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The role of cause-related marketing in consumer decision-making towards the store: An applied research with Bairro Feliz program

Beatriz Rocha Querido

Master in Business Administration

Supervisor:

PhD, Marjan Sara Fonseca Jalali, Associate Professor,
Iscte – Instituto Universitário de Lisboa

PhD, Marco Edgar Sousa Escadas, Assistant Professor,
Universidade do Minho

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Department of Marketing, Strategy and Operations

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Submitting this master's thesis has been a challenge. Working and studying is hard, but working and writing a thesis is even harder. The need to organize my time and push myself without a clear deadline in mind was a nightmare for someone who thrives under pressure. However, even if a year late, I managed to overcome procrastination and the typical "I'm so tired, I'll do it tomorrow" attitude. Congratulations to me for closing this chapter of my life.

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Resumo

Estudos recentes revelam que os consumidores estão mais inclinados a apoiar empresas que demonstram um compromisso com a sociedade. Como resultado, as empresas têm adotado estratégias de Responsabilidade Social Corporativa, como o Marketing Relacionado a Causas (MRC), uma estratégia reconhecida por fomentar o envolvimento dos clientes e reforçar a lealdade à marca. Contudo, o ceticismo continua a ser um desafio neste tipo de ações, uma vez que alguns consumidores assumem que estas possam ser criadas principalmente para a obtenção de lucro. Assim sendo, este estudo surge com o objetivo de investigar os antecedentes do processo de tomada de decisão dos consumidores em relação às iniciativas de MRC e perceber o impacto destas na intenção de visitar uma loja, no setor do retalho alimentar em Portugal. Baseado na Teoria do Comportamento Planeado, esta investigação irá expor os participantes a dois cenários- um cenário hipotético, e um cenário aplicado a uma iniciativa de MRC portuguesa, o programa Bairro Feliz, do Pingo Doce. Os resultados revelaram que as Imagem criadas das campanhas de MRC foram o fator com maior influência para a criação de atitudes positivas por parte dos consumidores, e que uma atitude favorável junto com a percepção de Controlo Comportamental foram os fatores de influência na intenção de participação do consumidor nas iniciativas de MRC; posteriormente, uma intenção positiva sugere uma maior possibilidade de visita de loja. Enquanto isto, o ceticismo não surgiu como entrave para o processo de decisão.

Palavras-Chave:

Ceticismo, Marketing Relacionado a Causas, Responsabilidade Social Corporativa, Setor de Retalho Alimentar, Teoria do Comportamento Planeado.

Classificação JEL:

M14 Cultura Empresarial, Diversidade, Responsabilidade Social
M31 Marketing

Abstract

Recent studies reveal that consumers are more inclined to support companies that demonstrate a commitment to society. As a result, companies have adopted Corporate Social Responsibility strategies, such as Cause-Related Marketing (CRM), a strategy recognized for fostering customer engagement and strengthening brand loyalty. However, skepticism remains a challenge in these types of actions, as some consumers assume that such initiatives may be created primarily for profit. Thus, this study aims to investigate the antecedents of consumers' decision-making processes regarding CRM initiatives and to understand their impact on the intention to revisit a store in the food retail sector in Portugal. Based on the Theory of Planned Behavior, this research exposes participants to two scenarios: a hypothetical one and another applied to a Portuguese CRM initiative, the *Bairro Feliz* program by Pingo Doce. The results revealed that the Perceived CRM image was the factor with more influence in order to form positive attitudes, additionally, that a favorable attitude combined with Perceive Behavioral Control were the influential factors for consumer participation intention in CRM initiatives; subsequently, a positive intention suggests a higher likelihood of store revisit. Meanwhile, skepticism did not emerge as a barrier in the decision-making process.

Keywords:

Cause-related Marketing, Corporate Social Responsibility, Food Retail Sector, Skepticism, Theory of Planned Behavior.

JEL Classification:

M14 Corporate Culture; Diversity; Social Responsibility

M31 Marketing

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Glossary of acronyms

APED - Portuguese Association of Distribution Companies (*Associação Portuguesa de Empresas de Distribuição*)

CRM - Cause-Related Marketing

CSR - Corporate Social Responsibility

CA - Consumer Attitudes

CCI - Consumer-Company Identification

BF- Bairro Feliz program

IR - Intention to Revisit

IP - Intention to Participation in CRM Initiatives

PBC - Perceived Behavioral Control

PD – Pingo Doce

P_CRM_Image - Perceived CRM Image

P_CSR_AWARENESS - Perceived CSR Awareness

Skep - Skepticism

SN - Subjective Norm

TPB - Theory of Planned Behavior

Introduction

Recent studies highlight that modern consumers appear to be more inclined to purchase from businesses that demonstrate a commitment to societal needs and environmental sustainability (Carroll & Shabana, 2010; Deng & Xu, 2015; Ellis et al., 2012; Faelli et al., 2023; Gelfound & Gelfound, 2024; Hernandez, 2021; PWC, 2024; Rizvi, 2022). As a result, companies have started to adopt Corporate Social Responsibility strategies not only as a marketing tool, but as a fundamental component of their business practices (Chandler, 2022; Marchi, 2022). Among other strategies, Cause-Related Marketing has emerged as a popular method for aligning corporate goals with social causes, fostering deeper customer engagement and loyalty (Amawate & Deb, 2021; Bhatti et al., 2023; Donahue, 2020; Miranda et al., 2020; Potdar et al., 2018; Shanbhag et al., 2023; Thomas et al., 2020; Van Steenburg et al., 2022; Vrontis et al., 2020). Besides, this has been no different in the retail sector (Chomvilailuk & Butcher, 2016; Dabija et al., 2018; Diallo & Lambey-Checchin, 2017; Lombart & Louis, 2014; Louis et al., 2019).

Concerning the food retail sector, Cause-Related Marketing allows consumers to actively participate in socially responsible campaigns, enhancing the perceived value of the products they purchase and, at the same time, boosting the company's reputation, while give individual satisfaction to the consumer (Amawate & Deb, 2021; Berger et al., 2007; Dowling, 2001; Mardini et al., 2018; Potdar et al., 2018; Vrontis et al., 2020). However, skepticism towards CSR in general and towards Cause-Related Marketing initiatives still exists, as some consumers question the authenticity of such actions, suspecting that they are primarily profit-driven (Ellen et al., 2006; Kuo & Rice, 2015; Miranda et al., 2020; Pittman, 1993; Skarmeas & Leonidou, 2013). This perception creates a challenge for companies in establishing trust and ensuring that their efforts resonate positively with consumers (Farooq & Wicaksono, 2021; Skarmeas & Leonidou, 2013).

In Portugal, Cause-Related Marketing initiatives have been adopted since the early 2000s, for example *Missão Continente* from Continente celebrated two decades of existence in 2023 (Veiga, 2024), but it was intensified after 2010 and today, almost all major retailers have introduced CRM initiatives to their consumers, but there are few studies which demonstrate the impact of Cause-Related Marketing on consumers in this particular field. Therefore, understanding the key determinants that shape consumer attitudes toward Cause-Related Marketing initiatives is therefore of great importance, both for companies aiming to establish trust and loyalty among their customer bases, and for the organizations wanting to increase awareness for their cause.

As such, this investigation aims to discover the key factors influencing consumer attitudes toward Cause-Related Marketing initiatives, observe the impact of skepticism within this context, and analyze the influence of Cause-Related Marketing initiatives in supermarket revisitation. In order to do this,

the research follow the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991) and extend it by incorporating insights from Hong et al. (2019), who applied the TPB model to explore the factors influencing consumer intention to participate in Cause-Related Marketing, and their intention to revisit the hypermarket, in Malaysia (Hong et al.,2019).

The choice of the food retail sector, namely the supermarket context, as the research backdrop is grounded due to the fact that it is a highly competitive sector where it implies constant updating to capture the consumer's attention (Calvo-Porrà & Lévy-Mangin, 2016), and Cause-Related Marketing has been one of the strategies used to improve consumer relationships (Chomvilailuk & Butcher, 2016; Dabija et al., 2018; Diallo & Lambey-Checchin, 2017;Lombart & Louis, 2014; Louis et al., 2019). However, there is a lack of studies about the Portuguese reality concerning Cause-Related Marketing initiatives, especially in the supermarket context.

This paper is structured into seven chapters. Chapter 1 defines the study objectives, highlights the adoption of Cause-Related Marketing in general, and in Portugal, and identifies the research gap related to consumer attitudes toward CRM initiatives.

Chapter 2 presents a detailed literature review, covering Corporate Social Responsibility and Cause-Related Marketing. It also examines existing research on consumer attitudes towards CRM and the impact of skepticism on consumer attitudes. Lastly, demonstrates the evolution of Cause-Related Marketing in the Portuguese food retail sector.

Chapter 3 outlines the conceptual model guiding the research. It develops the theoretical framework and formulates research hypotheses based on identified gaps and prior studies, providing a clear direction for the investigation.

Chapter 4 details the research methodology, including the design, data collection methods, and analysis procedures. This chapter ensures transparency and replicability, describing how the study's objectives will be achieved.

Chapter 5 presents the results of the research. It begins with a description of the study sample and then analyzes the findings related to the conceptual model constructs and the practical implications of Cause-Related Marketing initiatives.

Chapter 6 discusses the research findings in relation to existing literature and theoretical frameworks. It offers a comprehensive analysis of how the results align with or diverge from previous studies.

Chapter 7 concludes the paper by summarizing the key findings, highlighting the theoretical and practical contributions of the research, addressing the study's limitations and by providing recommendations for future research.

Literature Review

2.1. Corporate Social Responsibility

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and social responsibility have been growing in both public and private contexts (Wenqi et al., 2022), reflecting its importance as a cultural phenomenon (Marchi, 2022) and a strategic choice in the business domain (Chandler, 2022). Initially capturing attention in the 1950s, CSR has evolved from a basic management concept into a strategic framework that integrates a broader set of responsibilities regarding social and environmental concerns into business practices (Latapí et al., 2019). The United Nations defines CSR as “a management concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and interactions with their stakeholders” (UNIDO, n.d.).

The strategic role of CSR was underscored by Archie Carroll's Pyramid of Corporate Social Responsibility, which delineated economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic responsibilities (Carroll, 1979; Carroll, 1991). This framework was one of the most important literary contributions and has encouraged businesses to prioritize not just profitability but also legal compliance and ethical conduct, leading to sustainable business practices (Carroll, 1999). Carroll's pioneering work (Carroll, 1979) sited the stage for the integration of economic and social objectives within business operations, making CSR a fundamental part of organizational strategy (Chandler, 2022).

The introduction of the stakeholder theory by R. Edward Freeman in 1984 further emphasized the importance of considering various stakeholder interests, which has become central to CSR strategies today (Freeman, 1984). This theory highlights that businesses impact and are impacted by a network of stakeholders, including consumers, employees, and the community, thereby necessitating a balanced approach to decision-making (Freeman, 1984). Thomas M. Jones introduced the idea of CSR as a decision-making process which influenced the corporate action, initiated the operational dimension of CSR discussion (Jones, 1980).

In 1996, Burke and Logsdon expanded on the strategic dimension of CSR, identifying critical factors such as centrality, specificity, proactivity, voluntarism, and visibility, which link CSR activities directly to a company's core mission and objectives (Burke & Logsdon, 1996). Centrality measured how closely CSR was aligned with a company's mission and objectives, while specificity measured the ability to gain specific benefits for the company through CSR. Proactivity mentioned the ability to create policies in anticipation of social trends, while voluntarism characterized the autonomous decision-making process that should not be influenced by external regulatory mandates. And visibility emphasized the importance of CSR, which is recognizable to internal and external stakeholders. However, Burke and

Logsdon (1996) believed that applying strategic CSR through these dimensions would lead to economic outcomes only.

Elkington's Triple Bottom Line principle introduced in 1998 further expanded the scope of CSR, advocating for a balance between economic, social and environmental impact (Elkington,1998). This concept was reinforced by the European Commission's 2001 definition of CSR, where CSR was defined as "a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis" (European Commission, 2001, p.8). Thus, emphasizing voluntary integration of social and environmental concerns in business operations (European Commission, 2001).

The turn of the millennium saw further advancements and CSR become an integral part of management and competitive advantage, as noted by Werther and Chandler (2005), who argued for a top-down integration of CSR within business operations to achieve long-term sustainability. As a result, the author defined five phases of implementation: first, incorporate CSR perspective in the company strategic plan and in the culture; second, understand that all the actions should be directly linked to the core operations; third, comprehend stakeholders needs and make them a strategic priority; fourth, adopt mid and long-term planning for resources management; and fifth, optimize shared value instead of the profit maximization (Chandler & Werther, 2013; Chandler, 2016). Shared value was a concept introduced by Porter and Kramer, which translated on the simultaneously positive growth of companies but also on the economic and social development of community in which it operates, demonstrating the advantages or disadvantages that the business could for society (Porter & Kramer, 2011).

Moreover, the introduction of the "2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015 marked a milestone, setting a global framework that would influence CSR policies and actions (UNDP, n.d.). These goals highlighted the critical role that CSR played in addressing global challenges and fostering sustainable development across various sectors (Fallah Shayan et al., 2022).

Over recent years, alongside with globalization of markets, CSR has become a priority for companies (Akbari Sadr et al., 2019; Gelfound & Gelfound, 2024; Narayanan, 2022), one competitive advantage (Casais & Sousa, 2019; Gelfound & Gelfound, 2024) in order to endure long-term sustainability (Fernández-Guadaño & Sarria-Pedroza, 2018;). Gelfound & Gelfound (2024) emphasized that CSR purpose was to give back to the community through social and environmental actions with impact, providing positive social value. Thus, companies need to be aware of the essential interconnection among social, environmental, and economic dimensions (Brogi & Lagasio, 2019; Chowdhury et al., 2019; Elkington,1998; Taliento et al., 2019). The social dimension integrates all human resources associated with the business practices; the environmental is related to the

obligations to the environment; while the economic refers the financial performance, obligations towards shareholders, as well as innovation (Rodriguez-Gomez et al., 2020). If the company was having a good performance in all dimensions, CRS could also generate a positive reputation and brand equity, increase loyalty, and increase the willingness of selling products (Gelfound & Gelfound, 2024; Guzmán & Becker-Olsen, 2010; Lee, 2019; Li et al., 2019; Pirsch et al., 2007; Zhang & Ahmad, 2021). Moreover, the investment in CSR implies a rigorous study of the market and of stakeholders needs, in order to take advantage of the opportunities and minimize the associated risks, regarding, for example, reputational damages (Moisescu & Gică, 2020). CSR initiatives can impact a wide variety of stakeholders, such as customers, investors, employees, communities, suppliers, media, and others (Guzmán & Davis, 2017; Moisescu & Gică, 2020). For initiatives success, it is relevant to understand stakeholders can be influenced by different motives, such as economic motivations, social norms, or individual values, and skepticism may still exist (Farooq & Wicaksono, 2021; Musova et al., 2022; Skarmas & Leonidou, 2013, Mardini et al., 2018, Miranda et al. 2020). Various authors show that there are consumers who still question the motives behind CRM initiatives, because of previous initiatives that make them uncertain about companies' objectives and actions, due to phonemes such as "greenwashing". Therefore, it is important to include CSR in the global strategy in a transparent and ethical way, in order to minimize the negative impact of skepticism (Kim & Lee, 2018; Liu et al, 2022).

The implementation of CSR may happen through institutionalized and/or promotional programs (Pirsch et al., 2007). Institutionalized CSR programs are introduced as an approach that seeks to integrate CSR into the company's overall framework, addressing their social responsibilities to stakeholders (policies and programs about some of society's problems, for example). On the other hand, promotional programs are CSR initiatives that motivate product sales (cause-related marketing or green marketing, for example). According to Pirsch et al. (2007), the first are the most impactful in boosting customer loyalty, improving the overall perception of the company, and reducing consumer skepticism. On the other hand, promotional CSR programs seem more effective in generating purchase intent.

Kotler et al. (2012) introduced diverse categories of CSR initiatives, including corporate social marketing (endorsing behavior change campaigns); cause-related marketing (contributing a percentage of revenues to a specific cause linked to product sales or usage); cause promotion (backing social causes through promotional sponsorships); corporate philanthropy (direct donations to charities or causes); socially responsible business practices (adjusting and implementing discretionary business practices and investments that align with social causes); and community volunteering (encouraging employee volunteerism in the community). Shanbhag et al. (2023) stated that cause-related marketing has been increasingly popular among organizations over the last three decades, one of the most

versatile activities among CSR initiatives (Bhatti et al., 2023) and promotes product value creation through active customer participation (Vrontis et al., 2020).

As a major event, the COVID-19 pandemic was an attention call the world, and CSR practices and policies did not go unnoticed (He & Harris, 2020; Schwartz & Kay, 2023). COVID-19 tested companies' commitment to ethical business conduct and corporate social responsibility (He & Harris, 2020), posing challenges to firms with regard to the struggle of balancing the interest between stakeholders and their own business (Asante Antwi et al., 2021). This period lead companies towards more genuine and authentic CSR (He & Harris, 2020; Mahmud et al., 2021; Qiu et al., 2021), where safety and employees' and consumers' well-being were seen as a priority (George, 2020; Schwartz & Kay, 2023; Zhang, 2021).

Recent studies of Blank et al. (2024) defined nine CSR initiatives associated with the corporate response to COVID-19: donation in-kind (goods, services, and time), donation of money, creating content for entertainment, free products (product trials, premium content, and upgrades), free services (curbside pick-up, delivery, and senior hours), communication of operational changes, employee support (health and financial security), financial support to customers (discounts, flexible payment options, and payment deferral), and shifting production (to products needed to fight the pandemic, e.g., hand sanitizer, personal protective equipment, and ventilators). Social marketing was a tool that was used by diverse companies where companies wanted to influence consumers behaviors (Business for Impact, 2020). For example, Nike initiative "Play inside, play for the world", in 2020, encouraged consumers to a healthy life during the pandemic, since Nike club training subscription was free for a limited period of time and, simultaneously, boosted their brand authority and reputation among consumers (O'Brien, 2023). Additionally, Cause-related Marketing was also a tool used for companies to give back to the society, Donahue (2020) and Van Steenburg et al. (2022) highlighted the work of business towards non-governmental and non-profit associations, with donations and fundraises.

2.2 Cause-related Marketing

Cause-Related Marketing (CRM) is an example of a CSR promotional program (Pirsch et al., 2007) and is one of the most versatile marketing approaches inside of CSR (Bhatti et al., 2023). Varadarajan and Menon (1988) was the first to defined CRM as "the process of formulating and implementing marketing activities that are characterized by an offer from the firm to contribute a specified amount to a designated cause when customers engage in revenue-providing exchanges that satisfy organizational and individual objectives" (p. 60). This can be perceived as an activity to increase revenue, and a strategic approach to improve reputation and create a positive attitude toward the company (Amawate & Deb, 2021; Berger et al. 2007; Dowling, 2001; Mendini et al., 2018; Miranda et

al., 2020; Potdar et al., 2018; Thomas et al., 2020; Webb & Mohr, 1998), since it promotes a general growth of consumer satisfaction (Ajzen, 1985; Ajzen, 1991; Hong et al., 2019; Langen et al., 2013; Laroche, 2017; Lee & Kim, 2016; Polonsky & Wood, 2001; Pringle & Thompson, 1999; Varadarajan & Menon, 1988; Shanbhag et al., 2023). It is important to state that these initiatives are limited for a period of time (Bhatti et al., 2023).

The first CRM campaign happened in 1983, in the United States, by American Express (Varadarajan & Menon, 1988), which was a program with the objective to boost the usage of the AMEX credit card while raising funds for the restoration of the Statue of Liberty. This type of initiative increased during the last four decades, as has become a recurrent practice for companies (Adomaviciute et al., 2016), since consumers actually purchase from CRM campaigns (Chang & Chu, 2020) and feel satisfied with that (Jeong & Kim, 2020; Vrontis et al., 2020).

Unlike CSR, CRM normally is motivated by a desire to gain something from these initiatives. Normally, it should be a win-win situation, for the company, the nonprofit organization, and the customer (Miranda et al. 2020; Musova et al., 2022; Silva & Martins, 2017). For companies, CRM can increase reputation, positive purchase intentions, and customer loyalty (Amawate & Deb, 2021; Berger et al. 2007; Bhatti et al., 2023; Donahue, 2020; Dowling 2001; Mendini et al., 2018; Miranda et al., 2020; Potdar et al., 2018; Potdar et al., 2018; Shanbhag et al., 2023; Thomas et al., 2020; Van Steenburg et al., 2022; Vrontis et al., 2020; Webb & Mohr, 1998). For nonprofit organizations, CRM promotes financial growth or the increase of physical resources. Nevertheless, some studies show that companies benefit much more than the nonprofit organization itself (Adkins, 2000; Musova et al., 2022; Pringle & Thompson, 1999). Du and Vieira (2012) note that CRM has been also used in more controversial sectors to promote a positive reputation, both in environmental and social terms. For consumers, the advantage of these initiatives is helping a cause that they appreciate, as an inner satisfaction which makes them feel good about themselves (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2004; Laroche, 2017; Polonsky & Wood, 2001; Pringle & Thompson, 1999). Therefore, it is crucial that consumers understand companies' motives behind CSR and CRM initiatives, showing that company-identification introduced by Brewer (1991), is an important metric when predicting consumers' attitudes towards CRM initiatives (Hong, 2019).

Nowadays, CRM initiatives have evolved, especially with the covid-19 pandemic, and started to play a larger role in social awareness across companies' CSR practices, within the various sectors (Shanbhag et al., 2023). It's possible to identify three different types of CRM initiatives, such as transactional initiatives, message promotion, and licensing programs (Miranda et al., 2020). First, the transactional approach entails: a purchase-triggered donation, where the company promises to contribute a proportion of the profits generated from the sale of a product or service; a buy-one-give-one method, matching consumers' donations for a specific cause; and, the checkout charity method,

which encourages consumers to make a donation during the payment process (Kinard & Pardo, 2017; Kotler & Lee, 2005; Stole, 2006). Second, the message promotion campaign aims to communicate a company's support for a cause. Lastly, the licensing program allows for a cause's name or logo to be used on a product or service in exchange for royalty payments based on a percentage of sales. According to Miranda et al. (2020), the most used campaign is transactional.

2.3 The Consumer Side

Corporate Social Responsibility has been a competitive strategy for any company that desires a good reputation and loyal consumers (Gelfound & Gelfound, 2024; Li et al., 2019; Zhang & Ahmad, 2021). And, since the Covid-19 pandemic, companies moved towards more genuine and authentic CSR initiatives (He & Harris, 2020; Manos, 2020). As consumers become more responsive and aware of community issues, the authenticity of CSR has emerged as a key factor for successful campaigns and initiatives (Alhouti et al., 2016; Bruhn et al., 2012; Manos, 2020). CSR authenticity was defined as "consumer perceptions of how genuine and true a firm's CSR activities are" (Blank et al., 2023, p.4).

Brown and Dacin (1997) introduced one of the first studies investigating consumers' perceptions of CSR, demonstrating that CSR could influence how consumers responded to products. Furthermore, research would confirm to show that CSR authenticity can significantly impact consumer attitudes (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2004; Hong et al., 2019), boosting purchase intentions, brand loyalty, word of mouth, and enhancing reputation (Alhouti et al., 2016; Hong et al., 2019; Joo et al., 2019; Li et al., 2019). Additionally, consumers, now more conscious than ever, are reflecting their values and concerns in their purchasing choices (Carroll & Shabana, 2010; Deng & Xu, 2017; Ellis et al., 2012; Gelfound & Gelfound, 2024; Hernandez, 2021). Therefore, CSR has become a strategic way for companies to connect with consumers, impacting their behavior significantly (Gelfound & Gelfound, 2024; Guzmán & Becker-Olsen, 2010; Lee, 2019; Li et al., 2019; Pirsch et al., 2007; Zhang & Ahmad, 2021). This impact has been enhancing a reputations and financial performance (Chernev & Blair, 2015; Gelfound & Gelfound, 2024; McGuire et al., 1988).

Moreover, CRM has been one of the most used strategies by companies that intend to be socially responsible (Blank et al., 2023; Guerreiro et al., 2016; Miranda et al., 2020; Potdar et al., 2018; Webb & Mohr, 1998). Consists in a CSR promotional program (Pirsch et al., 2007), where companies contribute a specified amount to a designated cause if consumers act accordingly, in order to fulfill individual believes and organizational objectives (Ajzen, 1985; Hong et al., 2019; Langen et al., 2013; Varadarajan & Menon, 1988). In order to maximize the impact of CRM campaigns, it is crucial to know who the target is and to choose the cause carefully (Duarte & Silva, 2020; Farooq & Wicaksono, 2021; Mendini et al., 2018; Skarmeas & Leonidou, 2013).

Duarte and Silva (2020) indicated that it is vital to know the campaign target and its characteristics in order to be well perceived. In fact, the relationship between perception, attitude, and intention, could be influenced by factors such as gender and gender (Dhir et al., 2020). Regarding gender, women are seen as more benevolent and emphatic than men and appear to have a stronger connection with causes, leading to a more positive attitude and a greater likelihood of purchasing CSR related products, through CRM campaigns (Bhaduri & Ha-Brookshire, 2015; Duarte & Silva, 2020; Thomas et al., 2020; Webb & Mohr, 1998). In general, when concerning age, younger people appear as more environmentally and socially conscious than older people, which makes them more likely act positively towards CRM initiatives (Thomas et al., 2020). Nevertheless, older consumers also place value on CSR causes, and have more financial resources, which makes them more likely to contribute to CRM initiatives (Duarte & Silva, 2020; Lee & Cho, 2019)

2.3.1 Consumer Attitudes

When studying consumer attitudes and behavior Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), from 1991, is crucial, and concerning the retail context, Hong et al. perspective from the TPB, created in 2019 is important to consider. The TPB has been consider accurate to predictor consumers' intentions that could translate in behavior in diverse sectors and circumstances (Bosnjak et al., 2020; Hsu et al., 2017; Judge et al., 2019; McNeill & Venter, 2019; Peng et al., 2021), inclusive CRM initiatives (Hong et al., 2019; Shanbhag et al., 2023).

According to Ajzen (1991) TPB model suggests that people make rational decisions about specific actions according to the available information to them (Ajzen, 1991; Bosnjak et al., 2020), which could be companies CSR policies information, specific information about a particular CRM, or friends and family opinions, for example. Therefore, were defined three determinates for consumer intention: consumer attitudes (CA), subjective norm (SN) and perceived behavioral control (PBC) (Ajzen,1991).

Consumer attitudes was the first determinant of consumer intention, since a behavior attitude could predict a behavioral intention (Ajzen,1991; Hong et al., 2019; Lee & Kim, 2016; Rathore, 2022; Shanbhag et al., 2023; Wang et al. 2022; Zhang et al., 2013). Hong et al.'s perspective of TPB demonstrated that consumers attitude could be influenced by two factors: Consumer-company Identification (CCI) and Perceived CSR Image, and Perceived Company-cause Fit (Hong et al., 2019). CCI was introduced by Bhattacharya and Sen (2003), which consists in consumers comparing personnel values with company's values and identity. Even though, existed different ways to construct CCI, CSR has gained a significant effect in consumer identification (Deng & Xu, 2017). Perceived CSR image was defined as the consumer evaluation of company's actions towards stakeholders needs (Deng & Xu, 2017;Lacey et al., 2015; Park et al., 2017), which was align with the idea of CSR authenticity, where consumers evaluate the genuine concerns behind CSR initiatives (Blank et al., 2023). Lastly, Perceived

Company-cause Fit happens when the cause supported fits with the company identity, and if that happen consumers perceived that the initiative as authentic (Alhouthi *et al.*, 2016; Deng & Xu, 2017; Park *et al.*, 2017).

Moreover, SN were seen as the individual perception of a society expectation to act in a certain way (Ajzen, 1991; Judge *et al.*, 2019; Peng *et al.*, 2021; Peters & Templin, 2010; Rathore, 2022; Shanbhag *et al.*, 2023), since individuals could feel the need to have approval of others (Ajzen, 1991). For example, Judge *et al.* (2019) demonstrated that consumers' intention were influenced by SN when purchase a housing with a sustainability certification, since this process could implicate deal with other people point of view, and Peng *et al.* (2021) exhibited the government environmental regulations on green innovation were influencing enterprises' behavioral intention. However, in Hong *et al.* (2019) investigation, SN did not appear to be significant related to consumers intention towards CRM initiatives.

Lastly, PBC was seen as consumer perception of the difficulty in enact on a specific behavior, based on their past experiences and resources (Ajzen, 1991). Several researchers demonstrated that when consumers have access to the resources needed to participate in CRM initiatives, i.e., time and money, they feel that they have control over the decision to participate (Ajzen, 1991; Hong *et al.*, 2019, Rathore, 2022; Lee & Kim, 2016; Shanbhag *et al.*, 2023). Therefore, if a person has a positive attitude, perceives a social norm that supports the behavior, along with a high level of perceived control, their intention to perform the behavior will be more robust (Ajzen, 1991, Hong *et al.*, 2019, Bosnjak *et al.*, 2020; Rathore, 2022; Shanbhag *et al.*, 2023; Wu *et al.*, 2016). Additionally, its believed that if an individual's intention to perform a behavior is high, higher is the likelihood of actually engaging in that behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Graham-Rowe *et al.*, 2015; Hong *et al.*, 2019; Rathore, 2022; Shanbhag *et al.*, 2023)

Regarding CRM initiatives, consumers can participate in different ways, such as through donations of money, kinds, time (volunteering), and word-of-mouth (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2004). Regarding price/donations, McWilliams and Siegel (2000) and Bhattacharya and Sen (2004) believed consumers were unwilling to pay more just to be seen as good citizens. Recent authors confirmed that consumers are becoming more responsible with their choices and willing to pay more for responsible products or services, with socially or environmental concerns (Carroll & Shabana, 2010; Deng & Xu, 2017; Ellis *et al.*, 2012; Faelli *et al.*, 2023; Gelfound & Gelfound, 2024; Hernandez, 2021; PWC, 2024; Rizvi, 2022). The KPMG report indicated that "90% of consumers are willing to pay more to an ethical retailer or brand that gives back to society" (Hernandez, 2021, p.7). PwC 2024 Voice of the Consumer Survey highlighted that consumers were prioritizing a consumption focused on sustainability-focused practices and were more willing to spend more on sustainability products (PWC, 2024).

In addition, the intention to participate in CRM initiatives can be a reason for re-shopping at a company that implements CRM initiatives, due to the growth of consumer satisfaction ((Ajzen, 1985;

Ajzen, 1991; Hong et al., 2019; Langen et al., 2013; Laroche, 2017; Lee & Kim, 2016; Polonsky & Wood, 2001; Pringle & Thompson, 1999; Varadarajan & Menon, 1988 Shanbhag et al,2023). However, not all consumers can perceive CRM actions positively and authentic, due to skepticism (Farooq & Wicaksono, 2021; Skarmeas & Leonidou, 2013, Mendini et al., 2018, Miranda et al. 2020).

2.3.2 Consumer Skepticism

According to Webb and Mohr (1998), the fact that a company acts responsibly does not mean that it is seen as such, and this has a lot to do with the authenticity perceived by consumers. Authenticity is perceived when the consumer understands that companies are motivated to help without having as the financial objective as dominant (Alhouthi et al., 2016). In Chon and Kim's (2021) work, the scholars identified the differences between cynicism and skepticism related to CSR. The first is a disposition towards something that is marked by pessimistic beliefs, disappointment, and distrust. The second is seen as a temporary feeling or perception of doubt about the company's ability to match what it has committed itself to. In fact, consumer skepticism can affect companies' image and performance (Farooq & Wicaksono, 2021), resulting in the decrease of purchase intentions and in the depreciation of its image.

As Miranda et al. (2020) stated, there are two types of consumers, the ones who trust, and the ones who doubt, and since many consumers still question the motives behind CRM initiatives, skepticism continues to be an obstacle to their success (Farooq & Wicaksono, 2021;Skarmeas & Leonidou, 2013, Mendini et al., 2018, Miranda et al. 2020).With the growth of CRM initiatives as a mainstream practice of CSR policies, many consumers are perceiving these initiatives as self-serving or extrinsic motives, i.e., as just an attempt by the company to increase its profits (Ellen et al., 2006; Kuo & Rice, 2015;Pittman, 1993; Skarmeas & Leonidou, 2013). Taking this in consideration, it is important for a company to select the right cause and the right partner, if it wants to achieve the right outcome, and avoid consumer skepticism (Duarte & Silva, 2020; Mendini et al., 2018; Ratnakaran & Edward, 2019).

Considering money donations, customers are more likely to have a positive view of campaigns with larger donations, while smaller donations may be seen as marketing ploys, leading to customer skepticism (Natarajan et al., 2016). When observing demographics aspects as gender, women are seen as more pro-social consumer, for instance, they are more generous in charity donations (Amawate & Deb, 2021). In fact, women were identified less skeptical compared to men (Cui et al., 2003; Thomas et al., 2020; Youn & Kim, 2008). Furthermore, as age emerged as a factor influencing varying levels of sensitivity and receptiveness to CRM initiatives, studies found that younger consumers are more positive towards these ideas (Thomas et al., 2020; Youn & Kim, 2008).

2.4 Investigation Context

2.4.1 CSR Practices in Portugal

As a member of the United Nations and the European Union, Portugal has been committed to ensuring that companies adopt sustainable practices encompassing social, environmental, and economic considerations, as stipulated in treaties and policies (Monteiro, 2015). However, the integration of CSR in business activities was characterized by a passive mindset until the early 2000's (Neves & Bento, 2005). The mindset shift occurred with Portugal being the host of European Summit in 2000, and with the European Council's launch of the European Commission Green Paper (Ribeiro, 2017).

Therefore, different institutions emerged to promote the theme of CSR in Portugal, such as the Portuguese Association of Ethics (APEE), the Group of Reflection and Support for Corporate Citizenship (GRACE), and the Business Council for Sustainable Development (BCSD) (Azevedo et al., 2022). The Portuguese Association of Ethics (APEE) exists to help create and support a Sustainable Development model, guided by ethical principles and values (APEE, 2023). GRACE is a not-for-profit organization established by a consortium of businesses, with the objective of raising awareness within the business community about the importance of citizenship and social responsibility in companies (GRACE, 2024). BCSD Portugal is a non-profit organization committed to public benefit, established with the mission of promoting sustainable development. It actively supports companies on their journey towards sustainability, aiming to generate positive impacts on stakeholders, society, and the environment (BCSD Portugal, 2024). Additionally, The Portuguese Network for Social Responsibility of Organizations (RSO pt) was founded between the years 2006-2007 (RSO PT, n.d.), and advocates for the social responsibility of organizations. All of them are still important today.

Furthermore, in 2008, the Portuguese CSR standard was also created, NP 4469. This standard outlined requirements for a social responsibility management system, enabling organizations to create and implement policies and objectives that consider stakeholder views and social responsibility aspects (APCER, 2023), and was an innovative landmark for the development of the practices in the country (Ferro, 2008).

However, the prioritization and implementation of CSR policies in companies have typically been unequal. Additionally, Proença and Branco (2014) declared that despite knowing the benefits of being socially responsible, Portuguese companies did not have this as a priority; in fact, some refused to communicate their activities to external stakeholders. In terms of actions, external initiatives that have emerged over the years outlined by large companies or SMEs have been in support for the community, such as actions in schools, donations, or sponsorships for cultural, social, educational and sports actions (Gago et al., 2005; Proença & Branco, 2014). The internal initiatives generally focus on volunteering (Gago et al., 2005)

More recently, companies have been recognizing social responsibility as a core element, since the implementation of CSR started to add value to the company's reputation (Dieguez et al., 2023). This shift has been followed by an increase of awards that recognized the work on CSR practices (Gonçalves et al., 2020). Besides awards, certification becomes a big deal, to increase recognition and competitive advantage, primarily while working with multinational clients (Dieguez et al., 2023). It is important to highlight ISO 26000:2011, which is a certifiable international standard that specifies guidelines for social responsibility and SA 8000:2008, a consultative international standard that instructs standard certification on social responsibility (Dieguez et al., 2023). Concerning Dieguez et al. (2023) report, the prominent CSR practices in Portugal are related to code of conduct and inclusion of women, people with limitations and disadvantages and people from ethnic minorities in the market and was highlighted that reporting was not a priority.

2.4.2 CRM at the Portuguese Food Retail

The retail food segment significantly influences society's lifestyle and is acknowledged as a competitive industry where the relationship between retailer and consumer plays a crucial part (Calvo-Porrá & Lévy-Mangin, 2016). Chomvilailuk and Butcher (2016) and Lombart and Louis (2014) recognize that CSR initiatives positively influence consumers' attitudes, considering satisfaction and trust. Furthermore, according to Dabija et al. (2018), Diallo and Lambey-Checchin (2017), and Fernández-Ferrín et al. (2021), CSR also affects consumers' intention to purchase and their loyalty towards the retailer. Indeed, retailers see CSR as a way to improve their consumer relationships (Louis et al., 2019).

Large retailers were the first to introduce a CSR approach in their strategy, which was initially focused on responses to environmental concerns (Chase, 1991), but profitability was the primary motivation related to this change of strategy (Sirgy & Lee, 1996). In the early years of CSR implementation, Strong (1995) identified two types of retailers: ones proactive with pioneering practices and others only replying to government regulations. These CSR initiatives were consumer-orientated in order to respond to customer pressures, such as donations to charitable associations, implementation of green policies for purchasing and supply, and/or measures to improve public health (Piacentini et al., 2000).

In Portugal, the *Associação Portuguesa das Empresas de Distribuição* (APED) represents a large group of companies in the retail, wholesale, and e-commerce sector and its activity is based on four strategic axes: people, sustainability, the economy of the future and competitiveness and ethics (APED, 2023). Since APED's foundation in 1994, consumers have been the engine for its action, as well as for its 195 associates' actions (APED, 2023). Eight of these associates are considered the most relevant players in the Portuguese food retail industry: Sonae (Continente); Jerónimo Martins (Pingo Doce); Lidl; Intermarché; Auchan; Mercadona; Aldi; MiniPreço (Eco, 2023).

In 2010, with the Lisbon Agenda 2010, APED was already approaching sustainability strategies within the scope of the new challenges for food retail, such as creating eco-design packaging or environmental certification (Jorge, 2010). Consequently, a report from APED (2015) demonstrated that CSR initiatives were intensely focused on internal initiatives, which internal volunteering was the primary way to socially respond to society's needs (e.g., Auchan Portugal; Pingo Doce; Continente).

In the following years, the association has been introducing new layers towards the environmental battle, such as measures against food waste (APED, 2016), a commitment to circularity to ensure a more sustainable future (APED, 2018), the participation in the Plastics Pact, to increase the recycling of this material (Essência do Ambiente, 2023), and as the development of the decarbonization pact "*Juntos pela Descarbonização*", to decarbonize the industry by 2040 (Naves, 2022). In addition to their environmental concerns, retailers also demonstrated a concern for an equal society under a CSR strategy based on volunteering and patronage, policies to combat inequalities and promote inclusive development, support of social projects through cause related marketing, initiatives to raise awareness of healthier lifestyles, and investing in the development, recognition, and well-being of their employees (Auchan Retail Portugal, 2023; Jerónimo Martins, 2022; Lidl Portugal, n.d.; Sonae, 2023).

Since the beginning of the 2000s, it is possible to identify some cause-related marketing initiatives in Portugal by major Portuguese retailers, primarily in the two largest supermarket chains in Portugal: Continente, part of the Sonae group, and Pingo Doce, part of the Jerónimo Martins group.

One noteworthy initiative is the "*Missão Sorriso*" by *Continente*, Sonae Group, which is currently called "*Missão Continente*" and celebrates its two decades in 2023 (Veiga, 2024). Over this extended period, they have undertaken various projects and initiatives with the support of Portuguese consumers to raise funds for various causes, including areas such as food, people, and planet (Garcia, 2024). This support has come through the purchase of specific products, such as those related to "*Leopoldina*", as well as the collection of food items and donations, highlighting the collection of 639 thousand euros for needy families during the pandemic with the "*Nunca desistir*" campaign (Garcia, 2024). In 2023, they launched the "*A ajuda mora ao lado*" campaign, encouraging customers to support 1000 local institutions by purchasing vouchers in Continente stores or making donations via the Cartão Continente app (Continente, n.d.).

The Jerónimo Martins group, through the Pingo Doce supermarket, has stood out over the years with collectible campaigns targeting young people, such as "*Bando do Bosque*", a children's book where 50 cents were donated to family reading projects for every book sold under the National Reading Plan. Additionally, they had characters in plush toys that could be obtained through collectible stamps available in their stores, acquired by making purchases at the establishment (Gonçalves, 2019). This initiative started in 2019 and continued in the following years with the books "*Bando Do Bosque – Há Festa Na Clareira*" (2020), supporting the League for the Protection of Nature, and "*Bando Do*

Mar – Missão Salvar O Oceano" (2021), where the funds raised went towards marine litter collection and the environmental education project "*Em Busca dos Suspeitos do Costume*" by ABAE (Jerónimo Martins, 2023). Finally, in partnership with the National Commission for the Promotion of the Rights and Protection of Children and Youth, they launched the "*Frumania*" collection, including a set of collectible cards and Minions-themed plush toys (Jerónimo Martins, 2023). In addition, they have the *Bairro Feliz* program, which has supported over 1037 causes since 2019, with four editions, three of them national (Pingo Doce, 2023). This initiative arose from Pingo Doce's motivation to make the neighborhoods around its stores happier, allowing the community to choose local causes supported by the supermarket through in-store voting. This voting is done through cards that customers acquire when making purchases over 10 euros at a Pingo Doce store during the campaign period.

Another notable initiative is "*Mais Ajuda*" by Lidl, a project that emerged in 2019 with the aim of providing innovative solutions to social challenges (LIDL, 2023). In addition, Lidl has been promoting various campaigns during the Christmas season for the past nine years to improve its social impact, contributing over 4 million euros to 154 entities with the help of funds raised together with its customers (LIDL, 2023).

In addition to these initiatives, over the years, various supermarkets have supported association such as "*Operação Nariz Vermelho*" (Lemos, 2023; Nunes, 2019), "*Cruz Vermelha Portuguesa*" (Cruz Vermelha Portuguesa, 2022) and have also provided their space for collecting goods for "*Banco Alimentar Contra a Fome*" (Auchan Retail Portugal, 2021; Lemos, 2023; Mercadona, 2023).

Conceptual Model and Research Hypotheses

Research suggests consumers are becoming more conscious and aware of societal needs and report the desire to buy from companies that are socially and environmentally conscious (Deng & Xu, 2017; Faelli et al., 2023; Gelfound & Gelfound, 2024; Hernandez, 2021; PWC, 2024; Rizvi, 2022). In conjunction with other financial and moral motivations, companies have as a result been allocating efforts towards CSR implementation as a priority, wanting to be recognized as socially responsible by their stakeholders (Akbari Sadr et al., 2019; Gelfound & Gelfound, 2024; Narayanan, 2022). Cause-Related Marketing have been one of the strategies by companies in this regard. CRM is a tool that promotes product value creation through active customer participation (Vrontis et al., 2020), improving reputation and positive attitudes towards the company (Amawate & Deb, 2021; Berger et al. 2007; Dowling 2001; Potdar et al., 2018; Mendini et al., 2018), and can increase purchase intentions and customer loyalty (Amawate & Deb, 2021; Hong et al. 2019; Miranda et al., 2020; Potdar et al., 2018; Shanbhag et al., 2023; Thomas et al., 2020; Webb & Mohr, 1998).

Despite increased social concerns, skepticism towards CSR initiatives such as CRM still exists, and by some accounts is on the rise (Farooq & Wicaksono, 2021; Skarmeas & Leonidou, 2013; Mendini et al., 2018; Miranda et al. 2020). Some consumers perceive such initiatives as self-serving, an attempt by the company to increase its profits (Ellen et al, 2006; Farooq & Wicaksono, 2021; Kuo & Rice, 2015; Miranda et al. 2020; Pittman, 1993; Skarmeas & Leonidou, 2013). Therefore, even if a company makes efforts to act responsibly, it does not guarantee that consumers will support it or consider these efforts when making their choices (Farooq & Wicaksono, 2021; Miranda et al. 2020; Skarmeas & Leonidou, 2013).

Since the retail sector, especially food retailers, have a significant presence and impact on most consumers' lives, is a highly competitive sector, the relationship between these retailers and consumers is crucial to their success (Calvo-Porrall & Lévy-Mangin, 2016). CSR practices have been part of retailer-consumer relationships since around the 1990's (Chase, 1991; Piacentini et al., 2000; Sirgy & Lee, 1996; Strong, 1995); and in Portugal, there was a CRM arise in the 2000's, with *Missão Sorriso* from Continente, Sonae group (Veiga, 2024). With the evolution of times, CRM initiatives began to be popular among most relevant players in the Portuguese food retail industry until today. However, relatively little is known regarding consumers attitudes toward these initiatives (and CRM in general), and the extent to which they impact intentions to visit the stores or improve consumer-company relationship, and what are the predictors for their participation.

This research was conducted following the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991) with additional insights from Hong et al. (2019). The TPB has gained recognition from various authors for its

application in understanding consumer intentions and behaviors within diverse contexts (Hong et al., 2019; Hong et al., 2019; Hsu et al., 2017; McNeill & Venter, 2019) and posits three factors influencing consumer intentions and ultimately behaviors, namely: attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavior control (Ajzen, 1985). Hong et al.'s (2019) application of the model intended to understand which factors impacted consumers' intention to participate in CRM initiatives in particular, and therefore included additional variables pertaining to this context, which are also relevant to the current study.

The main objective of this research is thus to examine the determinants of the intention to participate in a CRM initiative and the effects of CRM initiatives on intentions to revisit a hyper/supermarket within the Portuguese food retail sector, concerning a real campaign, the *Bairro Feliz* program. In addition, we also aimed to identify the factors needed for a positive attitude towards a CRM initiative and to explore how consumer skepticism may moderate the relationship between consumer attitudes towards CRM initiatives and consumer intentions to participate in a CRM initiative. Therefore, this investigation proposes to answer to the following research questions:

RQ1: What factors influence consumers' attitudes towards CRM initiatives in the Portuguese food retail sector?

RQ2: What factors influence consumers intention to participate in CRM initiatives in the Portuguese food retail sector and how does intended participation affect intentions to revisit the store?

RQ3: To what extent does consumer skepticism moderate the relationship between consumer attitude towards CRM initiatives and intention to participate in a CRM initiative in Portuguese food retailing?

From Hong et al.'s (2019) research, were selected two antecedents to attitudes toward CRM, Consumer-company Identification and Perceived CSR image, since the third, perceived Cause-company Fit was not possible to identify in this scenario, due to the different causes supported throughout *Bairro Feliz* program. The first determinant consumer-company Identification represented consumers' ability to identify themselves socially with a company, considering company values, identity, and actions (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Deng & Xu, 2017; Hong et al., 2019). Therefore, if consumers perceive a company as ethical, they will develop a positive image regarding it and likely have positive attitudes towards it. Additionally, Deng and Xu (2017) also demonstrated that CSR has gained a significant effect in consumer identification. Consequently, it seems plausible to assume that:

H1: Consumer-company identification influences consumers' attitudes towards CRM initiatives in the Portuguese food retail sector.

The second determinant, Perceived CSR Image, introduced the importance of consumers' opinions regarding companies CSR actions (Hong et al., 2019). Several authors have considered CSR actions as

strategies to get closer to consumers and impact their behaviors (Gelfound & Gelfound, 2024; Li et al., 2019; Zhang & Ahmad, 2021), the idea being that if consumers perceive a company's CSR initiative as honorable, for example, they will nurture a positive image regarding it and likely have positive attitudes towards it as well (Park et al., 2017). This suggests that companies need to strategically follow new patterns of consumption, founded on consumer values and concerns (Deng & Xu, 2017; Faelli et al., 2023; Gelfound & Gelfound, 2024; Hernandez, 2021; PWC, 2024; Rizvi, 2022), in order to have a successful CSR action. Understanding that CRM has been one of the most versatile marketing approaches within CSR actions (Bhatti et al., 2022), especially for retailers (Chomvilailuk & Butcher, 2016; Dabija et al., 2018; Diallo & Lambey-Checchin, 2017; Lombart & Louis, 2014; Louis et al., 2019), not only to increase revenue, but also to increase reputation (Amawate & Deb, 2021; Berger et al. 2007; Dowling 2001; Potdar et al., 2018; Mardini et al., 2018), and consumer satisfaction (Ajzen, 1985; Ajzen, 1991; Hong et al., 2019; Langen et al., 2013; Laroche, 2017; Lee & Kim, 2016; Polonsky & Wood, 2001; Pringle & Thompson, 1999; Varadarajan & Menon, 1988; Shanbhag et al., 2023), it seems plausible to assume that:

H2: Perceived CRM image influence consumers' attitudes towards CRM initiatives, in the Portuguese food retail sector.

A 2021 KPMG consumer report highlighted that "97% of consumers are willing to pay more to an ethical brand" (Hernandez et al., 2021, p.7). Although it is known that self-reports can be over-inflated, results such as this, highlight a growing concern among consumers for ethical consideration when making purchases (Carroll & Shabana, 2010; Deng & Xu, 2017; Ellis et al., 2012; Faelli et al., 2023; Gelfound & Gelfound, 2024; Hernandez, 2021; PWC, 2024; Rizvi, 2022). This suggests that if consumers are aware of retailers CSR initiatives, they will act correspondingly, confirming the premise of TPB whereby people make rational decisions about specific actions according to the information available to them. Thus, seems plausible to assume that:

H3: Consumers' CSR awareness influence consumers' attitudes towards CRM initiatives, in the Portuguese food retail sector.

In the Theory of Planned Behavior, consumer intentions play a significant role in predicting actual behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Graham-Rowe et al., 2015; Hong et al., 2019; Shanbhag et al., 2023) and are influenced by three factors: consumer attitudes (CA), subjective norms (SN), and perceived behavioral control (PBC) (Ajzen, 1991;). Attitudes are bound with the way consumers perceive something and take a stand towards it (Ajzen, 1991; Hong et al., 2019; Lee & Kim, 2016; Shanbhag et al., 2023; Wang et al. 2022; Zhang et al., 2013). For example, in Hong et al.'s (2019) research, attitude towards CRM initiatives had the strongest effect on intention to participate in CRM activities, since consumer were curious and had the impression that the hypermarket was acting in accordance with the needs of society (Hong et al., 2019). Therefore, seems plausible to assume that:

H4: Consumer attitudes towards CRM influence consumer intentions to participate in CRM initiatives, in the Portuguese food retail sector.

Subjective norms refer to individuals' perceptions of society's expectations to act in a certain way (Ajzen, 1991; Judge et al., 2019; Peng et al., 2021; Peters & Templin, 2010). SN have been seen to be influenced by individual beliefs combined with the impulse to obey, since individuals could feel the need to have approval of others (Ajzen, 1991). Judge et al. (2019) found that consumers' intention to purchase housing with a sustainability certification was influenced by SN, since purchasing a house often involves listening to the opinions of others. In the current context, if consumers perceive that their families recognize participation in CRM initiatives as something important, for example, this may influence their intentions. Thus, it is proposed that:

H5: Subjective norms influence consumer intention to participate in CRM initiatives, in the Portuguese food retail sector.

Perceived behavioral control is the third factor that could influence consumer intentions to participate in CRM initiatives, according to the TPB, and demonstrates how consumers perceive if they should enroll in a specific behavior (Ajzen, 1991). For example, if consumers have access to essential resources, for example, financial or intellectual resources, their intention to act will be more robust (Bosnjak et al., 2020; Hong et al., 2019; Wu et al., 2016). In Hong et al.'s (2019) research, CRM participation was motivated by freedom to choose, information, time, financial resources, and the availability of the campaign in participants' location. Therefore, seems plausible to assume that:

H6: Perceived behavioral control influence consumers' intention to participate in CRM initiatives, in the Portuguese food retail sector.

Thus, when a consumer has a positive attitude towards a behavior and perceives a social norm that supports it as well as a high level of perceived control, their intention to perform the behavior will be more robust (Ajzen, 1991; Graham-Rowe et al., 2015; Hong et al., 2019). In the current context, we additionally consider that if consumers are satisfied with being able to support a cause and have a positive consumer-company identification, this will positively influence brand loyalty (Ajzen, 1985; Ajzen, 1991; Hong et al., 2019; Langen et al., 2013; Lee & Kim, 2016; Shanbhag et al., 2023). Additionally, high levels of intention are associated with higher chance of actually engaging in that behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Graham-Rowe et al., 2015; Hong et al., 2019; Shanbhag et al., 2023), and increase repeat patronage intentions, such as returning to a retailer that implements CRM initiatives (Hong et al., 2019) Thus, it seems plausible to assume that:

H7: Consumers' intentions to participate in a CRM initiative influences their intentions to revisit the store implementing it, in the Portuguese food retail sector.

Although CRM is one of the most used strategies by companies that intend to be socially responsible (Chattananon et al., 2008; Guerreiro et al., 2016; Potdar et al., 2018; Webb & Mohr, 1998),

these initiatives can still be met with skepticism (Miranda et al., 2020). Miranda et al. (2020) argues that there are only two types of consumers, the ones who trust, and the ones who doubt, and because many consumers still question the motives behind CRM initiatives, skepticism continues to be an obstacle to these initiatives' success (Farooq & Wicaksono, 2021; Skarmeas & Leonidou, 2013, Mendini et al., 2018, Miranda et al. 2020). With the growth of CRM initiatives, many consumers perceive these initiatives as self-serving, i.e., as just an attempt by the company to increase its profits (Ellen et al., 2006; Kuo & Rice, 2015; Pittman, 1993; Skarmeas & Leonidou, 2013). Consumer skepticism towards company actions concerning environmental and social problems can be further intensified if the motives behind these actions are not clear enough to the consumer (Duarte & Silva, 2020; Mendini et al., 2018; Ratnakaran & Edward, 2019). Therefore, skepticism can negatively influence attitudes towards CRM initiatives and the resulting intention to participate in those initiatives. Thus, this research proposes the following hypothesis:

H8: Consumer skepticism will moderate the relationship between consumers' attitudes towards CRM initiatives and the intention to participate in CRM initiatives, such that the relationship between attitude and intention to participate will be higher under lower levels of skepticism.

Figure 3.1 shows the proposed conceptual model of this research.

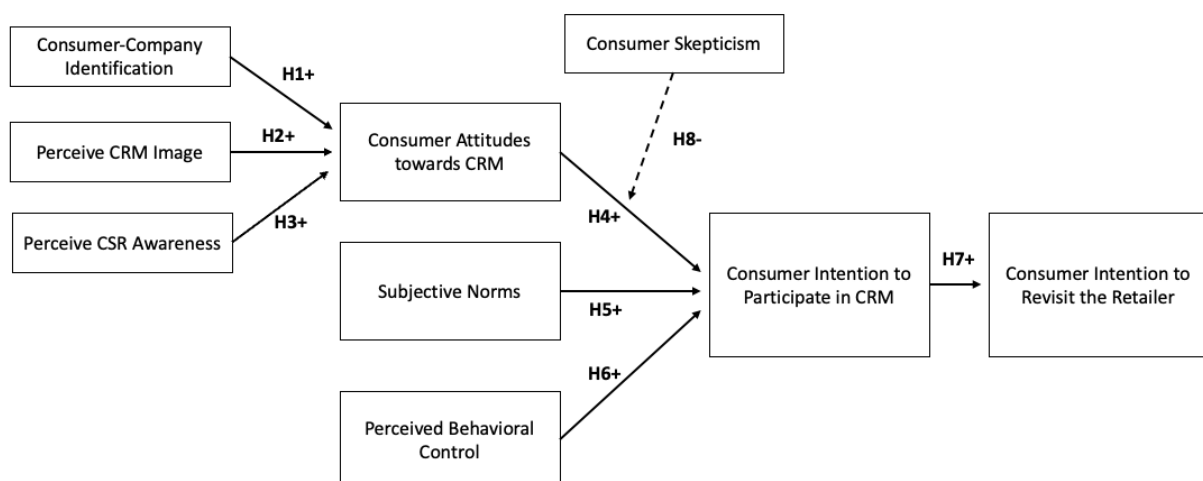


Figure 3:1 Proposed conceptual model

Methodology

This research aimed to answer to the following question “What factors can influence consumers' intentions to participate in food retail CRM initiatives; and how does this intention to participate in turn influence consumers' attitudes and behaviors with regard to the retailer?”. Therefore, it was important to define the research methodology, regarding data, methods, and resources needed.

4.1 The CRM initiative

In order for the study to more closely align with reality, it was considered necessary to select a Portuguese CRM initiative that was close to the majority of consumers.

Therefore, the *Bairro Feliz* program by Pingo Doce (PD) was chosen for this research. Despite being a transactional initiative (Miranda et al., 2020), the consumer did not have to buy a specific product or an extra voucher to participate in the initiative, they only needed to make a purchase exceeding 10 euros in any PD Store, in the country.

PD follows a corporate social responsibility policy based on five priority areas: promoting health through food, preserving biodiversity, commitment to people, promoting child and youth literacy, and being supportive (Pingo Doce, 2024). The *Bairro Feliz program*, initiated in 2021 under their Commitment to People strategy, aims to nurture relationships with communities near its stores (Pingo Doce, 2024). The program encourages the community to submit ideas for projects promoting positive impacts in each neighborhood with a Pingo Doce store (Pingo Doce, 2024). Between 2019 and 2023, PD held two regional editions and three national editions and has supported over 1037 local causes (Pingo Doce, 2024).

The *Bairro Feliz program* is designed to engage communities in improving their neighborhoods. It begins with a registration period, during which local entities, including associations, IPSS¹, foundations, or groups of five neighbors, can submit their ideas for community enhancement projects with a budget up to €1,000. These ideas can cover various areas, such as the environment, animal support, social support, citizenship, culture and heritage, tourism and leisure, education, health, well-being, and sport. Following the registration period, there is an evaluation period where a panel of internal and external judges selects two ideas for each store. The selected ideas are then shared with the community, and the *Bairro Feliz* program officially begins. Community members can vote for their

¹ Private Social Solidarity Institutions (IPSS) are non-profit organizations established by private initiative, aiming to promote organized solidarity and social justice. They focus on supporting children, youth, families, the elderly, and those with disabilities, as well as providing healthcare, education, and housing solutions, without being administered by the state (Segurança Social, n.d.).

preferred idea whenever they make a purchase of €10 or more. After each such purchase, they receive a voting coin, which they place in the box corresponding to their chosen idea. It is important to state that there is no requirement to pay an additional amount in order to vote. At the end of the initiative, each Pingo Doce store counts the votes, and the idea with the most coins at each store is declared the winner. This process encourages active community involvement and supports local initiatives that aim to improve neighborhoods.



Figure 4.1: Example of the initiative

4.2 Population of the study

The population of interest were Portuguese consumers, with more than 18 years old, that had the habit to buy food from supermarkets.

4.3 Procedures

In order to test the proposed hypotheses, and considering the quantitative nature of this research, a survey was used. A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data and analyze the relationships between our research hypotheses, which has been considered the best option due to its convenience, cost-efficiency, and ability to maintain respondent privacy (Bhandari, 2023; Taherdoost, H., 2022). Additionally, and based on the same reasons, was employed a non-probability sampling, specifically a convenience sample, which meant that the respondents were people that closer to the

researcher, therefore, it will not represent the entire Portuguese Population (Jager et al., 2017; McCombes, 2023).

Before releasing the questionnaire to the general public, a pre-test was conducted to understand the best way to present the questionnaire (Taherdoost, H., 2022), given the quantity of questions to be analyzed. Thus, two versions of the questionnaire were created and tested with eight individuals, consisting of four females (aged 23, 35, 51, 60) and four males (aged 18, 26, 35, 48). In the first version of the questionnaire, each question addressed both CRM as a concept and the *Bairro Feliz* Program, meaning participants responded to both topics in each section. In contrast, the second version was longer, as the questionnaire was organized into two main sections: one for CRM as a concept and another for the *Bairro Feliz* Program. In each section, participants responded to the questions separately, first answering all the questions about CRM and then all the questions about *Bairro Feliz*. The consensus from the pre-test favored the second version, despite its slightly longer length and time duration. This adjustment aimed to enhance clarity and facilitate ease of response, in order to avoid participants responding similarly to both scenarios. During the pre-test, respondents demonstrated that answering about both themes in the same questions influenced them to provide similar responses for each, which the revised format sought to prevent.

To construct and disseminate the questionnaire, Qualtrics platform was selected to ensure the reliability and efficiency of the survey instrument, owing to its robust features in survey design, distribution, and data collection. The data collection was conducted between August 12th and September 12th, 2023, and the questionnaire was distributed across three social networks: Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. The participation was voluntary and anonymous, with respondents providing only demographic information at the end, namely age, gender, nationality, level of education, and employment status.

For the structural analysis of the relationships proposed in the conceptual model, Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was utilized, a method commonly chosen by researchers to estimate complex models with multiple constructs, indicator variables, and structural paths, without requiring strict distributional assumptions on the data (Hair et al., 2019). PLS-SEM functions as a causal-predictive approach within Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), prioritizing prediction in statistical model estimation (Sarstedt et al., 2017; Wold, 1982). This method was specifically selected for this investigation because it is suitable for testing theoretical frameworks from a predictive perspective, particularly in cases with small sample sizes and potential distribution issues (Hair et al., 2019). Therefore, two structural equation models were also generated using SmartPLS 4. One aimed to assess the consumer decision-making process regarding the CRM theme; and the second aimed to evaluate the decision-making process regarding the *Bairro Feliz* program.

4.4 Measurement

The questionnaire was designed to facilitate respondent engagement and comprehension, and it was organized into seven sections: Introduction, Perceived CSR Awareness, Consumer Perceptions of CRM as a Concept, Consumer Perceptions of the *Bairro Feliz* program, Consumer Skepticism, Willingness to Pay an Additional Amount, and Demographic Questions.

The Introduction section introduced the main objective of the research and guaranteed the anonymity of the responses and that there were no right or wrong answers, as well as participants' freedom to abandon the questionnaire at any point without repercussion. In addition to ethical considerations, it was hoped this would reduce social desirability bias (Podsakoff et al. 2003; Steenkamp & Baumgartner, 2010).

Then, The Perceived CSR Awareness section comprised four items and was designed to assess respondents' awareness of CSR initiatives. This section utilized a 7-point Likert scale, and an example item was: "I consider myself a consumer attentive to Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives in general."

The two main sections "Consumer Perceptions of CRM as concept" and "Consumer Perceptions of the *Bairro Feliz* program" included a total of fourteen items each and both were divided into seven constructs: Consumer Company Identification; Perceived CRM Image; Attitude Towards CRM; Subjective Norm; Perceived Behavioral Control; Intention to Participate; Revisit Intention.

The first construct, Consumer Company Identification, consisted of three items adapted from Hong et al. (2019) and Musova et al. (2022). These items evaluated the alignment of supermarket principles with personal values and the perceived ethical behavior of supermarkets. For instance, one item stated: "For me, it is important that supermarkets have principles that are in line with mine." This construct employed a 7-point Likert scale.

Next, The Perceived CRM Image construct included two items, adapted from Hong et al. (2019) and Musova et al. (2022), which assessed the perception of CRM initiatives, an example was: "I believe that Cause-Related Marketing is a great way for supermarkets to help the community." These items were also measured using a 7-point Likert scale.

The Attitude Towards CRM construct consisted of two items, adapted from Rathore et al. (2022), designed to evaluate respondents' attitudes towards shopping at supermarkets that support CRM initiatives. One item was: "I like the idea of shopping in supermarkets that help the community," measured on a 7-point Likert scale.

The Subjective Norm construct, which comprised two items also adapted from Rathore et al. (2022), examined the influence of social surroundings on CRM-related shopping intentions. For example: "People around me believe it is a good idea to shop in supermarkets with these initiatives to support the community," measured using the same 7-point Likert scale.

The Perceived Behavioral Control construct included three items, adapted from Rathore et al. (2022), that examined the financial, time, and knowledge factors influencing the participation in CRM programs. An example item was: "I have the financial capacity to decide to shop in supermarkets with these types of programs.", and the responses were measured using a 7-point Likert scale.

The Intention to Participate and Revisit constructs each contained two items adapted from Hong et al. (2019). These constructs measured respondents' willingness to shop at supermarkets participating in CRM initiatives and their likelihood of revisiting these supermarkets. For instance, an example item from the Intention to Participate construct was: "I would be willing to shop in certain supermarkets to participate in such an initiative.", and for the Revisit construct was "I would return to shopping in supermarkets because they have this type of initiative in place.". As with the other sections, these items were evaluated using a 7-point Likert scale.

Additionally, the Skepticism section, consisting of six items, addressed potential doubts about CRM initiatives as a concept and as a real initiative, with the *Bairro Feliz program*. This section was adapted from Musova et al. (2022) and Skarmeas & Leonidou (2013) and explored skepticism regarding the genuine intent of these programs to benefit the community. An example item was: "For me, there are doubts about the existence of a genuine concern of supermarkets to help the community.", and the responses were measured using a 7-point Likert scale.

The Williness to Pay an Extra Value section contained a single item that examined whether respondents would be willing to pay an additional amount to participate in a CRM program, if required. Finally, the Demographic Questions section included six items designed to gather demographic information, such as gender, age, academic qualifications, professional status, and factors influencing supermarket choice.

The questionnaire primarily employed a 7-point Likert scale for quantitative variables, where 1 indicated "Strongly Disagree" and 7 indicated "Strongly Agree." This prevalence was due to their suitability for gathering data on quantitative variables, as they are generally straightforward and conducive to rapid responses (Bhandari, 2023). Annex "A" presents a detailed breakdown of the constructs analyzed, their items, the measurement scales, and the relevant literature.

Results and Findings

5.1 Sample description

The questionnaire collected a total of 230 responses, of which 149 were deemed valid due to incomplete answers or acquiescence bias. The findings from these responses are presented in this chapter.

5.2 Gender and Age

The sample comprised 101 female respondents (67,85%), 45 male respondents (30,2%), and 3 individuals (2%) who chose not to disclose their gender. The age ranges from 18 to 61 years, ($M = 30.31$, $SD = 10.675$). The majority of the sample was under the age of 24.

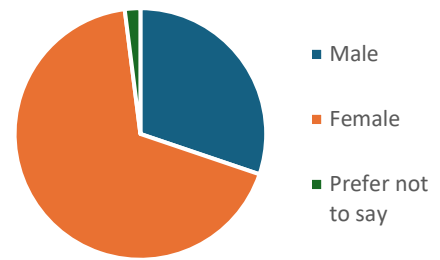


Figure 5.1: Gender and Age

5.3 Education

In terms of education, the majority of the sample held a bachelor's degree (55.2%), followed by approximately 24.8% who completed high school. Moreover, 17.4% possessed a master's degree, 1.3% did not finish high school, and another 1.3% held a PhD.

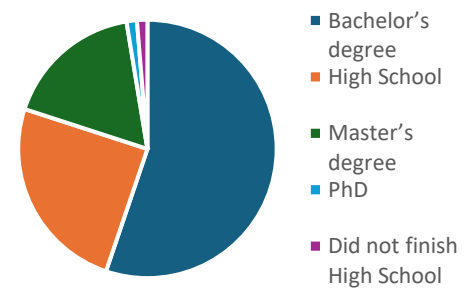


Figure 5.2: Education

5.4 Employment Status

Finally, in terms of employment status, the data revealed that the majority of the sample was employed (68.5%). Additionally, 22.8% were students, 2.7% were unemployed, 5.3% were self-employed, and 0.7% were retired.

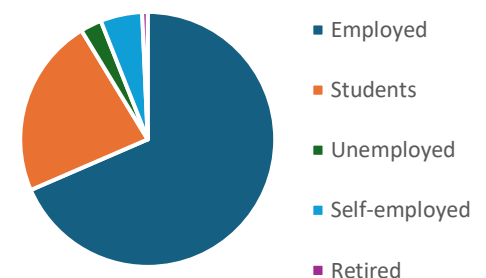


Figure 5.3: Employment Status

Employment Status

5.5 Consumer Habits

The participants were also asked to rank the main factors that influence their choice of supermarket in order of preference (lower values indicate greater preference), considering the following items: price, promotions, location CRM initiatives, product availability and supermarket size.

The results demonstrated that price (average rating of 2.1) and location (average rating of 2.2), were positioned as most important. Followed closely by promotions (rated at 3) and product availability (average rating of 4). In contrast, corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives (rated at 4.8) held a less prominent position in the hierarchy of consumer preferences. Lastly, the size of the supermarket was identified as the least prioritized factor, with a rating of 5.6.

5.6 Analysis of the Model Constructs

To test the model proposed, two structural equation models were developed using SmartPLS 4 program in order to achieve the main research objective: assessing consumers' decision-making processes concerning CRM initiatives. The first structural equation model was associated with the analysis of consumer attitudes towards CRM initiatives as concept, i.e. as a theoretical scenario, while the second was related to *Bairro Feliz program*, a practical scenario. Since skepticism has persisted as an obstacle to the success of CRM initiatives, as certain consumers continue to question the underlying motives behind such actions (Miranda et al., 2020; Skarmeeas & Leonidou, 2013), skepticism was examined as a moderating variable between consumer attitudes to CRM and consumer intentions to participate in CRM initiatives, in both analyses.

The Results explanation will be divided into two distinct sections: "CRM as a Concept" and "CRM in Practice".

5.6.1 CRM as a Concept

This results explanation concerns the first analysis, which were about assessing consumers' decision-making processes concerning CRM initiatives as a theoretical experience, as mentioned before. Hence, this analysis firstly examines the factors influencing consumers attitude toward CRM initiatives; then assesses what influences consumers' intention to participate in these initiatives, and the ensuing effect in their intention to revisit the supermarket.

Therefore, the first step of the SEM analysis was the measurement model evaluation (Hair et al., 2019). The reflective measurement models began with an assessment of the indicator loadings, which were expected to surpass 0.708 (Hair et al., 2019). This criterion suggests that the construct accounted for over 50 percent of the variance in the indicator, ensuring acceptable item reliability (Hair et al.,

2019). With regard to this analysis, Table 5.1 shows that all values were equal to or greater than 0.778, surpassing the recommended value.

Consequently, the second step was to measure the consistency of the constructs, using Jöreskog's composite reliability, where values between 0.70 and 0.90 range from "satisfactory to good", and values above 0.95 could be problematic, since it suggested that the items are redundant (Diamantopoulos et al., 2012; Hair et al., 2019). In this analysis, all values were above the recommended threshold of 0.7 (Table 5.1), demonstrating a high level of internal consistency reliability within the construct.

Additionally, the third step was to address the convergent validity of each construct, using the average variance extracted (AVE), which should be 0.50 or higher to indicate that the construct explains at least 50 per cent of the variance of its items (Hair et al., 2019). As can be seen in Table 5.1, all values exceeded the minimum requirement, ranging from 0.662 to 0.942, demonstrating that the indicators reliably measured the construct.

Lastly, the fourth step was assessing discriminant validity, ensuring that the constructs were empirically distinct from other constructs in the structural model, through the Fornell and Larcker (1981) traditional metric (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2019). This compares the square root of the AVE for each construct with the correlations between that construct and all other constructs; and states that the interconstruct correlations should not be greater than the square root of the AVEs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Table 5.2 demonstrates discriminant validity of the model in the diagonal.

Table 5.1: Measurement model and scale reliability

Item Description	Outer Loadings	Reliability	
		SCR	AVE
Consumer Company Identification		0,873	0,662
CCI_1	0,920		
CCI_2	0,898		
CCI_3	0,860		
Perceived CSR Awareness		0,908	0,775
PCSR_Awareness_1	0,874		
PCSR_Awareness_2	0,852		
PCSR_Awareness_3	0,884		
PCSR_Awareness_4	0,910		
Perceived CRM Image		0,900	0,873
PCRM_Image_1	0,916		
PCRM_Image_2	0,952		
Attitude towards CRM Initiatives		0,722	0,777
CA_CRM_1	0,898		
CA_CRM_2	0,865		
Subjective Norms		0,884	0,888

SN_1	0,935		
SN_2	0,950		
Perceived Behavior Control		0,763	0,662
PBC_1	0,827		
PBC_2	0,835		
PBC_3	0,778		
Intent to Participation in CRM Initiatives		0,926	0,931
IP_1	0,963		
IP_2	0,966		
Intention to revisit		0,940	0,942
IR_1	0,972		
IR_2	0,969		

Table 5.2: Correlation matrix and discriminant validity*

	Consumer Company Identification	Perceived CRM Image	Perceived CSR Awareness	Attitude towards CRM Initiatives	Subjective Norms	Perceived Behavior Control	Intent to Participation in CRM Initiatives	Intention to revisit
Consumer Company Identification	0,893							
Perceived CRM Image	0,480**	0,934						
Perceived CSR Awareness	0,672**	0,423**	0,880					
Attitude towards CRM Initiatives	0,676**	0,603**	0,565**	0,881				
Subjective Norms	0,544**	0,389**	0,568**	0,540**	0,942			
Perceived Behavior Control	0,438**	0,370**	0,525**	0,421**	0,608**	0,814		
Intent to Participation in CRM Initiatives	0,593**	0,554**	0,527**	0,671**	0,512**	0,530**	0,965	
Intention to revisit	0,577**	0,481**	0,502**	0,657**	0,524**	0,490**	0,876**	0,971

*Square root of AVE on the diagonal to test Discriminant Validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

**p < .001.

Before starting the analysis of the structural model, Table 5.3 presents the descriptive statistics for each construct, including mean and standard deviation, results of normality assessment (skewness and kurtosis), and Cronbach's alpha values for internal consistency. These statistics demonstrate that the constructs have high reliability, since Cronbach's alpha was between 0,714 and 0,925.

Concerning the antecedents of the attitude towards CRM, Consumer-Company Identification, Perceived CRM Image and Perceived CSR Awareness, the results reflect favorable insights, since the mean above 4 and 5 on a 7-point Likert scale (where 1 = Strongly Disagree and 7 = Strongly Agree). The first two demonstrates high mean scores, what suggest that consumers generally have a strong identification with the company and a favorable perceptions CRM image (Table 5.3). However, the

slight negative skewness and flat kurtosis of Perceived CSR Awareness construct indicate a generally positive attitude towards CSR action, but there is a range of opinions. Consequently, regarding the predictors to consumer intention to participate in CRM initiatives (attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control), there are also some differences. In the Attitude construct, the mean scores for CA_CRM_1 (M=5.99) indicate a strong positive attitude, while CA_CRM_2 (M=4.88) suggests more moderate opinions, and the differences in skewness and kurtosis reflect this variability. Subjective Norms demonstrate a moderate agreement with subjective norms regarding CRM activities, and the minimal skewness suggests a balanced distribution of responses. The Perceived Behavioral Control mean scores (PBC_1 M=4.46, PBC_2 M=4.45, PBC_3 M=3.87) suggest that respondents feel moderate control over engaging CRM activities. The nearly symmetrical distribution of responses indicates a wide range of perceived control levels.

Lastly, the Intent to Participate in CRM Initiatives shows high mean scores (IP_1 M=5.26, IP_2 M=5.40), which reflect a strong intent among respondents to engage in CRM initiatives. In fact, the negative skewness suggests that most responses are toward the higher end, indicating consistent agreement. the Intention to Revisit also display high mean scores (IR_1 M=5.38, IR_2 M=5.39), which indicate a strong intention to revisit the company, with negative skewness confirming the tendency towards positive responses.

Table 5.3: Descriptive Statistics of the items

Item Description	Mean	Standard Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	Cronbach's Alpha
Consumer Company Identification					0,872
CCI_1	5,34	1,42	-,51	-,62	
CCI_2	5,61	1,25	-,63	-,48	
CCI_3	5,76	1,31	-,87	-,04	
Perceived CSR Awareness					0,903
PCSR_Awareness_1	4,47	1,540	-,43	-,07	
PCSR_Awareness_2	4,54	1,596	-,39	-,45	
PCSR_Awareness_3	4,45	1,654	-,26	-,71	
PCSR_Awareness_4	4,32	1,661	-,22	-,76	
Perceived CRM Image					0,856
PCRM_Image_1	5,67	1,35	-,86	,27	
PCRM_Image_2	5,71	1,36	-,96	,48	
Attitude towards CRM Initiatives					0,714
CA_CRM_1	5,99	1,21	-1,4	2,18	
CA_CRM_2	4,88	1,74	-0,44	-0,79	
Subjective Norms					0,874
SN_1	4,17	1,61	-0,18	-0,7	
SN_2	4,64	1,47	-0,24	-0,5	

Perceived Behavior Control					0,748
PBC_1	4,46	1,58	-0,43	-0,37	
PCB_2	4,45	1,65	-0,21	-0,73	
PCB_3	3,87	1,73	-0,04	-1,02	
Intent to Participation in CRM Initiatives					0,925
IP_1	5,26	1,41	-0,52	-0,33	
IP_2	5,4	1,38	-0,68	0,11	
Intention to revisit					0,939
IR_1	5,38	1,4	-0,67	-0,13	
IR_2	5,39	1,41	-0,78	0,1	

The subsequent phase entailed the evaluation of the structural model, an important step to determine its compatibility with the data, marking one of the crucial stages in the approach of structural equation models (Hooper et al., 2008). This analysis covers four major categories: overall, absolute, predictive, and incremental fit (Morrison et al., 2017). Following the recommendation by Hair et al. (2014) to report one absolute fit index and one incremental fit index, the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) registered a score of 0.065, and the Normed Fit Index (NFI) was 0.741, showing an adequate fit to the data.

As emphasized by Hair et al. (2019), it is important to examine collinearity, in order to mitigate any potential bias in the regression results. For that, we used latent variable scores of the predictor constructs in a partial regression to calculate the VIF values (Hair et al., 2019). As can be seen in Table 5.4, all the values were lower than 3, which indicates that the model was free from common method bias (Hair et al., 2019). Following Hair et al. (2019), the next step was to examine the R^2 value of the endogenous constructs, which is a measure of the model's in-sample explanatory power (Shmueli & Koppius, 2011). The values of Attitude towards CRM Initiatives ($R^2=0,568$) and Intent to Participation in CRM Initiatives ($R^2=0,527$) were considered as moderate, since they are above 0.5 and lower than 0.75; but of Intention to revisit was considered as high ($R^2=0,768$), since Higher the R^2 values generally indicate a better fit of the model to the data. (Table 5.5).

Table 5.4: Collinearity statistics (VIF)

	VIF
Consumer Company Identification -> Attitude towards CRM Initiatives	1,992
Perceived CRM Image -> Attitude towards CRM Initiatives	1,331
Perceived CSR Awareness -> Attitude towards CRM Initiatives	1,868
Attitude towards CRM Initiatives -> Intent to Participation in CRM Initiatives	1,440
Subjective Norms -> Intent to Participation in CRM Initiatives	1,878
Perceived Behavior Control -> Intent to Participation in CRM Initiatives	1,617
Intent to Participation in CRM Initiatives -> Intention to revisit	1,000

Table 5.5: R² values

	R-square
Attitude towards CRM Initiatives	0,568
Intent to Participation in CRM Initiatives	0,527
Intention to revisit	0,768

The structural model portrayed in Figure 5.4 outlines the proposed relationships among the variables along with their estimated parameters. Six out of the eight hypotheses proposed were supported, according to Table 5.6. The results indicated that Consumer-Company Identification ($\beta = 0.418$; $p < 0.001$) and Perceived CRM Image ($\beta = 0.344$; $p < 0.001$) were considered good predictors of consumer attitude towards CRM initiatives, thereby supporting H1a and H2a, respectively. However, Perceived CSR Awareness was not considered as a significant determinant ($\beta = 0.139$; $p > 0.05$), thus not confirming H3a.

Moreover, the results shown that Attitudes toward the CRM Initiatives ($\beta = 0.522$; $p < 0.001$) and Perceived Behavioral Control ($\beta = 0.270$; $p < 0.001$) were recognized as significant determinants of the Intent to Participation in CRM Initiatives, confirming H4a and H6a. Nevertheless, it was observed that Subjective Norms were not a statistically significant predictor of the Intent to Participation in CRM Initiatives ($\beta = 0.066$; $p > 0.05$), therefore H5a was not supported. Moreover, the Intent to Participate in CRM Initiatives was also considered a statistically significant predictor of the Intention to revisit the store ($\beta = 0.876$; $p < 0.001$), thus supporting H7a.

Table 5.6: Construct Structural Model

Structural Relationships	Hypotheses		Path Coefficients	Standard Error	T statistics	P values
	Number	Direction				
Consumer Company Identification -> Attitude towards CRM Initiatives	H1a	Positive	0,418	0,098	4,267	0,000
Perceived CRM Image -> Attitude towards CRM Initiatives	H2a	Positive	0,344	0,075	4,566	0,000
Perceived CSR Awareness -> Attitude towards CRM Initiatives	H3a	Positive	0,139	0,087	1,596	0,111
Attitude towards CRM Initiatives -> Intent to Participation in CRM Initiatives	H4a	Positive	0,522	0,068	7,637	0,000
Subjective Norms -> Intent to Participation in CRM Initiatives	H5a	Positive	0,066	0,079	0,838	0,402
Perceived Behavior Control -> Intent to Participation in CRM Initiatives	H6a	Positive	0,270	0,075	3,610	0,000
Intent to Participation in CRM Initiatives -> Intention to revisit	H7a	Positive	0,876	0,030	29,343	0,000

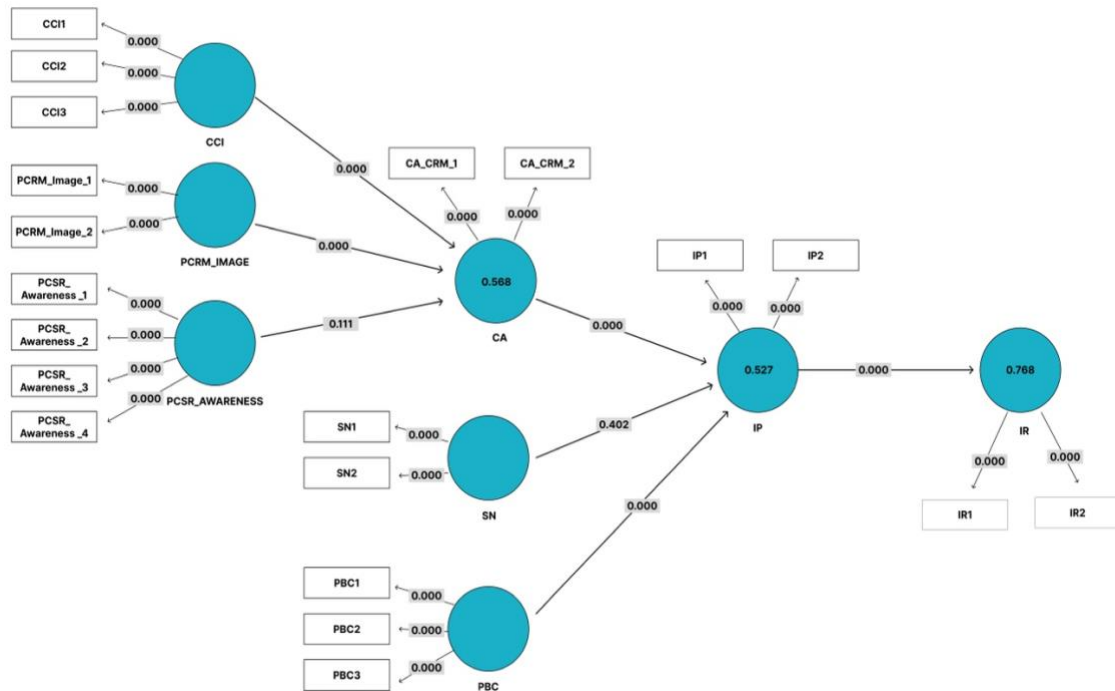


Figure 5.4: Proposed structural model

Consequently, to understand the moderating role of skepticism in the relationship between consumers' attitude towards CRM initiatives and the intent to participate, Figure 5.5 displays the previously proposed structural model with the addition of the moderator variable. The results presented in Table 5.7 indicate that, contrary to what was expected, skepticism towards CRM initiatives did not moderate the relationship between attitudes towards CRM and consumers' intention to participate in CRM initiatives (T-Test=1,556; $p > 0.05$), thus not confirming H8a.

Table 5.7: Construct Structural Model with the moderator variable

Structural Relationships	Number	Path Coefficients	Standard Deviation	T statistics	P values
Skepticism x Attitude towards CRM Initiatives -> Intent to Participation in CRM Initiatives	H8a	0,065	0,060	1,556	0,120

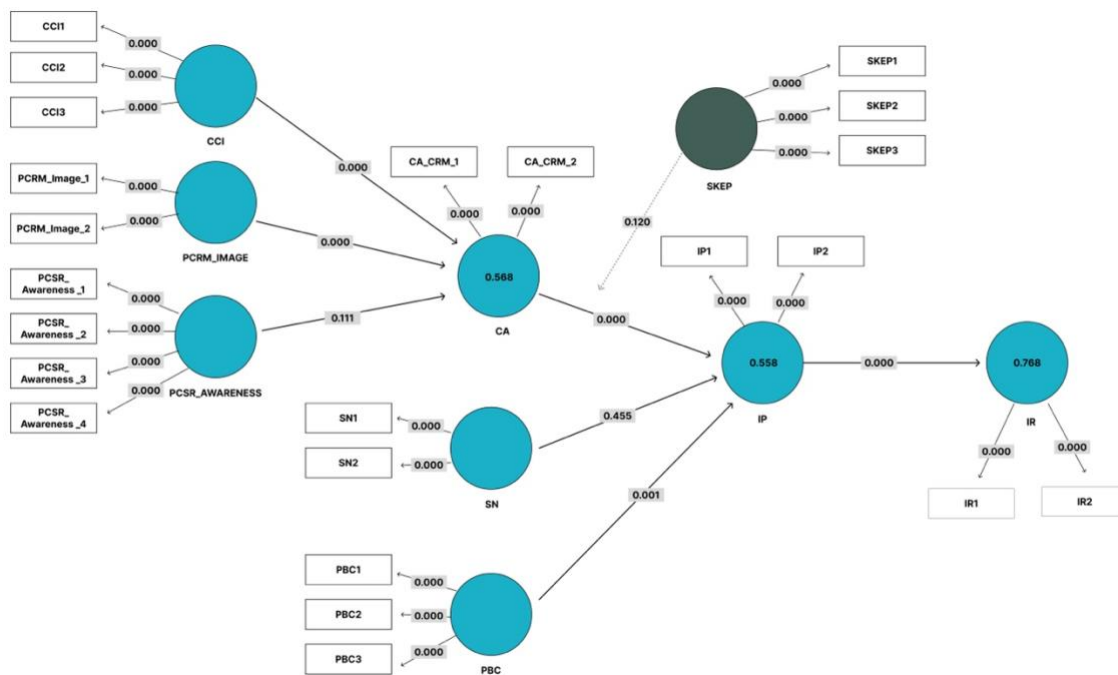


Figure 5.5: Proposed structural model with the moderator variable

5.6 CRM in Practice

In the previous section was presented an overview of the findings regarding CRM as a concept, aiming to analyze consumer responses to a theoretical or general scenario. This section shows the results of the second analysis, assessing consumers' decision-making concerning a tangible and applied initiative: the *Bairro Feliz* program.

Similar to the first analysis, we initiated by evaluating the measurement model (Hair et al., 2019), with an assessment of the indicator loadings (Hair et al., 2019). Table 8 shows that all values were equal to or greater than 0.785, surpassing the recommended value of 0.708. Moreover, it was measured the consistency of the constructs, using Jöreskog's composite reliability (Diamantopoulos et al., 2012; Hair et al., 2019), and all values were also above the recommended threshold of 0.7 (Table 5.8), representing a high level of internal consistency reliability within the construct. Next, to addresses the convergent validity of each construct was used the average variance extracted (AVE), and once again, all values exceeded the minimum requirement of 0.50 (Hair et al., 2019), ranging from 0.728 to 0.963, demonstrating that the indicators reliably measured the construct. Lastly, to assess discriminant validity and ensure that the constructs were empirically distinct from other constructs in the structural model was used the Fornell and Larcker (1981) traditional metric (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2019). Table 5.9 demonstrated that the shared variance for all model constructs was not greater than their square root of the AVEs.

Table 5.8: Measurement model and scale reliability (Bairro Feliz)

Item Description	Outer Loadings	Reliability	
		SCR	AVE
Consumer Company Identification		0,850	0,763
CCI_BF_1	0,816		
CCI_BF_2	0,897		
CCI_BF_3	0,905		
Perceived CSR Awareness		0,909	0,775
PCSR_Awareness_1	0,880		
PCSR_Awareness_2	0,846		
PCSR_Awareness_3	0,878		
PCSR_Awareness_4	0,916		
Perceived <i>Bairro Feliz</i> Image		0,917	0,923
PBF_Image_1	0,962		
PBF_Image_2	0,960		
Attitude towards <i>Bairro Feliz</i>		0.751	0,805
CA_BF_1	0,899		
CA_BF_2	0,896		
Subjective Norms		0,920	0,924
SN_BF_1	0,958		
SN_B_2	0,964		
Perceived Behavior Control		0,824	0,728
PBC_BF_1	0,884		
PBC_BF_2	0,887		
PBC_BF_3	0,785		
Intent to Participation in <i>Bairro Feliz</i>		0.824	0,848
IP_BF_1	0,916		
IP_BF_2	0,926		
Intention to revisit <i>Pingo Doce</i>		0.962	0,963
IR_PD_1	0,982		
IR_PD_2	0,981		

Table 5.9: Correlation matrix and discriminant validity (Bairro Feliz)*

	Consumer Company Identification	Perceived <i>Bairro Feliz</i> Image	Perceived CSR Awareness	Attitude towards <i>Bairro Feliz</i>	Subjective Norms	Perceived Behavior Control	Intent to Participation in <i>Bairro Feliz</i>	Intention to Revisit <i>Pingo Doce</i>
Consumer Company Identification	0.873							
Perceived <i>Bairro Feliz</i> Image	0.814**	0.961						
Perceived CSR Awareness	0.424**	0.361**	0.880					
Attitude towards <i>Bairro Feliz</i>	0.745**	0.772**	0.524**	0.897				

Subjective Norms	0.578**	0.497**	0.591**	0.614**	0.961			
Perceived Behavior Control	0.611**	0.484**	0.488**	0.589**	0.694**	0.853		
Intent to Participation in <i>Bairro Feliz</i>	0.710**	0.737**	0.456**	0.761**	0.588**	0.648**	0.921	
Intention to Revisit <i>Pingo Doce</i>	0.726**	0.733**	0.454**	0.767**	0.613**	0.606**	0.917**	0.981

*Square root of AVE on the diagonal to test Discriminant Validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

**p < .001.

Before analyzing the structural model, Table 5.10 provides descriptive statistics for each construct, including mean, standard deviation, skewness, kurtosis, and Cronbach's alpha values for internal consistency. The Cronbach's alpha values range from 0.758 to 0.962, indicating high reliability across the constructs (Hair et al., 2019).

For the attitude determinants, the mean scores for Consumer Company Identification and Perceived *Bairro Feliz* Image are high, reflecting strong positive perceptions. Perceived CSR Awareness has slightly lower mean scores but remains positive; the negative skewness suggests that while respondents generally value CSR efforts, opinions on their significance vary.

Regarding the predictors of consumer intention to participate in CRM initiatives, Attitude towards *Bairro Feliz* shows strong mean scores (CA_BFeliz_1 M=5.84, CA_BFeliz_2 M=5.11), indicating a generally positive attitude. The variability in scores highlights both strong and moderate attitudes. Subjective Norms show moderate mean scores (SN_BFeliz_1 M=3.91, SN_BFeliz_2 M=4.21) with minimal skewness, suggesting a balanced distribution of responses and agreement on the importance of CRM-related norms. Perceived Behavior Control has mean scores (PBC_BFeliz_1 M=4.85, PBC_BFeliz_2 M=4.74, PBC_BFeliz_3 M=4.32) indicating moderate control over CRM activities, with a nearly symmetrical distribution of responses reflecting varied perceptions of engagement ease.

Additionally, Intent to Participate in *Bairro Feliz* shows high mean scores (IP_BFeliz_1 M=4.55, IP_BFeliz_2 M=5.24), indicating a strong intention to engage in CRM initiatives. Intention to Revisit Pingo Doce also displays high mean scores (IR_BFeliz_1 M=5.08, IR_BFeliz_2 M=5.26), suggesting a strong inclination to revisit the company. The negative skewness in both constructs indicates that most responses are toward the higher end, reflecting consistent agreement.

Table 5.10: Descriptive Statistics of the items (*Bairro Feliz*)

Item Description	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	Cronbach's Alpha
Consumer Company Identification					0,844
CCI_BF_1	5.69	1.191	-0.817	0.671	
CCI_BF_2	5.90	1.201	-0.942	0.300	
CCI_BF_3	5.34	1.479	-0.787	0.218	
Perceived <i>Bairro Feliz</i> Image					0,917

PBF_Image_1	5.95	1.210	-1.046	0.665	
PBF_Image_2	5.85	1.293	-1.096	0.960	
Perceived CSR Awareness					0,903
PCSR_Awareness_BFeliz_1	4.47	1.540	-0.432	-0.066	
PCSR_Awareness_BFeliz_2	4.54	1.596	-0.394	-0.450	
PCSR_Awareness_BFeliz_3	4.45	1.654	-0.255	-0.714	
PCSR_Awareness_BFeliz_4	4.32	1.661	-0.218	-0.762	
Attitude towards <i>Bairro Feliz</i>					0,758
CA_BF_1	5.84	1.305	-1.101	0.920	
CA_BF_2	5.11	1.721	-0.588	-0.714	
Subjective Norms					0,917
SN_BF_1	3.91	1.768	-0.019	-0.935	
SN_BF_2	4.21	1.769	-0.161	-0.831	
Perceived Behavior Control					0,812
PBC_BF_1	4.85	1.526	-0.499	-0.269	
PBC_BF_2	4.74	1.670	-0.397	-0.604	
PBC_BF_3	4.32	1.854	-0.192	-1.093	
Intent to Participation in <i>Bairro Feliz</i>					0,821
IP_BF_1	4.55	1.936	-0.397	-0.965	
IP_BF_2	5.24	1.580	-0.761	-0.106	
Intention to Revisit Pingo Doce					0,962
IR_PD_1	5.08	1.650	-0.569	-0.712	
IR_PD_2	5.26	1.579	-0.744	-0.272	

The next phase entailed the evaluation of the structural model and following Hair et al. (2019) recommendation to report one absolute fit index and one incremental fit index, the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) registered a score of 0.062, and the Normed Fit Index (NFI) was 0.773, showing an adequate fit to the data.

Moreover, we evaluated the structural model. First, it was important to examine collinearity, in order to mitigate any potential bias in the regression results (Hair et al., 2019). The majority of the values were lower than 3 (Table 5.11), which indicates that the model was free of common method bias (Hair et al., 2019). Despite a VIF value of 3.144 for the relationship between Consumer-Company Identification and Attitude towards *Bairro Feliz*, which suggests a moderate level of multicollinearity between these two predictor constructs, however, this result was not severe enough to invalidate the regression results outright (Hair et al., 2019). Additionally, R^2 values were also examined, and the values of Attitude towards *Bairro Feliz* ($R^2=0,685$) and Intention to Participation in *Bairro Feliz* ($R^2=0,641$) were considered moderate; while the R^2 of Intention to revisit Pingo Doce ($R^2=0,841$) was considered high (Hair et al., 2019) (Table 5.12).

Table 5.11: Collinearity statistics (VIF) (*Bairro Feliz*)

	VIF
Consumer Company Identification -> Attitude towards <i>Bairro Feliz</i>	3,144
Perceived <i>Bairro Feliz</i> Image -> Attitude towards <i>Bairro Feliz</i>	2,965
Perceived CSR Awareness -> Attitude towards <i>Bairro Feliz</i>	1,220
Attitude towards <i>Bairro Feliz</i> -> Intent to Participation in <i>Bairro Feliz</i>	1,749
Subjective Norms -> Intent to Participation in <i>Bairro Feliz</i>	2,205
Perceived Behavior Control -> Intent to Participation in <i>Bairro Feliz</i>	2,103
Intent to Participation in <i>Bairro Feliz</i> -> Intent to revisit <i>Pingo Doce</i>	1,000

Table 5.12: R2 values (*Bairro Feliz*)

	R-square
Attitude towards <i>Bairro Feliz</i>	0,685
Intent to Participation in <i>Bairro Feliz</i>	0,641
Intention to revisit <i>Pingo Doce</i>	0,841

The structural model shown in Figure 5.6 was the framework for understanding the interplay among variables in the context of the *Bairro Feliz* program. The results presented in Table 5.13 reveal that seven out of the eight hypotheses proposed were supported. This analysis shows that Consumer-Company Identification ($\beta = 0.252$; $p < 0.01$), Perceived CSR Awareness ($\beta=0.478$; $p<0.001$) and Perceived *Bairro Feliz* Image ($\beta = 0.245$; $p < 0.001$) were considered statistically significant predictors of consumers attitude towards *Bairro Feliz*, thereby supporting H1b, H2b and H3b, respectively. These results are slightly different from the first analysis, since the Perceived CSR Awareness was not considered as a relevant determinant.

Concerning the factors influencing Consumers' Intention to Participate in *Bairro Feliz*, Attitude towards *Bairro Feliz* ($\beta=0.568$; $p < 0.001$) and Perceived Behavior Control ($\beta = 0.284$; $p < 0.001$) were recognized as significant predictors, supporting H4b and H6b, respectively. However, and similar to the first analysis, it was observed that Subjective Norms were not considered as a statistically significant determinant of the Intention to Participate in *Bairro Feliz* ($\beta = 0.042$; $p > 0.05$), thus not confirming H5b.

Additionally, the Intention to Participate was also a significant antecedent of the Intent to revisit the store, *Pingo Doce* ($\beta = 0,917$; $p < 0.001$), confirming H7b.

Table 5.13: Construct Structural Model (*Bairro Feliz*)

Structural Relationships	Hypotheses		Path Coefficients	Standard Error	T statistics	P values
	Number	Direction				
Consumer Company Identification -> Attitude towards <i>Bairro Feliz</i>	H1b	Positive	0,252	0,097	2,597	0,009

Perceived <i>Bairro Feliz</i> Image -> Attitude towards <i>Bairro Feliz</i>	H2b	Positive	0,478	0,087	5,520	0,000
Perceived CSR Awareness -> Attitude towards <i>Bairro Feliz</i>	H3b	Positive	0,245	0,054	4,549	0,000
Attitude towards <i>Bairro Feliz</i> -> Intent to Participation in <i>Bairro Feliz</i>	H4b	Positive	0,568	0,061	9,240	0,000
Subjective Norms -> Intent to Participation in <i>Bairro Feliz</i>	H5b	Positive	0,042	0,076	0,555	0,579
Perceived Behavior Control -> Intent to Participation in <i>Bairro Feliz</i>	H6b	Positive	0,284	0,077	3,691	0,000
Intent to Participation in <i>Bairro Feliz</i> -> Intent to revisit Pingo Doce	H7b	Positive	0,917	0,019	49,465	0,000

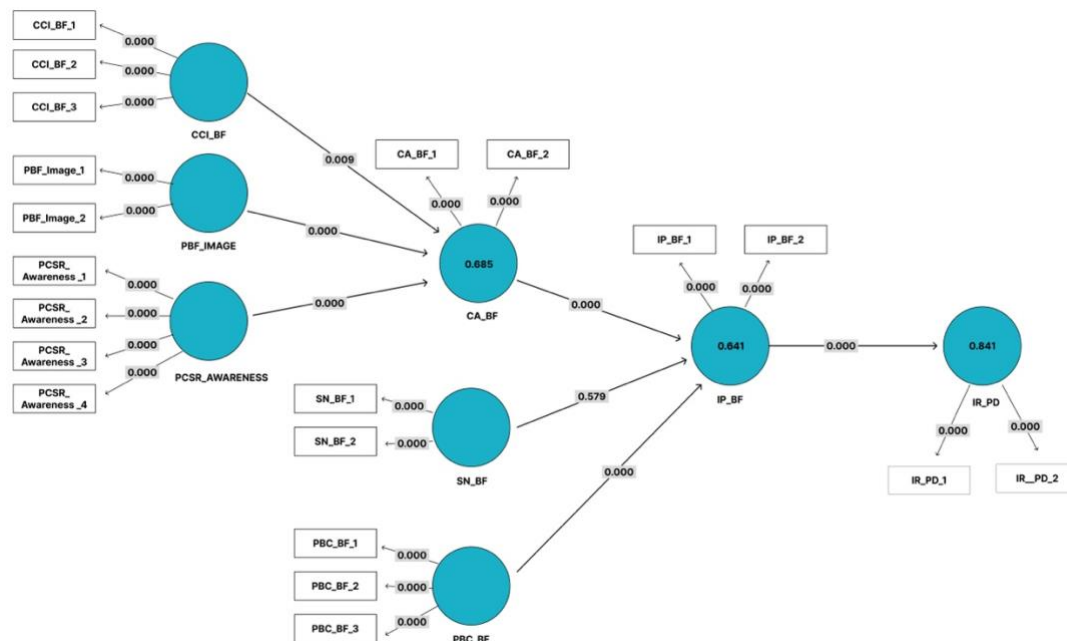


Figure 5.6: Proposed structural model (Bairro Feliz)

Additionally, to test the moderating role of skepticism in the context of *Bairro Feliz* program, Figure 5.7 presents the proposed structural model with the addition of the moderator variable. Considering Table 5.14, skepticism towards CRM initiatives also did not moderate the relationship between the Attitude towards *Bairro Feliz* and the Intent to Participation in *Bairro Feliz* (T-Test=0,318; $p > 0.05$), thus not confirming H8b.

Table 5.14: Construct Structural Model with the moderator variable (Bairro Feliz)

Structural Relationships	Number	Path Coefficients	Standard Error	T statistics	P values
Skepticism x Attitude towards <i>Bairro Feliz</i> -> Intent to Participation in <i>Bairro Feliz</i>	H8b	0,015	0,038	0,318	0,751

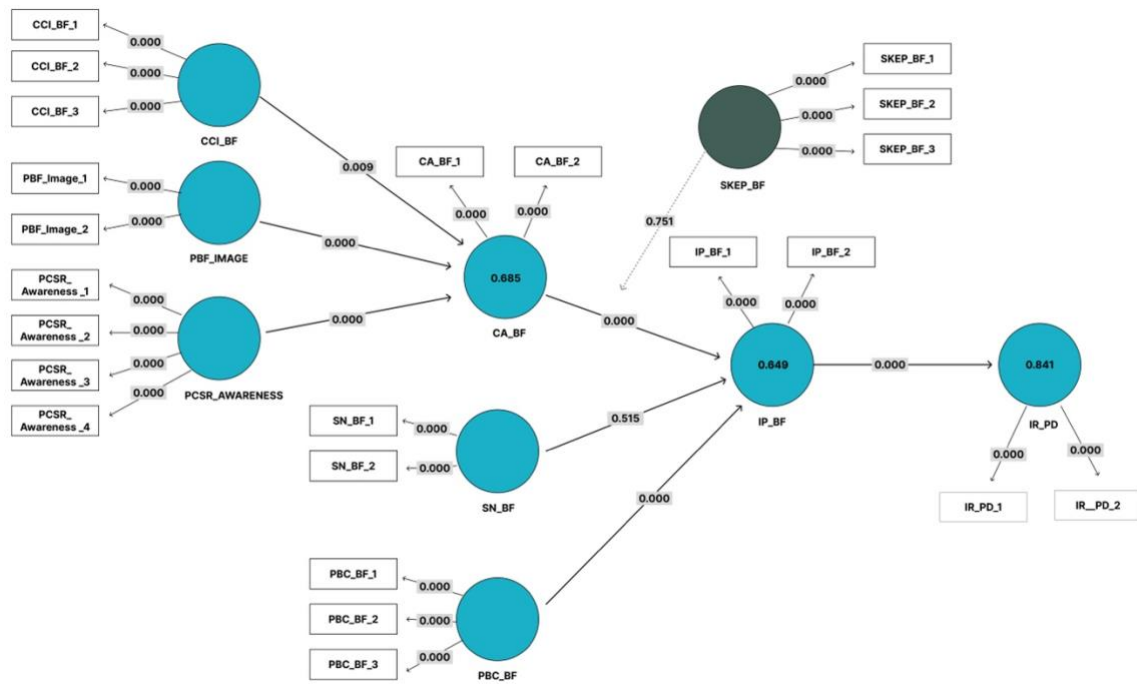


Figure 5.7: Proposed structural model with the moderator variable (Bairro Feliz)

Discussion

Cause-related marketing has emerged as a strategic CSR approach to improve company reputation and loyalty among consumers (Amawate & Deb, 2021; Berger et al. 2007; Bhatti et al., 2023; Dowling 2001; Potdar et al., 2018 Mendini et al., 2018). Retailers in particular have become more aware and more responsive towards society's needs, and there seems to be an understanding that CRM initiatives could impact their relationship with consumers (Calvo-Porrall & Lévy-Mangin, 2016; Dabija et al., 2018; Diallo & Lambey-Checchin, 2017; Fernández-Ferrín et al., 2021; Louis et al., 2019). In fact, in Portugal, the last decades have seen numerous CRM initiatives from major food retailers, such as “*Missão Sorriso*” or “*A ajuda mora ao lado*” from Continente, “*Bando do Bosque*” or “*Programa Bairro Feliz*” from Pingo Doce, “*Mais Ajuda*” by Lidl. This evolution of can demonstrate two ideas: these companies are trying to give more to the community; or are trying to create a positive image within their consumers. However, a crucial question remains: Do consumers consider CRM when choosing a food retailer?

Hernandez et al. (2021) highlighted that consumers in Portugal indicated that they “were willing to pay more to an ethical brand” (Hernandez et al., 202, p.95), and saw this as one of the future trends in consumer behaviors towards retailers after Covid-19. This prediction notwithstanding, the results of the current study did not show CRM as a primary consideration when selecting a food retailer. Instead, price and location appeared as the most influential determinants guiding consumers' decision-making. When asked about CRM initiatives' influence on their purchase intentions, the highest percentage of responses fell into the “more or less agree” (24,2%), followed by “undecided” (18,8%), indicating once again that CRM initiatives are not a top priority for consumers.

Nevertheless, consumers were aware of CRM initiatives. In fact, more than 80% of the surveyed consumers acknowledged CRM initiatives as an easy way to support non-profit causes and viewed these initiatives as beneficial for the community. The results therefore, highlighted a gap between attitudes and behaviour: consumers recognized the importance of CRM, but did not prioritize it in their decision-making process, so this perceived importance was not translated into action. At the same, and in an apparent contradiction, around 65% of the participants were more likely to buy from a specific food retailer if they were aware of a CRM initiative within it. This result highlights the critical role of information in consumer decision-making: although CRM was not a priority consideration for consumers, making them aware of CRM initiatives affected their subsequent decisions. This aligns with Bhattacharya and Sen's (2004) findings, which state that high levels of awareness are necessary for any positive attitudinal response from consumers towards CSR practices, including CRM initiatives. Thus, it was crucial to better understand the determinants that could influence consumers' decision to participate in CRM initiatives.

According to the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control influence consumer intentions to participate in CRM initiatives. Adapted from Hong et al. (2019) research, were also selected three factors that could influence consumer' attitudes towards CRM initiatives: consumer-company identification, Perceived CSR Awareness and Perceived CRM Image. Two analyses were elaborated to evaluate what predictors influenced consumers' attitudes and intentions to participate in CRM initiatives. The first presented CRM as a concept, and the second used the *Bairro Feliz* program, a CRM initiative from Pingo Doce.

The results demonstrated that consumer attitudes were significantly influenced by Consumer-Company Identification and Perceived CRM Image when consumers saw CRM as a concept. But when a specific CRM initiative was considered (in this case, *Pingo Doce's Bairro Feliz program*), the impact of Consumer-Company Identification was reduced. Instead, it was Perceived CSR Awareness and the Perceived Image of *Bairro Feliz* that most influenced participants' attitudes towards *Bairro Feliz program*. The importance of the perceived image of CRM/*Bairro Feliz* program is thus highlighted, as it emerged as the main determinant in both analyses. This further reinforces the need for consumer *awareness* of CRM initiatives, as a first step toward attitudes and behaviors. This is consistent with previous studies which have argued that it is vital for consumers to know initiative objectives and its characteristics in order to be successful (Bhattacharya and Sen's, 2004; Duarte & Silva, 2020; Farooq & Wicaksono, 2021; Gelfound & Gelfound, 2024; Hong et al, 2019; Mendini et al., 2018; Skarmeas & Leonidou, 2013).

With regard to the factors preceding Consumers' Intentions to Participate in CRM initiatives, both analyses showed consumer attitudes and perceived behavior control as influential factors. Nevertheless, the Subjective Norm, however, was not considered as determinant for consumers' intention to participate in a CRM initiative, in either context, consistent with Hong et al. (2019) findings. This seems to suggest that consumers today do not necessarily feel pressured to act according to what society (or their families or friends) think is correct and are seemingly not dependent of significant others' approval or disapproval of their behaviors. Instead, and as previously noted by Hernandez et al. (2021), current day consumers act mostly based on their values and feelings (Hernandez et al., 2021), provided they have the necessary resources, highlighting the importance of the perceived behavioral control factor (Bosnjak et al., 2020; Hong et al., 2019; Wu et al., 2016). That said, an alternative interpretation could be bound with consumers' willingness to admit to being influenced by others' opinions.

Another goal of this study was to understand the role of skepticism and whether this was present in consumer minds and could moderate the relationship between consumers' attitudes and the intention to participate in CRM initiatives. Concerning the idea that consumers are still skeptical about CSR activities, which was propose by authors such as Farooq & Wicaksono (2021), Mendini et al.

(2018), Miranda et al. (2020) and Skarmeas & Leonidou (2013), the results revealed some level of skepticism towards CRM initiatives, since consumers were not sure what the objectives of such campaigns were. In terms of CRM as a concept, the majority of the participants agreed that CRM initiatives could be used mainly to increase the revenue of supermarkets and had doubts about the existence of a genuine concern to help the community or a real level of responsibility towards it. However, regarding *Bairro Feliz program*, the percentages decreased and were closer to 50%. Thus, the skepticism was less pronounced for *Bairro Feliz program*, suggesting that familiarity with the initiative might reduce skepticism. Nevertheless, and contrary to common belief, skepticism did not emerge as a limitation for this investigation, since skepticism towards CRM initiatives did not moderate the relationship between attitudes towards CRM and consumers' intention to participate in CRM, in both contexts. This may occur because consumers did not give much thought to these initiatives since it was initially a theoretical hypothesis, and second was an initiative that they were familiar with, and they did not have to pay an extra value to participate. A different scenario involving financial contributions might yield different responses since the majority demonstrate that they would not participate if they had to pay an extra value. This affirms the findings of Bhattacharya and Sen (2004) and McWilliams and Siegel (2001) where consumers were not willing to pay more just to be seen as good citizens, and contradict recent authors that demonstrated a behavior shift in consumer, recognized as more responsible with their choices and willing to pay more for responsible products or services (Carroll & Shabana, 2010; Deng & Xu, 2017; Ellis et al., 2012; Hernandez, 2021). Besides, this result also demonstrated other attitude-behavior gap, because it was found that skepticism was found, but it did not have an influence on the intention to participate in these initiatives.

Regarding the impact of consumer intention to participate in CRM initiatives, our results demonstrated that this intention is a significant determinant for fostering strong consumer-company relationships. This, in turn, can serve as an incentive to enhance consumer loyalty and brand reputation, ultimately encouraging repeat visits to supermarkets. These findings are consistent with prior studies indicating that the intention to participate in CRM initiatives can lead to increased consumer satisfaction and brand loyalty (Ajzen, 1985; Ajzen, 1991; Hong et al., 2019; Langen et al., 2013; Laroche, 2017; Lee & Kim, 2016; Polonsky & Wood, 2001; Pringle & Thompson, 1999; Varadarajan & Menon, 1988; Shanbhag et al., 2023).

Conclusion, Theoretical and Practical Contributions

This investigation presented insights that deepen the understanding of consumer decision-making regarding Cause-Related Marketing initiatives in the Portuguese food retail sector. Through this research, we addressed three primary questions, namely: “What factors influence consumers’ attitudes towards CRM initiatives in the Portuguese food retail sector?”; “What factors influence consumers intention to participate in CRM initiatives in the Portuguese food retail sector and how does intended participation affect intentions to revisit the store?”; and “To what extent does consumer skepticism moderate the relationship between consumer attitude towards CRM initiatives and intention to participate in a CRM initiative in Portuguese food retailing?”

Concerning the first research question, the investigation emphasized the importance of the consumer perceptions of CRM image, as it appeared as the main determinant of consumer attitudes to a CRM initiative, in both analyses. This demonstrated the need to companies to make the campaign objectives clear and understandable for the food retail store consumers to comprehend. Besides this, consumer-company identification also appeared in both contexts, but with less significance.

Moreover, in regard of the second research question, this study shown a shift where consumer intentions were only influenced consumer attitudes towards CRM initiatives and by perceived behavioral control, excluding the influence of subjective norms within the two contexts. This may highlight two ideas, one where consumers are increasingly guided by personal empowerment rather than social pressures or external influences, or other where consumers do not have the intent to be seen as influenced by others. Additionally, it was proven that if exists a positive intention to participate in CRM initiatives, consumers intend to revisit the store in the future, in both contexts.

In response to the third research question, the results demonstrated that skepticism still occur, but it did not act as a barrier to CRM participation, since it did not emerge as a significant restriction for consumers' intention to participate in CRM initiatives in this study, in both contexts. However, this attitude-behavioral gap may raise questions about the seriousness of consumer engagement with CRM initiatives, since in the first context was a theoretical scenario, and the second was an initiative witch the consumer are already familiar with, and they did not have to pay an extra value to participate in these scenarios.

In sum, consumers are aware of CSR practices and specially of CRM practices in the food retail sector, however, they are not on their top of mind, therefore they showcased that they need to be inform about this kind of activities in order to act positively towards them. In order to be successful, the retailers should be aware of this reality and adapt their strategies in order to this campaign have an impact on store revisitation.

6.1 Theoretical and Practical Contributions

This investigation offers both theoretical and practical contributions to the understanding of consumers attitudes in the context of CRM initiatives in the Portuguese food retail sector. The two theoretical contributions were: firstly, the crucial role of perceived CRM image in shaping consumer attitudes, surpassing metrics such as consumer-company identification and perceived CSR awareness; secondly, the shift where consumer intentions are more influenced by consumer attitudes and perceived behavioral control rather than subjective norms, suggested that consumers are now more driven by personal empowerment.

This study also highlighted some practical contributions that could add more strategic guidance for retailers actively involved in CRM initiatives. The main insight is the crucial role of consumer awareness for CRM success. Marketers in food retail need to understand that having a clear target and meeting their values, preferences, and habits as consumers will be important to improve awareness and consciousness surrounding such initiatives. Thus, this research emphasized the intrinsic connection between consumer intention to participate in CRM initiatives and increased positive perceptions towards the retailer. This indicates that CRM could be an effective instrument for fostering customer relationships and cultivating brand loyalty and improving the revisitation rate. However, it is important to state that the majority of consumers respond that they would not participate if there were extra payments involved, so this could be a strategic decision to have in consideration for future campaigns in the retail sector.

6.2 Limitations and suggestions for future research

Despite its contributions, this study acknowledges certain limitations: sample size, sampling model, participant demographics, questionnaire length, and the availability of recent literature in this specific field.

The small sample size analyzed was a limitation as it may affected the statistical power and robustness of the findings. This limitation arose from the use of convenience sampling, a non-probability sampling method, which restricted the number of participants and may introduce biases, limiting the generalizability of the findings. However, this method was chosen for its convenience and cost-efficiency, given that the respondents were people closer to the researcher.

The small sample may arise also as a consequence of the questionnaire length, as it may also be considered a limitation. It comprised 23 questions, including demographics, with a 13-minute duration based on ExperReview of Qualtrics. Questionnaires longer than 9 minutes tend to have higher withdrawal rates, and this was evident in this study, with over 150 dropouts. Future research should

consider designing shorter questionnaires, in terms of time or number of questions, or splitting them into two separate questionnaires.

Additionally, the study's participant demographics, which showed an imbalance in terms of age and gender representation, could also be considered a limitation. The majority of respondents were between the ages of 18 and 24 and predominantly female, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to the broader population. However, the results may provide an overview of Generation Z consumers' perspectives towards these initiatives.

Future research should consider employing more rigorous sampling techniques to ensure a more representative sample of the target population. Collaborating with industry players or utilizing existing databases could help access larger and more diverse samples of consumers within the Portuguese food retail sector. Additionally, could be interesting to consider longitudinal designs to investigate the long-term effects of CRM initiatives on consumer behavior. This approach would help better understand consumer attitudes towards these initiatives over time and identify other possible influential factors, such as changes in market trends, economic conditions, and evolving consumer preferences. This study could provide deeper insights into how CRM initiatives can actually impact consumer engagement with retailers. Another possibility could be conducting a comparative analysis to compare different CRM campaigns, including those involving financial contributions, in order to better understand consumer engagement and motivations.

Lastly, accessing recent literature on CRM initiatives in the food retail sector was a limitation due to its scarcity, specially from Portugal.

Despite these limitations, this investigation raised some insights about the determinants of the intention to participate in a CRM initiative and the effects of CRM initiatives on intentions to revisit a hyper/supermarket within the Portuguese food retail sector and contributes to the Portuguese literature on this topic.

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Appendix

A. Full list of measurement items

Section	Construct	Items	Measurements	Adapted on
Introduction				
Perceived CSR Awareness	Perceived CSR Awareness	4 items	7-point Likert Scale (1-"Strongly Disagree"; 7-"Strongly Agree")	-
		I consider myself a consumer attentive to Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives in general.		
		I support Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives whenever I have the opportunity.		
		Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives influence my purchase intention in a particular establishment.		
		I try to be aware of the Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives of the supermarkets I frequent.		
Consumer Perceptions of CRM in general	Consumer Company Identification	3 items	7-point Likert Scale (1-"Strongly Disagree"; 7-"Strongly Agree")	Hong et al. (2019) and Musova et al. (2022).
		For me, it is important that supermarkets have principles that are in line with mine.		
		For me, it is important that supermarkets behave correctly according to my values.		
		To me, it's important for supermarkets to show a genuine interest in helping the community.		
	CRM knowledge	1 item	Binary answer (yes/no)	-
		Did you already know about this type of programs and/or initiatives?		
	Perceived CRM Image	2 items	7-point Likert Scale (1-"Strongly Disagree"; 7-"Strongly Agree")	Hong et al. (2019) and Musova et al. (2022).
		I believe that Cause-Related Marketing is an easy way for the consumer to support a non-profit cause.		
		I believe that Cause-Related Marketing is a great way for supermarkets to help the community.		
	Attitude towards CRM	2 items	7-point Likert Scale (1-"Strongly Disagree"; 7-"Strongly Agree")	Rathore et al. (2022)
		I like the idea of shopping in supermarkets that help the community.		
		I am more likely to shop at supermarkets if I know about these programs.		
	Subjective Norm	2 items	7-point Likert Scale (1-"Strongly Disagree"; 7-"Strongly Agree")	Rathore et al. (2022)
		There is, in the people around me, an increasing tendency to shop in supermarkets with this type of initiatives in place.		
		People around me believe that it is a good idea to shop in supermarkets with initiatives of this kind, in order to support the community.		
	Perceived Behaviour Control	2 items	7-point Likert Scale (1-"Strongly Disagree"; 7-"Strongly Agree")	Rathore et al. (2022)
		I have the financial capacity to decide to shop in supermarkets with these types of programs, in order to support the community.		
		I have time to decide if I want to shop in supermarkets with these types of programs, in order to support the community		
		I have information and knowledge about the processes of participation in this type of program.		

	Intention to participate	2 items	7-point Likert Scale (1-"Strongly Disagree"; 7-"Strongly Agree")	Hong et al. (2019)
		I would be willing to shop in certain supermarkets to participate in such an initiative.		
		I would be willing to shop in certain supermarkets, because by participating in an initiative of this kind I could help the community.		
	Revisit	2 items	7-point Likert Scale (1-"Strongly Disagree"; 7-"Strongly Agree")	Hong et al. (2019)
		I would go back to shopping in supermarkets because they have an initiative of this kind in place.		
		I would go back to shopping in supermarkets involved in such an initiative, as this way I could help the community with my purchases.		
Consumer Perceptions of Bairro Feliz Program	Consumer Comany Identification	3 items	7-point Likert Scale (1-"Strongly Disagree"; 7-"Strongly Agree")	Hong et al. (2019) and Musova et al. (2022).
		The <i>Bairro Feliz</i> program demonstrates principles that are in line with mine.		
		Pingo Doce, through the <i>Bairro Feliz</i> program, is behaving correctly.		
		Pingo Doce, through the <i>Bairro Feliz</i> program, demonstrates a genuine interest in helping the community.		
	CRM knowledge	2 items	Binary choice (yes/no)	-
		Did you already know about the <i>Bairro Feliz</i> program?		
		What led you not to participate?	Multiple choice	
	Perceived CRM Image	2 items	7-point Likert Scale (1-"Strongly Disagree"; 7-"Strongly Agree")	Hong et al. (2019) and Musova et al. (2022).
		I consider the <i>Bairro Feliz</i> program to be an important project.		
		I think the <i>Bairro Feliz</i> program is a great way for Pingo Doce to help the community.		
	Attittued towards CRM	2 items	7-point Likert Scale (1-"Strongly Disagree"; 7-"Strongly Agree")	Rathore et al. (2022)
		I find the program to be an easy way to help me support a non-profit cause.		
		I'm more likely to shop at one of your stores if I know about the program's existence.		
	Subjetive Norm	2 items	7-point Likert Scale (1-"Strongly Disagree"; 7-"Strongly Agree")	Rathore et al. (2022)
		There is, in the people around me, an increasing tendency to shop at Pingo Doce, when there is the <i>Bairro Feliz</i> program in progress.		
		People around me believe that it is a good idea to shop at Pingo Doce, because the <i>Bairro Feliz</i> program is a way to support the community.		
	Perceived Behaviour Control	3 items	7-point Likert Scale (1-"Strongly Disagree"; 7-"Strongly Agree")	Rathore et al. (2022)
		I have the financial capacity to decide to shop at Pingo Doce, with the <i>Bairro Feliz</i> program underway, in order to support the community.		
		I have time to decide if I want to shop at Pingo Doce, with the <i>Bairro Feliz</i> program underway, in order to support the community		
		I have information and knowledge about the processes of participation in the Pingo Doce' <i>Bairro Feliz</i> program.		
	Intention to participate	2 items	7-point Likert Scale (1-"Strongly Disagree"; 7-"Strongly Agree")	Hong et al. (2019)
		I would be willing to shop at Pingo Doce, just to participate in the <i>Bairro Feliz</i> program.		
		I would be willing to shop at Pingo Doce and participate in the <i>Bairro Feliz</i> program, in order to help the community.		
	Revisit	2 items		

		I would go back to shopping at Pingo Doce, knowing that the <i>Bairro Feliz</i> program is in action.	7-point Likert Scale (1-"Strongly Disagree"; 7-"Strongly Agree")	Hong et al. (2019)
		I would go back to shopping at Pingo Doce, since with my purchases I will be able to help the community.		
Skepticism	Skepticism	6 items	7-point Likert Scale (1-"Strongly Disagree"; 7-"Strongly Agree")	Musova et al. (2022) and Skarmas & Leonidou (2013)
		To me, Cause-Related Marketing initiatives may be being used primarily to increase supermarket revenue.		
		For me, there are doubts about the existence of a genuine concern of supermarkets to help the community.		
		For me, there are doubts about whether these supermarkets are really responsible to the community.		
		For me, the <i>Bairro Feliz</i> program is being used mainly to increase Pingo Doce's revenue.		
		To me there are doubts about the genuine concern of the		
		For me, there are doubts about whether Pingo Doce is really a responsible company.		
Pay an extra value		1 item	7-point Likert Scale (1-"Strongly Disagree"; 7-"Strongly Agree")	-
		If, in order to participate in a Cause-Related Marketing program, it was necessary to pay an additional amount defined by you to donate to that cause, would you be willing to participate/pay?		
Demographic Questions		6 items	Multiple Choice	-
		Gender		
		Age		
		Academic Qualifications		
		Professional Status		
		What are the most important elements for you when choosing a supermarket to shop in?		

B. Questionnaire Script

Secção 1 | Introdução

A presente investigação, inserida no âmbito do Mestrado em Business Administration do ISCTE, tem como objetivo analisar as perceções dos consumidores sobre iniciativas de Marketing Relacionado com Causas, realizados por supermercados.

A participação é totalmente anónima, sendo que os dados serão usados apenas para fins estatísticos.

Como forma de gratificação, será sorteado um cartão de oferta do Pingo Doce, no valor de 25 euros, no dia 31 de Setembro de 2023. A inscrição é opcional e realizada através de um link disponível no final do questionário.

No caso de existir alguma dúvida, comentário ou se pretender conhecer os resultados do estudo, poderá contactar através do email: brqoa@istce-iul.pt.

Ao continuar está a autorizar a sua participação. Muito Obrigado!

Secção 2 | Os consumidores estão conscientes das CSR?

Pergunta 2.1: Indique pf. a sua opinião para cada uma das seguintes afirmações:
(utilize uma escala entre 1 - Discordo totalmente e 7 - Concordo totalmente)

- Considero-me um consumidor atento às iniciativas de Responsabilidade Social Corporativa no geral.
- Apoio as iniciativas de Responsabilidade Social Corporativa sempre que tenho oportunidade.
- As iniciativas de Responsabilidade Social Corporativa influenciam a minha intenção de compra num determinado estabelecimento.
- Procuro estar atento às iniciativas de Responsabilidade Social Corporativa dos supermercados que frequento.

Secção 3 | As percepções do Consumidor face ao CRM como conceito

Já ouviu falar de iniciativas de Marketing Relacionado a Causas?

Acontecem quando uma empresa com fins lucrativos forma uma parceria com uma causa sem fins lucrativos, com o objetivo de promover a causa e as vendas da empresa.

Pergunta 3.1: Indique pf. a sua opinião para cada uma das seguintes afirmações:
(utilize uma escala entre 1 - Discordo totalmente e 7 - Concordo totalmente)

- Para mim, é importante que os supermercados tenham princípios que vão ao encontro dos meus.
- Para mim, é importante que os supermercados tenham comportamentos corretos segundo os meus valores.
- Para mim, é importante que os supermercados demonstrem um interesse genuíno em ajudar a comunidade.

Pergunta 3.2: Já conhecia este tipo de programas e/ou iniciativas?

Escolha a opção mais apropriada a si.

- Não conhecia.
- Sim, mas nunca participei.
- Sim, e já participei.

Pergunta 3.3: Indique a sua opinião para cada uma das seguintes afirmações:

(utilize uma escala entre 1 - Discordo totalmente e 7 - Concordo totalmente)

- Eu acredito que o Marketing Relacionado a Causas é uma forma fácil para o consumidor apoiar uma causa sem fins lucrativos.
- Eu acredito que o Marketing Relacionado a Causas é uma ótima forma para os supermercados ajudarem a comunidade.
- Eu gosto da ideia de fazer as compras em supermercados que ajudem a comunidade.
- Tenho maior probabilidade de fazer compras em supermercados se souber da existência destes programas.

Pergunta 3.4 Relativamente às iniciativas de Marketing Relacionado a Causas em supermercados e de uma forma geral: (utilize uma escala entre 1 - Discordo totalmente e 7 - Concordo totalmente)

- Existe, nas pessoas à minha volta, uma tendência cada vez maior de fazer compras em supermercados com este tipo de iniciativas em curso.
- As pessoas à minha volta acreditam que é uma boa ideia fazer compras em supermercados com iniciativas deste tipo, de forma a apoiar a comunidade.
- Eu tenho a capacidade financeira para decidir fazer compras em supermercados com este tipo de programas, de forma a apoiar a comunidade.
- Eu tenho tempo para decidir se quero fazer compras em supermercados com este tipo de programas, de forma a apoiar a comunidade
- Eu tenho informação e conhecimento sobre os processos de participação neste tipo de programa.

Pergunta 3.5: Sobre iniciativas de Marketing Relacionado a Causas em supermercados e em relação a mim: (utilize uma escala entre 1 - Discordo totalmente e 7 - Concordo totalmente)

- Eu estaria disposto a realizar compras em determinados supermercados para participar numa iniciativa deste tipo.
- Eu estaria disposto a realizar compras em determinados supermercados, porque ao participar numa iniciativa deste tipo poderia ajudar a comunidade.
- Eu voltaria a fazer as compras em supermercados por estes terem uma iniciativa deste tipo em prática.
- Eu voltaria a fazer as compras em supermercados envolvidos numa iniciativa deste tipo, visto que desta forma poderia ajudar a comunidade com as minhas compras.

Pergunta 3.6: Devido a iniciativas de Marketing Relacionado a Causas em supermercados: (utilize uma escala entre 1 - Discordo totalmente e 7 - Concordo totalmente)

- Eu ficaria muito satisfeita(o) com os supermercados que promovessem iniciativas de Marketing Relacionado a Causas.

- A minha opinião sobre estes supermercados iria melhorar.
- Eu teria mais confiança nestes supermercados.
- Eu incentivaria os meus amigos e familiares a fazerem compras nestes supermercados.

Secção 4 | As perceções do Consumidor face ao programa Bairro Feliz do Pingo Doce

O programa "Bairro Feliz" é uma iniciativa do Pingo Doce que tem o objetivo de ajudar a comunidade envolvente às suas lojas.

Como funciona:

1. Para cada loja são escolhidas duas causas.
2. Estas causas foram inscritas previamente por vizinhos ou por associações de cada bairro.
3. A votação da vencedora é feita com a moeda "Moeda Bairro Feliz", a qual o cliente recebe ao realizar uma compra igual ou superior a 10€ numa loja Pingo Doce e oferece a uma causa.
4. A causa vencedora de cada loja irá receber um donativo até ao valor máximo de 1.000 euros.

Pergunta 4.1: Já conhecia o programa "Bairro Feliz"?

Escolha a opção mais apropriada a si.

- Não conhecia.
- Sim, mas nunca participei.
- Sim, e já participei.

Pergunta 4.2: Indique a sua opinião para cada uma das seguintes afirmações:

(utilize uma escala entre 1 - Discordo totalmente e 7 - Concordo totalmente)

- O programa Bairro Feliz demonstra princípios que vão ao encontro dos meus.
- O Pingo Doce, através do programa Bairro Feliz, está a ter um comportamento correto.
- O Pingo Doce, através do programa Bairro Feliz, demonstra ter um interesse genuíno em ajudar a comunidade.

Pergunta 4.3:

O programa Bairro Feliz dá a conhecer duas causas locais e ajuda uma causa vencedora por loja.

Para tal acontecer, o cliente tem apenas de fazer compras num supermercado e escolher a causa que pretende ser ajudada, e isto sem necessitar de pagar um valor extra.

Indique a sua opinião para cada uma das seguintes afirmações:

(utilize uma escala entre 1 - Discordo totalmente e 7 - Concordo totalmente)

- Considero que o programa Bairro Feliz é um projeto importante.
- Considero que o programa Bairro Feliz é uma ótima forma do Pingo Doce ajudar a comunidade.
- Considero que o programa é uma forma fácil para me ajudar a apoiar uma causa sem fins lucrativos.
- Tenho maior probabilidade de fazer compras numa das suas lojas se souber da existência do programa.

Pergunta 4.4: Relativamente ao programa "Bairro Feliz" do Pingo Doce e de uma forma geral:

(utilize uma escala entre 1 - Discordo totalmente e 7 - Concordo totalmente)

- Existe, nas pessoas à minha volta, uma tendência cada vez maior de fazer compras no Pingo Doce, quando tem o programa Bairro Feliz em curso.
- As pessoas à minha volta acreditam que é uma boa ideia fazer compras no Pingo Doce, devido ao programa Bairro Feliz ser uma forma de apoiar a comunidade.
- Eu tenho a capacidade financeira para decidir fazer compras no Pingo Doce, com o programa Bairro Feliz em curso, de forma a apoiar a comunidade.
- Eu tenho tempo para decidir se quero fazer compras no Pingo Doce, com o programa Bairro Feliz em curso, de forma a apoiar a comunidade
- Eu tenho informação e conhecimento sobre os processos de participação no programa Bairro Feliz do Pingo Doce.

Pergunta 4.5: Sobre o programa "Bairro Feliz" do Pingo Doce e em relação a mim:

(utilize uma escala entre 1 - Discordo totalmente e 7 - Concordo totalmente)

- Eu estaria disposto a realizar compras no Pingo Doce, só para participar no programa Bairro Feliz.
- Eu estaria disposto a realizar compras no Pingo Doce e a participar no programa Bairro Feliz, de forma a ajudar a comunidade.
- Eu voltaria a fazer as compras no Pingo Doce, sabendo que tem em ação o Programa Bairro Feliz.
- Eu voltaria a fazer as compras no Pingo Doce, visto que com as minhas compras poderei ajudar a comunidade.

Pergunta 4.6: Devido ao programa "Bairro Feliz":

(utilize uma escala entre 1 - Discordo totalmente e 7 - Concordo totalmente)

- Eu fiquei muito satisfeito com o Pingo Doce com a realização do Bairro feliz.

- A minha opinião sobre o Pingo Doce melhorou.
- Eu tenho mais confiança no Pingo Doce.
- Eu incentivaria os meus amigos e familiares a fazerem compras no Pingo Doce.

Secção 5 | Ceticismo

Pergunta 5.1: Indique a sua opinião para cada uma das seguintes afirmações sobre o Marketing Relacionado com Causas em supermercados:

(utilize uma escala entre 1 - Discordo totalmente e 7 - Concordo totalmente)

- Para mim, as iniciativas de Marketing Relacionado a
- Causas podem estar a ser usadas principalmente para aumentar a receita dos supermercados.
- Para mim, existem dúvidas sobre a existência de uma preocupação genuína dos supermercados em ajudar a comunidade.
- Para mim, existem dúvidas sobre o facto destes supermercados serem realmente responsáveis para com a comunidade.
- Para mim, o programa Bairro Feliz está a ser usado principalmente para aumentar a receita do Pingo Doce.
- Para mim existem dúvidas sobre a preocupação genuína do Pingo Doce em ajudar a comunidade.
- Para mim, existem dúvidas sobre o facto Pingo Doce ser realmente uma empresa responsável.

Secção 6 | Pagar valor extra

Pergunta 6.1: Se, para participar num programa de Marketing Relacionado com Causas, fosse necessário pagar um valor adicional definido por si a doar para essa causa, estaria disposto a participar/pagar?

(Utilize uma escala entre "1 - De certeza que não participaria" e "7 - De certeza que participaria")

- Se tivesse de pagar um valor adicional para participar, eu...

Secção 7 | Dados Demográficos

Breves questões sobre si.

Pergunta 7.1: Género:

- Feminino
- Masculino
- Prefiro não dizer

Pergunta 7.2: Idade

(resposta aberta)

Pergunta 7.3: Habilitações Literárias: (nível mais elevado que completou)

- Menos do que a escola secundária
- Concluiu a escola secundária
- Licenciatura
- Mestrado
- Doutoramento

Pergunta 7.4: Situação Profissional

- Estudante
- Desempregado
- Trabalhador por conta de outrem
- Trabalhador por conta própria
- Reformado

Pergunta 7.5: Quais os elementos mais importantes para si na escolha de um supermercado para fazer compras? (Arraste para cima o fator mais importante, e assim sucessivamente)

- Localização
- Preços
- Promoções
- Iniciativas de Responsabilidade Social Corporativa
- Disponibilidade de produtos
- Tamanho
- Outro. Qual?