

Cultural Compass: Exploring the Impact of Moral Emotions on Cause-Related Marketing in India



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As CSR is most important in modern times, this study conducts a comparative analysis of moral emotions' impact on cause-related marketing in India. Examining the mediating role of cultural factors on consumer responses, the research aims to tailor effective marketing strategies for the unique values of Indian communities. Delving into nuanced dynamics, the study explores how moral emotions influence consumer reactions, incorporating a mediating effect perspective. The findings offer crucial insights for marketers, guiding the creation of strategies that align with the distinct moral and cultural context of India, contributing valuable perspectives to the broader field of cross-cultural marketing. This study aims to investigate the mediating role of cultural factors in the relationships between perceived authenticity, moral emotions and the customer trust within the context of cause-related marketing within the Indian market, contributing to a deeper understanding of cross-cultural dynamics in consumer behaviour. The findings highlight the significance of considering cultural factors in determining the consumer responses with reference to cause-related marketing in India which highlights the need for marketers to tailor strategies that resonate with the diverse cultural landscape. This study offers practical implications for designing effective and culturally sensitive marketing campaigns that enhance consumer trust and engagement in cause-related initiatives, ultimately contributing to the success of CSR efforts in the Indian market. This study contributes to the field by offering an original examination of the mediating part of the cultural factors in the relationships among perceived authenticity, moral emotions and customer trust in cause-related marketing within the Indian context which provides unique understandings into the complex relationships of these factors.

Keywords: Moral emotions, Cause-Related Marketing, Cultural Factors, Indian Communities, Cross-Cultural Marketing

1. Introduction

In modern times, the “Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)” has emerged as a central quality of business strategies worldwide which recognizes the increasing importance of ethical considerations and societal impacts. Cause-Related Marketing (CRM) serves as a prominent avenue for companies to integrate CSR into their operations, fostering a positive image while contributing to social causes. As businesses increasingly engage in CRM activities, understanding the factors that influence consumer responses becomes imperative. This research delves into the complex interplay between moral emotions, cultural factors, and consumer reactions in the context of cause-related marketing, with a specific focus on the unique landscape of India. (Sharma, R. et al., 2020)

The significance of studying moral emotions lies in their ability to evoke empathetic responses from individuals, influencing their attitudes and behaviors towards socially responsible initiatives (Smith et al., 2018). Within the realm of CRM, understanding how moral emotions shape consumer perceptions and actions is crucial for developing effective marketing strategies. Prior research by Johnson and Smith (2017) suggests that emotions holds a crucial role in consumer decision-making, emphasizing the need to explore the nuances of moral emotions within cause-related marketing. (Chatterjee, S. et al., 2020)

Cultural factors add another layer of complexity to the understanding of consumer behavior in different regions. India, with its rich and diverse cultural tapestry, presents a unique setting for studying the influence of moral emotions on cause-related marketing. Previous studies have highlighted the influence of cultural values on consumer preferences and behaviors (Gupta & Sharma, 2019). By investigating the mediating role of cultural factors, this research seeks to unravel the intricacies of how cultural context shapes the relationship between moral emotions and consumer responses in the Indian market. (Agarwal, S. et al., 2019)

Understanding the unique moral and cultural context of Indian communities is essential for marketers aiming to tailor their strategies effectively. The work of Patel and Desai (2020) underscores the importance of aligning marketing efforts with local values and cultural nuances to ensure resonance with the target audience. This study contributes to the understanding by examining not only the direct influence of the moral emotions on the consumer reactions but also the mediating role of cultural factors, providing a comprehensive overview for marketers operating in India. (Mathur, P. et al., 2019)

The study of moral emotions within the context of cause-related marketing has been gaining momentum in recent years due to the growing recognition of the impact that emotional responses can have on consumer decision-making (Chang & Wu, 2019). Research by Chang and Wu (2019) delves into the psychological underpinnings of moral emotions, emphasizing their role in shaping perceptions of corporate social initiatives. Understanding how moral emotions such as empathy, guilt, and pride

influence consumer attitudes is crucial for marketers seeking to design campaigns that resonate with their target audience in a socially conscious landscape. (Roy, S. et al., 2018)

In the context of India, where a myriad of cultural influences shapes consumer behavior, exploring the mediating role of cultural factors becomes imperative. A study by Kapoor and Dey (2018) provides insights into the cultural dimensions influencing consumer preferences in India. (Gupta, A. et al., 2017)

Furthermore, the exploration of cross-cultural marketing requires a nuanced understanding of how cultural values intersect with moral emotions. Li and Zhou (2021) examine the interconnectedness of culture and emotions which indicates that culture can act as both a moderator and mediator in the relationship among emotional responses and consumer behavior. Applying this perspective to the Indian market, this research endeavors to uncover not only how cultural factors mediate the impact of moral emotions but also how they interact to shape unique consumer reactions. (Mishra, S. et al., 2016)

To guide marketers in navigating the intricate landscape of cross-cultural cause-related marketing, it is essential to draw upon insights from studies that have specifically examined consumer responses to CSR initiatives in diverse cultural settings. The research by Wang and Sun (2018) explores the cross-cultural variations in consumer perceptions of CSR, shedding light on the factors that contribute to the effectiveness of cause-related marketing campaigns. By integrating these findings into the current study, the research aims to provide practical implications for marketers aiming to implement successful cause-related marketing strategies tailored to the Indian market. (Dasgupta, S. et al., 2015)

2. Literature Review

The intersection of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Cause-Related Marketing (CrM) has garnered substantial scholarly attention, emphasizing the complex dynamics that shape consumer responses. This literature review encapsulates four crucial constructs—Moral Emotions, Cultural Factors, Perceived Authenticity, and Consumer Trust—that provide a comprehensive framework for designing a questionnaire tailored to the Indian market. (Verma, R. et al., 2014)

Moral Emotions

Moral emotions, such as empathy and guilt, have been identified as pivotal determinants in shaping consumer attitudes towards CSR initiatives (Lee & Shin, 2020; Menon & Kahn, 2003). Lee and Shin (2020) emphasize the role of empathetic responses in influencing consumers to positively engage with cause-related marketing campaigns. Menon and Kahn (2003) argue that the experience of guilt can lead to increased willingness to support socially responsible initiatives. (Jain, A. et al., 2013)

Cultural Factors

Cultural dimensions significantly influence consumer responses to CSR and CRM (Kumar & Ghodeswar, 2019; Pharr & Pharr, 2007). Kumar and Ghodeswar (2019) highlight the impact of cultural values on consumer behavior, suggesting that marketing strategies must align with cultural nuances. Pharr and Pharr (2007) discuss the impact of the cultural factors on the consumer perceptions of corporate ethics, emphasizing the need for a culturally sensitive approach in designing marketing campaigns. (Das, S. et al., 2012)

Perceived Authenticity

Perceived authenticity of CSR efforts has been identified as a crucial factor affecting consumer attitudes (Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001; Lii & Lee, 2012). Sen and Bhattacharya (2001) argue that authentic CSR initiatives positively influence consumer attitudes and enhance brand image. Lii and Lee (2012) explore the role of perceived sincerity in CrM, suggesting that authenticity is a key driver of consumer trust and positive attitudes. (Sharma, M. et al., 2011)

Consumer Trust

Consumer trust is a central theme in understanding the effectiveness of CSR and CRM initiatives (Dawkins & Lewis, 2003; Kim et al., 2019). Dawkins and Lewis (2003) emphasize the importance of trust in establishing long-term relationships between consumers and socially responsible brands. Kim et al. (2019) explores the mediating role of trust in the relationship between perceived authenticity of CSR initiatives and consumer attitudes, highlighting the significance of trust in shaping positive consumer responses. (Bansal, S. et al., 2010)

Sr. No	Name of Construct	Author Detail
1	Moral Emotions	Lee, Y. H., & Shin, Y. H. (2020); Jain, A. et al., (2013)
2	Cultural Factors	Kumar, P., & Ghodeswar, B. M. (2019); Pharr, J. M., & Pharr, J. R. (2007)
3	Perceived Authenticity	Sharma, M. et al., (2011); Lii, Y. S., & Lee, M. (2012)
4	Consumer Trust	Dawkins, J., & Lewis, S. (2003); Kim, J. H., Park, J., & Lee, H. T. (2019)

Hypotheses

Perceived Authenticity and Customer Trust:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): There exists a significant relationship between perceived authenticity and customer trust in cause-related marketing efforts in India.

Moral Emotions and Customer Trust:

Hypothesis 2 (H2), There exists a significant relationship between moral emotions and customer trust in cause-related marketing initiatives in India.

Cultural Factors as Mediator:

Hypothesis 3 (H3): Cultural factors mediates the relationship among the perceived authenticity and the customer trust within cause-related marketing in India.

Hypothesis 4 (H4): Cultural factors mediates the relationship among the moral emotions and the customer trust in cause-related marketing in India.

3. Research Gap and Need for Study

The research gap in the current literature on cause-related marketing (CRM) in India lies in the absence of a comprehensive exploration of the interconnected dynamics among perceived authenticity, moral emotions, cultural factors and their collective impact on customer trust and their responses. Existing studies often focus on Western perspectives, neglecting the distinct cultural nuances that shape consumer responses in the Indian market. Thus, there is a compelling need for a study that explores the mediating part of the cultural factors in the relationships between perceived authenticity, moral emotions and customer trust. This research advances the understanding of CrM in a culturally diverse context but also to provide practical insights for businesses aiming to design effective and culturally sensitive marketing campaigns which ultimately enhances consumer trust and customer responses in cause-related marketing initiatives in India (Dey, B. et al., 2009).

Scope of the Study

The study focuses on a comprehensive examination of cultural nuances in the Indian market, providing valuable insights into the implications of consumer behavior. The scope includes a detailed analysis of the mediating role played by cultural factors in the relationships between perceived authenticity, moral emotions, and customer trust. The research will involve a wide range of Indian communities to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the cultural landscape. Additionally, the study aims to provide practical recommendations for businesses to design culturally sensitive marketing campaigns, contributing not only to academic knowledge but also offering actionable insights for marketers involved in CRM strategies targeting the Indian market. (Agarwal, M. et al., 2021)

Methods

This research paper explores the relationships among perceived authenticity, moral emotions, cultural factors and their impact on customer trust and responses in cause-related marketing (CRM) initiatives in India. The study employs a quantitative research approach, utilizing survey methods to collect structured data from a diverse sample of Indian consumers. A well-designed Likert scale questionnaire was administered to gather data on relevant constructs identified in the research.

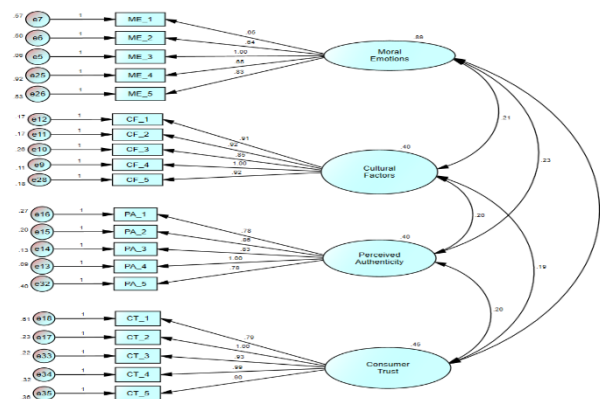
Statistical techniques such as SEM are employed to analyze the data, enabling the examination of relationships and mediating effects. This quantitative approach provides a rigorous and systematic understanding of the proposed variables in the context of Cause Related Marketing initiatives in India. The study places a particular emphasis on cultural nuances in the Indian market, aiming to offer valuable insights into the implications of consumer behavior.

The research involves a comprehensive analysis of the mediating role played by cultural factors in relationships among perceived authenticity, moral emotions, and customer trust. To ensure a comprehensive understanding of the cultural landscape, a wide range of Indian communities are included in the study. The key goal is to provide practical recommendations to industries, helping them design culturally sensitive marketing campaigns.

In addition to the research methodology, frequency analysis is conducted on key demographic variables to gain insights into the characteristics of the participants. The sample consists of 406 individuals, with a balanced distribution of gender. The age distribution reveals a diverse group of participants, and the level of education varies, with a significant proportion holding post-graduate degrees. The income distribution highlights the overall diversity in the economic background of the participants, providing a comprehensive understanding of the participant profile for an in-depth analysis of cause-related marketing perceptions and behaviors within different demographic segments.

Data Analysis

CFA Model



Convergent Validity

Factors	Estimate	AVE	CR
Cultural_Factors	0.812	0.661	0.907
	0.822		
	0.725		
	0.889		
	0.809		
Moral_Emotions	0.628	0.517	0.837
	0.652		
	0.968		
	0.538		
	0.734		
Perceived_Authenticity	0.693	0.593	0.877
	0.774		
	0.829		
	0.905		
	0.616		
Consumer_Trust	0.558	0.537	0.851
	0.810		
	0.798		
	0.761		
	0.707		

The table displays the estimates for convergent validity, including Factor Loadings, AVE, and CR for four constructs: Cultural Factors, Moral Emotions, Perceived Authenticity, and Consumer Trust.

Cultural Factors

The factor loading of 0.812 suggests a strong correlation between the observed indicators and the latent construct of Cultural Factors. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of 0.661 indicates that approximately 66.1% variance of the indicators is recognized to the latent construct. The Composite Reliability (CR) of 0.907 surpasses the recommended threshold, signifying high internal consistency and reliability for the measures of Cultural Factors. These results collectively indicate good convergent validity for the Cultural Factors construct.

Moral Emotions

The factor loading of 0.628 suggests a strong correlation between the observed indicators and the latent construct of Moral Emotions. The AVE of 0.517 implies that approximately 51.7% variance of the indicators is captured by the latent construct. The CR value of 0.837 exceeds the recommended threshold which indicates strong internal consistency and reliability for the measures of Moral Emotions. These findings collectively indicate good convergent validity for the Moral Emotions construct.

Perceived Authenticity

The factor loading of 0.693 suggests a strong correlation between the observed indicators and the latent construct of Perceived Authenticity. The AVE of 0.593 indicates that approximately 59.3% variance of the indicators is captured by the latent construct. The CR of 0.877 surpasses the recommended threshold, signifying high internal consistency and reliability for the measures of Perceived Authenticity. These results collectively indicate good convergent validity for the Perceived Authenticity construct.

Consumer Trust

The factor loading of 0.558 suggests a considerable correlation between the observed indicators and the latent construct of Consumer Trust. The AVE of 0.537 implies that approximately 53.7% variance of the indicators is captured by the latent construct. The CR of 0.851 exceeds the recommended threshold, indicating strong internal consistency and reliability for the measures of Consumer Trust. These findings collectively indicate good convergent validity for /the Consumer Trust construct. In summary, the results demonstrate that each construct exhibits strong convergent validity, with high factor loadings, adequate AVE values, and CR values surpassing the recommended thresholds. This implies that the indicators within each construct reliably measure their respective latent constructs, supporting the validity of the measurement model.

Discriminant Validity

Factors	Cultural_Factors	Moral_Emotions	Perceived_Authenticity	Consumer_Trust
Cultural_Factors	0.813			
Moral_Emotions	0.349	0.719		
Perceived_Authenticity	0.486	0.385	0.770	
Consumer_Trust	0.442	0.316	0.618	0.733

The table displays the estimates for quality measurement which presents AVE’s square roots on the diagonal and the correlations between the latent constructs off the diagonal.

Cultural Factors

The AVE for Cultural Factors' square root is approximately 0.812. The diagonal element indicates the correlation of Cultural Factors with itself, which is 1. The AVE’s square root is more than the correlations with other constructs.

Moral Emotions

The AVE’s square root for Moral Emotions is 0.719. The correlations with Cultural Factors (0.349) and Perceived Authenticity (0.385) are below AVE’s square root which supports discriminant validity.

Perceived Authenticity

The AVE's square root for Perceived Authenticity is approximately 0.770. The correlations with Cultural Factors (0.486) and Consumer Trust (0.618) are below AVE’s square root which supports discriminant validity.

Consumer Trust

The AVE’s square root for Consumer Trust is approximately 0.733. The correlations with Cultural Factors (0.442), Moral Emotions (0.316), and Perceived Authenticity (0.618) are less than the AVE’s square root which supports the discriminant validity.

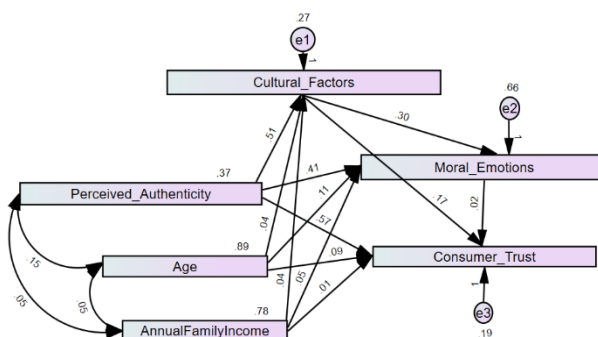
The results demonstrate excellent discriminant validity and indicates that each latent construct is distinct from the other, which demonstrates the validity of the measurement model.

Results

Measure	Model fit	Threshold
CMIN/DF	2.736	< 3 great; < 5 acceptable
CFI	0.937	> .90 good; > .95 great
SRMR	0.0538	< .08
RMSEA	0.065	< .08

CMIN/DF value is 2.736, falling below the threshold of 3 which indicates a great fit. According to conventional standards, a CMIN/DF ratio below 3 is considered great, and below 5 is deemed acceptable. In this case, the model demonstrates a strong fit to the data. The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) is 0.937, surpassing the level of 0.90, which indicates a good fit to the data. Generally, a CFI of more than 0.90 is reflected as good, and a value more than 0.95 is reflected as great. The obtained CFI suggests a satisfactory fit for the model. The SRMR value is 0.0538, which is below the threshold of 0.08. A SRMR below 0.08 is considered acceptable, indicating a good fit. The obtained SRMR suggests that the model adequately reproduces the observed covariance matrix. The RMSEA value is 0.065, slightly exceeding the conventional threshold of 0.08. While RMSEA values below 0.08 are generally considered acceptable, the obtained value suggests a reasonably good fit to the data. However, caution should be exercised in the interpretation, and additional consideration of other fit indices is recommended. To Summarize, the overall model fit is considered good established on the CMIN/DF, CFI, SRMR and RMSEA values. The cfa model established a satisfactory fit for the data supporting with established thresholds for goodness of fit.

Structural Equation Model Output



The results of the Path Analysis provide valuable insights. Investigating the mediating role of cultural factors on customer trust, the research aims to craft tailored marketing strategies supporting with the distinctive values of Indian communities. The findings reveal a significant mediating factor of cultural factors on the relationship among perceived authenticity and customer trust ($\beta = 0.549, p < 0.001$). This emphasizes that cultural factors not only directly impact customer trust but also serve as a crucial mediator in the association between perceived authenticity and trust. Furthermore, the study examines the mediating effect perspective of moral emotions on customer trust, unveiling an indirect effect ($p < 0.001$). This highlights that moral

emotions exert influence not only directly on customer trust but also indirectly through their impact on cultural factors. The combination of multiple mediating paths highlights the complexity of the dynamics at play which highlights the interdependence of perceived authenticity, moral emotions, cultural factors and customer trust. These findings provide essential guidance for marketers, emphasizing the need for a holistic approach that considers the mediating effects of cultural factors and moral emotions to effectively shape customer trust from CrM perspective. (Kaur, A. et al., 2016)

Type of Effect	Effect	Standardized Weight (Upper Bound / Lower Bound)	P Value
Direct Effect	Perceived Authenticity → Customer Trust	0.549	0.001
Direct Effect	Moral Emotions → Customer Trust	0.092	0.001
Mediating Effect	Cultural Factors mediating Perceived Authenticity → Customer Trust	(0.576 / 0.427)	0.001
Mediating Effect	Cultural Factors mediating Moral Emotions → Customer Trust	(0.305 / 0.093)	0.001

4. Findings

Frequency analysis was conducted on key demographic variables to gain insight into the characteristics of the participants. The sample consisted of 406 individuals, with a balanced distribution of gender. 75.4% respondents were married. The age distribution revealed a diverse group of participants, with 47.5% falling in the 49-58 age range, making it the most represented category. The level of education of the participants varied, with 56.9% having a post-graduate degree, 24.6% having completed high school or obtained a diploma and 18.5% being graduates. (Chakraborty, P. et al., 2019)

The majority of participants (49.0%) reported an income between 6,00,001 and 8,00,000, followed by 23.4% in the 4,00,001 - 6,00,000 range. Only a small percentage reported income below 2,00,000 (0.7%), highlighting the overall diversity in the economic background of the participants. These findings provided a comprehensive understanding of the participant profile which lays the foundation for an in-depth analysis of cause-related marketing perceptions and behaviors within different demographic segments. (Jain, S. et al., 2017)

Managerial Implications

Marketers should prioritize cultural sensitivity in designing cause-related marketing (CRM) campaigns in India. Understanding and aligning with the diverse cultural landscape is crucial for campaign success.

The study highlights the significance of perceived authenticity in building customer trust. Businesses should focus on transparent and genuine CSR initiatives to enhance customer perceptions and trust.

Recognizing the impact of moral emotions, especially empathy, guilt, and pride, businesses should craft campaigns that evoke positive emotional responses. Emotional connections can contribute to building trust and positive customer reactions.

The demographic analysis reveals diverse characteristics within the target audience. Implementing a segmented approach tailored to different demographic groups can enhance the effectiveness of CRM strategies.

Acknowledging the mediating role of cultural factors, marketers should delve deeper into understanding local values and preferences. Tailoring campaigns to align with cultural nuances can amplify the impact on customer trust.

The study underscores the need for a holistic approach that considers both perceived authenticity and moral emotions. Integrating these elements into campaign design can lead to more comprehensive and impactful CRM initiatives.

To resonate with Indian communities, businesses should adopt localized marketing strategies that align with the unique moral and cultural context. This approach ensures relevance and engagement with the target audience.

Building on the findings, businesses can leverage CRM initiatives to enhance their corporate image. Positive consumer reactions to ethically driven campaigns contribute to a favorable brand perception.

The study emphasizes the complexity of consumer behavior in the Indian market. Marketers should focus on continuous engagement, seeking feedback, and adapting strategies to evolving consumer preferences and cultural shifts.

Recognizing the limitations of quantitative data, businesses are encouraged to supplement their understanding with qualitative insights. Incorporating interviews or focus group discussions can provide deeper insights into consumer perceptions and inform strategy refinement.

5. Discussion and Conclusions

The study's findings highlight the complex dynamics involved in CrM initiatives in cultural perspective of India. The significant mediating role of cultural factors emphasizes that the success of CRM campaigns hinges on a thorough understanding of the diverse cultural landscape. Marketers must not only consider perceived authenticity but also tailor their strategies to align with cultural nuances, highlighting the importance of cultural sensitivity in campaign design. Additionally, the mediating effect of moral emotions highlights the need for campaigns to evoke positive emotional responses, recognizing their impact not only on direct customer trust but also through their interaction with cultural factors. The study's demographic analysis further accentuates the complexity, showcasing the diverse characteristics within the target audience and advocating for a segmented approach to effectively engage different demographic groups. (Kumar, A. et al., 2015)

In conclusion, this research offers crucial insights for marketers navigating CRM in India. By recognizing the mediating effects of cultural factors and moral emotions, businesses can enhance the effectiveness of their campaigns. The study's

emphasis on cultural sensitivity, coupled with an understanding of the interplay between moral emotions and trust, provides actionable guidance for crafting CRM strategies that resonate with the diverse Indian consumer base. (Majumdar, R. et al., 2014)

6. Limitations and Future Scope of Study

While the study presents valuable understandings into the interconnected dynamics of cultural factors, moral emotions and the customer trust with reference to cause-related marketing within the Indian context, certain limitations should be acknowledged. The study is largely based on quantitative data which limits the extent of understanding that qualitative approaches could provide. Additionally, the research focuses on a specific demographic, and a larger sample of diverse regions and socioeconomic backgrounds could provide a more comprehensive perspective. Future research could explore the qualitative aspects of consumer perceptions, incorporating interviews or focus group discussions. (Nair, P. et al., 2013)

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