



**UNIVERSITY OF TM
KWAZULU-NATAL**

**INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI**

**Importance of cause-related marketing on consumer behaviour and brand
consciousness: A University of KwaZulu-Natal student perspective**

By

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Master of Commerce Marketing Management**

School of Management, Information Technology and Governance

Discipline of Marketing and Supply Chain Management

College of Law and Management Studies

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DECLARATION

I, **Chandini Padayachee**, declare that

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Lastly, I would like to thank all of the University of KwaZulu-Natal students who took their time to participate in this study.

ABSTRACT

The study focuses on the impact of cause-related marketing (CRM) on consumer behaviour and brand consciousness from a UKZN student perspective. The study aims to uncover the effect of CRM on consumer attitudes towards brands, as well as whether or not CRM influences purchase decisions. Additionally, the study aims to determine whether or not CRM enhances the image of brands, creates brand awareness and encourages brand trial. Furthermore, the study aims to uncover whether or not consumers would consider switching to a brand that is affiliated to a CRM initiative, given price and quality were inconsequential to their purchase decisions. The study also aims to uncover the effectiveness of CRM in building and maintaining brand loyalty, as well as the influence of brand communication on social media on purchase decisions. Lastly, the study will determine what influence word-of-mouth (WOM) and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) have on UKZN students' purchase decisions of brands that support certain causes.

A sample of 261 students from the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Westville Campus were drawn using the convenience sampling technique. The data was collected through questionnaires, which were analysed accordingly using descriptive and inferential statistics. The results of the study show that there is a significant positive relationship between CRM on students' attitudes towards brands, the influence on their purchase decisions, their perceptions of brand image, their awareness of brands and brand trial and their brand switching behaviour. The results of the study show that CRM is effective in building brand loyalty and that social media brand communication, as well as WOM and eWOM about CRM initiatives have an influence on UKZN students' purchase decisions of brands that support causes. Recommendations from the results of the study provide insights into how marketers can adopt creative strategies that may provide companies with a competitive advantage for successfully implementing cause-related marketing initiatives.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Cause-related marketing (CRM) is described as an initiative that forms part of corporate social responsibility and can be described as an interactive corporate mechanism that makes use of innovative fundraising for charities, causes and non-profit organisations (Eastman, Smalley and Warren, 2019; Nelson and Vilela, 2017). Cause-related marketing has emerged as a popular marketing strategy, which is being used by brand managers and companies around the world due to its versatility (Bhatti, Galan-Ladero and Galera-Casquet, 2022; Corbishley and Mason, 2011; Rekha and Raman, 2021). The most common form of CRM is when a corporation takes a portion of its profits from each product that has been sold and donates it to a charitable cause (Melero and Montaner, 2016). Charities and non-profit organisations are often faced with an increased demand for their services, however, due to a lack of resources, sponsorships, as well as government support, these charities and non-profit organisations may find it difficult to help societies that are in need (Corbishley and Mason, 2011; Rekha and Raman, 2021). As a result, many causes have had to seek alternate methods, such as CRM, to obtain the much-needed support. Cause-related marketing has the advantage of promoting publicity for the cause or charity (Rekha and Raman, 2021).

Following the first recorded use of a CRM initiative by American Express in New York City in 1983, companies such as Coca-Cola and Nestlé, began using CRM as a marketing tool (Shetty, Chaudhuri and Shetty, 2021). Thereafter, CRM soon caught traction around the world, with other companies, such as Proctor and Gamble, Reckitt Benckiser and Unilever, engaging in cause-related partnerships with various non-profit organisations and charitable causes as a means of enhancing the image of brands, increasing sales, creating awareness and financial support for the causes (Chéron, Kohlbacher and Kusuma, 2012; Shetty, *et al.*, 2021). CRM partnerships are communicated to consumers through marketing campaigns, with the aim to raise awareness and funds for the non-profit organisation or cause whilst simultaneously increasing brand awareness, loyalty and sales for the company (Castillo-Villar and Cavazos-Arroyo, 2020; Chéron, *et al.*, 2012). However, there is little information available about CRM in South Africa, as the South African consumer profile is unlike those of other countries where significant research on the topic has been conducted (Corbishley and Mason, 2011; Human,

2016; Lerro, Raimondo, Stanco, Nazzaro and Marotta, 2019). Additionally, CRM has not received much attention in research, especially the impact of CRM on the buying behaviour of young consumers and university students (Mora and Vila, 2020).

The study aims to understand the importance of cause-related marketing on consumer behaviour and brand consciousness from a UKZN student perspective. The study will uncover the influence that cause-related marketing has on consumer attitudes, consumer decision-making, brand image, brand awareness, brand trial, brand switching, brand loyalty, the influence of social media posts about CRM on purchase decisions and word-of-mouth and electronic word-of-mouth about CRM on purchase decisions. The study will add to extant literature pertaining to the influence of CRM on consumer behaviour and brand consciousness from a South African university student perspective, as there is limited research on the importance of CRM on consumer behaviour and brand consciousness of South African consumers (Corbishley and Mason, 2011; Human, 2016; Lerro, *et al.*, 2019; Mora and Vila, 2020).

1.2. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The concept of cause-related marketing was first introduced to the mass market in 1983 by American Express to describe its campaign to raise money for the Statue of Liberty's restoration. American Express donated one cent to the restoration fund every time an American Express card was used. As a result, the Restoration Fund raised over \$1.7 million for the three-month duration of the cause-related campaign (Hamlin and Wilson, 2004). Additionally, the use of American Express cards increased by 27% over the duration of the campaign. (Hamlin and Wilson, 2004).

Henceforth, the use of CRM by companies has grown to become one of the most popular strategies due to its versatility and ability to increase sales and enhance brand image (Bhatti. *Et al.*, 2021; Chéron, *et al.*, 2012). Traditionally, CRM is referred to as the practice where a company promises to donate a certain number of products or amount of money to a partnered cause or non-profit organisation whenever a customer makes a purchase (Elving, 2012). Cause-related marketing has been successful due to the positive effect it has on the charities involved, consumers and the sponsors or companies (Guerreiro, Rita and Trigueiros, 2015). Cause-related marketing is found to have a positive influence on the buying decisions of consumers,

as well as improving the brand image and perceptions of companies that carry out CRM initiatives (Chéron, *et al.*, 2012; Melero and Montaner, 2016).

However, owing to the increase in the use of CRM, consumer attitudes towards the initiatives are mixed (Patel, Gadhavi and Shukla, 2016). Some consumers may question the validity of the initiatives and the company's intentions and react with scepticism and doubt, whilst others may support the causes due to post-purchase guilt (Lee and Johnson, 2019; Patel, *et al.*, 2016). Factors such as consumer scepticism, mistrust and guilt make CRM a challenging form of corporate social responsibility, as such factors can influence consumer decision-making, brand image, brand loyalty and brand switching in a negative way (Badenes-Rocha, Bigne and Ruiz, 2021; Chaabouni, Jridi and Bakini, 2022; Champlin, Sterbank, Windels and Poteet, 2019; Elving, 2012). According to Champlin, *et al.* (2019), engaging in activist advertising as a part of CRM, is considered to be challenging due to the difficulty in maintaining a balance between the social-issue messaging, marketing strategy and how consumers may perceive the campaign.

1.3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

There is limited information available regarding consumer attitudes and opinions towards CRM in South Africa (Corbishley and Mason, 2011, Human, 2016). There is also a lack of studies that were conducted on the impact of cause-related marketing on the purchase behaviour and attitudes of university students who make up a large segment of socially-conscious consumers (Corbishley and Mason, 2011; Lerro, *et al.*, 2019). According to Lerro, *et al.* (2019), consumers typically have positive attitudes towards CRM campaigns and have a high level of commitment towards supporting humanitarian charities and causes, thus making them an important target market for CRM campaigns. Therefore, the study aims to uncover the consumer behaviour and brand-consciousness of UKZN students regarding cause-related marketing initiatives, as well as result in the articulation of strategies that marketers can adopt for active engagement with university students.

1.4. CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

The study will add to the body of knowledge that is currently available on cause-related marketing and will provide insights into the buying behaviour and brand consciousness of university students which has not been widely explored (Bautista, Jeong and Pande, 2020; Corbishley and Mason, 2011; Human, 2016, Mora and Vila, 2020). The study will help

marketers understand the buying behaviour and brand consciousness of university students in relation to cause-related marketing initiatives and help uncover strategies to help marketers when it comes to actively engaging with university students.

1.5. OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The study will adopt an empirical research design which will use the quantitative approach of research. The research will be conducted at the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Westville Campus, where all registered students (both undergraduate and postgraduate) will form the population. Convenience sampling will be used in the study. Questionnaires will be used as a research instrument to collect data from participants and data collection will be carried out online. A link with the questionnaire and Letter of Informed Consent will be sent to all registered students at the UKZN Westville campus via the University Notices. Thereafter, the data will be captured using the SPSS software system and analysed using inferential and descriptive statistics.

1.6. AIM AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The study aims to identify the influence of cause-related marketing on consumer behaviour and brand consciousness from a UKZN student perspective. The objectives are as follows:

- 1.6.1. To determine if cause-related marketing has an effect on UKZN students' attitudes towards brands.
- 1.6.2. To uncover whether or not cause-related marketing influences UKZN students' decisions to purchase brands that support certain causes.
- 1.6.3. To determine whether or not cause-related marketing enhances the image of brands in the minds of UKZN students.
- 1.6.4. To determine the impact that cause-related marketing has on creating brand awareness and encouraging brand trial of brands that UKZN students are unfamiliar with.
- 1.6.5. To ascertain whether or not UKZN students will switch to a brand that is involved in cause-related marketing initiatives if price and quality is inconsequential to their purchase decisions.
- 1.6.6. To uncover UKZN students' perceptions of the effectiveness of cause-related marketing initiatives in building and maintaining brand loyalty.

- 1.6.7. To determine whether or not brand communication content on social media about cause-related marketing initiatives has influenced UKZN students' perceptions of the brand and purchase decisions.
- 1.6.8. To determine what influence word-of-mouth and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) have on UKZN students' purchase decisions of brands that support certain causes.

1.7. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Questions underpinning the study are listed below:

- 1.7.1. Does cause-related marketing have an effect on UKZN students' attitudes towards brands?
- 1.7.2. Does cause-related marketing influence UKZN students' decisions to purchase brands that support certain causes?
- 1.7.3. Does cause-related marketing enhance the image of brands in the minds of UKZN students?
- 1.7.4. What impact does cause-related marketing have on creating brand awareness and encouraging brand trial of brands that UKZN students are unfamiliar with?
- 1.7.5. Will UKZN students switch to a brand that is involved in cause-related marketing initiatives if price and quality are inconsequential to their purchase decisions?
- 1.7.6. What are UKZN students' perceptions of the effectiveness of cause-related marketing initiatives in building and maintaining brand loyalty.
- 1.7.7. Has brand communication content on social media about cause-related marketing initiatives influenced UKZN students' perceptions of the brand and purchase decisions?
- 1.7.8. What influence does word-of-mouth and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) have on UKZN students' purchase decisions of brands that support certain causes?

1.8. HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

Hypothesis 1:

There exists significant intercorrelations amongst the key dimensions (impact of CRM on students' attitudes towards brands, influence of CRM on purchase decisions, influence of CRM on brand image, impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial, impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour, effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty, impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions and influence of WOM and eWOM

on purchase decisions of brands that support causes) of the study relating to UKZN students, respectively.

Hypothesis 2:

There is a significant difference in the perceptions of UKZN students, varying in biographical profiles (gender, age, race, educational level, and college) regarding each dimension of the study (impact of CRM on students' attitudes towards brands, influence of CRM on purchase decisions, influence of CRM on brand image, impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial, impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour, effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty, impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions and influence of WOM eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes), respectively.

1.9. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Due to the study being confined only to UKZN's Westville Campus, the Collage of Humanities was excluded, as it is situated on UKZN's Howard Campus. Another limiting factor was a low response rate from students. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the strict lockdown regulations in the country meant that the University was inaccessible for the better part of the study's duration and questionnaires had to be administered electronically. The lack of data and the fact that many students have not checked the University notice boards, made it difficult to collect a large number of responses for the study. Therefore, the main limitations of the study were the time and feasibility constraints.

1.10. SUMMARY OUTLINE PER CHAPTER

Chapter One: Introduction and Overview

Chapter One provides an outline of the study. The chapter consists of the background of the study, focus of the study, the problem statement, as well as the contribution of the study. The chapter also looks at the study's research objectives, research questions, hypotheses and limitations.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Chapter Two focuses on the literature review. Emphasis is placed on the impact of CRM on consumers' attitudes towards brands, the influence of CRM on purchase decisions, the

influence of CRM on brand image, the impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial, the impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour, the effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty, the impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions and the influence of eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes. The chapter also delves into the consumer decision-making process.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

Chapter Three focuses on the research methodology of the study, such as the research approach and design, the study site, target population, sample method and sample size. The chapter also introduces the data collection method and data quality control, thereafter, exploring a description of data analysis and ethical considerations.

Chapter Four: Presentation of Results

Chapter Four consists of the presentations of results, which includes the findings and interpretations of data collected in the study. Descriptive and inferential statistics are utilised in the chapter. The results are interpreted using tables and graphical descriptions such as pie charts and graphs. The chapter also provides a statistical analysis of the questionnaire.

Chapters Five: Discussion of Results

Chapter Five discusses the results of the study, in accordance with the study's research objectives and questions. The results of the study will be compared to and contrasted with that of other scholars and researchers.

Chapter Six: Conclusion and Recommendations

Chapter Six concludes the research study by providing recommendations and direction for future research. The chapter also mentions strategies that marketers can adopt to implement successful cause-related marketing campaigns aimed at university students.

1.11. CONCLUSION

Chapter One provided an overview of what the study aims to achieve, as well as a brief background into cause-related marketing and the motivation for the study. The chapter also discussed the research objectives, research questions, hypotheses, the limitations of the study

and lastly, an outline of each of the chapters to follow. Chapter Two will focus on the literature review of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. INTRODUCTION

Increased competition and easily swayed consumer attitudes have resulted in companies finding it difficult to succeed in the business environment with well-priced and good quality products and services (Shree, Gupta and Sagar, 2017). Such increases in competition and fluctuating consumer attitudes have resulted in marketing practitioners looking for innovative initiatives to differentiate themselves from competitors and to create long-term engagement with consumers (Badenes-Rocha, Bigne and Ruiz, 2021; Chéron, Kohlbacher and Kusuma, 2012; Melero and Montaner, 2016). One such initiative is when a company partners with a cause, charity or non-profit organisation, known as cause-related marketing (Badenes-Rocha, *et al.*, 2021; Zhang, Jiang, Sun, Gu and Jiang, 2020). Cause-related marketing (CRM) can be described as a marketing strategy that consists of a donation or contribution which is made to a cause, charity or non-profit organisation through the purchase of a product or service by a consumer (Badenes-Rocha, *et al.*, 2021; Nelson and Vilela, 2017).

Charities and non-profit organisations provide a wide range of crucial services to many individuals or causes who depend on their help. However, a great majority of the public do not support or help in providing aid to such organisations, despite many reaping the benefits from these organisations (Paulin, Ferguson, Jost and Fallu, 2013). Unfortunately, many of these organisations may be faced with a plethora of problems, such as increased competition for essential resources and a lack of support from the government. In a bid to obtain these scarce resources, these organisations have to identify and work closely with as many supporters as possible, most of which are companies and brands (Gorczyca and Hartman, 2017; Paulin, *et al.*, 2013).

Since the first recorded use of a CRM strategy in 1983 by American Express, CRM has evolved into a popular marketing tool used by brand managers and companies across the world (Corbishley and Mason, 2011; Shree, *et al.*, 2017). Many companies, such as Proctor and Gamble, Coca-Cola and Nestlé, are growing increasingly conscious of the responsibilities that companies have towards society and the environment. Due to the higher level of consciousness gained by companies, the development of ethically orientated business strategies that are aimed

at aiding causes, non-profit organisations and charities who require assistance has increased (Shetty, Chaudhurr and Shetty, 2021; Ladero, Casquet and Singh, 2015). The most common form of such strategies, is when a company, through one of its brands, partners with a cause and takes a small percentage of its profits from each sale and donates it to the partnered cause (Melero and Montaner, 2016; Zhang, *et al.*, 2020). The partnership between a company and cause, charity or non-profit organisation is then communicated to consumers through various marketing campaigns, increasing awareness and raising funds for the cause, whilst simultaneously increasing awareness, brand loyalty and sales, as well as promoting the brands' offerings (Chéron, *et al.*, 2012; Thomas, 2021).

Given the relevance of CRM as a marketing strategy in the twenty-first century, it is important to explore the many factors (consumer scepticism, donation size, choice of cause, brand-cause fit, brand image, brand awareness, brand trial, brand switching behaviour, brand loyalty, word of mouth and electronic word of mouth) that impact the success of CRM campaigns and subsequently consumer purchase decisions. Chapter Two aims to understand the impact of CRM on consumer behaviour, particularly that of young consumers, such as university students. The study will look into consumer attitudes, consumer decision-making, the influence that social media has on purchase decisions, as well as the influence of word-of-mouth and electronic word-of-mouth on purchase decisions. The study also aims to understand the impact of CRM on brand consciousness and will explore the dimensions of brand image, brand awareness, brand switching and brand loyalty.

2.2. BACKGROUND OF CAUSE-RELATED MARKETING

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has evolved over the years and gained momentum due to a rapidly changing environment, with company performance being judged by the impact that has been made on the environment and society, as well as the CSR initiatives that have been carried out (Bhatti, Galan-Ladero and Galera-Casquet, 2021; Sheikh and Beise-Zee, 2011). The European Commission (2011) defines CSR as the responsibility that corporations have towards the environment and society. CSR includes a wide range of activities that can be carried out by companies, such as environmental protection, community outreach programmes or the development of art and education (Rekha and Raman, 2021; Sheikh and Beise-Zee, 2011). One of the ways in which CSR can be implemented is through cause-related marketing (CRM), where a company aligns its beliefs to a cause and then communicates a partnership with the

cause or charity to consumers through in-store campaigns and through digital platforms or traditional media (Kim and Johnson, 2013; Rekha and Raman, 2021; Shetty, Chaudhuri and Shetty, 2021; Shiekh and Beise-Zee, 2011; Thomas, 2021).

2.2.1. Definition of cause-related marketing

Varadarajan and Menon (1988:60) define cause-related marketing as the “process of formulating and implementing activities that are characterized by an offer from the firm to contribute a specified amount to a designated cause when customers engage in revenue-providing exchanges that satisfy organisational and individual objectives”. Essentially, in their definition, CRM is limited to specific partnerships between a company and cause, where each transaction that a consumer makes results in a donation to the cause.

Nelson and Vilela (2017:02), on the other hand, describe CRM as a “type of corporate social responsibility initiative, fundraising innovation and interactive corporate mechanism”. Similarly, Eastman, *et al.* (2019) state that CRM is considered to be a part of corporate social responsibility. Another study by Christofi, Leonidou, Vrontis, Kitchen and Papasolomou (2015) defines CRM as a marketing practice that merges fundraising for charities and non-profit organisations, organisational charity and corporate social responsibility for the purpose of increasing the profitability of a business. An example of a CRM campaign is when Procter and Gamble partnered its brand, Pampers, with UNICEF to donate one vaccine against tetanus for each pack of Pampers sold to help protect mothers and their babies around the world (Christopher, 2016). The initiative, which has been in existence since 2006, not only increased brand awareness for Pampers but has funded over 300 million vaccines which protected newborn babies from Maternal and Neonatal Tetanus (Pampers, 2020; PR Newswire, 2021).

Belch and Belch (2015) describe cause-related marketing (CRM) as an image-building marketing strategy that is used by companies, whereby a company creates a link or partnership between its brands and a cause, charity or non-profit organisation. The company or one of its selected brands acts as a sponsor to the partnered cause, making a promise to donate a certain percentage of profits on a sale for every transaction made by a customer, or by donating their products or services to the cause, charity or non-profit organization that the company is partnered with (Badenes-Rocha, *et al.*, 2021; Elving, 2012). Due to the ever-growing concern consumers show towards social and environmental affairs, many companies, such as Procter

and Gamble, Coca-Cola and Nestlé, are now associating themselves with causes and charitable organisations in order to gain the favour of consumers (Chang and Cheng, 2014; Thomas, 2021). By associating with causes, charities and non-profit organisations, companies can reflect their values, which can positively influence the company's brand image and awareness (Chang and Cheng, 2014; Thomas, 2021). Another example of a successful CRM initiative is the partnership between coffee franchise Starbucks and the Global Fund to fight AIDS. Every December, Starbucks donated 10 cents for every beverage sold in-store to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS in Africa, supporting many local communities involved in the harvesting of coffee beans (Starbucks Stories, 2020). The initiative has garnered over \$16 million in donations since the start of the campaign, almost ten years ago (Starbucks Stories, 2020). The donations are also being used to support the Global Fund's Covid-19 Response, since the start of the pandemic in 2020 (Starbucks Stories, 2020).

Kim and Johnson (2013) suggest that CRM is also a more consumer-centered strategy and describe CRM as a marketing activity that offers consumers the chance to make purchase decisions for reasons other than their own personal benefit. Likewise, the study by Lerro, Raimondo, Stanco, Nazzaro and Marotta (2019) describes CRM as a campaign that meets both the duties of consumers and companies and allows for the participation of both these parties for a good cause. Companies have to implement these initiatives of a social and ethical nature, while consumers have to purchase goods or services that are associated with the cause or initiative (Lerro, *et al.*, 2019). An example of such a partnership is one between Coca-Cola and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF). Coca-Cola partnered with WWF in 2013 to raise funds for conservation research and the prevention of the polar ice caps melting. The partnership was created in an effort to save the polar bears, which are Coca-Cola's unofficial mascot (WWF, 2016). When purchasing a can of Coca-Cola, consumers were encouraged to text the barcode at a cost of \$1, as a donation towards the WWF. The initiative, called *The Artic Home* campaign, had raised over \$2 million in its first year and up until the end of the campaign in 2016, managed to raise around \$10 million (WWF, 2016). In 2021, Coca-Cola renewed its partnership with WWF in an effort to reduce the environmental impact of Coca-Cola's supply chain and aid communities around the world in building resilience to climate change and water scarcity (WWF, 2022; The Coca-Cola Company, 2021).

By examining the various definitions of CRM, one can conclude that, essentially, CRM is a form of corporate social responsibility. A company, through one of its brands, partners with a

specific cause, charity or non-profit organisation for a certain period and each transaction made by a consumer with the brand results in a donation to the partnered cause, charity or non-profit organisation.

2.2.2. Origin of cause-related marketing

Today, CRM has evolved into a notable philanthropic trend used by marketers and brands around the world. The first official recorded use of CRM by a company dates to 1983, when American Express (AMEX) partnered with the Statue of Liberty Restoration Project in New York City, which led to a \$1.7 million contribution towards the restoration of the Statue of Liberty (Rekha and Raman, 2021; Shree, *et al.*, 2017). The campaign ran for three months and was initially created in an attempt to increase the number of credit card swipes made by American Express customers, by offering to contribute one penny for every transaction made and \$1 for every new card issued (Hamlin and Wilson, 2004; Rekha and Raman, 2021; Shree, *et al.*, 2017). The success of the initiative was due to the fact that the partnership resulted in a 27% increase in credit card usage in those three months and a 45% rise in new applications for credit cards with American Express (Shetty, *et al.*, 2021; Shree, *et al.*, 2017).

Since the success of the American Express campaign, CRM has become an important strategy for companies to increase sales, as well as enhance brand image (Chéron, *et al.*, 2012; Shree *et al.*, 2017). According to Shetty, *et al.* (2021), after the success of the American Express CRM campaign, many companies in the West had adopted CRM as a marketing tool to create brand awareness and consumer loyalty. Chang and Liu (2012:365) state that across many countries CRM has been recognised as a promising tool to build brand awareness, as many brands involved in CRM initiatives are considered to be “generous and altruistic”. However, many studies also state that consumer attitudes towards CRM vary, as some consumers may question the validity of such initiatives and be sceptical towards CRM initiatives, as consumers will question the motives behind the company’s intentions, whilst others only support these initiatives due to guilt and word-of-mouth (Badenes-Rocha, *et al.*, 2021; Elving, 2012; Patel, Gadhavi and Shukla, 2016; Rekha and Raman, 2021). Nonetheless, throughout many studies, CRM was found to have a positive effect on consumer purchasing decisions, as well as positively influencing brand image, brand awareness, brand loyalty and the consumer’s perception of the brand (Badenes-Rocha, *et al.*, 2021; Chéron, *et al.*, 2012; Eastman, Smalley and Warren, 2019; Lerro, *et al.*, 2019).

2.2.3. Cause-related marketing and university students

Nowadays, many consumers expect companies to be good corporate citizens and make contributions towards society through causes, charities and non-profit organisations (Terblanche, Boshoff and Human-Van Eck, 2022). University students, who can be referred to as younger consumers, are found to willingly choose brands that show support towards charities and non-profit organisations, as these age groups have a high level of commitment towards various environmental and humanitarian causes (Lerro, *et al.*, 2019). Due to their high level of commitment towards worthy causes, university students should be considered as a crucial target for CRM campaigns (Lerro, *et al.*, 2019; Robinson, Irmak and Jayachandran, 2012).

According to Brzezicki (2022), university students are considered to be tech-savvy, yet discerning consumers who are always researching brands and products. These young consumers prefer brands that are authentic, transparent, inclusive and expect brands to show support for important causes. University students are also avid users of social media, maintaining their personal relationships through platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter (Leggett, 2022). Due to their high usage of social media, these younger consumers are more likely to engage with a brand's online content through likes, shares, comments and reposts (Leggett, 2022).

As stated by Bautista, Jeong and Pandey (2020), Eastman, *et al.* (2019), Fromm (2021) and Hensley, *et al.* (2019), companies need to be display care towards worthy causes, especially if the causes relate to poverty, climate change, the environment or LGBTQ+ rights, in a transparent and upfront manner. Young consumers, such as university students, are regarded as discerning and resourceful and are eager to share information about brands on social media with others (Fromm, 2021). University students are considered to be the most important segment for companies to target with CRM campaigns (Brzezicki, 2022). It is imperative that marketers gain more understanding about university students as consumers, so that companies can better understand the motivations and responses that these young consumers will have towards CRM strategies (Castillo-Villar and Cavazos-Arroyo, 2020).

2.3. ADVANTAGES OF CAUSE-RELATED MARKETING

CRM may be seen as an advantageous situation for both the cause and company, as the cause will receive a well-needed income while the company may experience an increase in sales (Anghel, Grigore and Roşca, 2011). CRM is also helpful to consumers as it aids them in making a purchase decision that will benefit themselves, as well as the cause and society (Chang and Cheng, 2014). These advantages for both companies and causes are explored below.

2.3.1. Advantages for causes, charities and non-profit organisations

Apart from benefitting companies, CRM may be advantageous to causes as it allows causes and charities to increase their donation budget, thus helping more people (Guerreiro, *et al.*, 2015). Some of the advantages available to causes are increased financial resources, increased awareness and publicity, more opportunities for the cause and a decrease in consumer scepticism, which is explained in more detail in the subsequent sections.

2.3.1.1. Increased financial resources

The main benefit for causes may be the influx of physical and financial resources that these causes might acquire through the partnership (Silva, Duarte, Machado and Martins, 2019). By partnering with a company or brand, causes and charities often have more resources at their disposal, in the form of grants and donations, thereby, allowing them to provide their services to more of those who need it (Waters and MacDonald, 2018). In addition, the cause may also collect extra funding from other sources through the publicity that the cause may receive from the partnership with the brand (Fritz, 2021).

2.3.1.2. Increased awareness and publicity

Causes may also reap similar benefits as the company or brand, such as a better image, increased public awareness and positive publicity (Silva, *et al.*, 2019). The cause can gain free publicity through the marketing campaigns that may be carried out by the company during the course of the partnership for the CRM campaign (Fritz, 2021). According to Eikenberry (2013), a partnership with a company can increase the public awareness and the image of the cause, which in turn can create more opportunities for the cause or charity and increase public confidence.

2.3.1.3. Creates more opportunities

The additional benefits of increased public awareness and publicity can lead to an increase in volunteers which may enable the charity to do more for the cause they are supporting (Eikenberry, 2013; Silva, *et al.* 2019). Furthermore, the brand or company may be willing to assist the non-profit organisation regarding its managerial efforts which will enable the non-profit to manage their daily affairs in a more professional way, opening the doors for better future opportunities (Silva, *et al.*, 2019).

2.3.1.4. Decreased consumer scepticism

According to Eikenberry (2013), by partnering with brands for CRM initiatives, charities and causes can become more legitimate in the eyes of consumers, thus reducing scepticism and increasing consumers' support.

2.3.2. Advantages for companies and brands

The study by Elving (2012) states that one of the main reasons why companies partake in CRM initiatives is to make as much profit off their partnership with the cause whilst simultaneously improving the brands image through helping society and the environment. Galan-Ladero, Galera-Casquet and Wymer (2013) also state that companies make use of CRM initiatives to influence consumer attitudes, as well as their purchase decisions by playing on their post-purchase guilt. Throughout various literature (Bae, 2016; Belch and Belch, 2015; Berryman, 2018; Bigné-Alcañiz, Currás-Pérez, Ruiz-Mafé and Sanz-Blas, 2012; Chang, Chen, Chu, Kung and Huang, 2018; Galan-Ladero, *et al.*, 2013; Guerreiro, Rita and Trigueiros, 2015; Hemat and Yuksel, 2014; Kim and Johnson, 2013; Lerro, *et al.*, 2019; Schiffman and Wisenblit, 2015; Seberi and Karsalari, 2014; Silva, *et al.*, 2019; Vanhamme, Lindgreen, Reast and van Popering, 2012) it can be seen that carrying out CRM initiatives can prove to be very advantageous for brands and companies and the key advantages are discussed below.

2.3.2.1. Improves brand image

A successful CRM campaign has the power to drastically improve the image of a brand in the eyes of the consumer as well as the general public as it can increase credibility and give consumers the impression that the brand, through its company, is a good corporate citizen (Schiffman and Wisenblit, 2015). By aligning themselves with a worthy cause, brands can gain positive publicity and media attention and consumers tend to have a positive reaction towards

CRM initiatives which results in an overall growth in brand image (Bigné-Alcañiz, *et al.*, 2012; Rekha and Raman, 2021). Additionally, a good brand image can increase a company's market value (Schiffman and Wisenblit, 2015).

2.3.2.2. Increases brand loyalty

By partnering with causes, companies may improve customers' brand loyalty. Customers may feel moved by the positive contributions the brand is making, leading to the customer forming a strong bond with the brand if they share similar values (Bigné-Alcañiz *et al.* 2012; Vanhamme, *et al.*, 2012). Customers were found to have a higher level of satisfaction after purchasing a brand aligned with a CRM initiative, which resulted in customers displaying brand loyalty behaviours such as referrals and positive word-of-mouth (Galan-Ladero, *et al.*, 2013).

2.3.2.3. Increases brand awareness

Companies that are aligned with a cause or charity may garner attention through the partnership, allowing the brand to reach new, niche markets. Thus, CRM initiatives aid companies by increasing brand awareness and improve consumers' attitudes towards the brand (Bigné-Alcañiz *et al.*, 2012). Some consumers may have an emotional connection to a certain cause and through a CRM partnership, such consumers may pay more attention and support the brand involved (Belch and Belch, 2015).

2.3.2.4. Provides a competitive advantage

Carrying out a CRM initiative allows a company or brand to differentiate itself from competitors and provide a competitive advantage (Belch and Belch, 2015). CRM helps brands break through advertising clutter, allowing the brand to stand out against competitors with similar products and services (Silva, *et al.*, 2019).

2.3.2.5. Improves employee morale and recruitment

Employees may feel proud to work for a company that cares about society, the environment and its consumers which can lead to better employee retention rates, boost employee morale and result in more people wanting to work for the company (Chang, *et al.*, 2018; Lerro, *et al.*, 2019). According to a study by Lerro, *et al.* (2019), employees generally prefer working for companies that are involved in CRM initiatives. Melero and Montaner (2016) state that 70% of employees would prefer if the company they work for partnered with a worthy cause.

According to Silva, *et al.* (2019), CRM can also help to increase employee loyalty and commitment.

2.3.2.6. Increases sales

Guerreiro, *et al.* (2015) state that companies that partner with causes improve their corporate image and the long-term relationship they have with their consumers which increases the probability of cause-related products being purchased. As a result of the CRM partnership, companies experience an increase in sales and ultimately the company's profits, due to the brands alignment with an admirable cause (Berryman, 2018). Consumers are more willing to make purchases if they feel they are doing good by supporting a cause (Hemat and Yuksel, 2014). Consumers may also switch to the brand partnered with the cause, resulting in the brand reaching new target markets which in turn will increase sales (Hemat and Yuksel, 2014; Vanhamme, *et al.*, 2012).

2.3.2.7. Inexpensive to carry out

Costs can vary depending on the scale of the campaign, but primary types of CRM campaigns are generally inexpensive, especially if carried out by smaller businesses and brands (Bae, 2016). Consumers may be more than happy to purchase from the brand if they are supporting a worthwhile cause at the same time, resulting in the company not having to spend outrageous amounts on marketing and promotions (Bae, 2016).

Other noted benefits include better access to niche markets, increased purchase motivation by consumers, increased trial purchases, repeat purchases, increased employee loyalty and decreased sensitivity to price (Kim and Johnson, 2013; Seberi and Karsalari, 2014).

2.3.3. Advantages for consumers

CRM may also provide significant advantages to consumers. One such advantage is that consumers may receive a sense of value from their purchase and feel as if they are contributing some good to society to atone for their post-purchase guilt, especially if the purchase was of a hedonic (luxurious) nature (Silva, *et al.*, 2019). Consumers may also feel a sense of pride, as if they were able to help the less fortunate or those in need regularly, in a more convenient way, whilst satisfying their own needs (Eikenberry, 2013).

2.4. EFFECTIVENESS OF CAUSE-RELATED MARKETING INITIATIVES

The effectiveness of CRM initiatives is likely to depend on the type of product being partnered with a cause during the CRM campaign. According to Melero and Montaner (2016) the success of a CRM campaign is greater when the strategy is carried out with more hedonic products, which are more luxurious in nature, rather than those that are deemed practical and more utilitarian. Hedonic products are products that are not necessarily needed, but wanted, such as concert tickets, chocolate or ice cream and are usually linked to experimental consumption. Utilitarian products are more functional and practical and are used often, such as toothpaste or soap (Silva, *et al.*, 2019; Ye, *et al.*, 2021). Chang and Liu (2012) explain that the use of hedonic products is usually related to indulgence, desire, enjoyment and fun, compared to utilitarian products which are mainly used to satisfy practical needs. It can be concluded that hedonic products are determined by how much of pleasure a consumer gets from using them, while utilitarian products are determined by how functional they are.

Similar to the study by Chang and Liu (2012), research by Melero and Montaner (2016) found that CRM may be more effective when the products being offered by the company are perceived as hedonic, compared to those that are utilitarian. If a company links a CRM campaign to a hedonic product, the campaign may receive more attention and have a greater chance for success, as consumers may be overcome with guilt, as the products they are purchasing are more frivolous and luxurious and consumption is more pleasure-orientated (Baghi and Antonetti, 2017; Chang and Cheng, 2014; Chang and Liu, 2012; Melero and Montaner, 2016). Younger consumers, such as university students, were found to support CRM initiatives due to their high levels of self-awareness, which lead to feelings of guilt when they purchased expensive or luxurious products (Conlin and Bauer, 2022). Practical products were found to generate a lower emotional response from consumers, as the decisions to purchase utilitarian products resulted in less post-purchase guilt (Baghi and Antonetti, 2017; Melero and Montaner, 2016).

Melero and Montaner (2016) found that CRM initiatives that are linked to hedonic products actually led to greater purchase intentions from respondents. Consumers may be more aware of the need to support causes partnered with CRM initiatives when they purchase hedonic products, as the consumption of these products are usually cognitively driven, rational and goal orientated, which can increase purchase intentions (Melero and Montaner, 2016). However,

the study by Ye, *et al.* (2021) argues that when it comes to buy-one-give-one CRM offers, where for each product that is bought one product is donated, consumers would rather purchase a CRM product that is utilitarian in nature. These consumers believe that hedonic products will not meet the needs of those benefiting from the donations, as compared to more practical products such as soap, tinned foods, or toothpaste (Ye, *et al.*, 2021).

2.5. DISADVANTAGES OF CAUSE-RELATED MARKETING

Although CRM has proven to be successful for companies and brands, as well as have advantages for the charitable cause, there are still many risks that the charitable cause or non-profit organisation may face (Nelson and Vilela, 2017).

2.5.1. Disadvantages for the causes, charities and non-profit organisations

Although CRM has a vast number of benefits for causes, there may be many downfalls to a non-profit entering into a partnership with a company. A few key disadvantages are discussed in this section.

2.5.1.1. Smaller donations

There may be a possibility for donations that are made to be smaller than anticipated and the non-profit organisation may be negatively impacted if the partnered company is facing bad or negative publicity, as well as a decrease in individual donations because consumers may be under the impression that the non-profit organisation is already receiving corporate donations (Hawkins, 2012; Nelson and Vilela, 2017).

2.5.1.2. Brand cares more for its image

Non-profit organisations need to be careful as to which companies they accept a partnership with and should join into a CRM partnership with a company or brand that matches to their cause, as the non-profit organisation is more than just a way for the company or brand to improve their image (Thomas, Mullen and Fraedrich, 2011). Some companies or brands may just use the cause or charity for publicity and to improve its image, rather than to actually make a difference (Thomas, *et al.*, 2012).

2.5.1.3. Spill-over Effects

According to Chang and Liu (2012), CRM can also have spill-over effects, where the consumers' attitudes towards the brand can also affect and change their attitudes towards the cause, charity or non-profit organisation. Additionally, CRM initiatives can create another spill-over effect, such as market saturation. For example, if the partnered cause is helping people in a less developed country, the donations being made may have an impact on the local markets, as the people become reliant on the donations and choose not to purchase from local businesses (Leshner, 2018). Furthermore, another effect found by Human (2016), states that over a course of time, donations made to non-profit organisations and causes tend to decrease, especially if the CRM initiative is run over a long period of time, as consumers may feel that they have already supported the cause and find no need to carry on.

2.5.1.4. Many risks for the cause, charity or non-profit organisation

Additionally, charities with limited resources need to be careful as to not waste their resources on CRM partnerships that have a high chance of failing, as well as be careful not to over-rely on corporate donations and beware of partnering with unethical companies which can taint the image of the non-profit organisation or charity (Thomas, *et al.*, 2011).

2.5.2. Disadvantages for companies and brands

Despite having many notable advantages for brands and companies, there are many potential disadvantages that brands may face. Brands are often criticised for the reasons that their company has partnered with a cause or charity, with many consumers believing that the company has ulterior motives (Wilson, 2017). Companies should approach a CRM partnership with caution, as to avoid any negative effects on their image. A few disadvantages that companies and brands could face are:

2.5.2.1. Risk of the initiative backfiring on the brand

In some cases, CRM partnerships can have an adverse effect and backfire on the company that is carrying it out. Some companies may miss the mark or fail to recognise the point of the initiative by caring only about profits or by choosing the wrong cause to partner with (Marie, 2019). Brands can end up looking insincere and selfish which can harm their brand image and loyalty and leave a poor taste in their customers mouths (Marie, 2019).

2.5.2.2. *Ethical issues*

In some instances, CRM may do more harm than good, especially for companies, from an ethical point of view by creating problems the charity or cause may attempt to aid. For example, some products that are sold with pink ribbons on the outside in an attempt to raise awareness and funds for breast cancer may actually contain chemicals on the inside that can cause the illness in the first place (Eikenberry, 2013). In other cases, CRM initiatives may give consumers the false sense that the brand is doing good, when they can potentially be doing more harm (Eikenberry, 2013).

2.5.2.3. *Consumer scepticism*

Consumers may view CRM initiatives with suspicion and doubt, as they may question the motives that the company has for wanting to partner with a cause or charity, as it may seem as though the company is carrying out a CRM initiative to increase their sales without caring for the cause (Chaabouni, *et al.*, 2022; Melero and Montaner, 2016). Many consumers may believe that a company should not attach themselves to a cause, such as homelessness, especially since the individuals the company may be trying to help most probably cannot afford the products (Hensley, Diddi and Hyllegard, 2019). Such consumers would rather make a donation instead of purchasing the product to support the cause, due to the scepticism they feel.

Other notable disadvantages for brands could be that many consumers may support the initiative through social media by form of liking and sharing posts, but may not actually purchase products to support the cause (Livingston, 2012). Consumers may also avoid supporting the partnership as the company's prices may have increased to accommodate for a portion of the profit being donated (Livingston, 2012). There may also be misconceptions regarding the cause, with consumers believing that the cause or charity is owned by the company, resulting in them disregarding the campaign (Rekha and Raman, 2021)

2.5.3. Disadvantages for consumers

Although there is some research conducted on the advantages and disadvantages of CRM on both the company and cause, as shown above, there is little to no research conducted on the effect that CRM has on consumers. However, a study conducted by Eikenberry (2013) states that consumers may be blindsided by the need to help a cause and end up paying excessive amounts for products without knowing if the company is actually using the money the

consumer is paying to do good. Consumers may feel as though they are ‘doing good’ by contributing to those who are in need through a CRM initiative that is partnered with a deserving cause, however, they may be inadvertently contributing to the initial problem without meaning to do so (Rekha and Raman, 2021; Eikenberry, 2013). For example, clothing brand GAP partners with Product Red, a cause that aims to fight AIDS and Covid-19, but behind the scenes the brand’s clothing is produced in sweatshops in India where they exploit child labour (Eikenberry, 2009).

2.6. THE IMPACT OF CAUSE-RELATED MARKETING ON CONSUMERS’ ATTITUDES TOWARDS BRANDS

As mentioned earlier, there are various benefits for brands that engage in CRM initiatives which can, in turn, have a positive effect on consumers’ purchase intentions and more importantly, consumers’ attitudes towards the brand, which can either be positive or negative (Melero and Montaner, 2016; Terblanche, *et al.*, 2022). Schiffman and Wisenblit (2015:172) define an attitude as a “learned predisposition to behave in a consistently favourable or unfavourable way towards a given object” and in a marketing context, the “object” may refer to a service, advertisement, product or a brand. Consumer attitudes can be either positive or negative and can impact the consumer’s purchasing decision, reflecting whether the consumer has a favourable or unfavourable evaluation of the product, service, advertisement or the brand (Schiffman and Wisenblit, 2015).

Vanhamme, *et al.* (2012) found that consumers fulfill goals related to self-identification processes and feel as if they are doing good when purchasing products that are partnered with CRM initiatives. Similarly, Galan-Ladero, *et al.* (2013) state that consumers who have a positive attitude toward CRM campaigns may experience greater levels of satisfaction after they make a purchase from a brand, who’s parent company is linked to a charitable cause. These consumers may feel as if they are acting in line with core values and showing support to a worthy cause, due to the feel-good factor they experience when making a donation, all while satisfying their purchase needs (Galan-Ladero, *et al.*, 2013; Shetty, *et al.*, 2021).

Similar conclusions were drawn by Eastman, *et al.* (2019), who state that young consumers tend to have a more positive attitude towards companies that forge partnerships with charities, causes and non-profit organisations for CRM initiatives. Likewise, Lerro, *et al.* (2019) found

that young consumers, such as university students, generally have positive attitudes towards CRM campaigns as they believe in ethical consumerism. Young American consumers believe that CRM initiatives are a significant way for brands to show their support for causes and non-profit organisations (Partouche, *et al.*, 2018).

Younger consumers, were found to be more receptive to CRM campaigns and react more positively towards them, compared to those consumers that were part of older generations (Partouche, *et al.*, 2018). In a study conducted in France, it was found that young consumers were engaged in many different types of donations, by which 24% made regular donations and 67% had engaged in at least one charity initiative (Partouche, *et al.*, 2018). By using CRM initiatives, brands could impact the perceptions and attitudes of young consumers towards their companies (Eastman, *et al.*, 2019). Despite this, some research has found that although consumer attitudes and perceptions could be swayed and positively influenced by CRM, their purchase intentions could not (Eastman, *et al.*, 2019; Hyllegard, Yan, Ogle and Attmann, 2010).

Many young consumers tend to support CRM initiatives due to a higher degree of identification with the partnered cause or charity, especially if the cause relates to poverty, climate change, the environment or LGBTQ+ rights (Bautista, *et al.*, 2020; Eastman, *et al.*, 2019; Hensley, *et al.*, 2019). Paulin, *et al.* (2013) states that empathy is the experience of concern and emotional empathy is the experience of concern and emotion that one may feel for someone in distress, and may be seen as the driving force behind consumers' intentions to make donations and partake in CRM initiatives carried out by brands. According to Vanhamme, *et al.* (2012), the stronger a consumer's identification with a cause is, the more positive evaluations and attitudes they have towards the brand and the campaign. Even though many consumers may not directly relate to certain causes, for example, not all consumers are in immediate danger of becoming homeless or being diagnosed with cancer, their empathy and attitude towards a cause may vary according to their personal experiences (Paulin, *et al.*, 2013). The study carried out by Paulin, *et al.* (2013) found that when consumers have a greater empathetic identification with the charity or cause, the more positive their attitudes are towards the CRM initiative as well as the greater their support.

Young consumers, such as university students, may have a strong desire to be connected to

society and help those in need where they can, compared to older generations. One such example of the desire shown by younger consumers to help those in need is outlined by Hensley, *et al.* (2019), where the success of a CRM campaign was due mostly to the response by younger consumers. In 2015, Doritos carried out a CRM initiative where the brand partnered with a cause called the 'It Gets Better Project', that supports lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth and helps fight homelessness amongst them. Doritos released a limited-edition flavour, which included various colours of rainbow chips that were inspired by the Pride flag, and the only way consumers could obtain these chips were if they made a \$10 donation to the cause, leading to the initiative raising \$100 000 for the cause within a week. According to the study, around 1.6 million youth in the United States experience homelessness every year, leading it to be one of the causes most supported by many young consumers in the United States (Hensley, *et al.*, 2019).

Research undertaken by Hensley, *et al.* (2019) found that consumers have better responses to CRM campaigns where the company offers concrete outcomes to their initiatives, rather than those that just suggest vague, general benefits. An example of such a campaign is where shoe brand, Toms, offered to provide a pair of shoes to a child in a developing country for every pair of shoes they had sold (Eastman, *et al.*, 2019; Hensley, *et al.*, 2019).

Arguably, Eastman, *et al.* (2019) found that although the perceptions that young consumers have towards CRM companies may be favourable, it may not result in them purchasing from the company because of the cause partnership. The study states that these young consumers were more likely to make a CRM purchase if the donation made was on a one-for-one basis, such as in the case of Toms shoes which was mentioned above, where for each pair of shoes sold one pair was donated (Eastman, 2019). A similar conclusion was drawn by Ye, *et al.* (2021), who found that consumers are more likely to support a CRM initiative if it offered a buy-one-give-one offer on practical products such as soap and toothpaste.

However, as noted above, the conclusions about consumer attitudes vary and it can be seen that many CRM campaigns may not always end with consumers having positive attitudes towards the brand or company (Činjarević, Agrić and Peštek, 2018; Elving, 2012). There are various themes that can affect consumer attitudes towards CRM, such as scepticism, donation levels, choice of cause and brand-cause fit, which will be explored in detail below.

2.6.1. Consumer scepticism

Compared to other types of Corporate Social Responsibility, such as sponsorship, consumers are more likely to view CRM initiatives with suspicion (Melero and Montaner, 2016). When a brand initially communicates its CRM initiative with consumers, the brand and its parent company may be confronted with suspicion and scepticism. Such confusion and scepticism may be due to the consumer having to make a purchase from the brand first before a donation can be made. Consumer scepticism may be characterised as a consumer's tendency to doubt, question or disbelieve information that is put out by consumers (Činjurević, *et al.*, 2018). Consumers may question a company's motive for partnering with a cause or charity due to suspicion, as the partnership is linked to the company's profit-generating activities and especially if the company does not make their real motives clear at the beginning of a CRM campaign (Elving, 2012; Shetty, *et al.*, 2021).

When applied correctly, CRM can reduce the scepticism that consumers may have towards the company's motives and as a result, be positively received by consumers (Thomas, *et al.*, 2011). When consumers approve of the CRM initiative and partnership, there is reduced consumer scepticism and consumers will be less likely to associate negative motives with the company, resulting in increased brand trust (Shetty, *et al.*, 2021; Thomas, *et al.*, 2011). Young consumers were found to be more sceptical of CRM campaigns, especially in the case where the company sells expensive products such as laptops (Eastman, *et al.*, 2019). Participants in the study by Hensley, *et al.* (2019) stated that they believe that brands should not latch themselves onto a cause, such as homelessness, when the individuals the cause is trying to help may not even be able to afford the brand. These consumers felt that they rather not purchase the product and instead make a donation towards the cause.

Consumers are more inclined to believe or trust a CRM partnership if the company provides products that are in line with basic needs, such as food and water (Eastman, *et al.*, 2019). Similarly, Human and Terblanche (2012) and Ye, *et al.* (2021) found that consumers are more likely to have a positive attitude towards a CRM initiative if the company stipulates the amount being donated to the cause with each purchase that is made, which will result in consumers supporting the initiative. CRM claims are also seen as more authentic and believable if the donation size is objectively stated in the CRM offer, resulting in less scepticism (Chaabouni, *et al.*, 2020; Kim and Lee, 2009).

2.6.2. Donation size

A donation can be defined as instances when money or products are given to a person, charity or non-profit organisation to help them provide for a good cause (Oxford Dictionary, 2021). Companies may use CRM initiatives as a method to make donations to charitable causes to increase brand image and profits, without actually making too much of a loss (Vanhamme, *et al.*, 2012). Consumers may not question a brands' motive behind embracing a worthwhile cause through a partnership with a charity or nonprofit organization if the company is sacrificing a portion of what could be their potential profits (Chang and Liu, 2012; Ye, *et al.*, 2021).

Research conducted by Chang and Liu (2012) and Ye, *et al.* (2021) state that the size or amount of the donation made by a company towards the cause or charity was a persuasive factor in CRM, as consumers considered it to be a vital piece of information when making their purchasing decisions. A study by Terblanche, *et al.* (2022) found that when the company states the actual amount being donated from the sale, or a percentage-of-price expression, a more positive purchase intention was generated.

Consumer scepticism may be linked to donation levels, as consumers may mistrust the brand if the donation amount is too low (Chang and Liu, 2012). Consumers may already have reason to not trust the brand and by a brand offering a smaller, less significant donation amount, consumers may overthink and feel as if the brand is partaking in a CRM initiative for selfish reasons (Chang and Liu, 2012; Ye, *et al.*, 2021).

Contrary to the argument that donation size is an important factor in a consumer's attitude towards a CRM initiative stated by Ye, *et al.* (2021) and Chang and Liu (2012), a study undertaken by Human and Terblanche (2012) states that the size of the donation made no significant impact on whether or not young South African consumers, such as university students, supported the CRM initiative. Nevertheless, the relevant literature has mixed results regarding the aspect of donation levels, with some studies stating that younger consumers are, in fact, influenced by larger donation levels (Chang and Liu, 2012; Hyllegard, *et al.*, 2010; Terblanche *et al.*, 2022; Ye, *et al.*, 2021). Similarly, Lii, Wu and Ding (2013) found that consumers react favourably towards CRM campaigns if the company makes large donations towards the cause that they are partnered with. Other studies, on the other hand, state that CRM initiatives may have a larger impact if consumers are made aware of the amount or percentage

being donated to the cause by the company (Kim and Lee, 2009; Hyllegard, *et al.*, 2010; Terblanche, *et al.*, 2022; Thomas, 2021; Ye, *et al.*, 2021).

Eastman, *et al.* (2019) established that in terms of donation style, young consumers preferred CRM initiatives that had a specific one-for-one donation where it was specified how much would be donated, rather than a general and more traditional donation. A traditional donation would instead state that a portion of the sales would be donated to the cause, which may be seen as vague (Eastman, *et al.*, 2019). An example of a CRM initiative where consumers could choose the amount being donated is the NFL's (National Football League in America) campaign called, *My Cause, My Cleats* (O'Neill, 2020). For the NFL's initiative, teams and individual players designed footwear that raised awareness for the chosen cause while sharing a personal story that explored the players connection to the cause and the footwear was, thereafter, donated to the NFL Auction where fans were allowed to bid on these items with all proceeds being donated to the different causes and charities (O'Neill, 2020).

2.6.3. Choice of cause

CRM with choice has developed into a new type of marketing strategy, due to the increased use of CRM, whereby consumers choose the cause that they wish to donate to when making a purchase (Robinson, *et al.*, 2012). A promising way to increase consumer empowerment and the popularity of CRM campaigns is to help the consumer feel as if they are helping towards a greater good by contributing to a worthwhile cause and aiding those who are less fortunate (Kull and Heath, 2016; Terblanche, *et al.*, 2022). An example of such a strategy was outlined in Robinson, *et al.* (2012), where, whenever a customer opened a new cheque account at SunTrust Bank, the bank made a \$100 donation to a cause of the customer's choice. The study found that SunTrust Bank's form of CRM was relatively more effective, as consumers felt that they had made a better and greater contribution to the cause (Robinson, *et al.*, 2012).

Since 2013, online American store, Amazon, has donated a percentage of the price of most products that are sold on its AmazonSmile initiative, where the consumer is allowed to select the cause they want the donation to go to (Kull and Heath, 2016). Similarly, Gucci Parfums launched a CRM campaign that was previously run in the United Kingdom and Italy and later in the United States. For a limited period of time, five of the company's perfumes came with a

unique code that allowed consumers to redeem a \$5 donation to a cause of their own choice on Gucci's Chime for Change initiative (Kull and Heath, 2016).

Lerro, *et al.* (2019) found that younger consumers were shown to willingly choose brands that show support for charities and causes, as these age groups have a high level of commitment towards various environmental and humanitarian causes. Thus, younger consumers should be considered as the most crucial target market for CRM campaigns, especially those that allow the consumer to have a choice of cause (Lerro, *et al.*, 2019; Robinson, *et al.*, 2012). Knowing the recipient of the donation creates a positive attitude towards the CRM alliance and has a significant impact on purchase intention, as found in a study carried out by Terblanche, *et al.* (2022).

A 2011 study carried out by Corbishley and Mason found that South African citizens that fall within a higher income bracket were more likely to support causes that provide help to hospices, animal shelters and old age homes, whilst those consumers that belong to lower income groups tend to show more support to causes that are linked to HIV/Aids. South African women, on the other hand, show more interest towards causes that are linked to health, children and babies, while younger consumers, such as millennials, were found to prefer causes that aided homeless children and those affected by HIV/Aids (Corbishley and Mason, 2011). Champlin, Sterbenk, Windels and Poteet (2019) found that the most attention-grabbing social issues that companies and consumers choose to support relate to gender equality issues, namely topics that are related to women, as well as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ+) rights. According to Nielson (2020), 72% of consumers have considered the economic support that companies have provided during the Covid-19 pandemic when purchasing products. Companies that have supported Covid-linked causes were also positively viewed by 84% of consumers (Nielsen, 2020; Badenes-Rocha, *et al.*, 2021).

2.6.4. Brand-cause fit

A fundamental factor that adds to the overall success of a CRM campaign is the level of fit between a brand and cause and whether the partnership makes sense in the mind of the consumer (Bergkvist and Zhou, 2018; Chéron, *et al.*, 2012). Brand-cause fit can be defined as “the degree of acceptance of the pairing of the brand and the cause, from the consumer’s point-of-view” (Chéron, *et al.*, 2012:358). Furman and Maison (2020) define brand-cause fit as the

level of connection between the cause and how the brand is perceived and what product or service it provides. Yun, Duff, Vargas, Himelboim and Sundaram (2019), on the other hand, refer to brand-cause fit as the level of consistency or cohesiveness that the partnering company's brand and cause possessed, or in other words, the compatibility between the brand and the cause.

For a CRM campaign to be successful, a company should partner its brand with a cause, charity or non-profit organisation that is consistent with the brand's image, as the benefits of carrying out a CRM campaign can be achieved only if there is a complimentary fit between the cause and the brand, which is clear to the consumer (Bergkvist and Zhou, 2018; Chang and Liu, 2012). Thomas, *et al.* (2011) states that the success of a CRM campaign is impacted greatly by the level of compatibility between the brand and the cause, charity or non-profit organisation. The study's findings, similar to those by Bergkvist and Zhou, (2018), explains that simply partnering with a cause may not result in the company achieving its desired results, however, through careful consideration and selection of a charitable ally that fits the company's brand image and has high levels of compatibility, along with being committed for the long-term, the partnership can be greatly beneficial to both the company and the cause (Thomas, *et al.*, 2011).

Young consumers, such as university students, were found to be more likely to support CRM campaigns if the brand is well-known, or similarly, if the partnered cause or charity is popular and relevant (Bautista, *et al.*, 2020; Human and Terblanche, 2012). Young consumers also favour supporting companies that choose to partner with causes and charities that help with issues which need immediate attention, rather than those issues that are on-going (Eastman, *et al.*, 2019). A few other studies have discovered that consumers tend to support CRM initiatives that are partnered with causes related to health, education, poverty and the environment, as well as those initiatives that align with the company's brand image and beliefs (Bautista, *et al.*, 2020; Eastman, *et al.*, 2019; Hyllegard, *et al.*, 2010; Kotler and Keller, 2016).

However, sometimes the companies and causes that enter into a CRM partnership together may not be compatible. For example, take into consideration the partnership between the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and Royal Caribbean cruises, who partnered in a CRM initiative with the intention of bringing attention to ocean conservation efforts, even though various studies have shown that cruises are one of the leading contributors to the decline of ocean health through air and water pollution (Yun, *et al.*, 2019). Therefore, the partnership between WWF

and Royal Caribbean was seen as a low-fit between the company's brand and cause, leading to consumers rejecting the association and negative consumer attitudes towards the brand (Yun, *et al.*, 2019).

If there is a high level of brand-cause fit, the consumer gets the impression that the company cares about whichever social or environment issue it is supporting, rather than partnering with the cause for promotional and profiting reasons (Sheikh and Beise-Zee, 2011). Correspondingly, research carried out by Fazli-Salehi, Torres and Zúñiga (2019) states that consumer responses towards CRM initiatives are better when there is high level of brand-cause fit, as consumers view CRM campaigns more positively and feel as if partnership between the company and cause is more natural.

However, Furman and Maison (2020) argue that a low brand-cause fit increases consumer scepticism, which consecutively has a negative effect on the consumers' attitude towards the partnership, as well as purchase intentions. One such example is when KFC partnered with a breast cancer advocacy group in 2010, where KFC donated money towards the cause every time a customer bought fried chicken. The partnership was ridiculed, as consumers believed the pairing made no sense and was seemingly illogical as unhealthy, fried chicken did not fit a cause that was dedicated to health, one headline challenged the partnership, titled "What the cluck?" (Yun, *et al.*, 2019:997).

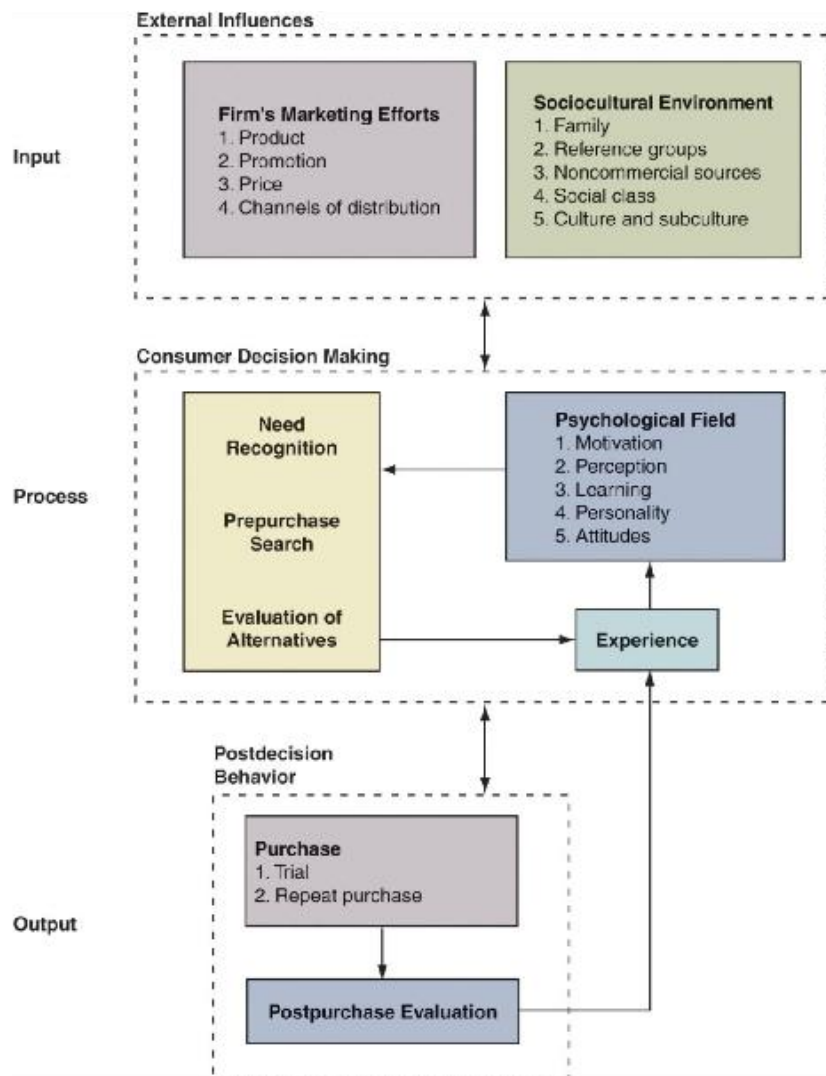
2.7. IMPORTANCE OF CAUSE-RELATED MARKETING ON CONSUMER DECISION-MAKING AND PURCHASE INTENTIONS

CRM initiatives may play a compelling role in influencing a consumer's purchasing decision, especially if the consumer has no real brand preference. Consumer decision-making can be influenced through effective communication and carefully thought-out methods (Lerro, *et al.*, 2019). Young consumers were found to be more sensitive and perceptive towards emotional types of marketing campaigns, which can impact their decision-making progress (Hyllegard, *et al.*, 2010). Contrary to this, another study found that younger consumers such as millennials and university students may not contribute to a CRM campaign and such initiatives do not affect their decision-making process (Partouche, *et al.*, 2018). With these consumers, their decision-making process is instead influenced by value, price and brand preferences (Partouche, *et al.*, 2018).

2.7.1. Consumer decision-making process

The consumer decision-making process is made up of the many steps that a consumer may go through when making a purchasing decision. The process begins at need recognition through to the pre-purchase information search, the judgement of different options, the purchase and consequently post-purchase evaluation (Hutter, Hautz, Dennhardt and Füller, 2013). The five stages of the consumer decision-making process are depicted in Figure 2.1.

FIGURE 2.1.
The Consumer Decision-Making Process



Source: Schiffman, L.G. and Wisenblit, J.L. (2015). *Consumer Behaviour 11th Edition*. Essex: Pearson.

Stage 1: Need recognition

To begin the process, as shown in Figure 2.1, the consumer is faced with a problem and realises that they need a certain product or service (Schiffman and Wisenblit, 2015). In turn, companies will recognise the need faced by the consumer and as a method of increasing brand-consciousness and swaying consumers' decision-making in favour of the brand, align the brand with a cause or charity (Rego, Hamilton and Rogers, 2020; Chang and Liu, 2012).

Stage 2: Pre-purchase search

During the second stage of the decision-making process (Figure 2.1), the consumer gathers information about the product that will cater to their existing need, either by recalling past purchases or by looking for new information (Schiffman and Wisenblit, 2015). By partnering with a cause or charity and carrying out a CRM campaign, a brand may better their image, as well as increase brand consciousness through extensive advertising campaigns, promotions and digital activations (Chang and Liu, 2012; Mobarak, *et al.*, 2022). Partnering with a cause or charity may lead to consumers developing a more favourable attitude and opinion about the brand, as well as aid consumer purchase intentions towards the brand's products and services (Patel, *et al.*, 2016).

Stage 3: Evaluation of alternatives

Once the process of collecting information is completed, consumers may move on to the stage of making comparisons between the different brands or products that they have identified, by evaluating quality, price and the brand (Figure 2.1) (Stankevich, 2017). When evaluating brands involved in CRM initiatives, consumer decisions may vary depending on the size of the donation being made by the brand towards the CRM initiative, with consumers favouring larger donation amounts (Chang and Liu, 2012; Thomas, 2021). Hemat and Yuksel (2014) found that consumers may switch to another brand if the said brand is associated with a charity, cause or non-profit organisation, given that the quality and price of the product or service they are purchasing is more or less similar to their usual brand.

Stage 4: Purchase decision

As shown in Figure 2.1, after evaluating all their alternatives and weighing their options, consumers may come to a decision about which product or service fits their needs the best and,

thereafter, make the actual purchase (Schiffman and Wisenblit, 2015). Depending on the nature of the product, consumers may or may not chose to purchase from a brand partnered with a CRM initiative.

A few studies have found that CRM initiatives are notably effective when the product or service is considered to be a luxury (Elving, 2012; Melero and Montaner, 2016; Silva, *et al.*, 2019; Ye, *et al.*, 2021). These studies have discovered that consumers may feel guilty when making an expensive purchase and by donating to a cause or charity, they may overcome these negative feelings. However, Partouche, *et al.* (2018) argues that the purchasing decisions of younger consumers may be more affected by value, quality, price and brand preferences rather than a partnership with a cause or charity.

Stage 5: Post-purchase evaluation

The final stage of the consumer decision-making process, as shown in Figure 2.1, takes place after the consumer has made his or her purchase and used the product or service, evaluating its performance in relation to what expectation he or she have had about the product or service (Schiffman and Wisenblit, 2015). By partnering with a charitable cause and carrying out a CRM initiative, companies can increase trust and loyalty which then leads to positive post-purchase evaluations, such as positive word-of-mouth and repurchases (Kang and Hustvedt, 2013).

Furthermore, when consumers make a purchase from a CRM initiative, they acquire greater value which leads to higher levels of satisfaction (Tanford, Kim and Kim, 2020). A study by Galan-Ladero, *et al.* (2013) found that consumers that have more positive attitudes towards CRM may experience greater satisfaction when making a CRM purchase which can lead to greater post-purchase satisfaction and in turn influences repurchases and positive word-of-mouth referrals.

2.7.2. Consumer purchase intentions

Lii, *et al.* (2013:20) define purchase intention as the “personal behavioural tendencies related to a focal brand”, while an intention can be described as a consumer’s intentional effort to act on a behaviour. Patel, *et al.* (2016) and Terblanche, *et al.* (2022) describe a purchase intention as the direction a consumer may take when they come across a product, to either make the

purchase or not. When consumers intend to make a purchase, they are cognitively assessing various brands that sell the product in their choice set (Lii, *et al.*, 2013). According to Shabbir, Kaufmann, Ahmad and Qureshi (2010) consumer purchase intentions may already be established well before the company decided to partake in CRM, as consumers may already be purchasing existing products from the company.

Studies by Patel, *et al.* (2015), Ye, *et al.* (2021) and Terblanche, *et al.* (2022) found that consumers may have greater purchase intentions towards companies that are involved in CRM initiatives, especially when the CRM initiative is linked to practical products. Nelson and Vilela (2017) and Ye, *et al.* (2021) agree that consumers are more inclined to have an intent to purchase products that are sold by companies involved in CRM. It is also more likely for buying behaviour to take place if there is an offering linked to CRM, as consumers believe companies that are partnered with helpful and worthwhile causes are good corporate citizens (Nelson and Vilela, 2017 and Ye, *et al.*, 2021). However, according to Saberi and Karsalari (2014), even though many consumers may be willing to accept lower-quality products or higher prices if they believe the company has good intentions, CRM is found to be more effective if consumers feel as if they are not making distinct trade-offs in exchange for making a small CRM donation.

By understanding consumer purchase intentions, companies are able to understand the market and make adjustments to their product offerings, enabling them to make better profits and attract more customers (Agmeka, Wathoni and Santoso, 2019). However, despite the extensive academic research on consumer purchase intentions and behaviour regarding CRM, there are a lack of studies that focus on CRM regarding younger consumers such as university students (Bautista, *et al.*, 2020; Corbishley and Mason, 2011). Therefore, the study aims to add to academic research by focusing on the younger generational cohort.

2.8. IMPACT OF CAUSE-RELATED MARKETING ON CONSUMERS' PERCEPTIONS OF BRAND IMAGE, BRAND AWARENESS, BRAND TRIAL, BRAND SWITCHING AND BRAND LOYALTY

Cause-related marketing may have a significant impact on the consumers' perceptions of brand image, brand awareness, brand trial, brand switching behaviour and brand loyalty, all of which will be explored in this section.

2.8.1. Brand image

Keller (2013) defines brand image as the consumers' perception about the company's brand, that is reflected by the associations and image the consumer has about the said brand in his/her mind. Wu and Wang (2014) state that if a brand has a strong image, it can live in the consumer's mind, impacting his/her purchase decisions and may help encourage future repurchases from the brand. Brand image comprises of brand associations, which are made up from the consumer's memory and perception of the brand (Anggraeni and Rachmanita, 2015). Many factors can influence brand image, such as the company, marketing mix, product attributes, the consumer's personal values, experiences and perceptions, as well as the consumer's feelings towards the brand (Anggraeni and Rachmanita, 2015). A good brand image allows the consumer to have confidence in the products or services that are offered by the company, leading to brand loyalty (Mobarak, Nassar and Barakat, 2022).

By using CRM as a strategic marketing tool, companies may alter and influence the current image that consumers have of the brand. By altering their current brand image, the company may be able to change and influence consumer purchase decisions, consumer attitudes concerning quality, in addition to loyalty (Vanhamme, *et al.*, 2012). Similarly, the study by Demetriou, Pappasolomou and Vrontis (2009) found that CRM may be a sustainable method for brands to build or enhance brand image, by engaging consumers emotionally and mentally with the brand, thus creating a positive brand image. Ice cream company Ben & Jerry's is an outstanding example of a company that is constantly involved in CRM initiatives, which has in turn led to the brand earning the loyalty of its many customers (Fromm, 2020). Many of the causes that Ben & Jerry's supports revolves around climate change and climate justice, as well as the justice system in America and fighting white supremacy and racism, garnering the support and attention from consumers in various markets (Fromm, 2020).

Studies by Bigné-Alcañiz, Currás-Pérez, Ruiz-Mafé and Sanz-Blas (2012) and Champlin, *et al.* (2019) found that consumers tended to react positively towards brands that are involved in CRM initiatives and the partnered social cause which consequently results in an overall growth in brand image. The study by Anggraeni and Rachmanita (2015) found that brand image plays an important role in a young consumer's buying behaviour. Similarly, the study by Mobarak, *et al.* (2022) found that brand image acted as a partial mediator between brand loyalty and CRM. If the consumer already has a positive image of the brand in his/her mind, the CRM

message may have a stronger influence on the consumer's purchasing decisions regarding that brand as compared to competitors (Anggraeni and Rachmanita, 2015). Kull and Heath (2016) on the other hand, state that if a brand has a negative image, carrying out a CRM campaign may have a positive effect, especially if the brand allows consumers to choose the type of cause they wish the donation to go to.

Yang, Kim and Kim (2017:86) define brand-consciousness as a "consumers' mental orientation in choosing a well-known brand-name product" and refer to brand consciousness of consumers as the belief that brand image and a strong brand name means that the company offers good quality which consumers are willing to pay a premium price for. Brand-consciousness may be linked to brand image as both play a part in how the consumer views the brand (Yang, *et al.*, 2017). Consumers that have greater brand consciousness tend to purchase brands that are more well-known and expensive as they believe brands with high levels of brand consciousness represent prestige and status and rely upon this when making purchasing decisions (Kautish, Khare and Sharma, 2020; Yang, *et al.*, 2017; Ye, Bose and Pelton, 2012).

Thus, the level of brand-consciousness may reflect how favourably consumers respond to brand names. Yang, *et al.* (2017) state that college students that are more brand conscious rely on interpersonal influences, such as family and friends, when making purchases, compared to those consumers who are not brand conscious. Nevertheless, brand-consciousness is a topic that has received little to no attention from academics, especially regarding the brand-consciousness of university-going consumers.

2.8.2. Brand awareness

When a company creates and carries out a CRM campaign, it may allow their brands to reach new market segments, or more niche markets by increasing brand awareness (Hutter, *et al.*, 2013). Keller (2013:44) defines brand awareness as "the strength of the brand node or trace in memory which we can measure as the consumer's ability to identify the brand under different conditions". Research carried out by Bigné-Alcañiz *et al.* (2012) states that CRM can assist companies by increasing brand awareness and improved attitudes towards the brand. The study also found that if a company has a low levels of brand awareness, they should partner with causes that are high-fit (Bigné-Alcañiz *et al.*, 2012). When consumers are made aware of a company's CRM initiatives, brand image is increased (Mobarak, *et al.*, 2022).

Saberi and Karsalari (2014) state that brand awareness should be considered an important factor in affecting consumer attitudes when it comes to making product purchases. A consumer's intention to purchase from a brand depends on the previous information that they gathered about the brand, allowing the consumer recall the brand among the clutter of rival brands (Keller, 2013; Saberi and Karsalari, 2014). When Pampers partnered with UNICEF for the *One Pack = One Vaccine* campaign, the power and brand name of UNICEF brought Pampers to the attention of new customers, increasing brand awareness for Pampers since the creation of the CRM initiative in 2006 (Christopher, 2016; Pampers, 2021).

Many companies are now using consistent CRM campaigns over long periods of time to change the overall attitude and opinion that consumers have about the brand, in turn leading to constant brand awareness (Saberi and Karsalari, 2014).

2.8.3. Brand trial

The first time a consumer uses or experiences a brand through either a purchase or free sample can be considered as brand trial (Bogomolova, Anesbury, Lockshin, Kapulski and Bogomolov, 2019). Brand trial is carried out when a consumer is won over by a brand they have not previously used, but made aware of through a marketing campaign, advertisement, a referral by word-of-mouth or a price promotion (Bogomolova, *et al.*, 2019). Consumers may be encouraged to try a new brand that they may have usually ignored or never heard of due to the said brand's parent company carrying out a CRM initiative (Langen, Grebitus and Hartmann, 2013).

Beauty company, *The Body Shop*, has always made a stance against animal testing and has made it a core part of its values and brand image, resulting in many consumers recognising what a socially-conscious brand it is (Dopson, 2019). The company's beliefs were outlined on social media and the campaign *#ForeverAgainstAnimalTesting* was created in order to appeal to social media influencers and celebrities, such as Maisie Williams, to share the hashtags as well as a link to ban animal testing (Dopson, 2019). Many consumers and users of beauty products are against animal testing are constantly looking to try different or new brands (Dopson, 2019). Due to the campaign increasing awareness for animal testing and *The Body Shop*, many consumers had undertaken brand trial, as the campaign was successful and

garnered a staggering eight million signatures on the petition to the United Nations (Dopson, 2019).

Customer trial of a new brand may depend on the new products perceived advantages (Shree, *et al.*, 2017). CRM can give a new brand a platform for a successful launch in a market that may already be cluttered with many competitors striving to get the consumers attention, altering consumer perceptions towards the new brand and increasing brand trial (Shree, *et al.*, 2017). By partnering with a cause through CRM, non-users may be encouraged to try the brand as the partnership can create enhanced persuasion through positive affect transfer (Nelson and Vilela, 2017). The study by Nelson and Vilela (2017) also states that unknown brands may benefit more from CRM as consumers may not know much about the brand and are likely to not have already formed associations.

A study conducted by Shree, *et al.* (2017) found that there is a positive correlation between consumers having a positive perception of the CRM initiative and thereafter carrying out brand trial. The study states that the more brand trial carried out by the customer, the more chances there are of the customer making repurchases of the product, resulting in them becoming more brand loyal (Shree, *et al.*, 2017).

2.8.4. Brand switching behaviour

Srivastava and Dixit (2017) state that brand switching is the practice where a consumer replaces the current brand that they purchase with another brand that is part of the same product category. In terms of consumer decision-making, price and quality play a crucial role when a consumer is deciding to switch to another brand and are also key factors in brand loyalty (Saleh, Althonayan, Alhabib, Alrasheedi and Alqahtani, 2015). Langen, *et al.* (2013) explain that brand switching depends on the consumer's personal opinion of CRM, as well as the level of brand loyalty the consumer has towards the brand. When Dove launched a CRM campaign called Real Beauty to promote body positivity and challenge the current body stereotypes in advertising, the brand's sales soared by 60% as many women around the world switched to the brand to support its cause (Bahadur, 2017).

Findings by Nelson and Vilela (2017) state the consumers that already purchase products from a competing brand may consider switching to a brand whose parent company is involved in a

CRM initiative. Such brand switching is the result of a positive brand-cause alliance, which may increase persuasion and encourage consumers to try out a brand that they may have previously ignored or not noticed (Nelson and Vilela, 2017).

If price and quality are equal, 94% of consumers are more likely to switch to a brand that is partnered with a charitable cause (Hemat and Yuksel, 2014). The study by Hemat and Yuksel (2014) also found that 76% of consumers have already switched to another brand in the previous 12 months since the study was first carried out, while an astounding 93% of consumers stated that they would consider purchasing from a brand that was partnered with a cause or charity for a CRM initiative. Similarly, a study carried out by Shree, *et al.* (2017) found that 79% of the surveyed consumers stated that it was likely that they would switch to a brand involved in CRM if price and quality were more or less the same. However, the study also found that only 38% of respondents purchased one or more products that were associated with a cause in the last 12 months (Shree, *et al.*, 2017).

One of the top determinants of brand switching is price, as it plays a crucial role when consumers are considering making a purchasing decision (Srivastava and Dixit, 2017). If the quality good or service is high and meets the standards of the consumer, they may be willing to pay a higher price for it (Saleh, *et al.*, 2015). The study by Lerro, *et al.* (2019) states that young consumers may switch to a brand that partakes in CRM initiatives and is partnered with a good cause or charity, if they consider the product to have similar quality and characteristics to their usual or previous brand choice.

2.8.5. Brand loyalty

Brand loyalty can be defined as a “measure of how often consumers buy a given brand, whether or not they switch brands and the extent of their commitment to buying the brand regularly” (Schiffman and Wisenblit, 2015:168). Belch and Belch (2015) also describe brand loyalty as the preference that a consumer has for a certain company’s brand which results in repeat purchases. Mobarak, *et al.* (2022) suggests that loyalty is a consequence of a consumer purchasing from a particular brand with a positive attitude. In accordance with Keller’s Brand Equity Model (2013), brand loyalty forms part of brand resonance, which refers to the type of relationship between a brand and consumer and the extent of the bond wherein the consumer’s activity with the said brand is impacted. Such activity can refer to repeat purchases, the extent

to which brand information is persevered and positive word-of-mouth, all of which could also be regarded as behavioural loyalty (Keller, 2013).

Brand loyalty may be significantly impacted by CRM as a consumer's brand loyalty is strengthened when a brand that he/she purchases from is involved in CRM initiatives through the brand's parent company. However, Lerro, *et al.* (2019) found that CRM had a larger impact on consumers that were not necessarily brand loyal compared to those who were. The study also discovered that the brand's participation in CRM initiatives did not affect consumers' loyalty (Lerro, *et al.*, 2019). Pertouche, *et al.* (2018) on the other hand, found that 86% of young consumers would become loyal to a brand that was partnered (through the company) with a cause or charity that they cared about in a CRM campaign that made significant donations with each purchase. The study also found that if companies donate to environmental and social issues, 83% of young American consumers would increase their loyalty towards the brand (Pertouche, *et al.*, 2018).

Transportation company, Uber, created a campaign where in-app donations could be made by those using the service to help provide five million meals to children in need (Buhr, 2014). Customers could make a \$5 donation on the app to support the No Kid Hungry initiative, along with using and sharing #5millionmeals, resulting in the target being met in four days, which proved that not only were Uber's customers loyal, but that they also cared deeply for the movement (Buhr, 2014).

Consumer attitudes towards the partnership between a cause and the company, as well as the cause itself, may be positively impacted on by CRM campaigns, especially if brand loyalty is high (Lafferty, Lueth and McCafferty, 2016). Galan-Ladero, *et al.* (2013) have linked brand loyalty to satisfaction, stating that when consumers purchase a product from a CRM initiative, they tend to have higher levels of satisfaction. Greater levels of satisfaction can in turn lead to increased chances for consumers to display loyal behaviours, such as referrals, positive word-of-mouth and repeat purchases (Galan-Ladero, *et al.*, 2013).

Although a few studies (Galan-Ladero, *et al.*, 2013; Lafferty, *et al.*, 2016; Lerro, *et al.*, 2013; Mobarak, *et al.*, 2022; Pertouche, *et al.*, 2018) have stated consumers may become more loyal to a company's brands that are involved in CRM, it is a part of CRM that is still largely unexplored, with no clear and extensive proof that CRM does, in fact, increase brand loyalty.

Hence, this study aims to contribute towards the branch of research regarding brand loyalty in CRM.

2.9. THE INFLUENCE OF BRAND COMMUNICATION CONTENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA ABOUT CAUSE-RELATED MARKETING INITIATIVES ON PURCHASE DECISIONS

Social media first started making an appearance in the mid to late 2000s and enabled organisations and individuals to connect and take part in online forums and discussions, as well as allowing them to create content and share information (Saxton and Wang, 2014). Some social media platforms even allow individuals to create so-called formal ties with whoever they wish too, such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter and these platforms are often regarded as social networking sites (Saxton and Wang, 2014).

Due to the rise of social media, the communication landscape has been dramatically altered, effectively having an impact on marketing strategies (Hutter, *et al.*, 2013). Many consumers perceive social media as a more reliable source for brand-related information (Han and Lee, 2022). Schiffman and Wisenblit (2015:139) define social media as “the interaction among people in which they create, share and exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks”. Content created by companies, brands and people can be spread throughout various social media platforms, such as Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and YouTube, to name a few (Schiffman and Wisenblit, 2015). Such social media activities were found to significantly impact consumer purchase decisions (Hutter, *et al.*, 2013). Recently, online donor engagement has led to many social media platforms being adopted by companies and brands. Many sites such as GoFundMe and Crowdrise are examples of charitable fundraising promoted through social networking sites (Kull and Heath, 2016; Saxton and Wang, 2014). Social networks have made it easier for charities and non-profit organisations to expand their donor base, gain financial support and spread awareness for the causes they provide help to (Saxton and Wang, 2014).

Research carried out by Handa and Gupta (2020) found that there is a relationship between the intentions of a consumer to partake in online CRM activities and their intention to purchase from the company involved in the CRM campaign. When carrying out a CRM initiative through social media, even if the cause is not directly tied to a consumer having to make a

purchase, consumers may be inclined to buy from the company as they feel the company and its brand are “doing good” (Handa and Gupta, 2020).

Just like other forms of advertising, CRM initiatives may be distributed online and consumed through the various social media channels and platforms that exist. These campaigns have the ability to alter and hopefully increase brand awareness, brand image and the awareness of social issues, whilst increasing consumers’ purchase intentions and enhance the performance of the brand (Tanford, *et al.*, 2020). CRM initiatives that are carried out on social media usually use emotional cues to guilt consumers into purchasing products from brands, as they believe it is an easy way to make a donation to a cause, especially if they are purchasing a product that is hedonic (luxurious) in nature (Eastman, *et al.*, 2019; Melero and Montaner, 2016).

Paulin, *et al.* (2013) argues that young consumers, such as university students, can be distinguished from other generations by their early exposure to the internet and use of social media. The study states that social media should be considered as one of the most important mediums of communication when a brand wants to engage consumers in their CRM initiatives (Paulin, *et al.*, 2013). University students maintain their personal relationships through constant online communications, which may not necessarily be conversations, but rather through likes, hearts, posts, shares and comments on social media platforms (Leggett, 2022). As a result of their high usage of online platforms, younger consumers more likely to engage with a brand’s online content through likes, shares, comments and reposts (Leggett, 2022). Due to their larger online presence, these younger consumers are more likely to switch to brands that carry out CRM campaigns if they can see the effort that is being made towards the causes on social media (Eastman, *et al.*, 2019). However, brands should illustrate the impact they are making with these donations through images and videos throughout the brand’s various social media accounts.

The influence of word-of-mouth and electronic word-of-mouth on the consumer purchase decisions of brands that support Cause-Related Marketing initiatives

Schiffman and Wisenblit (2015) describe word-of-mouth (WOM) as the evaluations and levels of satisfaction that consumers communicate about a brand, product or service with other consumers. These communications can either take place when consumers are face-to-face or through different electronic channels, for example social media, messages or e-mails, which

are then referred to as electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) (Schiffman and Wisenblit, 2015). Thomas, *et al.* (2011:39) describe WOM as the “transfer of information on a brand or a company among individuals not using traditional media”. Thus, WOM can be referred to as the promotion of a brand’s products or services that is not part of their marketing mix, and is out of the brands control (Thomas, *et al.*, 2011). Positive WOM and well-executed relationship management between the company and their consumers are considered to be a low-cost strategy that can yield a strong and loyal customer base (Ngoma and Ntale, 2019).

Through social media, consumers are now provided with additional mediums to spread either positive or negative messages about brands, products, or services. Consumers can communicate their experiences on social media platforms to other consumers or reach brands directly (Kim, Lee and Kim, 2017; Ngoma and Ntale, 2019). Through properly carried out CRM initiatives, companies can easily achieve positive eWOM (Thomas, *et al.*, 2011). eWOM has many different aspects compared to traditional forms of promotion. Firstly, eWOM may be seen as a source of information that is most relied upon by consumers, resulting in word-of-mouth spreading faster than other forms of marketing messages. Secondly, communications through eWOM are often retaliated through stories, allowing for message richness and personal interpretation. Lastly, satisfied customers were found to tell between three to five people about their positive experiences with a brand, which in turn leads to a multiplier effect (Thomas, *et al.*, 2011). It has become essential for marketers to understand eWOM among consumers on social media, as these platforms provide valuable insight into consumers’ wants, needs and expectations regarding products and services (Choi and Kim, 2019).

Smith (2011), Partouche, *et al.* (2018) and Mora and Vila (2020) found that the younger generation, such as university students, are more than willing to partake in eWOM, such as writing reviews and providing consumer-generated information about products, as 28% of younger consumers run blogs, while 44% were found to read blogs. Additionally, the study found that, 34% of young consumers use websites as their primary source of information and news. Thus, it is essential for marketing practitioners to uncover what motivates consumers, especially young consumers, such as university students, to write reviews and add to eWOM.

Transparency and trust can directly affect consumer purchase decisions, as consumers who trust a brand can spread positive word-of-mouth, yielding trust and creating positive attitudes among other consumers towards the company and its brands (Badenes-Rocha, *et al.*, 2021;

Kang and Hustvedt, 2013). Brand trust can be defined as when consumers are “willing to believe in and rely on the brand in question” and it prevails when one party relies on the integrity of the other (Wu and Chen, 2015:19). Competence and integrity are vital components that lead to consumer trust, as well as transparency (Kang and Hustvedt, 2013). Consumers need to trust that the company has positive intentions for partnering with CRM causes and that the company’s products or services will satisfy their needs. Ultimately, the level of trust that the consumer has for the company and its brands will impact the type of word-of-mouth communication between the consumer and his/her friends, family, colleagues and even strangers on online platforms, which can lead to either positive or negative communication regarding the company, its brands, products and initiatives (Badenes-Rocha, *et al.*, 2021; Choi and Kim, 2019; Kang and Hustvedt, 2013).

When deciding to carry out a CRM initiative, the company needs to ensure that there is full transparency throughout the campaign, as transparency will ensure that positive customer perceptions are created, which will then be communicated by consumers through word-of-mouth, which can in turn create positive attitudes towards the brand and build trust (Kang and Hustvedt, 2013). Gorczyca and Hartman (2017) state that apart from the company, charities and causes need to build awareness and trust to maintain and create good millennial donor relationships, as consumers look for transparency as to how funds are allocated by brands.

2.10. PREFERRED CAUSES TO SUPPORT

Companies choose to align themselves with many different causes which include but may not be limited to non-profit organisations and charities that help with issues such as education, social and animal welfare, health, diversity and the environment (Corbishley and Mason, 2011). According to Hensley, *et al.* (2019), in the United States, most brands that carried out CRM initiatives supported various causes, most relating to education, environmental issues, breast cancer, teenage pregnancy, HIV/Aids, domestic violence and homelessness. However, in a South African context, CRM campaigns that have the greatest following are associated with wildlife conservation, Aids, breast cancer, hunger, homelessness and children’s needs (Corbishley and Mason, 2011).

In spite of this, many companies are now adjusting their CRM strategies towards the new global concern, the Covid-19 pandemic, which began in early 2020 (Hultgren, 2020). Since the virus

was discovered, it has been disrupting lives, businesses and communities all around the world, leading to many companies and brands using CRM to show their support and join the fight against the pandemic and lessen the blow of its consequences (Clift and Court, 2020). One such CRM initiative was carried out by grocery store Pick 'n Pay in South Africa during mid-2020, where the brand created a relief fund aptly named '*Feed the Nation*'. Consumers were allowed to either donate in-store whilst paying for their groceries or donate their 'Smart Shopper' points towards the cause in a bid to help lower-income communities that were struggling to make ends meet during the level 5 lockdown (Reddy, 2020).

Causes are most likely to be split into four different categories. The first being health, that represents causes that relate to human health, such as aiding and carrying out research on HIV/Aids, diabetes and cancer, to name a few (Lafferty and Edmonson, 2014). An example of such a cause is the Solidarity Response Fund, Gift of the Givers South Africa and the Childhood Cancer Foundation SA (CHOC) (Vivier, 2020). The second category represents human services which aids those in need during natural disasters, the homeless or those who are victims of crimes, such as Habitat for Humanity Child Welfare South Africa, and UNICEF SA (Lafferty and Edmonson, 2014; UNICEF, 2019; Vivier, 2020). The third category relates to causes that assist animals, such as protection, animal cruelty and animal rights, like the World Wildlife Fund, NSPCA and the South African Guide Dog Association (Charity SA, 2020). The last category of causes deals with issues regarding the environment, such as saving habitats such as forests, oceans and rivers (Lafferty and Edmonson, 2014). An example of such charities are The Ocean Conservancy, Earthlife Africa and Greenpop (Louw, 2019).

2.11. CONCLUSION

By providing valuable insight into CRM, marketers can gain a deeper understanding about how to choose the right causes to fit their company's brands, how to positively influence consumer attitudes and correctly frame future CRM campaigns (Yun, *et al.*, 2019). After an extensive review of the available literature on CRM, one can conclude that there is a large gap in the research relating to the impact of CRM on brand-consciousness and consumer behaviour, especially regarding young consumers, such as university students. The next chapter of the thesis will provide an in-depth discussion on the research methodology used in the study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

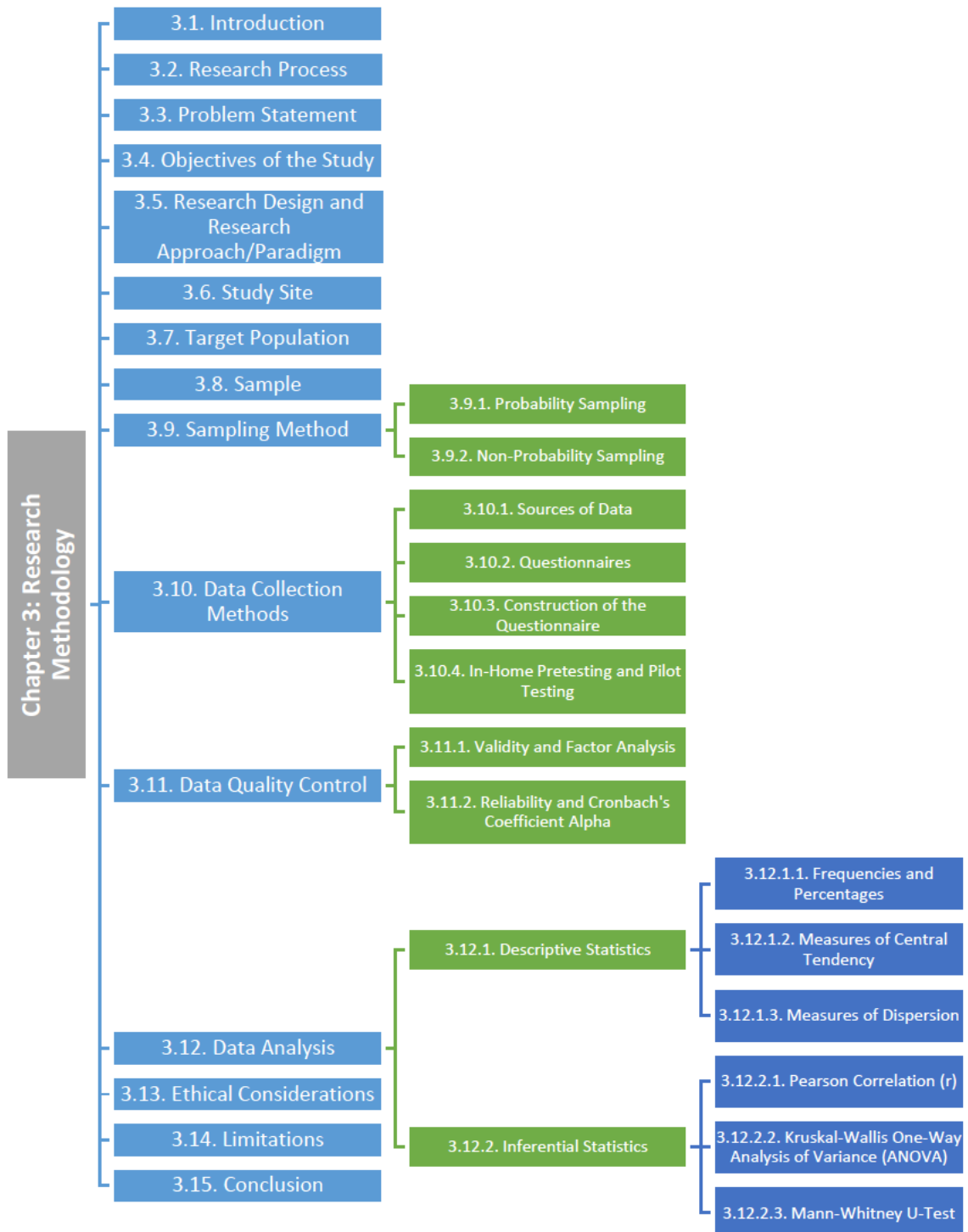
3.1. INTRODUCTION

According to Kallet (2009), research methodology can be defined as the ways in which a certain research problem could be examined, as well as the techniques that may be used to identify, collect, prepare and analyse the data collected by the study.

The following chapter will describe the research paradigm that was used in the study. The sample size, description of the population and a discussion on the method of data collection will be presented, together with the data collection instrument that was used in the study. The chapter also focuses on the research instrument's compilation, as well as the instrument's validity and reliability. Lastly, the chapter will delve into an explanation the various statistical tests that were conducted during the analysis of the data that was acquired. The structure of the chapter is illustrated in Figure 3.1.

FIGURE 3.1

Research Framework - Structure of the Chapter



Source: University of KwaZulu-Natal, Postgraduate Student Guide, School Research and Higher Degrees Committee, School of Management, IT & Governance, College of Law and Management Studies. (2022). Internet. Accessed November 20, 2022, from: <https://protect-za.mimecast.com/s/epM9CIO6EAHq7IPNfjmDWG?domain=learn2022.ukzn.ac.za>

3.2. RESEARCH PROCESS

Figure 3.2 below depicts the research process that was used in this study. An eight-step research process was followed in this study and an elucidation of each step is provided.

FIGURE 3.2
Research Process



Source: Adapted from Wessels, E.C. (2019). Developing a conceptual integrated online visual merchandising framework for apparel e-tailers: A South African consumers' perspective. [Online]. Accessed October 10, 2022, from: <https://umkn-dsp01.unisa.ac.za/handle/10500/26923>

3.2.1. Step 1: Define the research problem

The first step in the research process, as shown in Figure 3.2, is to define the research problem. The research problem of the study is outlined in Chapter One and the aim of the study is to understand the importance of cause-related marketing on consumer behaviour, particularly that

of university students. In addition, the study aims to investigate the effect of cause-related marketing on brand consciousness and will explore the dimensions of brand image, brand awareness, brand trial, brand switching and brand loyalty.

3.2.2. Step 2: Identify the research objective

The second step of the research process, as shown in Figure 3.2, is to identify the research objectives of the study. The research objectives are discussed in Chapter One of the study and are also referenced in Chapter Three.

3.2.3. Step 3: Conduct secondary research

As shown in Figure 3.2, conducting secondary research forms the third step of the research process. For the purposes of this study, secondary research was conducted to provide a background into cause-related marketing and this is delineated in Chapters One and Two. A detailed review of extant literature on the influence of cause-related marketing on consumer behaviour and brand consciousnesses is outlined in Chapter two.

3.2.4. Step 4: Determine the research design

Step four of the research process, as depicted in Figure 3.2, involves the establishment of the research design. For the purposes of this study, the researcher implemented an empirical research design, which used the quantitative method of data collection and the discussion thereof, is outlined in Chapter Three.

3.2.5. Step 5: Conduct the empirical study

As presented in Figure 3.2, step five of the research process involves conducting the empirical study by collecting primary data that will be analysed and discussed. Primary data was collected through a quantitative data collection instrument which was an online questionnaire. The results of this study are discussed in detail in Chapter Four.

3.2.6. Step 6: Data analysis

Step six of the research process, as shown in Figure 3.2, consists of data analysis. The data for this study was collected through an online questionnaire and a discussion of data analysis of this study is outlined in Chapter Four.

3.2.7. Step 7: Discussion of results

As exhibited presented in Figure 3.2, step seven of the research process includes a discussion of the results. A detailed explanation of the results of the study is provided in Chapter Five of this study.

3.2.8. Step 8: Conclusion and recommendations

As per Figure 3.2, step eight of the research process involves the conclusions that are drawn from the study, as well as recommendations that can be considered by marketers. The conclusion and recommendations are discussed in detail in Chapter Six of this study.

3.3. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Many companies around the world have decided to partner with various non-profit organisations and charitable causes as a means of enhancing their brands' image, increasing sales and creating awareness and financial support for these causes. With many corporations aiming to grow their customer-base, cause-related marketing initiatives are often used to show consumers that companies care about their customers, employees and the planet, in an effort to create a competitive advantage over their competitors. Despite this, there seems to be a lack of studies which explore the impact of cause-related marketing on the consumer behaviour and brand consciousness of university students (Corbishley and Mason, 2011; Lerro, Raimondo, Stanco, Nazzaro and Marotta, 2019). The study aims to understand the importance of cause-related marketing on consumer behaviour, particularly that of university students. In addition, this study aims to investigate the effect of cause-related marketing on brand consciousness and will explore the dimensions of brand image, brand awareness, brand trial, brand switching and brand loyalty.

3.4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study aimed to ascertain the importance of cause-related marketing on consumer behaviour and brand consciousness from a UKZN student perspective. The objectives are as follows:

- 3.3.1. To determine if cause-related marketing has an effect on UKZN students' attitudes towards brands.
- 3.3.2. To uncover whether or not cause-related marketing influences UKZN students' decisions to purchase brands that support certain causes.

- 3.3.3. To determine whether or not cause-related marketing enhances the image of brands in the minds of UKZN students.
- 3.3.4. To determine the impact that cause-related marketing has on creating brand awareness and encouraging brand trial of brands that UKZN students are unfamiliar with.
- 3.3.5. To ascertain whether or not UKZN students will switch to a brand that is involved in cause-related marketing initiatives if price and quality is inconsequential to their purchase decisions.
- 3.3.6. To uncover UKZN students' perceptions of the effectiveness of cause-related marketing initiatives in building and maintaining brand loyalty.
- 3.3.7. To determine whether or not brand communication content on social media about cause-related marketing initiatives has influenced UKZN students' perceptions of the brand and purchase decisions.
- 3.3.8. To determine what influence word-of-mouth and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) have on UKZN students' purchase decisions of brands that support certain causes.

3.5. RESEARCH DESIGN AND RESEARCH APPROACH/PARADIGM

The purpose of a research design is to provide the glue which will hold together the research project, as it is used to structure the study and show how all of the major parts fit together to address the research questions (Trochim, 2022). Sekaran and Bougie (2016:95) define research design as a “blueprint or plan for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data, created to answer research questions”. Furthermore, research design can also be an analysis of what the researcher wishes to explore regarding the limitations of the study, as well as framing various hypotheses and analysing data (Creswel, 2013). According to Sekaran and Bougie (2016), a research design may be used if there is little to no secondary data that the researcher may use.

According to Emerald Publishing (2022), empirical research is based on observations and measurements of experiences that are directly experienced by the researcher. The study made use of an empirical design, as the topic is largely unexplored as there is a lack of information regarding the impact that cause-related marketing has on the behaviour and brand consciousness of university students.

When gathering empirical data, there are three different types of approaches that one can use which are quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). When

selecting the type of approach to use, researchers may consider the type of study being carried out and the resources that are available. Quantitative methods rely on formal questions that have predetermined answers and make use of questionnaires and surveys, which are given to a vast number of respondents (Hair, Celsi, Ortinau and Bush, 2013). Quantitative methods are best used for studies that need to gather large amounts of data that can be communicated through diagrams, tables and statistics (Surbhi, 2016). Quantitative methods are standardised and measurable, allowing the researcher to find trends and patterns in the data that has been collected (Sekaran and Bougie, 2017).

On the other hand, qualitative methods consist of text, video, images and audio data that may be collected through open-ended interviews that are carried out by the researchers or collected through natural occurrences such as blog posts or websites that provide reviews (Hair, *et al.*, 2013). According to Trochim (2022), qualitative methods are mostly applied to social research, such as psychology and economics and is very useful in collecting information that is extremely detailed and generalised. However, researchers can also opt to use both qualitative and quantitative methods, which is referred to as mixed methodology (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). Table 3.1. shows the key differences between quantitative and qualitative methods of research.

Table 3.1.
Quantitative vs Qualitative Methods

QUANTITATIVE METHODS	QUALITATIVE METHODS
Makes use of numbers	Makes use of words
Deductive	Inductive
The researcher is ideally objective and an impartial observer	The researcher is required to be more involved or participative
Usually focuses on cause and effect	Usually focuses on understanding the subject in a economic, institutional, political or social context
Requires a hypothesis	Does not require a hypothesis
Disadvantages are that quantitative methods may force participants into categories and may not be able to go into too much detail about the subject	Disadvantage is that the study may only focus on a handful of individuals, thus making is hard to generalise

Source: Emerald Publishing (2022). How to Conduct Empirical Research.

For this study, the researcher has adopted a quantitative method for data collection. There are many advantages to using quantitative methods, such as its ability to accommodate a large sample size which allows for more target population generalisation, as well as the ability to have advanced statistical analysis (Emerald Publishing, 2022; Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). Additional advantages include the ability for concepts and relationships that are not directly measurable to be studied, as well as a simpler way to administer and record more structured answers from a questionnaire (Hair, *et al.*, 2013). Quantitative data is also found to be more efficient and reduces subjectivity of judgement (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016).

3.6. STUDY SITE

The research for the study was carried out at the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Westville Campus. The University has five different campuses, which include Howard College, Edgewood Campus, Pietermaritzburg Campus, Westville Campus and the School of Medicine. For the purpose of this study, UKZN's Westville Campus was utilised to conduct research, as it has a large student population and is comprised of three different colleges, excluding the

College of Humanities. Due to various limitations, such as time constraints, strikes on campus and the closure of the University due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the Westville Campus was more accessible, thus making it the more feasible option as a study site.

3.7. TARGET POPULATION

According to Sekaran and Bougie (2016:394), the population can be defined as “the entire group of people, events, or things that the researcher desires to investigate”. Based on the sample statistics, the population refers to what the researcher aims to make inferences on and investigate, which may include a complete group of people, objects of interest or a certain event (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016).

The target population for this particular study were all registered students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal’s Westville Campus. The target population was made up of both undergraduate and postgraduate students that were registered from the three colleges at the Westville Campus, which are the College of Law and Management Studies, the College of Agriculture, Engineering and Science and the College of Health Sciences.

3.8. SAMPLE

A sample refers to a sub-division of a population and is made from a certain number of people or members which are selected from the population (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). For the 2020 academic year, the number of students (both postgraduate and undergraduates) that were registered at UKZN’s Westville Campus was 11900 (Table 3.2). The population-to-sample-size table by Sekaran and Bougie (2016) was used to calculate the study sample for the purpose of this study, where the table gives an appropriate sample of 375 subjects. The sample of 375 subjects was drawn from the three colleges based at the Westville Campus, which are the College of Law and Management Studies, the College of Health Sciences and the College of Agriculture, Engineering and Science. The figures of the registered students at the University are outlined in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2.

University of KwaZulu-Natal, Institutional Intelligence Reports: Student Registration by College and Campus (2020)

College	UG	PG	Howard	Pmb	Med Sch	Westville	Edgewood	TOTAL
College of Agriculture, Engineering & Science	7117	2001	2424	2841		3853		9118
College of Health Sciences	4663	2198	1372		2623	2866		6861
College of Humanities	16909	3972	9775	4080			7026	20881
College of Law & Management Studies	6384	2670	1815	2058		5181		9054
TOTAL	35073	10841	15386	8979	2623	11900	7026	45914

University of KwaZulu-Natal, Institutional Intelligence Reports: Student Registration by College and Campus (2020). Internet. Accessed March 10, 2020, from the World Wide Web: <https://ii.ukzn.ac.za/Report/StudentRegistrations>.

As reported by the Institutional Intelligence (II) Report of 2020, a division within the Information and Communication Services at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, the following population sizes were gathered in relation to the three colleges at the Westville campus and are outlined below:

1. College of Law and Management Studies – 5181 students
2. College of Agriculture, Engineering and Science – 3853 students
3. College of Health Sciences – 2866 students

For the 2020 academic year, the total number of registered undergraduate and postgraduate students at the Westville Campus was 11900. According to Sekaran and Bougie's (2016) population-to-sample-size table, the appropriate sample size for the population was 375. The study had a total of 261 respondents, which resulted in a response rate of 69.6%. According to Holtom, Baruch and Ballinger (2022), the average response rate for online questionnaires for academic research that was conducted in 2020 was 68%. According to Richardson (2005 cited in Nulty, 2008), response rates of 60% or more are both acceptable and achievable by research scholars. Data collection was conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic, wherein strict

lockdown protocols and the closure of the University's campuses, made it challenging to attain the calculated sample size of 375 subjects for this study. Students had limited access to data or facilities which allowed them to access online questionnaires, which also contributed to low response rates. Additionally, according to the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Ethical Clearance prescriptions (Appendix 3), data had to be collected within a stipulated period and 261 completed questionnaires were received electronically during this period of time.

3.9. SAMPLING METHOD

According to Sekaran and Bougie (2016), there are many advantages to choosing a suitable sampling technique, such as improved result accuracy, reduced costs, greater flexibility and improved efficiency. There are two methods of sampling, namely, probability sampling and nonprobability sampling (Hair, *et al.*, 2013). These methods are discussed in more detail below.

3.9.1. Probability sampling

Probability sampling is a method wherein all elements of a population have an equal and known chance of being chosen or selected (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). It is any method that makes use of some form of random selection (Trochim, 2022). There are also four different types of probability sampling, which are simple random sampling, cluster sampling, systematic sampling and stratified sampling (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). Probability sampling has many advantages, one being that the researcher is able to collect information from a large number of respondents, as these respondents can be interviewed in a short period of time, which makes data collection cheaper, as well as convenient (Hair, *et al.*, 2013).

3.9.2. Non-probability sampling

According to Bhardwaj (2019:161), non-probability sampling can be defined as "a type of sampling where each member of the population does not have a known probability of being selected in the sample". With non-probability sampling, the choice of sample depends on the researcher's judgement or knowledge, the probability of selecting a particular group to sample is unknown and the representation of the target population may not be accurate (Hair, *et al.* 2013). According to Vehovar, Toepoel and Steinmetz (2016), non-probability sampling can be defined as a deviation from the principles of probability sampling, that the entities are included with unknown probabilities or in some cases the probabilities are known to be zero.

There are many advantages to using non-probability sampling. Sekeran and Bougie (2016) state that non-probability sampling is often more dependable and accurate, which allows researchers to make significant leads in their research through collecting information that may not have been previously discovered or understood. Similarly, Wiśniowski, Sakshaug, Ruiz and Blom (2020) state that the key advantage to non-probability sampling is the low-cost factor, as samples can be collected in various different and inexpensive ways, such as through volunteer panels or online surveys. There are four different types of nonprobability sampling, which are identified by Sekaran and Bougie (2016) as judgement sampling, quota sampling, snowball sampling and lastly, convenience sampling.

- **Judgement sampling:** In this method, participants are selected from a sample according to the purpose of the study and it is typically used when the researcher knows that those selected from the target population will meet his or her demands (Bhardwaj, 2019).
- **Quota sampling:** Participants are chosen according to specific characteristics that are set out by the researcher (Bhardwaj, 2019).
- **Snowball sampling:** The Snowball sampling method is adopted when the researcher finds it difficult to identify individuals from a sample, therefore, one respondent will identify other participants, such as family and friends, thereby, growing the sample and number of participants (Bhardwaj, 2019).
- **Convenience sampling:** Participants are selected according to their accessibility and availability (Bhardwaj, 2019).

For the purpose of this study the researcher chose to use convenience sampling, as individuals who were easily accessible to the researcher participated in the study. Convenience sampling can be defined as a type of non-probability sampling where participants are selected based on easy accessibility or availability, close geographic proximity and participants' willingness to be a part of the study (Etikan, Musa and Alkassim, 2015). Due to strict lockdown regulations and limited access to the Westville campus, respondents who were easily accessible and available, were the ones who participated in the study. There are many advantages to using convenience sampling as a method, according to Bhardwaj (2019). Firstly, it is very easy to implement, and creating samples is inexpensive. Secondly, it is a very useful method for generating hypotheses and for pilot studies. Lastly, data can be collected in a very short amount

of time. However, the disadvantage is that there is a possibility of a high sampling error (Bhardwaj, 2019).

3.10. DATA COLLECTION METHODS

According to McMillan and Gogia (2017), data collection can be described as the means that may be used to collect data that will thereafter be interpreted and analysed by the researcher. Data can be collected in various ways and through numerous sources. Section 3.10 will outline the function of both primary and secondary data, as well as the use and construction of the questionnaire in this study.

3.10.1. Sources of data

Information may be collected through various primary and secondary sources. Secondary data collection occurs when the researcher collects information that was already acquired by other researchers for a purpose that is different to that of the current study (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). Secondary data collection may include information sourced from journal articles, publications, books, or websites (Surbhi, 2016). Primary data collection, on the other hand, occurs when the researcher gathers data first-hand for the current study at hand and may be collected through personal interviews, surveys, questionnaires, observations and experiments (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016).

3.10.2. Questionnaires

For purpose of this study, the researcher made use of questionnaires as a tool to collect data, as it was easy to administer the online survey to a large group of participants. A questionnaire can be defined as a set of questions with predetermined answers that respondents can choose from (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). There are various advantages, as well as disadvantages to using questionnaires for data collection. According to Minnaar and Heystek (2013), Sekaran and Bougie (2016) and Trochim (2022) a few advantages include:

- Questions are standardised, which ensures that there is uniformity in the responses, which allows for results to be compared accurately.
- Participants can complete the questionnaires at their convenience.

- With most online questionnaires, respondent anonymity is ensured as respondents are not obliged to share their personal information. As a result, there is increased motivation by the respondent to participate in the study.
- The respondent can clarify any doubts with the researcher if the questionnaire is personally administered.
- Researchers can administer online surveys in a way which is time efficient, as there is no travelling required.
- Online surveys are also environmentally friendly, as they eliminate the use of paper.

However, there are also disadvantages to using questionnaires, such as bias may be introduced when the researcher explains the study, there is room for participants to misinterpret the statements in the questionnaire, it can also be time-consuming on the part of the researcher if they are using personally administered questionnaires (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016).

Questionnaires can consist of two types of questions, namely, open-ended and close-ended questions. With open-ended questions, respondents are allowed to answer the questions however they wish to (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). However, the questionnaire for the study consisted of close-ended questions where respondents were provided with a set of options and were allowed to select the answer that he/she thought was the most appropriate (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). An advantage of using close-ended questions is that it allows respondents to answer the questions faster, making it easier and saving time for both the respondent and the researcher (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016; Trochim, 2022). It also makes coding and analysing data easier for the researcher (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016).

3.10.3. Construction of the questionnaire

The questionnaire used for the study was divided into two sections. Section A consisted of the participants' biographical data (gender, age, race, educational level, college), where a nominal scale was used. A nominal scale can be described as a scale in which the researcher is able to allocate themes to various groups and categories (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016).

Section B related to the key dimensions (research objectives) of the study. The first key dimension dealt with the impact of cause-related marketing on consumer attitudes, followed

by consumer decision-making, brand image, brand awareness and brand trial, brand switching, brand loyalty, brand communication content on social media and word-of-mouth (WOM) and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM)). Section B consisted of an ordinal scale, specifically the 5-point Likert scale, which ranges from:

1. Strongly disagree (SD)
2. Disagree (D)
3. Neither agree nor disagree (N)
4. Agree (A)
5. Strongly agree (SA)

An ordinal scale allows for data to be categorised and ranked, which makes it easier to express the differences in each category, or in this case each key dimension of the study (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). There are various advantages to using a Likert scale, which includes its simplicity and versatility, it allows for more accurate responses, it provides more information to the researcher, it is easier to collect and categorise the data that is collected and it also allows for the data to be ranked in order (Johns, 2010; Sekaran and Bougie, 2016).

In this study, the questionnaires were administered electronically, through the University Notices. After ethical clearance to conduct research on the Westville campus was obtained, all students who were registered at the University's Westville Campus were emailed a link of the questionnaire, together with the Letter of Informed Consent via the University Notices. Those students who wished to participate were able to access the online questionnaire through a link. The questionnaires were administered online due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, travel restrictions, lockdowns and social distancing rules.

3.10.4. In-home pretesting and pilot testing

Pilot-testing is carried out before the actual questionnaire can be administered to participants to ensure that there are no errors and to give the researcher an idea of the time it may take for a participant to complete the questionnaire (Schade, 2015). For this study, the pilot-test was carried out with 15 participants, which allowed the researcher to ensure the necessary adjustments were made to the questionnaire to ensure that it was understandable, clear and unambiguous. No changes to the questionnaire were required after the pilot test.

3.11. DATA QUALITY CONTROL

Data quality control may ensure that the data is accurate, truthful and consistent. In this study, the researcher ensured that these factors were met by paying attention to validity and reliability when controlling the quality of the data collected.

3.11.1. Validity and Factor Analysis

Hair, *et al.* (2013:125) defined validity as the “extent to which the conclusions drawn from an experiment are true”. Sekaran and Bougie (2016) refer to validity as to how well a tool measures what is needed and how honest the results are. There are three different types of validity, the first being content validity, which determines whether or not a test represents all elements of the construct (Middleton, 2019). The second type is construct validity which can be described as “the approximate truth of the conclusion that the operationalisation accurately reflects its construct” (Trochim, 2022). Lastly there is criterion validity, which tests whether the results of the study match that of the theory, or the results of a different test (Middleton, 2019; Trochim, 2022).

Factor analysis can be used to test validity, and the results gathered from a factor analysis may confirm whether the speculated dimensions relate to the items that were measured in the study (Hair, *et al.* 2013). In this study, a factor analysis was used to ensure that the questionnaire was valid. Validity was also ensured throughout the study, as all questions that were presented to participants were identical, which ensured that each key dimension was thoroughly covered throughout the questionnaire.

3.11.2. Reliability and Cronbach’s Coefficient Alpha

Reliability refers to the degree of consistency in the observations made by the researcher, such as when two or more researchers observe the identical occurrence and end up with the same result or conclusion, resulting in the elimination of bias and unreliable results (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). Trochim (2022) states that reliability has to do with the quality of the measurement. It is also imperative that there is consistency between the items that are being measured as any instrument that has to be used to conduct research produces the same results each and every time it is being used (Trochim, 2022; Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). Consistency between the findings of two or more researchers is compared by using a correlation co-efficient, such as Cronbach’s Coefficient Alpha (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016).

According to Hair, *et al.* (2013:224), Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha can be defined as "a widely used measurement of the internal consistency of a multi-time scale in which the average of all possible split-half coefficients is taken". When the results of the Cronbach's Alpha are above 60%, the results are considered reliable (Bryman and Bell, 2011; Trochim, 2022). To improve the reliability of the questionnaire, a pre-test was carried out on a smaller sample of 15 participants.

3.12. DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis can be described as the process of examining the information that was obtained by the researcher (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). The process of analysing data includes interpreting, categorising and presenting the data that was collected, resulting in the ability to make conclusions about the study. Data that was collected for this study was coded using a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and thereafter captured in SPSS data editor. During the process of data analysis, descriptive and inferential statistics were used.

3.12.1. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics are used to classify a sample and include calculations that do not call for any assumptions about a population (Ross and Willson, 2017). These calculations include percentages, frequencies, measures of dispersion and measures of central tendency. By using descriptive statistics, the researcher is able to present data in a way that allows it to be easily interpreted by readers, as the study makes use of charts, graphs and frequency tables.

3.12.1.1. Frequencies and Percentages

Frequencies and percentages can be considered a lower-level quantitative approach as they merely report either ratios or counts (Ross and Willson, 2017). Typically, frequency data is used for nominal variables, such as gender, to separate, for example, male and female students (Deborah, 2014). These frequencies and percentages are typically communicated through pie charts and graphs. In this study, frequencies and percentages were used to document biographical variables such as gender, age, race, education level and college and were illustrated using pie charts and tables.

3.12.1.2. Measures of Central Tendency

There are three different measures of central tendency, the mean, median and mode (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016).

- **The mean** refers to the average, which is calculated by adding the values thereafter, dividing the total by the number of values in the set (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). Frequency analyses and mean analyses were conducted for Section B of the questionnaire used in this study, which included the key dimensions (the impact of cause-related marketing on consumer attitudes, consumer decision-making, brand image, brand awareness and brand trial, brand switching, brand loyalty, brand communication content on social media and word-of-mouth (WOM) and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM)).
- **The median** can be defined as the central item when the data is put in order from the lowest to highest (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). To find the median, all scores should be listed in numerical order and the score at the centre of the sample should be located (Trochim, 2022).
- **The mode** refers to the item that appears the most (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). To locate the mode, all scores could be set in numerical order and each one can be counted, with the most frequently occurring value considered as the mode (Trochim, 2022).

3.12.1.3. Measures of Dispersion

According to Hair, *et al.* (2013), measures of dispersion express how data is spread around the main value. There are three different types of measures of dispersion.

- **Range:** The range can be found by calculating the difference between the lowest and highest values in the set (Hair, *et al.* 2013). In other words, it can be found by subtracting the minimum value from the maximum value in the data set. The range provides useful evidence as to how spread out the data is, however in some cases the data may have outliers (Creswell, 2014).

- **Variance:** According to Sekaran and Bougie (2016), variance can be calculated by subtracting the mean from the data set, thereafter taking the square of the difference and dividing it by the total number of observations. Creswell (2014) states that an advantage of variance is that every change from the mean is treated similarly.
- **Standard deviation:** Sekaran and Bougie (2016:284) state that standard deviation “offers an index of the spread of a distribution or the variability of data”. It can be calculated by finding the square root of the variance (Trochim, 2022). For the purpose of this study, measures of dispersion are used to measure the extent to which UKZN students’ perceptions vary with regard to the key dimensions of the study (the impact of cause-related marketing on consumer attitudes, consumer decision-making, brand image, brand awareness and brand trial, brand switching, brand loyalty, brand communication content on social media and word-of-mouth (WOM) and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM)).

3.12.2. Inferential Statistics

Inferential statistics enable the researcher to draw conclusions about the population sample by using methods such as correlation, ANOVA and T-test (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016; Hair, *et al.*, 2013).

3.12.2.1. Pearson Correlation (r)

Pearson’s Correlation (r) can be defined as “a statistical measure of the strength of a linear relationship between two metric variables” (Hair, *et al.*, 2013). The correlation is acquired by judging the changes in one variable as another also varies (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). Correlation will always be between -1.0 and +1.0 and any value that falls out of this range is considered invalid (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). If the correlation is positive, it means there is a positive relationship, and if the correlation is negative, it means the relationship is negative (Trochim, 2022). However, if the correlation is 0, it means that the two variables do not have any relationship (Creswell, 2014).

For this study, a chi-square correlation analysis was used by the researcher to ascertain the relationship between the key dimensions in the study (the impact of cause-related marketing on consumer attitudes, consumer decision-making, brand image, brand awareness and brand

trial, brand switching, brand loyalty, brand communication content on social media and word-of-mouth (WOM) and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM)).

3.12.2.2. Kruskal-Wallis One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

An Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) aids the researcher in examining whether there are any significant differences in the dependent variable between two or more groups (Hair, *et al.*, 2013). ANOVA may be used by researchers when testing out hypotheses, to find if the means between two or more groups are equal, given that the sample population is distributed normally (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016).

With regards to this study, ANOVA was carried out to establish whether there is a compelling difference between the key dimensions of the study (the impact of cause-related marketing on consumer attitudes, consumer decision-making, brand image, brand awareness and brand trial, brand switching, brand loyalty, brand communication content on social media and word-of-mouth (WOM) and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM)) and the biographical variables, such as race, education level, age and college.

3.12.2.3. Mann-Whitney U-test

A Mann-Whitney U-test is used to assess if the distribution of ranks is significant statistically (Ramachandran and Tsokos, 2021). A Mann-Whitney U-test is used to contrast the divergences between two independent groups when the dependent variables are either ordinal or continuous, or not normally distributed. Usually, the Mann-Whitney U-test is considered to be a substitute for the independent t-test, however unlike the t-test, it allows the researcher to draw distinctive and different inferences about the data, depending on the researchers' assumptions and the distribution of the data. In this study, the Mann-Whitney U-test was used to analyse the differences in the perceptions of the male and female respondents regarding the key dimensions of the study (the impact of cause-related marketing on consumer attitudes, consumer decision-making, brand image, brand awareness and brand trial, brand switching, brand loyalty, brand communication content on social media and word-of-mouth (WOM) and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM)).

3.13. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Regarding the ethical considerations of the study, no participant was forced to participate in the study and only those that volunteered were part of the study. Participants were able to withdraw from the study at any given time, due to participation being by choice. A letter of informed consent was made available to participants to sign before partaking in the study, ensuring that the participants were aware of what the study was about. Participants were also assured that all information and data collected was to remain private and that they would not be in any harm by participating in the study. In the case that participants wished to ask the supervisor questions about the research, the supervisor's contact details were provided. The anonymity and confidentiality of the participants was guaranteed so that their information was protected and such information was treated with utmost confidentiality. The data that was collected by the researcher will not be used for any purpose other than that of this research.

Participants were informed that their participation in the study was completely voluntary, and no incentives were given for their involvement. A gatekeeper's letter was requested by the researcher from the Registrar of the University for permission to conduct the research and collect the required data from the students registered at Westville Campus. It is important that the ethical concerns of participants are safeguarded and respected. The researcher will ensure that all the personal data collected from the participants will not be disclosed and that no participant will be humiliated, harmed or damaged in any way in this research.

3.14. LIMITATIONS

As with any research, the researcher is bound to face certain challenges, which could be financial challenges, time constraints, access, physical limitations, or resource limitations. With this study, since students were the target population, it was difficult to acquire participants due to busy work schedules and no campus access due to Covid-19 lockdown restrictions. Many students faced challenges in terms of being able to access the online questionnaire due to the lack of available data. Participants could only be gathered through the University Notice System, which a limited number of students view, thus resulting in a low response rate. Furthermore, the College of Humanities is not based on the Westville Campus, resulting in a limited number of students being available to participate.

3.15. CONCLUSION

Chapter Three acts as a guide for the researcher, as well as the reader, on how data is collected and analysed and explained the many aspects to the research process. The researcher made use of a quantitative method to collect and analyse information for the study, as a large target population could be used (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). The researcher also chose to make use of non-probability sampling, where the sample was selected through a convenience sampling technique. The following chapter will present the results of the research study.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

The findings of this research study will be presented in this chapter. When analysing the results, the researcher made use of both inferential and descriptive statistics. The data will be presented in narrative, tabular and graphical formats. The data which was collected from the sample was captured on Microsoft Excel (Version 2016) and, thereafter, processed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) (Version 27). The biographical data of the respondents will be presented using figures, pie charts and tables. Where appropriate, the descriptive statistics include the mean, median, mode and standard deviation.

The data is presented according to the research objectives and the associated research questions, which are as follows:

- 4.1.1. To determine if CRM has an effect on UKZN students' attitudes towards brands.
- 4.1.2. To uncover whether or not CRM influences UKZN students' decisions to purchase brands that support certain causes.
- 4.1.3. To determine whether or not CRM enhances the image of brands in the minds of UKZN students.
- 4.1.4. To determine the impact that CRM has on creating brand awareness and encouraging brand trial of brands that UKZN students are unfamiliar with.
- 4.1.5. To ascertain whether or not UKZN students will switch to a brand that is involved in CRM marketing initiatives if price and quality is inconsequential to their purchase decisions.
- 4.1.6. To uncover UKZN students' perceptions of the effectiveness of CRM initiatives in building and maintaining brand loyalty.
- 4.1.7. To determine whether or not brand communication on social media about CRM initiatives has influenced UKZN students' perceptions of the brand and purchase decisions.
- 4.1.8. To determine what influence WOM and eWOM have on UKZN students' purchase decisions of brands that support certain causes.

4.2. PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

The researcher used both descriptive and inferential statistics to analyse the data from the questionnaires.

4.2.1. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

4.2.1.1. Biographical Details of Respondents

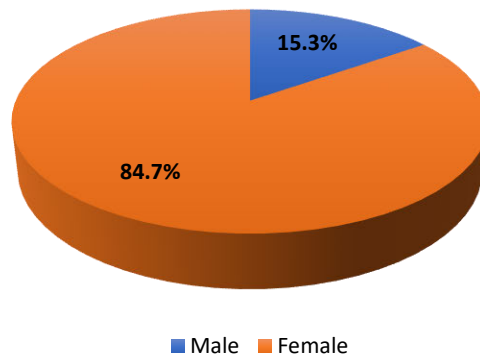
For this study, the minimum sample was calculated to be 375 subjects and the researcher collected 261 correctly completed questionnaires from respondents. Questionnaires were administered electronically owing to the Coronavirus pandemic which resulted in a low response rate. The biographical details of all 261 respondents are outlined in Table 4.1. The presentation of the biographical details of the respondents of this study is pertinent to establishing whether or not there are significant differences in the perceptions of UKZN students, varying in biographical profiles (gender, age, race, educational level, and college) regarding each dimension of the study (impact of CRM on students' attitudes towards brands, the influence of CRM on purchase decisions, the influence of CRM on brand image, the impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial, the impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour, the effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty, the impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions and the influence of WOM and eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes).

Table 4.1
Frequency distribution of biographical variables

		n	%
Gender	Male	40	15,3%
	Female	221	84,7%
	Total	261	100%
Age	18-21	182	69,7%
	22-25	68	26,1%
	26-29	8	3,1%
	30-33	3	1,1%
	Total	261	100%
Race	Black	204	78,2%
	Coloured	4	1,5%
	Indian	48	18,4%
	White	5	1,9%
	Total	261	100%
Educational Level	Undergraduate	224	85,8%
	Honours Degree	20	7,7%
	Post-Graduate Diploma	11	4,2%
	Master's Degree	5	1,9%
	Doctoral Degree	1	0,4%
	Total	261	100%
College	College of Law and Management Studies	128	49%
	College of Health Sciences	72	27,6%
	College of Agriculture, Engineering and Science	61	23,4%
	Total	261	100%

As evident in Table 4.1, the biographical variables included gender, age, race, educational level and college. Figure 4.1 provides an illustration of the gender proportions of the 261 respondents who participated in the study.

FIGURE 4.1
Composition of Sample: Gender



As illustrated in Figure 4.1, the majority of the respondents were female (84.7%), compared to males (15.3%). Figure 4.2 provides a graphical depiction of the age proportions of the 261 respondents of the study.

FIGURE 4.2
Composition of the Sample: Age

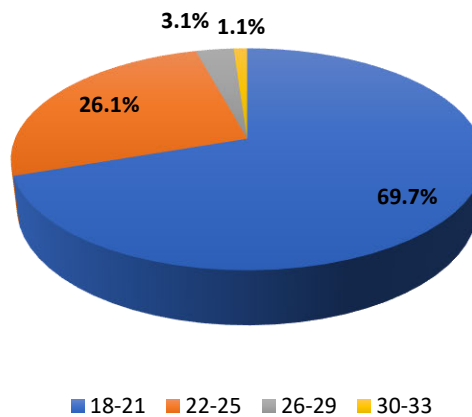
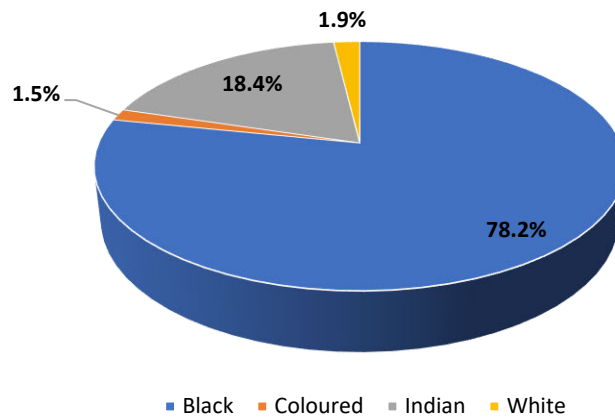


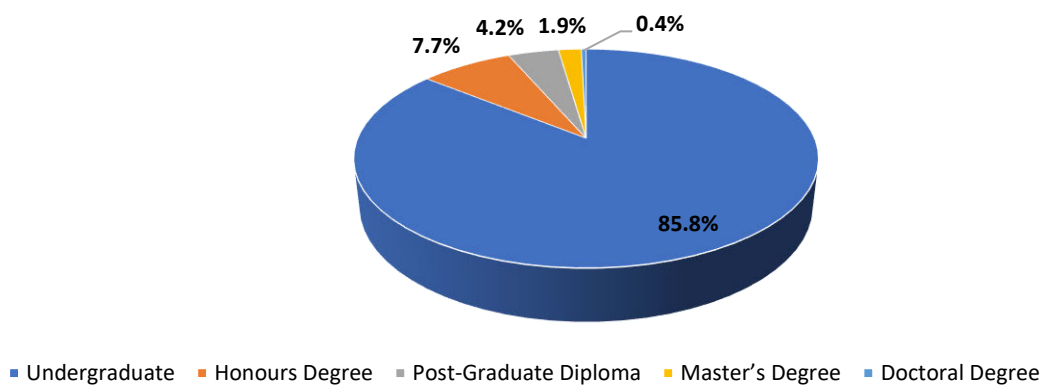
Figure 4.2 illustrates that the highest proportions of respondents were from the 18 and 21 year age category (69.7%), followed by the 22 to 25 years (26.1%) age category. Respondents between the ages of 26 to 29 years constituted 3.1% of the sample, whilst those in the 30 to 33 year age category had a proportion of 1.1% of the sample. Figure 4.3 provides a graphical representation of the percentages of respondents according to race groups.

FIGURE 4.3
Composition of Sample: Race



As seen in Figure 4.3, the sample of this study included respondents from four race groups. Black South Africans constituted the highest proportion of the respondents (78.2%), whilst the second highest group of respondents were Indians (18.4%), followed by Whites (1.9%). The Coloured race group had the lowest percentage of respondents (1.5%). Figure 4.4 provides a graphical representation of the educational level of respondents.

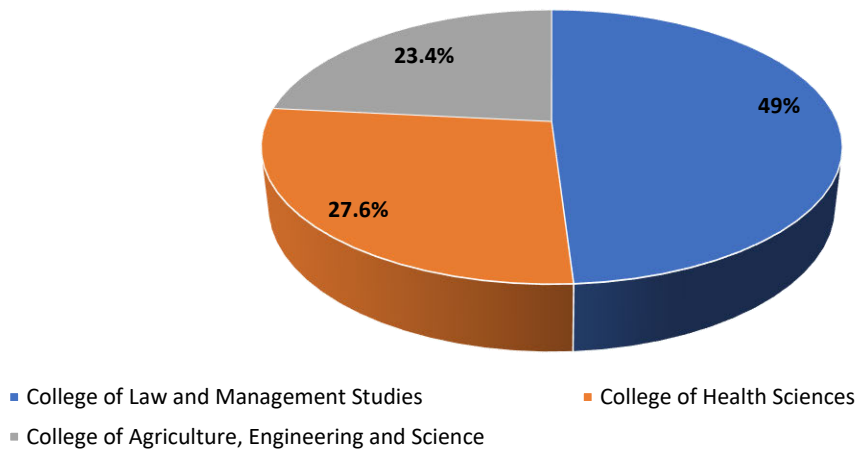
FIGURE 4.4
Composition of Sample: Educational Level



As seen in Figure 4.4, the results indicated that the majority of the respondents were registered for an Undergraduate degree (85.5%). Respondents who were registered for an Honours degree constituted 7.7% of the sample, whilst 4.2% of respondents were registered for a Post-graduate diploma. Furthermore, 1.9% of the respondents in the sample were registered for a Master's

degree and 0.4% of the respondents were pursuing their Doctoral degree qualifications. Figure 4.5 provides an illustration of the different colleges that the participants of this study belonged to.

FIGURE 4.5
Composition of Sample: College



According to Figure 4.5, the majority of respondents were from the College of Law and Management Studies (49%), followed by the College of Health Sciences which constituted 27.6% of the sample. The results further indicated that the College of Agriculture, Engineering and Science represented 23.4% of the respondents. The College of Humanities was not represented in the sample of the study, as students who are from this college are not registered at the Westville Campus.

4.2.1.2. Importance That UKZN Students Attach to the Key Dimensions of the Study

The results obtained relating to each of the objectives of the study will be presented using descriptive statistics. The UKZN Westville Campus students were asked to rate their perceptions of the various key dimensions of the objectives of the study using a 1–5 point Likert Scale. The higher the mean score, the more positively the dimension is viewed (Table 4.2).

Table 4.2
Descriptive Statistics: Key Dimensions of the Study

Key Dimensions of the Study	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Impact of CRM on students' attitudes towards brands	1,000	5,000	3,355	0,500
Influence of CRM on purchase decisions	1,000	5,000	3,005	0,638
Influence of CRM on brand image	1,000	5,000	3,548	0,487
Impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial	1,000	5,000	3,131	0,526
Impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour	1,000	5,000	3,358	0,512
Effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty	1,000	5,000	3,650	0,610
Impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions	1,000	5,000	3,420	0,635
Influence of eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes	1,000	5,000	3,814	0,666

Table 4.2 indicates that UKZN students attach varying degrees of importance to the key dimensions of the study which, in descending level of mean score values are:

- ❖ Influence of eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes (Mean = 3,814)
- ❖ Effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty (Mean = 3,650)
- ❖ Influence of CRM on brand image (Mean = 3,548)
- ❖ Impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions (Mean = 3,420)
- ❖ Impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour (Mean = 3,358)
- ❖ Impact of CRM on students' attitudes towards brands (Mean = 3,355)
- ❖ Impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial (Mean = 3,131)
- ❖ Influence of CRM on purchase decisions (Mean = 3,005)

As evident from Table 4.2, University of KwaZulu-Natal students attach the greatest level of importance to the influence of eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes (Mean = 3,814) and the least level of importance to the influence of CRM on purchase decisions (Mean = 3,005). Therefore, in order to assess how UKZN students viewed each of these dimensions, frequency analyses were conducted. Frequency analyses involved the examination

of the frequency distribution of the results for each of the scale items in order to determine whether or not the data was normally distributed (Appendix 5).

In terms of the construction of the questionnaire of this study, the Likert Scale items in Section B that pertain to each of the objectives (key dimensions) of the study are clustered as follows:

Impact of CRM on students' attitudes towards brands	: Statements B1 – B8
Influence of CRM on purchase decisions	: Statements B9 – B16
Influence of CRM on brand image	: Statements B17 – B24
Impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial	: Statements B25 – B32
Impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour	: Statements B33 – B37
Effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty	: Statements B38 – B42
Impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions	: Statements B43 – B48
Influence of eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes	: Statements B49 – B52

Table 4.3 outlines the frequency distribution of the Likert scale items (Statements B1 – B8) for the first objective of the study, which is to determine if CRM has an effect on UKZN students' attitudes towards brands.

Table 4.3

Descriptive Statistics: Frequency distribution of the scale items – Objective 1

B1 - I have a favourable attitude towards brands that participate in CRM initiatives.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	9	3,4
Disagree	21	8
Neither agree nor disagree	55	21,1
Agree	119	45,6
Strongly Agree	57	21,8
Total	261	100

Table 4.3 (Continued)

Descriptive Statistics: Frequency distribution of the scale items – Objective 1

B2 - I regularly make donations to causes that are partnered with brands.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	23	8,8
Disagree	84	32,2
Neither agree nor disagree	65	24,9
Agree	81	31
Strongly Agree	8	3,1
Total	261	100
B3 - I am sceptical of brands that are involved in CRM initiatives.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	34	13
Disagree	87	33,3
Neither agree nor disagree	87	33,3
Agree	43	16,5
Strongly Agree	10	3,8
Total	261	100
B4 - The size of the donation that a brand contributes towards a charity/non-profit organisation influences my purchasing decisions of that brand.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	34	13
Disagree	78	29,9
Neither agree nor disagree	45	17,2
Agree	74	28,4
Strongly Agree	30	11,5
Total	261	100
B5 - I support brands that make a sizeable contribution to a charity/non-profit organisation.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	3	1,1
Disagree	19	7,3
Neither agree nor disagree	48	18,4
Agree	127	48,7
Strongly Agree	64	24,5
Total	261	100
B6 - The brands' choice of cause to partner with influences my purchasing decisions.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	16	6,1
Disagree	59	22,6
Neither agree nor disagree	80	30,7
Agree	87	33,3
Strongly Agree	19	7,3
Total	261	100

Table 4.3 (Continued)

Descriptive Statistics: Frequency distribution of the scale items – Objective 1

B7 - I prefer supporting CRM initiatives that fit with the image of the brand.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	5	1,9
Disagree	38	14,6
Neither agree nor disagree	76	29,1
Agree	108	41,4
Strongly Agree	34	13
Total	261	100
B8 - I consider cause-related marketing as a good way for brands/companies to invest in the community and support non-profit organisations.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	3	1,1
Disagree	12	4,6
Neither agree nor disagree	24	9,2
Agree	134	51,3
Strongly Agree	88	33,7
Total	261	100

In terms of the respondents' perceptions of the *impact of CRM on students' attitudes towards brands*, as shown in Table 4.3, the majority (67.4%) of respondents stated that they have a favourable attitude towards brands that participate in CRM initiatives. However, only 34.1% of respondents regularly make donations to causes that are partnered with brands, whilst 24.9% were indifferent and 41% of respondents do not regularly make donations. The results of the study indicate that the majority (46.3%) of the respondents are not sceptical of brands that are involved in CRM initiatives. Additionally, 42.9% of the respondents are not influenced by the size of the donation that a brand contributes towards a charity or non-profit organisation when making their purchasing decision, whereas 39.9% of the respondents are cognisant of the donation size. Furthermore, the study found that the majority of respondents (73.2%) support brands that make a sizeable contribution to a charity/non-profit organisation. However, only 40.6% of respondents' purchasing decisions are influenced by the brands' choice of cause to partner with. The results also show that more than half of the respondents (54.4%) prefer supporting CRM initiatives that fit with the image of the brand. The results of this study show that the majority of the respondents (85%) consider cause-related marketing as a good way for brands or companies to invest in the community and support non-profit organisations.

Table 4.4 outlines the frequency distribution of the Likert scale items (Statements B9 – B17) for the second objective of the study, which is to uncover whether or not CRM influences students' decisions to purchase brands that support certain causes.

Table 4.4

Descriptive Statistics: Frequency distribution of the scale items – Objective 2

B9 - I prefer supporting brands that are involved in CRM initiatives.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	7	2,7
Disagree	25	9,6
Neither agree nor disagree	93	35,6
Agree	98	37,5
Strongly Agree	38	14,6
Total	261	100
B10 - I consider whether or not a brand has a CRM campaign/initiative when making a purchase decision.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	33	12,6
Disagree	102	39,1
Neither agree nor disagree	75	28,7
Agree	38	14,6
Strongly Agree	13	5
Total	261	100
B11 - I have purchased brands that were affiliated to charity organisations or non-profit organisations.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	11	4,2
Disagree	42	16,1
Neither agree nor disagree	36	13,8
Agree	127	48,7
Strongly Agree	45	17,2
Total	261	100
B12 - I am willing to purchase a brand that is involved in CRM irrespective of price.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	31	11,9
Disagree	64	24,5
Neither agree nor disagree	62	23,8
Agree	81	31
Strongly Agree	23	8,8
Total	261	100

Table 4.4 (Continued)

Descriptive Statistics: Frequency distribution of the scale items – Objective 2

B13 - I am willing to purchase a brand that is involved in CRM irrespective of quality.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	58	22,2
Disagree	93	35,6
Neither agree nor disagree	52	19,9
Agree	40	15,3
Strongly Agree	18	6,9
Total	261	100
B14 - I have switched to an alternative brand in order to support the CRM initiative that the brand was involved in.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	23	8,8
Disagree	113	43,3
Neither agree nor disagree	67	25,7
Agree	47	18
Strongly Agree	11	4,2
Total	261	100
B15 - I usually have high levels of satisfaction after purchasing from a brand with a CRM initiative.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	9	3,4
Disagree	45	17,2
Neither agree nor disagree	110	42,1
Agree	74	28,4
Strongly Agree	23	8,8
Total	261	100
B16 - Brands with CRM initiatives have a large influence on my purchase decisions.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	17	6,5
Disagree	74	28,4
Neither agree nor disagree	92	35,2
Agree	56	21,5
Strongly Agree	22	8,4
Total	261	100

In terms of the *influence of CRM on purchase decisions*, depicted in Table 4.4, more than half of the respondents (52.1%) prefer supporting brands that are involved in CRM initiatives, whilst 51.7% are cognisant of whether a brand is affiliated to a CRM campaign when making purchase decisions. The majority of the respondents (65.9%) affirm that they have previously purchased brands that were affiliated to charity organisations or non-profit organisations. However, the study's results reveal mixed responses regarding students' willingness to

purchase a brand that is involved in a CRM initiative irrespective of price. In terms of the results, 39.8% of respondents show willingness to purchase a brand irrespective of price, 23.8% being indifferent and 36.4% of participants being cognisant of prices. The study also found that a majority of respondents (57.8%) are unwilling to purchase a brand that is involved in CRM irrespective of quality. In addition, the results of the study reveal that more than half of the respondents (52.1%) have switched to an alternative brand in order to support CRM initiatives that the brand was involved in. The majority (42.1%) of the respondents remained indifferent regarding their levels of satisfaction after purchasing a brand that was linked to a CRM initiative.

Table 4.5 outlines the frequency distribution of the Likert scale items (Statements B17 – B24) for the third objective of the study, which is to determine whether or not CRM enhances the image of brands in the minds of UKZN students.

Table 4.5

Descriptive Statistics: Frequency distribution of the scale items – Objective 3

B17 - I believe that a brand has a better image if it's involved in CRM initiatives.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	7	2,7
Disagree	21	8
Neither agree nor disagree	55	21,1
Agree	133	51,0
Strongly Agree	45	17,2
Total	261	100
B18 - I believe that if there is a better fit between a brand and cause/charity/non-profit organisation, then the image of the brand will be enhanced.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	5	1,9
Disagree	12	4,6
Neither agree nor disagree	35	13,4
Agree	145	55,6
Strongly Agree	64	24,5
Total	261	100

Table 4.5 (Continued)

Descriptive Statistics: Frequency distribution of the scale items – Objective 3

B19 - I trust brands that are affiliated to CRM causes.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	6	2,3
Disagree	21	8
Neither agree nor disagree	90	34,5
Agree	119	45,6
Strongly Agree	25	9,6
Total	261	100
B20 - I view brands that are affiliated with CRM initiatives more favourably than brands that do not support causes.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	10	3,8
Disagree	42	16,1
Neither agree nor disagree	80	30,7
Agree	92	35,2
Strongly Agree	37	14,2
Total	261	100
B21 - I am more willing to support a brand's partnership with a cause if the brand has a favourable brand image.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	9	3,4
Disagree	16	6,1
Neither agree nor disagree	53	20,3
Agree	139	53,3
Strongly Agree	44	16,9
Total	261	100
B22 - I believe that a brand can improve its brand image by partnering with a social cause.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	3	1,1
Disagree	9	3,4
Neither agree nor disagree	23	8,8
Agree	146	55,9
Strongly Agree	80	30,7
Total	261	100
B23 - I believe that brands that are involved in CRM initiatives are credible.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	6	2,3
Disagree	21	8
Neither agree nor disagree	84	32,2
Agree	117	44,8
Strongly Agree	33	12,6
Total	261	100

Table 4.5 (Continued)

Descriptive Statistics: Frequency distribution of the scale items – Objective 3

B24 - I think that partnering with a cause or charity does not have any influence on brand image.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	46	17,6
Disagree	127	48,7
Neither agree nor disagree	48	18,4
Agree	29	11,1
Strongly Agree	11	4,2
Total	261	100

In terms of *the influence of CRM on brand image*, as shown in Table 4.5, the majority (68.2%) of the respondents believe that a brand has a better image if it's involved in CRM initiatives. In addition, the majority (80.1%) of respondents believe that, if there is a better fit between a brand and a cause/charity/non-profit organisation, then the image of the brand will be enhanced. More than half (55.2%) of the respondents affirm that they trust brands that are affiliated to CRM causes. According to the results of the study, there were mixed responses regarding whether or not brands that are affiliated to CRM initiatives are viewed more favourably than brands that do support causes, with approximately half (49.4%) of respondents affirming that brands are viewed more favourably, whilst 30.7% of respondents were indifferent in this regard. The results of the study further indicate that 70.2% of respondents are more willing to support a brand's partnership with a cause if the brand has a favourable brand image, whilst the majority of respondents (86.6%) believe that a brand can improve its brand image by partnering with a social cause. Furthermore, a fair proportion of the respondents (57.4%) believe that brands that are involved in CRM initiatives are credible. The majority of respondents (66.3%) affirm that partnering with a cause or charity will definitely have a positive influence on a brand's image.

Table 4.6 outlines the frequency distribution of the Likert scale items (Statements B25 – B32) for the fourth objective of the study, which is to determine the impact that CRM has on creating brand awareness and encouraging brand trial of brands that UKZN students are unfamiliar with.

Table 4.6

Descriptive Statistics: Frequency distribution of the scale items – Objective 4

B25 - I will make purchases of brands that I am not familiar with, if they are involved in a CRM initiative.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	32	12,3
Disagree	84	32,2
Neither agree nor disagree	87	33,3
Agree	48	18,4
Strongly Agree	10	3,8
Total	261	100
B26 - I have become aware of brands from the CRM campaign that they were involved in.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	10	3,8
Disagree	67	25,7
Neither agree nor disagree	77	29,5
Agree	90	34,5
Strongly Agree	17	6,5
Total	261	100
B27 - I would try a new brand if it's involved in a CRM initiative.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	8	3,1
Disagree	37	14,2
Neither agree nor disagree	73	28,0
Agree	124	47,5
Strongly Agree	19	7,3
Total	261	100
B28 - I will not support an unknown brand even if it is involved in a CRM initiative.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	30	11,5
Disagree	77	29,5
Neither agree nor disagree	96	36,8
Agree	47	18
Strongly Agree	11	4,2
Total	261	100
B29 - I am willing to try a new brand that is involved in CRM regardless of my brand preferences.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	13	5
Disagree	58	22,2
Neither agree nor disagree	65	24,9
Agree	106	40,6
Strongly Agree	19	7,3
Total	261	100

Table 4.6 (Continued)**Descriptive Statistics: Frequency distribution of the scale items – Objective 4**

B30 - I have previously purchased a new brand because that brand had a joint CRM campaign with a cause that I support.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	19	7,3
Disagree	86	33
Neither agree nor disagree	75	28,7
Agree	64	24,5
Strongly Agree	17	6,5
Total	261	100
B31 - Through a CRM campaign I was encouraged to purchase a new or unknown brand.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	23	8,8
Disagree	70	26,8
Neither agree nor disagree	67	25,7
Agree	87	33,3
Strongly Agree	14	5,4
Total	261	100
B32 - I believe that CRM is effective in building awareness for a brand.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	2	0,8
Disagree	11	4,2
Neither agree nor disagree	43	16,5
Agree	152	58,2
Strongly Agree	53	20,3
Total	261	100

In terms of the *impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial*, as shown in Table 4.6, the results of the study found that less than half of the respondents (44.5%) would not purchase brands that they were unfamiliar with, even if they are involved in CRM initiatives. The study also found that the majority (41%) of respondents have become aware of brands from the CRM campaigns they have been involved in. A fair proportion of the respondents (54.8%) are likely to try a new brand if it's involved in a CRM initiative. Additionally, the study found that the majority of respondents (41%) are likely to support an unknown brand that was affiliated to a CRM initiative. The results of the study further indicate that 47.9% of respondents are willing to try a new brand that is involved in a CRM initiative, regardless of their brand preferences. However, the results of the study reveal that 40.3% of the respondents did not previously purchase a new brand that was affiliated to a cause that they supported whereas, 31% of

respondents had made previous purchases. The majority of respondents (78.5%) believed that CRM is effective in building awareness for a brand.

Table 4.7 outlines the frequency distribution of the Likert scale items (Statements B33 – B37) for the fifth objective of the study, which is to ascertain whether or not UKZN students will switch to a brand that is involved in CRM marketing initiatives if price and quality is inconsequential to their purchase decisions.

Table 4.7

Descriptive Statistics: Frequency distribution of the scale items – Objective 5

B34 - I will switch to another brand if that brand is affiliated to a cause that I support.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	6	2,3
Disagree	31	11,9
Neither agree nor disagree	84	32,2
Agree	109	41,8
Strongly Agree	31	11,9
Total	261	100
B35 - I will switch to a brand that is involved in a CRM initiative provided that it is a good quality brand.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	10	3,8
Disagree	16	6,1
Neither agree nor disagree	29	11,1
Agree	144	55,2
Strongly Agree	62	23,8
Total	261	100
B36 - I have previously switched to a brand that was associated with a cause that I supported.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	23	8,8
Disagree	82	31,4
Neither agree nor disagree	71	27,2
Agree	74	28,4
Strongly Agree	11	4,2
Total	261	100

Table 4.7 (Continued)

Descriptive Statistics: Frequency distribution of the scale items – Objective 5

B37 - I am unlikely to switch to a brand that is involved in a CRM initiative.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	21	8
Disagree	102	39,1
Neither agree nor disagree	94	36,0
Agree	38	14,6
Strongly Agree	6	2,3
Total	261	100
B38 - I am likely to switch to a brand that is affiliated to a cause that I support provided that the brand is affordable.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	4	1,5
Disagree	19	7,3
Neither agree nor disagree	35	13,4
Agree	146	55,9
Strongly Agree	57	21,8
Total	261	100

With regard to the *impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour*, as shown in Table 4.7, more than half of the respondents (53.7%) claim that they will switch to another brand if that brand is affiliated to a cause that they support, whilst the majority (79%) of respondents affirm that they would switch to a brand that is involved in a CRM initiative provided that it is a good quality brand. However, only 32.6% of respondents have previously switched to a brand that was associated with a cause that they supported, whilst 40.2% of respondents did not engage in brand switching behaviour previously. Furthermore, 47.1% of respondents are likely to switch to brands that are involved in CRM initiatives, whilst 36% of respondents are indifferent. Furthermore, the majority of respondents (77.7%) did state that they were likely to switch to a brand that is affiliated to a cause that they support, provided that the brand is affordable.

Table 4.8 outlines the frequency distribution of the Likert scale items (Statements B38 – B42) for the sixth objective of the study, which is to uncover UKZN students' perceptions of the effectiveness of CRM initiatives in building and maintaining brand loyalty.

Table 4.8

Descriptive Statistics: Frequency distribution of the scale items – Objective 6

B38 - I believe that CRM is an effective means of enhancing brand loyalty.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	5	1,9
Disagree	21	8
Neither agree nor disagree	42	16,1
Agree	145	55,6
Strongly Agree	48	18,4
Total	261	100
B39 - I believe that brands will retain their loyal patrons by affiliating themselves to charities/non-profit organisations.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	5	1,9
Disagree	22	8,4
Neither agree nor disagree	53	20,3
Agree	134	51,3
Strongly Agree	47	18
Total	261	100
B40 - I believe that I will become loyal to a brand that is involved in CRM initiatives.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	11	4,2
Disagree	35	13,4
Neither agree nor disagree	87	33,3
Agree	95	36,4
Strongly Agree	33	12,6
Total	261	100
B41 - I am likely to become loyal to a brand that partners with causes that are close to my heart.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	6	2,3
Disagree	25	9,6
Neither agree nor disagree	55	21,1
Agree	103	39,5
Strongly Agree	72	27,6
Total	261	100
B42 - I will remain loyal to my preferred brand even if the brand does not have a CRM initiative.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	9	3,4
Disagree	27	10,3
Neither agree nor disagree	88	33,7
Agree	101	38,7
Strongly Agree	36	13,8
Total	261	100

Regarding the *effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty*, as shown in Table 4.8, the majority (74%) of the respondents believe that CRM is an effective means of enhancing brand loyalty, whilst 69.3% of the respondents believe that brands will retain their loyal patrons by affiliating themselves to charities or non-profit organisations. The results of the study further indicate that less than half (49%) of the respondents are likely to become loyal to a brand that is involved in CRM initiatives, whilst 33.3% of the respondents felt indifferent in this regard. The study also found that the majority (67.1%) of respondents were likely to become loyal to a brand that partners with causes that are close to their heart. Approximately half of the respondents (52.5%) stated that they would remain loyal to their preferred brand even if the brand is not linked to a CRM initiative, whilst 33.7% felt indifferent in this regard.

Table 4.9 outlines the frequency distribution of the Likert scale items (Statements B43 – B48) for the seventh objective of the study, which is to determine whether or not brand communication on social media about CRM initiatives has influenced UKZN students' perceptions of the brand and purchase decisions.

Table 4.9

Descriptive Statistics: Frequency distribution of the scale items – Objective 7

B43 - I have purchased a brand after seeing information about its involvement in CRM initiatives that was publicised on social media.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	19	7,3
Disagree	76	29,1
Neither agree nor disagree	57	21,8
Agree	82	31,4
Strongly Agree	27	10,3
Total	261	100
B44 - I often rely on information on social media when making my purchase decisions.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	24	9,2
Disagree	46	17,6
Neither agree nor disagree	47	18
Agree	104	39,8
Strongly Agree	40	15,3
Total	261	100

Table 4.9 (Continued)

Descriptive Statistics: Frequency distribution of the scale items – Objective 7

B45 - I believe that companies need to use social media in order to positively influence the perceptions of brands that are involved in CRM initiatives.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	9	3,4
Disagree	10	3,8
Neither agree nor disagree	30	11,5
Agree	110	42,1
Strongly Agree	102	39,1
Total	261	100
B46 - I have often been driven by guilt to make a purchase and donation after I have seen brands' CRM initiatives on social media.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	38	14,6
Disagree	76	29,1
Neither agree nor disagree	62	23,8
Agree	72	27,6
Strongly Agree	13	5
Total	261	100
B47 - I am likely to purchase a brand after seeing the impact of its CRM initiatives on social media.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	10	3,8
Disagree	35	13,4
Neither agree nor disagree	60	23
Agree	129	49,4
Strongly Agree	27	10,3
Total	261	100
B48 - I have formed a positive attitude towards brands after seeing the impact of their CRM initiatives online.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	6	2,3
Disagree	20	7,7
Neither agree nor disagree	55	21,1
Agree	142	54,4
Strongly Agree	38	14,6
Total	261	100

In terms of the *impact of social media brand communication about CRM initiatives on purchase decisions*, as shown in Table 4.9, 41.7% of respondents affirm that they have purchased a brand after seeing information about its involvement in CRM initiatives that were publicised on social media, whilst 21.8% of respondents were indifferent and 36.4% of respondents did not make purchases. More than half of the respondents (55.1%) often rely on

information on social media when making purchase decisions, whilst the majority of respondents (81.2%) believe that companies need to use social media in order to positively influence the perceptions of brands that are involved in CRM initiatives. However, less than half of the respondents (43.7%) claim that they are not often driven by guilt to make a purchase or donation after they have seen brands' CRM initiatives on social media, whilst 23.8% are impartial in this regard and approximately a third (32.6%) of respondents affirm that they have been driven by guilt to make purchases. According to the results of the study, a majority (59.7%) of respondents have stated that they are likely to purchase a brand after seeing the impact of its CRM initiatives on social media. In addition, a majority (69%) of respondents have formed a positive attitude towards brands after seeing the impact of their CRM initiatives online.

Table 4.10 outlines the frequency distribution of the Likert scale items (Statements B49 – B52) for the eighth objective of the study, which is to determine what influences WOM and eWOM have on UKZN students' purchase decisions of brands that support certain causes.

Table 4.10

Descriptive Statistics: Frequency distribution of the scale items – Objective 8

B49 - Word-of-mouth (WOM) and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) influences my purchase decisions of brands that are involved in CRM.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	6	2,3
Disagree	39	14,9
Neither agree nor disagree	60	23
Agree	107	41
Strongly Agree	49	18,8
Total	261	100
B50 - I am likely to purchase a brand that has positive reviews about its CRM initiatives.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	4	1,5
Disagree	22	8,4
Neither agree nor disagree	36	13,8
Agree	141	54
Strongly Agree	58	22,2
Total	261	100

Table 4.10 (Continued)**Descriptive Statistics: Frequency distribution of the scale items – Objective 8**

B52 - I am likely to purchase a brand that is affiliated to a cause through the recommendation of family and friends.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	4	1,5
Disagree	15	5,7
Neither agree nor disagree	32	12,3
Agree	153	58,6
Strongly Agree	57	21,8
Total	261	100
B52 - I will encourage family and friends to purchase brands that are involved in CRM initial initiatives.		
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	8	3,1
Disagree	13	5
Neither agree nor disagree	52	19,9
Agree	122	46,7
Strongly Agree	66	25,3
Total	261	100

With regard to the *influence of WOM and eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes*, as shown in Table 4.10, the majority of respondents (59.8%) believe that word-of-mouth (WOM) and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) influence their purchase decisions of brands that are involved in CRM initiatives. The majority of the respondents (76.2%) affirm that they are likely to purchase a brand that has positive reviews about its CRM initiatives. The study also found that a large majority of the respondents (80.4%) are likely to purchase a brand that is affiliated to a cause through the recommendation of family and friends. Furthermore, 72% of respondents reveal that they are prone to encouraging family and friends to purchase brands that are involved in CRM initiatives.

4.2.2. INFERENCE STATISTICS

4.2.2.1. UKZN Student Perceptions of the Key Dimensions of the Study

Hypothesis 1:

There exists significant intercorrelations amongst the key dimensions (impact of CRM on students' attitudes towards brands, influence of CRM on purchase decisions, influence of CRM on brand image, impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial, impact of CRM on brand

switching behaviour, effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty, impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions and influence of WOM and eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes) of the study relating to UKZN students, respectively (Table 4.11).

Table 4.11
Correlation: Key Dimensions of the Study

		Attitudes	Purchase Decisions	Brand Image	Brand Awareness and Trial	Brand Switching Behaviour	Building Brand Loyalty	SM Brand Communication	WOM and eWOM
Attitudes	r	1,000							
	p								
Purchase Decisions	r	0.557	1,000						
	p	0,000**							
Brand Image	r	0.509	0.495	1,000					
	p	0,000**	0,000**						
Brand Awareness and Trial	r	0.418	0.588	0.368	1,000				
	p	0,000**	0,000**	0,000**					
Brand Switching Behaviour	r	0.334	0.328	0.327	0.401	1,000			
	p	0,000**	0,000**	0,000**	0,000**				
Building Brand Loyalty	r	0.500	0.472	0.529	0.327	0.477	1,000		
	p	0,000**	0,000**	0,000**	0,000**	0,000**			
SM Brand Communication	r	0.397	0.390	0.494	0.423	0.399	0.450	1,000	
	p	0,000**	0,000**	0,000**	0,000**	0,000**	0,000**		
WOM and eWOM	r	0.476	0.385	0.494	0.348	0.349	0.560	0.535	1,000
	p	0,000**	0,000**	0,000**	0,000**	0,000**	0,000**	0,000**	

** p < 0.01 * p < 0.05

The results shown in Table 4.11 reveal that all the constructs are positively correlated to each other. Table 4.3 indicates that, at the 1% level of significance, there is a significant positive relationship between the impact of CRM on students' attitudes towards brands and the influence of CRM on purchase decisions, the influence of CRM on brand image, the impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial, the impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour, the effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty, the impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions and the influence of WOM and eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes. The implications of the positive, significant relationships are that UKZN students who have positive attitudes towards brands that are

affiliated to cause-related marketing initiatives are more inclined to purchase these brands, encourage family and friends to purchase these brands and are likely to build loyalty towards brands that support causes.

As evident in Table 4.11, there is a significant positive relationship between the influence of CRM on purchase decisions and the influence of CRM on brand image, the impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial, the impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour, the effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty, the impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions and the influence of WOM and eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes, respectively, at the 1% level of significance. The implication is that UKZN students' whose purchase decisions are influenced by CRM initiatives are likely to have a positive image of brands that support causes, thereby, increasing brand loyalty. Furthermore, these respondents are more likely to spread positive WOM and eWOM about the brands that are linked to cause-related marketing initiatives.

Table 4.11 indicates that there is a significant positive relationship between the influence of CRM on brand image and the impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial, the impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour, the effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty, the impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions and the influence of WOM and eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes, respectively, at the 1% level of significance. The inference is that brands that are involved in cause-related marketing initiatives are perceived by UKZN students as being better able to enhance brand image, brand awareness and encourage brand trials which in turn may encourage brand switching behaviour amongst consumers.

As indicated in Table 4.11, there is a significant positive relationship between the impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial and the impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour, the effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty, the impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions and the influence of WOM and eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes, respectively, at the 1% level of significance. The implications of the positive, significant relationships are that UKZN students who are aware of brands that are involved in CRM initiatives through social media communications, are more likely to engage in brand trial and brand switching behaviour in order to support the brand that is linked to CRM initiatives. Furthermore, these students are

prone to sharing information about brands that are involved in CRM initiatives in order to persuade their families and friends to support such brands.

Table 4.11 reflects that there is a significant, positive relationship between the impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour and the effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty, the impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions and the influence of WOM and eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes, respectively, at the 1% level of significance. The implication of the positive, significant relationship is that UKZN students are likely to switch to brands that support CRM initiatives provided that these brands are both affordable and of a good quality.

Table 4.11 indicates that, at the 1% level of significance, there is a significant, positive relationship between the effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty and the impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions and the influence of WOM and eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes. The inference is that by partnering with a CRM initiative, consumers believe that brand loyalty is enhanced and that brands are able to build loyalty by communicating their CRM initiatives through social media, which in turn results in positive WOM and eWOM.

Table 4.11 reflects that there is a significant, positive relationship between the impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions and the influence of WOM and eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes, respectively, at the 1% level of significance. The implication is that consumers' purchase decisions are more likely to be influenced by WOM and eWOM when a brand actively communicates their CRM initiatives on social media.

From the findings in Table 4.11, there seems to be moderate relationships between the following constructs:

- The impact of CRM on students' attitudes towards brands and the influence of CRM on purchase decisions ($r = 0.557$).
- Effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty and the influence of WOM and eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes ($r = 0.560$).

- Impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions and the influence of WOM and eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes ($r = 0.535$).
- Influence of CRM on brand image and the effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty ($r = 0.529$).
- Influence of CRM on purchase decisions and the impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial ($r = 0.588$).
- Impact of CRM on students' attitudes towards brands and the effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty ($r = 0.500$).
- Impact of CRM on students' attitudes towards brands and the influence of CRM on brand image ($r = 0.509$).

From the results in Table 4.11, Hypothesis 1 may be accepted.

4.2.2.2. Key Dimensions of the Study and Biographical Variables

Hypothesis 2:

There is a significant difference in the perceptions of UKZN students, varying in biographical profiles (gender, age, race, educational level, and college) regarding each dimension of the study (impact of CRM on students' attitudes towards brands, the influence of CRM on purchase decisions, the influence of CRM on brand image, the impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial, the impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour, the effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty, the impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions and the influence of WOM and eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes), respectively (Tables 4.12 to 4.17).

Table 4.12**Mann-Whitney U-Test: Key Dimensions of the Study and Gender**

Key Dimensions of the Study	Mann-Whitney U	Z	P value
Impact of CRM on students' attitudes towards brands	4190,000	-0,525	0,599
Influence of CRM on purchase decisions	3700,500	-1,641	0,101
Influence of CRM on brand image	4253,000	-0,382	0,703
Impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial	4225,000	-0,445	0,656
Impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour	4409,000	-0,025	0,980
Effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty	4024,500	-0,906	0,365
Impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions	4129,500	-0,664	0,507
Influence of eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes	3879,500	-1,246	0,213

**p<0.01

*p<0.05

The results in Table 4.12 indicate that there is no significant difference in the perceptions of UKZN students varying in gender. The results in Table 4.12 reveal that there is no significant difference in the impact of CRM on students' attitudes towards brands, influence of CRM on purchase decisions, influence of CRM on brand image, impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial, impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour, effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty, impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions and influence of eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes amongst respondents' gender.

Table 4.13**Kruskal-Wallis One-way ANOVA: Key Dimensions of the Study and Age**

Key Dimensions of the Study	Chi-Square	P-value
Impact of CRM on students' attitudes towards brands	2,346	0,504
Influence of CRM on purchase decisions	2,499	0,475
Influence of CRM on brand image	1,806	0,614
Impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial	4,052	0,256
Impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour	3,640	0,303
Effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty	4,396	0,222
Impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions	18,020	0,000**
Influence of eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes	7,899	0,048*

**p<0.01

*p<0.05

The results shown in Table 4.13 indicate that there is a significant difference in the perceptions of UKZN students varying in age regarding the impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions, at the 1% level of significance. The results also show that there is a significant difference in the perceptions of UKZN students varying in age regarding the influence of WOM and eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes, at the 5% level of significance. No other significant differences exist. In order to determine where the significant differences lie, mean analyses were undertaken (Table 4.14).

Table 4.14**Mean Analyses: Key Dimensions of the Study and Gender**

Key Dimensions of the Study	Age	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions	18-21	3,386	0,625	182
	22-25	3,600	0,610	68
	26-29	2,938	0,563	8
	30-33	2,667	0,726	3
	Total	3,420	0,635	261
Influence of WOM and eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes	18-21	3,791	0,627	182
	22-25	3,934	0,712	68
	26-29	3,375	0,641	8
	30-33	3,667	1,528	3
	Total	3,814	0,666	261

In terms of the impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions, the results of this study (Table 4.14) indicate that UKZN students from the 22 to 25 year age category (mean = 3,600) have a greater likelihood of making purchase decisions based on CRM communication on social media. UKZN students from the 30 to 33 year age category (mean = 2,667) are less influenced by the CRM communication on social media when making their purchase decisions. In addition, students from the 22 to 25 year age category (mean = 3,934) are more prone to be influenced by WOM and eWOM about brands that support causes when making purchase decisions as compared to the other age categories.

Table 4.15**Kruskal-Wallis One-way ANOVA: Key Dimensions of the Study and Race**

Key Dimensions of the Study	Chi-Square	P-value
Impact of CRM on students' attitudes towards brands	6,422	0,093
Influence of CRM on purchase decisions	11,470	0,009**
Influence of CRM on brand image	2,869	0,412
Impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial	11,077	0,011*
Impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour	7,955	0,047*
Effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty	5,845	0,119
Impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions	10,584	0,014*
Influence of eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes	10,649	0,014*

**p<0.01

*p<0.05

As outlined in Table 4.15, there is a significant difference in the perceptions of UKZN students varying in race regarding the influence of CRM on purchase decisions at the 1% level of significance and the impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial, impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour, impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions and the influence of WOM and eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes, at the 5% level of significance, respectively. No other significant differences exist.

Mean analyses were conducted in order to assess where the significant differences lie (Table 4.16).

Table 4.16**Mean Analyses: Key Dimensions of the Study and Race**

Key Dimensions of the Study	Race	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Influence of CRM on purchase decisions	Black	3,034	0,629	204
	Coloured	2,926	0,649	4
	Indian	2,969	0,807	48
	White	3,167	0,617	5
	Total	3,005	0,638	261
Impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial	Black	3,104	0,511	204
	Coloured	3,217	0,490	4
	Indian	2,922	0,966	48
	White	3,375	0,661	5
	Total	3,131	0,526	261
Impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour	Black	3,447	0,459	204
	Coloured	3,300	0,566	4
	Indian	3,133	1,286	48
	White	3,358	0,512	5
	Total	3,386	0,625	261
Impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions	Black	3,600	0,610	204
	Coloured	2,938	0,563	4
	Indian	2,667	0,726	48
	White	3,420	0,635	5
	Total	3,791	0,627	261
Influence of eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes	Black	3,934	0,712	204
	Coloured	3,375	0,641	4
	Indian	3,667	1,528	48
	White	3,814	0,666	5
	Total	3,034	0,629	261

The results in Table 4.16 indicate that White (mean = 3,167) and Black (mean = 3,034) students are more cognisant of CRM initiatives when making purchase decisions than the other race groups. In addition, White (mean = 3,375) and Coloured (mean = 3,217) students are of a strong belief that CRM initiatives enhance brand awareness and brand trial than the other race groups.

Furthermore, the results in Table 4.16 indicate that Black (mean = 3,447) students are more likely to engage in brand switching behaviour and purchase brands that support causes than the other race groups. In addition, Black (mean = 3,600) students place greater emphasis on CRM communication on social media when making purchase decisions than the other race groups. As evident in Table 4.8, Black (mean = 3,934) students are more inclined to be influenced by eWOM about brands that support causes when making their purchase decisions than other race groups.

Table 4.17

Kruskal-Wallis One-way ANOVA: Key Dimensions of the Study and Educational Level

Key Dimensions of the Study	Chi-Square	P-value
Impact of CRM on students' attitudes towards brands	5,930	0,204
Influence of CRM on purchase decisions	4,671	0,323
Influence of CRM on brand image	4,464	0,347
Impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial	4,093	0,394
Impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour	4,613	0,329
Effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty	3,274	0,513
Impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions	4,979	0,289
Influence of eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes	5,893	0,207

**p<0.01

*p<0.05

Table 4.17 indicates that there is no significant difference in the perceptions of UKZN students varying in educational level. As a result, there is no significant difference in the impact of CRM on students' attitudes towards brands, influence of CRM on purchase decisions, influence of CRM on brand image, impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial, impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour, effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty, impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions and influence of WOM and eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes amongst respondents' educational level.

Table 4.18

Kruskal-Wallis One-way ANOVA: Key Dimensions of the Study and College

Key Dimensions of the Study	Chi-Square	P-value
Impact of CRM on students' attitudes towards brands	0,896	0,639
Influence of CRM on purchase decisions	0,884	0,643
Influence of CRM on brand image	1,567	0,457
Impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial	1,590	0,452
Impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour	3,417	0,181
Effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty	0,336	0,845
Impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions	1,000	0,607
Influence of eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes	3,200	0,202

**p<0.01

*p<0.05

As outlined in Table 4.18, the results indicate that there is no significant difference in the perceptions of UKZN students varying in college, meaning there is no significant difference in the impact of CRM on students' attitudes towards brands, influence of CRM on purchase decisions, influence of CRM on brand image, impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial, impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour, effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty, impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions and influence of WOM and eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes amongst respondents' College.

From the results reflected in Tables 4.11 to 4.18, it is evident that Hypothesis 2 may be partially accepted.

4.3. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Statistical analysis of the questionnaire will be undertaken to determine the questionnaire's validity and reliability. Validity will be tested using Factor Analysis and reliability will be tested using Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha.

4.3.1. Validity of the Questionnaire

The validity of the questionnaire was evaluated using factor analysis, as an instrument to measure the perceptions that respondents have relating to the key dimensions of the study (impact of CRM on students' attitudes towards brands, the influence of CRM on purchase decisions, the influence of CRM on brand image, the impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial, the impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour, the effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty, the impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions and the influence of WOM and eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes).

4.3.1.1. Factor Analysis

Factor analysis can be defined as “a multivariate technique that confirms the dimensions of the concept that have been operationally defined, as well as indicating which of these items are most appropriate for each dimension” (Sekaran and Bougie (2017:222)). As indicated in the research methodology section of this study, the sample size for the study was computed using the population-to-sample-size table by Sekeran and Bougie (2013), which generated a sample size of 375 subjects. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was computed which, respectively, reflected adequacy (0.854; Approx. Chi-Square = 5033.596) and significance (df = 1326; Sig. = 0.000) as seen in Table 4.11.

Table 4.19
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		0,854
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	5033,596
	df	1326
	Sig.	0,000

The factor loadings for Section B of the questionnaire are presented in Table 4.19. Only the loadings that were greater than 0.4 were considered to be significant. When an item loaded significantly on two factors, only those with the higher loading was considered. All of the conditions were satisfied for factor analysis.

Table 4.20
Validity of Questionnaire: Factor Analysis

ITEMS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
B1	0,486							
B2		0,482						
B3								0,420
B4			0,719					
B5	0,403							
B6			0,564					
B7			0,438					
B8	0,643							
B9	0,404							
B10			0,559					
B11		0,424						
B12						0,758		
B13						0,680		
B14		0,497						
B15		0,480	0,425					
B16			0,688					
B17	0,600							
B18	0,620							
B19	0,477							
B20			0,484					
B21	0,485							
B22	0,620							
B23								
B24				-0,419				
B25		0,419						
B26		0,647						
B27					0,569			
B28					-0,602			

Table 4.20 (Continued)
Validity of Questionnaire: Factor Analysis

B29					0,479			
B30		0,697						
B31		0,652						
B32				0,525				
B33								
B34				0,630				
B35		0,522						
B36				-0,414				
B37				0,598				
B38	0,532							
B39	0,421							
B40			0,501					
B41			0,433	0,430				
B42								0,689
B43		0,579						
B44							0,626	
B45							0,411	
B46							0,452	
B47							0,565	
B48	0,462							
B49							0,439	
B50								
B51								
B52	0,427							
Eigenvalue	10,808	3,802	2,192	1,952	1,709	1,629	1,474	1,446
% of Total Variance	20,784	7,312	4,216	3,754	3,287	3,132	2,835	2,781

The results in Table 4.20 show that 13 items load significantly on Factor 1 and account for 20.78% of the total variance. Of the 13 items, three items relate to the impact of CRM on students' attitudes towards brands, one item pertains to the influence of CRM on purchase decisions, 5 items relate to the influence of CRM on brand image, two items relate to the

effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty, one item relates to the impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions and the other one to the influence of eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes. Since the majority of the items relate to the influence of CRM on brand image, Factor 1 may therefore be labelled likewise.

As indicated in Table 4.20, 10 items load significantly on Factor 2 which accounts for 7.31% of the total variance. Results further indicate that four of the items relate to the impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial, three relate to the influence of CRM on purchase decisions, one item relates to the impact of CRM on students' attitudes towards brands, another item pertains to the impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions, and the last item relates to the impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour. The results indicate that the impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial has the highest loading of (0.697), hence Factor 2 can be labelled the same.

Table 4.20 reveals that Factor 3 has nine items that load significantly and accounts for 4.22% of the total variance. Three items relate to the impact of CRM on students' attitudes towards brands, three other items relate to the influence of CRM on purchase decisions, two items relate to the effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty, and one item relates to influence of CRM on brand image. Since the impact of CRM on students' attitudes towards brands has the highest loading (0.719), Factor 3 can be labelled likewise.

Furthermore, Table 4.20 indicates that four items load significantly on Factor 4 and accounts for 3.75% of the total variance. One item relates to the impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial, two items relate to the impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour and the other item relates to the effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty. The results indicate that the impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour has the highest loading of (0.630), hence, Factor 4 can be labelled likewise.

Table 4.20 reveals that two items load significantly on Factor 5 and account for 3.29 % of the total variance and relate to the impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial. Therefore, Factor 5 can be labelled accordingly.

As evident in Table 4.20, two items load significantly on Factor 6 and accounts for 3.13% of the total variance. More so, these items relate to the influence of CRM on purchase decisions. Therefore, Factor 6 will be labelled accordingly.

The results in Table 4.20 show that five items load significantly on Factor 7 which accounts for 2.83% of the total variance. Four items relate to the impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions and one item to the influence of eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes. Since more items relate to the impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions, Factor 7 may therefore be labelled likewise.

Table 4.20 reveals that two items load significantly on Factor 8 and which accounts for 2.78% of the total variance. One item relates to the impact of CRM on students' attitudes towards brands and the other item to the effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty. Since the effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty has the higher loading (0.689), Factor 8 will be labelled likewise.

From the results obtained in Table 4.20, 2 factors (Factor 2 and Factor 5) were labelled as the impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial. In addition, one factor (Factor 1) was labelled as the influence of CRM on brand image. Another factor (Factor 3) was labelled the impact of CRM on students' attitudes towards brands. Furthermore, one factor (Factor 4) was labelled as the impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour. One factor (Factor 6) was labelled as the influence of CRM on purchase decisions and another factor (Factor 7) as the impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions.

Lastly, one factor (Factors 8) was labelled as the effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty. The key dimension of the study that did not feature as a factor was the influence of eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes. The logical explanation of this could be that some items may have been misperceived as other items by the respondents when answering the questionnaires. For instance, items relating to influence of eWOM on purchasing decisions of brands that support causes may have been diffused in items pertaining to the influence of CRM initiatives on purchase decisions.

4.3.2. Reliability of the Questionnaire

The reliability of the questionnaire was statistically assessed using Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha (Table 4.21). For the scale to be considered reliable and internally consistent in its measurement, the Cronbach Alpha should be above 0.7 (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). A Cronbach Alpha above 0.6 is acceptable (Pallant, 2013).

Table 4.21
Overall Reliability of the Questionnaire: Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
0,902	0,905	52

The reliability of the questionnaire was assessed to measure the consistency of the results. The results reveal a Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha of 0.902 which demonstrates a strong level of inter-item consistency and reliability.

The reliability for individual dimensions were also computed (Table 4.22).

Table 4.22**Overall Reliability of the Questionnaire: Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha**

Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha
Impact of CRM on students' attitudes towards brands	0,554
Influence of CRM on purchase decisions	0,749
Influence of CRM on brand image	0,633
Impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial	0,631
Impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour	0,390
Effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty	0,626
Impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions	0,641
Influence of eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes	0,676

Table 4.22 indicates that the reliability for the dimensions range from 0,390 to 0,749, thereby, indicating that the reliability per dimension ranges from less than moderate (impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour and impact of CRM on students' attitudes towards brands) to moderate (effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty, impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial, influence of CRM on brand image, impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions and influence of eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes) to good (influence of CRM on purchase decisions).

4.4. CONCLUSION

Chapter Four reported on the results of the descriptive and inferential statistics and examined the importance that UKZN students attach to the various key dimensions of the study. Additionally, the reliability and validity were assessed using Factor Analysis and Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha to test the questionnaire. The SPSS results were presented in tabular and graphical forms for more elaborative interpretation of the findings. Chapter 5 will explore and discuss the findings of the study in comparison to various literature.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

5.1.INTRODUCTION

Chapter Five comprises of a discussion of the results that were presented in Chapter Four. Each of the objectives of the study will be outlined, along with a discussion of the outcomes. The chapter outlines the significance that each key dimensions (as per the research objectives) of the study has on the purchasing behaviour of UKZN students, which are, the impact of CRM on students' attitudes towards brands, the influence of CRM on purchase decisions, the influence of CRM on brand image, the impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial, the impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour, the effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty, the impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions and the influence of WOM and eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes.

5.2.UKZN STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE KEY DIMENSIONS OF THE STUDY

Section 5.2 will examine the findings of the study, with regards to the relevant objectives of the study. The first objective aimed to determine if cause-related marketing has an effect on UKZN students' attitudes towards brands. The second objective aimed to uncover whether or not cause-related marketing influences UKZN students' decisions to purchase brands that support causes. The aim of the third objective was to determine whether or not cause-related marketing enhances the image of brands in the minds of UKZN students. The fourth objective focused on determining the impact that cause-related marketing has on creating brand awareness and encouraging brand trial of brands that UKZN students are unfamiliar with. The fifth objective focused on ascertaining whether or not UKZN students will switch to a brand that was involved in cause-related marketing initiatives if price and quality are inconsequential to their purchase decisions. Additionally, the sixth objective aimed to uncover UKZN students' perceptions of the effectiveness of cause-related marketing initiatives in building and maintaining brand loyalty. The seventh objective focused on determining whether or not brand communication content on social media about cause-related marketing initiatives influences UKZN students' perceptions of the brand and purchase decisions. Lastly, the eighth objective aimed at to determine what influence word-of-mouth and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) has on UKZN students' purchase decisions of brands that support certain causes.

5.2.1. THE IMPACT OF CAUSE-RELATED MARKETING ON STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS BRANDS

The first objective of this study was to determine if cause-related marketing has an effect on UKZN students' attitudes towards brands. The study focused on consumer scepticism, donation size, choice of cause and brand-cause fit as elements that may impact attitudes towards brands involved in CRM initiatives and the findings of this objective are discussed in this section. Table 4.3 in Chapter Four refers to the frequency distribution of the scale items.

5.2.1.1. Students' Attitudes

Various aspects of attitudes were investigated in this study. However, a more generalised understanding of student attitudes towards CRM was also gathered through the questionnaires. According to the results of this study, the majority of respondents (67.4%) have a favourable attitude towards brands that participate in CRM initiatives. These results were similar to the findings of a study conducted by Eastman, Smalley, and Warren (2019), which state that young consumers tend to have a more favourable attitude towards brands that forged partnerships with causes, charities and non-profit organisations. Similarly, the results were in line with the findings of a study by Partouche, Vessal, Khelladi, Castellano and Sakka (2018), who stated that young consumers were more receptive towards CRM campaigns and reacted in a more positive manner towards them.

Although many students have a favourable attitude towards CRM initiatives, this study found that 34.1% of students make donations on a regular basis. However, Partouche, *et al.* (2019) found that a majority of young French consumers (67%) view CRM initiatives favourably and show high purchase intentions, making regular contributions towards CRM initiatives. Many young French consumers were found to have previously engaged in at least one charity initiative, as they are concerned with supporting charities and causes and are willing to pay a higher price for products that are involved in CRM initiatives.

The study also found that a large majority of the respondents (85%) consider CRM as a good way for brands or companies to invest in the community and support non-profit organisations. Similarly, Partouche, *et al.* (2019) state that young consumers believe CRM initiatives are a significant way for brands to show that they support causes and non-profit organisations. These young consumers tend to be more aware of social and environmental issues such as poverty,

climate change, the environment or LGBTQ+ rights, and expect companies to show their support (Fromm, 2021). By carrying out CRM initiatives in support of these causes, companies can win the favour of consumers, which can lead to higher purchase intentions and favourable consumer attitudes.

5.2.1.2. Consumer Scepticism

In the context of scepticism, approximately half of the respondents (46.3%) stated that they are not sceptical of brands that are involved in CRM initiatives. However, contrary to this, Eastman *et al.* (2019) found that young consumers are generally more sceptical of CRM campaigns, especially if the brand sells expensive products. Similarly, Hensley, Diddi, and Hyllegard (2019) believe that brands should not latch themselves to a cause, as it leads to scepticism and young consumers questioning the motives of the brand. Elving (2012) agrees, by stating that consumers may feel suspicious as to why brands are choosing to partner with causes.

5.2.1.3. Donation Size

In terms of donation size, this study found that more than a third of the respondents (39.9%) are cognisant of the size of the donation that a brand contributes towards a charity or non-profit organisation. Additionally, this study found that a large majority of respondents (73.2%) do support brands that make a sizeable contribution to a charity or non-profit organisation. Sizeable donations were found to be preferred when consumers purchased high-value products, rather than when the consumer purchased low-value products, such as every day, utilitarian products like soap and toothpaste (Melero and Montaner, 2016). Similarly, the study conducted by Chang and Liu (2012) found that the level of donation made by a company towards a non-profit organisation or charity was a vital part of information for many consumers when they are making a purchase decision, due to there being a link between donation size and consumer scepticism, with consumers trusting brands that make larger donations (Chang and Liu, 2012; Eastman, *et al.*, 2019). However, smaller donation contributions can equate to substantial amounts depending on the number of transactions or purchases that are made.

A similar finding was reported by both Hyllegard, *et al.* (2010) and Lii, Wu and Ding (2013), who found that consumers are influenced by larger donations and may react favourably to CRM initiatives where brands are making considerable donations to the cause that they are partnered

with. Arguably, the study conducted by Human and Terblanche (2012) found that donation size made no significant impact on whether or not young consumers supported the CRM initiative.

5.2.1.4. Choice of Cause

Regarding choice of cause, this study found that more than a third of respondents' (40.6%) purchasing decisions are influenced by the brand's choice of cause to partner with. Consumers are found to identify with causes that relate to relevant issues, such as poverty, climate change, hunger, cancer and LGBTQ+ rights (Eastman, *et al.*, 2019; Fromm, 2021 and Hensley, *et al.*, 2019). Additionally, consumers are more likely to support a CRM initiative if the cause, charity or non-profit organisation is well-known, such as the Nelson Mandela Foundation, Childhood Cancer Foundation (CHOC) or UNICEF (Brand South Africa, 2017).

The study conducted by Robinson, Irmak and Jayachandaran (2012) found that that brands should allow consumers to choose the cause to which the donation is made, as it allows the consumer to have a perceived control over where their money is going and being donated to. However, consumers should only be allowed to choose a cause to donate too if the donation amount is significant, similar to the CRM initiative carried out by SunTrust Bank, where \$100 was donated to a cause of the customers choice when the customer opened a cheque account, as discussed in Chapter Two (Robinson, *et al.*, 2012).

5.2.1.5. Brand-Cause Fit

In the context of brand-cause fit, more than half of the respondents (54.4%) who participated in this study stated that they prefer supporting CRM initiatives that fit with the image of the brand. Similarly, a study conducted by Fazli-Salehi, Torres and Zúñiga (2019) found that consumers have a better response towards CRM initiatives if there is a high level of brand-cause fit, as the partnership gives the impression of being more natural. Furman and Mason (2020) agree, stating that a low brand-cause fit can increase consumer scepticism, which can lead to negative effects on consumer attitudes and purchase intentions. Similarly, Melero and Montaner (2016) found that perceived fit did have a meaningful impact on both the attitude consumers have towards the brand and the credibility of the campaign.

5.2.1.6. Intercorrelations Between Students' Attitudes Towards Brands and Other Key Dimensions of the Study

As outlined in Table 4.3, which tabulated the correlation between the key dimensions of the study in Chapter Four, the results of this study indicate that there is a significant, positive relationship between the impact of CRM on students' attitudes towards brands and the influence of CRM on purchase decisions, the influence of CRM on brand image, the impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial, the impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour, the effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty, the impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions and the influence of WOM and eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes.

The significant relationships infer that UKZN students who have positive attitudes towards brands that are affiliated to cause-related marketing initiatives are more inclined to purchase these brands, encourage family and friends to purchase these brands and are likely to build loyalty towards brands that support causes.

5.2.1.7. Influences of Biographical Variables on Students' Attitudes Towards Brands

The results of this study reveal that the perceptions of UKZN students towards brands involved in CRM initiatives are influenced by certain biographical variables, namely gender, age, race, education level and college. According to the results of this study, there are no significant differences in the attitudes of UKZN students towards brands involved in CRM initiatives varying in gender, age, race, education level and college.

5.2.2. THE INFLUENCE OF CAUSE-RELATED MARKETING ON PURCHASE DECISIONS

The second objective of the study was to uncover whether or not cause-related marketing influences UKZN students' decisions to purchase brands that support certain causes. In this study, factors such as price, quality, alternate brands and post-purchase satisfaction were explored as possible influences on consumer purchase decisions. Table 4.4 in Chapter Four refers to the frequency distribution of the scale items. The findings will be discussed below.

The results of this study reveal that more than half of the respondents (52.1%) prefer supporting brands that are involved in CRM initiatives and are cognisant of whether or not a brand is affiliated to a CRM campaign when making purchase decisions. These findings are similar to those by Patel, Gadhavi and Shukla (2015), who found that consumers may have greater purchase intentions towards brands that are linked to CRM initiatives. Consumers were also found to have greater purchase intentions when CRM initiatives were linked to practical products that satisfy basic human needs (Eastman, *et al.*, 2019). By having a clearer understanding of consumer purchase intentions regarding CRM initiatives, companies are able to better understand consumers and the market as a whole (Agmeka, Wathoni and Santoso, 2019).

The majority of respondents of this study (65.9%) also affirm that they have previously purchased brands that were affiliated to charities or non-profit organisations. Similar results were found in the study conducted by Corbishley and Mason (2011), who stated that a majority of consumers had previously participated in some activity that was linked to raising funds for a charity or cause. However, the study conducted amongst German consumers by Langen, Grebitus and Hartmann (2013) found that a very small number of consumers had previously purchased brands that were linked to CRM initiatives. A recent study conducted by Terblanche, *et al.* (2022) argues that many consumers show intent to purchase from companies involved in CRM initiatives, which challenges older findings such as that of Grebitus, *et al.* (2013).

Regarding price influencing purchase intentions, the results of this study revealed mixed responses regarding students' willingness to purchase a brand that is involved in a CRM initiative irrespective of price, with more than a third of the respondents (36.5%) being cognisant of prices. The majority of respondents in this study were also found to be unwilling to purchase a brand that is involved in CRM irrespective of quality, as many consumers are not willing to make distinct trade-offs when making a purchase (Saber and Karsalari). Consumers were found to be unwilling to buy lower quality goods, regardless of their support for the cause that the company is partnered with. These findings support those by Shree, *et al.* (2017), who revealed that a majority of surveyed consumers are likely to switch to a brand involved in a CRM initiative, however, only if price and quality were more or less the same. Srivastava and Dixit (2017) agree, stating that price plays a crucial role when consumers are making a purchase decision, whilst Lerro, *et al.* (2019) found that young consumers may switch to a CRM

partnered brand if they consider the product to have similar quality to their previous brand choice.

Additionally, regarding the influence of brand switching on purchase intentions, this study revealed that more than half of the respondents (57.8%) have switched to an alternative brand in order to support CRM initiatives that the brand was involved in. Findings by Nelson and Vilela (2017) state that consumers who already purchase a certain product from a competing brand, may consider switching to the sponsor CRM brand. If a consumer passionately supports a certain cause, charity or non-profit organisation, their purchase intentions may be strongly influenced, resulting in them purchasing from an alternate brand, if the brand is linked to a CRM initiative.

Regarding post-purchase satisfaction, more than a third of the respondents of this study (37.2%) experienced high levels of satisfaction after purchasing a brand that was linked to a CRM initiative. These findings are similar to those of Galan-Ladero, Galera-Casquet and Wymer (2013) who stated that consumers who tend to have more positive attitudes towards CRM, may experience greater satisfaction when making a CRM purchase which can lead to repurchases and positive WOM referrals. Consumers feel as if they are contributing to a worthwhile cause when making a CRM purchase, which in turn results in a higher level of post-purchase satisfaction.

5.2.2.1. Intercorrelations Between the Influence of Cause-Related Marketing on Purchase Decisions and Other Key Dimensions of the Study

As outlined in Table 4.3, which tabulated the correlation between the key dimensions of the study in Chapter Four, the results of this study indicate that there is a significant positive relationship between the influence of CRM on purchase decisions and the influence of CRM on brand image, the impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial, the impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour, the effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty, the impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions and the influence of WOM and eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes.

The significant relationships infer that UKZN students' whose purchase decisions are influenced by CRM initiatives, are likely to have a positive image of brands that support causes,

thereby, increasing brand loyalty. Furthermore, these respondents are more likely to spread positive WOM and eWOM about the brands that are linked to cause-related marketing initiatives.

5.2.2.2. Influences of Biographical Variables on the Influence of Cause-Related Marketing on Purchase Decisions

The results of this study reveal that the perceptions of UKZN students of the influence of CRM on purchase decisions are influenced by the biographical variable of race. The results indicate that White and Black students are more cognisant of CRM initiatives when making purchase decisions than other race groups.

5.2.3. THE INFLUENCE OF CAUSE-RELATED MARKETING ON BRAND IMAGE

The third objective of this study was to determine whether or not cause-related marketing enhances the image of brands in the minds of UKZN students. Table 4.5 in Chapter Four refers to the frequency distribution of the scale items. The findings will be discussed below.

With regards to determining whether or not CRM enhances the image of brands in the minds of UKZN students, the majority of respondents of this study (68.2%) believe that a brand has a better image if it's involved in CRM initiatives. In addition, this study revealed that a majority of the respondents (66.3%) believe that partnering with a cause or charity will definitely have a positive influence on a brand's image. These findings support those of Corbishley and Mason (2011), who state that brands and companies will have a better image if they were seen to be in support of a cause. Additionally, this study revealed that a large majority of respondents (80.1%) believe that, if there is a better fit between a cause/charity/non-profit organisation and a brand, then the image of the brand will be enhanced. Similar findings were revealed by Zhang, Scodellaro, Pang, Lo and Xu (2020), who found that a high brand-cause fit leads to enhanced brand image and brand credibility.

Approximately half of the respondents of this study (49.4%) viewed brands that are affiliated to CRM initiatives more favourably than brands that do not support causes. Moreover, a majority of the respondents (70.2%) revealed that they are more willing to support a brand's partnership with a cause if the brand has a favourable brand image. These findings support that of Maceli, Horner, Fogliasso and Zufta (2019), who found that young consumers have positive

impressions of brands that are partnered with causes and charities through CRM campaigns and are willing to make purchases that support causes. The study found that these consumers experienced positive emotions, such as happiness, when making CRM purchases (Maceli, *et al.*, 2019).

This study also found that a large majority of respondents (86.6%) believe that a brand can improve its brand image by partnering with a social cause. Furthermore, this study revealed that a majority of the respondents (57.4%) believe that brands that are involved in CRM initiatives are credible. Additionally, more than half of the respondents of this study (55.2%) affirm that they trust brands that are affiliated with CRM causes. Similarly, a study conducted by Silva, Duarte, Machado and Martins (2020) found that trust plays a large role in the perceived value of CRM. However, the study by Iscioglu and Borak (2019) found that consumers only trust brands that are involved in CRM initiatives if the company appears sincere in its efforts to improve the wellbeing of society. If companies do appear sincere, CRM campaigns can, in fact, improve brand image and purchase intentions (Iscioglu and Borak, 2019). Thus, it can be concluded that brands should aim to improve brand image to increase consumer trust and purchase intentions by carrying out CRM campaigns with credible causes, charities and non-profit organisations in a transparent and genuine manner.

5.2.3.1. Intercorrelations Between the Influence of Cause-Related Marketing on Brand Image and Other Key Dimensions of the Study

As evident in Table 4.3, which tabulated the correlation between the key dimensions of the study in Chapter Four, the results of this study indicate that there is a significant, positive relationship between the influence of CRM on brand image and the impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial, the impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour, the effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty, the impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions and the influence of WOM and eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes.

The significant relationships infer that brands that are involved in cause-related marketing initiatives are perceived by UKZN students as being better able to enhance brand image, brand awareness and encourage brand trials which in turn may encourage brand switching behaviour amongst consumers.

5.2.3.2. Influences of Biographical Variables on the Influence of Cause-Related Marketing on Brand Image

According to the results of this study, there are no significant differences in the perceptions of UKZN students varying in the biographical variables of gender, age, race, education level and college regarding the influence of CRM on brand image. This implies that the respondents' perceptions regarding brand image were not influenced by their biographical variables.

5.2.4. THE IMPACT OF CAUSE-RELATED MARKETING ON BRAND AWARENESS AND BRAND TRIAL

The fourth objective of this study aimed to determine the impact that cause-related marketing has on creating brand awareness and encouraging brand trial of brands that UKZN students are unfamiliar with. Table 4.6 in Chapter Four refers to the frequency distribution of the scale items. The findings of the study are discussed below.

With regard to brand awareness, this study found that less than a third of the respondents (22.2%) would purchase brands that they were unfamiliar with, if the brands are involved in CRM initiatives. Additionally, the study revealed that a majority of the respondents (54.8%) have become aware of brands from the CRM campaigns that they have been involved in. Similarly, Nelson and Vilela (2017) state that unknown brands may benefit more from CRM as consumers may not know much about the brand and are likely to not have already formed associations. CRM initiatives allow brands that are new entrants into the market, or brands that were previously unknown to stand out amongst competitors, thus increasing brand awareness.

The majority of respondents in this study (78.5%) believed that CRM is effective in building awareness for a brand. Additionally, this study revealed that a majority of the respondents (54.8%) are likely to try a new brand if it is involved in a CRM initiative. This is consistent with the findings of Shree, *et al.* (2017), who found that there is a positive correlation between consumers having a positive perception of the CRM initiative and their engagement in brand trial. The study found that brand-cause fit is linked to brand awareness, which impacts the perception consumers have of the brand, which in turn leads to differential positioning and brand trial (Shree, *et al.*, 2017).

The results of this study found that a majority of the respondents (41%) are likely to support an unknown brand that was affiliated to a CRM initiative. Additionally, approximately half of the respondents of this study (47.9%) are willing to try a new brand that is involved in a CRM initiative, regardless of their brand preferences. Nelson and Vilela (2017) found that this may be due to enhanced persuasion through positive effect transfer. The more a consumer is exposed to a CRM initiative, the more likely they are to be encouraged to try the new brand (Nelson and Vilela, 2017).

However, this study revealed that less than a third of respondents (31%) have previously purchased a new brand that was affiliated to a cause that they supported. Similarly, Shree, *et al.* (2017) found that there is a positive correlation between consumers having a positive perception of a brands' CRM initiative and thereafter carrying out brand trial. Due to the new, positive associations that consumers make with brands linked to CRM initiatives encourages brand trial, which can lead to brand loyalty if consumers experience high levels of post-purchase satisfaction.

5.2.4.1. Intercorrelations Between the Impact of Cause-Related Marketing on Brand Awareness and Brand Trial and Other Key Dimensions of the Study

As per Table 4.3, which tabulated the correlation between the key dimensions of the study in Chapter Four, the results of the study indicate that there is a significant, positive relationship between the impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial and the impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour, the effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty, the impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions and the influence of WOM and eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes.

The significant relationships infer that UKZN students who are aware of brands that are involved in CRM initiatives, through social media communications, are more likely to engage in brand trial and brand switching behaviour in order to support the brand that is linked to CRM initiatives. Furthermore, these students are prone to sharing information about brands that are involved in CRM initiatives in order to persuade their families and friends to support such brands.

5.2.4.2. Influences of Biographical Variables on the Impact of Cause-Related Marketing on Brand Awareness and Brand Trial

The results of this study reveal that the perceptions of UKZN students of the impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial are influenced by the biographical variable of race. The results indicate that White and Coloured students are of a stronger belief that CRM initiatives enhance brand awareness and brand trial, compared to other race groups.

5.2.5. THE IMPACT OF CAUSE-RELATED MARKETING ON BRAND SWITCHING BEHAVIOUR

The fifth objective of this study was to ascertain whether or not UKZN students will switch to a brand that is involved in cause-related marketing initiatives if price and quality is inconsequential to their purchase decisions. Table 4.7 in Chapter Four refers to the frequency distribution of the scale items. The findings of the study are discussed below.

In the context of brand switching behaviour, more than half of the respondents (53.7%) of this study claim that they would switch to another brand if that brand is affiliated with a cause that they support. Additionally, a large proportion of respondents of this study (77.7%) were likely to switch to a brand that is affiliated to a cause that they support, provided that the brand is affordable. A majority of the respondents (79%) of this study also stated that they would switch to a brand that is involved in a CRM initiative provided that the brand offers good quality products. These findings support those by Hemat and Yuksel (2014), who found that if price and quality are equal, consumers are likely to switch to a brand that is partnered with a charitable cause. Similarly, a study carried out by Shree, *et al.* (2017) found that a majority of consumers who participated in their study were likely to switch to a brand involved in a CRM initiative if price and quality were more or less the same. One of the top determinants of brand switching is price, as it plays a crucial role when consumers are making a purchasing decision (Srivastava and Dixit, 2017).

This study found that less than half of the respondents (47.1%) were likely to switch to a brand that was involved in a CRM initiative. Additionally, the results of this study revealed that approximately a third of respondents (32.6%) have previously switched to a brand that was associated with a cause that they supported. These results are supported by the findings by Langen, *et al.* (2013), who argued that a reasonable share of consumers did switch from their

regular brand to one that was linked to a CRM initiative in response to promotions made by the brand partnered with a cause, charity or non-profit organisation. However, the study also found that consumers would switch back to their regular brand, once the CRM campaign had ended (Langen, *et al.*, 2013). Similarly, Lerro, *et al.* (2019) found that young consumers may switch to a brand that partakes in CRM initiatives and is partnered with good cause or charity, if they consider the product to have similar quality and characteristics to their usual or previous brand choice.

5.2.5.1. Intercorrelations Between the Impact of Cause-Related Marketing on Brand Switching Behaviour and Other Key Dimensions of the Study

As evident in Table 4.3, which tabulated the correlation between the key dimensions of the study in Chapter Four, the results of the study indicate that there is a significant, positive relationship between the impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour and the effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty, the impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions and the influence of WOM and eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes.

The significant relationships infer that UKZN students are likely to switch to brands that support CRM initiatives provided that these brands are both affordable and of a good quality.

5.2.5.2. Influences of Biographical Variables on the Impact of Cause-Related Marketing on Brand Switching Behaviour

The results of this study reveal that the perceptions of UKZN students of the impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour is solely influenced by the biographical variable of race. Respondents from all race groups were likely to switch to brands involved in CRM initiatives, however, the results indicate that Black students have a higher likelihood of engaging in brand switching behaviour and purchase brands that support causes than any of the other race groups.

5.2.6. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CAUSE-RELATED MARKETING IN BUILDING BRAND LOYALTY

The sixth objective aimed to uncover UKZN students' perceptions of the effectiveness of cause-related marketing initiatives in building and maintaining brand loyalty. Table 4.8 in

Chapter Four refers to the frequency distribution of the scale items. The findings of the study are discussed below.

In the context of understanding the perceptions of UKZN students regarding the influence of CRM on brand loyalty, the results of this study found that a large majority (74%) of the respondents believe that CRM is an effective means of enhancing brand loyalty and approximately half of the respondents (49%) are likely to become loyal to a brand that is involved in CRM initiatives. According to the results of this study, the majority of the respondents (67.1%) were likely to become loyal to a brand that partners with causes that are close to their heart. Similarly, the study by Lerro, *et al.* (2019), found that CRM campaigns may have a bigger influence on the purchase intentions of non-brand loyal consumers, compared to those that are loyal to a particular brand. Consumers were found to have more brand loyalty due to the use of CRM, as long as the firm commits to the campaign in the long-term (Iscioglu and Borak, 2019).

The majority of respondents (69.3%) of this study believe that brands will retain their loyal patrons by affiliating themselves to charities or non-profit organisations. Additionally, the study revealed that approximately half of the respondents (52.5%) would remain loyal to their preferred brand even if the brand is not linked to a CRM initiative. These findings are similar to those revealed by Maceli, *et al.* (2019), who found that millennial consumers would remain loyal to the brand of their choice, regardless of the current image of the brand, as it would be difficult to switch once a relationship is formed.

5.2.6.1. Intercorrelations Between the Effectiveness of Cause-Related Marketing in Building Brand Loyalty and Other Key Dimensions of the Study

As evident in Table 4.3, which tabulated the correlation between the key dimensions of the study in Chapter Four, the results of the study indicate that there is a significant, positive relationship between the effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty and the impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions and the influence of WOM and eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes.

The inference of the significant relationship is that, by partnering with a CRM initiative, consumers believe that brand loyalty is enhanced and that brands can build loyalty by

communicating their CRM initiatives through social media, which in turn results in positive WOM and eWOM.

5.2.6.2. Influences of Biographical Variables on the Effectiveness of Cause-Related Marketing in Building Brand Loyalty

The results of this study reveal that there are no significant differences in the perceptions of UKZN students of the effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty varying in the biographical variables of gender, age, race, education level and college regarding the influence of CRM on brand image. This implies that the respondents' perceptions regarding brand loyalty were not influenced by their biographical variables.

5.2.7. THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA BRAND COMMUNICATION ABOUT CAUSE-RELATED MARKETING ON PURCHASE DECISIONS

The seventh objective of this study was to determine whether or not brand communication content on social media about cause-related marketing initiatives has influenced UKZN students' perceptions of the brand and purchase decisions. Table 4.9 in Chapter Four refers to the frequency distribution of the scale items. The findings of the study are discussed below.

In terms of the impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions, a fair proportion of the respondents (41.7%) of this study have purchased a brand after seeing information about its involvement in CRM initiatives that were publicised on social media. The study also revealed that more than half of the respondents (55.1%) often rely on information on social media when making purchase decisions. This is consistent with the findings of Eastman, *et al.* (2019), who revealed that many young consumers become aware of a brand's CRM initiatives after seeing campaigns on social media and for every five hours that a college student spent on social media, they were able to identify at least one CRM initiative.

The majority of the respondents (81.2%) of this study believe that companies need to use social media in order to positively influence the perceptions of brands that are involved in CRM initiatives. Additionally, this study found that a majority of the respondents (59.7%) are likely to purchase a brand after seeing the impact of its CRM initiatives on social media. Similarly, the findings of Hutter, Hautz, Dennhardt and Füller (2013) found that social media communications have a significant impact on consumer's decision-making processes. The

study further supports this notion by stating that social media is a viable communication channel for companies and along with WOM, is an intricate form of marketing (Hutter, *et al.*, 2013).

However, this study found that less than half of the respondents (43.7%) claim that they are not often driven by guilt to make a purchase or donation after they have seen brands' CRM initiatives on social media. However, these findings are inconsistent with that of Hensley, Diddi and Hyllegard (2019), who found that guilt was directly related to information processing and had a significant effect on millennials' attitudes towards the brand and their purchase decisions.

This study has also found that a majority of respondents (69%) have formed a positive attitude towards brands after seeing the impact of their CRM initiatives online. Similarly, the study conducted by Langen, *et al.* (2013) found that, on average, consumers had hardly heard about different CRM campaigns on various communication channels. Additionally, the study found that the greatest impact came from advertisements on the product itself, product advertisements and television commercials, as compared to social media (Langen, *et al.*, 2013). Thus, it may be beneficial for brands to communicate their CRM initiatives through social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook, as these are the platforms of choice for a majority of educated millennial consumers (Hensley, *et al.*, 2013).

5.2.7.1. Intercorrelations Between the Impact of Social Media Brand Communication About Cause-Related Marketing on Purchase Decisions and Other Key Dimensions of the Study

As evident in Table 4.3, which tabulated the correlation between the key dimensions of the study in Chapter Four, the results of the study indicate that there is a significant, positive relationship between the impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions and the influence of WOM and eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes.

The significant relationship infers that consumers' purchase decisions are more likely to be influenced by WOM and eWOM when a brand actively communicates their CRM initiatives on social media.

5.2.7.2. Influences of Biographical Variables on Impact of Social Media Brand Communication About Cause-Related Marketing on Purchase Decisions

The results of this study reveal that the perceptions of UKZN students of the impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions is influenced by the biographical variables of age and race. The results indicate that UKZN students from the 22 to 25 age category have a greater likelihood of making purchase decisions based on CRM communication on social media, compared to other age categories. However, UKZN students that are between the ages of 30 – 33 are less influenced by the CRM communication on social media when making purchase decisions. In terms of race, compared to other race groups, Black students place a greater emphasis on CRM communication on social media when making purchase decisions.

5.2.8. THE INFLUENCE OF WORD-OF-MOUTH AND ELECTRONIC WORD-OF-MOUTH ON PURCHASE DECISIONS OF BRANDS THAT SUPPORT CAUSES

The eighth and last objective of the study aimed to determine what influence word-of-mouth (WOM) and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) have on UKZN students' purchase decisions of brands that support certain causes. Table 4.10 in Chapter Four refers to the frequency distribution of the scale items. The findings of the study are discussed below.

The majority of respondents (59.8%) of this study believe that WOM and eWOM influence their purchase decisions of brands that are involved in CRM initiatives and are likely to purchase a brand that has positive reviews about its CRM initiatives. Additionally, this study found that a large majority of respondents (80.4%) are likely to purchase a brand that is affiliated to a cause through the recommendation of family and friends. Furthermore, it was revealed that a majority of the respondents (72%) of this study are prone to encouraging family and friends to purchase brands that are involved in CRM initiatives. These findings are in support of those of Thomas, *et al.* (2011) who revealed that satisfied consumers were found to tell between three to five people about their positive experiences with a brand, which in turn leads to a multiplier effect. Similarly, Smith (2011) found that millennials are more than willing to partake in eWOM, such a writing reviews and providing consumer-generated information about products. Badenes-Rocha, Bigne and Ruiz (2021) found that when consumers act as

advocates of brands and defend them against negative WOM spread by other consumers, usually develop the intention to share about the brands' CRM initiatives on social media.

5.2.8.1. Intercorrelations Between the Influence of WOM and eWOM on Purchase Decisions of Brands that Support Causes and Other Key Dimensions of the Study

As shown in Table 4.3, which tabulated the correlation between the key dimensions of the study in Chapter Four, according to the results of this study, there were no significant relationships between the influence of WOM and eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support causes and other key dimensions of the study.

5.2.8.2. Influences of Biographical Variables on the Influence of WOM and eWOM on Purchase Decisions of Brands that Support Causes

The results of this study reveal that the perceptions of UKZN students of the influence of WOM and eWOM on purchase decisions of brands that support CRM is influenced by the biographical variables of age and race. The results of the study indicate that students from the 22 to 25 age category are more prone to be influenced by WOM and eWOM about brands that support causes when making purchase decisions as compared to other age categories. In terms of race, Black students are more inclined to be influenced by eWOM about brands that support causes when making their purchase decisions than other race groups.

5.3. SUMMARY ANALYSIS OF THE KEY FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

This section will provide a summary analysis of the key findings of the study.

With regard to the first objective of the study, which aimed to determine if CRM has an effect on UKZN students' attitudes towards brands, the results reveal that the majority of UKZN students:

- ❖ Have a favourable attitude towards brands that participate in CRM initiatives.
- ❖ Are not sceptical of brands that are involved in CRM campaigns.
- ❖ Are cognisant of the size of the donation a brand contributes towards a charity or non-profit organisation when making their purchase decisions.
- ❖ Support brands that make a sizeable contribution to a charity or on-profit organisation.
- ❖ Prefer supporting CRM initiatives that fit with the image of the brand.

- ❖ Consider CRM as a good way for brands or companies to invest in the community and support non-profit organisations.

In terms of the second objective of the study, which aimed to uncover whether or not CRM influences UKZN students' decisions to purchase brands that support certain causes, the results of the study reveal that the majority of UKZN students:

- ❖ Prefer supporting brands that are involved in CRM initiatives.
- ❖ Are cognisant of whether or not a brand is affiliated to a CRM campaign when making purchase decisions.
- ❖ Have previously purchased brands that were affiliated to charities or non-profit organisations.
- ❖ Unwilling to purchase a brand that is involved in CRM irrespective of quality.
- ❖ Have previously switched to an alternative brand in order to support CRM initiatives that the brand was involved in.
- ❖ Are indifferent regarding the level of satisfaction they experience after purchasing a brand that was linked to a CRM initiative.

In terms of the third objective of the study, which aimed to determine whether or not CRM enhances the image of brands in the minds of UKZN students', the results of the study reveal that the majority of UKZN students:

- ❖ Believe that a brand has a better image if it's involved in CRM initiatives.
- ❖ The image of the brand will be enhanced if there is a better fit between a brand and the non-profit organisation, cause or charity it is partnered with.
- ❖ Trust brands that are affiliated to CRM causes.
- ❖ Are willing to support a brand's partnership with a cause if the brand has a favourable brand image.
- ❖ View brands that are involved in CRM initiatives more favourably than brands that do not support causes.
- ❖ Believe a brand can improve its brand image by partnering with a social cause.
- ❖ Think that brands that are involved in CRM initiatives are credible.
- ❖ Believe that partnering with a cause or charity will have a positive influence on a brand's image.

In terms of the fourth objective of the study, which aimed to determine the impact that CRM has on creating brand awareness and encouraging brand trial of brands that UKZN students are unfamiliar with, the results of the study reveal that the majority of UKZN students:

- ❖ Would not purchase brands they were unfamiliar with, even if the brands were involved in a CRM initiative.
- ❖ Have become aware of brands because of the CRM campaigns that the brands had been involved in.
- ❖ Are likely support an unknown brand that was affiliated to a CRM initiative.
- ❖ Are willing to try a new brand that is involved in a CRM initiative, regardless of their brand preferences.
- ❖ Did not previously purchase a new brand that was affiliated to a cause.
- ❖ Believe that CRM is effective in building brand awareness.

In terms of the fifth objective of the study, which aimed to ascertain whether or not UKZN students will switch to a brand that is involved in CRM marketing initiatives if price and quality are inconsequential to their purchase decisions, the results of this study reveal that the majority of UKZN students:

- ❖ Would switch to another brand is that brand is affiliated with a cause they support.
- ❖ Are likely to switch to a brand that is involved in a CRM initiative provided that it is a good quality brand.
- ❖ Are likely to switch to a brand that is affiliated to a cause that they support, provided that the brand is affordable.

In terms of the sixth objective of the study, which aimed to uncover UKZN students' perceptions of the effectiveness of CRM initiatives in building and maintaining brand loyalty, the results of the study reveal that the majority of UKZN students:

- ❖ Believe that CRM is an effective way to enhance brand loyalty.
- ❖ Believe that brands will retain their loyal patrons by affiliating themselves to charities or non-profit organisations.
- ❖ Are likely to become loyal to a brand that is involved in CRM initiatives
- ❖ Are likely to become loyal to a brand that partners with causes that are close to their heart.

- ❖ Would remain loyal to their preferred brand, even if the brand is not linked to a CRM initiative.

In terms of the seventh objective of the study, which aimed to determine whether or not brand communication on social media about CRM initiatives has influenced UKZN students' perceptions of the brand and purchase decisions, the results of the study reveal that the majority of UKZN students:

- ❖ Have purchased a brand after seeing information about its involvement in CRM initiatives that were publicised on social media.
- ❖ Rely on information on social media when making purchase decisions.
- ❖ Believe that companies need to use social media in order to positively influence the perceptions of brands that are involved in CRM initiatives.
- ❖ Are not often driven by guilt to make a purchase or donation after seeing brands' CRM initiatives on social media.
- ❖ Are likely to purchase a brand after seeing the impact of its CRM initiatives on social media.
- ❖ Have formed a positive attitude towards brands after seeing the impact of their CRM initiatives online.

In terms of the eighth and final objective, which aimed to determine what influence word-of-mouth (WOM) and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) have on UKZN students' purchase decisions of brands that support certain causes, the results of the study reveal that the majority of UKZN students:

- ❖ Believe that WOM and eWOM influence their purchase decisions of brands that are involved in CRM initiatives.
- ❖ Affirm that they are likely to purchase a brand that has positive reviews about its CRM initiatives.
- ❖ Are likely to purchase a brand that is affiliated to a cause through the recommendation of family and friends.
- ❖ Are prone to encouraging family and friends to purchase brands that are involved in CRM initiatives.

5.4. CONCLUSION

This chapter focused on discussing the results of the study in accordance with the key dimensions. In terms of the objectives of the study, the results indicate that CRM does affect the attitudes of UKZN students towards brands, influences UKZN students' decisions to purchase brands that support certain causes and enhances the image of brands in the minds of UKZN students. Additionally, CRM creates brand awareness and encourages trial of brands that UKZN students are unfamiliar with and encourages UKZN students to switch brands if price and quality are inconsequential. The results of the study further reveal that CRM is effective in building and maintaining brand loyalty, as well as influenced UKZN students' perceptions and purchase decisions through brand communication on social media. Lastly, the study reveals that WOM and eWOM influences UKZN students' purchase decisions of brands that support certain causes. Chapter 6 will provide strategies and recommendations that marketing practitioners can adopt to successfully implement CRM initiatives.

CHAPTER SIX

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

6.1. INTRODUCTION

Chapter Six will outline the recommendations and conclusion of the study. The conclusion and recommendations are devised based on the importance of cause-related marketing on consumer behaviour and brand consciousness from a UKZN student perspective. The recommendations outlined in this chapter can be adopted to ensure the creation of a successful cause-related marketing (CRM) campaign that will give marketers a creative competitive advantage when marketing brands to university students.

Chapter Six also focuses on recommendations for future studies, as well as the limitations for the study. Thereafter, the chapter concludes the study and provides the overall outcomes of the study.

6.2. RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The recommendations of the study are based on the importance of cause-related marketing on consumer behaviour and brand consciousness from a UKZN student perspective. The key dimensions of the study focused on the impact of CRM on students' attitudes towards brands, the influence of CRM on purchase decisions, the influence of CRM on brand image, the impact of CRM on brand awareness and brand trial, the impact of CRM on brand switching behaviour, the effectiveness of CRM in building brand loyalty, the impact of social media brand communication about CRM on purchase decisions and the influence of word-of-mouth (WOM) and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) on purchase decisions of brands that support causes.

6.2.1. The Impact of Cause-Related Marketing on Students' Attitudes Towards Brands

In terms of the impact of cause-related marketing on students' attitudes towards brands, the following recommendations are suggested to marketers for consideration when carrying out a CRM campaign:

- ❖ *Aim to partner with a cause, charity or non-profit organisation in a cause-related marketing initiative that fits the image, vision and mission of the brand:* Since consumers have a more favourable attitude towards brands that carry out CRM

initiatives, companies should opt to partner with those causes that have a high brand-cause fit. A better fit between the cause and brand gives the impression of the partnership being more authentic, reduces consumer scepticism, increases campaign credibility and purchase intentions. Companies need to ensure that brands are partnered with causes, charities or non-profit organisations that have similar goals or relates to the brand's customer base. Brands can also be partnered with well-known causes (such as CANSA, NSPCA or UNICEF). A company will need to carry out extensive research to find a cause that fits with the essence of the company's purpose. For example, if a company positions a product or brand as one that is beneficial in reducing water wastage in South Africa, the company can embark on a cause-related marketing campaign with a cause that is involved in water conservation. Consumers can be educated on the water-saving benefits of using the company's brand or product and can be afforded consumer discounts on the purchase of the particular product or brand.

- ❖ *Aim to reduce consumer scepticism:* Some consumers tend to be sceptical of companies that partner with charities, especially if the brand is expensive. Scepticism can influence purchase decisions, thus, it is important for marketers to ensure that CRM initiatives have a high brand-cause fit in order to increase the credibility of the campaign. Marketers need to conduct a preliminary investigation on the viability of potential partnerships with causes or charities in order to ascertain consumer perceptions of the credibility of the cause-related marketing initiative prior to the actual commencement of the partnership. Once a proposed cause has been selected, companies need to conduct research using focus groups that comprise the company's target audience. The investigation will provide insight into how the partnership may be perceived by the target consumers, which can help the company prepare for and prevent potential negative outcomes from the CRM partnership. It is recommended that marketers need to partner with causes, charities and non-profit organisations that are well-known, such as the Nelson Mandela Foundation or The World Wildlife Fund (WWF).
- ❖ *State the level or size of the donation being made:* The results of this study found that consumers tend to react more favourably towards CRM initiatives when the company makes considerable donations towards the cause. It is also a vital piece of information that consumers consider when making a purchase decision. Companies need to clearly outline the amount or percentage of the sales proceeds that will be donated to the cause. Information regarding the sales proceeds can be communicated to consumers by

incorporating messages about the CRM partnership on product packaging or digital communications, such as advertisements on social media platforms. For example, the company can state that for every pack of the product that is bought, R5 will be donated to the selected cause, charity or non-profit organisation. It can also be advantageous to include the cause, charity or non-profit organisation's logo on the product packaging as well. However, the use of the cause, charity or non-profit organisations' logo may have to be cleared with the company's legal department, as well as agreed upon in the contract between the company and the cause, non-profit organisation or charity.

- ❖ *Allow consumers to choose the cause their donation is going to:* As evident in the findings of this study, most consumers are influenced by the company's choice of cause to partner with. By allowing the consumer to choose the cause (from a limited list of causes that the company has cause-related affiliations with), the consumer obtains a certain level of control over where his/her money is going to or how it is being used. The company can include a QR code on the product's packaging that customers can scan when they make purchases. The customer will then be directed to a website or landing page where the CRM partnerships with the various causes are outlined and, with the use of a barcode printed on the till slip, the customer can choose from two or three causes that the company is offering to make a donation to. However, the recommendation may work for niche products from smaller companies rather than products from fast-moving consumer goods companies, due to the sheer scale of purchases.

6.2.2. The Influence of Cause-Related Marketing on Purchase Decisions

In terms of the influence of cause-related marketing on purchase decisions, the following recommendations are suggested to marketers for consideration when carrying out a CRM campaign:

- ❖ *Ensure that the brand's prices are affordable:* According to the results of this study, consumers may not be willing to pay a higher price to purchase products that are involved in CRM initiatives. From the results of the study, it can be seen that university students desire products that are reasonably priced, especially when they may be spending an additional amount on making a donation. Marketers need to ensure that the price of products that are linked to CRM initiatives are affordable, to encourage purchase decisions that are in favour of the brand.

- ❖ *Make consumers feel good about donating to a cause when purchasing from a CRM partnered brand:* With this strategy, the company can reach out to an agency to track each time a consumer makes a CRM linked purchase and sending the consumer updates on the difference their donation makes towards the charity or cause. Consumers tend to have greater post-purchase satisfaction when they have a positive attitude towards CRM and feel as if they are making a difference to society through their purchases. Greater post-purchase satisfaction leads to repurchases and increased WOM referrals. Companies can encourage consumers to subscribe to updates on CRM initiatives and campaigns through newsletters, or via social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube.

6.2.3. The Influence of Cause-Related Marketing on Brand Image

In terms of the influence of cause-related marketing on brand image, the following recommendations are suggested to marketers for consideration when carrying out a CRM campaign:

- ❖ *Practice corporate transparency:* By being more transparent with CRM initiatives, companies can build trust with their consumers, as well as increase credibility. Such credibility, in turn, leads to a positive brand image. Companies can show consumers the positive changes the initiative makes towards the community through the support given to charities, causes and non-profit organisations by posting on their brand's social media pages, websites and blogs.
- ❖ *Use CRM to reinforce the brand's story:* Marketers can use cause-related marketing to add richness to the brand and its story, encouraging customers to connect with the brand on different levels. It also can allow for brand differentiation.

6.2.4. The Impact of Cause-Related Marketing on Brand Awareness and Brand Trial

In terms of the impact of cause-related marketing on brand awareness and brand trial, the following recommendations are suggested to marketers for consideration when carrying out a CRM campaign:

- ❖ *Utilise CRM when launching a new brand in the market:* When launching a new product into the market, this strategy should be followed, especially if the product is a

new entrant in a pre-existing industry, as using a CRM initiative to launch the product can create differential positioning for the brand, especially if quality and price are similar to competitor products. However, it is beneficial for there to be a high brand-cause fit, as this increases the chances for consumers to carry out the trial of a new brand.

- ❖ *Utilise CRM by linking purchase context and message exposure:* Including messaging about the CRM partnership directly on product packaging can serve as a stimulus for consumers, encouraging them to support the CRM initiative.
- ❖ *Market the CRM partnership as much as possible:* A consumer is more likely to try a new brand if they are exposed to the CRM campaign regularly. Advertise the CRM campaign as much as possible through social media and digital communication, as well as in stores where the company's brands are sold. A recommendation to marketers would be the use of attention-grabbing artwork on point-of-sale material that is featured in stores, such as category banners and free-standing panel display units. Such items can also feature the cause, charity or non-profit organisation's logo, as well as messages that communicate information about the CRM partnership to the consumer.
- ❖ *Partner with a well-known charity or non-profit organisation:* Assuming that there is a high brand-cause fit, a relatively unknown brand can benefit from partnering with a well-known charity or non-profit organisation by reaching a new customer base through the charity or non-profit organisation's supporters. However, companies should ensure that they first create a thorough partnership agreement with the charity or non-profit organisation to iron out any legal issues, such as usage rights regarding logos and digital communications.
- ❖ *Synchronise new product launches with a CRM initiative:* Companies can create brand awareness by integrating a product launch with the announcement of a CRM initiative with a well-known cause, charity or non-profit organisation. By doing this, the company not only broadens awareness of an important cause, but also encourages consumers to buy the company's product whilst contributing to a good cause. However, this should only be carried out if it fits with the company, brand and timing of the campaign.
- ❖ *Align the duration of the CRM campaign to events, holidays or seasons in order to engage consumers with the campaign and increase awareness:* Companies can use seasonality or events to their advantage, by aligning the CRM initiative to holidays or events. For example, a company can partner with a cause that helps to provide educational material to underprivileged children during the 'Back-to-School' period from December to

February. By doing this, companies can create a link between the brand's CRM initiative and a certain event, holiday or season.

6.2.5. The Impact of Cause-Related Marketing on Brand Switching Behaviour

In terms of the impact of cause-related marketing on brand switching behaviour, the following recommendations are suggested to marketers for consideration when carrying out a CRM campaign:

- ❖ *Ensure that price and quality are similar to competitors:* By doing this, the chances of consumers switching to a CRM brand is greater, as consumers would prefer supporting a cause or charity.
- ❖ *Run a long-term CRM campaign to increase the chances of repurchase behaviour:* Many consumers may switch back to their previous brand once a CRM campaign is over. By utilising a long-term CRM strategy, consumers may switch permanently to a brand that is partnered with a cause or charity.

6.2.6. The Effectiveness of Cause-Related Marketing in Building Brand Loyalty

In terms of the effectiveness of cause-related marketing in building brand loyalty, the following recommendations are suggested to marketers for consideration when carrying out a CRM campaign:

- ❖ *Research and partner with a cause that directly impacts the company's customers:* Companies should aim to identify causes that consumers are most passionate about and find ways to incorporate these causes into a CRM initiative. As per the results of this study, consumers are likely to become loyal to a brand when the company partners with a cause that is close to their hearts. Marketers can research causes that most consumers are regular supporters of and partner with these causes for a CRM initiative, provided that there is a high brand-cause fit. For example, a fast-moving consumer goods company that produces food items may partner with causes that aim to fight hunger, poverty or provide education.
- ❖ *Ensure long-term commitment to the campaign:* Consumers are more likely to become loyal to a brand of a company that has a long-term partnership with a cause, charity or non-profit organisation as it shows that the brand is committed to the relationship with

the cause and has good intentions. Companies can create a long-term partnership with a cause, charity or non-profit organisation and renew campaigns each year with exciting and new initiatives to assist the causes in terms of fundraising.

6.2.7. The Impact of Social Media Brand Communication About Cause-Related Marketing on Purchase Decisions

In terms of the impact of social media brand communication about cause-related marketing on purchase decisions, the following recommendations are suggested to marketers for consideration when carrying out a CRM campaign:

- ❖ *Utilise social media to market CRM campaigns to university students:* Many consumers also utilise social media when making their purchase decisions. Regular posting on social media platforms about the good deeds and cause-related partnerships that the brand is engaged in reinforces the credibility of the campaign which can lead to increased communication about the campaign between consumers on social media. Which results in an increase in both purchase intentions and encourages brand trial.
- ❖ *Encourage consumers to share their CRM purchases on social media:* By encouraging consumers to share their CRM purchases, the brand gets free exposure to potential customers, existing customers get the free 'shout-out' by a brand, which can encourage repurchases and, in turn, more social media posts about the brand by existing customers.
- ❖ *Share the impact of the CRM campaign on the brand's social media platforms:* As per the results of the study, university students are more likely to purchase a brand after seeing the impact of its CRM initiatives on social media. Consumers may find comfort in knowing that their donations are making a positive impact towards those that are in need.
- ❖ *Create a hashtag for the CRM campaign:* Hashtags are a creative way to start conversations on digital platforms such as Twitter and Instagram. By clicking on a hashtag, social media users are provided with various posts and messages about a specific topic. By encouraging consumers to use a hashtag whenever they make a purchase or interact with a brand, marketers can create engagement which in turn leads to qualified leads and increased awareness. Hashtags can allow brands to reach new audiences and can help communicate the CRM initiative to a broader population.
- ❖ *Initiate user-generated content for the CRM campaign:* Companies can encourage consumers to engage with their brand online by asking consumers to create and share

content relating to the company's brand and the CRM initiative. Consumers can be encouraged to share pictures, videos or create TikTok videos or Reels which can, thereafter, be shared on the brand's social media platforms. Encouraging consumers to share brand related content will not only create engagement, but also drive awareness and visibility for both the brand and the cause, charity or non-profit organisation.

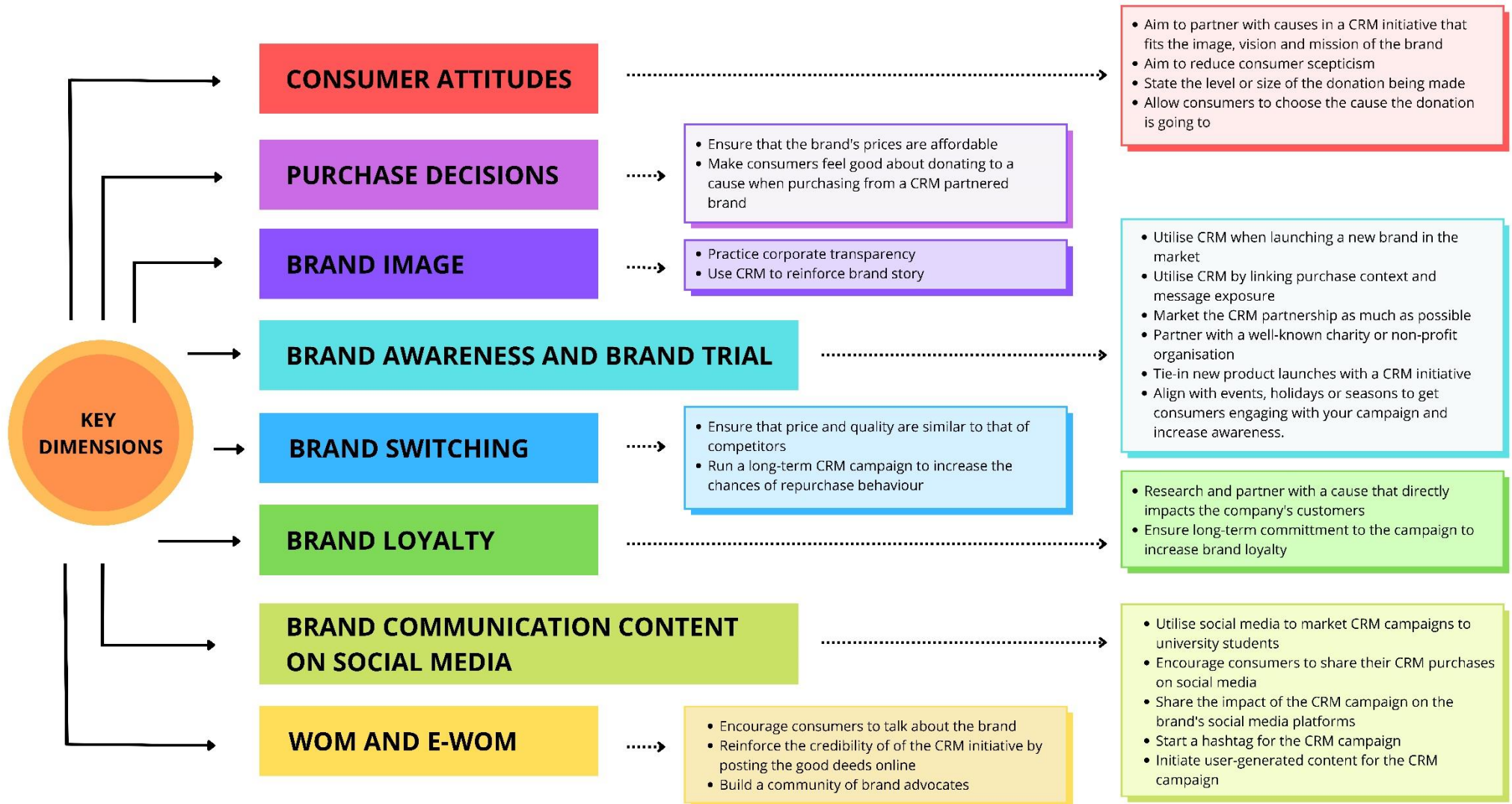
6.2.8. The Influence of WOM and eWOM on Purchase Decisions of Brands that Support Causes

In terms of the influence on word-of-mouth and electronic word-of-mouth on purchase decisions of brands that support causes, the following recommendations are suggested to marketers for consideration when carrying out a CRM campaign:

- ❖ *Encourage consumers to talk about the brand on online platforms:* Brands can include hashtags on their social media posts, on product packaging or advertisements to encourage consumers to reach out or to start conversations about the brand. Encouraging online conversations may be beneficial for the company in terms of creating eWOM, as many consumers are more than willing to write reviews and post consumer-generated information.
- ❖ *Reinforce the credibility of the CRM initiative by posting the good deeds on social media:* Posting CRM activities on social media may reinforce how credible the initiative is by showing consumers the ways in which their donations are being used. By doing this, brands can increase WOM and eWOM. As per the results of this study, a large majority of UKZN students are prone to encouraging family and friends to purchase brands that are involved in CRM initiatives.
- ❖ *Build a community of brand advocates:* Consumers that are brand loyal may act as advocates for the brand and defend the brand against negative WOM that may be spread by other consumers. Companies can create interactive social media pages where they constantly communicate and engage with consumers that they consider to be brand advocates. Companies can also encourage consumers to become brand advocates or influencers by creating special offers, discounts and offering gifts through competitions for consumers through loyalty or rewards clubs.

The recommendations outlined in this chapter are illustrated as a model of underlying strategies that can be used by marketing practitioners for successful marketing of CRM initiatives to university students (Figure 6.1).

FIGURE 6.1: Recommendations for successful marketing of cause-related marketing initiatives to university students



6.3. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The study could be expanded by conducting research on a wider scale, to include the other UKZN campuses, as well as the College of Humanities, which was excluded in this study. Future research could also be conducted on a wider scale, by including other South African universities, incorporating a number of additional social and demographic variables.

The study focused on CRM from the perspective of the brand involved in the partnership. Future research could explore CRM from the cause's point of view and provide guidelines to aid causes, charities and non-profit organisations when looking to form alliances and partnerships with the corporate sector.

Future research should also build on this study and further expand the knowledge on cause-related marketing.

6.4. CONCLUSION

Chapter Six presented a comprehensive set of recommended strategies that brands can utilise to ensure the success of their cause-related marketing initiatives. These recommendations were based on the impact of cause-related marketing on consumer behaviour and brand consciousness of the key dimensions of the study (the impact of cause-related marketing on consumer attitudes, purchase decisions, brand image, brand awareness and brand trial, brand switching, brand loyalty, brand communication content on social media and word-of-mouth (WOM) and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM)). The results of this study reveal that cause-related marketing initiatives significantly influence UKZN students' purchase behaviour and brand consciousness. UKZN students were found to be very supportive of brands that partake in CRM initiatives, with this study revealing that students have a more positive attitude towards brands that are partnered with causes, charities and non-profit organisations. It is strongly recommended that brands carry out CRM campaigns to foster positive consumer attitudes, increase brand awareness and trial, as well as build brand loyalty. Brands should opt to create CRM initiatives that have a high brand-cause fit to enhance the credibility of the campaign and reduce consumer scepticism.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1: LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT

UKZN HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (HSSREC)

APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL For research with human participants

Information Sheet and Consent to Participate in Research

Date:

Greetings,

My name is Chandini Padayachee (0810469302; Email: 215045263@stu.ukzn.ac.za) and I am an M Com (Marketing) student in the School of Management, Information Technology and Governance, at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. My supervisor is Dr P. D. Oodith (031-2607340; Email: oodithdp@ukzn.ac.za).

You are invited to consider participating in a research project entitled, *The Impact of Cause-Related Marketing on Consumer Behaviour and Brand Consciousness: A UKZN Student Perspective*. The aim of this study is to uncover the consumer behaviour and brand consciousness of UKZN students regarding cause-related marketing and effectively uncover strategies that marketers can adopt for active engagement with university students. The study is expected to include 375 students who are above the age of 18 years. If you choose to participate and remain in the study, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire, which should take you about 15 minutes to complete.

Through your participation, I hope to understand the feelings and opinions that UKZN Westville Campus students have towards cause-related marketing and its impact on consumer behaviour and brand consciousness. The results of this survey are intended to contribute to filling the knowledge gap on the impact of cause-related marketing on the purchase decisions of university students, as well as the impact cause-related marketing has on brand consciousness. The study will also provide valuable insight into the strategies that marketers can adopt for active engagement with university students. The study will not involve any risks and/or discomforts.

This study has been ethically reviewed and approved by the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (approval number HSSREC/00002093/2020).

In the event of any problems or concerns/questions you may contact the researcher at (0810469302; Email: 215045263@stu.ukzn.ac.za) or the UKZN Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, contact details as follows:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building

Private Bag X 54001

Durban 4000 KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557- Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Your participation in the study is voluntary and by participating, you are granting the researcher permission to use your responses. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time with no negative consequence. There will be no monetary gain from participating in the study. Your anonymity will be maintained by the researcher and the School of Management, I.T. & Governance and your responses will not be used for any purposes outside of this study.

All data, both electronic and hard copy, will be securely stored during the study and archived for 5 years. After this time, all data will be destroyed.

If you have any questions or concerns about participating in the study, please contact me or my research supervisor at the numbers listed above.

Sincerely

Chandini Padayachee

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE

I (_____) have been informed about the study entitled, *The Impact of Cause-Related Marketing on Consumer Behaviour and Brand Consciousness: A UKZN Student Perspective* by Chandini Padayachee (0810469302; Email: 215045263@stu.ukzn.ac.za).

I understand the purpose and procedures of the study (add these again if appropriate).

I have been given an opportunity to ask questions about the study and have had answers to my satisfaction.

I declare that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without affecting any of the benefits that I usually am entitled to.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study I understand that I may contact the researcher at (provide details).

If I have any questions or concerns about my rights as a study participant, or if I am concerned about an aspect of the study or the researchers then I may contact:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building

Private Bag X 54001

Durban

4000

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557 - Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Signature of Participant

Date

Signature of Witness
(Where applicable)

Date

Signature of Translator
(Where applicable)

Date

APPENDIX 2: QUESTIONNAIRE

Section A: Biographical Information

Please indicate your selection with a cross (X).

1. Gender

1.	Male	
2.	Female	

2. Age

1.	18-21	
2.	22-25	
3.	26-29	
4.	30-33	
5.	34-37	
6.	38 and over	

3. Race

1.	Black	
2.	Coloured	
3.	Indian	
4.	White	
5.	Other (Please specify _____)	

4. Educational Level

1.	Undergraduate	
2.	Honours Degree	
3.	Post-Graduate Diploma	
4.	Masters Degree	
5.	Doctoral Degree	

5. Which College do you belong to?

1.	College of Law and Management Studies	
2.	College of Humanities	
3.	College of Health Sciences	
4.	College of Agriculture, Engineering and Science	

Section B

Please indicate with a cross (X) the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements using the scale below:

- 1- Strongly Disagree (SD)
- 2- Disagree (D)
- 3- Neither agree nor disagree (N)
- 4- Agree (A)
- 5- Strongly Agree (SA)

**Cause-related marketing: when a company's name is partnered with a charity or cause and the brand pledges to make a donation of a certain amount towards the charity or cause.*

No.	Statement	1 SD	2 D	3 N	4 A	5 SA
1.	I have a favourable attitude towards brands that participate in CRM initiatives.					
2.	I regularly make donations to causes that are partnered with brands.					
3.	I am sceptical of brands that are involved in CRM initiatives.					
4.	The size of the donation that a brand contributes towards a charity/non-profit organisation influences my purchasing decisions of that brand.					
5.	I support brands that make a sizeable contribution to a charity/non-profit organisation.					
6.	The brands' choice of cause to partner with influences my purchasing decisions.					
7.	I prefer supporting CRM initiatives that fit with the image of the brand.					
8.	I consider cause-related marketing as a good way for brands/companies to invest in the community and support non-profit organisations.					
9.	I prefer supporting brands that are involved in CRM initiatives					
10.	I consider whether or not a brand has a CRM campaign/initiative when making a purchase decision.					
11.	I have purchased brands that were affiliated to charity organisations or non-profit organisations.					
12.	I am willing to purchase a brand that is involved in CRM irrespective of price.					
13.	I am willing to purchase a brand that is involved in CRM irrespective of quality.					
14.	I have switched to an alternative brand in order to support the CRM initiative that the brand was involved in.					

15.	I usually have high levels of satisfaction after purchasing from a brand with a CRM initiative.					
16.	Brands with CRM initiatives have a large influence on my purchase decisions.					
17.	I believe that a brand has a better image if it's involved in CRM initiatives.					
18.	I believe that if there is a better fit between a brand and cause/charity/non-profit organisation, then the image of the brand will be enhanced.					
19.	I trust brands that are affiliated to CRM causes.					
20.	I view brands that are affiliated with CRM initiatives more favourably than brands that do not support causes.					
21.	I am more willing to support a brand's partnership with a cause if the brand has a favourable brand image.					
22.	I believe that a brand can improve its brand image by partnering with a social cause.					
23.	I believe that brands that are involved in CRM initiatives are credible.					
24.	I think that partnering with a cause or charity does not have any influence on brand image.					
25.	I will make purchases of brands that I am not familiar with, if they are involved in a CRM initiative.					
26.	I have become aware of brands from the CRM campaign that they were involved in.					
27.	I would try a new brand if it's involved in a CRM initiative.					
28.	I will not support an unknown brand even if it is involved in a CRM initiative.					
29.	I am willing to try a new brand that is involved in CRM regardless of my brand preferences.					
30.	I have previously purchased a new brand because that brand had a joint CRM campaign with a cause that I support.					
31.	Through a CRM campaign I was encouraged to purchase a new or unknown brand.					
32.	I believe that CRM is effective in building awareness for a brand.					
33.	I will switch to another brand if that brand is affiliated to a cause that I support.					
34.	I will switch to a brand that is involved in a CRM initiative provided that it is a good quality brand.					
35.	I have previously switched to a brand that was associated with a cause that I supported.					

36.	I am unlikely to switch to a brand that is involved in a CRM initiative.					
37.	I am likely to switch to a brand that is affiliated to a cause that I support provided that the brand is affordable.					
38.	I believe that CRM is an effective means of enhancing brand loyalty.					
39.	I believe that brands will retain their loyal patrons by affiliating themselves to charities/non-profit organisations.					
40.	I believe that I will become loyal to a brand that is involved in CRM initiatives.					
41.	I am likely to become loyal to a brand that partners with causes that are close to my heart.					
42.	I will remain loyal to my preferred brand even if the even if the brand does not have a CRM initiative.					
43.	I have purchased a brand after seeing information about its involvement in CRM initiatives that was publicised on social media.					
44.	I often rely on information on social media when making my purchase decisions.					
45.	I believe that companies need to use social media in order to positively influence the perceptions of brands that are involved in CRM initiatives.					
46.	I have often been driven by guilt to make a purchase and donation after I have seen brands' CRM initiatives on social media.					
47.	I am likely to purchase a brand after seeing the impact of its CRM initiatives on social media					
48.	I have formed a positive attitude towards brands after seeing the impact of their CRM initiatives online.					
49.	Word-of-mouth (WOM) and electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) influences my purchase decisions of brands that are involved in CRM.					
50.	I am likely to purchase a brand that has positive reviews about its CRM initiatives					
51.	I am likely to purchase a brand that is affiliated to a cause through the recommendation of family and friends.					
52.	I will encourage family and friends to purchase brands that are involved in CRM initial initiatives.					

Thank you for your time and cooperation.

APPENDIX 3: ETHICAL CLEARANCE APPROVAL



17 November 2022

Chandini Padayachee (215045263)
School Of Man Info Tech & Gov
Westville Campus

Dear C Padayachee,

Protocol reference number: HSSREC/00002093/2020

Project title: The impact of cause-related marketing on consumer behaviour and brand consciousness: A UKZN student perspective

Amended title: Importance of cause-related marketing on consumer behaviour and brand consciousness: A University of KwaZulu-Natal student perspective

Degree: Masters

Approval Notification – Amendment Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application and request for an amendment received on 14 November 2022 has now been approved as follows:

- Change in title

Any alterations to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form; Title of the Project, Location of the Study must be reviewed and approved through an amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

Best wishes for the successful completion of your research protocol.

Yours faithfully



Professor Dipane Hlalele (Chair)

/dd

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
UKZN Research Ethics Office Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000
Tel: +27 31 260 8388 / 4587 / 3587

Website: <http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics/>

Founding Campuses: Edgewood Howard College Medical School Pietermaritzburg Westville

INSPIRING GREATNESS

**APPENDIX 4: FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE DATA
– SECTION B OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

	SD	D	N	A	SA
B1	9 (3.4%)	21 (8%)	55 (21.1%)	119 (45.6%)	57 (21.8%)
B2	23 (8.8%)	84 (32.2%)	65 (24.9%)	81 (31%)	8 (3.1%)
B3	34 (13%)	87 (33.3%)	87 (33.3%)	43 (16.5%)	10 (3.8%)
B4	34 (13%)	78 (29.9%)	45 (17.2%)	74 (28.4%)	30 (11.5%)
B5	3 (1.1%)	19 (7.3%)	48 (18.4%)	127 (48.7%)	64 (24.5%)
B6	16 (6.1%)	59 (22.6%)	80 (30.7%)	87 (33.3%)	19 (7.3%)
B7	5 (1.9%)	38 (14.6%)	76 (29.1%)	108 (41.4%)	34 (13%)
B8	3 (1.1%)	12 (4.6%)	24 (9.2%)	134 (51.3%)	88 (33.7)
B9	7 (2.7%)	25 (9.6%)	93 (35.6%)	98 (37.5%)	38 (14.6%)
B10	33 (12.6%)	102 (39.1%)	75 (28.7%)	38 (14.6%)	13 (5%)
B11	11 (4.2%)	42 (16.1%)	36 (13.8%)	127 (48.7%)	45 (17.2%)
B12	31 (11.9%)	64 (24.5%)	62 (23.8%)	81 (31%)	23 (8.8%)
B13	58 (22.2%)	93 (35.6%)	52 (19.9%)	40 (15.3%)	18 (6.9%)
B14	23 (8.8%)	113 (43.3%)	67 (25.7%)	47 (18%)	11 (4.2%)
B15	9 (3.4%)	45 (17.2%)	110 (42.1%)	74 (28.4%)	23 (8.8%)
B16	17 (6.5%)	74 (28.4%)	92 (35.2%)	56 (21.5%)	22 (8.4%)
B17	7 (2.7%)	21 (8%)	55 (21.1%)	133 (51%)	45 (17.2%)
B18	5 (1.9%)	12 (4.6%)	35 (13.4%)	145 (55.6%)	64 (24.5%)
B19	6 (2.3%)	21 (8%)	90 (34.5%)	119 (45.6%)	25 (9.6%)
B20	10 (3.8%)	42 (16.1%)	80 (30.7%)	92 (35.2%)	37 (14.2%)
B21	9 (3.4%)	16 (6.1%)	53 (20.3%)	139 (53.3%)	44 (16.9%)
B22	3 (1.1%)	9 (3.4%)	23 (8.8%)	146 (55.9%)	80 (30.7%)
B23	6 (2.3%)	21 (8%)	84 (32.2%)	117 (44.8%)	33 (12.6%)
B24	46 (17.6%)	127 (48.75%)	48 (18.4%)	29 (11.1%)	11 (4.2%)
B25	32 (12.3%)	84 (32.2%)	87 (33.3%)	38 (18.4%)	10 (3.8%)
B26	10 (3.8%)	67 (25.7%)	77 (29.5%)	90 (34.5%)	17 (6.5%)
B27	8 (3.1%)	37 (14.2%)	73 (28%)	124 (47.5%)	19 (7.3%)
B28	30 (11.5%)	77 (29.5%)	96 (36.8%)	47 (18%)	11 (4.2%)
B29	13 (5%)	58 (22.2%)	65 (24.9%)	106 (40.6%)	19 (7.3%)
B30	19 (7.3%)	86 (33%)	75 (28.7%)	64 (24.5%)	17 (6.5%)
B31	23 (8.8%)	70 (26.8%)	67 (25.7%)	87 (33.3%)	14 (5.4%)

**APPENDIX 5: FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE DATA
– SECTION B OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE (CONTINUED)**

B32	2 (0.8%)	11 (4.2%)	43 (16.5%)	152 (58.2%)	53 (20.3%)
B33	6 (2.3%)	31 (11.9%)	84 (32.2%)	109 (41.8%)	31 (11.9%)
B34	10 (3.8%)	16 (6.1%)	29 (11.1%)	144 (55.2%)	62 (23.8%)
B35	23 (8.8%)	82 (31.4%)	71 (27.2%)	74 (28.4%)	11 (4.2%)
B36	21 (8%)	102 (39.1%)	94 (36%)	38 (14.6%)	6 (2.3%)
B37	4 (1.5%)	19 (7.3%)	35 (13.4%)	146 (55.9%)	57 (21.8%)
B38	5 (1.9%)	21 (8%)	42 (16.1%)	145 (55.6%)	48 (18.4%)
B39	5 (1.9%)	22 (8.4%)	53 (20.3%)	134 (51.3%)	47 (18%)
B40	11 (4.2%)	35 (13.4%)	87 (33.3%)	95 (36.4%)	33 (12.6%)
B41	6 (2.3%)	25 (9.6%)	55 (21.2%)	103 (39.5)	72 (27.6%)
B42	9 (3.4%)	27 (10.3%)	88 (33.7%)	101 (38.7%)	36 (13.8%)
B43	19 (7.3%)	76 (29.1%)	57 (21.8%)	82 (31.4%)	27 (10.3%)
B44	24 (9.2%)	46 (17.6%)	47 (18%)	104 (39.8%)	40 (15.3%)
B45	9 (3.4%)	10 (3.8%)	30 (11.5%)	110 (42.1%)	102 (39.1%)
B46	38 (14.6%)	76 (29.1%)	62 (23.8%)	72 (27.6%)	13 (5%)
B47	10 (3.8%)	35 (13.4%)	60 (23%)	129 (49.4%)	27 (10.3%)
B48	6 (2.3%)	20 (7.7%)	55 (21.1%)	142 (54.4%)	38 (14.6%)
B49	6 (2.3%)	39 (14.9%)	60 (23%)	107 (41%)	49 (18.8%)
B50	4 (1.5%)	22 (8.4%)	36 (13.8%)	141 (54%)	58 (22.2%)
B51	4 (1.5%)	15 (5.7%)	32 (12.3%)	153 (58.6%)	57 (21.8%)
B52	8 (3.1%)	13 (5%)	52 (19.9%)	122 (46.7%)	66 (25.3%)