

# Understanding Gen Z's Response to CSR Messaging: How Message Clarity and Perceived Motives Drive Engagement



***Soojin Kim***

Kutztown University of Pennsylvania

***Yongjae Kim***

Kutztown University of Pennsylvania

## Abstract

This study examines the role of CSR message clarity and perceived motives in shaping Gen Z's attitudes and donation intentions, specifically within the context of CSR communication in sports. As a generation that is digitally native, socially conscious, and critical consumer group, Gen Z's engagement with CSR messages is influenced by both the clarity of the message and the authenticity of its motives. Using Construal Level Theory (CLT), the research reveals that clear, concrete CSR messages, which reduce psychological distance, foster positive attitudes toward the brand and its initiatives. Additionally, CSR motives perceived as public-serving enhance the effectiveness of message clarity, while self-serving motives lead to skepticism and diminished engagement. While CSR message clarity does not directly impact donation intent, it exerts an indirect effect through the formation of attitudes, highlighting the critical role of trust and favorable brand perceptions in influencing Gen Z's pro-social behaviors. The findings emphasize that transparency and genuine commitment to social causes are essential for successful CSR campaigns targeting this demographic.

**Keywords:** message clarity, perceived CSR motives, Gen Z, Construal Level Theory (CLT)

---

Soojin Kim, Ph.D., and Yongjae Kim, Ph.D., are affiliated with the Department of Sport Management at Kutztown University of Pennsylvania, Kutztown, PA, USA. Dr. Soojin Kim's research interests include strategic marketing, sport communication, and consumer behavior, while Dr. Yongjae Kim focuses on sport fan behavior, brand management, and strategic marketing.

## 1. Introduction

---

With expansive media exposure and deeply loyal fan bases, professional sports teams and leagues are uniquely positioned to leverage corporate social responsibility (CSR) to foster meaningful social change. As stakeholder expectations rise, so does scrutiny over the authenticity and impact of CSR efforts in sport. Babiak and Wolfe (2006) note that sport organizations are increasingly expected to serve the public good, regardless of whether their CSR motivations are altruistic or strategic.

In response, many leagues are broadening their CSR efforts, moving beyond philanthropy to address pressing social and environmental concerns. Carroll's (1991) classic four-tiered model, namely, economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic responsibilities, remains foundational, yet contemporary sport CSR also emphasizes environmental sustainability and social dimensions (Babiak et al., 2012; Ratten & Babiak, 2010). For example, the National Football League (NFL) has launched green initiatives, while also committing \$250 million over 10 years to combat systemic racism (Battista, 2020).

Despite significant CSR activity in sport, communication remains an underexamined dimension. Effective CSR communication is critical to cultivating stakeholder trust and engagement (Crane & Glozer, 2016). While scholars have developed frameworks for involving stakeholders in CSR messaging (Morsing & Schultz, 2006), limited research explores how such messages resonate with Generation Z (Gen Z), a key demographic known for its demand for transparency, ethical branding, and digital engagement (Deloitte, 2024; Nguyen et

al., 2019; Twenge, 2021). As the largest emerging consumer group (Miller & Lu, 2018), Gen Z exhibits strong preferences for brands that prioritize sustainability and social justice (Parker et al., 2019; Narayanan, 2022).

CSR messages vary in their framing, from specific action-oriented messages to broader, value-driven slogans (Kim & Bae, 2016; Pracejus et al., 2003). The NFL's 2025 Super Bowl shift from "End Racism" to "Choose Love" illustrates the contrast between concrete and abstract messaging. While the former signaled a clear stance on a social issue, the latter was seen by some as vague or politically sanitized, raising concerns about the league's true motives (Buckley, 2025). Such shifts underscore the importance of message clarity and perceived sincerity in shaping audience reactions. Moreover, the effectiveness of CSR messages often hinges on perceived motives. Audiences, particularly Gen Z, are more receptive to initiatives perceived as genuinely prosocial than those seen as self-serving or performative (Forehand & Grier, 2003; Klimkiewicz & Oltra, 2017). Thus, a critical question emerges: how do message clarity and perceived CSR motives influence Gen Z's attitudes and willingness to engage?

This study addresses a gap in the sport CSR communication literature by investigating how message clarity (concrete vs. abstract) and perceived motives (public-serving vs. self-serving) contribute to Gen Z's engagement with CSR initiatives. Drawing on Construal Level Theory (Trope & Liberman, 2010), which posits that psychological distance affects message interpretation, the study examines how CSR message framing influ-

ences Gen Z's perceptions, attitudes, and behavioral intentions. By exploring the mediating role of attitudes and the moderating influence of perceived motives, this research provides actionable insights for sport organizations seeking to engage Gen Z effectively, foster brand trust, and enhance the impact of their social initiatives.

## 2. Literature Review

---

### *Construal Level Theory (CLT)*

This study will be guided by Construal Level Theory (CLT), a widely recognized framework for examining the effectiveness of messages across different contexts (Anuar & Mohamad, 2011; Grau & Folse, 2007; Kim & Kim, 2021; Thomas, 2023). CLT posits that individuals interpret persuasive information to varying degrees depending on the psychological distance involved (Trope & Liberman, 2010). The theory emphasizes the relationship between mental abstraction (the construal level) and psychological distance, which influences how individuals evaluate, predict, and respond to information (Trope et al., 2007). This implies that a message's effectiveness can be enhanced by aligning its level of abstraction with the psychological distance perceived by the audience. Psychological distance includes temporal, spatial, or social dimensions, reflecting how close or distant an individual perceives an object, event, or action. When events or actions are perceived as near to the self, they are typically construed at a low level, characterized by concrete, specific, and contextual details, whereas those perceived as distant from the self are construed at a higher level, marked by abstract, general, and decontextualized

representations (Trope & Liberman, 2010). Previous research consistently indicates that messages designed to elicit a low construal level tend to generate stronger, more positive responses, as they present the information as tangible, contextual, and specific (Grau & Folse, 2007). By exploring how CSR messages influence the perceptions and behaviors of Gen Z, this study aims to provide valuable insights for sports organizations seeking to establish genuine and meaningful connections with this important demographic (see Figure 1).

### *Gen Z and Corporate Social Responsibility*

Gen Z, typically defined as individuals born after 1997 (Dimock, 2019), represents a unique and increasingly influential consumer group. Research suggests that Gen Z will not only become the fastest growing consumer segment but also a significant force in the labor market (Miller & Lu, 2018). One of the primary characteristics that sets this generation apart is its strong connection to technology and the internet. Having grown up in a fully digital environment, where connectivity and instant access to information are standard, Gen Z's behavior, social interactions, and decision-making processes differ greatly from those of previous generations (Greenfield, 2009; Francis & Hoefel, 2018). As digital natives, their interactions with brands are unique, posing both a challenge and an opportunity for marketers (Fromm & Read, 2018). They do not accept marketing messages passively but instead actively assess, question, and compare brands before making purchasing decisions (Kim et al., 2025). Consequently, traditional marketing

strategies often fail to appeal to this group unless they are authentic, transparent, and offer clear value-based messaging (Williams & Page, 2011).

Gen Z is also known for its strong focus on social responsibility, ethics, and environmental issues (Deloitte, 2024; Narayanan, 2022; Nguyen et al., 2019). Compared to previous generations, they are more likely to align with brands that mirror their values, particularly in relation to environmental issues and societal impact (Parker et al., 2019). This heightened awareness and concern for social and environmental issues fosters a more favorable view toward companies that engage in CSR initiatives (Thomas, 2022). Hence, firms can develop a positive relationship with these consumers, develop a strong image, and become a preferred brand if they engage in CSR and communicate it (Edinger-Schons et al., 2018). Accordingly, understanding how CSR messages influence Gen Z's attitudes and behaviors is critical for sport organizations aiming to engage this influential demographic, especially as they demand transparency, authenticity, and digital engagement (Twenge, 2021).

### ***Attitudinal and Behavioral Responses to Message Clarity***

Companies' investments in CSR initiatives yield minimal benefits if consumers are unaware of these efforts (Du et al., 2010). This highlights the crucial need for effective communication of CSR activities. For CSR efforts to achieve their full potential, messaging must be both widespread and impactful (Gilal et al., 2023). Research increasingly demonstrates that CSR messaging has

a powerful effect on consumer perceptions and behaviors. Well-crafted CSR messages can positively influence consumer attitudes, enhance corporate reputation, and improve brand image (Chen & Huang, 2018; Diallo & Lambey-Checchin, 2015; Folse et al., 2010). Consequently, strategically using CSR messaging to influence public perceptions has become a key approach for brands looking to foster stronger connections with their consumer base (Gangadharbatla et al., 2022).

A crucial factor in the effectiveness of CSR messaging is message clarity, which refers to how easily the audience understands the message, free from ambiguity or confusion (Darley & Smith, 1995; Kim et al., 2010; Yalch & Elmore-Yalch, 1984). Research indicates that concrete messages, which outline specific actions or outcomes, enhance message clarity, making it easier for consumers to process and respond (Yalch & Elmore-Yalch, 1984). This clarity, in turn, leads to more favorable consumer reactions (Kim et al., 2010; Kim & Bae, 2016). Furthermore, studies emphasize the importance of clarity as a key advertising strategy, showing that it can significantly improve attitudes toward both the message and the brand being promoted (Kim et al., 2010). As such, clarity is not merely a desirable feature but a vital determinant of message effectiveness.

In evaluating the effectiveness of CSR messages, researchers often focus on attitudes and behavioral intentions (e.g., Du et al., 2010; Wigley, 2008). Attitude refers to an individual's psychological state, influenced by their evaluations of a particular idea or object (Zanna & Rempel, 1988). In the context of this study, attitude reflects how positively or negatively an individual evaluates

the CSR message. Specifically, it refers to their overall feelings toward the message itself. In addition to attitude, this study will explore consumers' behavioral intentions, particularly their intention to donate to the cause presented in the CSR message. Although previous research has examined the direct effects of message clarity, the mediating role of message clarity between attitude towards the message and behavior has not been sufficiently explored and remains an area requiring further investigation.

H1: Higher CSR message clarity leads to more favorable attitudes toward the CSR message.

H2: Higher CSR message clarity has a positive effect on donation intent.

H3: Attitude toward the CSR message mediates the relationship between CSR message clarity and donation intent.

### ***Concrete vs. Abstract CSR Messages***

In the context of CSR campaigns, two primary types of messages have been identified: concrete messages, which specify a company's tangible actions toward a cause, and abstract messages, which focus on broader values or ideals (Olsen et al., 2003; Pracejus et al., 2003; Yoon, 2015). The existing literature on these message types presents mixed findings, yet consistent evidence suggest that concrete messages are more effective in shaping consumer attitudes and behaviors (Atkin et al., 2008; Hitchon et al., 1994; Ketelaar et al., 2010).

A pertinent case that illustrates the distinction between these two message types is the NFL's CSR initiative, which utilizes two contrasting messages: "End Racism" (concrete) and "Choose Love" (abstract). The concrete "End Racism"

message focuses on specific social cause, while the abstract "Choose Love" message emphasizes a broader, idealistic value. Existing literature suggests that concrete messages are less ambiguous and, therefore, easier for consumers to process and evaluate. Building on this, it is hypothesized that consumers exposed to the concrete "End Racism" message will exhibit stronger, more favorable attitudes and behaviors compared to those exposed to the abstract "Choose Love" message. While research generally supports the effectiveness of concrete messages, the potential impact of abstract messages, particularly in emotionally charged CSR contexts, remains an open question. This study seeks to fill this gap by exploring the effectiveness of message type specifically within the context of sports CSR. By doing so, it aims to offer deeper insights into how CSR messages can be strategically framed to better engage consumers and enhance brand perception.

### ***Perceived CSR Motive***

While CSR activities are intended to benefit society, there remains a degree of public skepticism, as many suspect that companies exploit CSR to boost profits (Illia et al., 2013). Scholars have noted that consumers often question the true motivations behind a company's CSR actions (Arumi et al., 2005; Mohr et al., 1998). When exposed to CSR messages, consumers typically try to infer the company's motivations for those actions (Mansouri et al., 2022).

Research indicates that individuals perceive CSR motives as either public-serving or self-serving (Forehand & Grier, 2003). These motivations have been variously described as altruistic versus



egoistic, exogenous versus endogenous, other-versus self-centered, and sincere versus image-promotional (Bendapudi et al., 1996; Ellen et al., 2006; Kim, 2011). Several studies have shown that when individuals perceive a company's CSR motives as sincere and public-serving, they tend to have more favorable attitudes and behaviors, such as greater trust, intention to support, and positive recommendations (Becker-Olsen et al., 2006; Ellen et al., 2000; Forehand & Grier, 2003). On the other hand, if the company's motives are seen as self-serving, it tends to lead to negative responses towards both the company and its CSR initiatives (Boerman et al., 2012). Therefore, the public's perception of a company's motives plays a critical role in shaping attitudes and influencing behavioral intentions (Lichtenstein et al., 2004).

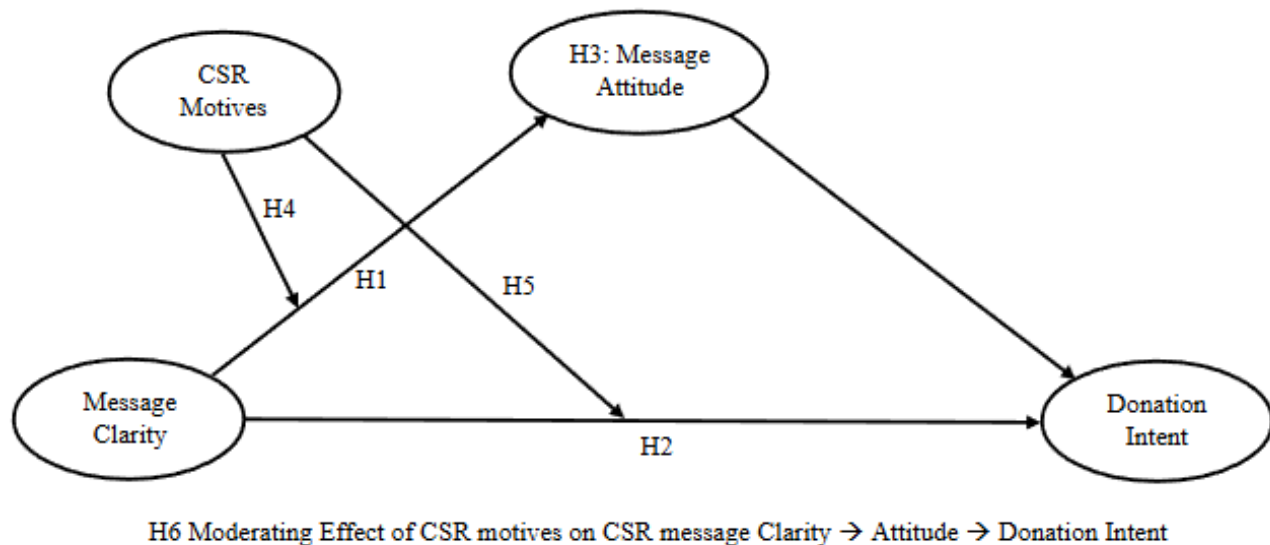
Given the importance of consumer awareness of CSR (Du et al., 2007; Sen et al., 2006; Son et al., 2023) and the influence of positive CSR evaluations on behavioral outcomes (Walker & Kent, 2009), it is expected that perceptions of CSR motives will lead to different behavioral reactions. Although past research has confirmed the effect of CSR motives on consumer behavior, most studies have focused on direct impacts and have not considered the interaction between CSR motives and other factors, such as perception of message clarity. This study proposes that CSR motives not only influence consumer evaluations of CSR initiatives

but also moderate the relationship between message clarity and subsequent behaviors. Specifically, when CSR motives are perceived as public-serving, the positive effect of message clarity on attitude towards the message and on donation behavior is stronger. Public-serving motives enhance the perceived authenticity and relevance of the message (Du et al., 2010), intensifying its effect. In contrast, self-serving CSR motives may diminish the message's credibility, leading to less positive attitude and a reduced likelihood of donation behavior. By examining how CSR motives moderate the relationship between message clarity and donation behavior, this study addresses an important gap in the literature, offering deeper insights into how CSR motives influence the effectiveness of CSR messaging.

H4: The positive effect of CSR message clarity on attitude toward the CSR message is stronger when CSR motives are perceived as public-serving rather than self-serving.

H5: The positive effect of CSR message clarity on donation intent is stronger when CSR motives are perceived as public-serving rather than self-serving.

H6: The mediating effect of attitude toward the CSR message is stronger when CSR motives are perceived as public-serving rather than self-serving.

**Figure 1***Theoretical Research Model*

### 3. Methodology

#### *Data Collection and Participants*

Participants for this study were recruited from business and sport management courses at a university, located in the Pennsylvania region of the United States. A total of 222 participants were successfully recruited from the university, using class announcement. The participants were college students aged 18 to 26, with an average age of 20.04 years ( $SD = 1.6$ ). In terms of ethnicity, the majority of participants identified as white/Caucasian, comprising 76.6% of the sample. Hispanic participants made up 14.4%, while 3.6% identified as Black/African American. The remaining participants identified as Asian or Pacific Islander (1.8%) and multiracial (3.6%). In the gender distribution, males comprised 64.9% of the participants.

For the purpose of this study, college students were recruited using a convenience sampling method, as they represent a significant segment of U.S. consumers (Francis & Hoefel, 2018). College

students today are primarily part of Gen Z, which includes individuals born roughly between the mid-to-late 1990s and the early 2010s (Dimmock, 2019). As a key demographic, Gen Z college students are an important consumer group, characterized by their strong interest in social, political, and environmental issues and preference for brands that align with their values (Francis & Hoefel, 2018; Seemiller & Grace, 2019). These traits make them an ideal focus for studies related to consumer behavior and CSR (Sawicka & Marcinkowska, 2023).

#### *Research Procedure*

The experiment was conducted in a classroom setting. Before the study, participants completed a pre-survey that included questions about their previous volunteer experiences and demographic information. Upon arrival, they received an overview of the study and were asked to read and sign a consent form. After providing consent, participants were exposed to one of two CSR messages -

“End Racism” or “Choose Love” - displayed as an image (see Appendix A and B). The order of message exposure was randomized to mitigate potential sequencing effects. Following the message exposure on a football field setting, participants completed a post-survey assessing their perceptions of the CSR messages and their experience with NFL CSR initiatives. On average, participants completed the survey in 8.7 minutes.

### **Measurement**

*Perceived Message Clarity.* Message clarity was measured using a 4-item, 7-point semantic differential scale. Participants rated their overall feelings about the clarity of the CSR messages on dimensions such as “Easy to understand-Not easy to understand,” “Immediately understandable-Not immediately understandable,” “Clear-Unclear,” and “Concise-Not concise.” These measures have been validated in various contexts (Kim & Bae, 2016).

*Attitude toward the CSR message.* Participants' attitudes toward the message were measured using a 4-item, 7-point semantic differential scale (Silvera & Austad, 2004). They rated their overall feelings about the CSR messages such as “Good-Bad,” “Pleasant-Unpleasant,” “Interesting-Uninteresting,” and “Likeable-Not likeable.”

*Perceived CSR Motives.* CSR motives were measured with four items adopted from Bolton and Mattila (2015) on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from Strongly disagree (1) to Strongly agree (7), categorizing participants into public-serving (codes as 1) or self-serving (coded as 2) motive groups using a median split with a threshold score of 5.2. The measurement includes “the

NFL participates in CSR because it genuinely cares about the well-being of others,” “The NFL commitment to CSR is genuine,” “The NFL is really just engaging in CSR to benefit itself (R),” and “The NFL participates in CSR because it wants to sell more tickets (R).”

*Intention to Donate.* Donation Intent was measured using a 3-item, 7-point semantic differential scale, with questions “What is the likelihood that you would donate to a cause that supports NFL's [CSR message] initiative in the future?” The scale included the items “likely-unlikely,” “probable-improbable,” and “possible-impossible.” These measures are widely used in donation behavior research (Grau & Folse, 2007).

### **Data Analysis**

To test the research hypotheses (see Figure 1), a series of statistical analyses were conducted. First, descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation analyses were performed to examine the relationships among the key variables in the study, including CSR message clarity, perceived CSR motives, attitude toward the CSR message, and donation intent. Pearson correlation coefficients were used to assess the strength and direction of these relationships.

Next, multiple regression analyses were conducted to evaluate the direct effects of CSR message clarity on attitude toward the CSR message (H1), as well as the direct effects of these variables on donation intent (H2). Interaction effects between CSR message clarity and perceived CSR motives were also tested to determine whether perceived CSR motives moderated the effect of



message clarity on attitude (H4) and donation intent (H5).

To further examine the role of attitude toward the CSR message as a potential mediator (H3), a mediation analysis was conducted using Model 8 of the PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2017). This analysis tested whether attitude toward the CSR message mediated the relationship between CSR message clarity and donation intent. Additionally, a moderated mediation analysis was performed to assess whether the indirect effect of CSR message clarity on donation intent through attitude varied depending on perceived CSR motives (H6). All statistical analyses were conducted using IBM SPSS 29 with a significance level set at  $p < .05$ .

Table 1

*Descriptive Statistics and Correlations Among Key Variables*

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
CSR Message Clarity	1.50	.50	-			
Perceived CSR Motives	1.48	.50	.03	-		
Attitude Toward CSR Message	5.64	1.17	.38**	.22**	-	
Donation Intent	4.25	1.49	.36**	.16*	.60**	-

- $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$

***Effect of CSR Message Clarity and Perceived CSR Motives on Attitude Toward the CSR Message***

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the effects of CSR message clarity and perceived CSR motives on attitude toward the CSR message. The overall model was significant,  $F(3, 218) = 18.77$ ,  $p < .001$ , explaining 20.5% of the variance ( $R^2 = .205$ ). CSR message clarity had

## 4. Results

### ***Descriptive Statistics and Correlations***

Table 1 presents the means, standard deviations, and Pearson correlation coefficients for the study variables. CSR message clarity was positively correlated with attitude toward the CSR message ( $r = .38$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and donation intent ( $r = .36$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Attitude toward the CSR message was significantly correlated with donation intent ( $r = .60$ ,  $p < .001$ ), supporting its role as a potential mediator.

a significant positive effect on attitude ( $B = 1.75$ ,  $SE = 0.44$ ,  $t = 3.99$ ,  $p < .001$ ), supporting H1. Perceived CSR motives also had a significant main effect on attitude ( $B = 1.40$ ,  $SE = 0.44$ ,  $t = 3.14$ ,  $p = .002$ ).

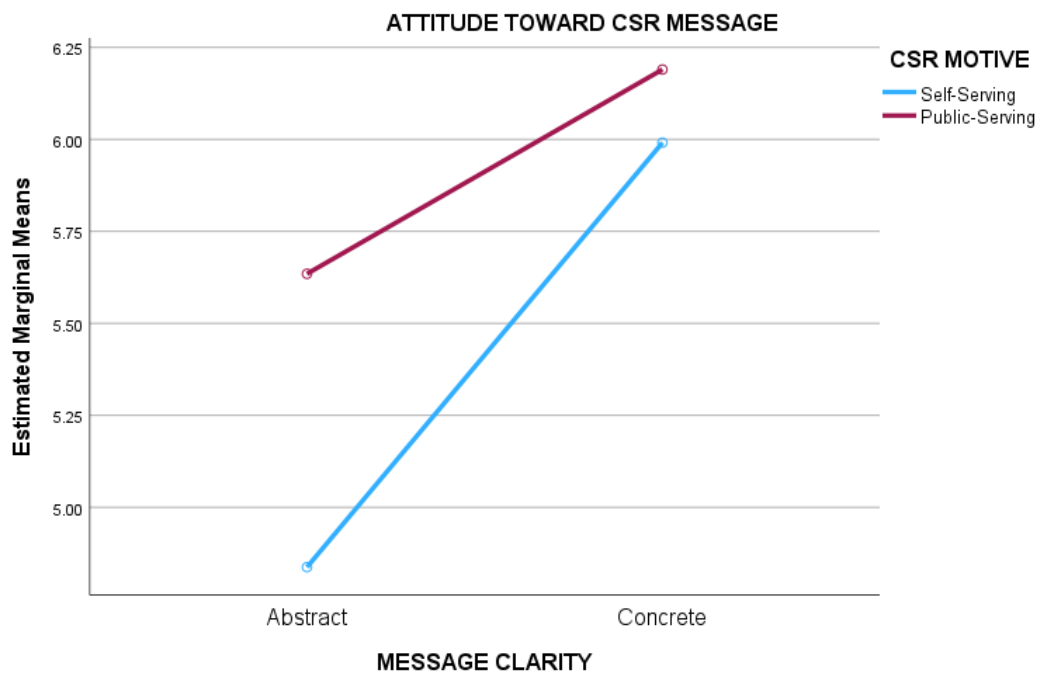
A significant interaction between CSR message clarity and perceived CSR motives was observed ( $B = -0.60$ ,  $SE = 0.28$ ,  $t = -2.12$ ,  $p = .035$ ). A simple slopes analysis indicated that when CSR motives

were perceived as public-serving (coded as 1), CSR message clarity had a stronger effect on attitude ( $B = 1.15, SE = 0.19, t = 5.92, p < .001$ ). When CSR motives were self-serving (coded as 2), the effect of clarity on attitude was weaker but still

significant ( $B = 0.56, SE = 0.20, t = 2.73, p = .007$ ). These findings support H4, suggesting that message clarity is more effective in improving attitudes when CSR motives are perceived as public-serving (see Figure 2).

Figure 2

*The interaction effect between message clarity and CSR motive on attitude toward CSR message*



#### ***Effect of CSR Message Clarity, Attitude Toward the CSR Message, and Perceived CSR Motives on Donation Intent***

A second regression model was conducted to examine the effects of CSR message clarity, attitude toward the CSR message, and perceived CSR motives on donation intent. The overall model was significant,  $F(4, 217) = 34.02, p < .001$ , explaining 38.5% of the variance ( $R^2 = .385$ ). Attitude toward the CSR message had a significant positive effect on donation intent ( $B = 0.67, SE = 0.08, t = 8.78,$

$p < .001$ ). However, CSR message clarity did not have a significant direct effect on donation intent ( $B = 0.95, SE = 0.51, t = 1.84, p = .066$ ), failing to support H2. As shown in Figure 3, the interaction between CSR message clarity and perceived CSR motives was also not significant ( $B = -0.31, SE = 0.32, t = -0.98, p = .328$ ), indicating that perceived CSR motives did not moderate the direct relationship between clarity and donation intent, failing to support H5.

Figure 3

*The interaction effect between message clarity and CSR motive on donation intent*



### ***The Indirect Effect of CSR Message Clarity on Donation Intent via Attitude Toward the CSR Message***

A mediation analysis was conducted using Model 8 of the PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2017) to examine whether attitude toward the CSR message mediated the relationship between CSR message clarity and donation intent. The conditional indirect effects at different levels of perceived

CSR motives are reported in Table 2.

When CSR motives were public-serving, the indirect effect of CSR message clarity on donation intent via attitude was significant ( $B = 0.77$ ,  $SE = 0.15$ , 95% CI [0.49, 1.08]). When CSR motives were self-serving, the indirect effect was weaker but still significant ( $B = 0.37$ ,  $SE = 0.13$ , 95% CI [0.12, 0.63]). These findings support H3.

Table 2

*Conditional Indirect Effects of CSR Message Clarity on Donation Intent via Attitude Toward the CSR Message*

Perceived CSR Motives	Effect	SE	LLCI	ULCI
Public-Serving	0.7726	0.1502	0.4914	1.0835
Self-Serving	0.3719	0.1309	0.1154	0.6314

### ***The Role of Perceived CSR Motives***

A moderated mediation analysis examined whether the strength of the indirect effect (CSR message clarity → Attitude → Donation intent) was influenced by perceived CSR motives. The index of moderated mediation was significant ( $B = -0.40$ ,  $SE = 0.19$ , 95% CI  $[-0.78, -0.04]$ ), indicating that the mediation effect was stronger when CSR motives were perceived as public-serving compared to self-serving. These findings support H6, demonstrating that while CSR message clarity enhances donation intent through attitude, this effect is weaker when CSR motives are perceived as

self-serving.

Table 3 provides a summary of the hypotheses and their outcomes. CSR message clarity significantly improves attitude toward the CSR message, which in turn increases donation intent. The effect of CSR message clarity on attitude is moderated by perceived CSR motives, such that clarity has a stronger impact when CSR motives are perceived as public-serving. Furthermore, the mediation effect of attitude is significant, but its strength varies based on CSR motives, with stronger mediation effects under public-serving CSR motives.

Table 3

#### *Summary of Hypothesis Testing*

	Hypothesis	Test Result
H1	Message Clarity → Message Attitude	Supported
H2	Message Clarity → Donation Intent	Not Supported
H3	Attitude mediates Message Clarity → Donation Intent	Supported
H4	CSR Motives moderate Message Clarity → Message Attitude	Supported
H5	CSR Motives moderate Message Clarity → Donation Intent	Not Supported
H6	Moderated mediation effect present	Supported

## **5. Discussion**

The findings of this study contribute to the understanding of CSR communication in sports, particularly in how CSR message clarity and perceived CSR motives influence Gen Z's attitudes and donation intent. As a consumer segment, Gen Z is highly digital, socially conscious, and critical in evaluating brand communications (Francis & Hoefel, 2018). Unlike previous generations, Gen Z has grown up in an era of instantaneous digital

access to information, making them more discerning and skeptical toward marketing messages (Djafarova & Bowes, 2021). Construal Level Theory (CLT) (Trope & Liberman, 2010) provides a useful framework for understanding how Gen Z processes CSR messaging, as their engagement depends on the psychological distance they perceive in corporate initiatives. Within this context, CSR message clarity and perceived motives significantly shape Gen Z's attitudes and subsequent

donation behavior.

### ***CSR Message Clarity and Attitude toward CSR Message***

According to CLT, individuals process information through high-level construals (abstract thinking) or low-level construals (concrete thinking) depending on the psychological distance of an event (Trope & Liberman, 2010). CSR message clarity reduces psychological distance by making information more concrete, structured, and accessible, enabling consumers to process the message at a low construal level with a focus on specific, tangible details. Given Gen Z's preference for direct, transparent, and fact-based communication (Prasanna & Priyanka, 2024), clear CSR messaging plays an essential role in shaping positive attitudes toward the brand's social responsibility efforts.

The significant positive effect of CSR message clarity on attitude toward CSR messaging (H1) aligns with this perspective. When CSR messages are clearly articulated, Gen Z consumers perceive them as credible, relatable, and trustworthy, fostering favorable attitudes toward the initiative. These results are consistent with previous research indicating that clear and well-structured CSR messages enhance consumer perceptions and trust (Du et al., 2010; Kim & Ferguson, 2018).

Additionally, the interaction between CSR message clarity and perceived CSR motives (H4) suggests that Gen Z's attitude toward CSR messages is influenced by whether the initiative is seen as public-serving or self-serving. When CSR motives were perceived as public-serving, message clarity had a stronger impact on attitude. This

aligns with CLT, as public-serving CSR initiatives are perceived as more psychologically "near", making Gen Z more receptive to the message's details. Given Gen Z's heightened awareness of social issues and demand for ethical corporate behavior (Franczak & Shanahan, 2022; Uche, 2018), they engage more with CSR efforts that authentically prioritize social good.

However, when CSR motives were self-serving, psychological distance increased, leading to greater skepticism and diminished effectiveness of message clarity in shaping attitudes. This finding is particularly relevant to Gen Z, who are hyper-aware of performative activism and "greenwashing" practices (Kim et al., 2025). Previous research supports that Gen Z consumers are more critical of CSR messages that appear profit-driven rather than altruistic (Forehand & Grier, 2003; Skarmeas & Leonidou, 2013). Therefore, for CSR campaigns targeting Gen Z, message clarity alone is insufficient; organizations must also ensure that their CSR motives are perceived as authentic and public-serving.

### ***The Role of Attitude in Driving Donation Intent***

The results further support the mediating role of attitude toward CSR messaging in influencing donation intent (H3). CLT suggests that attitudes serve as a psychological bridge between understanding a message (low-level construal) and forming behavioral intentions (high-level construal). Given Gen Z's reliance on digital sources for brand evaluation (Turner, 2015), the process of forming positive attitudes toward CSR initiatives is critical in influencing their willingness to engage in pro-social behaviors, such as donations.



Interestingly, CSR message clarity did not directly influence donation intent (H2 not supported), but it did so indirectly through attitude. This suggests that for Gen Z, a positive attitude toward CSR messaging is necessary before behavioral engagement can occur. This finding aligns with dual-process persuasion models, such as the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986), which posits that clear, well-articulated messages enhance consumer attitudes, which subsequently influence behavioral engagement. Given that Gen Z consumers actively compare and scrutinize brands before making purchasing or donation decisions, simply presenting a clear CSR message is insufficient—companies must first build trust and positive brand attitudes to drive behavioral responses (Pacut, 2024; Williams & Page, 2011).

### ***The Influence of Perceived CSR Motives on the Indirect Effect***

The moderated mediation analysis (H6) further underscores the importance of perceived CSR motives in shaping the effectiveness of CSR communication. The indirect effect of CSR message clarity on donation intent through attitude was stronger when CSR motives were perceived as public-serving than when they were perceived as self-serving. This supports CLT's assertion that psychologically closer events (public-serving motives) encourage more concrete processing, leading to stronger attitudinal and behavioral effects (Trope & Liberman, 2010).

For Gen Z, public-serving CSR initiatives feel more “real” and relevant, making them more likely to engage with the brand's social mission

(Uche, 2018). When Gen Z perceives CSR motives as genuine and socially driven, they process the message more favorably, ultimately increasing their intent to donate. However, when CSR motives are self-serving, Gen Z perceives a greater psychological distance, making them less likely to fully engage with the CSR message, thus weakening the impact of clarity on donation intent.

This result aligns with research suggesting that consumer skepticism toward corporate motives can reduce the persuasiveness of CSR campaigns, even when messages are clear (Becker-Olsen et al., 2006; Ellen et al., 2006). Given Gen Z's tendency to use social media as a tool for brand accountability and advocacy (Mei et al., 2025), organizations must ensure that CSR messaging is backed by real, demonstrable action. If a CSR initiative is perceived as insincere or opportunistic, Gen Z would disengage or even boycott the brand.

### ***Implications***

The findings of this study provide actionable insights for brands and sports organizations seeking to optimize their CSR communication strategies for Gen Z. As a digitally native, socially conscious, and highly skeptical consumer segment, Gen Z demands transparent, authentic, and engaging CSR messaging that aligns with their values. This study highlights the importance of CSR message clarity, perceived CSR motives, and attitudinal engagement in influencing Gen Z's responses to CSR initiatives. Given that many CSR efforts focus on long-term, abstract goals (e.g., sustainability, social justice, community development), there is a risk that Gen Z may perceive them as

distant or insincere. According to CLT, when CSR messages are vague or ambiguous, consumers engage in high-level construal processing, leading to reduced engagement. However, when CSR messages are clear, specific, and well-structured, they become more tangible and persuasive, allowing Gen Z to process them at a low construal level and engage more meaningfully. To enhance message clarity and reduce psychological distance, brands should use specific, measurable CSR commitments, leverage visual storytelling (e.g., short-form videos, infographics), and humanize CSR through authentic storytelling featuring real beneficiaries or brand advocates.

Furthermore, the study underscores the critical role of perceived CSR motives in shaping Gen Z's trust in CSR initiatives. This generation is highly skeptical of corporate motives and quick to call out performative activism or "greenwashing." Consumers respond more favorably to CSR initiatives that are perceived as public-serving rather than self-serving, reinforcing the need for transparency, long-term commitment, and third-party validation. To build trust and credibility, brands must clearly communicate their CSR goals, impact metrics, and progress updates, ensuring that their efforts align with genuine social impact rather than mere marketing tactics. Additionally, brands should prioritize sustained CSR engagement rather than opportunistic, short-term initiatives, as Gen Z values consistency in corporate social efforts.

The study also highlights that attitude formation plays a crucial role in driving behavioral engagement with CSR initiatives. Since Gen Z does not passively accept marketing messages,

brands must focus on building a strong, positive attitude toward CSR efforts before expecting actions such as donations or brand loyalty. This can be achieved through emotionally compelling storytelling, interactive CSR campaigns that encourage direct consumer participation, and leveraging peer and influencer advocacy to enhance credibility. Given Gen Z's reliance on social media influencers and user-generated content, integrating authentic brand ambassadors and community leaders into CSR campaigns can significantly boost engagement and trust. By implementing these strategies, brands can create compelling, transparent, and relatable CSR narratives that resonate with Gen Z's expectations and drive long-term consumer loyalty and social impact. Future research should further explore the impact of cultural differences, digital engagement trends, and emerging technologies such as AI-driven CSR initiatives on Gen Z's CSR perceptions and behaviors.

### ***Limitations and Future Research Directions***

While this study offers valuable insights into how Gen Z engages with CSR messaging, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the study relies on self-reported measures of donation intent, which may not always align with actual behavioral outcomes. Given that Gen Z consumers often express strong ethical stances online but may not always translate them into tangible actions, future research should incorporate real-world donation data, experimental donation tasks, or digital engagement metrics to provide a more accurate assessment of behavioral responses to CSR initiatives.

Second, while this study applies CLT to CSR

communication in sports, future research should explore additional psychological mechanisms that influence Gen Z's engagement with CSR messaging. Since Gen Z is highly driven by emotional connections, peer influence, and digital culture, future studies could examine the role of emotional appeals, message framing strategies, and brand trust in influencing CSR perceptions. Investigating how social proof (e.g., influencer endorsements, user-generated content) enhances CSR credibility could provide further insights into effective CSR engagement strategies for digital-first consumers.

Lastly, cultural and regional differences may impact how Gen Z perceives CSR motives and processes CSR messages. As Gen Z is a globalized yet diverse generation, future studies should explore cross-cultural variations in CSR engagement, examining whether the observed effects hold across different countries, economic contexts, and cultural values. Additionally, research should assess the role of digital platforms and technological advancements (e.g., AI-driven CSR campaigns, metaverse-based CSR experiences, interactive gamification of social impact initiatives) in enhancing CSR communication effectiveness for Gen Z consumers. By addressing these gaps, future research can provide a more globally relevant understanding of how Gen Z interacts with

CSR messaging, ultimately helping brands and organizations craft more impactful and engaging social responsibility initiatives.

## 6. Conclusion

---

This study expands the understanding of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) communication in sports, particularly in how Gen Z consumers engage with CSR messaging through the lens of Construal Level Theory (CLT). The findings demonstrate that clear, well-structured CSR messages significantly enhance attitudes toward CSR initiatives, which, in turn, increase donation intent and consumer engagement. However, this effect is moderated by perceived CSR motives, with public-serving motives amplifying the impact of clarity on attitudes and behavioral responses, whereas self-serving motives create psychological distance, weakening message effectiveness. These insights highlight the importance of both message clarity and authenticity in crafting effective CSR communication strategies for Gen Z consumers, who are highly skeptical, socially conscious, and digital-first in their engagement with brands.

## REFERENCES

- Anuar, M.M., & Mohamad, O. (2011). Examining the effects of cause-proximity and gender on consumers' response to cause-related marketing: evidence from Malaysia. *International Journal of Marketing Studies*, 3(3), 174-181. doi: 10.5539/ijms.v3n3p174.
- Arumi A. M., Wooden R., Johnson J., Farkas S., Duffet A., Amber O. (2005). *The charitable impulse: A public agenda report*. Retrieved from [http://publicagendaarchives.org/files/pdf/charitable\\_impulse.pdf](http://publicagendaarchives.org/files/pdf/charitable_impulse.pdf)
- Atkin, J. L., McCardle, M., & Newell, S. J. (2008). The role of advertiser motives in consumer evaluations of 'responsibility' messages from the alcohol industry. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 14(4), 315-335. doi:10.1080/13527260802141447
- Babiak, K., Mills, B., Tainsky, S., & Juravich, M. (2012). An investigation into professional athlete philanthropy: Why charity is part of the game. *Journal of Sport Management*, 26(2), 159-176.
- Babiak, K., & Wolfe, R. (2006). More than just a game? Corporate social responsibility and Super Bowl XL. *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, 15, 244-222.
- Battista, J. (2020, June 11). *NFL commits \$250M over 10-year period to combat systemic racism*. <https://www.nfl.com/news/nfl-commits-250m-over-10-year-period-to-combat-systemic-racism>
- Becker-Olsen, K. L., Cudmore, B. A., & Hill, R. P. (2006). The impact of perceived corporate social responsibility on consumer behavior. *Journal of Business Research*, 59(1), 46-53. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2005.01.001>
- Bendapudi, N., Singh, S. N., & Bendapudi, V. (1996). Enhancing helping behavior: An integrative framework for promotion planning. *Journal of Marketing*, 60(3), 33-49.
- Boerman, S. C., Van Reijmersdal, E. A., & Neijens, P. C. (2012). Sponsorship disclosure: Effects of duration on persuasion knowledge and brand responses. *Journal of Communication*, 62(6), 1047-1064.
- Bolton, L. E., & Mattila, A. S. (2015). How does corporate social responsibility affect consumer response to service failure in buyer-seller relationships?. *Journal of Retailing*, 91(1), 140-153.
- Buckley, S. (2025, February 6). *As Super Bowl end zone messages go, 'Choose Love' is no 'End Racism.'* The Athletic. <https://www.nytimes.com/athletic/6116906/2025/02/06/nfl-super-bowl-end-racism-choose-love-end-zones/>
- Carroll, A. B. (1991). The pyramid of corporate social responsibility: Toward the

- moral management of organizational stakeholders. *Business Horizons*, 34(4), 39-48.
- Chen, X., & Huang, R. (2018). The impact of diverse corporate social responsibility practices on consumer product evaluations. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 27(6), 701-715.
- Crane, A., & Glozer, S. (2016). Researching corporate social responsibility communication: Themes, opportunities and challenges. *Journal of Management Studies*, 53(7), 1223-1252.
- Darley, W. K., & Smith, R. E. (1995). Gender differences in information processing strategies: An empirical test of the selectivity model in advertising response. *Journal of Advertising*, 24(1), 41-56. doi:10.1080/00913367.1995.10673467
- Deloitte. (2024). *2024 Gen Z and Millennial Survey: Living and working with purpose in a transforming world*. <https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/ec/Documents/about-deloitte/deloitte-2024-genz-millennial-survey.pdf>
- Diallo, M., & Lambey-Checchin, C. (2015). Consumers' perceptions of retail business ethics and loyalty to the retailer: The moderating role of social discount practices. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 141(3), 435-449.
- Dimock, M. (2019, January 17). Defining generations: Where Millennials end and Generation Z begins. Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2019/01/17/where-millennials-end-and-generation-z-begins/>
- Djafarova, E., & Bowes, T. (2021). 'Instagram made me buy it': Generation Z impulse purchases in the fashion industry. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 59(4), 102345. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2020.102345>
- Du, S., Bhattacharya, C. B., & Sen, S. (2007). Reaping relational rewards from corporate social responsibility: The role of competitive positioning. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 24(3), 224-241.
- Du, S., Bhattacharya, C. B., & Sen, S. (2010). Maximizing business returns to corporate social responsibility (CSR): the role of CSR communication. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 12(1), 8-19. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2370.2009.00276.x>
- Edinger-Schons, L. M., & Lengler-Graiff, L., & Scheidler, S., & Wieseke, J. (2018). Frontline employees as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) ambassadors: A quasi-field experiment. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 157(2), 359-373. <https://doi.org/10.1007/S10551-018-3790-9>



- Ellen P. S., Mohr L. A., & Webb D. J. (2000). Charitable programs and the retailer: Do they mix?. *Journal of Retailing*, 76, 393–406.
- Ellen, P. S., Webb, D. J., & Mohr, L. A. (2006). Building corporate associations: Consumer attributions for corporate social responsibility programs. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 34(2), 147–157. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0092070305284976>
- Folse, J., Niedrich, R., & Grau, S. (2010). Cause-relating marketing: The effects of purchase quantity and firm donation amount on consumer inferences and participation intentions. *Journal of Retailing*, 86(4), 295–309.
- Forehand, M. R., & Grier, S. (2003). When is honesty the best policy? the effect of stated company intent on consumer skepticism. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 13(3), 349–356. [https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327663JCP1303\\_15](https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327663JCP1303_15)
- Francis, T., & Hoefel, F. (2018, November 12). ‘True Gen’: Generation Z characteristics and its implications for companies. McKinsey & Company. <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/consumer-packaged-goods/our-insights/true-gen-generation-z-and-its-implications-for-companies>
- Franczak, J., & Shanahan, D. E. (2022). Shifting to Generation ‘We’: How Gen Z’s Foci of Ethical Concerns Differ from Previous Generations. *Proceedings - Academy of Management*, 2022(1). <https://doi.org/10.5465/ambpp.2022.10930abstract>
- Fromm, J., & Read, A. (2018). *Marketing to Gen Z: The rules for reaching this vast and very different generation of influencers*. AMACOM.
- Gangadharbatla, H., Vardeman, C., & Quichocho, D. (2022). Investigating the reception of broad versus specific CSR messages in advertisements in an environmental context. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 28(3), 253–271.
- Gilal, F.G., Gilal, N.G., Martinez, L.F., & Gilal R.G. (2023). Do all brand CSR initiatives make consumers happy? The role of CSR-brand (mis)fit and sense of relatedness. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 32(6), 942–957.
- Grau, S.L., & Folse, J.A. (2007). Cause-Related Marketing (CRM): The Influence of Donation Proximity and Message-Framing Cues on the Less-Involved Consumer. *Journal of Advertising*, 36, 19 - 33.
- Greenfield, P. M. (2009). Linking social change and developmental change: Shifting pathways of human development. *Developmental Psychology*, 45, 401–418. doi:10.1037/a0014726

Hayes, A. F. (2017). *Introduction to mediation, moderation, and conditional process analysis: A regression-based approach* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Guilford Press.

Hitchon, J., Duckler, P., & Thorson, E. (1994). Effects of ambiguity and complexity on consumer response to music video commercials. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 38(3), 289–306. doi:10.1080/08838159409364266

Illia, L., Zyglidopoulos, S. C., Romenti, S., Rodríguez-Cánovas, B., & Del Valle Brena, A. G. (2013). Communicating corporate social responsibility to a cynical public. *MIT Sloan Management Review*, 54(3), 16-19.

Ketelaar, P. E., van Gisbergen, M. S., Bosman, J. A. M., & Beentjes, H. (2010). The effects of openness on attitude toward the ad, attitude toward the brand, and brand beliefs in Dutch magazine ads. *Journal of Current Issues & Research in Advertising*, 32(2), 71–85.

Kim, B. H., Han, S., & Yoon, S. (2010). Advertising creativity in Korea. *Journal of Advertising*, 39(2), 93–108. doi:10.2753/JOA0091-3367390207

Kim, H. (2011). A reputational approach examining publics' attributions on corporate social responsibility motives. *Asian Journal of Communication*, 21, 84-101.

Kim, M. J., Lee, S., & Chang, H. J. (2025). *What Does Gen Z Prioritize in ESG*

*Companies? Exploring Gen Z's Moral Identity and Firm Attractiveness.*  
<https://doi.org/10.31274/itaa.18801>

Kim, S., & Bae, J. (2016). Cross-cultural differences in concrete and abstract corporate social responsibility (CSR) campaigns: perceived message clarity and perceived CSR as mediators. *International Journal of Corporate Social Responsibility*, 1(6), 1-14.  
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s40991-016-0009-1>

Kim, S., & Ferguson, A. (2018). Dimensions of effective CSR communication based on public expectations, *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 24(6), 549-567.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13527266.2015.1118143>

Kim, T., & Kim, J. (2021). How spatial distance and message strategy in cause-related marketing ads influence consumers' ad believability and attitudes. *Sustainability*, 13(12), 1-15. doi: 10.3390/su13126775.

Klimkiewicz, K., & Oltra, V. (2017). Does CSR enhance employer attractiveness? The role of Millennial job seekers' attitudes. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 24(5), 449–463.  
<https://doi.org/10.1002/csr.1419>

Lichtenstein, D. R., Drumwright, M. E., & Braig, B. M. (2004). The effect of corporate social responsibility on customer

- donations to corporate-supported non-profits. *Journal of Marketing*, 68(4), 16-32.
- Mansouri, H., Rezaei, Z., Rozfarakh, A., & Abdollahi, H. M. (2022). The relationship between team social responsibility and patronage intentions football premier league fans: The moderator role of team identity. *Sport Psychology Studies*, 10(38), 187-206.
- Mei, X. Y., Ventzel, C., & Zachariassen, I. (2025). Can fast fashion brands win over Gen Z with corporate social responsibility communication on Instagram by appealing to their emotions? *Young Consumers: Insight and Ideas for Responsible Marketers*.  
<https://doi.org/10.1108/yc-02-2024-2005>
- Miller, L., & Lu, W. (2018, August 20). *Gen Z is set to outnumber millennials within a year*. Bloomberg. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-08-20/gen-z-to-outnumber-millennials-within-a-year-demographic-trends?embedded-checkout=true>
- Mohr L. A., Eroğlu D., & Ellen P. S. (1998). The development and testing of a measure of skepticism toward environmental claims in marketers' communications. *The Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 32, 30–55.
- Morsing, M., & Schultz, M. (2006). Corporate social responsibility communication: Stakeholder information, response and involvement strategies. *Business Ethics: A European Review*, 15, 323–38.
- Narayanan, S. (2022). Does Generation Z value and reward corporate social responsibility practices?. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 38(6), 1-35.
- Nguyen, H., Groth, M., & Flanagan, R. (2019). Ethical fashion consumption: Investigating the Gen Z consumer. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal*, 23(3), 368-384.
- Olsen, G. D., Pracejus, J. W., & Brown, N. R. (2003). When profit equals price: Consumer confusion about donation amounts in cause-related marketing. *Journal of Public Policy & marketing*, 22(2), 170-180.
- Pacut, M. (2024). Polish Gen-Z Consumers' Attitudes to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). *Marketing of Scientific and Research Organisations*, 53(3), 80–97.  
<https://doi.org/10.2478/minib-2024-0017>
- Parker, K., Graf, N., & Igielnik, R. (2019, January 17). *Generation Z looks a lot like Millennials on key social and political issues: Among Republicans, Gen Z stands out in views on race, climate and the role of government*. Pew Research

- Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2019/01/17/generation-z-looks-a-lot-like-millennials-on-key-social-and-political-issues/>
- Petty, R. E., & Cacioppo, J. T. (1986). The elaboration likelihood model of persuasion. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 19, 123–205. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601\(08\)60214-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601(08)60214-2)
- Pracejus, J. W., Olsen, G. D., & Brown, N. R. (2003). On the prevalence and impact of vague quantifiers in the advertising of cause-related marketing (CRM). *Journal of Advertising*, 32(4), 19–28. doi:10.1080/00913367.2003.10639146
- Prasanna, M. L., & Priyanka, A. (2024). Marketing to Gen Z: Understanding the Preferences and Behaviors of Next Generation. *International Journal For Multi-disciplinary Research*, 6(4). <https://doi.org/10.36948/ijfmr.2024.v06i04.26612>
- Ratten, V., & Babiak, K. (2010). The role of social responsibility, philanthropy and entrepreneurship in the sport industry. *Journal of Management & Organization*, 16(4), 482-487.
- Sawicka, J., & Marcinkowska, E. (2023). Environmental CSR and the Purchase Declarations of Generation Z Consumers. *Sustainability*, 15, 12759. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su151712759>
- Seemiller, C., & Grace, M. (2019). *Generation Z: A century in the making*. Routledge.
- Sen, S., Bhattacharya, C. B., & Korschun, D. (2006). The role of corporate social responsibility in strengthening multiple stakeholder relationships: A field experiment. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing science*, 34(2), 158-166.
- Silvera, D. H., & Austad, B. (2004). Factors predicting the effectiveness of celebrity endorsements advertisements. *European Journal of Marketing*, 38(11/12), 1509–1526. doi:10.1108/03090560410560218
- Skarmeas, D., & Leonidou, C. N. (2013). When consumers doubt, watch out! The role of CSR skepticism. *Journal of Business Research*, 66(10), 1831–1838. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2013.02.004>
- Son, J., Dittmore, S. W., & Choi, Y. (2023). Understanding the relationship between corporate social responsibility, team identification, and behavioral intention with the mediating effect of satisfaction in Korean professional baseball league. *Sustainability*, 15(10), 8381. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15108381>
- Thomas, G. (2022). Corporate Social Responsibility as a Sustainable Business Practice: A Study among Generation Z Customers of Indian Luxury Hotels. *Sustainability*, 14(24), 16813.

<https://doi.org/10.3390/su142416813>

Thomas, S. (2023). Determinants of cause-related marketing participation intention: The role of consumer knowledge, cause scope, and donation proximity. *Journal of Nonprofit & Public Sector Marketing*, 35(2), 194-214. doi: 10.1080/10495142.2021.1970077.

Trope, Y., & N. Liberman. (2010). Construal-level theory of psychological distance. *Psychological Review* 117(2), 440-463.  
<https://doi.org/10.1037/a0018963>

Trope, Y., Liberman, N., & Wakslak, C. (2007). Construal levels and psychological distance: Effects on representation, prediction, evaluation, and behaviour. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 17(2), 83-95.

Turner, A. (2015). Generation Z: Technology and Social Interest. *The Journal of Individual Psychology*, 71(2), 103-113.  
<https://dx.doi.org/10.1353/jip.2015.0021>.

Twenge, J. M. (2017). *iGen: Why today's super-connected kids are growing up less rebellious, more tolerant, less happy—and completely unprepared for adulthood—and what that means for the rest of us*. Atria Books.

Uche, S. (2018). *Generation Z and Corporate Social Responsibility*.  
<https://surface.syr.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1227&context=thesis>

Walker, M., & Kent, A. (2009). Do fans care? Assessing the influence of corporate social responsibility on consumer attitudes in the sport industry. *Journal of Sport Management*, 23(6), 743-769.  
<https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.23.6.743>

Wigley, S. (2008). Gauging consumers' responses to CSR activities: Does increased awareness make cents?. *Public Relations Review*, 34, 306-308.  
doi:10.1016/j.pubrev.2008.03.034

Williams, K. C., & Page, R. A. (2011). Marketing to the Generations. *Journal of Behavioural Studies in Business*, 3(1), 1-7.

Yalch, R. F., & Elmore-Yalch, R. (1984). The effect of numbers on the route to persuasion. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 11(1), 522-527.  
doi:10.1086/208988