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UNIVERSITY OF MEDIA, ARTS AND COMMUNICATION  
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**THE INFLUENCE OF CAUSE-RELATED MARKETING ON PURCHASE  
INTENTIONS AMONG MILLENIALS IN GHANA**

BY

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**DECLARATION BY STUDENT**


I hereby declare that this research is a result of my own original research and that, no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or any other higher education institute. I further declare that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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**CERTIFICATION BY SUPERVISOR**

This Dissertation has been prepared and presented under my supervision according to the guidelines for supervision and formatting of Dissertation laid down by the University of Media, Arts and Communication, UniMAC.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study explores the influence of cause-related marketing (CRM) on the purchase intentions of millennials. Employing a mixed-methods approach to capture both quantitative and qualitative insights, this study focused on achieving three objectives that focused on understanding the awareness and exposure of millennials to cause-related marketing strategies, the extent to which CRM influences the purchase intentions of Ghanaian millennials, and understand which CRM types had greater influencing power on millennials purchase intentions. The study followed the Consumer Purchase Decision Model and the Theory of Planned Behaviour to undertake this investigation. Quantitative data were collected from 150 survey respondents, while in-depth qualitative data were gathered through interviews with 10 participants. The findings revealed that millennials demonstrated a considerable understanding of CRM as a concept. However, their direct exposure to and experience with CRM strategies were less prevalent. Despite this, CRM emerged as a significant determinant of purchase intentions within this demographic. Among various CRM types, "percentage of sales" and "licensing CRM" strategies had a more pronounced impact on millennials' decision-making compared to other forms. The study underscores the potential of CRM as an effective marketing tool to engage socially conscious millennial consumers.

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my creator, savior, and director, the Almighty God, without whom I could not have made it this far.

I also dedicate this research work to my family, to my mother Mad. Rosemond Asare, for her sacrifices and ensuring that I had the best of education, and to my father, the late Andrews Kwening, I will always love you dad, to my foster dad, Mr. Franklin Norteye and, to my sister Miss. Vanita Ayisi Morrison and all my relatives and loved ones.

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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Chapter Overview**

This session of the research presents a general overview of the study. The chapter discusses critical issues that form the context for this study. Hence, critical issues concerning marketing in the digital age and, the definition of key concepts that form the study such as cause-related marketing and marketing among millennials are also discussed briefly to provide context for the study. Additionally, the problem statement is described in this chapter. Furthermore, the core objectives and research questions that guide this study are also stated in this chapter. The chapter further discusses the relevance of the study while also defining the scope of the study.

### **1.2 Background of the Study**

The changing dynamics of the marketing landscape globally mean that organisations have to be proactive and devise creative ways of marketing their products and staying relevant within the industry (Taqi, 2019; Kumar, 2015). Undoubtedly, the emergence of digital technologies in the broader discipline and practice of marketing has come to also mean that marketing approaches and strategies have taken up a more innovative approach (Nabieva, 2021). The relevance of the pervasion of digital technologies presents marketers with numerous and varied techniques to effectively market products and services to consumers (Zhu, 2021; Kumar, Divya, & Kumar, 2021). While technology has revolutionised marketing, the focus on consumer satisfaction has over the past decades become the core concern of most marketing professionals and academics. Digital technologies have thus, over the years become key tools in communicating products and

services to consumers, targeting them and improving customer satisfaction (Andrianova & Kruchinina, 2021; Kagan, 2018).

According to Kotler and Keller (2012), customer satisfaction has become the bane of marketing and marketers must ensure that marketing strategies, approaches, and technologies coherently serve the grand purpose of satisfying the needs and wants of customers. Some authors argue that since marketing evolved to focus more keenly on customer satisfaction, organisations have also become keener on understanding consumer dynamics to effectively market products and services to them (Fong, Loh, & Choi, 2022; Griffin, 2005; Kotler & Keller, 2012). The attention to customer satisfaction in marketing now means that customers have become integral parts of the marketing process (Taqi, 2019).

The advent of new media technologies as well as social media which is a key characteristic of communication among millennials further makes marketing in recent times a complex task (Andrianova & Kruchinina, 2021; Hussain, 2023). Marketers hence have to be critical of key demographic characteristics that influence consumers' tastes, choices, purchasing intentions, and power (Kotler & Keller, 2012). According to Aaker (2005) as well as Shetty, Chaudhuri, and Shetty (2021) marketing tendencies that seem to differentiate products based on cost, quality, value, functionalities as well as attributes are quickly losing relevance in the marketing industry. Hence, the recent marketing landscape is characterised by newer forms of creative techniques and strategies that are being implemented by different organizations across the world. Thus, conventional forms of marketing are quickly losing relevance, especially when one considers marketing to millennials in recent years (Kagan, 2018; Keelson, 2012).

Furthermore, consumers in recent years have become highly selective of the products they associate with, that is, those they purchase, use, recommend and remain loyal to, while demanding

ethical marketing forms to satisfy their altruistic nature (Zdravkovic, Magnusson, & Stanley, 2010; Moharam, Elsamadicy, & Negm, 2020). Hence, millennial consumers now tend to be more interested in purchasing and using products that indicate some ethical behaviours and characters from organisations. In essence, products and services that millennial consumers perceive as fulfilling some social cause become more attractive and preferable (Ferraris, Guidice, Grandhi, & Cillo, 2019).

Shetty, Chaudhuri and Shetty (2021) indicate that in response to these dynamisms, organisations have now turned to cause-related marketing techniques to attract consumers and increase the purchase and use of products and services. Cause-related marketing (CRM) is a marketing strategy where a company or brand aligns itself with a social or environmental cause and promotes both its products or services and the cause simultaneously (Aggarwal & Singh, 2019). In cause-related marketing campaigns, a portion of the proceeds from sales or specific actions (such as donations or purchases) is donated to the chosen cause or used to support initiatives related to the cause (Chang, 2008; Shetty, Chaudhuri and Shetty, 2021). Cause-related marketing, in essence, is a collaborative promotional strategy in which organisations or companies support a social cause that resonates with their customers and aligns their businesses' interests with social responsibility.

The execution of CRM strategies has evolved over the years birthing a large variety of CRM within the marketing scope although initially, the core of this approach was focused on organisations making donations for non-profit cause-related social issues with the aim of ensuring this directly affected organisational profits (Berglind & Nakata, 2005). Gupta and Pirsch (2006) account that the traditional form of CRM concerns organisations donating a portion of the sale of products to a charitable social cause. Other forms also include those strategies where the organisation donates proceeds of organisational profits to a charitable cause in society. Studies have shown that different

CRM strategies have different implications for consumer purchase behaviours. For instance, sales-related CRM strategies that allow the organisation to donate percentages of the sale of products consumers purchase has direct implications for endearing the organisation to consumers while profit-percentage donation CRM strategies have implications for ensuring brand loyalty among consumers (Gupta & Pirsch, 2006; Byerly, 2014; Eastman et al., 2019). Cause-related marketing has been a crucial element in marketing in recent times (Lucke & Heinze, 2015). Indeed, the concept presents a critical space between ethical marketing and profit generation that has become a rife point of study for most marketing communications researchers (Bigne-Alcaniz, Curra-Perez, & San-Blas, 2010)

The study focuses on millennials in Ghana and their purchase behaviours towards the marketing of products and services with the cause-related marketing approach. According to a study conducted by Pew Research Centre millennials are persons currently between age 25 and 43. According to Lee and Kotler (2016), millennials are persons who were born between 1980 and 2000. Owing to the time of their emergence, the millennial age group is noted for exhibiting very peculiar marketing characteristics that are interesting to study especially, within the cause-related marketing concept context (Jackson & Stoel, 2011). Furthermore, studies have shown that this age group comprise a group that currently has purchase power and engages in very diverse levels of product purchasing behaviours (Cunha & Gouveia, 2008). Additionally, other studies note that the millennial group are characterised by high levels of technology adaptation and use (Moreno, et al., 2017). Thus, for marketers, millennials form a critical marketing corpus that understands the use of digital communication tools and are hence exposed to digital marketing (Cunha & Gouveia, 2008; Moreno, et al. 2017). This makes millennials a prime market demographic group to study in line with an emerging marketing approach – CRM.

### **1.3 Problem Statement**

Since its popularisation in the early 1980s, cause-related marketing has become a key form of marketing (Shetty, Chaudhuri, & Shetty, 2021). Although scholars have argued its relevance since it emerged, there is no doubt that it has become a critical form of key competitive advantage for most organisations in a highly competitive marketing space globally (Zdravkovic, Magnusson, & Stanley, 2010). In an era where marketing has seen immense revolution, cause-related marketing has become that existential line between marketing based on direct profit maximisation and marketing approaches that are customer-centred and have a keen sense of social responsibility (Eastman, Smalley, & Warren, 2019).

It is essential to note that its emergence in the 1980s and onward popularisation means that the emerging marketing form has been closely associated with the purchase behaviours of millennials (Shetty, Chaudhuri, & Shetty, 2021). This is largely because millennials are believed to have been born around this time (Cunha & Gouveia, 2008). Thus, marketers have been interested in understanding how millennials (people between the ages of 28 and 45) respond to associating a cause with product purchase tendencies. In other words, in line with the changing dynamics of marketing from the 1980s due to the dynamic emerging customer base, cause-related marketing also emerged (Eastman, Smalley, & Warren, 2019). Since then, marketers have been keen on understanding how CRM influences consumer behaviour towards products. This also forms the core focus of the study. The study is hence interested in investigating the influence of CRM on the purchase intentions of consumers.

The reflections from the literature suggest some linkage between millennials (as a consumer base) and cause-related marketing (a marketing form that emerged during the millennial era) (Shetty,

Chaudhuri, & Shetty, 2021). One question this research focuses on stems from the motivation to inquire about how exposed millennials are to CRM strategies in the marketing space.

Meanwhile, researchers have also been keen on evaluating how cause-related marketing is linked or related to product purchase intentions and other behaviours of consumers. Hence several studies have sought to understand how marketing products based on the promotion of some social cause tends to influence purchase of products by consumers (Babu & Mohiuddin, 2008; Hoek & Gendall, 2008; Bgine-Alcaniz, Curra-Perez, & San-Blas, 2010; Folse et al., 2014; Howie et al., 2015; Ferraris, Guidice, Grandhi, & Cillo, 2019; Eastman, Smalley, & Warren, 2019; Silva et al., 2021; Silva, et al., 2020).

However, the literature also seems to indicate that not a lot of studies have been conducted to situate how a key demographic characteristic such as the age group of consumers influences this relationship. Thus, while studies have drawn a linkage between cause-related marketing and consumer purchase decisions, there has not been a lot of focus on understanding this relationship within the context of a key demographic group– millennials. Additionally, there has been little attention paid to how the different types of CRM strategies influence the purchase intentions of this consumer group. This is essential to be investigated as Gupta and Pirsch (2006) and Eastman et al. (2019) among other authors have noted that different CRM strategies have different consumer behaviour implications.

Furthermore, studies that have been conducted while paying attention to millennial age groups have also focused largely on the use of the quantitative approach (Eastman et al. 2019; Shetty et al. 2021; Bakshi & Verma, 2023). This approach has not allowed in-depth knowledge of the phenomenon of the relationship between cause-related marketing and the purchase intentions of

millennial consumers. This study therefore focuses on the use of the mixed methods approach to fill this gap.

This study emphasises the influence of cause-related marketing on purchase intentions among millennials in Ghana. The core of this study stems from the need to empirically ascertain how CRM influences the purchase intentions of millennial consumers in Ghana. This stems from the idea that, since its emergence, CRM has been used to market products and services to millennial consumers more than any other consumer age group (Bakshi & Verma, 2023).

#### **1.4 Research Objectives**

1. To examine the awareness and understanding of cause-related marketing among Ghanaian millennials
2. To ascertain the extent to which cause-related marketing influences Ghanaian millennials' purchase intentions
3. To investigate which type(s) of cause-related marketing strategies influence the purchase intentions of Ghanaian millennial consumers.

#### **1.5 Research Questions**

1. What is the level of awareness and understanding of cause-related marketing among Ghanaian millennials?
2. To what extent does cause-related marketing influence the purchasing decisions of millennials in Ghana?
3. Which type(s) of cause-related marketing strategies influence the purchase intentions of Ghanaian millennials?

## **1.6 Scope of the Study**

The scope of this study will be limited to investigating cause-related marketing among millennials in Ghana. This study will hence focus on studying the phenomenon among persons between the age range of 28 and 45 years at the time of this study (2024). Hence, this study considers collecting and analysing data from respondents between this age range. The classification of millennials within this age group was based on Pew Research Centers (2019) classification. The findings made in this study will hence primarily relate to this age group although it can be applied to other age groupings as well.

Geographically, this study is limited to collecting and analysing data from the Greater Accra region of Ghana. More specifically, the study will focus more on millennials within the Accra metropolis. Hence, the findings made will primarily concern millennials within this study area. According to the Ghana Statistical Service, the population of the Greater Accra region as of the 2021 census was an estimated 5.4 million. This represented the most populous region in the country. An estimated 56% of this population comprises millennials between the ages of 23 and 43 years. Aside from being the most populous city in the nation, the city is also characterised by high levels of trade and business tendencies. These factors make the city and the Accra Metropolis a prevalent area for a study of this nature.

Additionally, the researcher studies cause-related marketing and its influence on millennials within the broader concept of digital marketing. Digital marketing has become the bane of marketing in recent times. Digital communication technologies have become critical platforms for the execution of key marketing strategies in the past few years. Essentially, CRM strategies have in recent times played out on different digital communication platforms, especially, in line with the communication needs of millennial consumers (Deng et al. 2021). Hence, the study is more

focused on cause-related marketing initiatives that are carried out and seen by millennials on digital marketing platforms only.

### **1.7 Significance of the Study**

This study provides insights into how millennial consumers perceive and respond to cause-related marketing initiatives in Ghana. The core of this study is focused on three main objectives. The study, first, is focused on evaluating the exposure levels of millennials to cause-related marketing to draw out their knowledge of this form of marketing. Furthermore, the study is also interested in understanding how cause-related marketing influences purchase intentions and other consumer behaviours of millennials in Ghana. Finally, the study focuses on understanding the extent of influence different cause-related marketing has on millennials.

This study holds immense significance in several ways. First, understanding the motivations and decision-making processes of millennials can inform marketing strategies targeted at this demographic. Studying the influence of cause-related marketing on millennials' purchase intentions can contribute to understanding their perceptions of corporate social responsibility. Companies or organisations can use this information to tailor their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives to resonate with the values of this demographic. Findings from this study can help companies differentiate themselves from competitors by highlighting their commitment to social causes. This can be particularly important in industries where product differentiation is challenging.

Overall, this study on cause-related marketing's influence on the purchase intentions of millennials in Ghana can provide valuable insights for companies or organisations seeking to engage with this demographic effectively, while also contributing to the broader understanding of consumer behaviour and corporate social responsibility. Furthermore, this study is essential in adding to the

wealth of literature on cause-related marketing among millennials in Ghana. The study focuses on understanding the knowledge and levels of exposure to cause-related marketing among millennials in Ghana. The findings identified concerning this can be essential in contributing to the literature on the cause-related marketing-millennials discussion.

### **1.8 Chapter Summary**

This chapter of the study focused on providing critical contextualization for the entire study. The chapter presented a general background to the study while discussing essential issues such as marketing, cause-related marketing, and consumer behaviours of millennials. This was essential to provide the needed context to study the influence of cause-related marketing among millennials in Ghana. The study is built on three core objectives which are directed at understanding how exposed millennials are to cause-related marketing, the influence such forms of marketing have on the purchase intentions of millennials, and which forms of cause-related marketing have the most impact on purchase decisions. The chapter also discussed the scope of the study.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 2.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter focuses on reviewing relevant literature related to the phenomena under study. A literature review is a comprehensive summary and analysis of existing literature concerning a specific topic. It involves a critical evaluation of existing knowledge on the subject matter of interest to aid the research gain deeper knowledge in what they are researching (Ramdhani et al., 2014).

This section of the chapter discusses critical issues concerning cause-related marketing and its influence on the purchase intentions of consumers. The core of this chapter is to synthesize knowledge in this aspect and construct a knowledge base that direct this study. In essence, a review of relevant and related literature provides a critical empirical knowledge base which serves as a framework for the study. Furthermore. The chapter discusses two distinct and relevant theories: - theory of planned behaviour and the consumer purchase decision model The two theories provide a critical framework for understanding how consumers view CRM as well as how this marketing strategy influences their purchase intentions of products and services marketed with this approach.

#### 2.2 Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework serves as a framework for the creation and evaluation of research, assisting in the grounding of a study in pre-existing theories and concepts (Grant & Osanloo, 2014). It offers a fundamental framework for comprehending and analysing research questions, information, and findings. It functions essentially as a lens through which a researcher sees their subject matter, providing a cogent conceptual framework for framing and contextualizing their research (Adom et al., 2018). The theoretical framework offers a defined path for developing

research questions, selecting memthods, and analyzing data, which aids in the design of studies by researchers (Grant & Osanloo, 2014).

The framework facilitates comprehension of the relevance of research findings and their contribution to the wider field of knowledge by establishing connections between the findings and well-established hypotheses. By preventing straying from the key goals and preserving coherence throughout the investigation, it guarantees that the research is methodical and focused (Akintoye, 2015).

This study adopted the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and the Consumer Purchase Decision Model as the theoretical framework for the study. The two theories offer distinct and rigid frameworks for understanding how millennial consumers come to purchase products marketed with CRM strategies and also provide critical insights into understanding how consumers perceive and behave towards CRM initiatives.

### **2.2. 1 Consumer Purchase Decision Model**

This study is guided by the Consumer Purchase Decision Model. The model has become a key framework for most marketers and marketing research in recent times as the model aids the comprehension of the various stages that consumers go through while making a product purchase (Mahmood, 2019). Thus, the core of this model is the assumption that all consumers engage or go through five distinct stages when making a purchase. This model typically outlines the various factors that influence consumer behaviour and the steps consumers take from recognizing a need to making a purchase (Tang & Zhu, 2019). Essentially, the theory notes that there is linear cognitive and emotional set of activities that consumers go through while making a purchase. Similarly, the theory argues that this five-stage approach to understanding consumer purchase

behaviour provides an analytical framework for evaluating purchase behaviours of consumers (Mahmood, 2019).

The theory places a lot of emphasis on the collection and evaluation of product information from different sources to form perceptions and attitudes about products and brands before the consumer engages in any form of purchase behaviours. As Tang and Zhu (2019) note, the information gathered determine whether favourable or unfavourable perceptions and attitudes are developed towards the product.

The model can be traced to the earlier writings of Engel, Kollat and Blackwell in what used to be referred to as the EKB model that emerged from the Buyer Behavior theory (Ashman et al., 2015). The model is hence a specific aspect of the broader Buyer Behaviour model which looks keenly at how consumers organise information and act on the information to make product purchases (Bruner & Pomazal, 1988). Emerging from critical thoughts such as the EKB model, Buyer behaviour model and the John Dewey thoughts on consumer purchase behaviours, the Consumer Purchase Decision model holds strongly that man is an economically rational being and leans on cognitive and emotive schemas to make rational decisions on what products or services best fit their needs (Mahmood, 2019). The model thus emphasises that consumers make rational decision based on the information they are presented with and how they evaluate this information. This on the other hand is influenced by a variety of psychological factors (Mahmood, 2019).

This model typically consists of five stages (Kotin, 2023):

**Problem Recognition:** This stage occurs when consumers realize they have a need or desire for a particular product or service. The need can be triggered by internal factors (such as hunger or thirst) or external factors (such as advertising or social influence).

**Information Search:** Once consumers recognize a need, they may engage in an information search to gather information about potential solutions. This search can involve internal sources (such as memory or past experiences) or external sources (such as friends, family, reviews, or online research).

**Evaluation of Alternatives:** After gathering information, consumers evaluate different options or alternatives to satisfy their needs. They assess the features, benefits, and drawbacks of each option and compare them based on criteria such as price, quality, brand reputation, and personal preferences.

**Purchase Decision:** In this stage, consumers make a decision to purchase the product or service they believe best meets their needs and preferences. This decision can be influenced by various factors, including product availability, pricing, promotions, and the overall shopping experience.

**Post-Purchase Evaluation:** After making a purchase, consumers may evaluate their decision and their satisfaction with the product or service. If they are satisfied, they may become repeat customers and develop loyalty to the brand. However, if they are dissatisfied, they may seek alternative solutions or express negative feedback.

In conclusion, the customer Purchase Decision Model offers an organized method for comprehending and influencing customer behaviour. It also offers insightful information about the decision-making process involved in consumer purchases. By using this model, the current study can take into account the crucial significance of cause-related marketing while comprehending the psychological aspects that impact their purchasing intentions. Essentially, the relevance of using this model in this study is rooted in the model's ability to accurately predict and provide insights on what informs consumer purchase among millennials while most importantly, establishing how

CRM influences purchase. Furthermore, the model also aids in understanding where CRM initiatives are most likely effective when consumers purchase products and services. The model is also crucial in understanding how the different types of CRM may have different impacts on purchase intentions of consumers and the extent to which they influence purchase decisions while also aiding to understand the reasons behind this.

### **2.2.2 Theory of Planned Behaviour**

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), which was first presented in 1985, has grown to be one of the most popular and frequently mentioned ideas for explaining social behaviour in humans. The theory is attributed to the writings of Icek Ajzen (1988). The theory of planned behaviour is essentially a theory of psychology that captures and evaluates the behaviour and attitude of people.

The central claim of the theory is that three basic factors—attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control—influence an individual's behavioural intentions (Ajzen, 2011).

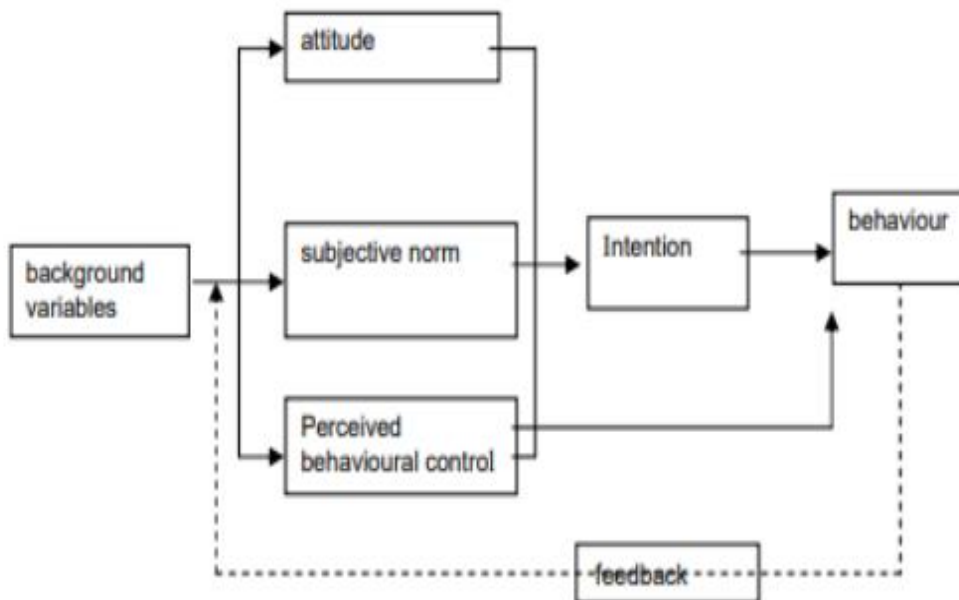
According to the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), the behavioural intention is the most direct predictor of human social conduct. To improve the theory of reasoned action's predictive power, Icek Ajzen developed the theory (Ajzen, 1988).

The TPB develops the idea of perceived behavioural control by taking into account self-esteem and self-efficacy. According to Ajzen's (1988) the Theory of Planned Behavior from is the, greatest technique to forecast behaviour is to ask people if they intend to act in a particular way. Three key pillars form the foundation of the theory. Thus, three primary factors, in Azjen's (2011) postulation of the TPB, influence an individual's conduct. These include:

- 1. Personal Attitude:** It encompasses the person's views and convictions regarding the actions they have taken or plan to take. It depicts the extent to which the actor develops

favourable or unfavourable thoughts about the behaviour. The perceived result of a behaviour influences a person's attitude toward it to some extent.

2. **Subjective Norms:** This concerns the opinions and beliefs other relevant people hold about the behaviour. They are formed by the actor's significant relations in the immediate society and environment.
3. **The perceived behavioural control:** this describes the actor's perceived levels of self-efficacy in controlling the behaviour. Hence, perceived behavioural control alternates depending on very varied factors. It may rise or fall owing to the confidence of the actor or other resources that builds or affects their self-efficacy towards the behaviour. Perceived behavioural control increases when the individual perceives the behaviour is easy to control and decreases when the converse is perceived by the actor.



***Figure 1: Pictorial Representation of the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Adapted from Ajzen, 1991)***

The theory and the three primary determinants are largely adopted to describe the thinking behind the intention to engage in a specific behaviour which includes the purchase of products and services. According to the theory, forecasting an action's intention to occur is crucial to predicting the behaviour itself (Ajzen, 1991). The theory further notes that perceived behavioural control is a measure of both the likelihood of expressing behaviour and the ability to do so. As a result, it is assumed that conduct is directly influenced by perceived behavioural control. Feedback regarding the behaviour's expectations is derived from the actual behaviour (Ajzen, 1991).

The fundamental tenet of the theory is that behavioural intentions are what shape human behaviour. The three aforementioned determinants shape the intentions. As a result, the theory contends that, generally speaking, a rise in positive attitudes and subjective norms regarding the behaviour, along with a rise in the degree of perceived control over the behaviour, results in a greater intent to engage in the behaviour, which is more likely to be carried out in practice (Ajzen, 2011).

- The theory has been adopted as part of the theoretical framework for this study largely because the three determining components have critical implications for predicting how people behave. Essentially, the theory will help to understand the psychological factors that account for making purchases based on the CRM initiatives they are exposed to. Thus, as TPB aids in comprehending the psychological factors that drive intentions, the theory is essential to understanding how CRM initiatives influence psychological patterns of purchase intentions. Additionally, the theory is crucial in understanding how such psychological issues such as norms, attitudes and perceived control influence human

behaviours. In effect, the theory has been adopted as it aids in how CRM as a marketing strategy influences attitudes, perceived control and norms towards product purchase.

### **2.3 Cause-Related Marketing**

Marketing trends have evolved essentially in the past few decades. The changing dynamisms in marketing from product centered approaches to consumer-centered approaches are evidence of how marketing has evolved over time (Kim & Johnson, 2013). In recent times, and in light of consumer calls to ensure that organizations exercise healthy levels of responsibility toward society, different marketing techniques have been espoused and adopted in the current marketing landscape (Shetty et al, 2021).

One of such marketing approaches is the cause-related marketing approach. The approach has become quite well adopted and used among different organizations and has, hence, become quite popular in marketing. According to Foo (2013), cause-related marketing has become more popular in marketing in recent times because it enables organizations to effectively strike a middle ground between making profit and fulfilling their social responsibility. In essence, CRM has become well adopted and used, as it portends crucial profit-making tendencies while also ensuring that the organization's social image does not suffer (Ferraris, 2019).

Cause-related marketing (CRM) is seen as a controversial subset of Corporate Social Responsibility (Foo, 2013). Although the tenets of CRM are relatively new, they have become broadly applied in modern-day marketing and have since become a critical aspect of marketing. According to McDaniel et al. (2009), CRM is a form of marketing that portends mutual benefits to both organizations and the society they operate in (Kim & Johnson, 2013). According to Varadarajan and Menon (1988, p. 60), the concept of CRM concerns the process of developing and implementing different marketing activities that include offerings from the organization to

contribute some specific amount or percentage of earnings to a designated social cause when customers purchase products and services. Thus, the core of this concept allows the marketing organization to donate some specified amount of money or percentage of profits to a social cause when consumers make purchases (McDaniel, 2009; Irwin, 2010).

Essentially, cause-related marketing is a form of marketing that provides a win-win situation for the organization and the society in which the organization operates. According to King (2001) and Meffert et al. (2009), the concept of CRM presents a win-win-win situation because there are three factions involved in this engagement, and all three factions' benefit. These factions include the organization, the society, and the specific social problem that receives the donation from the organization. Regardless of this, the core of CRM is to ensure profitability by donating to social causes of interest (Ferraris, 2019).

Cause-related marketing requires that an organization make some form of charitable contribution to a particular cause that its customer base perceives as relevant (Shetty et al., 2021). In essence, organizations develop cause-related marketing strategies to sell products and services to consumers by attaching the purchase of the product to the fulfilment of some social or environmental cause. According to Berglind and Nakata (2005), this innate proposition of CRM establishes it as different from social marketing, although CRM is often relevant and attached to the ideas of social marketing. According to the authors, CRM's focus is to boost marketing potential (reach, sales, profit margins, etc.), while social marketing is not focused on these. This essentially presents CRM as a critical marketing communication strategy or activity that focuses on organizations donating to solve social problems with the primary aim of reaching some marketing objectives (McDaniel, 2009). The innate idea of CRM is that by attaching product marketing to the fulfilment of charitable contributions, customers may perceive the product as not

simply something to satisfy needs but also something that fulfils some altruistic and emotional needs (Ferraris et al., 2019). These altruistic feelings are typically achieved by attaching the entire activity of the sale and purchase of products to the realization of social and environmental issues that interest consumers (Irwin et al., 2010).

Although CRM has become more popular in the last few years, the concept can be traced back to the 1970s but it became more formalised in the 1980s. The first evidence of the use of this marketing strategy can be traced to 1983 when American Express launched the first CRM campaign. American Express initiated a donation campaign targeted at the Statue of Liberty Restoration Project through card use (Tseng & Tang, 2023). This campaign eventually did not only support the restoration of the statue but also boosted American Express's card usage and brand image. This initiative marked the beginning of the popularisation of CRM across the globe as companies began to pay more attention to it following the American Express success story (Silva et al., 2021).

The ground-breaking study "Cause-related Marketing: A Coalignment of Marketing Strategy and Corporate Philanthropy" by Varadarajan and Menon was published in 1988 (Meffert, 2009). The researchers provided one of the earliest conceptualisations of the term cause-related marketing. They defined CRM as the process of creating and carrying out marketing initiatives that are distinguished by a company's offer to donate a certain amount to a chosen charity in exchange for customer participation in revenue-generating exchanges that meet both organizational and personal goals. CRM became more widely used in the 1990s as businesses realized it might have positive social and economic effects (Tseng & Tang, 2023). Big businesses started more methodically incorporating cause marketing into their plans. The phrase "cause-related marketing"

gained popularity, and groups advocating ethical standards and best practices in CRM were founded, such as the Cause Marketing Forum (Meffert, 2009).

Businesses like the 2006-founded TOMS Shoes have emerged as well-known instances of fusing cause marketing with commercial strategies. CRM was revolutionized by TOMS's "One for One" campaign, in which every pair of shoes purchased led to the donation of a pair to a person in need (Shetty et al. 2021 (Babu & Mohiuddin, 2008).

Since their popularisation, CRM strategies have become integral parts of marketing activities of many different organisations. Foo (2013) notes that while CRM has critical potential for making profits for organisations, there is a need for this strategy to be implemented in an effective manner. For instance, Foo (2013) notes that the cause that the organisation is willing to donate to must align with the interests of the organisation's brand. To ensure that the marketing campaign resonates with consumers, upholds the brand's values, and has a real impact, alignment is essential.

One of the core reasons for which marketers must be concerned with ensuring crucial alignment between the brand and the cause is to ensure authenticity and credibility. In recent times, consumers have become increasingly sceptical about the real motives and intentions of organisations (Dahl & Lavack, 1995). Furthermore, consumers are more inclined to support organisations that show authenticity in their social intentions (Hamby & Brinberg, 2017). For example, Patagonia's commitment to environmental sustainability is a natural fit with its brand and appeals to its target market. The company's environmental campaigns are seen as genuine since they are consistent with its basic goals and principles. Inversely, brands that fail to ensure alignment with the cause it intends to donate to may come across as incredible. and self-serving when they support causes that are not consistent with their brand values, missions, and vision (Bhatti et al., 2023).

For CRM campaigns to be successful, the cause and the brand must be meaningfully connected. By selecting a cause that aligns with its values and appeals to its target market, a brand can develop stronger emotional bonds with its customers. Engagement and brand loyalty are increased by this connection. Dove's "Real Beauty" campaign, for instance, is consistent with the company's brand commitment to challenge conventional notions of beauty and to celebrate true beauty (Morel, 2009). Because of this synergy, Dove has amassed a solid following of devoted followers that share the company's ideals and messaging. Customers are more inclined to support a company through purchases, advocacy, and favourable word-of-mouth when they believe it is sincerely dedicated to a cause that matters to them (Syaharani, 2021).

Studies have shown that effective CRM initiatives have critical implications for consumer perceptions of the brand (Tseng & Tang, 2023; Tang & Zhu, 2019; Silva et al., 2021). Marketing literature suggests a complex relationship between cause-related marketing and consumer brand perceptions (Syaharani, 2021). Often, this complex relationship entails factors such as perceptions of credibility and authenticity, which result in emotional connections between the brand and consumers (Israel, 2024). Some studies suggest that effective CRM campaigns create emotional connections between the brand and consumers, which have key implications for how consumers perceive the brand (Alcaniz et al., 2010; Bhatti et al., 2023; Qamar, 2013). Thus, effective CRM strategies establish the brand as authentic and credible and increase the level of trust that consumers have for the brand. Furthermore, CRM has crucial implications for positive brand engagement among consumers (Bhatti et al., 2023). When CRM initiatives are carried out effectively, they foster stronger emotional connections between the brand and consumers. This enforces constant engagement with the brand, as consumers also feel a sense of contributing to whatever donation activity the organisation is engaged in. Thus, as the organisation continues to

implement CRM strategies that align with the brand and the interests of consumers, consumers continually engage with the brand (Loureiro et al., 2012). This has critical implications for product purchase, repeat purchase, consumer loyalty, and product referral among consumers. A typical example of this is the 'Share a Coke' campaign by Coca-Cola, which involved personalising bottles with popular names and making donations of each bottle purchased to charity. This resulted in strong positive engagement with the Coke brand globally and improved perceptions of the brand (Yadav & Mandal, 2022).

Additionally, stronger emotional ties might result in more engaged and loyal consumers. Brands can build a community of supporters that identify personally with the brand's objective by skilfully communicating their dedication to it. Because consumers are more inclined to support and advocate for firms that share their values, this emotional connection can improve customer loyalty and advocacy (Loureiro et al., 2012) .

Brand perceptions are significantly influenced by how a CRM initiative is seen to have an impact. Customers want to know if the campaign is successful in achieving its goals and how their purchases support the cause (Tang & Zhu, 2019). Sustaining positive brand views requires openness in reporting CRM efforts' outcomes and impacts. For example, when TOMS Shoes first introduced their "One for One" initiative, it made it apparent how many shoes would be donated for every transaction. This openness strengthened the initiative's efficacy and contributed to the development of consumer trust (Nkwanyana, 2014). Other studies have also shown that consumer perceptions of CRM initiatives may not be solely based on openness, and transparency. For instance, Ross et al. (1992) and Meijer and Schuyt (2005) found that gender is a crucial determinant of CRM perceptions among consumers. These authors argue that CRM hinges greatly on the use of empathy to ensure effectiveness. In that instance, women who are naturally more empathetic

were found to respond more positively to CRM campaigns than men (Eagly & Crowley, 1986). Other studies have also found an association between the size of donation, and consumer willingness to engage in the CRM initiative. A majority of these findings indicate that the larger the donation, the more inclined that consumers are to purchase products and contribute to the pro-social cause (Moosmayer & Fuljahn, 2010; Dahl & Lavack, 1995).

### **2.3.1 Types of Cause-Related Marketing Campaigns**

There exists a plethora of different cause related marketing strategies. The advent of digital media technologies and their integration into marketing has further expanded the scope for the typology of CRM strategies (Qamar, 2013; Kathiravan & Deepak, 2019). For the purpose of this inquiry a few of these that hold relevance to the study are discussed in this section.

#### ***Transactional CRM***

This form of cause-related marketing focuses on the forms of CRM engagements where the company donates a specified amount of money for every product purchased from them. Also known as donation-based CRM, this type of CRM considers donating specific sums of money from whatever purchase made by consumers to a pre-determined charity organisation or cause (Lee & Johnson, 2019). This form of CRM is dependent directly on the purchase of products and services. This type of CRM operates on the principles of transactions - 'For every item sold, £1 will be donated to charity'. Thus, this form of CRM argues that for the company to be able to donate to a pro-social cause, consumer must make purchases and from every purchase made, an amount is then donated. In essence, this form perceives CRM as transaction between the organisation and consumers (Foo & Yazdanifard, 2013).

### ***Percentage-of-sales CRM***

In this form of CRM, the organisations strategically donate a percentage of sales to a charity organisations or project of interest. Thus, this strategy is characterised by organisations donating a specific percentage of their sales to support some philanthropic activity. In this approach, the organisation announces their willingness to engage in pro-social initiatives which is funded by percentage of organisational annual sales or profits (Bhatti et al., 2023).

This form of CRM is quite popular among organisations in recent times. This is mainly because this approach to CRM allows the organisation to manage or have control over what and how much is donated. The organisation can set reasonable and sustainable percentages to be donated to charity (Schamp et al., 2023).

### ***Promotional CRM***

Promotional cause-related marketing techniques do not focus on gathering direct financial donations to support some social cause. Instead, this form of CRM hinges greatly on the use of advertising and other promotional techniques to raise awareness about some social issues. The core of this strategy is not directed at collecting financial assistance towards donating to a charity. The approach shows or renders support to the social issue and its mitigation by using advertising tendencies to raise awareness and increase contributions towards the social issues (Lee & Johnson, 2019).

### ***Buy-one-Give-One CRM (BOGO)***

This model of cause related marketing is characterised by the donation of physical entities (products and services) to charity (Saktiana & Prakosa, 2023). This form of CRM is also transactional in nature but only focuses on the donation of products for every product or service

purchase made from consumers. This approach covers the marketing strategies where the organisation creates of BOGO offer and requires that consumers make purchase. This institutionalises some form of call to action, requiring a purchase for a product donation to occur (Schamp et al., 2023).

The business donates a good or service, or a portion of the sale, to a good cause or organization for each purchase made. Occasionally, instead of giving the free product to the buyer, it might also be donated to a worthy cause. The campaign encourages consumers to buy with the understanding that their purchase is supporting a worthy cause by highlighting both the promotional offer and the philanthropic component. An example of this is the TOM Shoes' one-for-one donation initiative which a pair of shoes is donated to a child in need for every pair purchased by a customer (Fatimi, 2024).

### ***Licensing CRM***

This strategy focuses on partnering with a charity to acquire their name and logo and use them on some product or service. This type of CRM refers to the strategy where an organisation partners with a charitable organisation to use its name, logo and branding in promotional campaigns (Chang & Chu, 2020) This requires the organisation and the charitable organisation to enter into an agreement which outlines specifically, how the charity's branding elements will be used, the terms of the partnership and how funds generated from the campaign will be used. This form of partnership allows the organisations to optimise their marketing tendencies while also supporting a social cause (Bhatti et al., 2023).

## ***Digital Cause Marketing***

Digital cause marketing is the practice of supporting and advancing a social or environmental cause through digital platforms and technologies. It makes use of internet resources, techniques, and platforms to elicit support, involvement, and action for a social cause or charity cause. With this strategy, companies and organizations can efficiently and rapidly reach a large audience. The company creates a digital marketing campaign using this method, incorporating the charity or cause within the brand's messaging. These might be emails, digital advertisements, website content, or posts on social media (Schamp et al., 2023).

### **2.4 Millennials as a Consumer Segment**

#### **2.4.1 Characteristics of Millennials**

Consumer segmentation in marketing is a critical element of the success of many marketing campaigns. In recent times, there has been a lot of focus on millennial consumers and how their unique characteristics and demography affect marketing. The literature on who exactly a millennial is prompts the idea that there is no strict consensus on which people form the millennial age group. However, some authors provide critical insights into who millennials are. While Millennials are persons born between the 1980s and the 2000s. More specifically, the Pew Research Center explains that millennials are persons who were born between 1981 and 1996 which signifies the beginning of a new millennium. In essence, millennials are persons who grew up in the new millennium (Dimock, 2019). According to Kaifi et al. (2012) the name tag millennials qualify the fact that this consumer base were born or grew up close to the new millennial year and raised in the dispensation of digital technological boom. Andert (2011) notes that this year group, being highly knowledgeable in digital technology exhibit significant levels of scepticism and non-compliance with traditional approaches to doing things in general. Smith and Nichols (2015) argue that millennials now form a key part of the marketing communications ecosystems both as

consumers and marketing managers. These critical characteristics of millennials have made them critical focus marketing in recent times.

For instance, some authors have argued that millennials are partly responsible for the advancement in the use of digital technologies in marketing in recent times because of their natural adoption and crucial use of such technologies (Saktiana & Prakosa, 2023; Shabbir et al., 2010). Furthermore, marketing has become more interactive in nature because millennials have a natural urge of interacting through the use of these digital technologies. Pitta (2012) notes that the very fact that millennials were born exactly before the boom of computers and by that grew up in computerised societies provide marketers with information on how they think and hence how they react with marketing information. It is hence not surprising that millennials have been linked very closely with the emergence and popularisation of digital and social media marketing.

Beyond this, millennials are well noted for showing a non-compliance to traditional forms of doing things. Pitta (2012) further notes that millennials have different product taste and preferences, perceive products differently, seek information about products and services from different sources, are characterised by complex purchase intentions processes and exhibit complex behaviours towards products and services. These factors have critical implications for how they react to different marketing strategies. For instance, millennials often rely on information to make purchases. Unlike other generations like baby boomers, millennials seek information from diverse sources, even from strangers as is often expressed in their reliance on product ratings. Again, the internet is a crucial aspect of millennial consumers' product information search efforts. Furthermore, Garau (2012) found in his study of millennials and how they react to marketing information notes that brand loyalty dynamics among millennials is far more complex than among the baby boomer

generation. This makes millennial consumers exhibit lesser degrees loyalty behaviours than baby boomers.

The demographic characteristics of millennials have critical implications for CRM initiatives. In fact, some authors have linked millennials to the development of cause-related marketing, which traces its roots and development to the periods where millennials also developed. Some authors have argued that millennials' nature urge to exhibit scepticism can be linked to calls from consumers to ensure that organisations contribute meaningfully to social development (Zdravkovic et al. 2010; Shetty, 2021). In essence, some authors have closely linked CRM activities and other CSR activities especially, those that occur on digital technological platforms, to the demographic characteristics of millennials. Some studies that have focused on product preference dynamics among consumers with critical focus on millennial consumers conclude that this generational cohort are more interested in purchasing products that have ties with solving social problems (Babu & Mohiuddin, 2008; Bgine-Alcaniz et al., 2010; Ferraris et al., 2019)

Essentially, the nature of millennials have been one of the core factors that have shaped marketing communications in recent times. Marketing efforts have become highly digital in nature because of the complex dynamisms of millennials' product information search characteristics (Ferraris et al., 2019). Thus, as millennials were essentially born and nurtured in the digital information technology eager, they require and lean on collecting a lot of information from different sources before making purchase (Kapoor et al., 2017). Phenomena such as electronic word-of-mouth and social media influencer marketing and online product referrals have thus become crucial parts of marketing today. While the reliance on social media and other digital technologies is the standout characteristic among millennials that influences marketing strategy choices, other authors have noted the relevance of older media forms in marketing to millennials. Furthermore, millennials

consumers' habit of being non-conforming sceptics have critically impacted ethical marketing and other organisational promotional operations.

#### **2.4.2 Millennials and Digital Marketing**

The emergence of digital technologies in marketing in recent times has recolonised how organisations market their products and services to different demographics (Godinho et al., 2022). In the past few decades, there has been a lot of attention on the use of digital marketing primarily. This has been occasioned primarily because of the nature of consumers that organisations market to who are often using digital media technologies to access product information, purchase products and interact with other consumers concerning products and services online (Israel, 2024).

According to Kapoor et al. (2017) because millennials are persons born during the periods of digital technology popularisation and are the core population group to have grown up with the internet, they often form the core focus of digital marketing efforts of organisations. In other words, millennials are highly immersed in internet technologies and as a result respond better to digital marketing strategies than older generations (Smith, 2012). Smith (2012) notes that millennials literally live their lives on digital media platforms and hence exhibit a host of different consumer behaviours while using digital platforms. For instance, Gerzema and D'Antonio (2011) note that digital media platforms have become a key source of information for most millennials. In essence, millennials rely heavily on the use of digital media platforms to have access to information about issues. They visit company website, e-commerce platforms and interact on social media platforms to have access to and organise product information for purchase. Essentially, digital marketers make use of this feature to provide critical product information to millennials on websites and on social media (D'Antonio, 2011).

Marketing literature provides evidence that digital marketing through the use of social media platforms is perhaps the most effective communication approach to target millennials (Israel, 2024). A number of studies have established how social media influences the purchase behaviours of millennials and by extension providing critical insights into understanding how digital marketing influences millennials (Babu & Mohiuddin, 2008; Bgine-Alcaniz, et al. 2010; Ferraris et al., 2019). Smith (2012) further notes that social media has become a key sphere for collecting and analysing product information. Studies suggest about more than half of the world's population of millennials discuss issues about products and services on social networking sites (Israel, 2024; cholz, 2021; Godinho et al., 2022). This portends critical implications for electronic word-of-mouth marketing for most organisations. Social media and other digital media platforms has enhanced to potency of digital marketing so far as word-of-mouth marketing is concerned. Smith (2012) avers that e-WOM has become one of the most effective means of marketing products to millennials today.

Okazaki (2007) and Smith (2012) argue that millennials are strongly influenced by e-WOM as they find this strategy more credible than other advertising approaches. According to the authors millennials are influenced by the thought that 'someone like me' has used to the product and can testify on its quality and benefits. This has had critical implications for influencer marketing which has become a critical digital marketing strategy. Influencer marketing has emerged as a key tactic for connecting with millennial consumers. Influencers have become essential in shaping the attitudes and perceptions of millennials and effectively influence their purchase behaviours.

### **2.4.3 Millennials and Ethical Consumerism**

The term "ethical consumerism" has been prominent in the market in recent decades, largely due to the influence of the millennial generation. People in this group, who were born between 1980

and 2000, have had a significant influence on how products and services are created, sold, and used. A wider societal change towards sustainability, social responsibility, and ethical practises is reflected in their purchasing behaviours and ideals.

The act of acquiring products and services that are manufactured and delivered in a way that is consistent with one's moral, environmental, and social beliefs is known as ethical consumerism (Bucic et al., 2012). Over the past few decades, this movement has grown in popularity, but millennials have been at the forefront of this movement (Trammell, 2023).

Millennials' purchasing habits demonstrate their dedication to ethical consumption. Customers are more likely to support companies that actively promote social issues, are open about their supply chains, and show a commitment to sustainable practices (Kutaula et al., 2024). Because of this generation's reputation for being willing to pay more for goods that live up to their moral standards, businesses have been forced to review their procedures and take more conscientious stands (Bucic et al., 2012).

The strong propensity of millennials towards ethical purchasing is a result of various causes. First off, this generation has never had greater access to information because to the development of digital technology. Millennials have the ability to easily investigate and evaluate the moral standards of businesses thanks to social media platforms, blogs, and online reviews (Sharma & Dev, 2018). The availability of information has raised consumer expectations and put pressure on businesses to maintain moral principles. Second, the demand for transparency and honesty is a defining characteristic of millennials. Rather than making meaningless or flimsy gestures, brands that truly embody their claimed values are highly regarded by millennials. Therefore, businesses that are thought to be dishonest or inauthentic risk criticism from millennial customers, who are eager to express their displeasure on social media and other digital platforms (Silva et al., 2021).

Thirdly, millennials' ethical consumerism is influenced by their global identities. Millennials have grown up in a globalized society and are more conscious of the effects of their buying decisions on the wider community. Customers are more likely to think about how their purchases impact global labour and environmental conditions in addition to their own local communities (Smith, 2012).

This dynamic and complex characteristics and strong linkage with ethical consumerism in recent times is perhaps the fundamental reason for which millennials have been closely associated with cause-related marketing (Babu & Mohiuddin, 2008). CRM enables millennials to use their everyday purchases to support issues that are important to them. Millennials are more inclined to think well of a firm and select its products over rivals when it supports a cause that speaks to their values. Brands and consumers can develop a deep emotional bond through cause-related marketing. Millennials are more inclined to become brand loyalists and promote a brand in their social networks if they believe it is dedicated to important causes. Understanding the ethical considerations and values of millennials (Bucic et al., 2012)

### **2.5 Influence of Cause-Related Marketing on Purchase Intentions**

The literature on cause-related marketing and its implications on purchase intentions of consumers has been quite well researched. To a large extent, the literature shows that there is consensus on how cause-related marketing influences the purchase intentions of consumers. For instance, Saktiana and Prakosa (2023) found in their study of college students in Indonesia that CRM programs implemented by organisations had significant positive implications on how they perceived brands and hence shaped their purchase intentions positively. The study further found that while it is true that CRM influences the purchase intentions and attitudes of consumers, there existed innate characteristics. For instance, Saktiana and Prakosa (2023) found that other critical

factors such as duration of the CRM initiative and congruence were critical influencing factors while the proximity of the CRM initiative did not influence attitudes and perceptions of consumers. Shabir et al. (2010) also investigated this same phenomenon among two colleges - Rawalpindi and Islamabad. The researchers were focused on understanding the mediating role of brand awareness and corporate image while understanding the influence of CRM engagements on consumer behaviours. The results show that cause-related marketing efforts have an impact on consumers' purchasing intentions. Additionally, it was found that the impact of CRM efforts on consumer purchase intentions is partially mediated by brand awareness and corporate image. Qamar (2013) also investigated the influencing power of CRM programs on the purchase intentions of consumers. This paper's primary goal was to determine how CRM campaigns affected Pakistani consumers' intentions to make purchases. For this survey, 280 respondents in all were contacted. The study's findings demonstrate that cause-related marketing initiatives influence consumers' purchase intentions, furthermore as Shabir et al. (2010) had found, additional mediating factors also influence the relationship between cause-related marketing and buy intention. Other studies such as Lafferty and Glodsmith (2005), Alcaniz et al., (2010) and Babu and Mahuidin (2008) amongst others provide empirical evidence to suggest the influence of CRM on the purchase intentions of consumers while also indicating how CRM affects other consumer behaviours. These studies establish that CRM initiatives are often effective as they directly relate to the emotional satisfaction of consumers. Lafferty and Glodsmith (2005) indicate that while in general terms CRM has an over-bearing influencing factor on consumer purchase intentions, other critical factors such as the type of CRM, cause and brand fitness as well as the brand image and attractiveness play crucial roles. Tseng and Tang (2023) concur that there exist critical dynamisms in how CRM influences the purchase intentions of consumers. Tseng and Tang (2023) found that the type of

CRM, donations size and other critical factors such as gender have diverse implications for the relationship between CRM and consumer purchase behaviours.

A number of studies have also investigated the relationship between CRM and purchase intentions among millennials. Foo (2013) notes that millennials exhibit critical demographic characteristics that link them ethical consumerism and marketing strategies such as CRM. Marketing literature provide evidence that millennial consumers exhibit favourable purchasing behaviours towards brands that are marketed with CRM strategies. For instance, Shetty et al. (2021) study investigated the impact of cause-related marketing on the purchase intentions of millennials in Karnataka and Kerala in India. The findings from the study indicate a significant positive relationship between cause-related marketing and purchase intentions. The study further showed that the type of cause-related marketing that respondents encountered had significant relationships with purchase intentions. Silva et al. (2021) investigates the relationship between CRM and purchase intentions among millennials. The study considered data from 229 millennials to investigate how their purchase intentions are influenced by CRM initiatives. The findings made from the study indicate that there was a significant positive relationship between CRM and purchase intentions among millennials. The study further found that critical determining factors such as perceived company motivation, brand-cause fit, product type, frame donation and the type of CRM play crucial roles in the extent to which millennials are influenced by CRM strategies. Lerro et al. (2019) found in their study of millennials in Italy that while CRM had critical influence on the purchase intentions of consumers there exist some innate dynamisms that need to be considered. They found that product type and quality mediated CRM's influence on purchase intentions of millennial consumers. This study implies that although CRM is highly effective in influencing the purchasing

behaviours of millennial consumers the extent of influence was highly contingent in the type of product and the CRM initiative.

The literature indicates, quite clearly that CRM is a significant influencing factor of purchase behaviours among millennial consumers globally. Eastman et al. (2019) however note that the positive relationship between cause-related marketing and purchase intentions is not always the case. Their study found that millennials may not always be influenced by this strategy towards purchase. However, the study found that the type of cause, and product type influenced respondents' decisions to purchase products.

## **2.6 Chapter Summary**

This chapter of the research focused on reviewing relevant and related literature regarding marketing, cause-related marketing and consumer purchase intention dynamisms among millennials. This chapter provides a vivid description of millennials as consumer cohort groups and how they react with ethical consumerism. The chapter also discussed the theory of planned behaviour and the consumer purchase decision model as the theoretical framework for the study.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Chapter Overview**

The core of this study is to investigate the influence of cause-related marketing (CRM) on the purchase intentions of millennial consumers in Ghana. The study is interested in understanding how CRM strategies adopted and implemented by organisations to market their products influence purchase attitudes and behaviours among millennial consumers. This chapter of the study report is focused on describing the research methodology the researcher adopted in collecting, handling, organizing, and presenting the data for the study. This section hence focuses on describing the research approach of the study, the study design, data collection procedures, as well as analysis techniques that were adopted by the researcher.

#### **3.2 Research Approach**

A study's research methodology refers to the strategic methods and processes used by the researcher to conduct the research. The research approach incorporates the bigger assumptions of data gathering, analysis, and interpretation. The research strategy is essentially a plan that the researcher uses to collect and understand data in order to answer their research questions.

According to Wimmer and Dominick (2007), methodologies for research consist of three (3) primary strands. These include qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-method techniques. The selection of a research approach is heavily influenced by crucial elements such as the study's objectives and overall purpose. As a result, it is critical to consider the study's purpose before selecting the appropriate design to maximize the likelihood of improving our understanding of the phenomena under investigation. According to Opoku et al. (2016), these variables influence the

choice of research design. The research technique is defined by the philosophy and framework that are fundamentally linked to the study's overall procedures.

To answer the research questions for this study, the researcher relied on the use of the mixed methods approach. A mixed methods approach in research combines quantitative and qualitative methodologies to create a more complete picture of a study topic. This method is effective because it combines the qualities of numerical data and narrative insights, providing a broader view on the issue under study. Hence, when conducting mixed methods research, the researcher is interested in collecting, organising and analysing both numeric and non-numeric data (Creswell, 2009). Furthermore, the mixed methods approach allows the researcher to measure variables, identify patterns, and test hypotheses while also delving deeper into phenomena by understanding the meanings, experiences, and processes that people ascribe to the phenomena under study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The mixed methods approach provides a richer comprehension of issues by incorporating different perspectives to knowledge generation. Also, it is essential in validating findings, as this approach tends to aid researchers in triangulating and cross-verifying their findings (Creswell, 2009).

The mixed methods approach is critical in understanding how CRM influences the purchase intentions of millennial consumers because it allows the researcher to investigate this phenomenon beyond mere descriptions while allowing for deeper insights into the relationship. The use of both quantitative and qualitative approaches aids in drawing up linkages and relationships between CRM and the purchase behaviours of millennials more effectively than relying on one single method.

### **3.3 Research Design**

The research design explains the overall method utilized to address the research problem. This often demands the integration of many study components logically and coherently, resulting in an effective solution (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). It acts as a guide for data collection, analysis, interpretation, and presentation of results. In the mixed methods paradigm, the researcher has access to a wide variety of research designs, which guide how the researcher collects and analyse data for the study (Creswell, 2009).

To achieve the objectives of this study, the case study research design was adopted. Case study research allows for the analysis and comprehension of complex situations using reports from past studies. It is a solid research approach, particularly when a thorough, in-depth investigation is required. The case study technique enables researchers to examine data in a specific context (Zainal, 2007). In most circumstances, a case study approach chooses a limited geographic region or a small group of people as research participants. In its most basic form, case studies explore and investigate contemporary real-life events by conducting thorough contextual research of a limited number of occurrences or situations, as well as their relationships (Rebolj, 2013).

### **3.4 Population and Sampling Technique**

Population in research refers to the group of units in which the research findings may be applied (Hu, 2014). The population of the study forms the group from which the researcher selects a sample to study (Creswell, 2009). The population for this study encompasses millennials living in the Accra Metropolis.

In quantitative research, sampling refers to the process of selecting a subset or sample from a larger population to participate in a study. Sampling is done with the purpose of gathering data that is typical of the entire population so that researchers may draw conclusions about the population from the sample (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). A sample is therefore a smaller group of people,

cases, or units drawn from the population with the intention of representing the study population (Bhadwaj, 2019).

The study used a convenience sampling strategy to choose research participants. The convenience sampling technique is a non-probability sampling strategy that allows researchers to pick study participants based on their accessibility, proximity, and desire to participate in the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling strategy that collects information from a group of people who are conveniently accessible and available (Bhadwaj, 2019). The individuals in the sample are selected because they are the most accessible to the researcher (Saunders et al., 2011). As a result, the strategy selects research subjects based on their availability and willingness to engage in the study. This strategy is critical for conducting research with limited resources, such as time and money.

According to Golzar et al. (2022), in order to assure validity, authenticity, and accuracy in selecting the appropriate sample units, the researcher must apply sampling criteria. To guarantee accuracy, sample criteria must be devised based on the core of the phenomenon being examined and the study's aims.

The study therefore relied on this to develop three-point sampling criteria. These include;

1. The research participants must be students living in the Accra Metropolis
2. The research participant must have significant knowledge of cause-related marketing.
3. The research participants must be or have been exposed to one or more forms of cause-related marketing strategies.
4. The participant must be a millennial (born between 1980s and 1999)

This study, considering the diverse data collection limitations and in line with Saunders et al. (2011) and Hair et al. (2018), adopted a sample size of 150 participants for the quantitative aspects of the study, while the same strategy was adopted to sample 10 research participants for the qualitative parts of the study. In essence, a total of 150 research participants were included in this study to understand CRM strategies and their effects on the purchase intentions of millennials.

### **3.5 Data Collection Instruments**

Data collection instruments are tools that the researcher relies on to collect systematic data from research respondents regarding a particular issue under study. The data collection tool allows the researcher to access the right forms of data while being concise, focused, and straight to the point (Bhadwaj, 2019). For this study, the researcher engaged the use of questionnaires and interview guides to collect data from respondents.

#### **3.5.1 Questionnaires**

Questionnaires, according to Pandey et al. (2023), are systematic data collection devices that include multiple-choice questions meant to extract information from participants. The primary goal of these instruments is to collect data on respondents' thoughts, beliefs, and attitudes toward a certain problem (Pandey et al., 2023).

This study's questionnaires were semi-structured. Semi-structured surveys ask both closed-ended and open-ended questions. This gave the researcher access to both extensive and restricted information for this investigation. In addition, the surveys included Likert scale questions. This was critical to ensuring that the research had access to thorough data while also making the most of limited resources.

#### **3.5.2 Interview Guides**

Mathers et al. (2000) define an interview guide as a set of questions to help the interviewer ask the right questions. The interview guide included open-ended and closed-ended questions. Ballou

(2011, p.5) notes that "open-ended questions allow the respondent to share more knowledge about the topic." In contrast, Lavrakas (2011, p. 2) recognizes that a close-ended question "provides respondents with a fixed number of responses from which to choose an answer." It consists of a question stem and a list of answer options (the response alternatives). Both types of questions were included in the interview guide to keep the interview balanced and to allow the researcher to learn more about the phenomena under study as needed.

### **3.6 Data Collection Procedures**

#### **3.6.1 Quantitative Data Collection**

Online data collection was carried out using a semi-structured questionnaire. The online poll was largely conducted using Google Forms, an online data collection tool. This was done to ensure that the sampled participants were comfortable and had enough time to complete the questionnaires (Zhang, 2000). Furthermore, Zhang (2000) claims that the use of online data collection was critical to ensuring that the data was acquired objectively since it allowed the research investigators to stay separate from the participants while they answered the questions.

#### **3.6.2 Qualitative Data Collection**

The study collected data through interviews. Interviewing is a conversational method of data collection in which the researcher asks questions and the respondents answer (Warren, 2011). Interviewing was adopted as a qualitative data collection tool for this study as this tool aided the research in collecting in-depth data to deeply understand how CRM influences the purchase behaviours of millennials. According to Warren (2011), unlike in regular conversational interviews, respondents in research interviews are meaning-makers who assist the research in explaining the topic under investigation in greater depth. The interviews were conducted in person with the respondents following a mutually agreed-upon day and time.

### **3.7 Data Analysis Techniques**

#### **3.7.1 Quantitative Data Analysis Technique**

Both correlation statistics and descriptive statistical analysis were used to examine the participant data (Field & Hole, 2003). To help with data management and organizing, the information gathered from the online survey was converted into Excel 2019. Descriptive statistical analysis was also conducted using Excel 2019. More specifically, descriptive analytical techniques were used to analyse and present the data for research question 1. It is essential to note that the presentation of the findings for the descriptive statistics was reliant on the use of frequency tables and descriptive graphs. Furthermore, the analysis made for this study mainly concerned the use of mean tests. To do this, the study relied on Nyutu et al.'s (2021, p. 98) adaptation of the Likert scale means interpretations.

- 1.00–1.80 = Strongly Agree
- 1.81 – 2.60 = Agree
- 2.61–3.40 = Neutral
- 3.41 – 4.20 = Disagree
- 4.21 – 5.00 = Strongly Disagree

After that, SPSS was used to convert the data for inferential analysis. In order to examine data and comprehend correlations between variables beyond descriptive statistics, the researcher used SPSS. Using Pearson correlation tests (p-value = 0.05), the software was utilized to evaluate the data in order to provide answers to study questions 2 and 3 (Hair et al., 2018). This was also crucial for testing the two hypotheses created to comprehend how CRM influences millennials' intentions to make purchases. The study's main research questions and hypotheses were taken into consideration while discussing and interpreting the study's findings. Moreover, the results were

interpreted in accordance with the theoretical framework supporting this investigation as well as previous findings from other investigations.

### **3.7.2 Qualitative Data Analysis Technique**

Thematic analysis was used in this investigation. Thematic analysis is the process of discovering patterns and themes in qualitative data (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). Guest et al. (2014) describes the method as going through textual material, recognizing themes, coding those themes, and finally analysing the structure and substance of the themes. Furthermore, according to Creswell and Creswell (2018), thematic analysis is a sort of qualitative analysis. It is used to examine classifications and exhibit data-related themes (patterns). It provides detailed illustrations of the data and addresses a wide range of topics through interpretation.

As Rubin (2005) and Marshall and Rossman (1999) suggest, the data received from the interviews will be transcribed and categorized into themes and sub-themes so that the data may be analysed thematically. The themes are explored in relation to the study objectives.

### **3.8 Ethical Issues**

Ethical conundrums arise from the types of issues social scientists investigate and the methods they use to obtain reliable and accurate data. In order to act ethically, a researcher must balance the necessity to advance knowledge with the significance of avoiding interference in other people's lives. All quantitative research ethical guidelines were duly observed in this study (Creswell, 2014, p. 189).

Participants in the research were informed that participation was entirely voluntary and that they might leave at any time without incurring any penalties. In doing so, it is guaranteed that participation is contingent upon a full understanding of the study and consideration for the participants' autonomy.

Personal information of participants was kept confidential and used exclusively to further achieve the objectives of this study. Identifying information was either removed or anonymised to protect participant privacy. The securely stored data was only accessible to the researchers and the supervisor. Because of this, the participants' identities are safe and their remarks cannot be associated with them, fostering an environment where they feel free to be candid and open in their feedback.

### **3.9 Chapter Summary**

This chapter addressed important concerns about the research approach utilized in this study. This chapter covers a discussion on how both the qualitative and the quantitative research methodology were adopted for the study. Convenience sampling, which served as the study's primary sample strategy, was also covered in this chapter. Furthermore, discussed in this chapter are the procedures used to gather and examine the data for the study.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

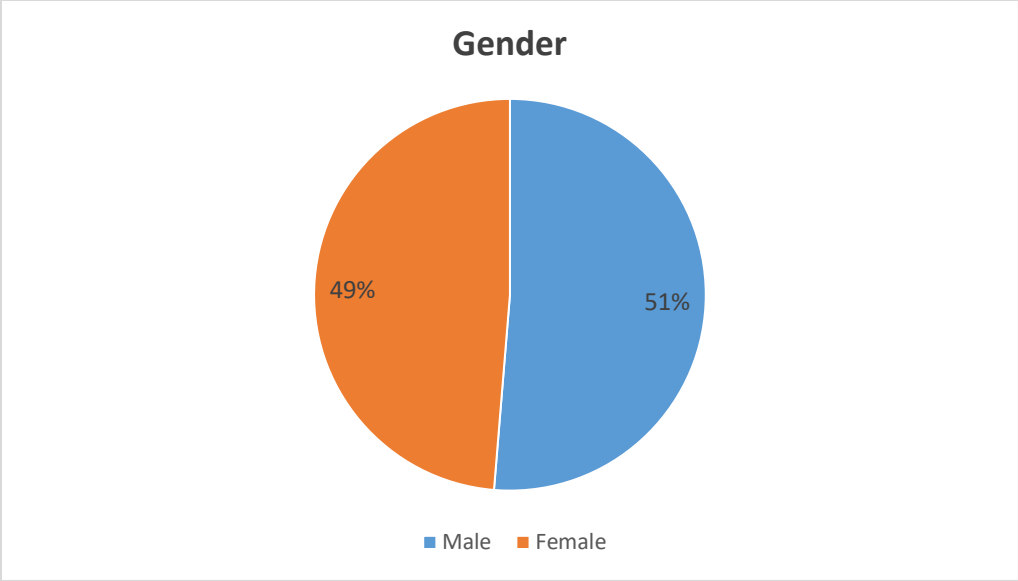
The core aim of this study was to investigate how Cause-Related Marketing (CRM) influences the purchasing decisions of millennials. The study is hence premised on achieving three main objectives. The study sought to investigate the extent to which millennials are exposed to cause-related marketing and also investigate the extent to which CRM influences purchase decisions of millennials. The study also sought to understand the extent to which the types of CRM influences purchase decisions while establishing which forms of CRM have a higher potency of influencing the purchase decisions of millennials.

This chapter of the study looks critically at presenting the findings of the study. The study adopted a mixed methods approach to gather both qualitative and quantitative data. The chapter focuses on presenting findings made from data collected using these approaches.

#### **4.2 Demographic Data of Respondents**

##### **4.2.1 Demographic Data for Quantitative Survey**

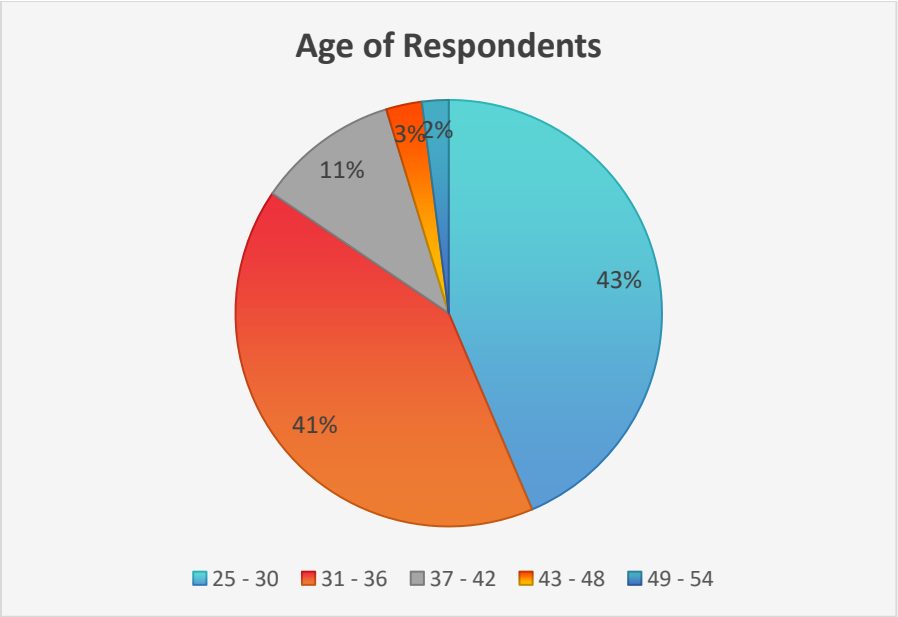
###### ***Gender of Respondents***



**Figure 2: Pie chart showing the gender of respondents (Source: Field Data, 2024)**

The pie chart above illustrates the gender of the respondents sampled for the quantitative survey. The data shown in the pie chart indicates that 51% of the respondents sampled for the survey were males while 49% of them were females.

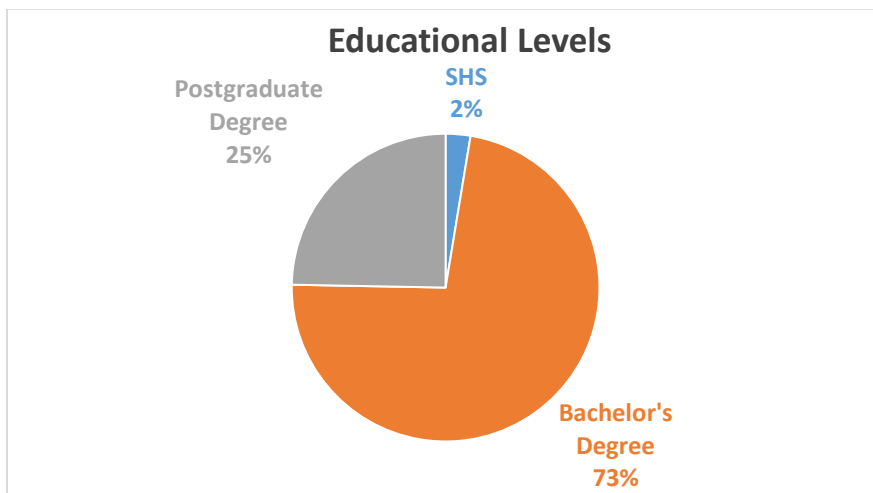
**Age of Respondents**



**Figure 3: Pie chart showing the age of respondents (Source: Field Data, 2024)**

The pie chart above illustrates the ages of the respondents sampled for the survey in this study. The data indicates that close to half of the respondents (43%) were between the ages of 25 and 30. Furthermore, the pie chart shows that 41% of the respondents were between 31 and 36 years while 11% of them were between 37 and 42 years. The data shows that 3% of them were between 43 and 48 years while 2% were aged between 49 and 54 years. The data implies that all the respondents sampled for the study were millennials. Furthermore, the data implies that the majority of the respondents were young millennials as most of them were aged between 25 and 36 years.

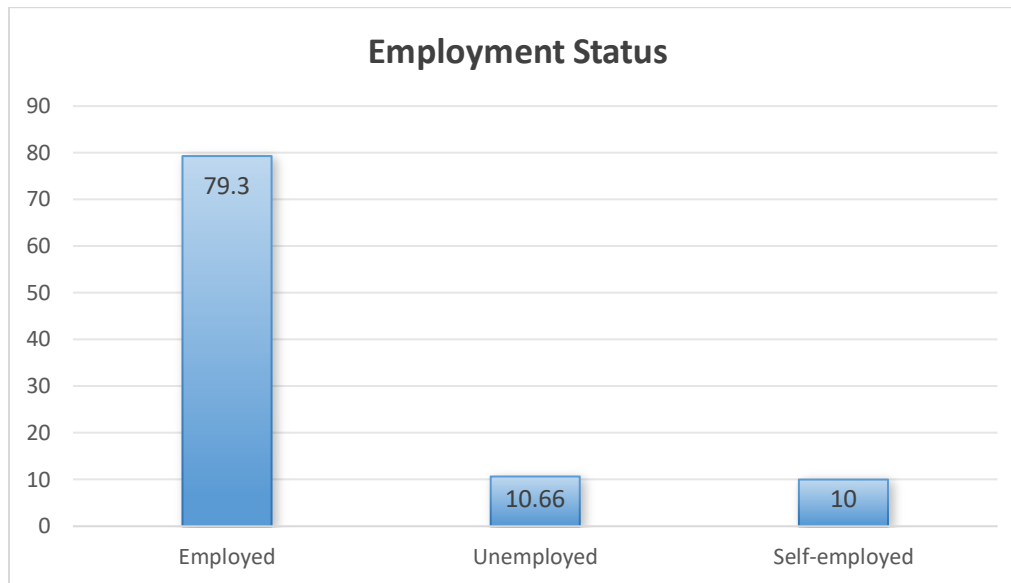
***Educational Background of Respondents***



**Figure 4: Pie chart showing the educational levels of respondents (Source: Field Data, 2024)**

The pie chart shows the educational levels of the respondents. The data shows that about two-thirds of the respondents (73%) were Bachelor degree holders. Furthermore, the data also shows that 25% of the respondents were post graduate degree holders while just 2% of them were SHS certificate holders. The data implies that almost all the respondents had received significant advanced level education.

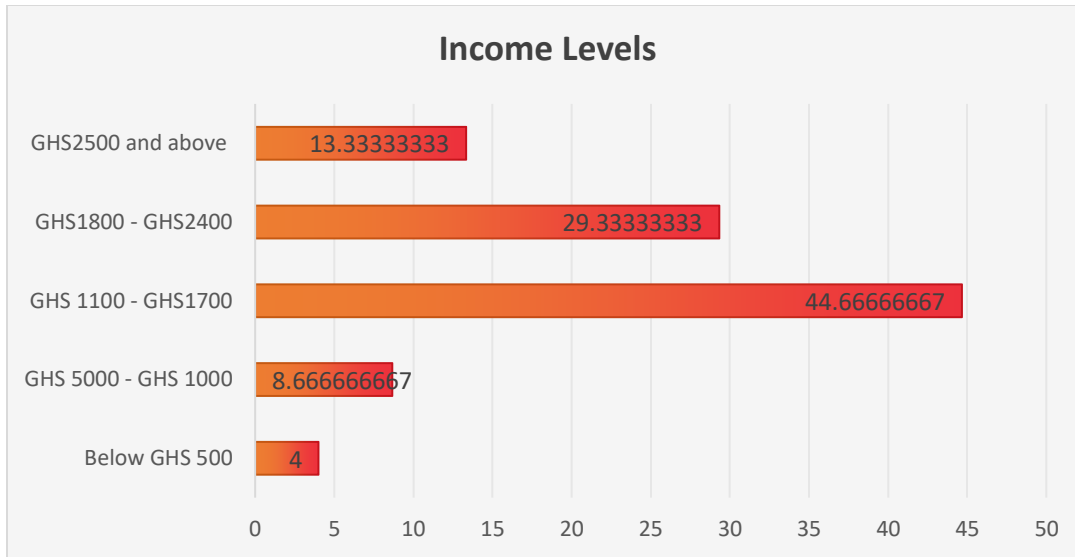
### ***Employment Status of Respondents***



***Figure 5: Bar chart showing the employment status of respondents (Source: Field Data, 2024)***

The bar chart illustrates the employment status of the respondents. The data indicated in the chart shows that a majority of the respondents (79.3%) were employed. Furthermore, the data shows that 10.6% of the respondents were unemployed while 10% of them were self-employed. This implies that a majority of the respondents were had been gainfully employed and hence had significant purchasing power to purchase products. Relative to this study, the data shows that most of the respondents could afford purchasing products and hence were actively engaged in the making purchase decisions.

### ***Respondents Income Levels***



**Figure 6: Bar chart showing the income levels of respondents (Source: Field Data, 2024)**

The figure above presents data on the income levels of the respondents. The data indicates that close to half of the respondents (44.6%) received incomes between GHS1100 and GHS1700. Furthermore, the data also shows that 29.3% of the respondents received between GHS1800 and GHS2400. The data shows that only 4% of the respondents receive incomes less than GHS500 while 13.3% received GHS2500 and more. This shows that the respondents were gainful income earners and hence had purchasing power. Consequently, this supposes that almost all the respondents were actively engaged in making purchasing decisions.

**4.3 RQ1: To what extent are Ghanaian millennials exposed to cause-related marketing in Ghana?**

The first objective of this study was to investigate the extent to which millennials in Ghana were exposed to cause-related marketing. Hence, the study sought to understand how often Ghanaian millennials had seen or experienced products being sold with the aim of satisfying some pro-social cause.

The study first sought to understand the extent to which the respondents were aware of the concept of cause-related marketing and how it is used to market products and its implications. The table below presents findings on the awareness levels of respondents concerning the use of CRM in marketing products in the country.

**Table 1: Awareness levels of Cause-Related Marketing**

<b>Awareness Levels of Respondents on Cause-Related Marketing</b>					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
<b>Awareness of CRM</b>	150	1.00	5.00	2.5493	.82419
<b>Valid N (listwise)</b>	150				

*(Source: Field Data, 2024)*

The table above provides a descriptive analysis of the awareness levels of respondents on cause-related marketing as a marketing approach used to market products and services to them. A mean test run on the data gathered from the respondents using a 5-point Likert scale showed a mean test score of 2.54 and a standard deviation score of 0.82. Following the adaptation of Nyutu et al., (2021) on the interpretation of Likert scale mean scores, the table indicates that the average respondent sampled for this study agreed to be aware of cause-related marketing as a marketing technique used to market products. Essentially, the findings show that respondents were aware of the use of the concept of CRM as a marketing technique in Ghana. Relative to the first research question, which seeks to understand the extent to which respondents had been exposed to CRM techniques, the data provides critical evidence to suggest a significant portion of the respondents were aware of the concept.

Qualitative data gathered from respondents further proves that the respondents had adequate awareness of the concept of CRM as a marketing technique. The data gathered in indicates that

almost all the respondents were able to provide some explanation to the concept of CRM. Respondents were asked to provide brief explanations to the concept during the interview sessions. Qualitative data gathered from the research participants proved that respondents had some significant understanding of the concept as they were able to adequately explain what the concept entails.

One of the respondents, as shown in the excerpt below explains that the concept of CRM captures marketing strategies where organisations align their business objectives with providing pro-social and charitable services to the societies they operate from.

*“Well, very. I’m quite familiar with course related marketing. It’s more like a marketing strategy where businesses align with social or charitable causes to promote their products and services while also contributing to a course.”*

*RSP01 (Source: Field Interview, 2024)*

In the excerpt above, the participant first alludes to being familiar with the concept and goes on to provide critical insights into what the concept means. The participant provides a concise explanation to the concept while indicating the core ideas of the concept of CRM. Some of the participants also provided vivid descriptions to the concept as a means of showing their awareness of the concept.

*“So, what it means to me is that there’s an organization who is into maybe selling products or providing services, and they want to embark on an agenda, like a goal which will help society. So, for instance, they want to embark on an idea like mental health agenda or maybe menstrual health. Will they embark on this using their products or their services?”*

*RSP02 (Source: Field Interview, 2024)*

In the excerpt provided above the participant attempts to express awareness of the concept by providing some hypothetical examples of what the concept means and how CRM is practised in organisations. More specifically, the excerpt shows the participant alluding to a particular type of CRM technique while attempting an explanation to the concept.

Essentially, the data gathered from the survey as well as qualitative data gathered from interviews indicate that a significant number of the participants were aware of what the concept of CRM means. By providing critical explanations and examples to explain the concept, the participants expressed that they were well aware of CRM use among organisations in Ghana as a marketing strategy.

To further actuate the extent to which the participants were exposed to use of CRM as a marketing strategy in Ghana, the study further sought to investigate the degree exposure to these marketing strategies. The study further sought to understand how frequently the participants had encountered CRM campaigns.

***Table 2: Frequency of Exposure to CRM Strategies***

<b>Question</b>	<b>S.</b> <b>A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>S.</b> <b>D</b>	<b>Category</b> <b>mean</b>
I often see CRM product advertisements	26	32	51	27	14	2.80
I often see advertisements/products where a percentage of my purchase of the product is donated to charity	31	45	28	30	16	2.70

I often see advertisements/products where a percentage of organisational proceeds is donated to charity	24	48	32	27	19	2.79
I often see advertisements/products where the purchase of a product pays for the purchase of a similar product for a donation	27	26	45	29	23	2.96
I often see advertisements/products where the purchase of a product pays for a service for charity	25	43	31	28	23	2.87
<b>Means test score = 2.82; St.Deviation = 1.17; n = 150</b>						

*(Source: Field Data, 2024)*

The table above present data on respondents’ exposure to CRM techniques. The table above indicates the degrees to which respondents agreed or disagreed to critical questions in line with their perceived exposure to products and services being marketed with different CRM techniques. A means test run on the data gathered from the respondents using a 5-point Likert scale showed a mean test score of 2.84 and a standard deviation score of 1.17. Following the adaptation of Nyutu et al., (2021) on the interpretation of Likert scale mean scores, the table indicates that the average respondent sampled for this study was unable to either agree or disagree to being frequently exposed to marketing strategies which engaged the use of CRM techniques. Essentially, the data gathered shows that the respondents believed that they were not strongly exposed nor otherwise to the use of CRM as a marketing strategy in Ghana.

To further investigate this phenomenon and reach conclusive findings, the study engaged in qualitative analysis of data. Qualitative data also showed that the participants did not show being either strongly exposed or not to CRM practices in Ghana. This is expressed in how the participants only showed cursory exposure levels to this form of marketing. Thus, when asked if they could recall some CRM campaigns they had experienced or witnessed, not all the respondents were able to accurately identify such campaigns. It is essential to note that at best, respondents were who were able to recall experiencing or witness the use of CRM as a marketing technique simply provided singular examples. This means that while some of the respondents had experienced CRM techniques, the provision of singular events further marked low levels of exposure.

For instance, in the excerpt below, the participant simply provides a cursory idea of what they had experienced as a CRM initiative.

*“Yes, I think recently, I think Ghana, Ghana Water Company Limited engage in the CRM focusing on safe drinking water initiatives. This campaign was launched to educate communities about Ghana, about water conservations, conservation and management”*

*RSP01 (Source: Field Interview, 2024)*

The participant makes reference to an initiative from the Ghana Water Company, a governmental organisation as a CRM project. It is essential to note that the speaker continuously uses the phrase *‘I think’* which demonstrate that the example provided is a cursory one and that there is are low levels of surety attached to it. Furthermore, it is unclear whether the example provided by the participant represents a CRM initiative as it leans more towards a civic education engagement by a government agency more than a profit making initiative which is an essential aspect of CRM. It

is worth noting as well that the use of the phrase ‘*I think recently*’, adds to the finding that exposure levels among participants were inconclusive as the participant was unable to recall whether they had experienced the initiative in recent times or a long time ago.

Essentially, the findings show that frequency of exposure to CRM initiatives were neither strong nor weak. The data gathered from both quantitative and qualitative sources shows that while some of the respondents believed that they were frequently exposed to or engaged with CRM initiative, others noted otherwise. In essence, the study’s data point that while there were significant levels of awareness concerning the concept and practice of CRM, exposure levels were inconclusive. Thus, the data shows that while knowledge of CRM was popular among the research participants, exposure, experience and witness of the initiative was not as popular.

**4.4 RQ2: To what extent does cause-related marketing influence the purchasing decisions of millennials in Ghana?**

The second objective of the study focused on understanding the extent to which cause-related marketing influences the purchasing decisions of millennials in Ghana. Thus, the study focused on investigating how CRM strategies adopted to market products and services of organisations influenced the purchase decisions of respondents. The study focused on using both quantitative and qualitative data to ascertain this phenomenon.

***Table 3: Cause-related Marketing Influence on Purchase Decisions***

Questions	S.	A	N	D	S.	Category
	A				D	Mean

I am likely to buy a product because it is associated with a cause	69	33	19	19	10	2.12
I have purchased a product because it was associated with a cause	63	38	16	20	13	2.21
I purchase a particular product often because it is associated with a cause	51	31	31	23	14	2.45
I think that when a product is related to solving a social problem, it must be bought	63	26	13	32	16	2.41
I feel like when I buy a product that supports a cause I am indirectly supporting the cause as well	68	32	13	23	14	2.22
I think that when a product supports a cause, it becomes attractive to me	47	37	24	25	17	2.52
I prefer to purchase products that support a	55	27	26	22	20	2.50

cause than other products that do not						
I have recommended a product to another person because the product supported a cause	39	38	20	34	19	2.70
I feel like I may recommend a product to another person because it supports a cause	61	32	17	23	17	2.35
I have purchased a product because a friend recommended that it supports a cause	46	36	12	33	23	2.67
<b>Means test score = 2.41; St.Deviation = 1.25; n = 150</b>						

(Source: Field Data, 2024)

The table above presents data on respondents’ perceptions on how CRM initiatives influence their purchase decisions. The table presents data towards the extent to which respondents agree or disagree to being influenced by CRM initiatives towards making some purchase decisions. The data shown on the table indicates that for each question asked in this regard, the majority of the respondents indicated that they either strongly agreed or agreed to being influenced by CRM to make diverse purchase decisions. Meanwhile, the frequency table shows that a significantly lesser number of the respondents perceived that they had not been influenced by CRM to engage in any purchase decisions. Furthermore, the means of each of the categorical questions asked also

indicates that on the average, the respondents varying degrees to agreeing that CRM had some influence on their purchase decisions of products and services.

A means test run on the data gathered from the respondents using a 5-point Likert scale showed a mean test score of 2.41 and a standard deviation score of 1.25. Following the adaptation of Nyutu et al., (2021) on the interpretation of Likert scale mean scores, the table indicates that the average respondent sampled for this study was agreed that CRM influenced their purchase decisions. The data therefore suggests that for the average respondents sampled for this study, CRM was essential in influencing purchasing decisions. Thus, the data supports the supposition that CRM is a prime influencing factor that influenced the purchase decisions of the respondents.

The study also engaged in assessing qualitative data to further understand how CRM influenced the purchase decisions of millennials. The qualitative data gathered showed that to a very large extent, all the participants perceived that CRM had significant influence on the purchase decisions of participants. Thus, findings made from the qualitative study supports findings made from the quantitative study. This is typically expressed in the finding that participants believed that CRM influenced their purchase of products and services.

Some of the research participants indicated that they were strongly influenced by CRM strategies and initiatives towards the purchase of some products and services. In the excerpt provided below for instance, the participants allude that CRM's influence *absolutely* influenced their decisions to make purchases. The participant notes that CRM initiative made them feel like they were contributing to a positive pro-social endeavour. It is essential to note that to actuate the extent of influence, the phrases *absolute* and *pushes me* are used by the participant. Essentially, the

participant captures the absolute influencing power of CRM in pushing them towards making some favourable purchase decisions.

*“Absolutely, because if I’m buying water and part of it is going to be donated to patients with heart problems. I already assumed that I’m contributing in a way to these people to be able to help and pay for their health care. And so, if I see a motive behind that, I feel like it’s a good motive, and it pushes me, it pushes my purchasing power to support the cause...”*

*RSP04 (Source: Field Interview, 2024)*

Another participant indicated while providing an example of CRM that as a result of an organisation’s CRM initiative they had discontinued patronising the services of another organisation in favour of one that had been engaged in CRM. This expresses two core things towards understanding the influence of CRM on the purchase decision of the participants. First, the excerpt shows the extent to which CRM had influenced the purchase decisions of the participant in favour of the organisation, MTN. Additionally, the excerpt also presents critical insights for organisations who do not engage in CRM as the excerpt shows that some participants were willing to discontinue purchasing from organisations who do not engage in CRM activities.

*“Okay, so, okay, let me use MTN. So, when they introduced the Momo, they introduced this MTN bright scholarships, where they assist needy by brilliant students to further their education. So, when they started that cause I decided to use MTN. So, I switched from the network that was using and I started using MTN.”*

*RSP02 (Source: Field Interview, 2024)*

It is essential to also note that while the findings suggest the CRM was a critical influencing factor for purchase intentions, the data also points that participants believed that other critical issues such as product pricing and product quality play a moderating role in consumers' purchase intentions.

In the excerpt provided below the participant notes how product quality and price can play a crucial role in their decision to purchase a product or service even within the context of the product being engaged with some CRM initiative.

*“I think my biggest one would be pricing and then product quality. So, if the price doesn't really match with the quality. For me, it raises eyebrows and it makes me wonder why I would want to call it, why I would, I would want to purchase such an item”*

*RSP01 (Source: Field Interview, 2024)*

The extract above indicates the mediating role of other key factors such as pricing and product quality within the broader context of CRM. Hence, the findings suggest that while CRM strategies are crucial in influencing the purchase intentions of consumers other factors such as the quality of the product and the price also play important roles. Lerro et al. (2019) found similar findings in his investigation on young consumers in Italy. As was found in this study, Lerro et al. (2019) also found that factors such as product pricing and quality play essential mediating roles in influencing consumer purchase intentions even in the active context of CRM.

In essence, the data gathered indicates that the respondents perceived that CRM had significant influence on their purchase decisions. The data therefore provides evidence to suggest that CRM was a crucial influencing factor in influencing the purchasing decisions of the respondents sampled for the study. The findings made in this study aligns with the findings of Saktiana and Prakosa (2023), Shabir et al. (2010) as well as Qamar (2013) who have all emphasised the central role of CRM strategies in influencing the purchase decisions of young consumers.

#### **4.4 RQ3: Which type(s) of cause-related marketing strategies influence the purchase intentions of Ghanaian millennials?**

The third objective of this study focused on understanding the types of CRM that influenced purchase decisions of Ghanaian millennials. Thus, the core of this objective was to understand how and what types of CRM initiatives influenced the purchase decisions of millennial consumers. The study investigated this within five main types of cause-related marketing - Percentage of Sale, Transactional, Donation, Licensing and Promotional CRM.

The study engaged the use of quantitative data analysis to investigate the extent to which the different types of cause-related marketing influenced the purchasing intentions of the respondents. The table presents the results of the Pearson correlation analysis in SPSS. The table shows the relationship between purchase decisions of the respondents and the different types of CRM. The table shows the extent to which the different types of CRM influence the purchase decisions of the respondents.

***Table 4: CRM Types and Extent of Influence on Purchase Intentions Table 3: Cause-related Marketing Influence on Purchase Decisions***

		Percentage of Sale CRM	Transactional CRM	Donation CRM	Licensing CRM	Promotional CRM
Purchase Intentions	r value	.798	.573	.525	.596	.328
	p value	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	N	150	150	150	150	150

(Source: Field Data, 2024)

A Pearson correlation coefficient was computed to determine the relationship between respondents' purchase intentions and the different types of CRM. This was done to determine the extent to which the different types of CRM influenced the purchase intentions of the respondents. Essentially, this aided in reaching the conclusion as to which type of CRM had the highest influencing power on the purchase intentions of respondents.

Firstly, the results indicate a significant relationship between purchase intentions of consumers and the different CRM types. Thus, the data presented in the data shows a positive significant relationship between the two variables. Thus, the data shows positive relationships between purchase intentions and percentage of sale CRM (r value = 0.78); purchase intentions and transactional CRM (r value = 0.57), purchase intentions and donation CRM (r value = 0.52); purchase intentions and licensing CRM (r value = 0.59) and purchase intention of promotional CRM (r value = 0.32). Furthermore, tests of significance also show that all the p values of the various relationships showed 0.00 which is less than the p-value mark - 0.05. Hence, essentially,

the data shows that the relationships between purchase intentions and the different types of CRM were all significant.

However, the data also shows critical variations within these relationships. Hence, while the findings suggest that all the different types of CRM could influence purchase intentions of respondents, there existed critical differences in the extent to which the different types influenced purchase intentions. In essence, the data provided in the table above shows that percentage of sale CRM had a strong positive relationship with the purchase intentions of respondents. Consequently, the findings indicate that percentage of sale CRM strategies were the most influential forms of CRM so far as the purchase intentions of respondents are concerned.

The findings made from the data also indicate that Licensing CRM initiatives also had a strong positive significant relationship with the purchase intentions of the respondents. Hence, respondents believed that licensing CRM initiatives also strongly influenced their purchase intentions. Furthermore, the study found that this is followed by transactional CRM initiatives where the organisation donates a portion of sale of products to support a pro-social cause. The study found that with  $r$  value of 0.573, there was a moderate significant relationship between transactional CRM and the purchase intentions of respondents. The data shows that this is followed by donation CRM while promotional CRM was found in the study as the least influential CRM type that influences purchase intentions.

Essentially, the findings made in the study suggest that the most influential CRM type was the type of CRM where a percentage of an organisation's sale is donated to charity or some pro-social cause. This was followed by licensing CRM, transactional CRM and donation CRM with promotional CRM being the least influential type of CRM among respondents.

Studies such as Lafferty and Goldsmith (2005) and Tseng and Tang (2023) have also found that while CRM has a general impact on the purchasing decisions of consumers, there exist critical differences in how the different types of CRM influence purchase intentions. This study hence concurs with the findings of initial studies such as Lafferty and Goldsmith (2005) and Tseng and Tang (2023) towards the fact that the different CRM types have varied influences on purchase intentions of consumers.

#### **4.5 Chapter Summary**

This chapter of the research focused on presenting the key findings made in the study. The chapter discusses findings made from both quantitative and qualitative data to understand the core research objectives of the study.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The core of the study looked critically at understanding the role of cause related marketing strategies in influencing the purchase decisions of millennial consumers in Ghana. This chapter of the research presents a summary to the critical findings made in the study. The study provides critical conclusions to key issues discussed in this research work. Furthermore, the study provides some critical recommendations based on the findings made in the study.

#### **5.2 Summary of Key Findings**

The primary goal of this study was to find out how much exposure millennials in Ghana have to cause-related marketing. To further understand this, the study investigated customers' knowledge of CRM programs and degrees of exposure. The study began by determining how well respondents understood the idea of cause-related marketing, how it is used to promote products, and the repercussions. In essence, the data suggest that respondents were aware of the usage of CRM as a marketing tactic in Ghana.

In response to the first study question, which tries to determine the extent to which respondents had been exposed to CRM approaches, the data suggests that customers were aware of the idea. Qualitative data collected from research participants demonstrated that consumers had a good comprehension of the idea since they could appropriately articulate what it comprises. Essentially, the survey results and qualitative data from interviews show that a considerable proportion of consumers understand what the term CRM entails. The participants demonstrated their understanding of CRM use as a marketing strategy in Ghana by offering crucial explanations and examples.

To better understand the extent to which consumers were exposed to the usage of CRM as a marketing technique in Ghana, the study looked at the degree of exposure to different marketing tactics. The findings show that the typical consumer was unable to agree or disagree with being often exposed to marketing strategies that included the usage of CRM techniques. Essentially, the data suggest that consumers considered they had not been sufficiently exposed to the usage of CRM as a marketing tactic in Ghana or elsewhere. Essentially, while there was widespread awareness of CRM, exposure levels were ambiguous. As a result, while CRM knowledge was popular among customers, exposure to and experience with the strategy were less popular.

The second objective of the study was to determine the extent to which cause-related marketing influenced millennials' purchase decisions in Ghana. The study assessed both qualitative and quantitative data to investigate the extent to which CRM influences the purchase decisions of millennial consumers. The findings made from both qualitative and quantitative analysis indicate that CRM was a prime factor that influenced consumers' purchase decisions. First, the quantitative data analysis, through means test score showed that the average consumer exposed to CRM strategies was likely to make favourable purchase decisions towards organisations that engage such marketing practices. To further understand this, qualitative data analysis showed that indeed, CRM was a critical element in influencing the purchase decisions of consumers.

The study further found that some consumers believed that although CRM was critical influencing factor, other key issues such as the quality of products and pricing was essential factors that consumers also consider when making purchases.

The third objective of the study looked at identifying the extent to which the different CRM types influenced purchase intentions of consumers. The findings made from qualitative analysis of the data shows that although consumers believed that the different types of CRM influenced purchase

intentions differently, CRM types and their influence were linked greatly to the personal individual interests of consumers. Thus, CRM types that aligned with the areas where consumers were personally interested in influenced them the most.

Quantitative analysis of the data also proved the different CRM types influenced purchase intentions differently. The findings indicate that while some types of CRM had great influence on purchase intentions, others had lesser influence. Inferential statistical analysis showed that CRM types where organisations donated a percentage of their sales to charity influenced purchase intentions of millennial consumers the most. The findings found that this was followed by licensing CRM types. Transactional CRM where a fixed portion of product sale is dedicated to support a pro-social cause was found to also have moderate influence on the purchase intentions of millennial consumers. Other types of CRM such as donation CRM and promotional CRM had lesser influence on the purchase intentions of consumers.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

This study set out to examine the role of Cause-Related Marketing (CRM) in influencing the purchase decisions of millennial consumers. Specifically, it aimed to understand the levels of exposure to CRM initiatives, the influence of CRM on millennial purchase decisions, and the degree to which various CRM strategies impacted purchase intentions. The study's findings reveal several key insights into how millennial consumers in Ghana respond to CRM efforts, providing implications for both marketers and researchers interested in understanding consumer motivations within this demographic.

First, the findings indicate that, although there is a general awareness of CRM among millennials, actual exposure to CRM initiatives remains low. This gap between awareness and exposure

suggests that many CRM campaigns are not reaching their intended audience effectively or the frequency of the use of CRM as a critical marketing strategy in recent times is very low. As millennials are known for their preference for brands with strong social and ethical values, this underexposure presents an opportunity for companies to enhance the visibility and reach of their CRM initiatives, potentially by integrating CRM messages more seamlessly into digital and social media channels frequented by millennials.

The study also found that CRM can positively influence millennial purchase decisions; however, it is not the sole determining factor. While millennials are more likely to support brands with social commitments, they also prioritize product quality and price in their purchasing decisions. These findings underscore the importance of a balanced marketing approach that combines CRM with competitive pricing and high-quality offerings to effectively attract and retain millennial consumers. CRM should therefore be viewed as a complementary strategy, enhancing rather than replacing other essential aspects of the marketing mix.

Additionally, the study revealed that different CRM strategies have varying degrees of influence on millennial purchase intentions. Percentage-of-sale CRM emerged as the most effective type of CRM, suggesting that millennials respond well to tangible, outcome-oriented campaigns where they can directly see the impact of their purchases on the cause supported. On the other hand, promotional CRM strategies, such as emphasising pro-social behaviour among citizens, were found to be less influential. This indicates that millennials may perceive percentage-of-sale CRM as more transparent and impactful compared to promotional CRM, which may feel more commercially driven than socially motivated.

In conclusion, this study has highlighted that while CRM is a valuable tool for engaging millennial consumers, its effectiveness is dependent on several factors. For CRM initiatives to succeed, they must be strategically crafted to align with the values and preferences of millennials. Brands should also consider adopting CRM strategies that align with the core interests of their target audiences as this has shown to resonate more strongly with millennials.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

The researcher suggests the following based on the findings and conclusions reached in this study.

- Companies should enhance the visibility of CRM campaigns to bridge the gap between awareness and exposure. This could involve incorporating CRM messaging across social media, influencer partnerships, and digital advertising platforms frequently used by Ghanaian millennials. Regular, targeted CRM content on these channels could increase engagement and create more meaningful connections with millennial consumers.
- Since percentage-of-sale CRM was found to be the most influential, brands should adopt clear, outcome-focused CRM strategies that outline the direct impact of consumer purchases on supported causes. Providing updates on funds raised or projects completed can reinforce consumer trust and enhance perceived transparency, which is important to millennial buyers.
- Millennials are more likely to engage with causes they feel personally connected to. Companies should identify causes that resonate with their specific millennial demographic, tailoring CRM campaigns to address social issues or community needs that align with their consumers' values and lifestyles.
- Allowing consumers to actively participate in CRM initiatives can deepen their connection to the brand. This could involve inviting consumers to vote on causes, participate in fundraising

events, or share stories of personal impact through social media. Such engagement not only increases exposure but also fosters a sense of community and loyalty toward the brand.

- Rather than relying solely on CRM to drive sales, companies should integrate CRM with other aspects of the marketing mix, such as product innovation and service excellence. CRM should complement, rather than substitute, quality assurance and product appeal efforts to provide a holistic and attractive value proposition to millennials.

#### **5.4.1 Suggestions for Further Research**

- Future research could examine how different age groups, beyond millennials, respond to various CRM strategies. Understanding generational differences in CRM perceptions could help brands tailor campaigns to appeal to a broader consumer base.
- As social media and digital platforms are increasingly central to CRM, further research could explore how specific channels (e.g., Instagram, TikTok, YouTube) impact CRM effectiveness. Investigating platform-specific strategies could help businesses optimize their campaigns based on audience engagement and channel characteristics.
- Future studies could delve deeper into the interplay between CRM and other marketing elements. Researching how CRM interacts with aspects like advertising, customer service, and brand messaging would provide a more holistic view of CRM's place within the broader marketing mix.

#### **5.5 Chapter Summary**

This chapter focused on providing a summary to the key findings made in the study. The chapter also presents critical conclusions to the key issues raised in this chapter in line with the core

objective of the study. The chapter also provides and discusses key recommendations for marketing practice and policy as well as for further research.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A

#### Survey Questionnaire: Cause-Related Marketing and Purchase Decisions

**Introduction:** *Thank you for participating in this survey. The purpose of this study is to understand your attitudes and behaviours regarding cause-related marketing and its influence on your purchase decisions. Your responses will remain anonymous and confidential. Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability.*

#### A. Demographic Data of Respondents

1. Gender: a.  Male

b.  Female

2. Age:

a. 25 – 30

b. 31 – 36

c. 37 – 42

d. 43 – 48

e. 49 – 54

f. 55 and above

3. Highest Level of Education

a. Primary/JSS

d. Bachelor's Degree

b. SHS/O Level

e. Postgraduate degree

f. Other (Please Specify) .....

4. Employment status

a. Employed

b. Unemployed

c. Self-employed

5. Income earner group

- a. Below 500 [ ]
- b. [ ] 500-1,000 [ ]
- c. [ ] 1,100-1,500 [ ]
- d. 1,600-2,000 [ ]
- e. Above 2,000 [ ]

Kindly select the options that best describe your perceptions and attitudes towards the questions/statements provided.

[S.A = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, N = Neutral, D = Disagree, S.D = Strongly Disagree]

**B. Awareness of Cause-Related Marketing**

**RQ1: To what extent are consumers exposed to cause-related marketing as a strategy to market products?**

Question	S.A	A	N	D	S.D
I have observed some organizations engaged in cause-related marketing					
I have seen some products being marketed using cause-related marketing					
I have seen some products with donation inscriptions on their products					
I have seen some products being advertised together with dealing with some social cause					
I have seen some advertisements where the purchase of the product leads to donation of an amount off the purchase					
I have seen advertisements where organisations donate products to charity for every purchase I make					
I have seen advertisements where a fixed amount of proceeds from my purchase is donated to a cause					
I have seen an advertisement where the purchase I make pays for service to a social cause					

**Bii: Frequency of Exposure to CRM initiatives by organisations**

Question	S.A	A	N	D	S.D
I often see CRM product advertisements					
I often see advertisements/products where a percentage of my					

purchase of the product is donated to charity					
I often see advertisements/products where a percentage of organisational proceeds is donated to charity					
I often see advertisements/products where the purchase of a product pays for the purchase of a similar product for a donation					
I often see advertisements/products where the purchase of a product pays for a service for charity					

### C. Cause-related marketing and purchase decisions

**RQ2: To what extent does cause-related marketing influence the purchase intentions and decisions of consumers?**

Question	S.A	A	N	D	S.D
I am likely to buy a product because it is associated with a cause					
I have purchased a product because it was associated with a cause					
I purchase a particular product often because it is associated with a cause					
I think that when a product is related to solving a social problem, it must be bought					
I feel like when I buy a product that supports a cause I am indirectly supporting the cause as well					
I think that when a product supports a cause, it becomes attractive to me					
I prefer to purchase products that support a cause than other products that do not					
I have recommended a product to another person because the product supported a cause					
I feel like I may recommend a product to another person because it supports a cause					
I have purchased a product because a friend recommended that it supports a cause					

### D. Cause-related marketing type and Purchase decisions/intentions

**RQ3: To what extent does the type of cause-related marketing influence the purchase decisions/intentions of consumers?**

	Question	S.A	A	N	D	S.D
<b>General</b>	I have purchased a product because it was associated with a cause I am interested in					

	When I see a product that is associated with a cause I am interested in, I feel inclined to buy the product					
	If a product or organisation donation does not support a cause I am personally interested in I do not purchase					
Percentage of Sale CRM	When I see a product that donates a percentage of sales to a cause I feel like purchasing the product					
	I often purchase products where a percentage of organisational sales is donated to charity					
	If the product or brand does not use this type of CRM I may not purchase it					
Transactional CRM	When I see a product that donates an amount of money from purchase to charity I feel like purchasing them					
	I often purchase products where a part of the money used to purchase the product is donated to charity					
	If the product or brand does not use this type of CRM I may not purchase it					
Buy-one-Give-one (BOGO)	When I see a product that requires me to donate items to charity I feel like purchasing the product					
	I often purchase products that donate items to charity					
	If the product or brand does not use this type of CRM I may not purchase it					
Licensing CRM	When I see a product co-produced by a charity organisation I feel like purchasing the product					
	I often purchase products that are co-produced by a charity organisation					
	I intend to purchase products co-produced by a charity organisation					
	If the product or brand does not use this type of CRM I may not purchase it					
Promotional CRM	When I see a product that is campaigning on a pro-social issue I feel like purchasing the product					
	I have engaged in some form of volunteerism because a product or organisation wanted me to as part of cause-related marketing campaigns					
	I think that I may one day engage in some form of volunteerism because a product or organisation wanted me to as part of cause-related marketing campaigns					
	If the product or brand does not use this type of CRM I may not purchase it					



## **Appendix B**

### **Interview Guide for Research participants**

1. How familiar are you with cause-related marketing (CRM)?
2. Can you describe what cause-related marketing means to you?
3. Can you recall any recent advertisements or campaigns that involved CRM?
4. How often do you come across brands or companies that are engaged in supporting social causes or charitable activities through their marketing efforts?
  - a) Where do you usually encounter CRM campaigns (e.g., social media, TV, in-store, online ads)
5. Does a company's involvement in supporting a social cause influence your decision to purchase their products or services?
  - a) Why or why not?
6. Can you provide examples of when a CRM campaign influenced your purchase decision?
7. What types of causes or social issues are most important to you when considering a brand's CRM efforts (transactional, promotional, BOGO etc.)
8. Are there specific causes that would make you more likely to support a brand?
9. How do one-time donation campaigns compare to long-term commitments by brands to social causes in influencing your purchase decisions?