

The Effect of the Unofficial Sponsorship of a Celebrity Doing a Good Cause on Consumer Responses: An Empirical Investigation

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This study contributes to the area of corporate sponsorship by proposing and empirically testing the effect of the unofficial sponsorship of a celebrity doing a good cause, which is a more cost-effective alternative to the official sponsorship of celebrity, on consumer responses towards the unofficial sponsor and its brand. A sample survey was used to collect the data and structural equation modelling was used to analyse the data. Results show that attitudes toward the celebrity is significantly and positively affected by perceived altruistic motive of the celebrity, but not significantly affected by perceived self-benefit motive of the celebrity. Attitude towards the celebrity, in turn, has both a direct and indirect effect (via perceived altruistic motive of the firm, perceived self-interest motive of the firm and perceived quality) on attitude towards the firm, which in turn, positively affects intention to buy the firm's products. Theoretical contribution, managerial implication, limitations, and future research directions are also discussed.

Key words: *Altruistic motive, Self-benefit motive, Attitude toward the celebrity, Attitude toward the firm, Perceived quality, Purchase intention.*

Introduction

Cause-related marketing (considered as a form of CSR activities/programs), company support of social causes, has experienced tremendous growth during the past decade (Barone, Miyazaki, and Taylor, 2000). The continued growth in cause-related marketing is expected as a result of the *positive outcomes* experienced by corporations in their cause-related marketing efforts (Barone, Miyazaki, and Taylor, 2000; Tate, 1995; Varadarajan and Menon, 1988). Presumably, the success of cause-related marketing reflects, a least in part, the favourable responses of consumers to a company's support of a cause, resulting in the choice of that's company's products or services.

Cause-related marketing is defined as a strategy designed to promote the achievement of marketing objectives (e.g., brand sales) via company support of social causes (Barone, Miyazaki, and Taylor, 2000). In some cases, there is a direct relationship between sales of a company's products and its support of a social cause, such as a company donating a certain amount of money per transaction. In other cases, the link between brand sales and the support of a cause may be less evident, such as a company donating money to a charity without indicating whether or how this support is tied to corporate sales. In these two situations, the public normally know who the sponsoring company is. In other words, sponsoring firms publicise their support of social causes. As a result, consumers and the public can identify the "official" sponsors of the cause-related marketing activities/programs and firms, and, on the other hand, can gain positive outcomes from being official sponsors of social causes.

Empirical studies that have been conducted on the effect of CSR (which also includes caused-related marketing) on consumers have either operationalised CSR as *perceived CSR* or *level of CSR* (e.g., Brown and Dacin, 1997; Garcia de los Samlones, Herrero, and Rodriguez del Bosque, 2005; He and Li, 2011; Lacey and Kennett-Hensel, 2010; Maignan, 2001; Romani, Grappi, and Bagozzi, 2013; Singh, Garcia de los Salmones, and Rodriguez del Bosque, 2008; Tian, Wang, and Yang, 2011) or as *CSR attributions* or *CSR motives* (e.g., Ellen, Webb, and Mohr, 2006; Groza, Pronschinske, and Walker, 2011; Lee et al., 2009). CSR motives have been found to have significant impacts on consumer responses, for example, purchase intention (Ellen, Webb, and Mohr, 2006), and attitude towards the firm and purchase intention (Groza, Pronschinske, and Walker, 2011; Lee et al., 2009). In all these studies, the firms in the studies were the "official" sponsors of the CSR activities/programs.

An interesting question is whether or not firms can gain the same positive outcomes from a much more cost-effective alternative to official sponsorship of celebrity, the "unofficial" sponsors of good causes in general and an "unofficial" sponsorship of a celebrity doing a good cause in particular. Unofficial sponsorship is defined in this study as a sponsorship in terms of technical and/or product supports without any financial support involved and

without the need to be identified or labelled as the sponsor of the activity or program. Specifically, how would consumers respond to unofficial sponsorship of good causes of a firm?

An example would be Nike assisting Athiwara Khongmalia or Toon Bodyslam, a rock star in Thailand, to achieve his goal in completing the 55-day 2,215.4-kilometer marathon from Betong District of Yala Province in the South of Thailand to Mae Sai District in Chiang Rai Province in the North of Thailand in 2017, raising 1,148 million Baht (or US\$33.6 at the time) for hospitals in Thailand. Nike provided technical support to maximise his performance and minimise his risk of injury, and five pairs of running shoes for rotation over the 55-day run. Nike can be considered as “unofficial” sponsor of this celebrity, because Nike provided these supports free of charge without requesting the celebrity to endorse its products or using its support of this celebrity in any of its publicity. After the 55-day run in 2017, Toon Bodyslam continues to run his charity runs and Nike continues to provide technical support and shoes to Toon Bodyslam. The celebrity has just finished a two-day 187-kilometer run from the First Thai–Lao Friendship Bridge in Nong Khai Province, finishing at the Khon Kaen Sports Stadium in Khon Kaen Province in June 2019, raising 54 million Baht (US\$1.7 million at the time) for hospitals in the Northeast of Thailand.

The objective of this study is to determine if unofficial sponsoring of a celebrity doing a good cause has a positive result for the sponsoring firm. Specifically, the objective of this study is to understand the process by which consumers respond to the unofficial sponsorship of a celebrity doing a good cause by a firm. A conceptual model of consumer responses towards the unofficial sponsorship of a celebrity doing a good cause is proposed and empirically tested.

This paper is organised as follows. The first section reviews relevant literature and proposes the conceptual models. This is followed by methodology section and results and discussion section. The last section includes theoretical contribution, managerial implications, limitations, and future research directions.

Literature Review

Model Conceptualisation

The approach used by Zeithaml (1988) in conceptualising perceptions of quality, price, and value was used to conceptualise the conceptual model in this study. Specifically, insights from a focus group interview and findings from the literature review of past studies were synthesised to propose the conceptual model and hypotheses for this study. The details of the conceptualisation process is discussed in the sections below.

FocusGroup Interviews

The objective of the focus interview is to identify the relevant constructs and the relationships among the constructs for conceptualising the conceptual model for this study. Specifically, a focus group interview of eight consumers (four males, four females, aged between 18 and 45) was conducted at the early stage of this study. During the session, the subjects were asked to first express their opinions of Toon Bodyslam and then to express their opinions on Toon Bodyslam's 55-day run in 2017. They were also asked to express their opinions on Nike. The following findings were obtained from the focus group.

First, the subjects' first responses towards Toon Bodyslam were regarding his charity runs. The subjects mostly learned about Toon's charity runs through both traditional media such as newspapers and TVs, as well as social media such as Facebook and Twitter. Second, when the subjects were asked to comment on Toon's motivation on the run, the majority of the subjects stated that the celebrity's motive was social interest or altruistic motives (i.e., the celebrity engaged in the charity run because he really cared about the society). A few subjects also commented that the motive could be self-interest or self-benefit motive (i.e., the celebrity engaged in the charity run because he wanted to promote himself). Furthermore, the altruistic motive and self-benefit motive perceived of the celebrity had positive impacts and negative impacts on their attitudes towards the celebrity, respectively. Third, when the subjects were asked to comment on Nike's motivation on supporting Toon's run, the subjects agreed that Nike did not use its support of Toon's run for publicity or promotion and considered Nike as the unofficial sponsor rather than official sponsor of the run. They also identified both altruistic motive and self-benefit motive as motivations of Nike. The altruistic motive and self-benefit motive perceived of Nike also had positive and negative impacts on attitudes towards Nike, as well as perceived quality of Nike's products, respectively. Finally, there seemed to be a relationship between attitudes towards the celebrity and attitudes towards Nike.

In conclusion, two different attitudinal structures (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980) were identified in the focus group interview: cognitions (i.e., attributions of the celebrity's motives) and attitude towards the celebrity, and cognitions (i.e., attributions of the firm's motives) and attitude towards the unofficial sponsor (i.e., the firm). There also seemed to be a relationship between the two attitudinal structures.

Since attributions of motives (cognitions) and attitudes (affective) were identified in the focus group interview, the literature review in the next section focuses mainly on attributions of motives and attitudes affected by the motives.

Past Studies on the Effect of Perceived Motives on Consumer Responses

Since there is no direct literature on attributes of cause-related marketing, the literature is based on attributions of CSR, in which cause-related marketing is included. A literature review on the effect of CSR motives on consumer responses shows that there have been relatively few empirical studies on this topic (Ellen, Webb, and Mohr, 2006; Groza, Pronschinske, and Walker, 2011; Lee et al., 2009).

Ellen et al. (2006), identified four types of CSR attributions or motives, including value-driven motive (i.e., the company engages in CSR because it believes that CSR is the right thing to do), strategic-driven motive (i.e., the company engages in CSR to increase sales or profit), egoistic motive (i.e., the company engages in CSR to take advantage of the cause or non-profit organisation for itself), and stakeholder-driven motive (i.e., the company engages in CSR because of stakeholder pressures). They also categorised the four types of motives into two categories: self-centred motives (i.e., strategic-driven motive and egoistic motive) and other-centred motives (i.e., value-driven motive and stakeholder-driven motive). They found that value-driven motive and strategic-driven motive positively affect purchase intention, while egoistic-driven motive negatively affects purchase intention. On the other hand, a stakeholder-driven motive does not have a significant impact on purchase intention.

Groza, Pronschinske, and Walker (2011) and Walker et al. (2010), used three of Ellen et al. (2006)'s motives (i.e., value-driven motive, strategic-driven motive, and stakeholder-driven motive) in their studies. They found that value-driven motive and strategic-driven motive positively affect attitude towards the firm and purchase intention, while stakeholder-driven motives negatively affect attitude toward the firm and purchase intention.

Lee et al. (2009), on the other hand, posited that there are three types of philanthropic CSR motives, including altruistic public-serving motive (e.g., the company engages in philanthropy to benefit the society), firm-serving motives (e.g., the company engages in philanthropy to benefit itself), and reactive motives (e.g., the company engages in philanthropy to respond to consumer boycott, pressures from NGOs, or other corporate scandals). They found that public-serving motive (equivalent to value-driven motive), has a significant positive impact on attitude towards the firm. On the other hand, firm-serving motive (equivalent to strategic-driven motive) and reactive motive (equivalent to stakeholder-driven motive) do not significantly affect attitude towards the firm. They also found that attitude towards the firm has a positive impact on purchase intention.

In summary, value-driven motive (Ellen, Webb, and Mohr, 2006), can be considered as equivalent to altruistic public serving motive (Lee et al., 2009), and strategic-driven and egoistic motive (Ellen, Webb, and Mohr, 2006) can be considered as equivalent to firm-

serving motive (Lee et al., 2009). Altruistic motive clearly has a positive effect on consumer responses, while self-benefit motives may or may not have a negative impact on consumer responses.

The Conceptual Framework: The Dual Mediation Hypothesis

Since there were two attitudinal structures to be related, the Dual Mediation Hypothesis (MacKenzie, Lutz, and Belch, 1986) was the appropriate conceptual framework to conceptualise the conceptual model for this study. MacKenzie, Lutz, and Belch (1986), derived the Dual Mediation Hypothesis from the joint cognitive structure/cognitive response model of communication effects (Lutz and Swasy, 1977) and the elaboration likelihood model (Petty and Cacioppo, 1981) to explain the role of attitude toward the ad as the mediator of advertising effectiveness in their empirical study. The Dual Mediation Hypothesis postulates that a consumer's affective responses towards difference sources are affected by their cognitive responses toward the sources and that the affective response towards a source can affect the cognitive responses and affective response towards another source.

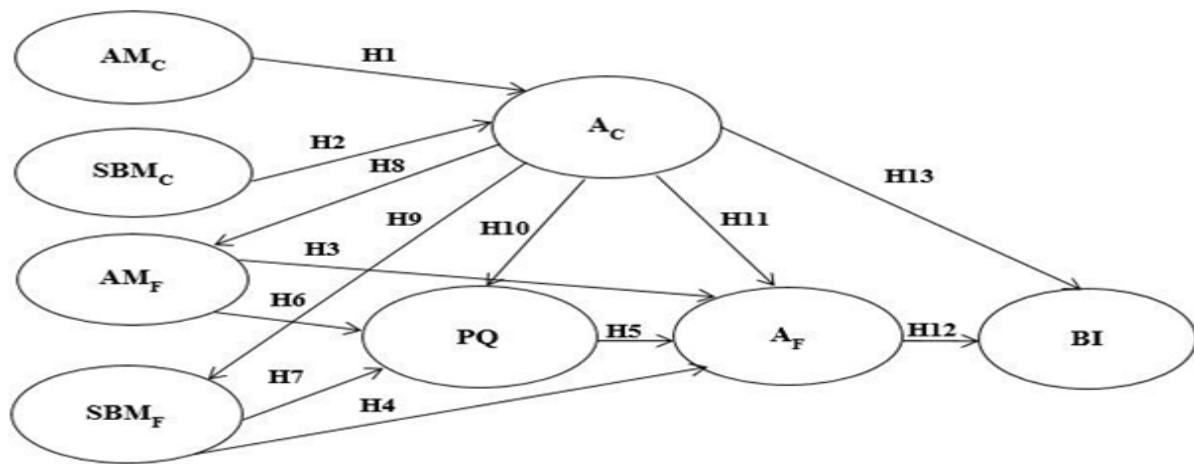
The Conceptual Model and Hypotheses

Using the Dual Mediation Hypothesis as the conceptual framework to integrate the two attitudinal structures together, the conceptual model for this study is shown in Figure 1. According to the conceptual model, attitude towards the celebrity (affect response towards the celebrity) is positively and negatively affected by perceived altruistic motive of the celebrity and perceived self-benefit motive of the celebrity (cognitive responses toward the celebrity), respectively. Attitude towards the unofficial sponsor/firm (affective response toward the sponsor/firm) is positively affected by perceived altruistic motive of the firm and perceived quality of the firm's products (cognitive responses towards the firm), and negatively affected by perceived self-benefit of the firm (cognitive response towards the firm). It is also positively affected by attitude towards the celebrity (affective response towards the celebrity). Perceived quality of the firm's products (cognitive response towards the firm) is positively and negatively affected by perceived altruistic motive of the firm and perceived self-benefit motive of the firm (cognitive responses toward the firm), respectively. Attitude towards the celebrity (affective response towards the celebrity) positively affects perceived altruistic motive of the firm and perceived quality of the firm's products (cognitive responses towards the firm), and negatively affects perceived self-benefit motive of the firm (cognitive response towards the firm). Finally, purchase intention (cognitive response) is positively affected by attitude towards the firm (affective response towards the firm) and attitude towards the celebrity (affective response towards the celebrity). Each of the relationships in the conceptual model is discussed below.

Note:

AMC – Altruistic Motive of the Celebrity
 SBMC – Self-Benefit Motive of the Celebrity
 AMF – Altruistic Motive of the Sponsor/Firm
 SBMF – Self-Benefit Motive of the Sponsor/Firm
 PQ – Perceived Quality of the Firm’s Products
 AC- Attitude towards the Celebrity
 AF – Attitude towards the Sponsor/Firm
 BI – Intention to Buy the Firm’s Products

Figure 1. The Conceptual Model



Effect of Perceived Altruistic Motive and Perceived Self-Interest Motive of the Celebrity on Attitude towards the Celebrity

The focus group interview showed that there are two types of motives towards the celebrity: altruistic motive and self-benefit motive. Using findings from the past studies on the effect of consumers’ beliefs about motives of the firm on their attitude towards firms discussed above as reference, it is reasonable to postulate that consumers’ beliefs about the motives of the celebrity significantly affect their attitudes towards the celebrity. Specifically, the following hypotheses are proposed:

- H1:** Perceived altruistic motive of the celebrity positively affects attitude towards the celebrity.
- H2:** Perceived self-benefit motive of the celebrity negatively affects attitude towards the celebrity.

Effect of Perceived Altruistic Motive and Perceived Self-Benefit Motive of the Firm and Perceived Quality of the Firm's Products on Attitude towards the Firm

The focus group interview showed that there are also two types of motives towards the unofficial sponsor (or the firm): altruistic motive and self-benefit motive. The past studies discussed above indicate that consumers' beliefs about the motives of the firm in unofficially sponsoring the celebrity significantly affect attitude towards the firm. Specifically, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H3: Perceived altruistic motive of the firms positively affects attitude towards the firm.

H4: Perceived self-benefit motive of the celebrity negatively affects attitude towards the firm.

Although it is widely accepted that cognitive response such as perceived quality positively affects attitude towards the brand (Ajzen, 1985; 1991; Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980; Bagozzi, 1981; Lutz, 1986), the review of literature in CSR shows that the effect of perceived quality on attitude towards the firm has not yet been tested. The focus group interview showed that perceived quality of the firm's products has a positive impact on attitude towards the firm. As such, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H5: Perceived quality of the firm's products positively affects attitude towards the firm.

Effect of Perceived Altruistic Motive and Perceived Self-Benefit Motive of the Firm on Perceived Quality of the Firm's Products

The focus group interview showed that, apart from significantly affecting the attitude towards the firm, altruistic motive and self-benefit motive of the firm also significantly affects perceived quality of the firm's products. Specifically, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H6: Perceived altruistic motive of the firms positively affects perceived quality of the firm's products.

H7: Perceived self-benefit motive of the celebrity negatively affects perceived quality of the firm's products.

Effect of Attitude Towards the Celebrity on Altruistic Motive of the Firm, Self-Benefit Motive of the Firm, Perceived Quality of the Firm's Products, and Attitude Towards the Firm

The focus group interview showed that attitude towards the celebrity may significantly affect the beliefs about the motives of the firm, as well as attitudes towards the firm. According to

the Dual Mediation Hypothesis (MacKenzie, Lutz, and Belch, 1986), affective response towards a source (i.e., attitude towards the celebrity) can affect the cognitive responses (i.e., altruistic motive of the firm, self-benefit motive of the firm, and perceived quality of the firm's products) and affective response (i.e., attitude towards the firm) of another source (i.e., the firm). Furthermore, attitude towards the celebrity should positively affect perceived altruistic motive of the firm, perceived quality of the firm and attitude towards the firm, but negatively affect perceived self-benefit motives of the firm. Specifically, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H8: Attitude towards the celebrity positively affects perceived altruistic motive of the firm.

H9: Attitude towards the celebrity negatively affects perceived self-benefit motive of the firm.

H10: Attitude towards the celebrity positively affects perceived quality of the firm's products.

H11: Attitude towards the celebrity positively affects attitude towards the firm.

Effect of Attitude Towards the Firm and Attitude Towards the Celebrity on Intention to Buy the Firm's Products

For the relationship between attitude towards the celebrity and purchase intention, the review of literature in the area of CSR showed that there is no literature on the impact of attitude towards celebrity on purchase intention. The review of literature in CSR showed that the amount of empirical research on the effect of attitude toward the firm on purchase intention is very limited (i.e., Ellen, Webb, and Mohr, 2006). Specifically, Lee et al. (2009), found that attitude towards the firm positively affects purchase intention. As such, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H12: Attitude towards the firm positively affects intention to buy the firm's products.

According to the Dual Mediation Hypothesis, the effect of attitude towards the celebrity on intention to buy the firm's product is mediated by cognitions of the firm (i.e., perceived altruistic motive of the firm, perceived self-benefit of the firm, perceived quality of the firm's products) and attitude towards the firm. It is interesting to see if attitude towards the celebrity has a direct effect on intention to buy the firm's products. As such, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H13: Attitude towards the celebrity positively affects intention to buy the firm's products.

Methodology

Research Design

The research design for this study is sample survey. Specifically, an online survey was used in this study. The link to the questionnaire was posted in a Facebook page. The subjects read a short description of Toon Bodyslam's 55-day run and the support of Nike in terms of technical and product support and then answered the questions that follow.

Sample

A total of 205 subjects participated in the survey. In terms of gender, there were 118 females (57.60%) and 87 males (42.40%). In terms of age, seven of them were 20 or younger (3.41%), 30 of them were 21-30 (14.63%), 62 of them were 31-40 (30.24%), 79 of them were 41-50 (38.54%), and 27 of them were over 50 (13.18%). In terms of marital status, 81 of them were single (39.50%) were single, 116 of them were married (56.60%), and eight\ of them were divorced or separated (2.90%). In terms of income, 104 of them (50.73) had a monthly income of over 50,000 Baht. In terms of education, 98 of them had bachelor degrees (47.89%), 103 of them had master degrees or higher (50.25%), and four of them had a diploma or vocational certificate (1.95%). In terms of occupation, 56 of them were white collar (27.32%), 49 of them were blue collar (23.90%), 49 of them were business owners (23.90%), 15 of them were professional (7.32%), 24 of them were students (11.71%), and 12 of them were housewives or retired (5.85%). The detail of the subjects' demographic profiles is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Profile of the Subjects (205 Samples)

Data	Items	Amount	Frequency (%)
Gender	Male	87	42.40
	Female	118	57.60
Ages	Less than 21 years	7	3.41
	21-30 years	30	14.63
	31-40 years	62	30.24
	41-50 years	79	38.54
	51-60 years	25	12.20
	More than 60 years	2	0.98
Marital Status	Single	81	39.50
	Married	116	56.60
	Divorced or Separated	8	3.90
Income	Less than 10,000 baht	22	10.73
	10,001-20,000 baht	21	10.24

Data	Items	Amount	Frequency (%)
	20,001-30,000 baht	27	13.17
	30,001-40,000 baht	16	7.80
	40,001-50,000 baht	15	7.32
	More than 50,000 baht	104	50.73
Education	Diploma/ High vocational certificate	4	1.95
	Bachelor's Degree	98	47.80
	Master's Degree or equally	102	49.76
	Doctor's Degree or equally or above	1	0.49
Occupation	Student	24	11.71
	White collar	56	27.32
	Blue collar	49	23.90
	Business owner	49	23.90
	Professional (e.g., doctor, lawyer, engineer)	15	7.32
	Housewife	9	4.39
	Retired	3	1.46
	Total	205	100.00

Measures

There are eight constructs in the conceptual model: perceived altruistic motive of the celebrity, perceived self-benefit motive of the celebrity, attitude towards the celebrity, perceived altruistic motive of the firm, perceived self-benefit motive of the firm, perceived quality of the firm's products, attitude towards the firm, and intention to buy the firm's products. The definitions and items of these scales were derived from existing scales (Brown and Dacin, 1997; Ellen et al., 2006; Groza, Pronschinske, and Walker, 2010; He and Lee, 2010; Lee et al., 2009; Lii and Lee, 2012) and insights from the focus group interview. The definitions of the scales and their items are shown below:

Perceived altruistic motive of the celebrity is defined as the extent that the motive of the celebrity is perceived as unselfish concern for or unselfish devotion to the welfare of society. It is measured by a five-item, seven-point Likert scale. A sample item is "Toon really wanted to improved society by his running campaigns."

Perceived self-interest motive of the celebrity is defined as the extent that the motive of the celebrity is perceived as concern for the company's own interest or advantage. It is measured by a four-item, seven-point Likert scale. A sample item is "What Toon really wanted in his running campaigns was to benefit himself."

Attitude towards the celebrity is defined as the overall evaluation of the celebrity in a favorable or unfavorable way. It is measured by a three-item, seven-point Likert scale. A sample item is “My overall feeling towards Toon is very favourable.”

Perceived quality of the firm’s products is defined as the overall superiority of the firm’s products. It is measured by a three-item, seven-point Likert scale. A sample item is “The performance of Nike’s products is very good.”

Perceived altruistic motive of the firm is defined as the extent that the motive of the firm is perceived as unselfish concern for or unselfish devotion to the welfare of society. It is measured by a five-item, seven-point Likert scale. A sample item is “Nike really wanted to improve society by supporting Toon’s running campaigns.”

Perceived self-interest motive of the celebrity is defined as the extent that the motive of the firm is perceived as concern for the company’s own interest or advantage. It is measured by a four-item, seven-point Likert scale. A sample item is “Nike’s motive in supporting Toon’s running campaigns was self-interested/self-benefited.”

Attitude towards the firm is defined as the overall evaluation of the celebrity in a favourable or unfavourable way. It is measured by a three-item, seven-point Likert scale. A sample item is “My overall feeling towards Nike is very favourable.”

Intention to buy the firm’s products is defined as the propensity or determination to buy the products of the firm. It is measured by a three-item, seven-point Likert scale. A sample item is “If I need to buy sport shoes, it is very likely that I will buy Nike.”

See Appendix for more details about these measures.

Data Analysis

To test the hypothesised relationships among the constructs specified in the conceptual model, a structural equation modelling approach was used. The data were input into PRELIS 2 (Joreskog and Sorbom, 1988) to generate the covariance matrix for structural equation model analysis. The matrix was then input into LISREL 8 (Joreskog and Sorbom, 1993) to examine the model fit and to test the hypotheses.

Results and Discussion

The Measurement Model

The standardised factor loadings (standardised λ s), reliability, and proportion-of-variance-extracted index of each of the constructs in the measurement model are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: The Measurement Model Results

Constructs and Indicators	Standardised Factor Loadings	Reliability/ Item R²	Proportion of Variance Extracted
Perceived altruistic motive-celebrity (ξ_1)		0.945	0.7842
X1 (ALTRUISTIC-C 1)	0.91 ^{a, b}	0.82	
X2 (ALTRUISTIC-C 2)	0.89 ^b	0.79	
X3 (ALTRUISTIC-C 3)	0.86 ^b	0.75	
X4 (ALTRUISTIC-C 4)	0.86 ^b	0.74	
X5 (ALTRUISTIC-C 5)	0.91 ^b	0.82	
Perceived self-benefit motive-celebrity (ξ_2)		0.864	0.6300
X6 (SELFBENEFIT-C 1)	0.74 ^{a, b}	0.90	
X7 (SELFBENEFIT-C 2)	0.65 ^b	0.83	
X8 (SELFBENEFIT-C 3)	0.90 ^b	0.91	
X9 (SELFBENEFIT-C 4)	0.86 ^b	0.75	
Attitude toward Celebrity (η_1)		0.839	0.6300
Y1 (ATTITUDE-C 1)	0.78 ^{a, b}	0.61	
Y2 (ATTITUDE-C 2)	0.78 ^b	0.61	
Y3 (ATTITUDE-C 3)	0.82 ^b	0.67	
Perceived altruistic motive-firm (η_2)		0.907	0.6620
Y4 (ALTRUISTIC-F 1)	0.85 ^{a, b}	0.73	
Y5 (ALTRUISTIC-F 2)	0.84 ^b	0.71	
Y6 (ALTRUISTIC-F 3)	0.78 ^b	0.61	
Y7 (ALTRUISTIC-F 4)	0.79 ^b	0.62	
Y8 (ALTRUISTIC-F 5)	0.80 ^b	0.64	
Perceived self-benefit motive-firm (η_3)		0.839	0.5750
Y9 (SELFBENEFIT-F 1)	0.76 ^{a, b}	0.58	
Y10 (SELFBENEFIT-F 2)	0.71 ^b	0.50	
Y11 (SELFBENEFIT-F 3)	0.86 ^b	0.74	
Y12 (SELFBENEFIT-F 4)	0.69 ^b	0.48	
Perceived quality of the firm's products (η_4)		0.927	0.7675
Y13 (QUALITY 1)	0.77 ^{a, b}	0.59	
Y14 (QUALITY 2)	0.88 ^b	0.77	
Y15 (QUALITY 3)	0.93 ^b	0.86	
Y16 (QUALITY 4)	0.92 ^b	0.85	
Attitude towards the firm (η_5)		0.911	0.7867
Y17 (ATTITUDE-F 1)	0.80 ^{a, b}	0.65	
Y18 (ATTITUDE-F 2)	0.91 ^b	0.83	

Constructs and Indicators	Standardised Factor Loadings	Reliability/ Item R ²	Proportion of Variance Extracted
Y19 (ATTITUDE-F 3)	0.94 ^b	0.88	
Purchase Intention (η_6)		0.929	0.8300
Y20 (INTENTION 1)	0.82 ^{a, b}	0.67	
Y21 (INTENTION 2)	0.97 ^b	0.94	
Y22 (INTENTION 3)	0.94 ^b	0.88	

^aFixed at 1.00 in the non-standardised solution.

^b $p < 0.001$, 1-tailed t-test

The reliabilities (i.e., Cronbach Alpha) of all of the constructs were moderately high to high (ranging from 0.839 to 0.945) and exceeded 0.7, which is the threshold recommended by Nunnally (1978). For convergent validity (Fornell and Larcker, 1981), the standardised factor loadings are generally high and statistically significant (i.e., higher than 0.7). The more conservative proportion-of-variance-extracted index (Fornell and Larcker, 1981), which indicates the amount of variance captured by a construct in relation to the amount of variance caused by measurement error, indicated that all of the constructs had a high convergent validity (ranging from 0.5750 to 0.8300). All of the indices exceeded the minimum standard of 0.50, which indicates that the variance captured by the construct exceeds the variance caused by the measurement error.

The discriminant validity among the eight constructs was assessed by comparing the proportion-of-variance-extracted indices of each pair of constructs with the square of the correlation between the constructs in the pair (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Results showed that the proportion-of-variance-extracted indices of constructs in every pair were higher than the square of the correlation between the constructs of the pair, indicating the discriminant validity among the eight constructs. The proportion-of-variance-extracted indices of the eight constructs and the correlation matrix of the eight constructs are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: The Correlation Matrix of the Latent Variables

Correlation Matrix of ETA and KSI								
	Att_c	Altru_f	Sbene_f	Quality	Att_f	Intent	Altru_c	Sbene_c
Att_c	1.00							
Altru_f	0.49	1.00						
Sbene_f	0.07	0.08	1.00					
Quality	0.62	0.56	0.35	1.00				
Att_f	0.56	0.54	-0.14	0.73	1.00			
Intent	0.50	0.44	0.11	0.58	0.78	1.00		
Altru_c	0.75	0.37	0.13	0.46	0.42	0.38	1.00	

Correlation Matrix of ETA and KSI								
	Att_c	Altru_f	Sbene_f	Quality	Att_f	Intent	Altru_c	Sbene_c
Sbene_c	0.02	-0.01	0.00	-0.01	-0.01	-0.01	-0.20	1.00

In terms of the model fit, the Chi-square value ($\chi^2_{420} = 1,097.67, p = 0.0$) indicated that the model did not adequately fit. Since the Chi-square test is suggested to be used as a guide rather than an absolute index of fit (Bagozzi, 1981; Bearden et al., 1982; Fornell and Larcker, 1981), the incremental fit indices including Bentler and Bonett's (1980) normed fit index (NFI), Bentler's (1990) comparative fit index (CFI), and Bollen's (1989) incremental fit index (IFI) were used to assess the model fit. The model fit could be considered as acceptable because all the three incremental indices were over 0.90. Specifically, NFI, CFI, and IFI were 0.92, 0.95, and 0.95, respectively.

The Structural Model

The following hypotheses were tested in this study. Perceived altruistic motive of the celebrity positively affects attitude towards the celebrity (H1) while perceived self-benefit motive of the celebrity negatively affects attitude towards the celebrity (H2). Perceived altruistic motive of the firm, perceived quality of the firm's products, and attitude towards the celebrity positively affect attitude towards the firm (H3, H5, and H11, respectively) while perceived self-benefit motive of the firm negatively affects attitude towards the firm (H4). Perceived altruistic motive of the firm positively affects perceived quality of the firm's products (H6) while perceived self-benefit motive of the firm negatively affects perceived quality of the firm's products (H7). Attitude towards the celebrity positively affects perceived altruistic motive of the firm (H8), perceived quality of the firm's products (H10) and attitude towards the firm (H11) but negatively affects perceived self-benefit motive of the firm (H9). Perceived quality was hypothesised to positively affect attitude towards the firm (H5). Finally, attitude towards the firm and attitude towards the celebrity positively affect intention to buy the firm's products (H12 and H13, respectively).

Results (see Table 4) show that, in terms of statistical significance, perceived altruistic motive of the celebrity positively affects attitude towards the celebrity ($\gamma_{1,1} = 0.76, p = 0.0$). However, the impact of perceived self-benefit motive of the celebrity on attitude towards the celebrity is not significant ($\gamma_{1,2} = -0.088, p > 0.05$). As such, H1 is supported but H2 is not supported. A plausible explanation for the lack of support for H2 could be the fact that Toon has proven to the Thai public that he is altruistic in his running campaigns, rendering perceived self-benefit motive irrelevant.

Attitude towards the firm is positively affected by perceived altruistic motive of the firm ($\beta_{5,2} = 0.099, p < 0.05$), perceived quality of the firm's products ($\beta_{5,4} = 0.65, p = 0.0$) and attitude

towards the celebrity ($\beta_{5,1} = 0.15, p < 0.05$) but negatively by perceived self-benefit motive of the firm ($\beta_{5,3} = -0.093, p < 0.05$). As such, H3, H4, H5 and H11 are all supported.

Perceived quality of the firm's products is positively affected by perceived altruistic motive of the firm ($\beta_{4,2} = 0.21, p = 0.0$) and attitude towards the celebrity ($\beta_{4,1} = 0.39, p = 0.0$) but negatively by perceived self-benefit motive of the firm ($\beta_{4,3} = 0.20, p = 0.00$). As such, H6, H7, and H10 are all supported.

Attitude towards the celebrity positively affects perceived altruistic motive of the firm ($\beta_{2,1} = 0.74, p = 0.0$) but does not have significant impact on perceived self-benefit motive of the firm ($\beta_{3,1} = 0.021, p > 0.05$). As such, H8 is supported but H9 is not supported.

Finally, intention to buy the firm's products is positively affected by attitude towards the firm ($\beta_{6,5} = 0.87, p = 0.0$) but not by attitude towards the celebrity ($\beta_{6,1} = 0.11, p > 0.05$). As such, H12 is supported but H13 is not supported. This findings indicated that attitude towards the celebrity does not have a direct impact on intention to buy the firm's products; the effect of attitude towards celebrity on intention to buy the firm's products is mediated by cognitions towards the firm (i.e., perceived altruistic motive of the firm, perceived quality of the firm's products) and attitude towards the firm.

In terms of substantive significance (i.e., the extent an observed effect is large enough to be meaningful), findings show that altruistic motive of the celebrity significantly and substantively affects attitude towards the celebrity ($\gamma_{1,1} = 0.76, p = 0.0$), which in turn, significantly and substantively affects perceived altruistic motive of the firm ($\beta_{2,1} = 0.74, p = 0.0$) and perceived quality of the firm's products ($\beta_{4,1} = 0.39, p = 0.0$). Perceived quality of the firm's products significantly and substantively affects attitude towards the firm ($\beta_{5,4} = 0.65, p = 0.0$), which in turn, significantly and substantively affects intention to buy the firm's products ($\beta_{6,5} = 0.87, p = 0.0$).

The proportion of variance explained (R^2) of the six functions with attitude towards the celebrity, perceived altruistic motive of the firm, perceived self-benefit of the firm, perceived quality of the firm's products, attitude toward the firm, and intention to buy the firm's products as the dependent variables are 0.59, 0.24, 0.028, 0.53, 0.58, and 0.61, respectively. In summary, all hypotheses except H2, H9, and H13 are supported.

Table 4: The Structural Model Results

Independent Construct	Dependent Construct					
	Attitude toward the celebrity	Altruistic motive (firm)	Self-benefit motive (firm)	Perceived quality	Attitude towards the firm	Purchase Intention
Altruistic motive (celebrity)	0.76 ^a	-	-	-	-	-
Self-benefit motive (celebrity)	0.08 ^{n.s}	-	-	-	-	-
Attitude towards the celebrity	-	0.74 ^a	0.021 ^{n.s.}	0.39 ^a	0.15 ^b	0.11 ^{n.s}
Altruistic motive (firm)	-	-	-	0.21 ^a	0.099 ^b	-
Self-benefit motive (firm)	-	-	-	-0.20 ^a	-0.093 ^b	-
Perceived quality	-	-	-	-	0.65 ^a	-
Attitude towards the firm	-	-	-	-	-	0.87 ^a
R ²	0.59	0.24	0.028	0.53	0.58	0.61
Chi-square	1,097.67					
Degree of freedom	420					
p-value	0.00					
NFI	0.92					
CFI	0.95					
IFI	0.95					

^ap = 0.0, one-tailed t-test

^bp < 0.05, one tailed t-test

Conclusion

Theoretical Contribution

This study extends the knowledge in the area of cause-related marketing (and CSR) by proposing and empirically testing a conceptual model of consumer responses to the unofficial sponsorship of a celebrity doing a good cause. The results demonstrate the process by which attributions of motives of the celebrity doing a good cause affect consumers' attitudes towards the celebrity, as well as consumers' beliefs, attitudes, and buying intentions towards the sponsor/firm. Specifically, perceived altruistic motive of the celebrity positively affects attitude towards the celebrity, which, in turn, positively affects perceived altruistic motive of

the firm, perceived quality of the firm's products, and attitude towards the firm. Perceived altruistic motive of the firm and perceived quality of the firm's products positively affect attitude towards the firm while perceived self-benefit motive of the firm negatively affects attitude towards the firm. Finally, attitude towards the firm positively affects intention to buy the firm's products.

Managerial Implications

Results from this study show unofficial sponsorship of a celebrity doing a good cause has a positive outcome on attitude towards the firm and intention to buy the firm's products. Specifically, attitude towards the celebrity has both a direct positive effect and an indirect positive effect (via perceived altruistic motive of the firm and perceived quality of the firm's products) on attitude towards the firm, which in turn, positively affects intention to buy the firm's products. Since attitude towards the celebrity is significantly and substantively affected by perceived altruistic motive of the celebrity, it is important for the sponsor/firm to find the right celebrity. The findings imply that the right celebrity is the celebrity who is perceived by the public to be altruistic in motive in doing a good cause (i.e., consistently doing a good cause without receiving any financial reward or benefits for a long period of time).

Limitations and Future Research Directions

The main limitation of this study is the lack of generalisability of the findings. This is because the data for this study were collected from subjects of one country, evaluating one single celebrity and one company. This study should be replicated with different firms in different industries in different countries to validate the generalisability of the findings.

Apart from replicating these studies with other firms in other industries and other countries, the following future studies are suggested. First, future research should compare consumers' perceived attitude towards quality, attitude towards the firm, and intention to buy the firm's products between unofficial sponsorship and no sponsorship. This research would confirm if unofficial sponsorship actually renders positive outcomes to the sponsoring firm. A second aspect for future research can aim at comparing official sponsorship versus unofficial sponsorship of good causes. This research should confirm if the effectiveness of unofficial sponsorship can be as effective as or more effective than official sponsorship. Finally, future research should study if unofficial sponsorship also has significant positive effects on business customers.



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Appendix

Perceived Altruistic Motive of the Celebrity (5-item, 7-point Likert Scale)

- X1: Toon's motive in his running campaign was pure/altruistic.
- X2: Toon really wanted to improve society by his running campaign.
- X3: Toon did not expect anything in return for his running campaign.
- X4: Toon did not have any hidden agenda for his running campaign.
- X5: Toon is a very socially responsible person.

Perceived Self-Benefit Motive of the Celebrity (4-item, 7-point Likert Scale)

- X6: Toon's motive in his running campaign is self-interested/self-benefited.
- X7: What Toon really wanted in his running campaign was to benefit himself.
- X8: Toon's running campaign was self-promotional in nature.
- X9: Toon had hidden agenda for his running campaign.



Attitude toward the Celebrity (5-item, 7-point Likert Scale)

Y1: My overall attitude toward Toon is very positive.

Y2: My overall feeling toward Toon is very favorable.

Y3: Overall, I like Toon very much.

Perceived Altruistic Motive of the Firm (5-item, 7-point Likert Scale)

Y4: Nike's motive in supporting Toon's running campaign was pure/altruistic.

Y5: Nike really wanted to improve society by supporting Toon's running campaign.

Y6: Nike did not expect anything in return for supporting Toon's running campaign.

Y7: Nike did not have any hidden agenda for supporting Toon's running campaign.

Y8: Nike is a very socially responsible company.

Perceived Self-Benefit Motive of the Celebrity (4-item, 7-point Likert Scale)

Y9: Nike's motive in supporting Toon's running campaign was self-interested/self-benefited.

Y10: The objective of Nike in supporting Toon's running campaign is to promote its image.

Y11: Nike supported Toon's running campaign to increase its sales and profit.

Y12: Nike had hidden agenda in supporting Toon's running campaign.

Perceived Quality of the Firm's Products (4-item, 7-point Likert Scale)

Y13: The design of Nike's products is very stylish/trendy.

Y14: The quality/grade of materials used to make Nike's products is very high.

Y15: The workmanship/craftsmanship of Nike's products is very good.

Y16: The performance of Nike's products is very good.

Attitude toward the Celebrity (3-item, 7-point Likert Scale)

Y17: My overall attitude toward Nike is very positive.

Y18: My overall feeling toward Nike is very favorable.



Y19: Overall, I like Nike very much.

Intention to Buy the Firm's Products (3-item, 7-point Likert Scale)

Y20: If I need to buy sport shoes, it is very likely that I will buy Nike.

Y21: If I need to buy sport apparels, it is very likely that I will buy Nike.

Y22: If I need to buy sport equipment, it is very likely that I will buy Nike.