
Purchase Intentions for Food Products Under Different CRM Campaign Settings: An Empirical Evidence from Poland

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Wojciech Kozłowski¹, Szczepan Figiel²

Abstract:

Purpose: Purchase intentions determined by a range of factors can be considered as a proxy indication of potential market demand. Declared consumer willingness to buy products does not necessarily translates into effective demand, nonetheless, constitutes valuable information on how buyers may react when products are offered, and the purchases are intertwined with charity donation. In the article and results of the author's own empirical analysis regarding determinants of purchase intentions under hypothetical cause-related marketing campaigns are presented in the context of the theory of planned behaviour (TPB). The aim of the study was to examine importance of cause involvement, attitudes towards campaign, and attitude toward helping in shaping purchase intentions for food products under different antidiabetic CRM campaign settings.

Design/Methodology/Approach: A 2×2 experimental design (product type: hedonic vs. utilitarian × donation size: small vs. large) was employed. Data were collected via a self-administered survey carried out among Polish consumers who completed 439 questionnaires. Robustness of the results was confirmed through calculations of factor loading, Cronbach's alpha, and composite reliability parameters. Latent variables were measured using validated scales and their impact on purchase intention was assessed applying logistic regression.

Findings: It was found out that in case of frequently purchased food products such as yoghurt and ice cream cause involvement positively influence purchase intentions, no matter the product type and donation size. Attitude toward helping, regardless donation size, increases odds of intention to buy the hedonic product (ice cream) as well as the utilitarian product (yoghurt) offered with small donation whereas attitude toward campaign increases odds of intention to buy only when the utilitarian product is considered.

Practical Implications: To optimize CRM campaigns, marketers should align causes with consumer values to leverage cause involvement. For utilitarian products campaigns should focus on positive attitudes toward CRM initiatives, while for hedonic products appeals should address altruistic benefits. Large donations are not recommended for utilitarian goods as they may weaken purchase intentions.

Originality/Value: This study contributes to the literature by investigating costly, consumer-funded donations in Poland, where according to Authors' knowledge such empirical research has not been conducted yet. Therefore, it helps to fill existing gap regarding international

¹University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, Faculty of Economic Sciences, Institute of Management and Quality Sciences, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9146-510X>, e-mail: wojciech.kozlowski@uwm.edu.pl;

²Institute of Agricultural and Food Economics, National Research Institute, ORCID: 0000-0001-6058-427X, e-mail: sfigiel@gmail.com;

comparisons of the CRM campaigns potential effects. Moreover, the research extends the TPB by integrating cause involvement as a pivotal construct as well as reveals product-type asymmetries in CRM effectiveness.

Keywords: *Purchase intentions, cause related marketing, food products.*

JEL codes: *D12, M31*

Paper type: *Research article.*

1. Introduction

Purchase intention (PI) is a valuable indicator of consumer actual purchase behaviour (Patel *et al.*, 2023; Shastry and Anupama, 2021; Ajzen, 1991). It can be understood as “willingness to buy in the future a given product under certain conditions” (Parengkuan, 2017, p. 11).

Thus, understanding what determines consumer purchase intentions is crucial to successfully create a market demand, goods, and services. One of interesting problems is how PI is influenced by cause-related marketing (CRM) solutions meant to meet both business and social expectations.

Cause-related marketing is a commercial activity, based on post-purchase giving, where the increase in financial funds to support worthy social cause is combined with the purchase of products (Patel *et al.*, 2022). It can be considered as an act of responsible behaviour targeted to society assuming that purchasing charity linked products is a prosocial behaviour based on the notion that some people care about the well-being of the others.

Prosocial behaviour covers any voluntary and intentional action (Eisenberg and Miller, 1987) such as helping, comforting, sharing, and cooperation (Batson and Powell, 2003), that benefits another person and is often costly for the benefactor (Simpson and Willer, 2008).

Even though consumers may experience multiple benefits buying cause-related products, a CRM campaign could be perceived as costly to them. Personal costs related to engaging in the donation process include physical energy and distress as well as time and money that may negatively impact individual decisions to behave prosocial (Howie *et al.*, 2018).

Gnezzy *et al.* (2012) bring together behaviour and individual's identity to explain prosocial acts. They state that individual behaviour reflects someone's identity and suggest that because personally costly prosocial behaviour is a signal of social behaviour, the consumer will be more likely to engage in corporate social initiatives.

In contrast, costless prosocial acts don't signal much about individual prosocial identity. Regarding CRM, consumers who have made a costly donation may feel more prosocial and behave more honestly when buying products linked with social causes than consumers making a costless donation.

Therefore, it's interesting to know what persuades consumers to participate in costly CRM campaigns and how high monetary cost (higher prices) they can accept when engaging in such campaigns. It should also be emphasized that relatively little empirical research on CRM relates to costly prosocial behavior.

Majority of empirical results published in peer-reviewed journals are based on research conducted in the USA, China, India, and the United Kingdom (Bakshi and Verma, 2023; Pandey and Bajpai, 2022; Thomas *et al.*, 2020). Yet, effects of the CRM campaigns can be significantly influenced by factors connected to a given geographic and economic region.

Therefore, it is recommended to conduct research in various markets to better understand consumers' responses to CRM initiatives (Boulouta and Manika, 2022; Thomas *et al.*, 2020). Our study meets this expectation since in the article an attempt to identify determinants of consumer purchase intentions for cause-related products in Poland is presented.

Applying the theory of planned behavior (TPB) framework in the context of costly CRM campaign, we focused our research on importance of such factors as cause involvement, attitudes towards campaign, and attitude toward helping. The purpose of the paper is to present results of our empirical study aimed at revealing purchase intentions of selected Polish consumers for food products using a four experiments survey reflecting different CRM campaign settings.

Especially, we tried to assess the role of cause involvement, attitudes towards campaign, and attitude toward helping in shaping consumer purchase intentions as well as to examine the likely influence of the product type (utilitarian vs. hedonic food products) donation size (small vs. large) on significance of these factors. In the light of literature these are problematic questions we try to answer using the data were collected via a self-administered survey carried out among Polish consumers who completed 439 questionnaires.

The study is meant to fill existing gap regarding international comparisons of the CRM campaigns potential effects. The findings contribute to the knowledge on factors determining consumer purchase intentions and methodological discussion on

extending the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) by integrating cause involvement as a pivotal construct.

2. Literature Review

Various theories have been developed and used to understand prosocial consumer behaviour in the context of the cause-related marketing (Thomas *et al.*, 2020). One of the most comprehensive and relevant ones, although surprisingly not applied very widely in the CRM studies is the theory of planned behavior (Zhang *et al.*, 2020). Its core is the “individuals’ intention to perform a given behavior” which leads to the person’s actual behaviour (Ajzen, 1991, p. 181). TPB assumes that the greater the behavioural intention, the greater the likelihood of the expected behaviour to be observed (Ajzen, 1991).

Behavioural intention is formed by “attitude toward behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control” (Ajzen, 1991, p. 182). Attitude toward behaviour is driven by individual beliefs about the possible results of given behaviour. Behavioural beliefs create a favourable or unfavourable attitude. In the context of CRM presumably what customer think about supporting social cause can influence the intention to buy the cause-related products.

Subjective norms are the result of individual perception about how persons significant for the others would like them to behave in a particular way (Ajzen, 1991). It is assumed that intention to purchase a charity linked product will increase if consumers receive CRM signals in public settings (Choi *et al.*, 2018). The last predictor of behavioural intention is perceived behavioural control, that refers to evaluation of people behaviours in the situations with no complete volitional control (Tsai *et al.*, 2020).

Behavioral control plays an important role in CRM since individuals assess the costs and benefits of donation behaviour (Han *et al.*, 2010). Ajzen (1991) argues that perception of behavioural control is subject to availability and price of a particular product. From the economic point of view price plays a fundamental role in the decision making process.

Therefore, understanding consumer willingness to buy products linked with social cause at a premium price is important for organizations implementing costly CRM campaigns because pricing may limit consumer decisions to behave prosocial. Consequently, conceptual framework of our study is rooted in the Ajzen theory with special consideration of selected attitudinal factors critical to formation of purchase intentions.

Based on a review of extensive literature we modified the TPB framework while focusing on cause involvement, attitudes towards campaign, and attitude toward

helping, which seem instrumental in determining purchase intentions for products offered in connection with CRM campaigns.

Cause involvement is the extent to which a consumer considers a given issue to be personally important (Grau and Folse, 2007). In this context, buying cause related products means that consumer value the sponsored cause (Howie *et al.*, 2018). CRM campaigns refer mainly to human being, animal welfare, and environment and health related causes (Zhang *et al.*, 2020; Lafferty and Edmondson, 2014).

Personal experience and values result in the fact that causes may be perceived differently by the consumer and therefore they will have different impact on purchase intentions for cause-related products (Sindhu, 2020; Lafferty and Edmondson, 2014).

Role of the fit between consumer and the cause in influencing purchase intention of cause-related products has been confirmed in many studies (Patil and Rahman, 2023; Aggarwal and Singh, 2019), although it is determined by many additional variables, including donation size (Koschate-Fisher *et al.*, 2012), product-cause fit (Sung *et al.*, 2020) and cause type (Fan *et al.*, 2020).

When discussing the issue of attitude toward CRM campaigns it needs to be underlined that attitude itself is a multidimensional construct. Attitude includes three components, i.e., cognitive (beliefs, and knowledge about the object of attitude), affective (emotions regarding the object), and behavioural one (reaction to a particular object) (Galan-Ladero *et al.*, 2015).

In our study attitude toward the CRM campaigns was assumed to be an affective construct defined as positive, or negative emotions toward such campaigns. It is recognized that consumer attitudes toward corporate social responsibility are rather supportive.

Therefore, compliant attitudes of consumers towards the CRM initiatives and their positive effect on willingness to buy products to support social cause can be expected. In fact, such a relationship has been indicated (e.g., Choudhary and Suresh, 2023; Rego and Hamilton, 2021). Studies also show that consumers attitude toward CRM depends on various factors, for example, personal values (Galan-Ladero *et al.*, 2015), trust, religious, and social networks (Youn and Kim 2008), and the perceived company's motives (Amawate and Deb, 2021).

Another important determinant shaping potentially consumer purchase intentions for the CRM products is attitude toward helping people, i.e. altruism. According to Smith and Alcorn (1991, p. 25) helping people “may be motivated by simple reactance to situations and actions of others, by original influence of individual and group models, or by internationalized values” Schwartz (2010) explains that personal values are used as a guide to select or evaluate individual's decisions to

take prosocial action. Chang and Chu (2020, p. 205) believe that buying cause-related products as a prosocial act result in consumers positive feeling of doing good.

Results of different research provide evidence that altruists engage more in prosocial behaviour expressed in willingness to buy charity-linked products than people behaving in a less altruistic manner (e.g., Baek *et al.*, 2020; Nguyen, 2015).

Nevertheless, even people who accept altruistic values may be sceptical of the cause-related marketing campaigns, which can negatively affect their prosocial behaviour. There are several quite convincing explanations of such reactions. One of them is that altruists can respond unfavourably to socially oriented initiatives but perceptually still profit-driven (Zasuwa, 2016).

Another explanation, crucial for our research, stems from the self-perception theory. Gnezzy *et al.* (2012) argue that altruistic individuals are not motivated to financially support social causes, because “costless” behavior is not perceived by them as a sign of prosocial personality. That is why costly CRM campaigns may result in disengagement of altruists in prosocial behaviour.

Impact of the discussed determinants (cause involvement, attitude toward campaign, and attitude toward helping others) on consumer purchase intentions can be significantly moderated by donation size and product type. Therefore, these factors are also included in the conceptual framework of our study. How they influence the consumer purchase intentions for the CRM products seems to be still an open question.

In case of donation size various authors provide answers addressing this issue from many, often incomparable perspectives. Apart from that some of the presented results are inconclusive, or even contradicting, showing positive as well as negative impacts, or no effects of increasing the donation size on consumer purchase decisions.

Researchers confirm that donation magnitude significantly influences consumer involvement in supporting cause-related marketing initiatives, although it also depends on other factors, for instance, such as donation framing (Patel *et al.*, 2022; Tsiros and Irmak, 2020), donation proximity (Grau and Folse, 2007), product type (Strahilevitz and Myers, 1998), company-cause fit and perceived motives of firms supporting social causes (Koschate-Fischer *et al.*, 2012) and cultural environment (Vaidyanathan *et al.*, 2013).

Negative impact of donation size on consumer response to cause-related marketing campaign is mainly explained by consumer scepticism resulting from the assessment of company motives to behave prosocial (Chaabouni *et al.*, 2021).

Role of products linked with social cause in CRM campaign stems from the fact that they evoke different feelings. Hedonic products are combined with pleasure-oriented consumption (excitement, pleasure, and delight). In contrast, utilitarian products relate to goal-oriented consumption (functional task) (Strahilevitz and Myers, 1998).

In some studies evidence that CRM strategy is more effective for hedonistic than utilitarian product can be found (e.g., Schamp *et al.*, 2023, Strahilevitz and Myers, 1998). In others studies the use of utilitarian products for charitable campaign have been recommended.

The ambiguity of the relationship is often explained by the simultaneous influence of different factors that weaken or strengthen the effect product type on the CRM effects, such as donation-message framing and donation size (Patel *et al.*, 2022), warm glow feeling (Chang and Chu, 2020) and company-cause fit (Koschate-Fischer *et al.*, 2012). In CRM campaigns mostly used are hedonic products (Kulshreshtha *et al.*, 2019), but a meta-analysis by Fan *et al.* (2020) shows that the campaigns linked with utilitarian products are more effective.

3. Research Methodology

The presented overview of literature related to factors shaping consumer purchase intentions inspires to verify the following research hypotheses:

- (H1) under CRM campaign purchase intentions are simultaneously and positively influenced by consumer's cause involvement as well as their attitude toward campaign and attitude toward helping others;
- (H2) larger donation size negatively affects consumer's purchase intention;
- (H3) purchase intentions toward hedonic and utilitarian food products under CRM campaign are no different.

Empirical part of the study is based on an experimental approach to CRM campaign meant to capture relationship between purchase intentions and the discussed factors as cause involvement, attitude toward campaign, and attitude toward helping considering donation size and product type. In our research attitudinal construct is represented by attitudes toward act and object.

The first one is manifested in helping diabetics and the second one refers to advertising campaign promoting financial support for a hypothetical diabetes prevention program in Poland. They determine donation behavior articulated in purchase intentions toward CRM product offerings.

The TPB research framework has been extended by including additional construct, i.e., cause involvement, to ascertain its impact on purchase intentions.

We selected diabetics as the charitable object. We presumed that considering the diabetes statistics antidiabetic prevention is an important social cause, so helping diabetics through purchasing any of the food products chosen for our experimentation should sound as an appealing proposition.

Experimental studies on the CRM indicate that health-related cause has frequently been examined (Zang *et al.*, 2020). Zimmet (2017) argues that diabetes will become a serious global public health problem. There are over 3 million diabetics in Poland, and it is estimated that about one million people have not been diagnosed yet. According to predictions diabetics will constitute 10% of the population in 2030 (W 2030 roku ..., 2022, September 22).

Our study is based on an experimental design to reveal consumer purchase intentions for hedonic and utilitarian food products offered jointly with donations. Assuming that varying product type and donation size can play a role in shaping purchase intentions the scheme 2 (hedonic and utilitarian product) x 2 (small and large donation) control variables has been applied. Two low unit price and low involvement items were chosen, namely probiotic yoghurt as utilitarian product based on perceptions concerning the utility of the product, i.e., healthiness (Cramer and Antonides, 2012).

Pistachio family ice-cream was selected as hedonic product (Tzafilkou *et al.*, 2022, November). Yoghurt and ice cream markets show clear upward trends. Over the period 2015-2021 the yogurt consumption in Poland increased by 16% (Główny Urząd Statystyczny, no date). In 2022, the average per capita consumption of ice cream accounted for 5.7 liters, higher by 46% compared to 2012 (Błaziak, 2023, April 23).

The impact of CRM campaign on consumer behaviour can be examined with an amount being donated framed in absolute money units or in relative percentage terms. In our investigation monetary donation as the exact unit of money per sale was used. Chang (2008) argue that consumers want to know exactly how much money will be donated to support social cause.

Based on the research by Vaidyanathan *et al.* (2013) we assumed that a small donation is equal to 6.3% of the regular price of products and a large one is twice as much. An essential assumption was that consumer bears the cost of the donation to particular cause. It is a case of costly donation as buying products linked with the cause is associated with additional costs incurred by consumers (i.e., premium, higher prices).

To collect data a self-completed survey was used. Participants of the survey have been chosen using non-probability sampling procedure and the chain referral technique called "snowball". This type of sampling allows to quickly find individuals willing to participate in a survey and whose characteristics fit best the

research objectives under limited sample frame and at relatively low sampling costs (Burns and Veck, 2020).

The first step was to ask some selected students of the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, the northeast region of Poland, to complete the questionnaires. In the next step they distributed questionnaires among other persons who agreed to participate in the survey. Each respondent randomly received one of the four versions of experimental booklet (i.e., product-cause print advertising and the questionnaire), which varied by donation size and product type combination.

The CRM add included a visual presentation of a hedonistic product (ice cream) or an utilitarian product (yoghurt), information on their price and quality attributes as well as the slogan "Help people with diabetes" and message about the amount of money that will be donated to the cause.

The respondents were asked to express their opinions on several statements concerning intention to purchase the advertised product as well as importance of the social cause specified in the add. They were also asked to assess accuracy of several statements concerning their attitude toward cause-related marketing campaign and attitudes toward helping or supporting others as well as their experience in making charitable contributions and purchasing cause-related products.

To reveal purchase intention, commitment to the cause, attitude toward cause-related marketing campaign, and attitudes toward helping others a 4/5-item, seven-point Likert and semantic scales of measure were used (see the Appendix). The questionnaire ended with a set of several demographic and economic inquiries. Overall, 458 completed questionnaire forms were collected.

After eliminating those exhibiting dubious response patterns 439 questionnaires in total were approved for further processing and computation. Considering recommendations by Malhorta (2016) that minimum sample size for models (with up to 5 factors, more than 3 items for each construct, and commonalities of 0.50) is at least 200, the number of individual responses collected is more than sufficient to perform an empirical analysis. The data were processed and statistical calculations performed using the IBM SPSS and Gretl software packages.

4. Research Results and Discussion

The sample of respondents, mostly being under age of 30 (68%), consisted of 60% of females and 40% of males. Half of the respondents represented post-secondary educational level, i.e., they completed master or bachelor programs or were still studying.

The majority of the survey participants (62%) were employed, including 22% of them being working students. The average monthly income of respondent's

households was around the country average. About two-thirds of the respondents declared spendings on food between 20-40% of their whole income on food. Finally, 86% of them had already donated some money to charity and purchase of cause-related products.

Prior to quantitative analysis of the survey results their reliability and validity were examined using such measures as factor loading, Cronbach's alpha (α), composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE). As shown in Table 1, all the model constructs fulfil the recommended minimum values of parameters (Shrestha, 2021).

Table 1. *Validity and reliability of the measures*

Constructs (Factor)	Item/Variable	Factor loading	Loading average	α	CR	AVE
Purchase Intention (PI)	PI1	0.860	0.913	0.950	0.962	0.834
	PI2	0.908				
	PI3	0.919				
	PI4	0.936				
	PI5	0.941				
Cause Involvement (CI)	CI1	0.912	0.925	0.958	0.968	0.856
	CI2	0.946				
	CI3	0.914				
	CI4	0.946				
	CI5	0.908				
Attitude toward CRM campaign (AtC)	AtC1	0.874	0.888	0.911	0.937	0.789
	AtC2	0.874				
	AtC3	0.922				
	AtC4	0.882				
Attitude toward helping others (AtH)	AtH1	0.908	0.919	0.938	0.956	0.844
	AtH2	0.894				
	AtH3	0.945				
	AtH4	0.927				

Source: *Author's calculations.*

As mentioned, answers were scored on a scale ranging in terms importance from 1 to 7. These ordinal latent variables were transformed into binary variables assuming that purchase intention is eventually a dichotomous “yes/no” decision. The variables were dichotomized with reference to the 7-point scale as follows:

$$\begin{cases} y_i = 1 & \text{if } z_i \geq msv \\ y_i = 0 & \text{if } z_i < msv \end{cases}$$

z_i – score on the 1-7 scale,

msv – median score value on the scale.

A logical step after such transformation of the collected data was the use of logistic regression to examine statistical importance of the analysed factors in determining purchase intentions of the survey's participants. Specifically, the following logit model was applied for estimation:

$$PI_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 CI_i + \beta_2 AtC_i + \beta_3 AtH_i + \varepsilon_i$$

where:

- PI – purchase intention,
- CI – cause involvement,
- AtC – attitude toward campaign,
- AtH – attitude toward helping.

First, the model was run for the whole sample of respondents. The results of estimation shown in Table 2, provide clear evidence that all three considered variables, being statistically significant, determine purchase intentions food products under CRM campaigns. The value of the McFadden's pseudo R^2 indicates very good model fit.

The regression coefficient are positive and highly significant. This means that a positive change in value of each predictor variable increases very considerably odds of intention to buy the products offered. Consequently, the first hypothesis is verified positively and accepted.

Table 2. The logit model estimates for the whole sample ($n=439$)

Variable	Coefficient (β)	Standard error	Slope at mean
Constant	-1.67***	0.22	x
CI	1.40***	0.29	0.30
AtC	1.29***	0.30	0.29
AtH	1.38***	0.30	0.31
n = 439; McFadden's pseudo $R^2 = 0.35$; 81.3 0% of cases 'correctly predicted'			

Note: ***, **, * – significance levels $\alpha < 0.01$, $\alpha < 0.05$, $\alpha < 0.1$, respectively

Source: Author's calculations.

In order to provide a deeper empirical insight into determinants shaping purchase intentions, consistently with the adopted experimental design scheme (2 products and 2 donations), the set of 439 correctly completed questionnaires has been divided into the following four subsets:

- utilitarian product and small donation (107 questionnaires);
- utilitarian product and large donation (106 questionnaires);
- hedonic product and small donation (125 questionnaires);
- hedonic product and large donation (101 questionnaires).

Looking for the differences between the combination of the control variables the above model has also been estimated separately for each subset of the questionnaires. The results of estimations are presented in Tables 3-6.

Table 3. *The logit model estimates for the utilitarian product and small donation subset of questionnaires (n=107)*

Variable	Coefficient (β)	Standard error	Slope at mean
Constant	-1.13***	0.42	x
CI	1.22*	0.66	0.20
AtC	1.33**	0.65	0.24
AtH	1.51**	0.67	0.26
n = 107; McFadden's pseudo R² = 0.35; 83.2% of cases 'correctly predicted'			

Note: ***, **, * – significance levels $\alpha < 0.01$, $\alpha < 0.05$, $\alpha < 0.1$, respectively

Source: Author's calculations.

Table 4. *The logit model estimates for the utilitarian product and large donation (n=106)*

Variable	Coefficient (β)	Standard error	Slope at mean
Constant	-1.28***	0.44	x
CI	1.66**	0.67	0.26
AtC	2.03***	0.63	0.36
AtH	0.85	0.63	0.14
n = 106; McFadden's pseudo R² = 0.39; 83.0% of cases 'correctly predicted'			

Note: ***, **, * – significance levels $\alpha < 0.01$, $\alpha < 0.05$, $\alpha < 0.1$, respectively

Source: Author's calculations.

Table 5. *The logit model estimates for the hedonic product and small donation (n=125)*

Variable	Coefficient (β)	Standard error	Slope at mean
Constant	-2.68***	0.52	x
CI	1.75***	0.60	0.41
AtC	1.03	0.64	0.25
AtH	2.49***	0.62	0.55
n = 125; McFadden's pseudo R² = 0.49; 85.6% of cases 'correctly predicted'			

Note: ***, **, * – significance levels $\alpha < 0.01$, $\alpha < 0.05$, $\alpha < 0.1$, respectively

Source: Author's calculations.

Table 6. *The logit model estimates for the hedonic product and large donation (n=101)*

Variable	Coefficient (β)	Standard error	Slope at mean
Constant	-1.78***	0.53	x
CI	1.46**	0.53	0.34

<i>AtC</i>	0.39	0.62	0.10
<i>AtH</i>	1.45**	0.67	0.35
n = 101; McFadden's pseudo R² = 0.23; 74.3.0% of cases 'correctly predicted'			

Note: ***, **, * – significance levels $\alpha < 0.01$, $\alpha < 0.05$, $\alpha < 0.1$, respectively

Source: Author's calculations.

In the case of utilitarian food product with larger donation *AtH* appeared statistically insignificant what suggests that attitude toward helping does not influence purchase intention if donation is high (Table 3 and 4). So, looking from this point of view the second hypothesis is supported.

However, in the case of hedonic product, no matter of donation size *AtC* appeared statistically insignificant, what means that attitude toward campaign is indifferent considering size of donation (Table 5 and Table 6). This indicates that when buying a hedonic food product consumer willingness to donate is not affected by donation size. So, the second hypothesis is not supported with regard to this type of product.

Comparisons of the model results (Table 3-6) suggests that purchase intentions toward hedonic and utilitarian food products under CRM campaign are shaped differently by the factors considered. Therefore, the third hypothesis should be rejected.

Relative importance of the analyzed factors assumed to influence purchase intentions for the cause related food products is illustrated graphically (Figure 1). It needs to be noticed that all model results show statistical significance of consumer involvement in increasing odds of purchase intentions, so its pivotal role in shaping them. Consumer attitude toward helping seems to play more important role when a hedonic product is offered, whereas consumer attitude toward campaign matters more in the case of utilitarian product.

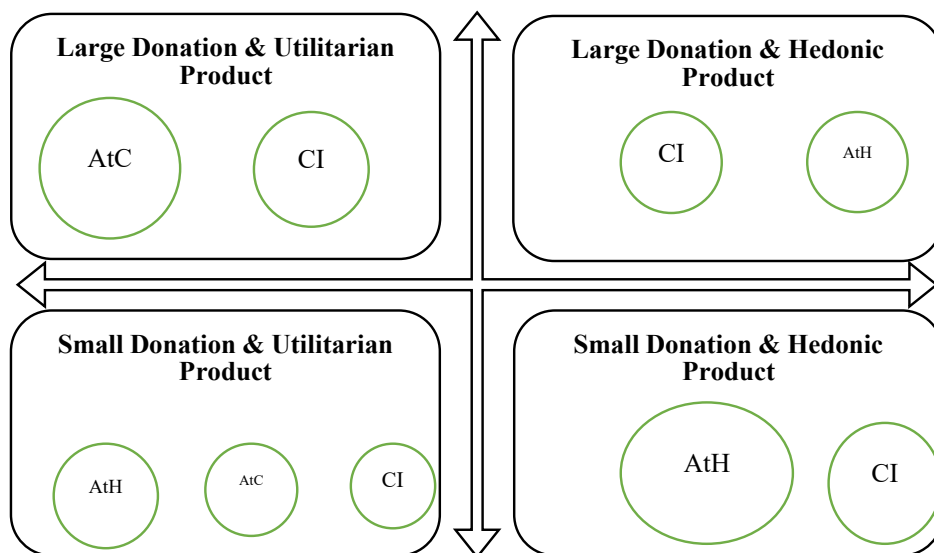
Consequently, it can be claimed that cause involvement having positive impact on purchase intentions is the key factor determining success of costly CRM initiatives. Our findings are in line with the results presented by Patil and Rahman (2023), and Aggarwal and Singh (2019). They argue that consumers' responses to CRM campaigns will be favorable if their commitment to the cause is high.

However, the results of our research differ from studies conducted by Patel et al. (2017) suggesting that customer-cause fit is not a good predictor of consumers' purchase intentions. It should be noted that the relationship between consumer-cause fit, and the effectiveness of CRM campaigns can be determined by additional variables.

Our results indicate that the effect of cause involvement on willingness to buy isn't significantly moderated by product type as well as donation size. This does not

confirm results of research by Hajjat (2003) who found that a higher cause-consumer matching leads to a greater willingness to donate more to a social cause.

Figure 1. A graphic comparison of the importance of the factors influencing purchase intentions CI – consumer involvement, AtH – attitude toward helping, AtC – attitude toward campaign.



Note: Circle areas in the figure correspond to the values of the estimated regression coefficients.

Source: Own study.

In contrast to cause involvement, the impact of AtH and AtC on the willingness to buy regarding product type and donation size is not unambiguous. The experiments we carried out referred to costly CRM campaigns. Regarding this type of cause-related marketing Gneezy *et al.* (2012) state that altruists may be more motivated to donate to the social cause because costly social behavior is a manifestation of their prosocial identity.

However, our study shows that this would not be true, if altruists wanted to purchase a utilitarian product (yoghurt) to support a large donation to a diabetes prevention program. This may be explained by skepticism about highly-sized donations for supporting social cause (Chaabouni *et al.*, 2021) and weaker association of utilitarian goods with a feeling of warm glow than hedonistic products (Chang and Chu, 2020).

Altruistic behavior is a benevolent action, so this study also provides evidence that customers who appreciate benevolence and universalism are more willing to buy a hedonic product (ice cream) and make a large or small donation to a social cause as

well as to buy a utilitarian product (yoghurt) linked with a small donation, then customers who represent self-interest values (power and achievement). Generally, these results fall within the range of research emphasizing importance of customers altruistic values in CRM campaign (e.g., Patil and Rahman, 2023; Baek *et al.*, 2020).

Attitudes toward CRM campaign is another factor that differentiates consumer buying behavior regarding product type and donation size. According to previous studies positive attitudes toward cause-related marketing initiatives strengthen purchase intentions (e.g., Choudhary and Suresh, 2023; Rego and Hamilton, 2021).

The results of our study are mixed. A positive relationship between variables is observed in the case of utilitarian products, regardless donation size. In contrast, consumer attitudes toward cause-related marketing campaign have no impact on purchase intention of hedonic product and paying premium price.

An explanation for this could be emotions associated with the purchase of such goods. Pleasure and warm glow feelings on the one hand and guilt emotions on the other are the fundamental motivators for purchasing hedonistic, cause-related products (Chang and Chu, 2020; Strahilevitz and Myers, 1998).

5. Conclusions, Proposals, Recommendations

In the article empirical evidence from Poland showing significance of selected factors shaping purchase intentions for food products offered under experimental antidiabetic prevention CRM campaign are presented. Results of our study indicate how purchase intentions for hedonic and utilitarian food products under different donation sizes may be determined by cause involvement, attitude toward CRM campaign, and attitude toward helping.

The findings provided constitute a contribution to the literature on factors shaping consumer behavior and can be useful for improving effectiveness of marketing management practices.

The CRM literature is by large related to the U.S. consumer market and cultural environment and the contribution to the field based on the Polish experience has been very modest (Bakshi and Verma, 2023). Additionally, most research concerns costless cause-related marketing campaigns, whereas in our study a case of costly CRM campaign, meaning that the customer bears the cost of donation to the cause, is examined. To our best knowledge no such a study has been conducted regarding the Poland's consumer market context; thus, the article is an attempt to fill this gap.

Costly cause-related marketing campaigns can be beneficial for the marketers. Considering the obtained research results it can be suggested that consumers' cause involvement seems a more important factor shaping purchase intention than product type and donation size linked with a CRM campaign.

Hence, companies should direct support to causes stimulating high consumer involvement by choosing a cause consistent with the target audience expectations. Some of cause-related marketing research indicates that charitable campaigns can be more effective for hedonic than utilitarian products (e.g. Patel *et al.*, 2022; Chang and Chu, 2020; Strahilevitz and Myers, 1998).

Our research suggests that to evoke purchase intentions for utilitarian products and willingness to pay premium price companies applying costly CRM strategies need to strengthen favorable consumer attitudes toward CRM campaigns. Unlike utilitarian products when offering hedonic products under CRM campaigns marketers should generate and reinforce positive attitudes toward helping others among the customers implementing, for instance, educational campaign referring to social issues, as benevolence is more important than attitudes toward CRM campaigns in making purchase decisions and paying more for the hedonic products.

Also, in case of costly CRM campaigns it is critical for businesses to constantly communicate with the target markets via appropriately selected media (for instance social media in the case of Generation Z) and invest in maintaining a strong image of a truly socially responsible organization and developing trust among customers.

The authors are aware of limitations of the study. Especially, the fact that the study is only one country-based case, and it is well known that effectiveness of the CRM strategies might be significantly influenced by cultural and geographic environments as well as consumer attitudes toward such marketing practices are likely to differ across countries. For that reason, research findings shouldn't be generalized to other consumer populations and replication of this type of study in other countries is desirable to highlight potential differences.

The findings might also be influenced by selected cause (diabetes), low-price and low-engagement food products (yoghurt and ice cream) and donation size (6.30% and 12.50% of regular prices). The previous research shows that cause category, product type and category as well as donation size can differentiate purchase of products supporting a social cause. Therefore, further studies should be conducted regarding various products, causes and donations to examine their impact on costly prosocial behavior.

More specifically, consumer product categories (specialty goods, shopping goods, convenience good, services), type of cause-product/brand fit (low, high), shopping orientation (hedonistic, utilitarian), involvement (high, low involvement products) and framing of donation size (absolute, relative terms) should be considered when assessing the impact of costly CRM campaigns on consumers' purchase intentions.

Finally, impact of additional variables as culture (collectivism, individualism) and groups of customers (Baby Boomers, Gen X, Gen Y, Gen Z) could also be investigated. Despite the indicated limitations, we believe that this study provides

useful insight into the role of key factors shaping consumer purchase intentions and can help business practitioners to increase effectiveness of costly CRM campaign as well as researchers to design follow up studies based on the presented methodological approach and findings.

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