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Article

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The Effects of Cause-Related Marketing on Consumer Repurchase Intentions Through Brand Resonance: Moderating Effects of News Articles and Advertising

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Abstract

The increasing reliance on news articles and advertising to communicate cause-related marketing (CRM) initiatives highlights a critical gap in understanding their effects on brand equity, especially post-natural disasters. This study investigates the role of brand resonance as a mediator and media coverage (news articles and advertising via newspapers) as a moderator in the relationship between CRM and consumer repurchase intention (CRI). Despite widespread discussions about the impact of paid media on brand equity, the intricate interactions between CRM message framing, the medium of dissemination, and their collective influence on brand resonance during crises still need to be fully explored. Utilizing attribution theory and signaling theory, this research aims to bridge these gaps by examining how different media types affect the effectiveness of CRM activities. This study used an accidental sampling technique to collect data from 410 respondents and applied PROCESS Macro v4.0 to test the research hypotheses. The findings extend the existing literature by providing empirical evidence on how CRM, when mediated by brand resonance and moderated by media coverage, shapes corporate reputation. This research not only deepens the theoretical understanding but also offers practical insights for optimizing media strategies to enhance brand resonance and consumer satisfaction in the aftermath of natural disasters.

Keywords: Cause-related marketing, brand resonance, consumer repurchase intention, news articles, advertising, natural disasters.

1. Introduction

Cause-related marketing has become a strategic instrument for philanthropy and brand resonance (Malviya, Chakravarty, Das, Akaremsetty, & Mahajan, 2023). In times of crisis, such as natural disasters, brand resonance—the customer's strongest connection to a brand—is crucial (Rew & Cha, 2021). CRM may improve brand resonance by matching customers' values and societal expectations (Sattar, Barr, & Sfodera, 2023). Companies have recognized the power of the marketing strategy that connects company and consumer interests with philanthropic causes to increase brand perceptions and consumer interactions (Adewole, 2024; Tao & Ji, 2024). As a result, this marketing approach has undergone significant expansion with the help of these companies. The combination of CRM efforts, particularly during natural catastrophes, offers a unique opportunity to investigate their impact on consumer repurchase intention (Phillips & Pue, 2023). For example, researchers like Kortam, Ibrahim, and Ibrahim (2024) found that media coverage is increasingly influencing public opinion and CRM campaign success.

The media, utilizing various platforms, including advertising and news articles, has a significant impact on how consumers perceive and react to CRM initiatives (Agustriana, 2024; Schamp, Heitmann, Bijmolt, & Katzenstein, 2023). The effectiveness of CRM activities pivots on framing and disseminating the message across various media channels, including news articles and advertisements (Chang & Kwak, 2023). Nevertheless, the specific effects of these diverse types of media on CRM results have yet to be thoroughly investigated (Kurdi et al., 2022), especially in the context of developing nations like Pakistan, where cellular companies frequently engage in CRM to enhance their market presence and consumer rapport. These observations highlight the critical need to explore the effectiveness of CRM communication strategies, especially through news articles and advertising, in shaping consumer behavior in such contexts.

Ogilvy's Global Media Influence Survey reveals that corporate announcements covering CSR activities and strategic business decisions contribute to shaping earned media coverage and building a brand's global reputation (Ogilvy, 2019). Although the importance of both earned (e.g., word-of-mouth, news articles, publicity, or social media buzz) and paid media (e.g., advertising) in these strategies is acknowledged (Penttinen & Ciuchita, 2022), research into the benefits of these media strategies, especially in the aftermath of natural disasters, remains sparse (Nielsen, Landwehr, Nicolaï, Patil, & Raju, 2024). This gap underscores the need to investigate how news articles and advertising influence CRM's success, especially in the context of post-disaster brand resonance and consumer repurchase intention.

This gap in the literature is notable, especially given the restricted use of news articles for communicating socially responsible activities such as CRM, and the limited attention to the moderating effect of advertising on brand equity (Tao & Ji, 2024). This study aims to

address this gap by examining the role of brand resonance as a mediator and the perception of media coverage (i.e., news articles and advertising via newspapers) as a moderator between CRM and CRI relationships in post-natural disasters. Despite the extensive coverage of the effects of paid media on brand equity, the nuanced interplay between CRM message framing, the medium of dissemination (news articles vs. advertising), and their collective impact on brand resonance in the face of natural disasters remains underexplored. By focusing on these dimensions, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of CRM's role in post-disaster recovery and consumer engagement.

This study addresses these objectives and adds three main contributions to the existing literature. First, it presents new empirical evidence on how CRM message framing with news articles and advertising builds brand resonance after natural disasters. Second, this study illuminates consumers' cognitive processes when choosing CRM tasks. Third, this study explores how news articles and advertising affect CRM and CRI, focusing on brand resonance.

The research uses attribution theory and signaling theory. Attribution theory explains how people behave (Hassan & Saleh, 2024). Signaling theory describes how media communicate to consumers about an organization's CSR (Zarzycka, Krasodomska, Dobija, Grabowski, & Jemielniak, 2024). The findings will provide practical insights for marketers and policymakers to optimize CRM strategies, particularly in leveraging media to enhance brand resonance and consumer repurchase intention in disaster recovery contexts.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

2.1. Underpinning Theories

Attribution theory, introduced by Weiner (1985), studies how people assign causes to occurrences or behaviors. In CRM, consumers attribute a company's social cause involvement to its motives. If consumers think a corporation is altruistic, they may like the brand, increasing brand resonance (Gabrielli, Baghi, & Bergianti, 2021). It can foster distrust, which may affect brand perception (Zasuwa, 2019). However, honest and open CRM communication in support of positive customer attributions is equally important (Schamp et al., 2024). According to Jolink and Niesten (2021), Signaling theory states that in an information asymmetric environment, the sender can convey information about oneself via signals. CRM may also show customers a company's social responsibilities (Connolly, Certo, Ireland, & Reutzel, 2011). Selection of appropriate mass media channels is crucial to CRM credibility.

1.2 Hypotheses

1.2.1 Attitudes toward Cause-Related Marketing and Consumer Repurchase Intention

Previous studies like Bhatti et al., (2023) have demonstrated that CRM has both causes and consequences. Authors such as Kim et al., (2022) provided empirical evidence that CRM programs boost consumer loyalty and repurchase intentions by establishing a positive

brand image and emotional attachment. Concurrently, Le et al., (2022) argue that CRM enhances brand perception, which increases repurchase intentions by fostering consumer satisfaction and trust. Silva, Duarte, Machado, and Martins (2020) stress that brand trust is a key factor in the link between CRM actions and repurchase intention. They also stress that CRM's main job is to build trust with customers. Authors like Yapanto et al. (2021) observed that CRM actions may create an emotional connection with consumers, motivating them to promote a company and improve repurchase intentions. This illustrates CRM's strategic function in fostering customer loyalty and repeat purchases. Based on the above arguments, we postulate that;

- **H1:** Attitudes towards cause-related marketing will be positively related to consumer repurchase intentions.

1.2.2 Brand Resonance (the Mediator)

CRM, based on past research, influences long-term consumer behaviors such as repurchase intentions (Yapanto et al., 2021). According to Yağız and Özer (2023), CRM is indispensable for brand resonance, as it strengthens consumer loyalty and attachment. Accordingly, brand resonance affects repurchase intentions, underlining the relevance of emotional attachment and community (Tsai, Lin, & Li, 2014). Researchers like Huo et al. (2022) find brand resonance as a crucial mediator in changing CSR activities into positive consumer behavior outcomes, including repurchase likelihood, thereby linking CRM initiatives to consumer loyalty. These insights collectively suggest that the relationship between cause-related marketing and consumer repurchase intention is mediated by the degree of brand resonance experienced by the consumer (Pourazad, Stocchi, & Pare, 2019; Thompson, 1997), reflecting a deeper psychological bond with the brand fostered by effective CRM campaigns. Concurrently, Pereira, Silva, & Casais (2024) demonstrate that CRM significantly enhances consumer brand engagement, particularly for emotionally positioned brands, by effectively mediating through perceived consumer value, thereby suggesting a potential increase in consumer repurchase intentions and strengthening of brand resonance. Therefore, based on the literature above and our understanding of the role of brand resonance in bridging CRM efforts and consumer repurchase intentions, we propose the following hypothesis;

- H2:** The relation between attitude towards cause-related marketing campaigns and consumer repurchase intentions will be mediated by brand resonance.

1.2.3 News Articles and Advertising via Newspapers (moderators)

Studies suggest CRM efforts boost consumer repurchase intentions (Sharma, Srivastava, Sharma, Singh, & Nijjer, 2024). Consumers view socially responsible enterprises as more trustworthy, which strengthens brand loyalty (Le et al., 2024). Accordingly, News articles boost awareness and credibility in CRM campaigns (Thomas, Bhatt, & Patel, 2024). Reputable news sources can help a CRM effort reach more people and establish legitimacy than traditional advertising (Özturan & Grinstein, 2022). Authors such as Le et al. (2022) found that media coverage of CRM initiatives affects brand perception and repurchase

intentions. They suggest news articles can boost CRM (Seok, Lee, & Kim, 2020). Researchers like Park, Kwak, An, and Chawla (2021) suggest further research into how the tone and subject of news coverage can influence the effect of CRM on consumer repurchase intentions. Consequently, Marketers must comprehend the role of news articles in CRM initiatives (Beattie, Durante, Knight, & Sen, 2021; Ferraris, Giudice, Grandhi, & Cillo, 2020). It involves getting media coverage alongside attractive CRM initiatives to increase the campaign's impact on consumer behavior (Jeong & Chung, 2023). However, advertising is double-edged (Lee, Kim, & Ham, 2016; Vanhamme, Lindgreen, Reast, & Van Popering, 2012). It can communicate CRM activities, but its effectiveness depends on message credibility (Lee et al., 2016). Overly promotional or self-serving advertising can increase mistrust and negate CRM's favorable benefits on repurchase intentions (Seok et al., 2020). In other words, when consumers perceive advertising as an insincere attempt to exploit a cause for commercial gain, it acts as a negative signal, increasing skepticism and potentially diminishing the positive impact of CRM on repurchase intention (Ioannou, Kassinis, & Papagiannakis, 2023). From the review of the literature above, we propose that:

- **H3:** The relation between brand resonance and consumer repurchase intentions will be moderated by news articles such that the relationship will be stronger when news articles' effectiveness is high.
- **H4:** The relation between brand resonance and consumer repurchase intentions will be moderated by advertising such that the relationship will be weaker when advertising effectiveness is high.

1.2.4 Moderated-Mediation Effect

Drawing from signaling theory and its application in cause related marketing, the distinction between various media types—specifically advertising and news articles—and their impact on consumer repurchase intention via brand resonance forms the foundation of our proposed hypotheses. Signaling theory posits that signals, such as those emanating from CRM activities (Şeşena & Gündoğdub, 2023), serve as indicators that influence consumer perceptions and behaviors (Terblanche, Boshoff, & Human-Van Eck, 2023). Product quality and brand partnerships with well-known social enterprises can boost customer trust and brand equity (Chavadi, Sirothiya, Menon, & MR, 2023). The medium used to transmit these signals can affect their effectiveness. Advertising can spread CRM messaging, but it can also cause consumer distrust and impair the CRM-CRI link through brand resonance. Advertising skepticism can undermine CRM campaigns due to questions about the brand's genuineness (Ndasi & Akcay, 2020; Xue & Mattila, 2024). In contrast, News articles, which are more reliable and less biased, can boost brand resonance by demonstrating a business's CRM honesty (Cordero-Gutiérrez, Aljarah, López, & Lahuerta-Otero, 2024). Furthermore, positive news coverage of CRM operations increases brand resonance and consumer repurchase intention (Llopis-Amorós, Gil-Saura, & Molina,

2018). Accordingly, earned media often leads to better customer outcomes than sponsored media (Zhou, Li, Ruan, & Zhang, 2023). Based on the study theories and literature, we propose the following hypotheses:

- **H5:** Perceived advertising effectiveness weakens the indirect relationship between cause-related marketing and consumer repurchase intentions via brand resonance, reducing the mediating effect of brand resonance when advertising effectiveness is high.
- **H6:** Perceived news articles' effectiveness strengthens the indirect relationship between cause-related marketing and consumer repurchase intentions via brand resonance, enhancing the mediating effect of brand resonance when news articles' effectiveness is high.

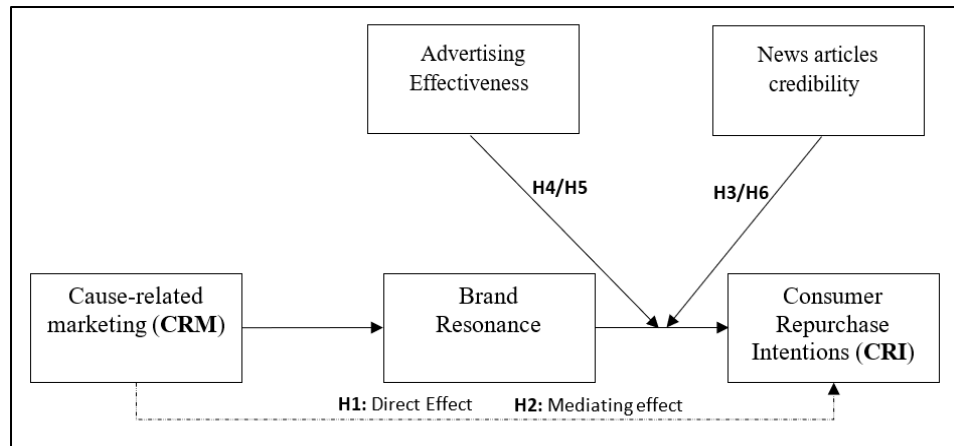


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

3. Sample and Procedure

This research employed a survey method grounded in the questionnaire standards and ethics outlined by the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR). Given that all references were in English but the respondents were Pakistani, it was essential to translate the questionnaire from English to Urdu to ensure clarity and prevent misunderstandings. To maintain the integrity of the original questionnaire, the Urdu version was subsequently re-translated into English by a different individual, ensuring that the meaning remained consistent with the original. The study targeted mature consumers who were aware of or had participated in CRM campaigns organized in the aftermath of natural disasters and who had been exposed to media coverage (i.e., news articles and advertising) of these campaigns. To address potential biases, two scenarios were presented to gauge consumer awareness and exposure to CRM campaigns: (i) an advertisement promoting a CRM campaign by Zong, one of Pakistan's largest cellular companies, during

the Covid-19 crisis, and (ii) CRM activities by JAZZ, as reported by a journalist in the Daily Times newspaper.

An accidental sampling technique was utilized to collect data from a prominent shopping center in Lahore, with the data compilation process spanning two weeks, conducted from 6 PM to 10 PM daily. To mitigate method bias, as suggested by Podsakoff, Podsakoff, Williams, Huang, and Yang (2024), the construct measures were divided into different sections of the questionnaire, given that data collection was from a single source. Out of 615 distributed self-administered questionnaire copies, 464 were returned. The study excluded 54 questionnaires that were less than 90% completed, resulting in a net of 410 responses, yielding a response rate of approximately 66.66% for analysis.

3.1 Measures

In this study, all constructs were quantified using 5-point Likert scales, with responses ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), except for attitudes toward the CRM campaign and advertising effectiveness, which were assessed using a 5-point semantic differential rating scale. To mitigate common method bias (CMB), psychological and methodological distinctions were introduced between constructs (Podsakoff et al., 2024). Employing distinct scale formats (semantic differential and Likert) for predictors and outcomes helped minimize common scale biases. Attitudes towards CRM campaigns were gauged using a modified 6-item scale inspired by Burton and Lichtenstein (1988) and Lichtenstein and Bearden (1989), as recommended by Westberg and Pope (2014), utilizing a 5-point semantic differential scale. Responses to the statement, "My attitude toward this CRM campaign is..." ranged from unattractive/attractive, bad/good, unfavorable/favorable, poor/excellent, to harmful/beneficial. The item "I like this CRM campaign" was measured on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), assessing consumer attitudes towards CRM campaigns amid the second phase of the COVID-19 crisis in Pakistan. News articles' effectiveness was measured using a 3-item questionnaire adapted from Owen and Karrh (1996), employing a 5-point Likert-type scale. Advertising effectiveness was assessed through 3 items (convincing/unconvincing, believable/unbelievable, & biased/unbiased) drawn from MacKenzie and Lutz (1989), each measured on a 5-point semantic differential scale. To minimize CMB and the social desirability effect (Chung & Monroe, 2003), respondents were shown newspaper ads and reporter news about cellular companies' CRM practices during the Covid-19 crisis. A cover letter accompanied the questionnaire items, emphasizing privacy and the voluntary nature of participation. Brand resonance, aimed at gauging the extent to which consumers feel "in sync" with the brand (Keller & Swaminathan, 2019), reflects the objective of creating a deep bond between the brand and consumers by aligning with their beliefs and values. This study adopted a 12-item scale from Tsai, Lin, and Li (2014) to measure brand resonance, using a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Consumer repurchase intention reflects the propensity to repurchase from organizations engaged in CRM, largely influenced by previous purchase experiences. CRI was measured using 3 items adapted from Vázquez-Casielles, Iglesias, & Varela-Neira (2017), on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

4. Results

4.1 Preliminary Analysis

4.1.1 Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA): Measurement Model

Table 1 presents the bivariate correlations, means, standard deviations, and Cronbach's alpha, alongside estimates for discriminant and convergent validity for all constructs in the study. Initially, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted for all variables using AMOS 24 to assess the validity of the instrument and the measurement model's appropriateness. The standardized factor loadings for all items were ≥ 0.60 , indicating satisfactory validity as recommended by Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson (2010). The CFA analysis led to the refinement of the measurement model, retaining 21 out of 27 items. This refinement was based on the goodness-of-fit indices ($\chi^2/df = 2.67$; RMSEA = 0.06; GFI = 0.90; AGFI = 0.87; NFI = 0.92; TLI = 0.94; CFI = 0.95), with 6 items dropped due to factor loadings ≤ 0.60 . The construct reliability (or composite reliability) values exceeded 0.70 for all latent variables, affirming the scale's reliability (Hair et al., 2010).

This study also examined both discriminant and convergent validity to establish the measurement model's construct validity. Both standardized beta (β) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) were utilized to validate convergent validity. It was seen that all standardized β and AVE values exceeded the threshold of 0.5, as stated by Fornell and Larcker (1981). This indicates that there were no concerns with convergent validity. Based on Fornell and Larcker (1981), discriminant validity was determined by comparing the square root of each construct's AVE to its correlations with other variables. Discriminant validity was ensured by the study, which showed that correlations between the components were less than the square roots of AVE for each construct. In addition, the discriminant validity of the measurement model was reaffirmed by the fact that the Maximum Shared Variance (MSV) values were lower than the AVE values, which indicated that there were no problems with the discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2010). A collinearity test conducted using SPSS 24 indicated that tolerance values were within the permissible range of 0 to 10, which is consistent with the recommendation made by O'Brien (2007). This suggests that there is no multicollinearity among the indicators. In order to set the stage for testing the study's hypotheses, this in-depth evaluation confirms the constructs' discriminant and convergent validity and confirms that multicollinearity is not present.

Table 1: Mean, Standard Deviation, Correlations, Reliability, and Validity

	Mean	SD	A	CR	AVE	MSV	ω	1	2	3	4	5
1. AD	3.654	1.251	0.849	0.869	0.688	0.450	0.876	0.830				
2. CRM	3.635	1.173	0.918	0.922	0.666	0.450	0.937	0.671**	0.816			
3. BR	3.019	1.191	0.871	0.859	0.508	0.121	0.880	0.174**	0.185**	0.713		
4. CRI	3.538	1.293	0.865	0.869	0.689	0.284	0.880	0.533**	0.445**	0.348**	0.830	
5. NA	3.713	1.184	0.875	0.878	0.708	0.303	0.928	0.424**	0.550**	0.294**	0.396**	0.841

Notes: N=410. **p < .01, ω = McDonald's omega - construct reliability

AD = advertising, CRM= cause-related marketing, BR= Brand resonance, CRI= consumer repurchase intention, NA = News articles, CR = composite reliability, AVE= average variance extracted, MSV = maximum shared variance, α = Cronbach's alpha, SD= standard deviation

Table 2: Mediation, Moderation, and Mediated-Moderation Analysis

	Brand resonance (BR)		Consumer repurchase intention (CRI)	
Direct effect (without mediation) via SPSS				
Cause related marketing (CRM)	---		0.435***	
Mediating effect of BR (Model 4, Process Macro)				
CRM	0.429***		0.191***	
BR			0.261***	
R ²	.035		.245	
Indirect effect	Effect size 0.045	SE 0.014	LLCI 0.020	ULCI 0.075
Second end moderating effect of News articles b/t BR and CRI (Model 1, Process Macro)				
BR			-0.126	
News articles (NA)			0.075	
Interaction (BR x NA)			0.098***	
R ²			0.198	
Second end moderating effect of advertising b/t BR and CRI (Model 1, Process Macro)				
BR			0.595***	
Advertising (AD)			0.714***	
Interaction (BRxAD)			-0.089	
R ²			0.311	
Mediated-moderation relationships (when AD acts as a moderator) (Model 14, Process Macro)				
	Effect size Index	SE	LLCI	ULCI
Conditional indirect effect (via CS) at the different values of AD ^a ; (model 14, Process Macro)				
+1 SD	0.025	0.014	0.002	0.059
Mean	0.048	0.015	0.023	0.082
-1SD	0.071	0.022	0.033	0.119
Index of Mediated-moderation	-0.018	0.008	-0.036	-0.005
Mediated-moderation relationships (when NA acts as a moderator) (Model 14, Process Macro)				
	Effect size Index	SE	LLCI	ULCI
Conditional indirect effect (via BR) at the different values of NA ^a ; (model 14, Process Macro)				
+1 SD	0.063	0.020	0.029	0.106
Mean	0.042	0.014	0.017	0.073
-1SD	0.021	0.017	-0.011	0.056
Index of Mediated-moderation	0.017	0.010	0.002	0.040

Note: n = 410, SE = Standard error, LLCI= lower-limit of confidence interval, ULCI = upper-limit of confidence interval. *** p < .001, ** p < .01, * p < .05. ^a Bootstrap analysis based on 5000 resamples.

4.1.2 Common Method Variance (CMV)

To mitigate CMV and ensure the integrity of our data, we implemented several preemptive strategies before collecting data. Recognizing the potential for CMV in research utilizing single-source, cross-sectional methods, we strategically separated the measurement of variables. Despite these precautions, we proceeded to test for method bias using Harman's one-factor test rigorously Podsakoff et al. (2024), which revealed that the largest factor explained only 36.41% of the variance, well below the critical threshold, indicating no dominant factor. Furthermore, when considering all factors, they accounted for 72.60% of the total variance, suggesting a multifactorial structure. Additionally, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) with a common latent factor (CLF) was conducted, resulting in a CLF value of 0.612, significant at the t-value level. The CMV, calculated as the square of the CLF value ($0.612^2 = 0.3745$ or 37.45%), falls below the 50% threshold, indicating that CMB is not a significant concern in our data. Further validation using the CFA marker technique yielded a common latent factor value of 0.246, with the CMV calculated as the square of this value ($0.246^2 = 0.0605$ or 6.05%), reinforcing the conclusion that CMB does not bias our results significantly.

The demographic composition of our study sample predominantly consisted of male telecom users (68%), with females comprising 32%. The age group of 30-45 years represented 65% of the sample, while 57% held a bachelor's degree. A substantial proportion of participants (71%) reported using dual-SIM services, 75% had an income less than PKR 60,000, and 76% were prepaid users. This demographic breakdown provides context for interpreting the study's findings within the Pakistani telecom user base.

4.2 Hypotheses Testing

4.2.1 Direct and Mediation Effect

To validate our hypotheses, we addressed Common Method Bias (CMB) using Podsakoff et al.'s (2024) variance extraction method with the CMB-adjusted composite technique in AMOS, ensuring unbiased analysis. We then examined direct, indirect, and mediation effects (Iacobucci, Saldanha, & Deng, 2007), while confirming no confounding control variables influenced the results.

The first hypothesis (H1) suggested a positive relationship between cause related marketing and consumer repurchase intention. We employed correlational and regression analyses via SPSS version 24 to examine this relationship. The study yielded positive and statistically significant regression coefficients ($\beta = 0.435$, $p < .001$), thereby confirming H1. This result indicates that CRM campaigns conducted by telecom companies significantly impacted CRI during the Covid-19 crisis in Pakistan. To investigate the mediation effect, we utilized the Process macro version 3.5 (Model 4, Hayes, 2018) to examine the indirect relationship between CRM and CRI, along with calculating the confidence interval (CI) for the effect size. The findings in Table 2 revealed a significant partial mediation effect of brand

resonance on the CRM-CRI relationship. Specifically, the effect size was 0.045 for this indirect relationship, with a CI not including 0 (0.020-0.070), lending support to H2. Furthermore, the analysis demonstrated that CRM is significantly and positively related to brand resonance ($\beta = 0.191$, $p < .001$), which, in turn, is positively associated with CRI ($\beta = 0.261$, $p < .001$).

These results underscore the pivotal role of brand resonance as a mediator in the relationship between CRM and CRI, highlighting the effectiveness of CRM initiatives in enhancing consumer engagement through strengthened brand connections.

4.2.2 Moderating Effect of News Articles and Advertising

To examine the moderating effects of news articles and advertising effectiveness on the relationship between brand resonance and consumer repurchase intention, we utilized the Process Macro with bootstrapping as recommended by Hayes (2018), specifically employing Model-1 for this analysis as depicted in Table 2. In alignment with Dawson's (2014) guidelines for interpreting interactions between predictor variables, the significance of the moderation was determined by testing the coefficient of the interaction term. The analysis, detailed in Table 2, revealed significant relationships between presumed brand resonance, advertising, and news articles with CRI. Hypothesis 3 posited that news articles would strengthen the positive link between brand resonance and CRI, especially under heightened perceptions of news article effectiveness. Correspondingly, the data indicated a significant interaction effect (BR x NA) on CRI ($\beta = 0.098$, $p < 0.001$).

Conversely, Hypothesis 4 anticipated that advertising would weaken the association between brand resonance and CRI, becoming less influential under increased advertising perceptions. This was corroborated by the findings, which showed a significant BR x AD interaction effect on CRI ($\beta = -0.089$, $p < 0.001$).

Following Dawson's (2014) guidelines, Figures 2 and 3 illustrate that brand resonance's positive effect on CRI increases with higher news article effectiveness and decreases with greater advertising perceptions. These findings support Hypotheses 3 and 4, confirming the amplifying role of news articles and the dampening effect of advertising on brand resonance's impact on CRI.

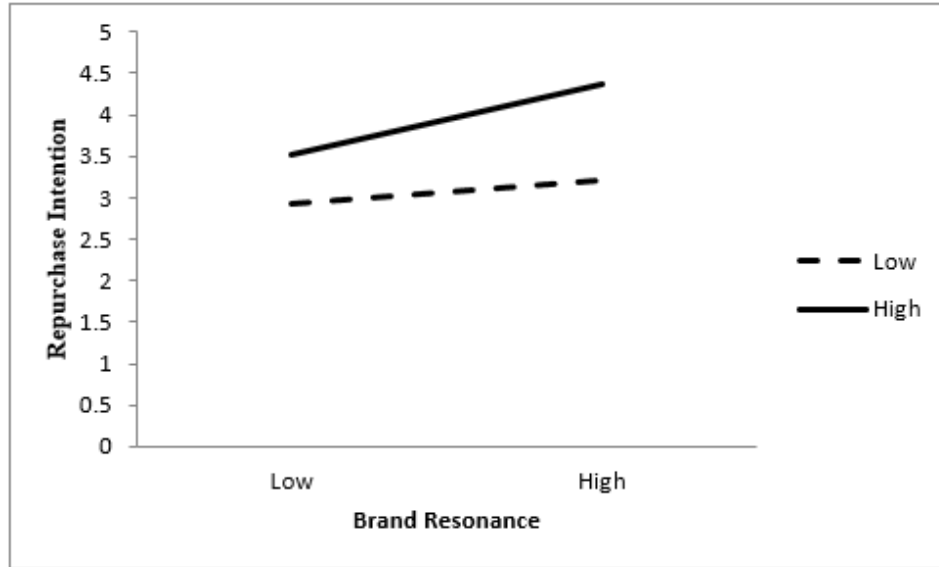


Figure 2: Moderating Effect of News Articles' Credibility

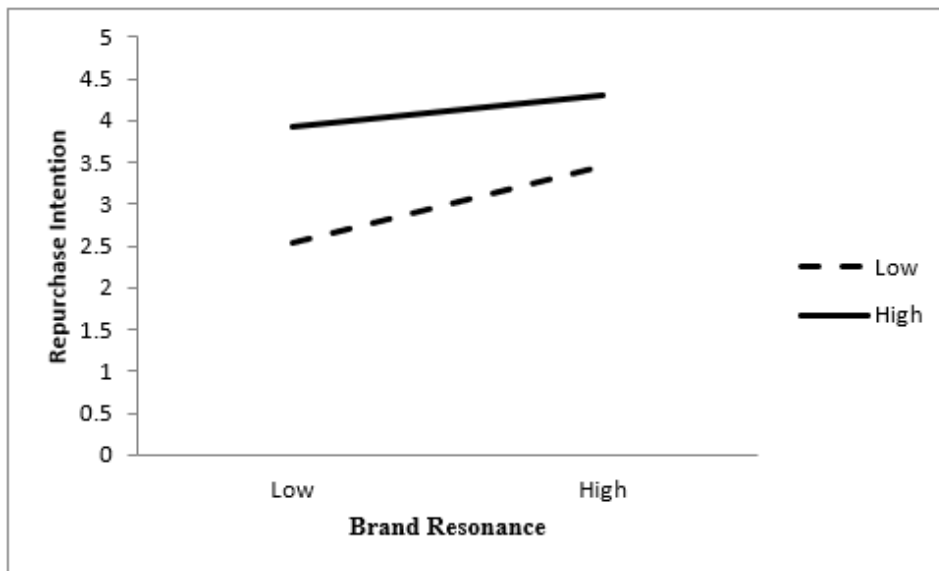


Figure 3: Moderating Effect of Advertising

4.2.3 Moderated-Mediation Effect

Hypotheses 5 and 6 explored the nuanced conditions affecting the indirect relationship between attitudes toward a CRM campaign and repurchase intention through brand resonance, with advertising and news articles serving as moderators, respectively. Utilizing the PROCESS macro in SPSS (Model 14, Hayes, 2018), we assessed the moderated mediation effect. For clearer analysis, predictor variables were mean-centered before applying Hayes' Model 14 to evaluate how advertising and news articles moderated the relationship between brand resonance and consumer repurchase intention. The analysis, summarized in Table 2, revealed variations in the mediating effect of brand resonance on the path from attitudes toward CRM campaigns to repurchase intentions, contingent on the levels of advertising and news articles. Specifically, the indirect effect was weaker at higher levels of advertising ($\beta=0.025$, $S.E=0.014$; 95% $CI=[0.002, 0.059]$) compared to lower levels ($\beta=0.071$, $S.E=0.022$; 95% $CI=[0.033, 0.119]$). Conversely, the mediation effect was strengthened at higher levels of news article exposure ($\beta=0.063$, $S.E=0.020$; 95% $CI=[0.029, 0.106]$) versus lower levels ($\beta=0.021$, $S.E=0.017$; 95% $CI=[-0.011, 0.056]$).

This differential impact is further substantiated by the index of moderated mediation, which was found to be significant for both advertising (-0.018 ; $se=0.008$; 95% $CI=[-0.036, -0.005]$) and news articles (0.017 ; $se=0.010$; 95% $CI=[0.002, 0.040]$), with the confidence intervals notably excluding zero. These findings affirm the presence of moderated mediation, indicating that the role of brand resonance as a mediator between attitudes toward CRM campaigns and repurchase intention is indeed contingent upon the levels of advertising and news articles.

Therefore, the study's results fully support Hypotheses 5 and 6, demonstrating that advertising weakens while news articles strengthen the mediated relationship, aligning with the initial propositions of our investigation.

5. Discussion

This study investigates the dynamic interplay between brand resonance and cause-related marketing, as well as the moderating effects of news articles and advertising credibility. The findings of this study provide insightful revelations about the effectiveness of CRM strategies in Pakistan's telecom industry, particularly in the aftermath of natural disasters. Specifically, the findings indicate that brand resonance plays a substantial role in mediating the connection between consumer perceptions towards cause-related marketing efforts and consumer repurchase intentions. Applying Attribution Theory, we can understand how consumers attribute motives to CRM efforts, influencing their trust and loyalty toward the brand. Similarly, Signaling Theory helps explain how CRM actions signal a brand's values to consumers, strengthening brand resonance. Effective CRM campaigns that enhance brand resonance significantly improve the likelihood of repurchase, acting as a critical psychological connector that deepens the consumer's emotional and cognitive engagement with the brand. This result aligns with Pourazad (2018), and Pereira et al. (2024),

highlighting the strategic importance of CRM in enhancing brand value perception and consumer engagement to foster customer loyalty and repurchase behavior.

In addition, the moderating effect of news articles on the impact of CRM is clearly visible in Figure 2. Presumably highly credible news items significantly increase the impact of brand resonance on consumer repurchase intention. This highlights the essential role that trustworthy media plays in boosting the effectiveness of marketing messages, particularly in contexts that are sensitive to the trust of consumers, such as the phases of recovery that follow a tragedy. The credibility of the media has an effect on how consumers perceive and act, as pointed out by Perera, Nayak, and Nguyen (2023), who found that consumers are more likely to make purchases with a brand when they believe the information they are presented with is trustworthy. Alternatively, there is a novel dynamic at play when considering the moderating influence of advertising credibility on the connection between brand resonance and CRI (Figure 3). Despite predictions, high advertising credibility reduces the impact of brand resonance on CRI, suggesting consumer skepticism towards promotional activities, even when ads are perceived as credible. This indicates that consumers may be skeptical of promotional activities even when ads are seen as credible, which reduces the effects of advertising in improving CRM results. The intricate nature of advertising in CRM campaigns is brought into focus by this subtle effect. This aligns with the findings of Eisend and Tarrahi (2022) and Feijoo, Díaz-Campo, and Vizcaíno-Verdú (2025), who found that advertising is less effective than news media because consumers perceive 'earned' media as more authentic and trustworthy than 'paid' media. Similarly, Tao and Ji (2024) and Pereira et al. (2024) support this perspective, highlighting how strategic communication can leverage media credibility to enhance customer engagement and repurchase intentions, thereby amplifying the benefits of CRM in challenging market situations.

5.1 Theoretical Implications

Our study fills gaps in CRM theory by incorporating Attribution Theory and Signaling Theory to articulate consumer perceptions and response to CRM activities. These results demonstrate how corporations' intentions and communication channels' legitimacy may influence customer behavior. Attribution Theory, which states that customers ascribe CRM efforts, is supported by our data. It's important to note that profit-driven incentives may boost brand resonance and repurchase intentions, while genuine, selfless motives might lower it. Signaling Theory explains how and why brand authenticity is signaled by the trustworthiness of communication channels like news (or advertising). Credible but urgently promoted advertising has a considerably less influence on brand resonance and repurchase intentions than trustworthy media reports. These findings support the premise that consumers trust 'earned' media more than 'paid' media (Shankar et al., 2024) and that signal believability influences consumer reactions.

We use an integrated theoretical approach to analyze CRM effectiveness and how CRM communication affects CRM success. Using Attribution Theory and Signaling Theory, we provide a comprehensive CRM strategy interaction framework. Attribution Theory shows how customers evaluate CRM motivations, while Signaling Theory shows how communication channel selection and credibility affect trust and engagement. While diverse, both models complement each other and reflect the CRM link between channel signals and motivation attributions. Our study examines how cause related marketing affects consumer repurchase intention, how brand resonance mediates and moderates this relationship, and how external communications (news articles and advertising) affect it. Our methodology recognizes the complexity of the communication environment, unlike previous research, which normally analyzes just direct impacts. The effectiveness of different communication methods depends on the channels' validity and trustworthiness. This perspective is crucial in a world when various platforms deliver consumers messages. Our research shows how motivation attributions (Attribution Theory) and channel credibility (Signaling Theory) interact. This broad perspective highlights media's strategic role in promoting or decreasing ROI of CRM, providing a path for marketers and policymakers to improve CRM initiatives.

5.2 Managerial Implications

The study's findings can help marketers improve their CRM strategy. Our research reveals how advertising effectiveness and news item legitimacy affect CRM outcomes, offering ways to strengthen CRM campaign authenticity and efficacy. Our study demonstrates that choosing the right channels and creating trustworthy messaging is essential for CRM efforts. This is crucial as customers distrust corporate goals and can separate compassion from profit. Our study found that advertising and news article credibility significantly moderates CRM's effect on brand resonance and consumer repurchase intentions, suggesting marketers deliberately use media to increase CRM authenticity. As a result of the research, marketers need to take into consideration both the content and delivery of CRM messages. There is a connection between the ability to communicate effectively and the likelihood of even well-intentioned CRM programs failing. Thus, marketers must make CRM communications simple, compelling, and delivered through trusted channels. Our research assists businesses in the process of building CRM strategies that are more customer-centric. This is done by mapping out how customer satisfaction mediates CRM and brand-related results and how external communications affect this mediation. We must do this to ensure that CRM strategies meet company goals and customer values. Our method lets marketers evaluate CRM activity and communication credibility for more successful and responsive campaigns. This research shows that improving communication channel credibility can raise CRM brand resonance. This is a must for businesses that want to boost the visibility of their brand in the market and build customer trust that lasts. Our study can help firms enhance their CRM strategy, improving consumer responses in the short term and brand loyalty in the long run. Our research also indicates that marketers

carefully consider which media will increase CRM communications' credibility. This strategic insight helps CRM projects achieve their aims and boost brand image.

5.3 Conclusion

This research takes a novel approach to exploring crisis management by integrating public relations, marketing, and brand management perspectives, distinctively focusing on post-natural disaster scenarios through a marketing management lens. Unlike previous studies grounded in social sciences, this study evaluates customer feedback and media coverage's role in crises, offering fresh insights into consumer-brand dynamics in post-natural disasters. The findings advocate for organizations to engage in CRM practices not just as a response to natural disasters but as a strategic effort to enhance consumer satisfaction and loyalty. By bolstering brand resonance, organizations can strengthen the consumer-brand connection, leveraging consumers' positive perceptions as engaged viewers to amplify consumer repurchase intention. This research provides actionable insights for both international and local firms, highlighting the importance of fostering positive brand perceptions to create and enhance brand resonance. It reveals that high levels of brand resonance can significantly boost CRI, suggesting that participation in CRM programs can serve dual purposes: supporting charitable causes and enhancing corporate image among consumers. Although some research implies that publicizing CRM initiatives may lower shareholder value, the majority of evidence suggests that CRM practices favorably improve consumer satisfaction and purchase intentions. Notably, In the post-natural disasters, Pakistani telecom companies such as Jazz and Zong 4G demonstrated how CRM activities could be efficiently used to support both societal needs and corporate objectives. This shows the positive impact that well-executed CRM initiatives have on consumer engagement and brand equity. This study shows that media coverage has complex effects on CRM results. It shows that news articles generally make readers feel good, while ads can make people skeptical if they are not done properly. To avoid backlash, organizations must convey CRM initiatives clearly and truthfully, ensuring consumers regard them as genuine rather than self-serving. Finally, this study backs up the idea that CSR and CRM are not just acts of humanity but also smart investments in a brand's reputation and relationship with customers. An effective communication strategy, particularly through reputable news outlets, emerges as a key factor in enhancing brand resonance and fostering positive consumer engagement with CRM activities. This strategy provides a blueprint for businesses that are looking to navigate the complexities of marketing and brand management during times of crisis.

5.4 Limitations and Future Research

Our study has a few limitations that warrant explanation. First, this study used self-reported measures, which are prone to social desirability and faulty memory biases. Implementing objective data sources like client purchase records, behavioral monitoring, or observational techniques might improve conclusions. Experiments might also examine how CRM

message framing and delivery effect customer behavior. Second, this research only sampled Pakistan's telecom business, which may restrict its applicability. For future research on how CRM strategies affect consumer behavior in other geographic and cultural contexts, this study should be replicated. Third, the study considers brand resonance and consumer repurchase intention, ignoring important marketing characteristics like consumer trust, brand loyalty, and emotional connection to the brand. These factors should be included in future research to better understand how CRM affects customer behavior. Finally, this research did not include individual criteria like internet literacy, media trust, or CRM campaign participation. Future research should investigate these moderating factors to identify how CRM strategies can be tailored to meet the needs of diverse consumer groups.

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