

Article

# The Role of Company-Cause Fit and Company Involvement in Consumer Responses to CSR Initiatives: A Meta-Analytic Review

Grzegorz Zasuwa

Department of Economics and Management, Faculty of Social Sciences, The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, al. Raclawickie 14, 20-950 Lublin, Poland; gzasuwa@kul.pl; Tel.: +48-506-345-012

Received: 8 March 2017; Accepted: 8 June 2017; Published: 13 June 2017

**Abstract:** The marketing literature suggests that company-cause fit is of key importance to developing a successful socially responsible initiative. However, controversy exists regarding the level of this fit. While some studies report that high fit between a company and a cause has beneficial effects on consumer responses to such efforts, other research identifies negative impacts. This paper aims to obtain a deeper insight into this issue by examining the moderating role of company involvement in a cause. A meta-analysis of 51 experimental studies, yielding a total sample size of 11,335 subjects, shows that company-cause fit influences consumer responses to CSR initiatives most positively when a company with a positive reputation is highly involved in a cause, that is, when the company donates at least products. If such a company provides its beneficiary with only monetary contributions (i.e., low involvement), the effects of fit are significantly less influential.

**Keywords:** company-cause fit; company involvement; corporate social responsibility; meta-analysis; consumer responses to CSR

---

## 1. Introduction

Li, Wu, and Ding [1] argue that, nowadays, the ultimate goal of corporate social responsibility (CSR) “is sustainability that not only incorporates, but also meets economic, social, and environmental responsibilities at the same time that they are linked to corporate success” (p. 16). In practice, to fulfill commitments to CSR and to sustainability, a company can carry out a variety of activities (CSR initiatives) [2]. These actions can be investigated from multiple perspectives as sustainability is a multidimensional concept [3]. The present paper addresses the marketing aspects of CSR initiatives.

Marketing scholars typically identify three types of CSR initiatives such as philanthropy, cause-related marketing (CRM), and sponsorship [4,5]. However, the range of actions undertaken by contemporary companies to meet societal and environmental needs is much wider and also includes other initiatives such as community volunteering [2], responsible sales (i.e., fair trade) [6], and socially responsible employment and manufacturing practices [7]. Bhattacharya and Sen [7] note that these diverse CSR initiatives may address six domains such as community support, diversity, employee support, the environment, operations in foreign countries, and products. It is also worth mentioning that companies typically implement their CSR initiatives by allying with not-for-profit organizations as such partnerships have the potential to create more value [8].

As mentioned earlier, according to the contemporary approach to CSR, companies undertake CSR initiatives to enhance their performance and to deliver social (and environmental) benefits at the same time [9]. More specifically, these activities may enhance consumers’ attitudes toward a company [10], product evaluations [11], brand loyalty [12], and the purchase intention [13]. The positive association between CSR and consumer patronage encourages companies to increase their CSR efforts. However, running a successful social initiative is not an easy task [7].

Marketing literature provides several recommendations regarding how to enhance consumer outcomes of CSR efforts. In this research stream, a vast number of studies address the issue of company-cause fit [14]. However, controversy exists regarding the level of this fit. On the one hand, studies show that consumers have more appreciation for CSR efforts that follow on naturally from the organization's core business activities [15]. Therefore, CSR initiatives with high congruence (fit) with a company may outperform social projects with a low fit. On the other hand, academics warn that high fit between the core business of a firm and a social cause may evoke consumer skepticism. For example, Drumwright found that, in research on the managers' objectives for the campaigns with social dimensions, "when there was too close a relationship, managers pointed to cynical reactions from consumers about the company's motive, who perceived it to be opportunistic or exploitative" [16] (p. 71). This critical attention may in turn evoke negative stakeholder responses to CSR initiatives. These undesirable effects are most evident for companies with bad reputations as Yoon, Gürhan-Canli, and Schwarz found that a firm with a bad reputation that attempts to correct its image by means of insincere support for a highly congruent cause only tarnishes its image [17]. Therefore, a question about the consistency of past studies arises.

In the debate about company-cause fit, it is worth noting that the vast majority of previous studies focused on consumers' cognitive processes. For example, in their seminal paper, Becker-Olsen, Cudmore, and Hill [18] demonstrated that high fit between a company and a cause makes consumers think less about a CSR initiative, and their thoughts are more favorable than in the case of a low fit condition. In other words, high company-cause fit decreases consumers' elaboration of CSR messages and in turn improves the transfer of favorable attitudes from a social cause or a charity to the company and its products [19]. Of course, this way of explaining the effects of company-cause fit has greatly contributed to a better understating of consumer responses to CSR initiatives. However, the beneficial effects of a high company-cause fit are likely to move beyond the easier processing of CSR messages, as the perception of socially responsible activities does not only depend on the compatibility of new information with the existing knowledge that a consumer possesses. Several studies have shown that consumers base their evaluation of and response to CSR efforts on the amount of corporate resources, skills, and time that a company invests in a specific cause or a charity (cf. [20]). This observation suggests that the effects of company-cause fit may be moderated by company involvement in a cause.

Building on the presented arguments, this paper has two objectives. The first is to clarify and possibly resolve some inconsistencies in past studies that examined the effects of company-cause fit on the consumer outcomes of CSR initiatives. The second is to examine the moderating role of company involvement in the relationship between company-cause fit and consumer responses to CSR initiatives.

Accordingly, to achieve this purpose, the present study develops a theoretical framework that leads to the formulation of the research hypotheses. Then, a meta-analysis is conducted to systematically assess the research findings of past studies and test the hypotheses. The results show how company-cause fit influences consumers' attitudinal and behavioral responses to CSR initiatives. The paper ends with a discussion of the theoretical and managerial implications of this study, as well as directions for further research.

## 2. Company-Cause Fit and Its Types

In a broader view, company-cause fit, also referred to as congruence [17], similarity [21], or relevancy [22], is typically understood as the relatedness between a company and a cause [23]. For example, Du, Bhattacharya, and Sen define this fit as "the perceived congruence between a social issue and a company's business" [24] (p. 12). In a similar vein, Robinson, Irmak, and Jayachandran explain that "the fit between the company and a cause can be described by how well the two entities appear to connect or make sense together" [25] (p. 129).

The perceived relatedness between a firm (brand) and a cause can stem from the different characteristics of these entities; thus, it can be divided into several types. In their seminal paper, Menon and Kahn [26] show that the source of the fit can be the market. More specifically, they explain that the

fit is high when a company and a charity (or cause) share the same customers. Bigné, Currás-Pérez, and Aldás-Manzano [27] distinguish between image fit and functional fit. Image fit refers to the level of similarity between a company's (or brand) associations and the image of a social cause, while functional fit concerns the compatibility between the products of a company and the type of social cause that it supports. Given that companies typically implement CSR initiatives by allying with not-for-profit partners, Lafferty, Goldsmith, and Hult [10] claim that a source of fit can involve not only products and social causes (i.e., product-category fit), but the names of partners (i.e., brand-name fit). Brand-name fit "refers to how comfortable consumers are with the cause-brand pairing; that is, how logical is the partnership?" [10] (p. 513), whereas product-category fit denotes the relationships between the product and a particular social cause. Interestingly, Simmons and Becker-Olsen [28] demonstrate that a company can increase or (even) create the fit when there is no apparent link between the company and its not-for-profit partner. Accordingly, they distinguish between natural fit, which is "the extent to which the sponsored cause is perceived as being congruent with the image of the sponsor, independent of efforts to create a perceived fit between the organizations" [28] (p. 156), and created fit, which is achieved through communication efforts with stakeholders or stems from donated products that evoke a shared association. In more recent work, Kim, Sung, and Lee propose distinguishing among business fit, activity fit, and familiarity fit. Comparing activity fit and business fit, they note that "the business fit is about 'with whom' and activity fit concerns 'what to do.'" [29] (p. 165). Hence, business fit refers to the degree that the core business of a company matches with the activity domain of a non-profit organization, while activity fit stems from the link between a company's core business and the activity that the company performs when cooperating with a not-for-profit partner organization. The third category of fit mentioned above relates to the familiarity of organizations that form a company-cause alliance. This type of fit is high when a company and a not-for-profit partner organization have a similar level of awareness among consumers, regardless of whether it is high or low (e.g., high-high, low-low). The familiarity fit is low when a well-known company (not-for-profit organization, NPO) builds a partnership with an NPO (company) that is not familiar to the stakeholders (e.g., high-low). Finally, Zdravkovic, Magnusson, and Stanley identify 10 subcategories of fit that form two macro dimensions, prominence fit and marketing strategy fit. According to them, "prominence fit relates to the manner in which the cause relationship is presented and explained to potential customers while the marketing strategy fit dimension deals with the partners' similarity in segmentation, targeting, and positioning" [30] (p. 158).

### 3. Hypotheses

As mentioned in the introduction, there is no consensus among academics about the role of company-cause fit in stakeholders' responses to socially responsible initiatives. Some claim that the fit enhances the results of these activities, while others argue that congruence between a company and a social cause does not have any impact on the outcomes or that its impact is negative. To obtain a deeper insight into this issue, the following sections explain how company-cause fit influences: (1) the perceived organizational motivation behind CSR initiatives (i.e., CSR attributions); (2) the consumer outcomes of CSR initiatives; and it elaborates on (3) the moderating role of company involvement in a cause.

#### 3.1. Company-Cause Fit and CSR Attributions

Given that the perceived organizational motives underlying CSR efforts play a key role in the consumer outcomes of CSR initiatives [31,32], it is worth explaining in greater detail the relationship between company-cause fit and CSR attributions.

In his pioneer work, Heider [33] shows that individuals have such a strong need for understanding the reasons for events and actions that they may even attribute motives to an object in movement. In other words, motive attributions contribute to a better understanding of the environment by helping individuals interpret the causes of behaviors and events. These interpretations, in turn, determine

individuals' subsequent attitudinal and behavioral reactions [34]. However, individuals do not always elaborate deeply on the reasons for a behavior in question. According to the theory of two stages of interpretation, in the first stage, an individual makes a superficial evaluation of an object in question. When the results of this evaluation are congruent with existing knowledge, the individual does not engage in a deeper interpretation. However, if the results of the preliminary assessment are not consistent with the individual's existing knowledge, he or she tends to put more effort into reasoning and interpretation [19].

Sen, Bhattacharya, and Korschun [35] find that the awareness of CSR initiatives among consumers and other stakeholders is limited, despite corporate efforts to communicate such projects. Thus, attributional processes are likely to emerge among consumers in the context of CSR efforts, in general. However, their significance seems to be associated with the fit between a company and a social cause, as an activity that is inconsistent with prior expectations stimulates motive attribution [36]. Thus, the lower the company-cause fit, the more the consumer elaborates on the CSR initiative in question and focuses on the organizational motives underlying this activity [18].

However, a lack of congruence between a company and a social cause not only increases attributional processes, but also raises consumer skepticism toward a company and its social projects. For example, Myers, Kwon, and Forsythe [37] note that a lack of fit is a cue that may signal the existence of an ulterior motive for engaging in a CSR activity. In a similar vein, Becker-Olsen, Cudmore, and Hill [18] show that low fit leads to consumer beliefs that the firm is less credible. As a consequence, consumers may be less likely to attribute the CSR initiative to the company's altruistic motivation when the fit is low and more likely to perceive the CSR initiative as a genuine attempt to help the cause when the fit is high. Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

**Hypothesis 1 (H1).** *Company-cause fit increases other-serving attributions.*

When a consumer more strongly attributes other-serving motives to a company, he or she does not necessarily perceive less commercial motivation behind a CSR initiative (e.g., self-serving attributions). Several studies demonstrate that self-serving attributions do not correlate with other-serving attributions [38] because consumers accept that a company seeks profits as an economic entity in society [39,40]. Specifically, consumers regard CSR initiatives as simply promotional activities [12]. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

**Hypothesis 2 (H2).** *Company-cause fit is neutral to other-serving attributions.*

### 3.2. Company-Cause Fit and Consumer Outcomes of CSR Initiatives

Deriving from the brand extension literature, several studies suggest that company-cause fit permits cognitive processes related to CSR efforts move easier as the perception of socially responsible activities depends not just on new information, but on the compatibility of information with the existing knowledge that a consumer possesses [18]. In other words, a high fit between a company and a social cause makes consumers think less about a CSR initiative than in the case of a low fit condition. This lower elaboration of CSR efforts enables an easier transfer of favorable associations from a social cause or a charity to a company. As a consequence, company-cause fit can enhance consumer attitudes toward a company and its products.

In addition, as mentioned above, congruence between a company and a social cause can positively affect other-serving attributions. Several studies demonstrate that a perceived genuine organizational motivation behind CSR efforts is a powerful antecedent of consumer opinions, attitudes, and behaviors, such as company evaluation [17], attitudes toward cause-brand alliance [41], purchase intention [25], brand/firm loyalty, or advocacy [12]. Considering the easier transfer of attitudes when company-cause fit is high and the significant association between CSR attributions and consumer outcomes of CSR efforts, the following hypothesis is proposed:

**Hypothesis 3 (H3).** *Company-cause fit enhances consumer outcomes of CSR initiatives.*

The present study assumes that one reason for the lack of consensus on the impact of company-cause fit on consumer responses to CSR initiatives is that previous studies have examined different outcomes of CSR efforts. Indeed, past studies have investigated the impacts of company-cause fit across a wide range of outcomes, including attitudinal responses such as an initiative evaluation [16], company's evaluation [19], brand attitudes [42], brand credibility [43] and company-cause alliance attitudes [44], and behavioral responses such as purchase intentions [25] and brand loyalty [45]. Given that the fit between a company and a cause enables an easier transfer of affect from not-for-profit organizations (NPO) to companies, the effects of the fit would be stronger for consumers' attitudes than for their behaviors. Therefore, the following hypothesis is formulated:

**Hypothesis 4 (H4).** *Company-cause fit more strongly enhances consumers' attitudinal outcomes than their behavioral outcomes of CSR initiatives.*

### 3.3. The Moderating Role of Company Involvement

The lack of consensus among past studies suggests that the perception of and responses to CSR initiatives are much more complex than information processing theories suggest. Several studies show that consumers base their evaluation of CSR efforts on the outcomes of such initiatives [11]. In other words, CSR efforts that generate a better social performance are more likely to benefit a company, including consumer responses.

If congruence between a company and a social cause is high, the company may be more capable of helping an NPO, as fit increases the transferability of expertise and synergy in activities, products, or markets [46]. In contrast, when the company is unrelated to the cause, corporate resources are not able to work efficiently. Thus, Porter and Kramer [47], in their seminal paper, conclude that "the more closely tied a social issue is to a company's business, the greater the opportunity to leverage the firm's resources—and benefit society" (p. 88).

The synergy between a company and a cause is also perceived by consumers. For example, Alcañiz, Cáceres, and Perez [20] find that corporate competence in managing social activities is evaluated on the basis of the company-cause fit, that is, if a company partners with a highly congruent NPO, a consumer is likely to consider the company to be competent in its CSR efforts. However, if a company cooperates with an unrelated NPO, consumers may conclude that it has no competence in addressing a specific social problem.

However, a high level of fit between a company and a social cause is not enough to achieve a synergic effect in corporate social activities. This effect seems to depend on the level of company involvement in a social cause, that is, "the nature and amount of company resources devoted to the business–nonprofit alliance" [48] (p. 31). When a company supports a social cause with only a monetary contribution, a synergic effect cannot be achieved. Regardless of whether the money is donated by a related company or by an unrelated company, its utility is the same. A synergic effect in the cooperation between a company and an NPO can emerge, provided that the corporate involvement in a cause is higher, that is, a corporate commitment to a cause moves beyond monetary donations and includes non-monetary resources, skills, and expertise.

In addition, corporate involvement in a cause influences the perceived organizational motives underlying CSR efforts. For example, Folse, Niedrich, and Grau [49] show that higher donation amounts increase other-serving attributions. Becker-Olsen, Cudmore, and Hill, [18] find that perceiving CSR efforts as socially motivated (i.e., other-serving attributions) can reduce (or neutralize) some of the negative effects of low fit between a company and a cause.

In summary, company involvement in a cause seems to moderate the effects of company-cause fit on other-serving attributions and on the consumer outcomes of CSR efforts. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

**Hypothesis 5 (H5).** *Company involvement in a cause strengthens the relationship between company-cause fit and the consumer outcomes of CSR initiatives.*

#### 4. Materials and Methods

To test these hypotheses, this study conducted a meta-analysis, an approach that has been shown to be useful where previous studies have yielded inconclusive results [50]. A meta-analysis has been successfully applied in several disciplines, including management (see [42,51,52]) and sustainability [53].

A meta-analysis is “a form of survey research in which research reports, rather than people, are surveyed” [54] (p. 1). In other words, this is a statistical procedure that integrates the research findings of previous studies on a particular subject. Combining the results of different studies leads to greater objectivity and generalizability. In addition, this statistical procedure allows testing hypotheses and identifying moderators that explain the variation between research findings [55]. However, a meta-analysis, like other methods, is not free from limitations and can be misused [56]. To be correctly applied, one has to strictly follow the selected procedure.

This study followed the standard procedure of meta-analysis by Lipsey and Wilson [54]. First, an extensive literature search was carried out to find the relevant research reports (e.g., scientific papers, conference proceedings) that meet the specified inclusion criteria. Second, the reports were carefully evaluated and coded. Third, the effect size was calculated and statistically analyzed. The remainder of this section outlines the study selections, sample characteristics, and statistical procedure.

##### 4.1. Selection of Studies and Sample Characteristics

To collect relevant data, the following steps were taken. First, computerized searches of scientific databases, including *ABI/Inform*, *EBSCO Business Source Complete*, and *Web of Knowledge*, were conducted. These searches were based on the key terms *fit/congruence/similarity* and *CSR/social responsibility/social initiative/social marketing/cause marketing*, which had to be present in the title, abstract, or keywords [57]. As a result, 196 papers were identified that could be potentially included in the analysis. Then, a preliminary selection was performed taking into account the information provided by abstracts. Studies were included if they: (1) were experimental, that is, had treatment and control groups (survey research and conceptual papers were excluded); (2) were published in peer-reviewed outlets; and (3) examined consumer responses. To ensure that relevant studies on company-cause fit were not missed, the reference lists of articles that met the selection criteria were evaluated for the inclusion of additional papers. Next, the articles were carefully read to collect data in order to calculate the effect sizes. Papers that reported insufficient information to compute the mean difference effect sizes were excluded from this study (see [27,29,43,58]).

Ultimately, the meta-analysis was performed on 40 papers (marked by asterisks in the References) that reported the research findings of 51 independent experimental studies. These experiments addressed a wide variety of social and environmental causes, and represented the efforts of companies from several industries (see Appendix A). The investigated research reports appeared in 24 journals, most of them in *Journal of Consumer Psychology* (six studies), *Journal of Business Research* (five studies), *Journal of Advertising* (four studies), *Journal of Consumer Marketing* (four studies), *Journal of Marketing* (three studies), and *Journal of Retailing* (three studies). The remaining outlets published one or two studies each.

The studies yielded 117 company-cause fit effects on several consumer outcomes of CSR initiatives including attitudes toward CSR efforts, attitudes toward a company (or brand), purchase intentions, and CSR attributions. The effect sizes were derived from 11,335 subjects; thus, on average, a sample included 222 participants. The majority of studies were carried out on students (78%) and were conducted in the United States of America (76%).

#### 4.2. Statistical Procedure

The statistical analysis followed the general procedure recommended by Lipsey and Wilson [54]. First, for each study, the standardized effect sizes and confidence intervals were calculated according to the formula by Hedges and Olkin [59]:

$$s = \sqrt{\left( (n_e - 1)(s_e)^2 + (n_c - 1)(s_c)^2 \right) / (n_e + n_c - 2)} \quad (1)$$

where  $X_e$  and  $X_c$  are the means for the experimental and control groups, respectively;  $s$  is the pooled standard deviation;  $n_e$  and  $n_c$  are the number of observations; and  $S_e$  and  $S_c$  are the standard deviations of the experimental and control groups, respectively. When the standard deviations or means were not reported, this study calculated the effect sizes directly through  $t$  tests,  $F$  tests,  $p$  values, or  $r$  coefficients, following the formulas provided by Lipsey and Wilson [54] (pp. 198–199). If a paper reported nonsignificant effects of company-cause fit and did not provide the necessary information to calculate an effect size, an effect size of 0.00 was assigned.

To assess the impacts of company-cause fit on consumer responses to CSR initiatives (H1, H2, H3), the mean weighted effect sizes were calculated, and then, their statistical significance was tested based on the  $z$  statistic. The following formula was used to calculate that statistic:

$$z = \frac{|\overline{ES}|}{SE_{\overline{ES}}} \quad (2)$$

where  $\overline{ES}$  represents the absolute value of the weighted mean effect size, and  $SE_{\overline{ES}}$  is the standard error of that effect. The  $z$  statistic is distributed as a standard normal variate [54] (see pp. 114–115).

To test hypotheses describing the effects of moderators (H4, H5), Hedges' [60] approach was used. Following this procedure, analogous to ANOVA, a researcher divides the total variability of the effect sizes into the portion explained by the moderating variable ( $Q_B$ ) and the remaining portion ( $Q_w$ ). To examine whether the variability explained by the moderator was statistically significant, the following formula was used:

$$Q_B = Q_T - Q_w \quad (3)$$

where  $Q_B$  is the statistic distributed as chi-square with  $j - 1$  degrees of freedom,  $j$  is the number of groups (i.e., categories), and  $Q_T$  is the total variability; the  $Q_w$  statistic is distributed with  $k - j$  degrees of freedom, where  $k$  represents the number of effect sizes [54] (see p. 136).

## 5. Results

### 5.1. Hypothesis Tests

To test the research hypotheses, the effect sizes were divided into five homogeneous groups that reflected the impact of company-cause fit on consumer attitudes toward a CSR initiative, attitudes toward a company (or brand), purchase intentions, other-serving attributions, and self-serving attributions. The sixth group consists of the effect sizes for other CSR outcomes such as price fairness, endorsement perceptions, brand loyalty, and brand equity.

Table 1 outlines the results of the hypothesis tests. H1 states that company-cause fit increases other-serving attributions. The research findings of this study provide support for this prediction, as the weighted mean effect size is 0.25 ( $z = 8.83$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), with a 95% confidence interval from 0.19 to 0.30. Following Cohen's benchmark, one may conclude that, on average, company-cause fit has a medium impact on attributing other-serving motivation to a company that conducts a CSR initiative. In addition, consistent with H2, the weighted effect size for self-serving attributions is small ( $ES = 0.002$ ) and statistically insignificant from zero ( $z = 0.03$ ,  $p = 0.40$ ).

The next two hypotheses relate to the impacts of company-cause fit on consumer outcomes of CSR initiatives. H3 predicts that this fit enhances the outcomes of CSR efforts. The results of the meta-analysis provide support for that expectation, as the effects of company-cause fit on examined consumer responses are medium to large. More specifically, the largest effect size is for consumer attitudes toward CSR initiatives ( $ES = 0.93$ ,  $z = 30.06$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), followed by attitudes toward a company ( $ES = 0.53$ ,  $z = 18.85$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and purchase intentions ( $ES = 0.52$ ,  $z = 17.13$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ).

Although the results show that the effects of company-cause fit vary substantially across consumer responses to CSR efforts, H4 is not entirely supported. This study hypothesized that the effects of company-cause fit would be greater for attitudinal than for behavioral outcomes of CSR efforts. Given that purchase intention may serve as a proxy of consumer purchase, this meta-analysis provides only partial support for H4. Consistent with the predictions, the effect size for consumer attitudes toward CSR initiatives is greater than that for purchase intentions (respectively,  $ES = 0.93$  vs.  $ES = 0.52$ ,  $Q = 108.21$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), but there is no difference between the magnitudes of the effect sizes for attitudes toward a company and purchase intentions ( $ES = 0.53$  vs.  $ES = 0.52$ ,  $Q = 0.60$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). Thus, H4 is only partially supported.

**Table 1.** Effect sizes of company-cause fit by company involvement.

CSR Outcome	C In.	K	N	$\overline{ES}$	Z	CI−	CI+	$Q_T$	$Q_B$
Initiative attitude									
	Total	20	4816	0.93	30.06 ***	0.87	0.99	344.42	
	High	6	718	1.43	16.70 ***	1.26	1.59	59.09	38.98 ***
	Low	14	4098	0.85	25.76 ***	0.79	0.92	246.34	
Company attitude									
	Total	31	5387	0.53	18.85 ***	0.48	0.59	352.66	
	High	7	1060	0.86	13.31 ***	0.73	0.99	28.14	32.03 ***
	Low	24	4327	0.45	14.49 ***	0.39	0.52	292.49	
Purchase intention									
	Total	27	4582	0.52	17.13 ***	0.46	0.58	163.53	
	High	8	1346	0.82	14.30 ***	0.71	0.93	60.76	38.31 ***
	Low	19	3236	0.40	11.28 ***	0.33	0.47	64.45	
Other-serving attributions									
	Total	23	5326	0.25	8.83 ***	0.19	0.30	348.46	
	High	12	2610	0.46	11.34 ***	0.38	0.54	165.92	52.40 ***
	Low	11	2716	0.05	1.33	−0.02	0.13	130.14	
Self-serving attributions									
	Total	8	1371	0.00	0.03	−0.10	0.11	17.18	
	High	2	100	0.00	0.00	−0.39	0.39	0.01	0.00
	Low	6	1271	0.00	0.03	−0.11	0.11	17.17	
Others									
	Total	8	1377	0.69	12.10 ***	0.57	0.80	153.00	
	High	3	391	1.25	10.75 ***	1.03	1.48	78.38	31.29 ***
	Low	5	986	0.51	7.73 ***	0.38	0.63	43.32	

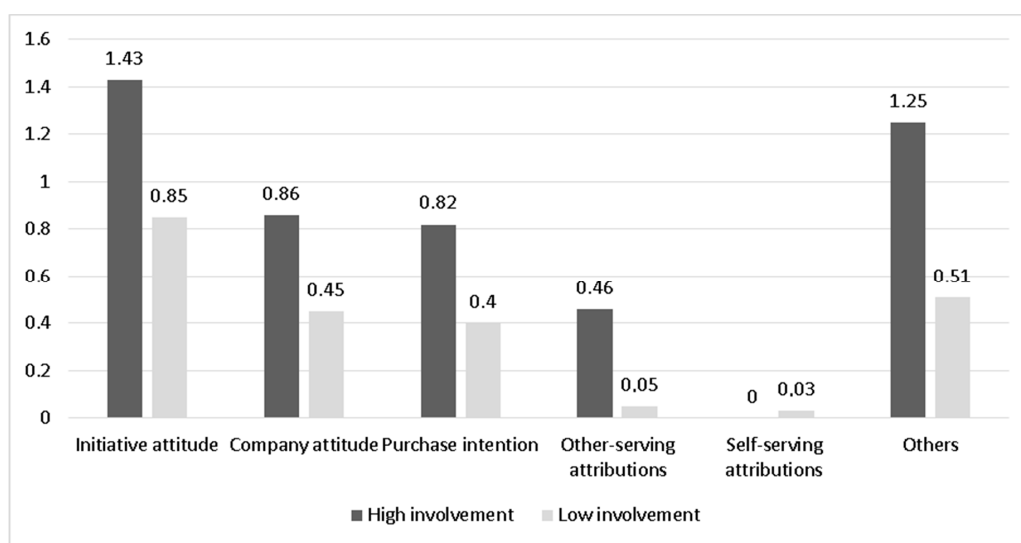
Note: C In. = company involvement, K = total number of effect sizes, N = overall sample size,  $\overline{ES}$  = weighted mean effect size,  $z = z$  - test statistic, CI+ and CI− = 95% confidence intervals for weighted mean effect size;  $Q_T = Q_T$  statistics for CSR outcomes and sub-groups,  $Q_B = Q_B$  = statistic for low vs. high company involvement, \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ .

The next hypothesis (H5) relates to the moderating role of company involvement in a cause. To test whether some of the variability in the effect sizes across studies could be attributed to company involvement, the research studies were divided into two groups. The first group included studies where company support was limited to monetary contributions (i.e., low involvement). The second



group consisted of research where a company donated at least its products (i.e., high involvement). Then, the weighted effect sizes were calculated for these sub-samples across CSR attributions and the consumer outcomes of CSR efforts.

The results also provided support for Hypothesis 5, showing that company-cause fit imposes stronger effects on consumer responses to CSR outcomes when company involvement is high than when it is low (Figure 1). This moderating effect is valid for other-serving attributions ( $ES = 0.46$  vs.  $ES = 0.05$ ,  $Q = 52.40$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), attitudes toward an initiative ( $ES = 1.43$  vs.  $ES = 0.85$ ,  $Q = 38.98$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), attitudes toward a company ( $ES = 0.86$  vs.  $ES = 0.45$ ,  $Q = 32.03$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), and purchase intentions ( $ES = 0.82$  vs.  $ES = 0.40$ ,  $Q = 38.31$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). In other words, the company-cause fit strongly influences the consumer responses to CSR efforts when the company engages in a deeper cooperation with a cause (i.e., high involvement). The positive effect of this fit also occurs for low company involvement (i.e., monetary donations), but its impact is much lower.



**Figure 1.** Effect sizes of company-cause fit by company involvement.

However, the positive effects of high company involvement in a cause do not concern all consumers' responses to CSR efforts. The present study shows that exceptions are self-serving attributions. Regardless of the magnitude of company involvement in a cause, company-cause fit seems to be neutral to the perception of a CSR initiative as a promotional tool ( $ES = 0.00$  vs.  $ES = 0.03$ ,  $Q = 0.00$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ).

## 5.2. Supplementary Analysis

As mentioned in the introduction, a high company-cause fit may evoke unfavorable consumer responses to a company and its products. This negative effect can be particularly strong for companies with bad reputations. For example, Bhattacharya and Sen [7] find, in a qualitative study, that high company-cause fit makes consumers mostly skeptical when a company has a negative reputation (e.g., cigarette or alcohol producers). An experimental study by Yoon, Gürhan-Canli, and Schwarz [17] reaches a similar conclusion. They demonstrate that a company with a bad reputation that attempts to correct their image by means of insincere support for a highly congruent cause only tarnishes its reputation. Thus, prior corporate reputation seems to be a strong moderator that may not only weaken the positive effects of high company-cause fit, but change its direction from positive to negative.

The sample used in the present meta-analysis included several observations (total  $k = 13$ ) derived from studies that examined the CSR efforts of companies with negative reputations (or consumers were highly skeptical to those organizations); therefore, a supplementary analysis was conducted to

check whether the research findings were biased by the effect of prior reputation. Specifically, the effect sizes were calculated separately for positive and negative reputations. In addition, for each type of reputation, the effects of low and high corporate involvement were assessed.

Table 2 summarizes the results of the supplementary meta-analysis. This analysis replicates the findings of a previous meta-analysis for companies with positive (or neutral) reputations. Namely, it shows that company-cause fit positively affects consumer responses to the CSR efforts of a company with a positive reputation. These effects are also moderated by company involvement, that is the effect sizes for other-serving attributions ( $ES = 0.19$  vs.  $ES = 0.47$ ,  $Q = 23.08$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), attitudes toward an initiative ( $ES = 0.85$  vs.  $ES = 1.56$ ,  $Q = 54.98$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), attitudes toward a company ( $ES = 0.57$  vs.  $ES = 0.86$ ,  $Q = 16.33$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), and purchase intentions ( $ES = 0.41$  vs.  $ES = 0.82$ ,  $Q = 25.84$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) are larger when the involvement is high rather than low.

**Table 2.** Effect sizes of company-cause fit by company involvement and by corporate reputation.

CSR Outcomes	C In.	Positive Reputation			Negative Reputation			$Q_B$ pos vs. neg
		$\bar{ES}$	$K$	$N$	$\bar{ES}$	$K$	$N$	
Initiative attitude								
	High	1.56	5	663	0.17	1	55	23.99 ***
	Low	0.85	14	4098				n.a.
	$Q_B$ low vs. high		54.98 ***			n.a.		
Company attitude								
	High	0.86	7	1060				n.a.
	Low	0.57	20	3907	−0.69	4	420	132.13 ***
	$Q_B$ low vs. high		16.33 ***			n.a.		
Purchase intention								
	High	0.82	8	1346				n.a.
	Low	0.41	18	3152	−0.02	1	84	3.73 *
	$Q_B$ low vs. high		35.96 ***			n.a.		
Other-serving attributions								
	High	0.47	11	2550	0.07	1	60	2.27
	Low	0.19	7	2388	−1.09	4	328	111.12 ***
	$Q_B$ low vs. high		23.08 ***			16.85 ***		
Self-serving attributions								
	High	0.00	2	100				n.a.
	Low	0.17	3	358	0.02	2	100	0.01
	$Q_B$ low vs. high		0.00			n.a.		
Others								
	High	1.25	3	391				n.a.
	Low	0.51	5	986				n.a.
	$Q_B$ low vs. high		31.29 ***			n.a.		

Notes: C In. = company involvement,  $\bar{ES}$  = weighted mean effect size,  $K$  = total number of effect sizes,  $N$  = overall sample size,  $Q_B$  pos vs. neg =  $Q_B$  statistic for positive vs. negative company reputation,  $Q_B$  low vs. high =  $Q_B$  statistic for low vs. high company involvement, n.a. = not applicable, \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ .

Although not hypothesized, the supplementary analysis suggests that company-cause fit may negatively influence the outcomes of CSR initiatives if such activities are carried out by a company with a negative reputation. These negative effects hold for company attitudes ( $ES = -0.69$ ,  $z = 6.61$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and other-serving attributions ( $ES = -1.09$ ,  $z = 9.19$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Hence, the present study identifies a possible reason for the negative effects of company-cause fit. In addition, the results suggest

that a high level of corporate involvement may neutralize the negative effects of company-cause fit on other-serving attributions when consumers express unfavorable attitudes toward the company ( $ES = -1.09$  vs.  $ES = 0.07$ ,  $Q = 16.85$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ).

## 6. Discussion

The present study provides several insights into the CSR and sustainability literature. First, the meta-analysis showed that company involvement in a cause can strengthen the positive effects of company-cause fit. In a broader perspective, this research finding suggests that the positive effects of high fit may not stem exclusively from easier information processing. The vast majority of previous studies considered a consumer to be a passive receiver of information about CSR efforts. High company-cause fit makes a consumer think less and enables more efficient information processing [20], excluding situations when corporate behavior is hypocritical [18]. The research findings of this paper complement past studies, as they indicate that a consumer can be an active receiver of CSR information and rationally evaluate companies and their socially responsible activities—that is, he or she recognizes the synergic effect of high corporate involvement in a congruent not-for-profit organization (or social cause) and derives value from this effect (as it is manifested by more favorable responses to a company and its activities).

Second, according to the evidence from the meta-analysis, company-cause fit significantly influences the consumer outcomes of CSR efforts (apart from self-serving attributions); however, this impact differs across different types of consumer responses to CSR initiatives. Company-cause fit has the greatest impact on attitudes toward CSR activities, but its effects on other responses are smaller in magnitude. Thus, the present study validates the thesis about the positive impacts of company-cause fit on CSR outcomes and finds the type of CSR outcome to be another moderator of these effects.

Third, a supplementary analysis suggests that prior corporate reputation may be a strong moderator of company-cause fit because a negative perception of a company not only weakens the positive effect sizes for CSR outcomes, but is likely to make such effects negative for company attitudes and self-serving attributions when corporate contributions are limited to monetary donations. High involvement seems to neutralize these negative effects.

In addition to theoretical contributions, the present paper offers practical implications. Van Marrewijk and Werre [61] argued that in practice, there is no one definition of a sustainable company and identified six stages of corporate sustainability. According to their view, any firm can choose a position from the pre corporate sustainability level (i.e., the firm has no ambition for sustainability) to the holistic corporate sustainability level (i.e., sustainability is fully integrated and embedded in the company). The moderating effect of company involvement on the effects of company-cause fit suggests that deeper engagement in a congruent social or environmental issue (i.e., a higher level of ambition for sustainability) can boost the consumer outcomes of CSR and sustainability efforts. In other words, this engagement can contribute to building a strong company reputation as a socially and environmentally responsible entity. Managers can increase corporate involvement by moving from promotional CSR initiatives (e.g., CRM) that focus on enhancing short term corporate profitability (the profit-driven stage of sustainability) to more complex programs that go beyond superficial, monetary donations and entail a higher level of corporate involvement in a congruent cause. Thus, the present study joins other papers that highlight the benefits of strategic approaches to CSR [47].

Although the current paper provides theoretical and practical contributions, it is not free of limitations. First, the meta-analysis was mainly conducted on experimental studies carried out in the United States of America. Thus, the generalization of the findings is limited to that country. To extend the generalization of the research findings to other cultures and nations, more studies are needed. In a similar vein, most studies in the sample used students. Although performing experiments on students is a predominant practice in marketing and consumer research, this practice reduces the generalization of the findings. Therefore, another opportunity for future studies is to replicate the

findings of the present research on non-student subjects. Third, though some studies addressed real companies or charities (one can see their names in Appendix A), they investigated the effects of hypothetical initiatives. As a proxy of behavioral outcomes, these studies used purchase intentions. In fact, there may be substantial differences between behavioral intentions and market behavior. Thus, to validate the findings of the present meta-analysis, research performed in real marketing settings is needed. Finally, the present study measured a company's involvement in social or environmental causes using a dichotomized scale (low vs. high involvement). In this approach, CSR initiatives that included only financial donations (regardless the size of donation) were regarded as a sign of low involvement, whereas other types of contributions (e.g., product donations) were coded as high involvement. To obtain a better insight into the role of company involvement on the consumer outcomes of CSR initiatives, future studies are invited to take into account not only the nature of company recourse, but also their value.

**Acknowledgments:** I would like to acknowledge the financial support of the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The author declares no conflict of interest.

## Appendix A

**Table A1.** Products, causes and participants used in studies.

Authors	Product Type/Company	Cause/Charity	Participants
Barone, et al., 2007 [23]	apparel brands	nature conservation	students
Becker-Olsen, et al., 2006 [18]	Home Depot, Revlon	homelessness, domestic violence	students
Becker-Olsen, Hill 2006 [62]	Alpo Petfoods, Sport Authority	Humane Society, Special Olympic	students
Bower, Grau 2009 [63]	early learning tools	early literacy, childhood obesity	students
Buil, et al., 2012 [64]	printer, mp3, pasta, chocolates	Red Cross, Greenpeace	consumers
Chéron, et al., 2012 [65]	pet-toy	cruelty to animals, AIDS	students
Das, et al., 2016 [66]	coffee drink, toothpaste	Coffee Kids, Oral Health America	students
Ellen, et al., 2000 [67]	grocery store, building supply store	disaster, ongoing cause	consumers
Ellen, et al., 2006 [31]	gas station	older and disabled people, wildlife habitats, homelessness	consumers
Gu, Morrison 2009 [68]	timber based furniture manufacturer, Hewlett-Packard	early literacy, childhood obesity, recycling, cleaning the Everest	students
Gupta, Pirsch 2006 [44]	Disney entertainment park, AT&T, MCI WorldCom	St Jude Children's Research Hospital	students, consumers
Ham, Han 2013 [69]	hotel	green practice	consumers
Han, et al., 2013 [70]	Adidas, Nike, Hyundai Motors, Samsung Electronics	World Cup	consumers
Kerr, Das 2013 [71]	chocolates	Children's Hunger Fund, Save the Whales	students
Kim 2011 [72]	computer technology company	education for low-income families, transportation for older and disabled people	students
Kim, Kim 2016 [73]	movie tickets	Not revealed	students
Kim, Sung, Lee 2012 [29]	construction company	Habitat for Humanity, Magpie Nest, Red Cross, Society for Cerebral Palsy	students
Koschate-Fischer, et al., 2015 [74]	mineral water	natural environment, abused dogs	students
Kuo, Rice 2015 [75]	candies, lemonade	Susan G. Komen Foundation, leukemia	students
Lafferty 2007 [76]	shampoo	American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Save the Whales	students
Lafferty 2009 [77]	shampoo	National Cancer Institute, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals	students
Lafferty, et al., 2004 [10]	mineral water, instant soup	Red Cross, Famine Relief	students

Table A1. Cont.

Authors	Product Type/Company	Cause/Charity	Participants
Lee, Ferreira 2013 [78]	t-shirt	Boys and Girls Club, Pop Warner Football League, Human Rights Campaign, Planned Parenthood	students
Menon, Kahn 2003 [26]	orange juice, pet foods	cancer, skin cancer, homelessness, green forests	students
Myers, Kwon 2013 [41]	Ralph Lauren, Converse	Habitat for Humanity, Red Cross	students
Myers, et al., 2012 [37]	clothes	water conservation	students
Nan, Heo 2007 [79]	orange juice	Healthy Diet Research Association, Traffic Safety Research Association	students
Pirsch, et al., 2007 [13]	food producer	environmental causes, breast cancer	students
Rifon, et al., 2004 [80]	shoes, medicines	contraception	students
Rim, et al., 2016 [81]	pharmaceutical company	St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, United Cerebral Palsy Association, Humane Society	students
Robinson, et al., 2012 [25]	notebook	education, water conservation	students
Samu, Wymer 2009 [82]	Gerber	Save the Children, National Wildlife Federation	students
Samu, Wymer 2014 [83]	bookstore	environment conservation, education	students
Seok Sohn, et al., 2012 [84]	milk brand	clean water for African children	students
Simmons, Becker-Olsen 2006 [28]	pet foods	Paralympic games, animal protection	students
Van den Brink, et al., 2006 [45]	trousers, staples	pollution in rivers, living conditions of poor iron or cotton suppliers of the company	students
Westberg, Pope 2005 [85]	soft drinks	homelessness	students
Yang, et al., 2015 [86]	cosmetics company	animal testing	students
Yoon, et al., 2006 [17]	tobacco company, oil company	lung cancer, natural environment	students

## References

- Lii, Y.S.; Wu, K.W.; Ding, M.C. Doing good does good? Sustainable marketing of CSR and consumer evaluations. *Corp. Soc. Responsib. Environ. Manag.* **2013**, *20*, 15–28. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Kotler, P.; Lee, N. Corporate social responsibility. In *Doing the Most Good for Your Company and Your Cause*; John Wiley & Sons: Hoboken, NY, USA, 2005.
- Hart, S.L.; Milstein, M.B. Creating sustainable value. *Acad. Manag. Exec.* **2003**, *17*, 56–67. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Lii, Y.S.; Lee, M. Doing right leads to doing well: When the type of CSR and reputation interact to affect consumer evaluations of the firm. *J. Bus. Ethics* **2012**, *105*, 69–81. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Polonsky, M.J.; Speed, R. Linking sponsorship and cause related marketing: Complementary and conflicts. *Eur. J. Mark.* **2001**, *35*, 1361–1389. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Stefanska, M.; Nestorowicz, R. (Eds.) *Fair Trade in CSR Strategy of Global Retailers*; Palgrave Macmillan: New York, NY, USA, 2015.
- Bhattacharya, C.B.; Sen, S. Doing better at doing good: When, why, and how consumers respond to corporate social initiatives. *Calif. Manag. Rev.* **2004**, *47*, 9–24. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Sagawa, S.; Segal, E. Common interest, common good: Creating value through business and social sector partnerships. *Calif. Manag. Rev.* **2000**, *42*, 105–122. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Smith, N.C. Corporate social responsibility: Whether or how? *Calif. Manag. Rev.* **2003**, *45*, 52–76. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Lafferty, B.A.; Goldsmith, R.E.; Hult, G.T.M. The impact of the alliance on the partners: A look at cause-brand alliances. *Psychol. Mark.* **2004**, *21*, 509–531. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Brown, T.J.; Dacin, P.A. The company and the product: Company associations and corporate consumer product responses. *J. Mark.* **1997**, *61*, 68–84. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Du, S.; Bhattacharya, C.B.; Sen, S. Reaping relational rewards from corporate social responsibility: The role of competitive positioning. *Int. J. Res. Mark.* **2007**, *24*, 224–241. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Pirsch, J.; Gupta, S.; Grau, S.L. A framework for understanding corporate social responsibility programs as a continuum: An exploratory study. *J. Bus. Ethics* **2007**, *70*, 125–140. [[CrossRef](#)]
- Guerreiro, J.; Rita, P.; Trigueiros, D.A. Text Mining-Based Review of Cause-Related Marketing Literature. *J. Bus. Ethics* **2015**, *139*, 111–128. [[CrossRef](#)]

15. Hamlin, R.P.; Wilson, T. The impact of cause branding on consumer reactions to products: Does product/cause 'fit' really matter? *J. Mark. Manag.* **2004**, *20*, 663–681. [[CrossRef](#)]
16. Drumwright, M.E. Company advertising with a social dimension: The role of noneconomic criteria. *J. Mark.* **1996**, *60*, 71–87. [[CrossRef](#)]
17. Yoon, Y.; Gürhan-Canli, Z.; Schwarz, N. The effect of corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities on companies with bad reputations. *J. Consum. Psychol.* **2006**, *16*, 377–390. [[CrossRef](#)]
18. Becker-Olsen, K.L.; Cudmore, B.A.; Hill, R.P. The impact of perceived corporate social responsibility on consumer behavior. *J. Bus. Res.* **2006**, *59*, 46–53. [[CrossRef](#)]
19. Pracejus, J.W.; Olsen, G.D. The role of brand/cause fit in the effectiveness of cause-related marketing campaigns. *J. Bus. Res.* **2004**, *57*, 635–640. [[CrossRef](#)]
20. Alcañiz, E.B.; Cáceres, R.C.; Pérez, R.C. Alliances between brands and social causes: The influence of company credibility on social responsibility image. *J. Bus. Ethics* **2010**, *96*, 169–186. [[CrossRef](#)]
21. Gwinner, K.P.; Eaton, J. Building brand image through event sponsorship: The role of image transfer. *J. Advert.* **1999**, *28*, 47–57. [[CrossRef](#)]
22. Rodgers, S. The Effects of sponsor relevance on consumer reactions to internet sponsorships. *J. Advert.* **2003**, *32*, 67–76. [[CrossRef](#)]
23. Barone, M.J.; Norman, A.T.; Miyazaki, A.D. Consumer response to retailer use of cause-related marketing: Is more fit better? *J. Retail.* **2007**, *83*, 437–445. [[CrossRef](#)]
24. Du, S.; Bhattacharya, C.B.; Sen, S. Maximizing business returns to corporate social responsibility (CSR): The role of CSR communication. *Int. J. Manag. Rev.* **2010**, *12*, 8–19. [[CrossRef](#)]
25. Robinson, S.R.; Irmak, C.; Jayachandran, S. Choice of cause in cause-related marketing. *J. Mark.* **2012**, *76*, 126–139. [[CrossRef](#)]
26. Menon, S.; Kahn, B.E. Corporate sponsorships of philanthropic activities: When do they impact perception of sponsor brand? *J. Consum. Psychol.* **2003**, *13*, 316–327. [[CrossRef](#)]
27. Bigné, E.; Currás-Pérez, R.; Aldás-Manzano, J. Dual nature of cause-brand fit: Influence on corporate social responsibility consumer perception. *Eur. J. Mark.* **2012**, *46*, 575–594. [[CrossRef](#)]
28. Simmons, C.J.; Becker-Olsen, K.L. Achieving marketing objectives through social sponsorships. *J. Mark.* **2006**, *70*, 154–169. [[CrossRef](#)]
29. Kim, N.; Sung, Y.; Lee, M. Consumer evaluations of social alliances: The effects of perceived fit between companies and non-profit organizations. *J. Bus. Ethics* **2012**, *109*, 163–174. [[CrossRef](#)]
30. Zdravkovic, S.; Magnusson, P.; Stanley, S.M. Dimensions of fit between a brand and a social cause and their influence on attitudes. *Int. J. Res. Mark.* **2010**, *27*, 151–160. [[CrossRef](#)]
31. Ellen, P.S.; Webb, D.J.; Mohr, L.A. Building corporate associations: Consumer attributions for corporate socially responsible programs. *J. Acad. Mark. Sci.* **2006**, *34*, 147–157. [[CrossRef](#)]
32. Vlachos, P.A.; Panagopoulos, N.G.; Rapp, A.A. Feeling good by doing good: Employee CSR-induced attributions, job satisfaction, and the role of charismatic leadership. *J. Bus. Ethics* **2013**, *118*, 577–588. [[CrossRef](#)]
33. Heider, F. *The Psychology of Interpersonal Relations*; John Wiley & Sons: New York, NY, USA, 1958.
34. Weiner, B. *Human Motivation: Metaphors, Theories, and Research*, 2nd revised ed.; SAGE Publications: London, UK, 1996.
35. Sen, S.; Bhattacharya, C.B.; Korschun, D. The role of corporate social responsibility in strengthening multiple stakeholder relationships: A field experiment. *J. Acad. Mark. Sci.* **2006**, *34*, 158–166. [[CrossRef](#)]
36. Koschate-Fischer, N.; Stefan, I.V.; Hoyer, W.D. Willingness to pay for cause-related marketing: The impact of donation amount and moderating effects. *J. Mark. Res.* **2012**, *49*, 910–927. [[CrossRef](#)]
37. Myers, B.; Kwon, W.S.; Forsythe, S. Creating effective cause-related marketing campaigns: The role of cause-brand fit, campaign news source, and perceived motivations. *Cloth. Text. Res. J.* **2012**, *30*, 167–182. [[CrossRef](#)]
38. Zasuwa, G. Do the ends justify the means? How altruistic values moderate consumer responses to corporate social initiatives. *J. Bus. Res.* **2016**, *69*, 3714–3719. [[CrossRef](#)]
39. Karaosmanoglu, E.; Altinigne, N.; Isiksal, D.G. CSR motivation and customer extra-role behavior: Moderation of ethical corporate identity. *J. Bus. Res.* **2016**, *69*, 4161–4167. [[CrossRef](#)]
40. Vlachos, P.A.; Tsamakos, A.; Vrechopoulos, A.P.; Avramidis, P.K. Corporate social responsibility: Attributions, loyalty, and the mediating role of trust. *J. Acad. Mark. Sci.* **2009**, *37*, 170–180. [[CrossRef](#)]

41. Myers, B.; Kwon, W.S. A model of antecedents of consumers' post brand attitude upon exposure to a cause-brand alliance. *Int. J. Nonprofit Volunt. Sect. Mark.* **2013**, *18*, 73–89. [CrossRef]
42. Orlitzky, M.; Schmidt, F.L.; Rynes, S.L. Corporate social and financial performance: A meta-analysis. *Organ. Stud.* **2003**, *24*, 403–441. [CrossRef]
43. Bigné-Alcañiz, E.; Currás-Pérez, R.; Sánchez-García, I. Brand credibility in cause-related marketing: The moderating role of consumer values. *J. Prod. Brand Manag.* **2009**, *18*, 437–447. [CrossRef]
44. Gupta, S.; Pirsch, J. The company-cause-customer fit decision in cause-related marketing. *J. Consum. Mark.* **2007**, *23*, 314–326. [CrossRef]
45. Van den Brink, D.; Odekerken-Schröder, G.; Pauwels, P. The effect of strategic and tactical cause-related marketing on consumers' brand loyalty. *J. Consum. Mark.* **2006**, *23*, 15–25. [CrossRef]
46. Lee, E.M.; Park, S.Y.; Rapert, M.I.; Newman, C.L. Does perceived consumer fit matter in corporate social responsibility issues? *J. Bus. Res.* **2012**, *65*, 1558–1564. [CrossRef]
47. Porter, M.E.; Kramer, M.R. Strategy and society: The link between competitive advantage and corporate social responsibility. *Harv. Bus. Rev.* **2006**, *84*, 78–92. Available online: <http://sharedvalue.org/resources/strategy-society-link-between-competitive-advantage-and-corporate-social-responsibility> (accessed on 10 May 2015). [PubMed]
48. Irmak, C.; Sen, S.; Bhattacharya, C.B. Consumer reactions to business-nonprofit alliances: Who benefits and when? *Mark. Lett.* **2015**, *26*, 29–42. [CrossRef]
49. Folse, J.A.G.; Niedrich, R.W.; Grau, S.L. Cause-relating marketing: The effects of purchase quantity and firm donation amount on consumer inferences and participation intentions. *J. Retail.* **2010**, *86*, 295–309. [CrossRef]
50. Ali, R.; Lynch, R.; Melewar, T.C.; Jin, Z. The moderating influences on the relationship of corporate reputation with its antecedents and consequences: A meta-analytic review. *J. Bus. Res.* **2015**, *68*, 1105–1117. [CrossRef]
51. Cohen-Charash, Y.; Spector, P.E. The role of justice in organizations: A meta-analysis. *Organ. Behav. Hum. Decis. Process.* **2003**, *86*, 278–321. [CrossRef]
52. Damanpour, F. Organizational innovation: A meta-analysis of effects of determinants and moderators. *Acad. Manag. J.* **1991**, *34*, 555–590. [CrossRef]
53. Osbaldiston, R.; Schott, J.P. Environmental sustainability and behavioral science: Meta-analysis of proenvironmental behavior experiments. *Environ. Behav.* **2012**, *44*, 257–299. [CrossRef]
54. Lipsey, M.W.; Wilson, D.B. *Practical Meta-Analysis*; Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, CA, USA, 2001; Volume 49.
55. Card, N.A. *Applied Meta-Analysis for Social Science Research*; Guilford Publications: New York, NY, USA, 2015.
56. Stanley, T.D. Wheat from chaff: Meta-analysis as quantitative literature review. *J. Econ. Perspect.* **2001**, *15*, 131–150. [CrossRef]
57. Cooper, H. *Research Synthesis and Meta-Analysis: A Step-by-Step Approach*, 5th ed.; Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, CA, USA, 2016.
58. Basil, D.Z.; Herr, P.M. Attitudinal balance and cause-related marketing: An empirical application of balance theory. *J. Consum. Psychol.* **2006**, *16*, 391–403. [CrossRef]
59. Hedges, L.V.; Olkin, I. *Statistical Methods for Meta-Analysis*; Academic Press: New York, NY, USA, 1985.
60. Hedges, L.V. Fitting categorical models to effect sizes from a series of experiments. *J. Educ. Behav. Stat.* **1982**, *7*, 119–137. [CrossRef]
61. Van Marrewijk, M.; Werre, M. Multiple levels of corporate sustainability. *J. Bus. Ethics* **2003**, *44*, 107–119. [CrossRef]
62. Becker-Olsen, K.L.; Hill, R.P. The impact of sponsor fit on brand equity the case of nonprofit service providers. *J. Serv. Res.* **2006**, *9*, 73–83. [CrossRef]
63. Bower, A.B.; Grau, L. Explicit donations and inferred endorsements. *J. Advert.* **2009**, *38*, 113–126. [CrossRef]
64. Buil, I.; Martínez, E.; Montaner, T. La influencia de las acciones de marketing con causa en la actitud hacia la marca. *Cuad. Econ. Dir. Empresa* **2012**, *15*, 84–93. [CrossRef]
65. Chéron, E.; Kohlbacher, F.; Kusuma, K. The effects of brand-cause fit and campaign duration on consumer perception of cause-related marketing in Japan. *J. Consum. Mark.* **2012**, *29*, 357–368. [CrossRef]
66. Das, N.; Guha, A.; Biswas, A.; Krishnan, B. How product-cause fit and donation quantifier interact in cause-related marketing (CRM) settings: Evidence of the cue congruency effect. *Mark. Lett.* **2016**, *27*, 295–308. [CrossRef]

67. Ellen, P.S.; Mohr, L.A.; Webb, D.J. Charitable programs and the retailer: Do they mix? *J. Retail.* **2000**, *76*, 393–406. [CrossRef]
68. Gu, H.; Morrison, P. An examination of the formation of consumer CSR association: When corporate social responsible initiatives are effective. *Asia Pac. Adv. Consum. Res.* **2009**, *8*, 68–75. Available online: <http://www.acrwebsite.org/search/view-conference-proceedings.aspx?Id=14762> (accessed on 12 May 2015).
69. Ham, S.; Han, H. Role of perceived fit with hotels' green practices in the formation of customer loyalty: Impact of environmental concerns. *Asia Pac. J. Tour. Res.* **2013**, *18*, 731–748. [CrossRef]
70. Han, S.; Choi, J.; Kim, H.; Davis, J.A.; Lee, K.Y. The effectiveness of image congruence and the moderating effects of sponsor motive and cheering event fit in sponsorship. *Int. J. Advert.* **2013**, *32*, 301–317. [CrossRef]
71. Kerr, A.H.; Das, N. Thinking about fit and donation format in cause marketing: The effects of need for cognition. *J. Mark. Theory Pract.* **2013**, *21*, 103–112. [CrossRef]
72. Kim, H.S. A reputational approach examining publics' attributions on corporate social responsibility motives. *Asian J. Commun.* **2011**, *21*, 84–101. [CrossRef]
73. Kim, N.; Kim, S. Product Donations in Cause-Related Marketing Campaigns. *Acad. Mark. Stud. J.* **2016**, *20*, 66–78. Available online: <http://search.proquest.com/openview/e58dd159d88724e93a47dbcd007b6753/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=38744> (accessed on 3 February 2017).
74. Koschate-Fischer, N.; Huber, I.V.; Hoyer, W.D. When will price increases associated with company donations to charity be perceived as fair? *J. Acad. Mark. Sci.* **2015**, *44*, 608–626. [CrossRef]
75. Kuo, A.; Rice, D.H. The impact of perceptual congruence on the effectiveness of cause-related marketing campaigns. *J. Consum. Psychol.* **2015**, *25*, 78–88. [CrossRef]
76. Lafferty, B.A. The relevance of fit in a cause-brand alliance when consumers evaluate corporate credibility. *J. Bus. Res.* **2007**, *60*, 447–453. [CrossRef]
77. Lafferty, B.A. Selecting the right cause partners for the right reasons: The role of importance and fit in cause-brand alliances. *Psychol. Mark.* **2009**, *26*, 359–382. [CrossRef]
78. Lee, J.; Ferreira, M. A role of team and organizational identification in the success of cause-related sport marketing. *Sport Manag. Rev.* **2013**, *16*, 161–172. [CrossRef]
79. Nan, X.; Heo, K. Consumer responses to corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives: Examining the role of brand-cause fit in cause-related marketing. *J. Advert.* **2007**, *36*, 63–74. [CrossRef]
80. Rifon, N.J.; Choi, S.M.; Trimble, C.S.; Li, H. Congruence effects in sponsorship: The mediating role of sponsor credibility and consumer attributions of sponsor motive. *J. Advert.* **2004**, *33*, 30–42. [CrossRef]
81. Rim, H.; Yang, S.U.; Lee, J. Strategic partnerships with nonprofits in corporate social responsibility (CSR): The mediating role of perceived altruism and organizational identification. *J. Bus. Res.* **2016**, *69*, 3213–3219. [CrossRef]
82. Samu, S.; Wymer, W. The effect of fit and dominance in cause marketing communications. *J. Bus. Res.* **2009**, *62*, 432–440. [CrossRef]
83. Samu, S.; Wymer, W. Cause marketing communications: Consumer inference on attitudes towards brand and cause. *Eur. J. Mark.* **2014**, *48*, 1333–1353. [CrossRef]
84. Seok, S.Y.; Han, J.K.; Lee, S.H. Communication strategies for enhancing perceived fit in the CSR sponsorship context. *Int. J. Advert.* **2012**, *31*, 133–146. [CrossRef]
85. Westberg, K.; Pope, N. An examination of cause-related marketing in the context of brand attitude, purchase intention, perceived fit and personal values. In Proceedings of the ANZMAC 2005 Conference: Social, Not-for-Profit and Political Marketing, Fremantle, Australia, 5–7 December 2005.
86. Yang, C.F.; Lai, C.S.; Kao, Y.T. The determinants of attribution for corporate social responsibility. *Procedia Soc. Behav. Sci.* **2015**, *207*, 560–567. [CrossRef]

