

# Does your Cause Fit my Heart? Self-expansion, Self-Concept, and Brand Engagement in Cause Related Marketing

**Carlos Rodriguez**  
College of Business Delaware State University  
**Shalini Bariar**  
VESIM Business School

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## **Abstract**

Marketing strategies focus on connecting consumers to brands on a more intimate manner by enhancing their meaning around a particular cause such as concern for the environment, social responsibility, education, or community needs. This study assesses the impact of branding on the consumer's self expansion mechanisms and the creation of meaning as the fit between the cause and brand enhances consumer's self-concept. A fit between the cause and the need for self-identification increases consumers' knowledge, abilities, perspectives, and even identities. These findings uncover the values dimension in the structure of cause-brand fit. Second, a fit between the meaning of the cause and brand identity is an antecedent to brand credibility and engagement into the self. Finally, a fit between the cause significance and consumer's identity generates self-expansion, an enrichment from the brand to the self-concept. A sample of 275 consumers in Mumbai, India is used to estimate our theoretical model through confirmatory factor analysis, Lisrel and partial least-squares path modeling, PLS. Identity and self-expansion theories are the framework for our study.

**Keywords:** *Cause-marketing; Self-concept; Self-expansion*

**Track:** Product and Brand Management