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**Communicating Brands' Purpose-Driven
Orientation:
Does it Make a Difference on Cause-related
Advertisements?**

A study on well-established fast-fashion brands

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Title: Communicating Brands' Purpose-Driven Orientation. Does it Make a Difference on Cause-related Advertisements? A study on well-established fast-fashion brands.

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Abstract

Motivated by the necessity of change in a world with alarming environmental and social issues, consumers' purchase behaviour and brands' business models have been showing an incredible transformation. This reality transcends to the fast-fashion industry, where brands progressively begin to communicate their CSR practices (cause-related marketing) and their purpose (purpose-driven orientation).

In line, the present dissertation intends to examine how well-established fast-fashion brands can communicate more efficiently a cause-related advertisement by integrating purpose-driven statements. Based on an extensive analysis of the existing literature regarding the concepts in cause, an experimental study design was performed to examine the effect of adding a purpose-driven statement to a cause-related advertisement on consumers' purchase behaviours and brand equity perceptions, as well as to which type of responsible practice are consumers more sensitive.

Results alert to the importance of introducing a purpose-driven orientation effectively. The success of a purpose-driven statement communication requires the integration of important elements and a clear internal congruency. If consumers cannot relate the statement with the brand's practice conduct it will lead to a perverse result and consumers' purchase intention will decrease. Moreover, this thesis reinforces the relevance of cause-fit in a cause-related advertisement.

Resumo

Motivados pela necessidade de mudança, num mundo que atualmente apresenta alarmantes problemas ambientais e sociais, o comportamento dos consumidores e os modelos de negócio das marcas têm vindo a apresentar uma incrível transformação. Esta realidade transcende para a indústria de *fast-fashion*. As marcas começam a comunicar as suas práticas de responsabilidade social – marketing relacionado com causas (MRC) e os seus propósitos – *purpose-driven orientation*.

Esta dissertação pretende estudar como é que marcas bem estabelecidas da indústria de *fast-fashion* podem comunicar eficientemente uma publicidade relacionada com causas, integrando nas mesmas afirmações relativas ao seu propósito. Com base numa análise extensa da literatura existente sobre os conceitos em causa um estudo experimental foi realizado de forma a tecer conclusões em relação ao efeito que adicionar uma afirmação relativa ao propósito da marca, numa publicidade que comunique uma prática de responsabilidade social ou ambiental, tem no comportamento de compra do consumidor e na sua perceção de valor da marca, e a que tipo de prática são os consumidores mais sensíveis.

Os resultados mostram que é importante introduzir o conceito de *purpose-driven orientation* eficazmente. O sucesso da comunicação do propósito da marca requer a integração de elementos fundamentais e congruência interna. Se os consumidores não conseguirem relacionar a afirmação com a conduta praticada pela marca irá originar um resultado perverso e a intenção de compra dos consumidores irá diminuir. Adicionalmente, esta tese reforça a importância da existência de *cause-fit* aquando a prática de MRC.

Key Words: Purpose-driven orientation; Cause-related Marketing; Fast-fashion; Brand Equity; Purchase intention; Willingness to pay.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Problem Definition and Relevance

In a world that is getting warmer, more crowded, with less resources, more demanding and faster, phenomena such as global warming, environmental pollution, and increasing decline of flora and fauna are critical threats (Chen and Chai, 2010). This unfortunate reality implies an urgency to rethink and reconfigure, not only peoples' lifestyles and consumption behaviours, but also companies' business models (Kotler, 2011).

This change, however, has been gradually happening. From educating children to the importance of recycling or incentivizing students to do voluntary work, to the trendy use of plastic-free water bottles and eradication of single-use plastic bags in supermarkets, are examples of purpose-driven initiatives.

The combination of these events reflects the increasing business and societal awareness of the social and environmental thematic, which contributes to the constant growth of sustainable consumption behaviours (Joshi and Rahman, 2015). It is important to stress that consumers are not the only ones to express concerns but also expect companies to have a purpose-driven orientation (Accenture, 2018). As suggested by Kotler, (2011), companies began to integrate sustainable businesses practices in their strategies pressured by consumers' green behaviours. As a reflection, responsible business models have been in constant evolution. Chronologically, companies moved from the shareholder theory (Friedman, 1962), to the stakeholder approach (Freeman, 1994), which was the starting point for the integration of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) (Marrewijk, 2002). Research in this domain evolved to a new concept named Purpose Driven Orientation (Dewttinck and Defever, 2020). In fact, the preference for companies that care and adopt this new business model that integrate a purpose driven orientation is a leading trend among stakeholders directly and indirectly related to the company (Dewttinck and Defever, 2020). An example of brands that realise the importance of purpose and adopted it into their business models are NASA, Ikea, and Facebook. These brands state the reason of being a company as "To reach for new heights and reveal the unknown for the benefit of humankind", "To create a better everyday life for the many people", and "To share and make the world more open and connected", respectively.

Over the last years, marketing strategies have evolved in parallel with the previously mentioned business models. More and more brands tend to communicate their sustainable development

responsible practices, known as *cause-related marketing* (Sheikh and Beise-Zee, 2007). For instance, Nike's recent campaign "You can't stop us", The Guardian's campaign known as "The polluters", or Always with "Like a girl" are examples of brands that make a stand and integrated CSR into their communication strategies. If a year ago, mainly due to climate change topics being trendy, and viewed as urgent with figures like Greta Thunberg spearheading the movement, it would be likely to affirm that pro-environmental practices are more powerful, when communicated, than pro-socially responsible practices. Nowadays, with the Covid-19 pandemic the importance of one type of CSR practice versus another, becomes less clear.

Additionally, research has shown the relevance of integrating purpose into brands' marketing strategies. A study conducted by Edelman (2018), verified that about 60% of consumers want brands to make it easier for them to see their values and positions on important issues. In the same year, Accenture performed a research which concluded that two thirds of consumers consider brands that communicate their purpose more attractive (Barton *et al*, 2018). This expresses the importance of advertising a brand's purpose. But is this enough?

For the fast fashion industry this reality is no exception. Sustainability became the biggest issue in the fashion context (McNeill and Snowdon, 2019). Triggered by the necessity to transmit a sense of consciousness, fast-fashion brands show an increasing tendency to promote their ethical and sustainable commitment, in such a way that the consumers can relate with what they stand for (Barton *et al*, 2018). In line with this trend, some well-established fast-fashion brands started to integrate a purpose driven approach into their business models, such as Nike and Patagonia, among others (Dewttinck and Defever, 2020).

Despite this sustainable shift in the increasing tendency from consumers' behaviours and some companies' practices, the fast-fashion industry expresses some contradiction (Pookulangara and Shephard, 2013). While consumers claim to be more concerned about the environment, they continue to search and pay for the so attractive, fast, and affordable fast fashion (Johansson, 2010). Moreover, with consumers' increased knowledge, the irresponsible CSR practices of brands led to fast, strong, and difficult to reverse opinions from consumers. In fast fashion this is a frequent reality, Gap and H&M suffered from this experience when they saw their sales decrease due to their association with child labour at manufacturing firms.

Consequently, some questions arose, which this research will try to provide answers: Is purpose, already, strong enough to make a difference when added in a cause-related advertisement?

Does the type of cause communicated affect this relationship? To which type of responsible practices statements do consumers' value more, environmental, or social?

1.2. Research objective

Limited advertising efforts in the field of purpose-driven orientation have been used as a tool to promote a change in buying behaviour and increase brand equity. Motivated by this gap, the focus of the current research is to examine the communication impact of adding a purpose-driven statement into a cause-related advertisement on consumers' evaluations of well-established brands in fast-fashion industry. Additionally, two types of responsible practices will be taken in consideration - of environmental versus social.

Therefore, the research objective is to analyse the impact of adding purpose into a cause-related marketing advertisement on consumers' brand equity perceptions, purchase intention and willingness to pay and assess the moderating role of environmental versus social practices on the aforementioned relationship. The research questions to be investigated are as follows:

R.Q.1: Does adding a purpose-driven statement to a cause-related advertisement for a well-established fast-fashion brand impact consumers' purchasing behaviours and brand equity?

R.Q.2: Does the type of responsible practice communicated in a cause-related advertisement from a well-established fast-fashion brand influence consumers' purchasing behaviours and brand equity?

R.Q.3: What is the moderating role of (socially versus environmentally) responsible practices on the relationship between a cause-related advertisement type from a well-established fast-fashion and consumers' purchasing behaviours and brand equity?

2. Literature Review

2.1. CSR and Purpose- Driven Orientation

Triggered by the globalization and the expansion of capitalism, corporations began to worry about competitiveness, reputation, global visibility and an expanded network of stakeholders (Cruz, Almeida and Nayal, 2020). This tendency gave origin to different theories regarding corporate responsibility such as the Stakeholder theory. This theory states that businesses should never diminish society's well-being, and have the commitment of engaging the well-being of others, especially the company's stakeholders (Freeman, 1994). An opportunity to combine central concepts of business with the ones from the ethical field.

It was only in the decade of 2000, that CSR began to be on the spotlight of corporations' strategy approach, and consequently incorporated into their practices. There are different notions for the concept of CSR. According to European Commission (2001) CSR integrates social and environmental concerns into companies' business models and their relationship with stakeholders. For (Du, Bhattacharya and Sen, 2010), CSR is the use of business practices, policies, and resources in order to maximize long-term economic, social and environmental well-being.

As Matten and Moon (2008) suggested, the existence of multiple CSR definitions can be explained by: (a) CSR is a notion that is used for a variety of different concepts, (b) as CSR is correlated with values, it will naturally change parallelly with them.

For instance, different terminologies have been given to CSR such as corporate citizenship, business ethics, community involvement, sustainability, or corporate social performance – CSP (Carroll, 1991; Auld *et al*, 2008; Jones and Wicks, 1999; Abdeen *et al* , 2016).

Different scholars also provided different concepts with respect to CSR such as Carroll's pyramid which is based on the evolution of companies' economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic performance (Carroll, 1991). An alternate approach to CSR is one in line with the UN's sustainable development definition that suggests that companies must adopt practices that satisfy the current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to fulfil their wants (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987). In particular, sustainability depends on how well companies make their decisions, considering the economic, environmental, and social dimension also known as Triple Bottom Line (Alvarado-Herrera *et al.*, 2017; Bansal, 2014 Chow & Chen, 2012). In line, other scholars share this perspective,

Elkington (1998) defines a business as sustainable when its actions engage in to the "triple bottom line" of economic prosperity, environmental quality and social justice. In the author's study, research reinforces that this practice is not easy, however is urgent to adopt.

The economic dimension refers to the long-term profitability of the firm (Alvarado-Herrera *et al.*, 2017) and the impact of the organization's business practices on the economic system (Elkington, 1998), while the social dimension is linked with the relationship between the company and the socio-cultural environment, meaning its participation in community issues and social causes (Choi and Ng, 2011). The environment dimension is dedicated to the involvement of the firm in ecological behaviours, in particular how to use natural and limited resources efficiently, reduce waste, minimize eco-logical impact in the production process and promote eco-friendly products (Choi and Ng, 2011).

Although the three dimensions of TBL have been defined and regarded as a crucial combination to guarantee the well-being of future generations (Alhaddi, 2015), the economic responsibility is nonetheless an essential condition to guarantee the sustainable growth of businesses and, therefore, omnipresent (White *et al.*, 2019). The remaining social and environmental dimensions are less omnipresent and are chosen by companies as a mean to communicate their sustainable commitment. The impact of these two dimensions – double bottom line – is therefore worth analysing further to understand the extent to which they impact consumers' attitudes and behaviours, differently.

2.1.1. Double bottom line

Hult (2011) suggests the existence of an opportunity in marketing communication to move from a consumer relationship focused approach, to a holistic view involving marketplace concerns, such as environment and social dimensions, and attending different stakeholders' needs.

The environmental topic is significantly present in the twenty-first century, from world climate summits and ambitious environmental commitments, such as the COP24 in Katowice in 2018, the Rio20+ UN Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012, and the COP21 & the Paris Agreement for Sustainable Development, to the rise of green movements and phenomena such as the young environmental activist Greta Thunberg (Jung, Petkanic and Nan, 2020). Green topics - climate change, decline of flora and fauna and limited resources - are under the spotlight of most developed societies and inevitably in consumers' behaviours and companies' businesses models.

With the COVID 19 pandemic, the social thematic gained a new relevance. The stress created by the virus brought to light social necessities in different areas of society, most noticeably in healthcare and social care where hospitals were lacking not only technical but also human resources and the people who were forced to close down their businesses found themselves without a structured support (Bartik *et al.*, 2020). Companies observed and adapted to the new social context by increasing their pro-social practices. For example, EDP, together with CTG, with the goal to help the fight against the coronavirus pandemic, offered 50 ventilators, 200 monitors and medical equipment to Portuguese local hospitals for a total worth of around €4M. With that same objective, Zara's owner Inditex converted part of its textile manufacturing capacity to produce hospital scrubs for Spain medical institutions (Cruz *et al.* , 2020). The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on corporate social responsibility, marketing philosophy and consumer ethics has been visible (He and Harris, 2020).

Thus, the systematic presence on the current society of the previous dimensions led to the decision to introduce the double bottom line components in this research, namely the environmental and social dimensions.

2.1.2. Purpose-driven Business

Alongside with the evolution of the CSR approach, research has been evolving into new concepts. An example is Porter and Kramer (2011) study, with the notion of *Share Value*, which defends that as companies integrate strategies with the focus of creating shared value, they are benefiting society while improving the firms' competitiveness. In this sense, companies focus on identifying and increasing the connections between societal and economic progress (Porter and Kramer, 2011). In some researches, this reflects how traditional CSR is an outdated and limited concept, suggesting that Creating Shared Value should replace the CSR concept (Moreira da Cruz, Pires de Almeida and Blom Nayal, 2020).

In line, organizations are starting to include in their agendas the need to be distinctive and make a relevant difference in society by contributing to stakeholders' needs and, consequently, do more than their basic obligations. This necessity led to the definition of a new business practice known as purpose-driven business orientation.

The definition of the word "purpose" is according to the Cambridge Business English Dictionary "why you do something or why something exists". Similarly, purpose-driven

orientation is about why companies do what they do, their very reason for existence that goes beyond profit (Dewttinck and Defever, 2020).

Purpose-driven business orientation recognizes an inherent relationship between businesses and society. Purpose is often associated with the mission and vision of an organization. However, this concept goes beyond these dimensions, which reveals an overarching dedication to society that transcends to the goal of making a difference. It aims at improving society's daily live and reducing the negative impact in the world. It can be considered as the ideology of a brand.

This is a powerful approach and - as Dewttinck and Defever (2020) suggests - a strong, stimulating, and shared purpose enables brands to go beyond their self-imposed limitations. Studies have shown the relevance of integrating purpose-driven orientation in an organization's business model. A EY (2017) survey concluded that companies that integrate purpose into their operation reports have an increase in customer loyalty of 52%, and in brand value and reputation of 51%. Additionally, Edelman's (2018) research shows that purpose rises consumers' purchase intention, up to almost 2/3 of consumers buy on belief. For instance, the worldwide company Unilever verified that its purpose-driven brands double their economic growth, comparing with the ones that do not have a purpose-driven linked. Moreover, the same report showed that 60% of consumers have preference for brands that share their values and positions. Consequently, well-established brands have been increasingly adopting this utmost relevant business model approach. For instance, IKEA's purpose is "To create a better everyday life for the many people".

It is important to refer that having a purpose-driven orientation company is more than developing a powerful purpose statement, it means that companies must work to align their internal resources, operation processes and ideals with their purpose. Therefore, McKinsey&Company (2020) worked into a framework of five major elements that are critical to a value-creator purpose: (i) Redefine portfolio strategy and products; (ii) Manage people talent and culture; (iii) Adapt processes and systems to meet purpose; (iv) The target performance metrics and incentives used to make organization's purpose tangible; (v) Align external positions and communications to be consistent with the purpose defined.

Concluding, a purpose should be the result of a systematic, rational, and emotional statement that guides every decision making and requires internal alignment to be considered a competitive advantage.

2.1.3. Fast-Fashion Industry

Sull and Turconi (2008) define fast fashion industry as a democratization of couture, that reaches masses through trendy and affordable items, as quickly as possible. This breath-taking speed and outstanding reach are feasible due to the existence of intense competition and lack of supply chain transparency, which enables this industry to down both costs and prices.

As a consequence of its traditional business model, this industry has a significant social and environmental impact worldwide. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has calculated that fast-fashion industry produces 10% of global carbon dioxide emissions every year, while it is estimated to use around 1.5 trillion litres of water annually (The Guardian, 2020). Meanwhile concerns have been rising regarding pollution, from chemical waste to microplastics (The Guardian, 2020). Moreover, garment production is associated to inadequate work conditions and child labour. An example is the collapse of the Rana Plaza in 2013, killing 1134 garment workers in Dhaka, Bangladesh, which has revealed the unacceptable working conditions of the whole fashion industry to the world.

Fast-fashion industry realized the urgency for a more sustainable approach (McNeill and Snowdon, 2019) and better ethical concerns (Aspers and Skov, 2006) in its business model. The industry is changing. Parallely, there is a growing movement of “ethical consumerism”, which is the consumer’s demand for goods with production processes that do not harm the environment, or the human resources involved (Shaw *et al.*, 2005). This rise of consciousness from companies and consumers led to the origin of new fashion terms such as *ethical-fashion*, *sustainable fashion*, or even *slow-fashion* (McNeill et al, 2019), which are more and more used in fast-fashion industry practices.

Triggered by the necessity to transmit its consciousness, fast-fashion brands show an increased tendency to promote their ethical and sustainable commitment, as consumers show an increased preference to buy from companies that care (Kotler, 2011). In 2019, H&M Global Sustainable Manager, Pascal Brun stated the following “We want to use our size to lead the change towards circular and renewable fashion.” In the same year, a member from Zara Design Team, Marta Ortega claimed that “[We] are highly focused on making clothes in a responsible, sustainable way, that limits the impact on the environment and [which] challenges ourselves to continually work as hard as we can to improve how we manufacture”. In this sense fast-fashion brands have been materializing these statements by introducing new practices. For instances, sustainable collections - such as “Join Life” by Zara, “Sustainable Choice” by Mango, or even H&M’s

“Conscious Exclusive” and Nike’s “Move to Zero”. Or circular consumption initiatives, that are characterized by closed loops, where practices such as reuse and recycle are imperatives (Vehmas *et al.*, 2018), it gives consumers the possibility to reduce the negative impact of the textiles’ life cycle by repairing or reusing garments and recycling material (Dahlbo *et al.*, 2017). Brands such as H&M and Nike adopt this initiative into their business models. For instance, H&M aspires to create a net positive impact on the climate by 2040 through extensive and continued in-store and online communication initiatives such as the “Take Care” program that aims to inspire, guide, and help consumers to prolong the life of their clothes and by offering a money-off voucher for each bag of clothes dropped-off. Nike has the “Reuse-A-Shoe” campaign whose top three priorities are promoting the Circular Systems Design - through initiatives such as placing a sustainability performance score on almost 70% of all products - producing with 100% of renewable electricity and using recycle materials - such the “Flyknit” which enabled Nike to avoid over 10 million pounds of waste since its inception (Nike, 2019a).

Moreover Nike, for instance, already adopted a purpose-driven orientation approach having as its purpose “To bring inspiration and innovation to every athlete in the world”.

2.2. Cause-related and purpose-driven marketing

Marketing mix is widely accepted among marketers, as a result of profound exposure to this concept over the years. Most introductory marketing manuals embrace it as “the heart of their structure” (Cowell, 1984), and define it as the combination of four controllable parameters that are able to influence the consumer’s buying processes and decisions (Kotler, 2003). These are called the 4P’s: Product, Price, Place and Promotion. Within marketing mix, advertising is a relevant promotion technique (Kayode, 2014).

As (Kotler, 2003) stated, advertisement generates primarily awareness and knowledge, often has the capability to create preferences and ultimately, especially when combined with promotion, it triggers purchase. Nowadays, consumers are exposed to numerous advertisements, this increases the necessity to do it efficiently and stand out from the many.

Different brands adopt different marketing strategies. The increase of social and environmental business responsibilities of brands led to the emerging of a new marketing concept known as *green marketing* (Akehurst, Afonso and Gonçalves, 2012), *environmental marketing*, or *cause-related marketing* (Sheikh and Beise-Zee, 2007).

2.2.1. Cause related marketing

Cause-related marketing is related with CSR, in fact, some suggest that one of the main motivations for companies to embrace CSR practices is marketing (Lantos, 2001), since communicating responsible practices can lead to benefits such as customer loyalty, brand reputation and better market value (Moir, 2001). Thus, cause-related marketing emerges as a form of supporting a cause, and consequently as a marketing instrument (Sheikh and Beise-Zee, 2007).

Bert Ven de van (2008) referred that when a company decides to use marketing instruments, as advertising, to report its CSR actions it needs to do it carefully, since there is the risk to arouse public scepticism. With the objective to neutralize negative reactions to CSR marketing communications, empirical research indicates five factors that must occur: (i) the company must have a strong reputation; (ii) a high company to issue/cause fit; (iii) a perceived relation with the good cause of the CSR initiative; (iv) Consumers need to have a strong relation with the good cause; (v) Proactive CSR initiatives generate better attitudes than reactive initiatives. This expresses the importance to be coherent between what they stand for and what they practice internally. When the previous aspects are verified, research show that cause-related marketing is a valuable tool in marketing (Nan and Heo, 2007). The inclusion of a cause claim in a message significantly increases unaided recall of an advertisement (Cunningham and Cusshing, 1993) and on purchase intention (Hamiln and Wilson, 2004).

In fact, there is a vast literature regarding the previous mentioned point (ii), that suggest that cause-related marketing and firm-cause fit are positively correlated to the efficiency of the cause-related advertisement (Kuo & Rice, 2015). Additionally, some researchers also refer that consumers' identification with the cause is a good criteria to achieve a campaign success (Gupta and Pirsch, 2008).

Thus, when companies' advertisement campaigns communicate pro-environmental, or pro-social initiatives they are practicing cause-related marketing. This approach has been recurrent adopted by brands, for instances Nike's feminist campaign "One Day We Won't Need This Day" or H&M pro environmental advertisement "Bring it on". However, which approach works better, to which CSR thematic are consumers more sensitive to, environmental or socially responsible practices?

2.2.2. Purpose-driven marketing

When considering integrating purpose-driven business orientation statements within marketing communication it is important to acknowledge their relevance. A study performed by Accenture (2020), revealed that two thirds of consumers find brands that actively communicate their purpose more attractive (Barton *et al*, 2018). Yet, limited research has examined the advertising effects of a brand's purpose-driven message. Specifically, there is scarce academic research about the effects of purpose-oriented advertising on consumers' attitudes and perceptions about brands.

This lack in the literature motivated one of the research questions in the present study, which is understanding if adding purpose into an cause-related advertisement that communicates responsible practices, by a well-established fast-fashion brand, has a positive effect on consumers' brand equity perceptions and consumers' purchase behaviours.

2.3. Brand Equity

Brands are intangible assets which provide value to the firm and its customers (Keinan and Avery, 2008). As Kotler (1991) stated, brand is a name, term, design, symbol, or any feature that identifies a seller's goods or services as distinct from those of the other sellers. Thus, brands attach value to products, this increment of utility or value is called Brand Equity (Farquhar, Han, and Ijiri 1991; Kamakura and Russell 1993; Park and Srinivasan 1994; Rangaswamy, Burke, and Oliva 1993).

This concept is known as a valuable source of competitive advantage (Khan, Hong and Tan, 2015). It results from consumers' overall perceptions regarding the brand, by measuring everything that is associated with it in consumers' minds (Keller, 1993). Additionally, it creates not only value to the company but also for consumers (Aaker, 1992). In fact, among others, brand equity influences merger and acquisition decision making, willingness to pay premium prices, probability of brand choice and marketing communication effectiveness (Yoo *et al*, 2000). The previously mentioned facts reflect the relevance of this indicator for companies.

In summary, brand equity study has two main motivations, one is financial related, the other is to understand how marketing efficiency can improve. In this sense, Keller (1993) states that for brands to achieve the second mentioned objective, companies need to have information regarding the brand knowledge that consumers have in their minds from the company's previous marketing investments. Hence, marketing has a considerable influence in this concept,

since any action can be positively related to the brand equity (Yoo and Donthu, 2001), which includes the type of advertising that a brand adopts.

Aaker (1991) suggested that the concept relies on five main assets: brand loyalty; brand awareness; brand image; perceived quality; and other proprietary brand assets. However, in the same study, he refers this last dimension – other proprietary brand assets – are of a lesser important component. Therefore, for current research purposes, the author will only contemplate the four initial assets.

Collectively, brand equity consists in *brand loyalty* which refers to consumers' intention to buy the brand as a primary choice, expressing consumers' satisfaction and repeated buying patterns (Oliver, 1997). Sometimes brands tend to neglect the existing customers and focus their sales growth on new ones, however loyal customers can contribute to new users through their genuine advises; *brand awareness* consists in brand recognition and brand recall (Keller, 1993). Recognition has a powerful influence in consumers' brand evaluations. This is shown in the research of Hoyer and Brown (2014), where a peanut butter taste test was conducted for two groups, one of which was able to see the brand of the product they were tasting, while the other performed a blind taste. When choosing their favourite peanut butter, 70% of consumers in the first group chose the well-known brand, while the second - which was not shown the products' brands – preferred a different kind. This reflects how the level of brand awareness dramatically changes consumers' evaluations. The recall consists in the ability of consumers to associate the brand to the right category (Keller, 1993). Doing it right enables brands to be in the range of options, which increases purchasing probabilities; *brand image* is related with a set of associations in consumers' memories that forms their overall brand perception; Finally, *brand quality* is about consumer's judgment about a product's overall excellence (Zeithaml, 1988). Aaker (1991) identifies perceived brand quality as a differentiator attribute that support brands higher prices and attracts channel customer interest.

As mentioned, advertisements have a strong influence in brand equity and naturally, this effect is expanded to brand equity assets. For instances, Yoo and its colleagues (2000) stated that this marketing tool can increase brand image and brand loyalty, as higher the frequency, the higher the awareness. Shimp (1997), also referred that advertisement reinforces consumers' brand-related beliefs and consequently increases brand loyalty. Moreover, a study perceived by Cobb-Walgren, Beal, and Donthu (1995) concluded that the dollar amount spent on advertising has a

positive effect on brand equity and its dimensions, mainly because advertising is considered by consumers as a reflection of brand quality (Milgrom and Roberts 1986).

3. Conceptual Framework and Hypothesis

This chapter intends to present the conceptual model and the hypotheses that the current study will test. Having in consideration the literature review provided in the previous chapter, the impact of well-established brands cause-related advertisements with and without purpose and the moderating role of type of responsible practices on consumer responses, will be analysed.

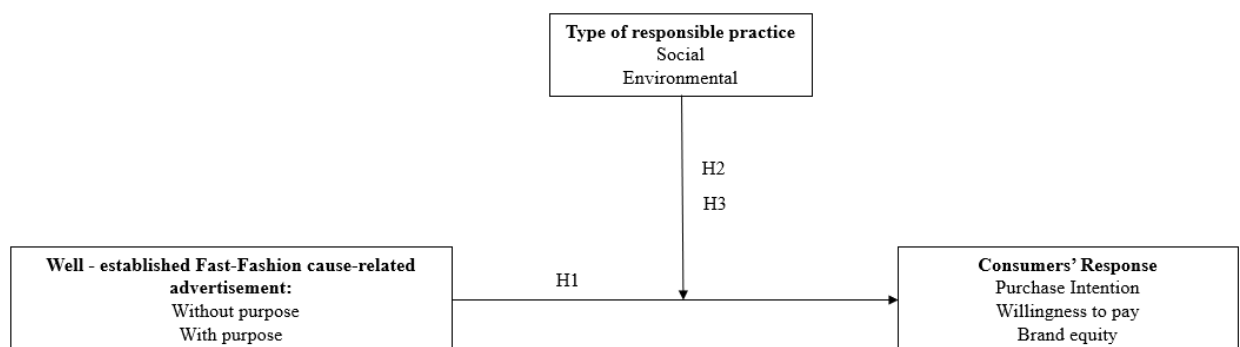


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Own contribution

As prior research suggests, advertising is a relevant tool of marketing communication that has positive influence on purchase intention (Boulding, Lee, and Staelin 1994; Chay and Tellis 1991; Johnson 1984; Maxwell 1989), and on brand equity (Yoo, Donthu and Lee, 2000). However, prior studies in this domain refer to its potential, reporting that two thirds of consumers find brands that actively communicate their purpose, more attractive (Accenture, 2020). This finding is reinforced, showing that, sixty percent of consumers have a preference for brands that share their ethical standings (Edelman, 2018). In line, cause-related marketing is seen as an efficient marketing tool, when used properly, that also has an influence on communication efficiency, purchase intention, willingness to pay and brand assessments. However, not much research has been done about combining purpose statements with cause-

related marketing. It is therefore, interesting to understand if adding a purpose-driven statement in a cause-related marketing advertisement, increases the efficiency of the communication.

Additionally, it is important to acknowledge that this relation is not linear, mainly due to the scarcity of empirical analyses of purpose-driven advertisements in the academic literature. Based on the aforementioned topics, the first hypothesis of the present study is:

H1: Adding a purpose-driven statement in a cause-related advertisement by well-established fast-fashion brands, will affect consumers' purchase behaviours and brand equity.

H1a: Exposing consumers to a cause-related advertisement with purpose (vs. without) for a well-established brand will increase consumers' purchase intentions, willingness to pay and brand equity.

As previously stated, cause-related marketing is regarded as an efficient marketing tool, when used properly. It has also an influence on communication efficiency, purchase intention, willingness to pay and brand assessments. In the following hypothesis, the difference between a cause-related advertisement that communicates an environmentally responsible practice, or a socially responsible practice, is explored. As companies integrate the *Triple Bottom Line* - TBL (Elkington, 1998) approach in their sustainable business models and start to communicate their CSR practices, it is relevant to understand which of the dimensions generates higher purchase intentions and better brand equity evaluations. Generally, the perceived fit, meaning the degree of similarity and compatibility that consumers perceive between a cause and brand (Lafferty 2007), has an important impact on the efficiency of the communicated CSR cause. However, research also suggests that the relationship between consumers and the cause is an important factor (Gupta and Pirsch, 2008). Taking this notion into account and considering that Nike mainly communicates social related campaigns and deals extensively with social-related practices, the author hypothesizes that socially responsible practices will have a greater impact on consumers' evaluations than environmental practices, when examining Nike. On the basis of this argument, the second set of hypotheses is as follows:

H2: The type of responsible practice communicated in a cause-related advertisement for a well-established brand will influence consumers' purchase intentions, willingness to pay and brand equity.

H2a: Communicating a socially responsible practice from a brand such as Nike, will increase consumers' purchase intentions, willingness to pay and brand equity, when compared to an environmentally responsible practice.

Finally, with the objective of studying if the type of responsible practice that is communicated in a cause-related marketing influences the relationship between a cause-related advertisement (without and with purpose) and consumers' responses, such as purchasing behaviour and brand equity perceptions, a third hypothesis will be analysed. As aforementioned, since Nike is actively related with social initiatives, and cause-fit increases cause-related efficiency, it is hypothesized that, this type of socially responsible initiative will have a more positive effect than an environmentally responsible initiative.

H3: The impact of a cause-related advertisement (with vs without purpose) for a well-established brand on consumers' responses (purchase intentions, willingness to pay and brand equity) will be moderated by the type of responsible practice (social vs. environmental) used, so that:

H3a: Exposing consumers to a cause-related advertisement with and without purpose, by a well-established brand, that communicates socially (vs. environmentally) responsible practices will increase (vs. decrease) customers' purchase intention, willingness to pay and brand equity.

4. Methodology

The following chapter will be dedicated to introducing the research methodology that will conduct to the empirical study. Moreover, a definition of the variables and an explanation of how they have been integrated in the research, will be performed.

4.1. Research Method

The present research methodology is composed by two research instruments. Therefore, with the objective to address the research questions and explore the hypothesis defined previously, primary data was collected through a pre-test and a main survey, in order to reach a vast audience and consequently collect a higher number of responses in a more efficient and faster way, both studies were conducted through the online platform Qualtrics.

4.1.1. Pre-Test

The previously mentioned pre-test was answered through a survey conducted in the Qualtrics platform by 33 Portuguese participants. The main goal of the pre-test was to understand the current Portuguese knowledge regarding purpose-driven businesses. In this sense, the questionnaire was composed by five questions divided into three parts (Appendix B): the first was dedicated to acknowledging the familiarity of participants with the CSR concept; the second aimed to understand the familiarity, the level of knowledge, and the importance given by the participants to purpose-driven businesses; and finally, the third was focused to understand which triple bottom line dimensions were more important to be communicated by brands in order to support the decision of which ones should be included in the study.

Consequently, to study the level of familiarity, a seven-point scale from 1 (not at all familiar) to 7 (very much familiar) was used. Data shows that, on average participants are very familiar with the concepts of CSR and purpose-driven business, having a slightly higher familiarity with the CSR concept ($M_{\text{CSR Familiarity}} = 6.34$, $SD = 1.1$) when compared with the purpose-driven business concept ($M_{\text{Purpose-Driven Business Familiarity}} = 6.15$, $SD = 0.9$), however the difference between these means is not statistically significant ($t(31) = 0.33$, $p = .74$).

In the question dedicated to exploring the level of expertise, respondents were presented with a list of nine possible purpose-driven business characteristics and asked to classify their level of

agreement on a seven-point scale, being 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). It was possible to conclude that participants had a very satisfactory knowledge regarding the concept in study through the mean score ($M = 5.95$; $SD = 0.85$) of participants.

Table 1 Results of descriptive analysis regarding purpose level of expertise

Complete the following statement considering your concept of purpose: "The purpose of a brand is related with..."		
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
Values of a brand	5,88	1,166
Mission of a brand	5,88	1,166
Vision of a brand	5,67	1,534
Ideology of a brand	6,03	1,380
The meaning of a brand	6,03	1,380
Short-term orientation of a brand	2,88	1,516
Long-term orientation of a brand	6,61	1,116
Meeting shareholders' needs of a company/brand	3,73	1,973
Meeting stakeholders' needs of a company/brand	5,67	1,814

Moreover, on average participants consider to be “definitely very important” for a brand to adopt a purpose-driven orientation approach ($M_{\text{Purpose-Driven Approach Importance}} = 6.70$, $SD = .64$). Finally, in the last section participants had to rank the three bottom line dimensions – social, environmental, economic by relevance for a brand to communicate, it was possible to conclude that the social ($M_{SD \text{ Social}} = 1.45$, $SD = .56$) and the environmental ($M_{SD \text{ Environmental}} = 1.91$, $SD = .68$) dimensions were the most important to be communicated, being the economical ($M_{SD \text{ Economical}} = 2.64$, $SD = .74$) the least important in the respondents’ opinion (see table 1).

These findings reflect the increasing consciousness of consumers regarding the importance of sustainable business models and social responsibility. Consequently, one can affirm that when a brand communicates its purpose, consumers understand its underlying meaning.

4.1.2. Main Study

The main questionnaire collected a total of 335 responses, however only 245 participants finished all questions. This is a frequent phenomenon when hosting online-based surveys, since depending on the conditions in which participants start to answer them, they may not express enough engagement as well as they can be frequently interrupted. Consequently, only the fully 245 completed answers were considered in the analysis.

Moreover, the sample size is appropriate. Considering the four experimental conditions that constitute the questionnaire, each has approximately 60 participants which is in line with the required number of answers for a randomized experimental design-study (Maxwell & Delaney, 2004).

4.2. Research Design

The present study intends to research if adding brands' purpose-driven statement into a cause-related communication influences consumers' brand equity evaluation and their purchasing behaviours. Additionally, it aspires to recognise the impact of communicating different types of responsible practice, social or environmental, in brands' cause-related advertisements. In line, the current study follows a 2 (type of advertisement: with purpose, without purpose) x 2 (Type of responsible practice: social, environmental) between-within the subjects' design. Considering the following as dependent variables: purchase intention, willingness to pay (WTP) and brand equity.

The main questionnaire was composed by four parts (see appendix C). The first part, participants were exposed to the stimuli, followed by a group of questions related with the shown advertisement. This part was object of the randomizer flow option from Qualtrics, which randomly assigned participants to one of the four Nike advertisements (see table 2). Each scenario was constituted by a cause-related advertisement either with Nike's purpose or without Nike's purpose, complemented with the communication of a social/environmental responsible practice performed by the brand. After, respondents were presented with one manipulation question, constituted by three items with the main goal of understand the success of the stimuli created, namely whether participants recognized the brands' purpose driven orientation statement (vs. not in the advertisement without the purpose statement) and the responsible practice communicated (environmental vs. social). Following, they were presented with a group of questions to analyse agreement with statements regarding to

different associations related with brand equity. This part ended with two final questions dedicated to understanding the purchasing behaviour of participants, particularly their likelihood of purchasing a Nike’s product, and their WTP.

The third part focused on exploring respondents’ overall expertise regarding purpose-driven orientation and purpose driven business concepts. Finally, the fourth part consisted in demographic questions in order to better identify and define the sample, specifically information regarding age, gender, nationality, occupation and annual income.

Table 2: Manipulation scenarios

Scenarios	Type of cause-related advertisement		Type of responsible practice	
	Without Purpose	With Purpose	Environmental	Social
Scenario 1	x		x	
Scenario 2	x			x
Scenario 3		x	x	
Scenario 4		x		x

4.3. Stimuli development

The participants were randomly exposed to one cause-related advertisement of a fast-fashion well-established brand, called Nike. There are four distinct stimuli (see figure 2), differentiated by the presence of purpose-related statements and responsible practices. In this sense, for each type of cause-related advertising (with purpose vs. without purpose), two manipulation scenarios were created involving the communication of a brand’s pro-social practice or pro-environmental practice. Consequently, it was possible to analyse consumers’ purchasing behaviour and brand equity evaluations in four circumstances: (1) cause-related advertisement without purpose and environmentally responsible practice communication; (2) cause-related advertisement without purpose and socially responsible practice communication; (3) cause-related advertisement with purpose and environmentally responsible practice communication; (4) cause-related advertisement with purpose and socially responsible practice on

communication. The elements included in each stimulus were retrieved from Nike’s website, while the purpose itself and the practices communicated in the stimulus were defined based on facts from the “FY19 Nike, Inc. Impact Report” (Nike, 2019b), which makes the environmental and social claims more credible.

Moreover, the design of all stimuli included the brand’s name and logo, while an image of the same sneaker was used in all the four manipulation conditions. This included the same background, font, colours, and size, and similar number of words. The intent of which was to have the four stimuli uniformized as much as possible to better control biased results.

During the questionnaire respondents were initially exposed to a cause-related advertisement either with or without purpose. After reading it carefully, a set of questions was presented to study the effect of the presence of brands’ purpose driven orientation statement in cause-related advertisements on different variables, in particular purchase intention, WTP and brand equity.

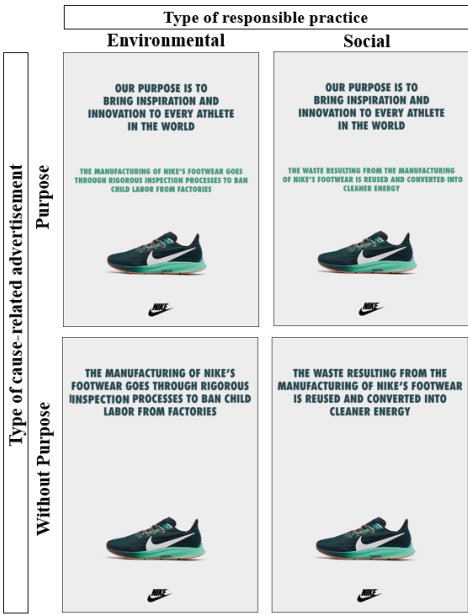


Figure 2: Manipulation Scenarios

4.4. Variable descriptions

4.4.1. Independent Variables

Advertisement type: This variable was constituted by two components, one showed respondents a Nike cause-related advertisement without purpose, while the other showed a Nike cause-related advertisement with purpose.

4.4.2. Moderator

Type of responsible practice: This variable was assessed through two different statements, considering the two bottom line dimensions (environmental vs social). Participants were either exposed to a stimulus with the Nike's socially responsible practice statement, while the other exposed the participants to a stimulus with Nike's environmentally responsible practice's statement.

4.4.3. Dependent Variables

Brand equity: This variable was presented to participants after being exposed to the stimulus, by asking respondents to rate their level of agreement regarding seven items that intend to evaluate consumers' brand equity perceptions. In particular: "I would not buy other brands if this brand is in the store"; "This brand is my first choice"; "Some characteristics of this brand come to my mind promptly"; "I know what this brand's products look like"; "This brand is from high quality"; "The reliability of this brand is very high"; and "I am familiar with this brand", using a seven-point scale (1 = Strongly disagree ; 7 = Strongly agree), and adapted from Khudri and Farjana (2017) .

Purchase Intention: After looking carefully through the advertisement, participants were asked to imagine being in a Nike's store and to rate their level of agreement regarding their purchase intention in that situation. This variable is composed by two items: "I have a very high purchase interest ", and "I definitely intend to buy it", using a seven-point scale (1 = Strongly disagree; 7 = Strongly agree), adapted from Spears and Singh (2004).

Willingness to pay: After being exposed to one of the four stimuli, the participants were asked to read it carefully and to imagine seeing that same advertisement in a Nike's store. Then, they were asked to express their willingness to pay for a Nike product, from a range between 0 and 100 euros.

5. Analysis and Results

The following chapter intends to describe the data collected and the obtained results. This section starts with a sample characterization, followed by an outlier and reliability analysis. To conclude, the hypotheses analysis will be conducted.

5.1. Sample Characterization

In order to characterize the attributes of the sample, a descriptive statistical analysis was performed to all the demographic indicators and equality was verified across the four different stimuli.

In total, the questionnaire tested a sample of participants of 243. Most of the participants were Portuguese (92%) and women (68%). Furthermore, the majority of the sample reported ages between 18-25 (55%) and 46-55 (22%) years old. Considering the interviewees' occupation, more than half are currently employed (56%), 22% are students and 18% are students/employed. Additionally, when analysing the sample's highest level of education, it is possible to verify that the majority has a bachelor's degree (59%), followed by a master's degree/MBA or similar (20%).

Finally, concerning participants annual income most of the sample reported to gain annually less than 10.000€ (34%) or between 10.000€ and 19.000€ (35%).

5.2. Outliers Analysis

With the objective to detect uncommon responses profiles and possible mistake answers that could origin biased result a multivariate outlier analysis was performed. This test has in account two or more variables simultaneously and is used to identify unusual combinations of answers for each participant (Seltman, 2015).

As result, a Mahalanobis distance was estimated for each respondent. Then, these distances were converted into z-scores, to standardize the values. Participants with a z-score bellow than 0.001 are consider outliers. Consequently, four multivariate outliers were identified, however only two were removed. Considering as a criterion, their overall purpose knowledge. Leaving the total sample with 243 participants. As the literature is not coherent regarding the exclusion of outliers, (Judd and McClelland, 1989; Orr, Sackett and DuBois, 1991; Barnett and Lewis, 1994), this decision was made considering the rigor of the research.

5.3. Scale Reliability

Each one of the scales used in this study was adapted from previous literature. The purchase intention scale was retrieved from Spears and Singh (2004) and brands equity form Khudri and Farjana (2017).

To study the reliability of utilized variables, a group of criteria was checked. For scales with 2 items the correlation analysis was performed to evaluate the strength of relationship between two quantitative variables, where values near 1 or -1 express high levels of correlation. In line, purchase intention, being a two-item scale, has a correlation of 0.79 which reflects a high positive correlation.

When dealing with variables composed by three or more items, a factorial analysis was performed, followed by the measurement of the Cronbach's alpha of each item that assessed the reliability or internal consistency of the scale.

Corresponding, first the factorial analysis was conducted to conclude if the scale was adequate to the factor in study. Kaiser (1974) recommends a minimum value of Kaiser Meyer Olkin (KMO) of 0.5 and suggests that values between 0.5 and 0.7 are mediocre, values between 0.7 and 0.8 are good, and finally values between 0.8 and 0.9 are great. The scale used to test Brand Equity has a KMO value of 0.77, which is considered as good. Additionally, the analysis suggests only one component was extracted.

According to DeVellis (1991), values lower than 0.6 are unacceptable, between 0.65 and 0.7 are minimally accepted whereas significances between 0.70 and 0.80 are good and between 0.8 and 0.9 very good. Brand equity is a seven-item scale with Cronbach's alpha of 0.85, which is perceived has very good.

Table 3: Reliability test for multi-item scales

Scale	Initial number of items	Cronbach's alpha	Number of deleted items	Cronbach's alpha if items deleted	Final number of items
Brand equity	7	0.85	-	-	7

5.4. Manipulation Check

In order to assure that the stimulus effectively manipulated the type of advertisement (without purpose; with purpose) and the type of responsible practices (environmental; social) variables, three manipulation check questions were conducted after the stimulus' presentation. Therefore, respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with the following statements on a 7-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree): “This advertisement deals with a purpose”, “This advertisement deals with environmental issues” and “This advertisement deals with social issues”.

To test the success of the manipulation questions an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was ran. Firstly, we studied the success of the manipulation question regarding purpose, where the independent variable was the type of advertisement (without purpose, with purpose) and the dependent variable was the level of agreement with the statement “This advertisement deals with a purpose”. The results suggested that the type of advertisement has a marginally statistically significant effect on consumers' evaluations ($F(1, 242) = 3.42, p = .066$). It is important to refer that in the current study there is not a strict distinction between values below or above the .05 threshold to determine if the results are statistically significant or not. In fact, for the purpose of this study, p-values that are between .05 and 1 will be considered as marginally significant. This thesis is supported by some research which defends that ignoring results that have a *p-value* slightly above .05 could lead to ignoring interesting outcomes (Gelman and Stern, 2006). Thus, a marginal significance can be justified by the fact that purpose is a recent topic. Even though, in the pre-test participants refer that they know the concept, its novelty can lead to misunderstandings and consequently justify part of this marginal effect.

The group that saw the stimuli with purpose registered a higher agreement mean ($M_{\text{Without Purpose}} = 5.75$ vs. $M_{\text{With Purpose}} = 6.05, t(241) = -1.83, p = .066$).

Table 3: Manipulation check for Type of cause-related advertisement

	Type of cause-related advertisement				
	Without Purpose		With Purpose		<i>t-test</i>
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
“This advertisement deals with a purpose”,	5.75	1.40	6.05	1.11	-1.83 ⁺

Note: *** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$, ⁺ $p \leq .1$

Secondly, the same analysis was conducted to study the success of the manipulation question regarding the type of responsible practice. An ANOVA test was analysed considering the effect that the type of responsible practice has on participants' level of agreement on the following statements "This advertisement deals with environmental issues" $F(1, 242) = 263.94, p < .001$ and "This advertisement deals with social issues" $F(1, 243) = 53.64, p < .001$, showing that results were statistically significant. Further t-test analysis shows that considering participants' level of agreement with the statement "This advertisement deals with environmental issues", results indicate that the group of respondents that was exposed to the advertisement that communicated an environmentally responsible practice registered higher means ($M_{\text{Environment}} = 5.97$ vs. $M_{\text{Social}} = 2.58, t(241) = 16.27, p < .001$). Regarding the statement "This advertisement deals with social issues" the mean was higher for the group of participants exposed to the socially responsible practice statement ($M_{\text{Environment}} = 4.60$ vs. $M_{\text{Social}} = 6.17, t(241) = -7.71, p < .001$), validating the manipulation question.

Table 4: Manipulation Check for Type of SD responsible practice

	Type of responsible practice				
	Environmental		Social		<i>t-test</i>
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
"This advertisement deals with environmental issues"	5.97	1.30	2.58	1.89	16.27***
"This advertisement deals with social issues"	4.60	1.86	6.17	1.28	-7.71***

Note: *** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$, † $p \leq .1$

5.5. Main Results

5.5.1. With Purpose versus without purpose

H1: Adding a purpose-driven statement into a cause-related advertisement by well-established brands, will affect consumers' purchase behaviours and brand equity, in the fast-fashion industry.

H1a: Exposing consumers to a cause-related advertisement with purpose, for a well-established brand, will increase consumers' purchase intentions, willingness to pay and brand equity.

To test the hypothesis 1 and 1a, a multivariate analysis of variance, MANOVA, was performed. This statistical test studies the effect of the independent variable(s) in one or more dependent variables which make it the appropriate tool to be applied in this assessment (Selman, 2006).

In this sense, it was possible to verify that the effect that including purpose in a cause-related advertisement, significantly impacts consumers' purchase intention ($F(1, 242) = 6.73, p < .05$). Yet, adding purpose cause-related advertisement is non-significant on consumers' willingness to pay ($F(1, 242) = 1.17, p = .28, NS$) and brand equity evaluations ($F(1, 242) = .10, p = .75, NS$), partially validating H1.

Moreover, to study in detail, the statistically significant effect that the type of advertisement (with purpose vs. without purpose) has on consumers' purchase intention a *t-test* analysis was performed. The results were unexpected, since it revealed that those participants exposed to a cause-related advertisement with purpose had a lower purchase intention than those that exposed to a cause-related advertisement without purpose ($M_{\text{Without Purpose}} = 4.10$ vs $M_{\text{With Purpose}} = 3.75, t(241) = 2.58, p < .05$). Therefore, H1a it is not validated.

Table 5 Result of the Independent Sample t-test

	Type of cause-related marketing				<i>t-test</i>
	Without Purpose		With Purpose		
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Purchase Intention	4.10	1.67	3.57	1.52	2.58***

Note: *** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$, + $p \leq .1$

Overall, results reveal that considering a cause-related advertisement that communicates a brands' responsible practice, by a well-established fast-fashion brand, adding brands' purpose does not have a statistically significant effect on consumers' willingness to pay and brand equity. Nevertheless, it has a significant effect on consumers' purchase intentions. Yet, this result is valid for a cause-related advertisement that communicates a brands' responsible practice without purpose, in opposition to what was hypothesised.

5.5.2. Socially responsible practice versus environmental responsible practice

H2: The type of responsible practice communicated in a cause-related advertisement for a well-established brand will influence consumers' purchase intentions, willingness to pay and brand equity.

H2a: Communicating a socially responsible practice from a brand such as Nike, will increase consumers' purchase intentions, willingness to pay and brand equity, when compared to an environmentally responsible practice.

To study hypothesis H2a, this time a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed. This statistical test studies the effect of the independent variable(s) in one or more dependent variables which make it the appropriate tool to be applied in this assessment (Selman, 2006).

The results of this analysis suggest that the type of responsible practice communicated has not a statistically significant effect on consumers' purchase intention ($F(1, 242) = 1.04, p = .31, NS$), on consumers' willingness to pay ($F(1, 242) = .07, p = .78, NS$), nor on brand equity evaluations ($F(1, 242) = .15, p = .70, NS$), not validating H2a.

In conclusion, the type of responsible practice that is communicated in a cause-related marketing by, well-established fast-fashion brands, does not impact consumers' purchasing behaviours nor the perceived brand equity, showing that both responsible dimensions are valid attributes to use in a cause related advertising.

5.5.3. The moderation effect of type of responsible practice type

H3: The impact of a cause-related advertisement (with vs without purpose) for a well-established brand on consumers' responses (purchase intentions, willingness to pay and brand equity) will be moderated by the type of responsible practice (social vs. environmental) used, so that:

H3a: Exposing consumers to a cause-related advertisement (with vs. without purpose), by a well-established brand, that communicates socially (vs. environmentally) responsible practices will increase (vs. decrease) customers' purchase intention, willingness to pay and brand equity.

To test this hypothesis 3, a MANOVA test was performed to analyse the two-way interaction effect between cause-related advertising type (without purpose vs. with purpose) and the type of responsible practice (environmental vs. social) on the dependent variables.

MANOVA results show a marginally significant cause-related advertisement type x responsible practice type interaction on purchase intention ($F(1, 242) = 3.28, p = .07$). Considering willingness to pay and brand equity the effect is not statistically significant, on willingness to pay ($F(1, 242) = .11, p = .7, NS$) and on brand equity ($F(1, 242) = .07, p = .8, NS$), partially validating H3.

To understand if exposing consumers to a socially responsible (vs. an environmentally responsible) practice through a cause-related advertisement without purpose has a greater effect on purchase intention, an independent samples *t-test* analysis was performed.

Results show a marginally significant difference between the means, on purchase intention ($M_{\text{Without Purpose, Environmental}} = 3.80$ vs. $M_{\text{Without Purpose, Social}} = 4.39, t(115) = -1.92, p = .058$), suggesting higher purchase intentions towards a socially responsible than an environmentally responsible communications' practice, without a purpose orientation.

Table 6: Results of Independent Sample t-test two-way interaction Without purpose type of cause-related advertisement and Type of responsible practice

	Type of responsible practice				<i>t-test</i>
	Environmental		Social		
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Purchase Intention	3.80	1.77	4.39	1.53	-1.92 ⁺

Note: *** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$, + $p \leq .1$

A similar analysis was used to test whether communicating a socially responsible (vs. an environmentally responsible) practice in a cause-related advertisement with purpose by a well-established brand increases consumer purchase intention. Results of the independent t-test show that the purchase intention mean difference is not statistically significant, ($M_{\text{With Purpose, Environmental}} = 3.58$ vs. $M_{\text{Without Purpose, Social}} = 3.49$, $t(128) = 0.31$, $p = .92$, NS). Interestingly, this result shows that both socially and environmentally responsible practices are valid and evaluated similarly by consumers. This result provides interesting implications showing that communicating a cause-related advertisement with a purpose allows more flexibility when designing campaigns since a wider range of responsible practices are recognised by consumers. Nevertheless, H3a is partially validated.

6. Conclusions and Implications

The present study aimed to understand if adding a purpose-driven statement into a cause-related advertisement makes a difference on consumers' brand evaluations and purchase intentions. Also, whether the type of responsible practice that is communicated is a moderator in the relationship.

Considering the first research question (RQ1.), and contrary to expectations, this research shows that adding purpose-driven statements to a cause-related advertisement leads to lower purchase intentions. In fact, the analysis, indicates that cause-related advertisements without purpose are more likely to have higher purchase intentions. This conclusion is not completely in line with the majority of literature available regarding purpose. But is in line with a novel phenomenon reported recently in the academic literature. A recent research by Vredenburg and colleagues (2020) suggests that it is necessary to exist a match between the brand's message, purpose, values and its prosocial responsible practice in order to create a positive effect on consumers' evaluations. This research defends that when this congruency does not exist – “woke washing” can occur a (Sobande, 2019). That is, consumers will wonder what values or practices support the message, and consequently express their dissatisfaction. For instance, Nike suffered from this phenomenon in its “Dream Crazy” campaign supporting racial justice, as consumers pointed out that the campaign was not in line with Nike's internal management, such as having black board members (Ritson, 2020). This shows that the use of *purpose* as a stand is not always beneficial. Brands need to use it carefully and wisely. As expressed in the literature, the adoption of the purpose-driven orientation model is a combination of elements in which congruency is fundamental. Furthermore, these results show that presently, purpose is perhaps, still not strong enough to make a difference when communicated in a cause-related advertisement.

Regarding the second research question (RQ2.) the analysis suggests that the type of responsible practices communicated in a cause-related advertisement do not have a significant effect on consumers' purchasing behaviours and brand equity evaluations. Therefore, communicating different responsible initiatives is not impactful by itself, suggesting that these types of practices need to be accompanied by other communication tools in order to stand out and get consumers' attention.

Finally, the third research question (RQ3.) intended to study the moderating role of the type of responsible practices on the relationship between the type of cause-related advertisement (with and without purpose) on consumers' responses – their purchasing behaviours and brand equity. Findings suggest that socially responsible initiatives are more impactful when paired with cause-related advertisements without purpose. Yet, for cause-related advertisements with purpose, both socially and environmentally practices are valid, as no differences were observed between them. These results are in line with the cause-fit theory in cause-related campaigns (Kuo & Rice, 2015), suggesting that overall, fast-fashion brands such as Nike, that actively promote socially-related issues are more recognized on this dimension than through environmental actions. Yet, brand activism communications through purpose still need to be better worked internally so that coherent messages are communicated to the external audience in a more credible way (Vredenburg et al., 2020).

6.1. Theoretical Implications

Considering that the concept of purpose-driven orientation is an emerging business model that is taking the first steps in the branding and advertising literature, this study contributes to decrease the scarcity of available research regarding the thematic. In fact, CSR has been evolute over the past years, as a consequence purpose-driven orientation was integrated into the most diverse sectors, from a brand's business model to its communication strategy. This research focus its contribution on the communication of purpose and cause-related marketing analysing what works better and what can be improved by brands that care.

Thus, as prior literature suggests, purpose-driven orientation is a potential and powerful strategy that leads to a sustainable growth. Yet it has its risks when implemented, this study contributes to the conclusion of a recent research that refers that when not adopted properly and consequently not communicated correctly, this statement can lead to the practice of *woke washing*, which leads to a perverse reaction from consumers, that do not see congruency between the message, the purpose and the brand practices (Vredenburg et al., 2020).

Moreover, it supports the prior literature regarding the importance of cause-fit (Kuo & Rice, 2015) on cause-related marketing, and how this should be relevant to have in consideration when deciding the type of pro-sustainable practice that a brand intends to communicate. Thus, a congruent brand decreases the probability of existing potential harmful misalignments (Ven de van, 2008). Also, it suggests that the type of responsible practice that is communicated has

a moderator effect on the type of cause-related advertisement and consumers' purchase intentions.

Overall, this research's findings represent an effort to understand how to perform more efficient cause-related advertisement practices that positively influence purchase behaviours and brand equity evaluations, by well-established brands in fast-fashion that want to adopt a purpose-driven business-model.

6.2. Managerial Implications

This research's findings have useful implications for well-established fast-fashion brands that adopt a cause-related marketing strategy, want to integrate a purpose-drive business model and intend to increase the efficiency of their advertisements.

It supports the relevance of adopting emerging marketing tactics such as make a stand in relevant topics for society. Brands that want to communicate their purpose statements into their cause-related advertisements need to acknowledge that purpose-driven orientation is a powerful and emerging approach, that consumers appreciate and search for. However, its communication success is not linear. In fact, if a brand communicates its purpose in an incongruent way, it risks consumers not to engage positively with the campaign. Therefore, brands need to be aware that integrating purpose must be a guideline for every step of decision making in the company as to exist authenticity when communicated to consumers. Moreover, it reinforces the importance of stand for relevant social and environmental issues and make a difference. More than never, consumers are extremely aware of this type of behaviours, with the present pandemic context brands should to contribute to the wellbeing of their communities and as stressed during the literature an aspect that contributes to the success of a cause-related marketing is that consumers need to have a strong relation with the good cause communicated.

Thus, this study alert for the advertisement's implications when making a stand. It is relevant for companies to align their communication campaign – from the creativity process to the campaign release and related brand's events - with their previous practices, associations, and reputation. This fit within the advertisement construction is fundamental to be well received by consumers. When this is verified, brands have higher probabilities to perform an advertisement success.

Moreover, marketers should consider the importance of the type of responsible practice communicated in a cause-related advertisement without purpose. The cause-fit of the cause-related advertisement is fundamental to positively influence consumers' purchase intentions. Fast-fashion brands should opt to communicate initiatives that consumer can associate with the brand's values and practices (Ven de van, 2008). Additionally, perform and communicate a sustainable business model is the reflection of the future, generation Y (Millennials) are the generation type that gives more relevance to ethical aspects during their purchase decision-making (Herédia-Colaço, Moreira da Cruz and Pires de Almeida, 2020) and the most sustainable-driven consumers (Nielsen, 2018). These facts express the potential of practicing cause-related marketing and integrate purpose-driven orientation efficiently in a long-term vision.

7. Limitation and Further Research

Several limitations should be referred. Firstly, the sample that constitutes the current study lack cultural diversity, since 92% of participants are Portuguese. This could have led to biased results since this concept is more well known in other countries, where it is a common practice to adopt this business model. Additionally, the data was collected throughout an online survey which has some disadvantages, in particular, if a participant has a question during the questionnaire it cannot be answered, there is also a low accuracy control of the respondents' identity and answers. Therefore, further research regarding this thematic could be performed through interviews or field experiments to test consumer behaviour using a sample with higher levels of cultural diversity.



Another limitation is associated with the fact that the number of people that were exposed to a cause-related advertising without purpose was lower than the number of participants exposed to a cause-related advertisement with purpose. This can influence the significance level of the analysed relationship. Moreover, the fact that the purpose statement was never presented alone from type of responsible practice could have contributed to the marginal result of the manipulation check test.

Since the research studies two main responsible practices - social and environmental - consumers can be biased, due to the COVID19 context that we are living, and more sensitive to social topics, when compared to environmental practices. Also, the study included only one well-established brand, Nike. Consequently, a suggestion for further research would be to perform the study considering different fast-fashion brands.

Furthermore, future research could study the impact of communicating only purpose-driven, without it being integrated in a cause-related advertising, on consumers' purchase behaviours and brand equity. Moreover, having a control condition where no statement about Purpose is provided will also allow to understand any existing causality to emerge. Concluding, room for improvement exists, these limitations should be considered in future research regarding purpose-driven communication.

Appendices

Appendix A – Stimuli (Type of cause-related advertisement x Type of responsible practice)

		Type of responsible practice	
		Environmental	Social
Type of cause-related advertisement	Purpose	<p>OUR PURPOSE IS TO BRING INSPIRATION AND INNOVATION TO EVERY ATHLETE IN THE WORLD</p> <p>THE MANUFACTURING OF NIKE'S FOOTWEAR GOES THROUGH RIGOROUS INSPECTION PROCESSES TO BAN CHILD LABOR FROM FACTORIES</p>  	<p>OUR PURPOSE IS TO BRING INSPIRATION AND INNOVATION TO EVERY ATHLETE IN THE WORLD</p> <p>THE WASTE RESULTING FROM THE MANUFACTURING OF NIKE'S FOOTWEAR IS REUSED AND CONVERTED INTO CLEANER ENERGY</p>  
	Without Purpose	<p>THE MANUFACTURING OF NIKE'S FOOTWEAR GOES THROUGH RIGOROUS INSPECTION PROCESSES TO BAN CHILD LABOR FROM FACTORIES</p>  	<p>THE WASTE RESULTING FROM THE MANUFACTURING OF NIKE'S FOOTWEAR IS REUSED AND CONVERTED INTO CLEANER ENERGY</p>  

Appendix B – Pre-test survey questions

Introduction

First and foremost, thank you for your willingness to participate in this survey.

This survey is being conducted to be included in my master's thesis research at Católica Lisbon SBE.

Please be aware that there are no right or wrong answers. It will not take more than 5 minutes to complete it. The survey is anonymous, and the data will be kept strictly confidential. It is important that you answer truthfully.

Thank you very much for your participation.

Are you familiar with what Corporate Social Responsibility is?

- 1- Not at all familiar (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (8)
- 4 - Neither/Nor (9)
- 5 (3)
- 6 (4)
- 7- Very much familiar (10)

Are you familiar with what a purpose-driven business is?

- 1- Not at all familiar (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 - Neither/Nor (4)
- 5 (5)
- 6 (6)
- 7- Very much familiar (7)

Complete the following statement considering your concept of purpose:
 "The purpose of a brand is related with..."

	1 - Strongly Disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 -Neither agree / nor disagree (4)	5 (5)	6 (17)	7 - Strongly Agree (7)
Values of a brand (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mission of a brand (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vision of a brand (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ideology of a brand (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The meaning of a brand (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Short-term orientation of a brand (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Long-term orientation of a brand (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Meeting shareholders' needs of a company/brand (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Meeting stakeholders' needs of a company/brand (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Nike is a well-established sportswear brand and has a purpose-driven business.

A purpose-driven business is a business model that gives to the company a reason for its existence that goes beyond profit. It is about why companies do what they do to meet stakeholders' needs and interests.

In your opinion, how relevant is it for a brand to adopt this approach?

- 1 -Definitely very unimportant (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4- Neither important/ Nor unimportant (4)
- 5 (5)
- 6 (6)
- 7- Definitey very important (7)

Considering the following three dimensions of Sustainable Development:

Economic dimension is related to the long-term profitability of the firm.

Social dimension is linked with the relationship of the company and the social-cultural context, meaning its participation in community issues and social causes.

Environment dimension is dedicated to the involvement of the firm in responsible behaviours related with the environment and ecology.

Rank the previously mentioned dimensions, considering the type of information you consider more relevant a brand to communicate.

Economic dimension information

Social dimension information

Environmental dimension information

Appendix C – Main survey questions

Introduction

First and foremost, thank you for your willingness to participate in this survey.

The following questionnaire is being conducted as part of my master's thesis research in Management with specialization in Strategic Marketing at Católica Lisbon SBE.

Please be aware that there are no right or wrong answers and that it is important that you answer truthfully to every questions. The survey is anonymous and the data will be kept strictly confidential.

The questionnaire will not take more than 5 minutes to be completed and it is available in portuguse and english.

Thank you very much for your participation.

Joana Veloso

Manipulations

Please take a moment to look at it carefully and answer to some questions concerning. Please remember there are no right nor wrong answers. Answer according to your own perceptions.

One of the advertisements is randomly selected and depicted

On a scale from 1 (Completely disagree) to 7(Completely agree), please rate your level of agreement with the following statement.

	1 - Completely disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 - Neither agree/Nor disagree (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 - Completely agree (7)
This advertisement deals with environmental issues (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This advertisement deals with social issues (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This advertisement deals with a purpose (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

To which brand does this slogan belong to?

- Adidas (1)
- Nike (2)
- Oasics (3)
- Oysho (4)
- Other (5)

To which brand does this logo belong to?

- Adidas (1)
- Nike (2)
- Oasics (3)
- Oysho (4)
- Other (5)

Now, please rate your level of agreement with the following statements, considering Nike's brand, on a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree).

	1 - Strongly Disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 - Neither agree/ Nor disagree (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 - Strongly Agree (7)
"I would not buy other brands if this brand is in the store" (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
"This brand is my first choice" (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
"Some characteristics of this brand come to my mind promptly" (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
"I know what this brand's products look like" (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
"This brand is from high quality" (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
"The reliability of this brand is very high" (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
"I am familiar with this brand" (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Now, imagine that you see this same advertisement in a Nike store, and you give a deep look at it.


One of the advertisements is randomly selected and depicted

Please indicate your level of agreement , from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree), considering the following statements referring to a Nike's product.

	1 - Strongly disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 - Neither agree/Nor disagree (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 - Strongly agree (7)
"I have a very high purchase interest" (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
"I definitely intend to buy it" (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How much are you willing to pay for a Nike's product?

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

€ () 

Purpose Knowledge

Do you know what a purpose-driven business is?

Please answer from a scale from 1 (Definitely I do not know) to 7 (Definitely I do know).

- 1 - Definitely I do not know (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 - Neither know/ Nor not know (4)
- 5 (5)
- 6 (6)
- 7 - Definitely I know (7)

Do you know what a purpose-driven consumption is?

Please answer from a scale from 1 (Definitely I do not know) to 7 (Definitely I do know).

- 1 - Definitely I do not know (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 - Neither know/ Nor not know (4)
- 5 (5)
- 6 (6)
- 7 - Definitely I know (7)

Demographics

Age

- 18-25 years (1)
- 26-35 years (2)
- 36-45 years (3)
- 46-55 years (4)
- older than 55 years (5)

Gender

- Male (1)
- Female (2)

Occupation

- Student (1)
- Student/Employed (2)
- Employed (3)
- Retired (4)

Highest education level

- Less than high school degree (1)
- High school graduate or similar (2)
- Bachelor Degree (3)
- Master Degree/MBA or similar (4)
- Doctoral Degree/PhD (5)

Where are you from?

▼ Afghanistan (1) ... Zimbabwe (1357)

What is your current personal annual income in Euros?

- Under €10.000 (1)
- € 10.000 - 19.999 (2)
- € 20.000 - 29.999 (3)
- € 30.000 - 39.999 (4)
- € 40.000 - 49.999 (5)
- € 50.000 - 74.999 (6)
- € 75.000 - €99.999 (7)
- € 100.000 - 150.000 (8)
- Over € 150.000 (9)

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