women differ in their value, attitude, and role behaviors. With regard to responses to CRM campaigns, prosocial behavior seems particularly suitable for explaining differences (Berger et al., 1999; Dahl and Lavack, 1995; Potter and Adam, 2005).

Moosmayer and Fuljahn (2010) found that consumer perception of firm behavior, consumer attitude to product, and consumer goodwill toward the CRM campaign differ between gender groups. Moreover, they found that gender moderates the influence of consumers purchasing intention of firm behavior.

Langemn et al were analyzed the moderating role of gender on Cause-related Marketing. Their results showed that gender significantly influence consumers’ expectation and children under 18 significantly impact consumers’ request regarding CRM efficiency.

Empathy describes the competence to perceive (cognitively) and share (affectively) the emotional state of another person (Zahn-Waxler and Radke-Yarrow, 1990), by arousing feelings of care for and interest in the wellbeing of another person, empathy has a direct prosocial function. Moreover, empathy is usually considered to be a keysource of altruistic and prosocial behavior (Eisenberg, 2000).
Past studies on sex roles suggest that females are more favorable toward self and other oriented appeals compared to males (Meyers, 1988). Hence, with regards to CRM, female as compared to male is expected to give more favorable response towards CRM regardless of the cause-related marketing. This is because with regards to prosocial behavior female is likely to respond to CRM campaigns more positively than male. Also, considering gender differences in empathy, diverse studies have consistently reported stronger empathic feelings for women than for men (Skoe et al., 2002). Owing to the link between empathy and prosocial behavior, women tend to behave more prosocially and are thus likely to respond to CRM campaigns more positively than men.

It is therefore expected that gender may moderates the impact of cause’s participation on consumers’ response to CRM. Based on the theories mentioned and review of relevant literature the following hypothesis is therefore suggested:

H3: The Impact of cause’s participation is not the same for male and female consumers in CRM.

3. Methodology

In the present study we investigated the effects of Cause-proximity and Cause’s participation on consumers’ response in Cause-Related Marketing (CRM). Also, was examined the moderating role of gender on the relationship between cause’s participation and consumers’ response. In order to analyze the first hypothesis, (ie the relationship between Cause-proximity and consumers’ response in CRM) and analyze the second hypothesis, (the relationship between cause’s participation and consumers’ response in CRM) inferential two-variable linear regression was used to determine the relationship between two variables Cause-proximity and consumers’ response (also, cause’s participation and consumers’ response) by means of distance scale in which the determination rate of criterion variance by means of predictor variable was identified by R2 (coefficient of determination).

In order to analyze the Third hypothesis, (ie the moderating role of gender on the relationship between cause’s participation and consumers’ response); Leven test was used to determine the equality of variance between the groups of women and men, then given equal variances between these two groups, inferential independent T-test was used to compare the average of cause-related marketing between the two groups of male and female.

The current study, according to its purpose, is an applied research and also is kind of descriptive surveys of the area of field studies considering the data collection method. To investigate the relationship between the variables and testing hypothesis, after collecting the needed data and information through questionnaires, statistical software SPSS20 was used.

All Iranian consumers form the Statistical population of this research. Due to the magnitude and distribution of these consumers, those who bought their needs from, Lale, Shahravad, Moallem, Refah and Artesh Chain Stores underwent this survey. In this study, simple random sampling has been used meaning that the researcher accidentally went to these stores and gave the questionnaire to the buyers to fill out the questionnaire and some of the completed questionnaires were chosen from each region according to the Cochran formula about the estimated sample.

The sample size is very important to generalize the results to the community. There are several methods for determining sample size which among them mathematical methods are the most accurate ones for calculating the sample size.

Cochran's formula is used to obtain the sample size in this study based on which the number of sample is equal to 384, which shows the maximum sample size in cases we may not have the exact population of the study with 5% of error.

\[ n = \frac{z^2 \times p(1-p)}{d^2} \]

\[ = \frac{(1.96)^2 \times (0.5) 
\times 0.5}{(0.05)^2} = 384 \]

In this study, the data collected in the field part was done by a questionnaire and the library method was used to collect information about the concepts and theories related to the topic of the research.

The questions are based on a Likert scale from very much agreement to very much disagreement that the grading is 1 to 5. In the present study, in order to more assurance a total number of 410 questionnaires were distributed among consumers in stores. Some of questionnaires were excluded due to wrong and incomplete responses and finally 384 questionnaires were analyzed for data analysis.

In the present study, Cronbach’s alpha coefficient was used to assess the reliability of the questionnaire and the reliability of the questionnaire is obtained Cronbach’s Alpha: 0.86.
4. Findings and Discussion

In this part we have tried to examine each hypothesis by using inferential two-variable linear regression statistics to test the first hypothesis and independent T test to examine the second hypothesis, and made a decision to approve or reject the hypotheses.

Test of the first hypothesis: There is a significant correlation between cause-proximity and consumers’ response in CRM.

Our H0 is: There is not a significant correlation between cause-proximity and consumers’ response in CRM.

Our H1 is: There is a significant correlation between cause-proximity and consumers’ response in CRM.

A survey on the correlation between cause-proximity and Consumers’ response is achieved by using an inferential two-variable linear regression statistics, based on which the calculated p-value (0.001) is less than significant level 0.01, therefore, at this level, H0 is rejected. So it is concluded that the linear regression model is significant and it means that there is a significant correlation between cause-proximity and consumers’ response. Correlation coefficient is R=0.75, which represents the extend of correlation between cause-proximity and consumers’ response. Given that the value of R’adj (adjusted R’) is equal to 0.57, it is concluded that the variable of cause-proximity to consumers in this model, determine 0.57 of the variance of purchasing intention of a product by consumers (Table 1).

The results also indicate that the regression coefficient of cause-proximity impact on consumers’ response is 0.58 and the due to the P-value (significance) of 0.001 which is smaller than the significance level of α=0.05, the H0 is rejected in this level and thus it can be said that cause-proximity has a significant positive impact on consumers’ response. In other words, the results show that when a cause related activity is carried out in a local area, the consumers purchasing intention increases in comparison to national and international cause related activities.

Table 1: The coefficients of the regression model of the correlation between cause-proximity to consumers and their consumers’ response

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>R²_adj</th>
<th>Estimate B</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>The standard estimate of β</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The extent of cause-proximity for consumers</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>0.074</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>19.33</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Test of the second hypothesis: There is a significant correlation between cause’s participation and consumers’ response in CRM.

Our H0 is: There is not a significant correlation between cause’s participation and consumers’ response in CRM.

Our H1 is: There is a significant correlation between cause’s participation and consumers’ response intention in CRM.

A survey on the correlation between cause’s participation and consumers’ response is achieved by using an inferential two-variable linear regression statistics, based on which the calculated p-value (0.001) is less than significant level 0.01, therefore, at this level, H0 is rejected. So it is concluded that the linear regression model is significant and it means that there is a significant correlation between cause’s participation and consumers’ response. Correlation coefficient is R=0.79, which represents extend of correlation between cause’s participation and consumers’ response. Given that the value of R’adj (adjusted R’) is equal to 0.61, it is concluded that the variable of consumerspurchasingintention to consumers in this model, determine 0.61 of the variance of purchasing intention of a product by consumers (Table 1).

The results also indicate that the regression coefficient of cause’s participation impact on consumers’ response is 0.57 and the due to the P-value (significance) of 0.001 which is smaller than the significance level of α=0.05, the H0 is rejected in this level and thus it can be said that cause’s participation has a significant positive impact on consumers’ response. In other words, the results show that, the higher participation of a cause sponsored by a firm consumers perceive, the more likely its product is purchased.
Table 2: The coefficients of the regression model of the correlation between cause’s participation and consumers’ response

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>R² (adj)</th>
<th>Estimate B</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>The standard estimate of β</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The extent of cause’s participation for consumers</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>0.071</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>17.42</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Test of the Third hypothesis: The Impact of cause’s participation is not the same for male and female consumers in CRM.

Our H0 is: The Impact of cause’s participation is the same for male and female consumers.

Our H1 is: The Impact of cause’s participation is not the same for male and female consumers.

Leven Test was used to examine the equality of variances and due to a p-value (significance) of 0.358 which is larger than the significant level of α= 0.05, H0 is not rejected and as a result the variances of the two groups are said to be equivalent, so parameter one test is applicable. Comparison Impact of cause’s participation for male and female consumers is obtained via T-test and because the p-value (significance) equals 0.001 is smaller than the significance level of α=0.05, so the H0 hypothesis is rejected in this level. Thus it can be concluded that there is a significant difference in cause’s participation between the male and female consumers. According to the averages the cause’s participation for male consumers is more than that for female consumers (Table 3).

Table 3: T-test statistics for comparing the average The Impact of cause’s participation for consumers in terms of gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>T Statistic</th>
<th>Degrees of freedom</th>
<th>Significant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The rate of cause’s participation for consumers</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>10.04</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>9.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Conclusions

The present study assesses impact of cause-proximity, cause’s participation and gender on consumers’ response to cause-related marketing. Using an experimental study on a total of 384 respondents among Customers of Iranian Chain Stores, the current study shows that cause-proximity and cause’s participation have a significant positive impact on consumers’ response. The results show that when a cause related activity is carried out in a local area, the Consumers’ response increases in comparison to national and international cause related activities.

Marketers are expanding CRM campaigns that need various levels of participation, essentially using implications from sales promotions strategies such as rebates and coupons. Contrary to simple intuition, Predicate that consumers prefer to hold a diverse standard of participation, there is a group of consumers who degust active participation in CRM campaign. The results of this study show that cause’s participation has a significant positive impact on consumers’ response.

In addition, the current study examines The Impact of cause’s participation on male and female. With regards to the moderating effect of gender on the relationship between cause’s participation and consumers’ response towards CRM, the results shows that The Impact of consumers’ response towards CRM is not the same for male and female consumers. Male response towards CRM is influenced by degree of cause’s participation. In other words, cause’s participation don’t effect on Response of female consumers towards CRM very much. On the contrary, cause’s participation impact attitudes towards CRM for male response much more than female. Overall, female have more favorable purchasing intention towards CRM than male and that male response towards CRM is influenced by cause’s participation. The findings of this study can be directly or indirectly used as guidelines for manufacturing companies or firms, service, advertising and commerce firms and can be used by managers in designing their CRM campaigns in the future.
References


