Predicting cause-related marketing patronage intentions based on Schwartz’s theory of human values: a large-scale sample study anchored on female fashion leadership

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Abstract
Purpose – Businesses embark on cause-related marketing (CRM) initiatives as a marketing strategy to fortify consumers’ behavioural intentions. Prior research indicates that human values could be tapped to understand the consumers’ responses to perceived organizational motives behind undertaking social cause initiatives. This research employs Schwartz’s theory of human values to examine consumers’ patronage intentions towards CRM-linked fashion products. Moreover, fashion leaders play a crucial role in the diffusion of the latest fashion and fashion trends. This research investigates by integrating human values and fashion leadership, offering insights into CRM-linked fashion consumption motives.

Design/methodology/approach – The overarching goal was to investigate the complex interplay between human values and female fashion leadership to predict CRM patronage intention (CPI). Hence, a large-scale research study on 2,050 samples was undertaken by adopting threefold partial least squares–multigroup analysis–artificial neural network (PLS-MGA-ANN) to establish and empirically test a comprehensive model.

Findings – This study is unique as it establishes and validates the relative or normalized importance placed on human values by fashion leaders, thereby predicting CPIs. The results revealed that women with high-fashion leadership and specific value types (benevolence, universalism, self-direction) are more likely to patronize CRM-linked fashion retailers. In addition, the findings validated that women with low-fashion leadership and specific value types (tradition, security, conformity) are more likely to patronize CRM-linked fashion stores.

Originality/value – The findings provide a valuable rationale to non-profit marketers, fashion marketing experts and practitioners to design customer value-based profiling and manage crucial CRM decisions.

Keywords Cause-related marketing, Female fashion leadership, Human values, CRM patronage intention, Non-profit marketing

Paper type Research paper

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1. Introduction

Cause-related marketing (CRM) strategy, under the umbrella of corporate social responsibility (CSR), encompasses a mutually beneficial association between a firm and a non-profit organization (NPO) meant to promote the firm’s sales and the NPO’s cause (Lee and Johnson, 2019). In other words, it is a CSR practice where consumers donate a certain amount to charity while purchasing a product (Thomas and Jadeja, 2021). The last three decades have seen a tremendous increase in CRM initiatives worldwide (Bhatti et al., 2022).

More specifically, Kureshi and Thomas (2020) found that the past two decades have observed the highest penetration of CRM activities in India, and around 177 CRM campaigns were designed/executed across numerous Indian business organizations. Prior literature indicates that CSR positively impacts patronage intentions (Zayyad et al., 2021). Patronage intention is “the consumer’s patronage of a firm, which is considered an organization which supports social cause” (Deb et al., 2020, p. 9). Suryavanshi et al. (2023) suggest that socially responsible business-driven activities result in high patronage intentions. However, the latest study found that there has been a rising level of scepticism and adverse reactions among CRM consumers in India (Thomas et al., 2022a), which leads to lower patronage intention towards the firm (Deb et al., 2020; Zayyad et al., 2021).

In the Indian context, many established fashion brands have begun incorporating a purpose-driven strategy into their business models (Thomas et al., 2022a). For example, Pernia’s Pop-Up Shop, an Indian online fashion retailer, raised funds by unveiling a CRM initiative wherein a certain portion of the purchase proceeds from the sale of fresh collections/designers would be donated to the NPO named “Save the Children”. Though this phenomenon is common in advanced economies, a recent surge has been noticed in emerging economies requiring deep enquiry (Bhatti et al., 2022). What influences consumers’ patronage intentions towards CRM-linked fashion retailers? Past studies have attempted to address this aspect, but only to a limited extent (Lee and Kim, 2014). Previous studies have attempted to address this aspect, but only to a limited extent (Lee and Kim, 2014). Would the consumers’ patronage intention towards fashion retailers be higher if the perceived connection closely resembles consumer value and the business’s identity that prioritizes CRM activities? In other words, if the individual values are aligned with the business, would the consumer patronize that business?

Accordingly, to answer this question, this research employs Schwartz’s (1992) theory of human values, which has received empirical support from numerous studies sourcing data gathered in more than 60 countries (Zasuwa, 2015). The justification for employing Schwartz’s theory in the present study related to patronage intentions towards CRM-linked fashion retailers is that this theory is universal and captures human values holistically. Moreover, utilizing Schwartz’s theory as an anchoring theory for the present study would dig deeper into the value underpinnings of CRM behavioural intentions (Zasuwa, 2015).

Past research has investigated values and fashion leadership to explore and offer insights into the motives underlying fashion purchases (Goldsmith et al., 1991). The fashion leadership concept has been employed in marketing since clothing marketers widely acknowledge fashion leaders as an essential pillar supporting reaching a wider audience and selling effectively to consumer change agents. Haluk (2014, p. 433) stated that “fashion leadership” represents

Those people who are more interested in fashion than other consumers, who are more confident of their taste and who are the first to purchase new styles; it also includes the people who influence other consumers to adopt and purchase new fashion products.

Fashion leaders play a crucial role in the diffusion of the latest fashion changes and trends (Goldsmith et al., 1993). Although fashion consumers have been studied from diverse perspectives in developing markets, there needs to be more research on fashion
leadership in the context of CRM patronage intentions (CPIs). This study fulfils this void. Henceforth, the present study aims to predict fashion leaders’ CPIs by examining human values. Therefore, the research question for the present study is – Does the human values of fashion leaders impact patronage intentions in the context of CRM-linked fashion retailers while purchasing fashion products?

The global women’s apparel market is projected to reach US$1,207.4bn by 2028. Developing countries such as India are witnessing rapid growth in the women’s wear market due to emerging fashion trends and the rising influence of social media (IMARC, 2023). By 2020, the Indian women’s apparel market had emerged as the world’s sixth-largest. Therefore, this study in the Indian context recruited a large sample of female fashion leaders to realize the study’s goals. This study is unique as it establishes and validates the relative or normalized importance (NI) placed on female fashion leaders’ human values while predicting CPIs. The findings provide a valuable rationale to non-profit marketers, fashion marketing experts and practitioners for designing customer value profiling. Such profiling would guide in predicting CRM behavioural intentions based on value, thereby bonding CRM consumers with advertising content/messages in a manner that would resonate deeply with the target segment. Hence, a large-scale research study was undertaken by adopting threefold partial least squares–multigroup analysis–artificial neural network (PLS-MGA-ANN) for establishing and empirically testing a comprehensive model by integrating human values and fashion leadership to predict CPI (see Figure 1).

2. Literature review and hypothesis development

2.1 Cause-related marketing (CRM) and fashion consumers

CRM is defined as “donating a percentage of revenues to a specific cause based on the revenue occurring during the announced support period” (Kotler and Lee, 2005, p. 81). Recent research observed that fashion companies eagerly participate in transaction-based or purchase-triggered donation-based CRM activity, and also suggests that CRM plays a substantial role in the fashion industry in eliciting positive consumer responses (Lee and Johnson, 2019). For instance, the “Red campaign” entailed numerous fashion brands such as Gap, Nike and Converse pledging money towards supporting HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns in Africa.

2.1.1 Fashion leadership and values. Past research has established the significance of targeting fashion leaders (Goldsmith et al., 1993) and their crucial role in defining fashion shopping orientation and consumption (Michon et al., 2007). Zasuwa (2015) established that human values impact ethical decision-making, especially social cause initiatives. Although values played a critical role in fashion consumption (Kaiser, 1990), prior literature majorly concentrated on sketching fashion leadership based on demographics such as age, race, gender and marital status (Kang and Park-Poaps, 2010). Accordingly, the relationship of fashion leadership with human values has not been fully understood, and the existing studies have not been sufficient to explain this relationship. Within the fashion industry context, prior research has shown positive responses from Millennials, Generation Z and Generation Y consumers towards supporting a good cause while buying CRM-linked fashion brands (Hyllegard et al., 2010; Hessekiel, 2018). Furthermore, Goldsmith et al. (1993) established the association between social values and fashion leadership such that fashion leaders place more importance on specific values than other shoppers. Therefore, this warrants further investigation into the interplay between fashion leadership and values and further validates which human values would be more critical for fashion leaders during CRM decision-making.
2.2 Schwartz’s theory of human values and CRM patronage intention

Schwartz’s theory is a widely acknowledged universal theory, and the 10 values represented in the theoretical framework could offer an in-depth knowledge of the value underpinnings of CRM behaviour (Zasuwa, 2015). Schwartz’s framework comprises two bipolar dimensions. The first dimension encapsulates the conflict between values, highlighting the independence of ideas/actions/feelings, open-mindedness (self-direction,
stimulation), and values that underline order, discipline, preserving past and intransigence (security, tradition, conformity). The second dimension deviates from “self-transcendence” and “self-enhancement” values. This dimension encapsulates the divergence between values that underline welfare concerns and others’ interests (benevolence, universalism) and values that underline seeking personal gain, success and supremacy over others (achievement, power). The hedonism value (HEV) is relatively linked to both dimensions (Schwartz, 1992, p. 8).

Patronage intention is defined as a consumer’s willingness to buy, interact, recommend, and revisit an online retail store (Baker et al., 2002). In recent times, Suryavanshi et al. (2023) examined the prominent influence of CSR value-driven motives on corresponding processes underlying CPI in the context of online grocery retailing. Recent studies indicate that the increased distrust among consumers who buy products associated with CRM promotions has reduced patronage intentions (Deb et al., 2020; Thomas et al., 2022b). Zayyad et al. (2021) found the influence of the various dimensions of CSR on patronage intentions within the context of the banking sector. Likewise, Yoo (2014) found several antecedents having positive influences on consumer attitude and patronage intention in the context of fast fashion retailing. The CSR literature has revealed a positive effect on consumer patronage intentions in the context of retail apparel brands involved in socially responsible activities (Diddi and Niehm, 2016). In other words, past studies assert that consumer patronage intention would be greater for those firms which promote social initiatives (Deb et al., 2020).

2.2.1 Universalism values and CRM patronage intention. Universalism values (UNV) represent “understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of all people and nature” (Schwartz, 1992, p. 12). (Schwartz, 1994, p. 5) observed that “the motivational goal of universalism is understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of all people and nature”. Prior research on value orientations and CSR indicate that individuals with a self-transcendent value orientation tend to possess pro-environmental solid beliefs and are more likely to act according to such beliefs (Bardi and Schwartz, 2003). Likewise, Zasuwa (2015) established that UNV are positively associated with CRM attitudes and behavioural intentions. Similarly, Pepper et al. (2009) found that UNV significantly predict socially conscious behaviour. Diddi and Niehm (2016) established the significant role of UNV towards impacting the consumers’ intentions to patronize retail apparel brands engaged in CSR activities. Hence, consumers for whom this value is significant would invariably support CRM activities undertaken by firms, eventually leading to high patronage. Therefore, we could safely assume that UNV would impact CPIs positively.

$H1$. There is a positive relationship between UNV and CRM patronage intention.

2.2.2 Benevolence values and CRM patronage intention. Past research reveals that benevolence values (BEV) match UNV and deal with the well-being of others. Such values underline voluntary concern for others’ benefits and the benefit of society (Schwartz 1992). In other words, BEV are defined as a caring attitude and welfare activities which symbolize concern towards others. Individuals who possess self-transcendent value orientation envisage retail fashion brands to act in an ethical manner (Diddi and Niehm, 2016). Zasuwa (2015) established that benevolence would positively impact CRM behavioural intentions and also found that it was a predictor of prosocial behaviour. The latest research by Suryavanshi et al. (2023) identified CSR motives and established that values-driven motives linked to BEV were the strongest predictor of CPI. Hence, we postulate that consumers with high BEV would have a higher patronage towards CRM-linked fashion retailers.

$H2$. There is a positive relationship between BEV and CRM patronage intention.
2.2.3 Tradition values and CRM patronage intention. Prior research confirms that traditional values (TRV) embody respect, acceptance and commitment to the traditions that one’s culture imposes on an individual (Zasuwa, 2015). Hauschild et al. (2020) have observed tradition preservation in consumption habits related to apparel and the encounters related to fashion consumption in preserving traditions in ephemeral reality. This research further suggests how the symbolic orientation of TRV is transmitted to fashion consumption, incorporating symbolic portrayal of culture into contemporary fashion elements. In the Indian context, traditions play a significant role for the customer and from ancient times, it is evident that India is known for its hospitality and prosocial behaviour such that monetary donations were the most frequent donation type in India when compared to other donation types of such as blood or time (India Giving Report, 2020). In other words, consumers who are high on TRV would be high on CRM behavioural intentions (Zasuwa, 2015; Miller et al., 2017). Thus, consumers would likely patronize the firm undertaking CRM initiatives. Thus, the hypothesis is formulated as follows:

\[ H3 \quad \text{There is a positive relationship between TRV and CRM patronage intention.} \]

2.2.4 Conformity values and CRM patronage intention. Prior research reveals that conformity values (COV) represent consumers who place great significance on conformity and avoid disturbing or upsetting activities that may violate social norms or social expectations (Schwartz, 1992). The absence of research investigations in these domains warrants further examination to ascertain the behavioural antecedents of consumer patronage intention towards apparel retail brands engaged in CSR promotions (Diddi and Niehm, 2016). Past research in the context of the clothing fashion industry suggests that COV play a crucial role towards developing emotional attachment (Ahmed et al., 2018), and individuals who prioritize conformity were found to be polite, eventually triggering prosocial behaviour and charitable giving (Zasuwa, 2015; Bekkers and Wiepking, 2011). Therefore, we propose that consumers acknowledging COV would have a positive inclination towards firms undertaking CRM initiatives, thereby reflecting higher patronage intention:

\[ H4 \quad \text{There is a positive relationship between COV and CRM patronage intention.} \]

2.2.5 Security values and CRM patronage intention. Schwartz (1992) suggests that security values (SEV) are highly associated with COV and TRV. It is worth noting that the multidimensional view of value reflects an aggregate concept that constitutes numerous facets. In other words, SEV symbolize consumers who are devoted towards preserving societal safety and harmony. Varshneya and Das (2017) established that the purchase intention of fashion retail shoppers is mainly based on crucial parameters related to SEV. Prior literature has indicated that values strongly impact individuals’ ethical decision-making processes (Diddi and Niehm, 2016). Zasuwa (2015) established that consumers with high-SEV would likely possess a positive attitude towards CRM. Hence, the above discussion supports that consumers with high SEV would have positive associations and higher patronage with those firms that promote CRM initiatives. Thus, the following hypothesis is formulated:

\[ H5 \quad \text{There is a positive relationship between SEV and CRM patronage intention.} \]

2.2.6 Achievement values and CRM patronage intention. Past literature indicates that achievement values (ACV) represent a unique characteristic of individual success by exhibiting competency (Zasuwa, 2015). The ACV signify those individuals mainly concentrating on personal development (Schwartz, 1992). Self-enhancement values, such as ACV, assist the pursuit of an individual’s success and promote dominance over people
and resources (Schwartz, 2006: p. 7). Prior studies have found the critical role of ACV while engaging with luxury fashion brands (Heine and Trommsdorff, 2010). Apparel consumers are placing high importance on retail brand CSR practices and are increasingly engaging in ethical decisions while making purchase choices (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2004). In the context of CRM initiatives, an individual attains self-gratification by donating to social causes (Thomas and Jadeja, 2021), which provides a sense of achievement and well-being. Hence, we safely assume that, for those high on ACV, the charitable donations made by the firm would eventually result in high patronage towards such firms. Thus, the following hypothesis is formulated:

**H6.** There is a positive relationship between ACV and CRM patronage intention.

2.2.7 Power values and CRM patronage intention. Past research has established that individuals who are high on power values (POV) seek high prestige and social status (Schwartz, 1992) and accumulate wealth for growth. In other words, POV is similar to ACV since it links with pursuing self-interests. There are mixed research outcomes regarding the relationship between POV and CRM (Zasuwa, 2015). Prior research has examined the relationship between the self-enhancement of personal values (e.g. social power and recognition) and behavioural intention towards ethical fashion consumption (Manchiraju and Sadachar, 2014). However, recent research on personal values indicates that contributing towards an individual’s CRM activities results in gratification and subjective happiness (Patel et al., 2023). Since POV are linked to social status, we propose that CRM contributions help individuals gain social status. Besides, CRM donations by firms would provide an opportunity to thwart negative publicity and gain a reputation in the eyes of consumers (Adkins, 2004). Hence, we propose that consumers with high POV would likely have high patronage towards firms engaging in CRM activities. Thus, the following hypothesis is formulated:

**H7.** There is a positive relationship between POV and CRM patronage intention.

2.2.8 Hedonism values and CRM patronage intention. Prior academic work suggests that HEV signify the pleasures of satisfying self-interests (physiological needs) and challenges (Schwartz, 1992). Past research indicates that hedonism represents consumers’ dispositional values attributed to emotional values, and the study’s results found that HEV positively impact trust in CRM campaigns (Thomas and Jadeja, 2021). Kang and Park-Poaps (2010) have evaluated multiple varying hedonic motives for shopping in the context of fashion consumption. The individuals high on hedonism indicated lesser scepticism towards CRM initiatives while shopping (Deb et al., 2020) and further exhibited reduced guilt during CRM purchases (Botti and McGill, 2011). Likewise, Strahilevitz and Myers (1998) note that hedonic value-driven shoppers are highly favourable to CRM activities undertaken by firms. Thus, the following hypothesis is postulated:

**H8.** There is a positive relationship between HEV and CRM patronage intention.

2.2.9 Stimulation values and CRM patronage intention. Zasuwa (2015) proposed that stimulation values (STV) are positively associated with CRM. Schwartz (1992) suggested that STV is more related to novelty, excitement and challenges on a mundane level. STV is associated with maintaining a positive and optimal activation level. Although STV were considered opposite to TRV and COV, past research has suggested such values to have a neutral effect on CRM attitude (Zasuwa, 2015). Past research has indicated that the cognitive activity of exploring new information and fashion trends, as well as new products/brands, can generate stimulation. Consumers indulge in gratification shopping to satisfy STV (Kim and Hong, 2011). Hence, it is inferred that CSR initiatives such as CRM
with a social dimension could lead to higher patronage intention for consumers with STV. The following hypothesis is formulated as follows:

\[ H9. \quad \text{There is a positive relationship between STV and CRM patronage intention.} \]

2.2.10 **Self-direction values and CRM patronage intention.** Prior research indicates that consumers who are high on self-direction values (SDV) desire independent thought and action (Schwartz, 1992). Individuals with high SDV attach great importance to new experiences. From the fashion apparel market perspective, personal values are crucial because what consumers wear differs due to an individual’s thinking, values and lifestyle (Damhorst et al., 1999). Value-driven CSR motives are a unique way to integrate consumers, charity and the firm, which renders new innovative experiences to customers and propels their CPIs towards the firm (Suryavanshi et al., 2023). Past research in the Spanish fashion retail consumer context has established that SDV were fundamental to examining behavioural intentions (Sarabia-Sanchez et al., 2012). Similarly, Zasuwa (2015) found that consumers with high SDV have a positive attitude towards CRM campaigns. Hence, this leads to the following hypothesis:

\[ H10. \quad \text{There is a positive relationship between SDV and CRM patronage intention.} \] 

3. **Research methodology**

3.1 **Data collection process**

This study was part of a large project. It was partially based on a longitudinal study undertaken by the GiET Foundation (www.gietfoundation.in) to investigate CRM behavioural intentions and consumer values in the context of fashion leadership. The current investigation involved recruiting a large sample of consumers residing in the megacities of India to represent the whole of India and ensure generalizability. A professional market research firm was hired to carry out this survey nationally. The survey was randomly distributed to consumers residing in the seven megacities of India with a population of more than 10 million (New Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad and Ahmedabad). The responses were gathered from fashion shoppers who walked out of the fashion retail stores by questioning them about fashion apparel shopping from a hypothetical fashion store, presuming it was more or less similar to the fashion store where they regularly shopped. The respondents were briefly provided information about the research study and asked for their willingness to participate in the study. The participants were asked to evaluate the extent to which they view themselves as similar to the person in the item on a seven-point Likert scale (from 1 = not at all like me to 7 = very much like me). A few items used to measure fashion leadership were framed as “I am the first to try new fashion; therefore, many people regard me as being a fashion leader” and “I am aware of fashion trends and want to be one of the first to try them”. Due to the nature of the study, only female fashion leaders were selected to eliminate interference. In other words, we adopted the fashion leadership scale from Gutman and Mills (1982) for this research study. This original scale was employed among female shoppers in Los Angeles (United States), and the scale failed to achieve loading equivalence when administered to a male segment of shoppers (Michon et al., 2015). Therefore, our study recruited only female shoppers and preferred to exclude male shoppers to avoid skewed results on fashion orientation (Beaudoin et al., 2003). Besides, the respondents were female fashion leaders who bought a CRM-linked fashion product at least once in the last 6 months.

Moreover, a fictitious CRM brand name was utilized to control bias in the responses regarding any specific known fashion brand. The survey was conducted between
September 1 and December 31, 2022. The questionnaire was pilot-tested on 30 female fashion leaders to reinforce conceptual equivalence. Three marketing scholars and two practitioners in the fashion domain were appointed to support the investigation to ensure the content validity of the questionnaire. It is approximated that the respondents took approximately 18 min to complete the survey. A total of 2,050 completed questionnaires were utilized for the final analysis. All female respondents were guaranteed that the data would be kept confidential and anonymous.

The socio-economic demographic profile of this study’s respondents found that women with a low sense and high sense of fashion leadership were approximately equal in numbers. Most were under 25 years or between 26 and 35 years old. Additionally, a significant portion of them were either graduates or postgraduates. Approximately equivalent distribution was noticed for different economic classes of income groups in the collected samples.

3.2 Latent constructs operationalization
The scale items were operationalized using past research. The 30 items on 10 core human values were from Longo et al. (2020) and Schwartz’s (2003) portrait values questionnaire. The fashion leadership scale was adopted from Gutman and Mills (1982). CPI scale was adopted and modified to meet the current study requirements from Deb et al. (2020). The primary 10 human values construct were identified as universalism (UNV), benevolence (BEV), tradition (TRV), conformity (COV), security (SEV), achievement (ACV), power (POV), hedonism (HEV), stimulation (STV) and self-direction (SDV) values. Moreover, the outcome construct CPI was assessed using a seven-point Likert scale.

4. Statistical results
4.1 Inner model
In order to gauge the internal consistency and convergent validity of the inner model, all the latent variables were sequentially evaluated through the congeneric latent construct estimator (Marzi et al., 2023; McNeish and Wolf, 2020). Consequently, the standard reliability matrices, such as Cronbach’s alpha and McDonald’s omega, exceeded the pre-established 0.70 criterion (Henseler et al., 2009). Moreover, convergent validity was inspected with average variance extracted (AVE), composite reliability (CR) and factor loadings (FL). Resultantly, AVE > 0.50, CR > 0.70 and FL > 0.70, all latent constructs, had been found to have their loadings fairly above the recommended thresholds (refer to Table I). The robust measure of the discrimination power of the model and the HTMT ratio of correlations shows that every pair is below the threshold of 0.85 (Henseler et al., 2015). These findings support that current research is consistent with the theoretical and methodological assumptions of pre-established research.

4.2 Outer model
Table II depicts the path analysis outcomes that reveal that all pre-identified latent human value constructs have a statistically significant impact on the outcome construct CPI. Specifically, it was found that UNV (β = 0.190), BEV (β = 0.207), TRV (β = 0.183), COV (β = 0.114), SEV (β = 0.194) and SDV (β = 0.156) values possess a statistically significant influence in the hypothesized direction. Whereas it was revealed that ACV (β = −0.082), HEV (β = −0.076), POV (β = −0.077) and STV (β = −0.152) values exhibit a statistically significant negative impact on CPI, that aligns with the predefined theoretical direction as well. These path analysis results provide statistically significant support (p < 0.001) to all
<table>
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<th>Construct/Items</th>
<th>FL</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Alpha</th>
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<th>AVE</th>
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<td>POV</td>
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<td>0.93</td>
<td>0.93</td>
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<td>HEV</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td>1.60</td>
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<td>HEV1 ← HEV</td>
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<tr>
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<td>STV</td>
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<tr>
<td>STV1 ← STV</td>
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<td>STV2 ← STV</td>
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<td>SDV</td>
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<td>1.16</td>
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<td>CPI</td>
<td>4.37</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>0.92</td>
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<td>CPI2 ← CPI</td>
<td>0.809</td>
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<td>CPI3 ← CPI</td>
<td>0.795</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPI4 ← CPI</td>
<td>0.798</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPI5 ← CPI</td>
<td>0.812</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPI6 ← CPI</td>
<td>0.779</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPI7 ← CPI</td>
<td>id*</td>
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<td>id*</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPI9 ← CPI</td>
<td>0.715</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: N = 2,050; Results of Congeneric approach using CLC Estimator Shiny app (https://plsdeams.shinyapps.io/CLC_Estimator/). FL = factor loadings, M = mean; SD = standard deviation; alpha = Cronbach’s alpha; omega = McDonald omega; AVE = average variance extracted; CR = composite reliability; UNV = universalism values; BEV = benevolence values; TRV = tradition values; CLC = congeneric latent construct; COV = conformity values; SEV = security values; ACV = achievement values; POV = power values; HEV = hedonism values; STV = stimulation values; SDV = self-direction values; CPI = CRM patronage intention; id* = item deleted due to lower factor loadings

Source: Table created by authors
10 pre-established hypotheses (H1-H10). The $f$-square is considered to be a robust measure that is capable of measuring the variance accounted by each exogenous variable in the model; as depicted in Table II, almost all the latent construct had effect sizes $\geq 0.02$ ($f^2$), indicating a small effect size (Cohen, 1988). Summarily, the $p$-values and $f^2$ provide ample validation to support the 10 hypotheses of the current study.

The structural model’s standardized root mean square residual is 0.035, below the acceptable 0.08 level. The Normed Fit Index, or Bentler and Bonett Index, at 0.889, was quite close to the recommended level of 0.90 (Chou and Bentler, 1995). Hair et al. (2014) assert inspecting coefficient of determination ($R^2$) and cross-validated redundancy ($Q^2$) to measure the structural model’s prediction efficiency. Resultantly, it was found that the structural model predicted CPI with acceptable and closer levels of $R^2$ (0.754) and $Q^2$ (0.750) as per recommendations of Kock and Lynn (2012). Hence, it is safe to infer that the structural model is robust for predicting the CPI of female fashion leaders.

### 4.3 Multigroup analysis

In line with Henseler et al. (2016) PLS-MGA recommendations, we developed the three-step MICOM procedure to assess configural invariance, compositional invariance and composite mean value and variance equality across groups. The primary aim of the PLS-MGA was to perform a statistical examination of the path coefficients across different groups to evaluate the existence of differences between two cohorts of fashion leadership (Agudo Peregrina et al., 2015). The results (Table III) demonstrate that significant relationships exist between human value traits and CPI, as indicated by the beta coefficients and $t$-values across the two groups. These statistical analyses presented here demonstrate that all aforementioned human values exhibit a statistically significant impact ($p < 0.001$) on CPI among both cohorts of female fashion leadership. Likewise, the important distinctions that surfaced during MGA state that BEV, SDV, UNV, ACV and STV exert a higher impact in the case of high-fashion leadership groups. Meanwhile, the remaining five human values (COV, SEV, TRV, HEV, POV) had a higher impact on CPI among the low-leadership cohort.

### Table II. Path analysis results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Path</th>
<th>Hypothesis [±]</th>
<th>$\beta$</th>
<th>$t$-statistics</th>
<th>$p$-values</th>
<th>$f^2$</th>
<th>LB (2.5%)</th>
<th>UB (97.5%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNV $\rightarrow$ CPI</td>
<td>H1[+]</td>
<td>0.190</td>
<td>12.740***</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.123</td>
<td>0.161</td>
<td>0.219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEV $\rightarrow$ CPI</td>
<td>H2[+]</td>
<td>0.207</td>
<td>11.079***</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.099</td>
<td>0.169</td>
<td>0.243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRV $\rightarrow$ CPI</td>
<td>H3[+]</td>
<td>0.183</td>
<td>12.450***</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.107</td>
<td>0.155</td>
<td>0.212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COV $\rightarrow$ CPI</td>
<td>H4[+]</td>
<td>0.114</td>
<td>8.234***</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.049</td>
<td>0.086</td>
<td>0.140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEV $\rightarrow$ CPI</td>
<td>H5[+]</td>
<td>0.194</td>
<td>11.124***</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.081</td>
<td>0.160</td>
<td>0.229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACV $\rightarrow$ CPI</td>
<td>H6[+]</td>
<td>-0.082</td>
<td>6.706***</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.017</td>
<td>-0.106</td>
<td>-0.057</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POV $\rightarrow$ CPI</td>
<td>H7[+]</td>
<td>-0.077</td>
<td>6.002***</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.022</td>
<td>-0.103</td>
<td>-0.052</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEV $\rightarrow$ CPI</td>
<td>H8[+]</td>
<td>-0.076</td>
<td>6.244***</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.030</td>
<td>-0.100</td>
<td>-0.052</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STV $\rightarrow$ CPI</td>
<td>H9[+]</td>
<td>-0.152</td>
<td>10.951***</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.050</td>
<td>-0.179</td>
<td>-0.124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDV $\rightarrow$ CPI</td>
<td>H10[+]</td>
<td>0.156</td>
<td>8.521***</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.057</td>
<td>0.120</td>
<td>0.193</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:** $N = 2,050$. Results of bootstrapping resample (5,000); 95% confidence intervals = (LB = lower bound (2.5%), UB = upper bound (97.5%)) *** $p < 0.001$; dependent variables include CRM patronage intention (CPI); universalism values (UNV); benevolence values (BEV); tradition values (TRV); conformity values (COV); security values (SEV); achievement values (ACV); power values (POV); hedonism values (HEV); stimulation values (STV) and self-direction values (SDV)

**Source:** Table created by authors

10 pre-established hypotheses (H1-H10). The $f$-square is considered to be a robust measure that is capable of measuring the variance accounted by each exogenous variable in the model; as depicted in Table II, almost all the latent construct had effect sizes $\geq 0.02$ ($f^2$), indicating a small effect size (Cohen, 1988). Summarily, the $p$-values and $f^2$ provide ample validation to support the 10 hypotheses of the current study.

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### 4.3 Multigroup analysis

In line with Henseler et al. (2016) PLS-MGA recommendations, we developed the three-step MICOM procedure to assess configural invariance, compositional invariance and composite mean value and variance equality across groups. The primary aim of the PLS-MGA was to perform a statistical examination of the path coefficients across different groups to evaluate the existence of differences between two cohorts of fashion leadership (Agudo Peregrina et al., 2015). The results (Table III) demonstrate that significant relationships exist between human value traits and CPI, as indicated by the beta coefficients and $t$-values across the two groups. These statistical analyses presented here demonstrate that all aforementioned human values exhibit a statistically significant impact ($p < 0.001$) on CPI among both cohorts of female fashion leadership. Likewise, the important distinctions that surfaced during MGA state that BEV, SDV, UNV, ACV and STV exert a higher impact in the case of high-fashion leadership groups. Meanwhile, the remaining five human values (COV, SEV, TRV, HEV, POV) had a higher impact on CPI among the low-leadership cohort.
4.4 Artificial neural network analysis
As PLS-MGA identified the significance of all human values while predicting CPI in both groups, a novel two-model ANN design was employed, wherein two separate ANN (L and H) models were developed for women with low-fashion leadership (L) and high-fashion leadership (H) sense. The prediction accuracy of each ten-fold neural network was assessed using the lower levels of root mean square error (RMSE) for both the training and testing data sets. According to Sim et al. (2014), the RMSE presented below the stated threshold and suggested high prediction accuracy for both groups. Furthermore, the NI for both cohorts of female fashion leadership was evaluated individually. The relative importance quotient (rank) was generated by dividing the importance of each predictor by the maximum importance value in the model. The data reveal a clear distinction among ranks for high and low levels of female fashion leadership groups that utilize human value to predict CPI (Table IV). Specifically, BEV, UNV, SDV and TRV were the initial top-ranked predictors of CPI in a cohort of high-fashion leadership. Likewise, TRV, SEV, COV and BEV were the four highly ranked human values for predicting CPI among low-fashion leadership groups.

5. Discussion
The first phase of SEM analysis indicated that all 10 human values significantly influenced the CPIs of female fashion leaders in the hypothesized direction. This led to the acceptance of H1-H10. The results obtained in this study align with the recent findings of Suryavanshi et al. (2023), who observed that a person’s ethical judgements and decision-making skills are an interactive composite of her values in a business environment. The finding of this study is partially in line with the findings of Zasuwa (2015), who adopted Schwartz’s theory to examine human values from the perspective of CRM attitude. Therefore, such a comprehensive understanding of human values could be utilized by future researchers who could extend this research by evaluating the mediating effects of various other factors, such as emotions, scepticism or guilt on fashion purchases by fashion leaders, based on the adequate support gathered from CRM and fashion literature.
In order to compare and contrast the effects of these human values while predicting the CPI of women with different levels of fashion leadership, MGA was employed. MGA is a widely adopted method that is broadly employed for group comparisons. MGA was applied to create two groups in fashion leadership to further test for meaningful differences. Past literature in the fashion marketing domain has validated the creation of multi-groups related to fashion leadership for understanding fashion consumption (Goldsmith et al., 1993; Lang and Armstrong, 2018). The MGA revealed that irrespective of leadership cohorts, all human values were found to have significant loadings on CPI. However, this study revealed a few important distinctions. Firstly, UNV, BEV, SDV, ACV, and STV had a more substantial impact on CPI for the high-fashion leadership cohort than the low-fashion leadership cohort. Secondly, in the case of the low-fashion leadership cohort, it was revealed that TRV, conformity, SEV, POV, and HEV have a higher impact on CPI. Finally, the overall female fashion leaders' cohort found that the UNV exerts the most significant positive impact on CPI, followed by TRV, SEV, BEV, SDV and COV. Past research has indicated that UNV orientation drives consumers to make choices and select products that conserve the environment and certainly take into account the welfare of others (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2004).

Furthermore, it was also revealed that STV imparts the most significant negative loadings on CPI, followed by ACV, HEV and POV. This is, to a certain extent, contrary to past findings, which established that consumers indulge in gratification shopping of fashion brands to satisfy STV (Kim and Hong, 2011). Further, the overall sample confirms the effect of six human values (BEV, UNV, SDV, TRV, COV, SEV) to be positive and significant. In contrast, the remaining four human values (STV, ACV, POV, HEV) were negative and significant while predicting female fashion leaders’ CPIs. These findings partially corroborate the study of Zasuwa (2015), who employed Schwartz’s theory and found that STV, ACV, POV and HEV were negatively associated with beliefs about CRM. Due to varied levels of female fashion leadership, one possible reason for this outcome might be due to fashion shopping largely being driven by leisure, recreation, pleasure, enjoyment, curiosity and other values related to entertainment aspects of shopping (Bertrandias and Goldsmith, 2006; Kang and Park-Poaps, 2010; Sarabia-Sanchez et al., 2012).
In the final analysis stage, two separate tenfold cross-validated ANNs were independently executed for two female fashion leadership groups: low-fashion leadership (L) and high-fashion leadership (H). Past literature suggests that consumers' possessing high-fashion leadership seem to have different sets of values/psychological attributes compared to typical mass-market consumers and are more inclined towards indulging in social activities (Kang and Park-Poaps, 2010). Likewise, Gutman and Mills (1982) observed that consumers with high-fashion leadership were more involved in fashion shopping and were more sympathetic when compared with consumers with low-fashion leadership. ANN (H) results found that BEV, UNV, and SDV were the top three predictors of CPI for the high-fashion leadership cohort. In contrast, ANN (L) results found that TRV, followed by SEV and COV, were the top-ranked predictors of CPI for women with low-fashion leadership.

Additionally, it was found that ANN ranked HEV, ACV, POV and STV in the substantially lower ranks among both cohorts of female fashion leaders. Furthermore, these ranks partly align with the findings of Schwartz (2012), who found while demonstrating value priorities that power and stimulation were the lowest in the ranks when individuals were asked to attribute importance to the 10 values. Along similar lines, past research carried out in the context of fashion products has shown that individuals with hedonic values were least likely to engage in prosocial behaviour (Empacher et al., 2002).

However, the distinctive results achieved by each ANN are notably interesting to explore further. The results of ANN (H) established for the high-fashion leaders’ cohort revealed that BEV reflected by a female fashion leader was ranked as the strongest predictor of CPI, followed by UNV (second rank) and SDV (third rank). This is also supported by recent research, which suggests that human values include a desire to meet social expectations and improve others’ welfare, directly related to transcendental values of benevolence and universalism (Labroo et al., 2023). To some degree, the findings of this study are consistent with the findings of Sarabia-Sanchez et al. (2012), who found the strong influence of SDV on behavioural intentions for Spanish fashion retail consumers. Furthermore, it supports the findings of Schwartz (2012), who, based on Schwartz’s theory, found while validating value priorities that BEV, UNV and SDV were the three most important values when individuals were asked to attribute importance to the 10 values. Likewise, the results of ANN (L) established that for the low-fashion leadership female cohort, TRV (first rank) possessed by a female fashion leader was ranked the strongest predictor of CPI, followed by SEV (second rank) and COV (third rank). This might have happened because TRV necessitate receptiveness to immutable past expectations (Schwartz, 2012). This is in line with the recent finding by Chakraborty and Sadachar (2023), who found the crucial role of TRV in predicting consumer behaviour towards fashion apparel. Additionally, the findings are consistent with the findings of Zasuwa (2015), who established in the context of CRM that SEV are less important than TRV. Besides, the finding is consistent with the finding of Ahmed et al. (2018), who revealed the substantial role of COV in creating an emotional connection in the fashion apparel industry.

5.1 Theoretical and managerial implications
The findings of this large-scale sample study offered scholarly knowledge and provided novel theoretical contributions to academicians. The findings of this study, anchored on Schwartz’s theory, have guided us to determine the association between the various elements of the research model. This study has aptly addressed the theoretical research gap by instigating a first-of-its-kind investigation to assimilate all the constructs to provide empirical evidence on female fashion leadership, Schwartz value types and CRM patronage towards fashion retailers. From a theoretical lens, this research has substantially
contributed to CRM and fashion marketing literature from an emerging market perspective. The application of the tri-stage method (PLS-MGA-ANN) is the relatively novel approach employed, which has enriched the extant literature on CRM and fashion marketing. Thus, by employing a predictive and analytic method, this research offers a unique methodological paradigm to academicians and practitioners for future research.

Additionally, unlike existing studies that utilized the Schwartz theory in the CRM context (Bigné-Alcañiz et al., 2009; Zasuwa, 2015), this research has given a new dimension of knowledge by providing the predictors of CPI towards fashion retailers. The results of this study offer novel theoretical contributions to academic researchers/scholars by revealing the pivotal role of the Schwartz theory in understanding CPIs and thus proffer insights on the predictors in the order of importance for both groups (high and low female fashion leadership). To this date, such empirical evidence in the prevailing CRM or fashion literature rarely exists. Although past research in the CRM domain has identified the critical role of human values in comprehending behavioural intentions (Thomas et al., 2022b; Zasuwa, 2015), this study fills the theoretical research gap by predicting value-profiling in the fashion leadership context, especially for developing countries such as India. The latest research on CRM-linked online retailers revealed that value-driven CSR motive was the most prominent motive that impacts patronage intentions, but this research did not entirely predict which specific values are the most crucial for consumers (Suryavanshi et al., 2023).

Moreover, in contrast to the prevailing studies that have examined the role of personal values in the context of CRM-linked consumption (Zasuwa, 2015; Diddi and Niehm, 2016; Thomas et al., 2022b; Suryavanshi et al., 2023), the findings of this study have established the relative NI of human value types held by female fashion leaders. There needs to be more empirical evidence related to CRM and fashion marketing literature in the public domain. Thus, this study proffers insights regarding the crucial role of human values in predicting CPI in the order of importance for two distinct groups of female fashion leaders, thereby advancing our knowledge of fashion leadership. Therefore, the robust findings of this study have facilitated the establishment of an innovative model based on the principles of Schwartz’s theory to dig deeper into the determinants of CPI, thereby augmenting the existing fashion marketing and CRM literature.

Female fashion leaders are the advocates of fashion trends. Fashion leadership denotes a strong interest in new trends in fashion and exhibits higher consumption of stylish fashion goods (Lang and Armstrong, 2018). The present study offers robust findings by recruiting a large sample from major Indian cities that represent India. This contributes to a better understanding of the role of fashion leadership in potential CRM consumption from an emerging market perspective. Business decision-makers who wish to partner with NPOs to execute successful CRM ad campaigns can benefit from human value profiling. Moreover, the results of this study have indicated that consumers (females) with high levels of fashion leadership and specific value types (benevolence, universalism and self-direction) are more likely to patronize CRM-linked fashion retailers. The NPO executives and CRM marketers could target female fashion leaders and consider value profiling while devising campaigns to elicit favourable CRM responses. Besides, it was found that value types such as stimulation, achievement, power and hedonism were less likely to have a greater influence on CPI and, hence, should not typically be prioritized while developing CRM promotional programs. Fashion retailers could sketch CRM ad campaigns which should de-emphasize such value types. Fashion marketers may target segments based on consumers’ value profiles of fashion leaders and develop effective advertisement strategies accordingly.
Practitioners could select suitable media to frame messages by assessing customer profiles based on value types. Therefore, the results offer a valuable rationale to practitioners and marketers for employing value-profiling and predicting patronage intentions of female fashion leaders.

6. Limitations and future research
A few potential limitations of this present study are discussed here. Firstly, although this study has the advantage of being a large-scale sample study, it could have contributed more if it was based on actual customer purchases in an experimental and lab setting. Despite this potential limitation, our investigation has its strengths due to its data robustness, which has captured responses that represent populations across India. A further potential limitation of this study is the inclusion of only female fashion leaders/consumers. Future studies could use data representing male consumers in different cultural contexts and check the interplay of values and CRM behavioural intentions in fashion leadership. Prior research has observed variations in CRM response owing to the influence of demographic factors (Thomas and Jadeja, 2021), but the results exhibit inconsistency. Hence, future research should examine whether socio-demographic differences (age, income, education and occupation) influenced CPI. Methodologically, this study employed deep neural network architecture based on the innovative tri-stage PLS-SEM, ANN and MGA to predict and rank the factors influencing CPI. Future studies might employ other competent techniques, such as necessary condition analysis, which would help the researchers to discover the necessity conditions of the proposed research model. This research can also be extended by investigating other values, such as religious, materialistic, or spiritual, in the CRM patronage context (Thomas et al., 2022b; Suryavanshi et al., 2023). We recommend that researchers incorporate other constructs to predict CPI, thereby intensifying the model's predictive power.

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References


Further reading


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