AMERICAN MARKETING ASSOCIATION

2022 AMA WINTER ACADEMIC CONFERENCE

Reconnecting and Reconceiving the Marketplace

February 10-11 | Virtual
February 18-20 | Las Vegas, NV

PROCEEDINGS

Volume 33

Co-Chairs:

Ashlee Humphreys
Northwestern University
Medill School of Journalism

Grant Packard
York University
Schulich School of Business

Katrijn Gielens
University of North Carolina
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AMA | AMERICAN MARKETING ASSOCIATION

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Advertising, Promotions & Marketing Communication

COMPARING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SINGLE- AND MULTI-PRODUCT REPETITION STRATEGIES IN THE CONTEXT OF BRAND PLACEMENTS

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Keywords: brand placement repetition, brand attitudes, multi-product brand placements

Description: This paper compares the effects of single- and multi-product repetition strategies on brand attitudes in the context of brand placements.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

During the last decade, with rising concerns about the effectiveness of traditional advertising methods, alternative promotional means, such as brand placements, have gained popularity. As such, it is common to see placements of various products belonging to the same brand during one viewing session. Current research is designed to compare the effectiveness of the single-product and multi-product repetition strategies in the context of brand placements, as well as to explore repetition frequencies needed to achieve the maximum impact on brand attitudes.

Method and Data

The proposed hypotheses and research questions were tested using a quasi-natural experiment. Six hundred forty students were recruited at a major university in the US and were asked to participate in the study. After signing the informed consent form and answering several demographic questions, subjects watched one of the twelve versions of the stimulus containing repetition of single-product or multi-product brand placements. The repetition frequencies of placements ranged from one to seven.

Summary of Findings

Results showed that brand attitudes for multi-product exposure conditions are significantly higher than those for single-product conditions. However, the difference in brand attitudes between the experimental conditions becomes significant only around seven repetitions. Thus, the present research demonstrates that at the high frequency of repetitions, the multi-product strategy could help to mitigate the negative effects of single-product repetition strategies reported in the past research.

Key Contributions

This research contributes to marketing literature in two main ways. First, this research illustrates that brand placement repetition is a complex phenomenon, the effectiveness of which depends not only on the frequency of exposures but also on the number of featured products. Second, this research contributes to the literature on repetition variation strategies by transferring them to the brand placement context and demonstrating that variation of brand placement repetition could help to heighten brand attitudes.

CONSUMER PERCEPTION OF SPONSORED LISTING AND ITS IMPACT ON ONLINE MARKETPLACE

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Keywords: Online Marketplaces, Online Advertising, Sponsored Listings, Digital Marketing Customer Experience, Consumer Search

Description: Consumer engagement (clicks & purchases) with online marketplace is impacted by the presence of sponsored listings (digital ads) and depending on the rank/position at which the advertised listings is deployed the user engagement is either adverse or positive.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Online marketplaces (Amazon, Expedia, etc.) display the available offerings in a rank ordered list, often based on a proprietary ranking algorithm referred to as organic ranking. Many such marketplaces offer the sellers a digital advertising alternative, called sponsored listing, to improve their rank. A sponsored listing is thus an organic listing that is promoted, often by being listed at the top of certain search results on the online marketplace. Sponsored listings are revenue generating options available to online marketplaces that address the sellers' demand for alternative ways to online prominence. Consumer perception and behavior towards sponsored listings are influenced by two mechanisms: a utility enhancing signal of quality due to the sponsored status

and a utility diminishing bias against it due to a natural preference for organic ("non-sponsored") listings. This paper proposes to reconcile these opposing mechanisms and analyze, from a consumer behavior perspective, the evolution of the combined effect of these two mechanisms along the various positions of a rank ordered listing? In doing so it addresses how the presence of sponsored listings affect consumers' engagement, as implied by the clicks and purchases, with the online marketplace?

Method and Data

The empirical context of the paper is online hotel booking. It uses rich micro level observational data (nearly 2 Million observations) of consumer search and purchase behavior obtained from Expedia, the leading OTA platform. Using reduced form models, the paper first shows evidence to support the presence of the two opposing mechanisms. It shows how the net combination of these two mechanisms manifests along the rank ordering of the OTA. The paper uses a model of sequential consumer search, based on Weitzman (1979), to rationalize the combined effect of the two mechanisms. The model of sequential search accounts jointly for consumer search and purchase behavior in a rank ordered setting. This structural discrete choice model of demand with optimal sequential search is used to study how consumers perceive & behave in the presence of sponsored listings on online marketplaces. The model estimation is done using maximum simulated likelihood where the simulation involves an accept reject approximation of the logit smoothed probabilities. It uses control function approach (Petrin & Train (2010)) to account for potential endogeneity biases, most notably due to targeted advertising. Using counterfactual simulations, (a) the impact of sponsored listings is quantified by examining how sponsored listings compare with organic listings towards consumer engagement with the online marketplace and (b)

the impact of search frictions on the relevance of sponsored listings is assessed by examining how user engagement with sponsored listings varies under different search cost scenarios.

Summary of Findings

The paper finds that (a) consumers have a natural preference for organic listings at the top of the page; if sponsored listings are replaced with organic listings at the top of the page, then (i) the total clicks are likely to improve by 34% and 30% on laptops and mobiles respectively and, (ii) conditional on clicking, the booking rate is likely to improve by 44% and 39% on laptops and mobiles respectively; (b) consumer engagement with the online marketplace is at its optimal best with organic listings at the top ranks and sponsored listings at the middle & lower ranks; the bias against sponsored listings weakens significantly further down the page and the signaling effect of quality due to sponsored nature makes it valuable at middle and lower ranks; (c) demonstrates the complementary relationship between advertising and search costs by showing that under environments characterized by high search costs (search frictions), effectiveness of sponsored listings, make them valuable for the buyer, seller and the online marketplace; (d) Finally, consumer welfare is higher under the marketplace assigned ranking with only organic listings (and no sponsored advertising).

Statement of Key Contributions

This paper contributes to the growing literature on sponsored listings used on online marketplaces. Its key contribution is the documentation of the rank varying nature of consumer perceptions regarding sponsored listings. It rationalizes the existence of multiple mechanisms, which are theoretically at loggerheads with each other. While it is one of the few papers which explores the quality signaling role of sponsored listings, it is perhaps the first paper which has attempted to

account for bias against sponsored products, using observational data. From a managerial perspective, this paper is likely to be of relevance while optimizing the gains from sponsored listings for online marketplaces. An understanding of the interplay between the two mechanisms and the net impact on sponsored listings is crucial for online marketplaces. Further, this paper finds empirical evidence that in an environment characterized by high search costs, sponsored listings, as bearers of low cost & direct information, help the listing hotels and encourage competition among competing hotels as predicted by theory. This supports the conclusion that an ideal strategy for the online marketplace is to identify the optimal search frictions to operate with.

JUST GIVE ME A REASON:

THE VALUE OF GOAL SETTING IN MOTIVATING BLOOD DONATIONS

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Keywords: Blood Donation, Donor Retention, Commitment, Motivation

Based on ability-opportunity-motivation theory and goal-setting theory, we show in our exploratory study that setting a goal in the form of a specific reason for donating blood increases donor performance in the form of donation frequency, potentially increasing the volume of donations per donor.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question: Does communicating specific donation goals, such as donating enough blood needed for a specific medical treatment, would motivate blood donors to donate more frequently.

Method and Data: An online experiment using three scenarios with different donation goals was conducted to test our assumption. The study's target population was individuals who had

donated blood in the past three years (but had discontinued). Each of the blood donors was randomly assigned to one of the three conditions. The final sample included 168 respondents. The results of the experiment show that there are differences in the appeal of the donation goals. The higher the effort required, the lower the appeal. However, if the blood donation organization manages, for example through an optimal communication strategy, to motivate and also commit blood donors to the proposed blood donation goal, this can lead to an increased number of blood donations in the course of a year. In this way, it is possible to reach a large number of donors in the short term by setting a donation goal and to achieve a maximum of donations with a minimum of effort of targeted communication measures.

Summary and Findings: The results from our exploratory study show that setting a donation goal can increase blood donations. For blood donor organizations, this is significant in that by setting a donation goal rather than a request to donate "once again," they can generate more blood donations in a given time period and better secure the blood supply. The goal of blood donor organizations should therefore be to use appropriate communication measures to encourage potential blood donors to commit to a blood donation goal. This could then motivate them to donate blood more frequently, which would also increase the amount of blood donated. For the blood donation organization, however, this then also means that the communication measures must be precisely tailored to the individual blood donor and also reward the achievement of the goal. In addition, once the goal has been reached, the communication must be adapted in such a way that the blood donor continues to be motivated to donate.

Key Contribution: The results from our exploratory study show that setting a donation goal can increase blood donations. For blood donor organizations, this is significant because by setting a donation goal rather than a request to donate blood "once again to save lives," they can generate more blood donations in a given time period and better secure the blood supply.

The goal of blood donor organizations should therefore be to use appropriate communication measures to encourage potential blood donors to commit to a blood donation goal. This could then motivate them to donate blood more frequently, which would also increase the amount of blood donated. In addition, once the goal has been reached, the communication must be adapted in such a way that the blood donor continues to be motivated to donate. Apart from the managerial implications for the communication strategies of blood donation organizations, our work makes a valuable contribution to science by applying AOM theory and goal-setting theory in a new additional context.

GROWING SALES WITH INFLUENCERS IN LIVESTREAMING COMMERCE

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Keywords: livestreaming, influencer marketing, e-commerce, social media

Description: we empirically quantify effects of the popularity and number of influencers in livestreaming commerce and highlight a negative interaction effect between the two factors.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

While livestreaming commerce has grown rapidly in recent years, little is known about what factors drive product sales via livestreaming. Previous studies on livestreaming and influencer marketing have been unable to establish a direct relationship between product sales and livestreaming or influencer characteristics. The goal of this article is to fill the research gap by examining how features of influencers and live events impact product sales via livestream. Given that marketing budgets are usually limited, one common question among marketing managers is whether they should employ a single big influencer or multiple small influencers. The first strategy is based on the popularity of influencers (a popularity-focused strategy), whereas the second relies on the nunber of influencers (a quantity-focused strategy). Unfortunately, there is no simple answer to this question. Moreover, when marketing managers have sufficient funds, is it advantageous

to use a combination of both strategies? In addition, how do the effects of the two strategies differ across various characteristics of influencers and live events? These research questions are especially crucial because they can provide actionable implications for brands and firms to increase sales via livestreaming commerce as well as via influencer marketing in general.

Method and Data

To answer the above research questions, we obtain a unique data set about livestreaming commerce on Douyin, the Chinese version of TikTok and a social media app for livestreaming and short video sharing. Our data set includes information about 108,341 products, 80,367 influencers and 1,350,984 live events during a five-month period from January 28, 2021, to June 28, 2021. We model each product's sales during live events on a daily basis. This panel data setting allows us to account for unobserved product- and store-specific factors such as product quality and brand awareness, eliminating endogeneity biases caused by omitted time-invariant variables related to product sales. Moreover, we leverage the instrumental variable approach to account for further confounding factors in the effects of popularity and number of influencers.

Summary of Findings

Several interesting findings emerge from our research. First, we show that both the popularity and the number of influencers have a significantly positive effect on product sales via livestream. We find that a single big influencer with at least one million followers could be more effective than ten small influencers. Moreover, we uncover evidence of a surprising negative interaction effect between popularity and number of influencers, implying that employing a big influencer and multiple smaller influencers at

the same time is not optimal. Further analyses provide possible explanations for the negative interaction and highlight the important differences between popularity and number of influencers. On the one hand, the success of a popularity-focused strategy may rely on how livestreaming viewers perceive an influencer's personal qualities such as trustworthiness and attractiveness. On the other hand, the effectiveness of a quantity-focused strategy may mainly depend on whether it can reach a large audience and raise product awareness.

Statement of Key Contributions

The primary contribution of this article is to empirically assess the relationship between livestreaming features, specifically the influencers, and product sales.

First, our findings contribute to a line of research on livestreaming. To the best of our knowledge, our research is the first to investigate the effect of livestreaming factors on actual product sales, and thus provides important implications for researchers as well as practitioners.

Second, our work also adds to a small but growing stream of research on influencer marketing. Our research is distinct from previous studies in two important ways: first, our work establishes a direct relationship between influencer characteristics and product sales based on a large-scale empirical data set rather than a small sample of self-reported responses; second, we evaluate influencer characteristics using their market performance and activity records rather than subjective assessments.

Multiple Peer Effects in Charitable Donations

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ABSTRACT

Social interactions facilitate information flows and enable individuals to influence each other, and therefore manifest as peer effects. Understanding the drivers of social interactions represents an opportunity for firms to amplify returns on marketing efforts. In this study, the authors conceptualize multiple sources of peer effects in Charitable giving and utilize data on university alumni donations that include the amounts alumni donors donate to the university, the marketing that they received from the university, and their time-variant and -invariant characteristics. After accounting for various confounds, the results show substantial multiple peer effects among alumni donors. This research contributes to literature on marketing efforts, social interactions, and alumni donations by documenting the sources of peer effects and suggests that fundraisers should incorporate multiple peer effects into their marketing effort decisions.

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Economic agents are likely to experience social influence (or peer effects) from multiple sources, as they socially interact with their peers at workplace, neighborhood, and other social groups such as hobby clubs, religious congregations, among others. Such peer effects can play out as social multipliers of marketing (Hartmann et al 2010). For example, marketing communication received by an economic agent can change his/her behavior which in turn can change the behavior of her peers in the same workplace, neighborhood, and/or other social groups. The existence and magnitudes of these peer effects, and the corresponding social multipliers are likely to vary from one peer group (or reference group) to the other. It is both theoretically important and practically significant to understand peer effects and the associated multipliers among economic agents while recognizing multiple sources of these influences. In this research, we conceptualize the sources of peer effects in the context of university alumni donations.

Extant research on peer effects in marketing implicitly assumes that customers are socially influenced by only one reference group (e.g., Manchanda, Xie and Youn 2008; Nair, Manchanda and Bhatia 2010), with a few notable exceptions (e.g., Reza et al 2021; Cohen-Cole 2006) that emphasizes the use of multiple reference groups to distinguish peer effects from various confounds. While Cohen-Cole (2006) emphasized non overlapping multiple peer groups to identify peer effects, Reza et al (2021) emphasized the use of partially overlapping peer groups to identify peer effects. In this research, we conceptualize university alumni to have three sources of peer effects, i.e., geography based, graduating major based, and graduation year based, that are likely to shape their donations. Following Reza et al (2021), we exploit partially overlapping peer groups to identify peer effects due to different sources.

Quantifying multiple sources of social influences and associated multipliers has important implications for marketing (Hartmann et al 2010; Manchanda, Xie and Youn 2008). In the presence of multiple sources of social influences, a change in the behavior of an economic agent due to a marketing communication can change the behavior of his/her peers, differently in different reference groups. Thus, different magnitudes in different reference/peer groups should vary in their

magnification of marketing efforts; i.e., the social multiplier of marketing should vary across these groups. Knowledge of such sources of peer effects, and their ensuing social multipliers can allow marketers to prioritize their marketing efforts effectively. By allocating marketing resources to different sources of peer effects in proportion to the magnitude of social multipliers, marketers can improve the overall effectiveness of their marketing efforts.

We conceptualize sources of peer effects among university alumni donors by proposing that universities being social institutions promote the formation of ties and facilitate social interactions among alumni donors in several ways. First, university alumni living in the same geographic area could form social ties, facilitated by their geographic proximity. Second, age similarity among the students admitted in a university is likely to promote social ties and interactions which persist even after graduation. Third, similarity in the formal education and the aptitudes among the students in a same major can also promote social interactions and tie formations. To operationalize these three potential sources of peer effects, we rely on the metropolitan statistical area (MSA), graduation year, and major, respectively.

To infer the proposed peer effects, we assume donors to donate an amount that maximizes their utility as function of their characteristics and how far away their donation is from the expected donations of their peers. Such utility maximization by donors leads to a linear-in-means econometric specification (Blume et al 2011). Further, we explicitly note the endogeneity of marketing effort, which we overcome by recognizing existing decision rules for marketing resource allocation. Using panel data pertaining to alumni donors to a major U.S. university (in which we observe the amount donated by each donor from 1986 to 2013, and time-invariant and time variant donor characteristics), we quantify peer effects due to the proposed sources. Particularly, we find that the strongest peer effect and therefore social multiplier is due to the alumni donors defined by graduating major peers, followed by graduation year peers, and geography peers. Accordingly, our research extends the marketing literature on charitable giving and university alumni donations by

conceptualizing and empirically demonstrating the existence of multiple sources of peer effects among alumni donors.

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Don't Invade my Personal Space! Strength of Ties in Social Media and Paid Ad Intrusiveness

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Keywords: Ad creepiness, Digital ad, social media

Description: We empirically investigate the effects of tie- strength between a user and his friends on digital ad creepiness and find that stronger ties between a user and his friends posting before an ad lead to higher perceptions of ad intrusiveness.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

With the surge of paid ads on social media such as Facebook, the perception of customers towards this kind of advertising is often more negative than positive. For instance, while exposure to customized ads can increase the efficiency of customer purchase, many users report that they find paid ads to be intrusive and even creepy. Such perceptions most likely dampen the effectiveness of paid search advertising. In this research, we apply the strength of ties theory to understand if a user's perceptions of ad intrusiveness and creepiness might depend on the user's strength of ties with 'friends' whose posts are visible before the ad. In this research, we try to answer three research questions of 1) Does the user's perceptions of ad intrusiveness/creepiness depend on the user's strength of ties with 'friends' whose posts are visible before the ad? 2) Does the dilution in intimacy (variance in the user's strength of ties with 'friends') impact the user's perceptions of ad intrusiveness/creepiness?,

and 3) Does such relationship change based on the type of advertised product or the relevance of the ad to the user's needs?

Method and Data

To answer the above research questions, we follow a multi-step methodology. First, we collect primary data about the activity of 120 real users on Facebook for 15 weeks. We obtain perceptions of posts, ads, and tie strength of friends during users' real time Facebook activity. With this data, we are able to understand if empirical patterns exist between strength of 'friends' tie and ad perceptions after controlling for both the emotional and cognitive elements of the ad and its popularity. We also follow up with MTurk experiments with participants from both US and few Asian countries to understand causal effects. As the next step to have a more controlled experiment to test causality in a real-world platform and test moderators, we are in the process of running some quasi-natural experiments on Facebook

Summary of Findings

We propose that stronger the tie, the higher the perceived ad intrusiveness and creepiness. Strong interpersonal ties with friends involve more intimacy and higher emotional involvement with the content posted by those friends, while users might be non-involved with information posted by weak friendship ties. As a result, an ad that appears after a flow of posts from stronger ties might invade the user's personal space and be considered intrusive or creepy to a greater extent than if it appears after posts from weaker ties. Our results show that stronger the ties between a user and the friends posting one or two posts before the ad, larger the ad creepiness perceptions. Also, we see that the dilution in intimacy

(variance in the user's strength of ties with 'friends') decreases the user's perceptions of ad intrusiveness/creepiness.

Statement of Key Contributions

The findings of this research can provide useful insights for the position of paid ads on social media feed of users. Further, unlike existing strength of ties research, which mainly considers the usefulness of the information obtained from ties of different strength, we relate strength of ties to notions of personal space, intimacy and intrusiveness that have implications for advertisers and social media platforms. In this manner, we make a theoretical contribution as well. And this research is important to be covered because 1) social ties is important when it comes to personal space and intimacy, 2) understanding these underlying factors can help advertisers manage the users' perceptions of ad creepiness, 3) social media platforms will have more number of users and more revenues if users have less perceived ad intrusiveness, and 4) less ad creepiness can increase the likelihood of clicking on the ad, both helping the advertiser with the conversion rate and the social media platform to make money from the ad clicks.

Also, our research findings can have managerial implications, for example social media platforms can consider Adding the strength of tie to one of the factors in ad placement or our findings can provide useful insights for the position of paid ads on social media feed of users.

RECEIVABLES' EFFECT ON THE VALUE OF ADVERTISING

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Keywords: advertising, receivables, DSO, shareholder value

Description: We show that, in contrast to extant marketing theory, receivables do not destroy the value of advertising.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

With advertising spending now over 200 billion dollars in the United States (McNair 2017), it is critically important for managers to understand the factors that affect the value of their firm's advertising. Indeed, there has been more research published on the value of advertising than there has been for any other marketing investment (Edeling et al. 2021). Given the importance to our discipline of understanding factors that affect the value of advertising, in this paper we examine whether and how receivables affect the value of advertising.

Receivables are the payments that are due to a firm from its business customers. Like advertising, they are economically important because U.S. firms have over four trillion dollars in payments that are due to them from their customers (Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, Fourth Quarter 2019). In terms of their effect on the value of advertising, recent research theorizes that receivables reduce the value of advertising by making advertising redundant

(Frennea et al. 2019). Because receivables and advertising build equity with different types of customers, the current article re-examines whether receivables affect the value of advertising.

Method and Data

Extant research finds that "receivables share" (i.e., the firm's receivables divided by the sum of the receivables for all firms in the industry) decreases the shareholder value of advertising. However, receivables are more commonly measured as DSO (days sales outstanding). To example the implications of representing receivables as DSO versus receivables share, we decompose a firm's receivables share into the product of three components: DSO, market share, and the inverse of industry DSO.

To test how each of the three components of receivables share affect the value of advertising, we assemble a data set of 28,725 firm-year observations that includes 2,978 firms spanning 20 years. We first calculate the correlation between receivables share and each of its constituent components. We then replicate the finding from extant research that receivables share reduces the value of advertising. Next, we replace receivables share with its three constituent components in our model of the shareholder value of advertising.

Summary of Findings

We replicate extant research and find that the coefficient estimate in our stock return model for the interaction between an unanticipated change in receivables share and an unanticipated change in advertising is negative and significant. The correlations between receivables share and each of its constituent components indicate that receivables share is very highly correlated with market share (correlation is 0.94), but not with DSO (correlation is 0.00) or the inverse of industry DSO

(correlation is 0.15). Consistent with findings in recent research (Hill et al. 2020), we find that the coefficient estimate for the interaction between the unanticipated change in advertising and the unanticipated change in market share is negative and significant. Importantly, we also find that the coefficient estimates for advertising's interactions with DSO and with the inverse of industry DSO are not significant. That is, we do not find any evidence that DSO, which is how receivables are typically represented, has any influence on the value of advertising.

Key Contributions

We build upon extant marketing theory on the relationship between advertising and receivables, which argues they are substitutes because they both enhance customer equity (Frennea et al. 2019). We refine this theory to highlight that although both advertising and receivables can enhance customer equity, they generally do so for different types of customers. Hence, receivables are not a substitute for advertising. Because receivables do not substitute for advertising, there is no reason to expect receivables to reduce the value of advertising.

Our research also provides actionable insights to managers that are responsible for a firm's advertising budget or receivables policy. Extant research argues that investing in both advertising and receivables is redundant and inefficient (Frennea et al. 2019). We show that, although a firm's receivables share is negatively associated with the value of its advertising, the association is attributable to the firm's market share. Importantly, the amount of time provided to a customer to make payment (i.e., DSO) does not significantly affect the value of advertising. Our results indicate that managers can build value for their firms by investing in both advertising and receivables without concern that their firm's receivables will destroy the value of their firm's advertising.

PRICE PROMOTING ORGANIC PRODUCTS: A FIELD EXPERIMENT WITH ONLINE ADS

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Keywords: Organic products; price promotions; organic claims; packaging color; online advertisements
Description: In an online field experiment on digital advertisements of a drugstore product, we find that surprisingly, ads including a price promotion and an organic claim increased consumer interest in the product, whereas price promotion ads without organic claim or green color did not increase consumer interest.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

The premium price levels of organic fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs) are commonly addressed in prior literature of various disciplines, ranging from marketing (see e.g., Verhoef and Van Doorn 2016) and economics (Cecchini, Torquati, and Chiorri 2018), to health and nutrition sciences (Olson 2017; Hemmerling, Canavari, and Spiller 2016), to environmental sciences (Mauracher, Procidano, and Valentini 2019). However, beyond these research streams—which essentially focus on the permanent (premium) price *levels* of organic products, much less research exists on consumers' behavioral responses to temporary price *promotions* of organic products. What is more, the few extant studies (e.g., Bezawada and Pauwels 2013; Ngobo 2011; Marian et al. 2014) that do address price promotions of organic products tend to assume that consumers always notice, when buying FMCG products, whether they are buying an organic or a non-organic, conventional product. Indeed, in scanner and register data, organic products/SKUs are marked 'organic', regardless of how visible (or explicit) vs. invisible (or implicit) the organic label or claims are to consumers. Thereby, a question that remains largely unanswered by previous research is: What is the effectiveness of price promotions, in combination with explicit organic claims as well as implicit cues, in boosting consumer interest in a FMCG product?

Method and Data

The present study addresses the above research question by reporting an online field experiment on digital advertisements of an organic FMCG product (bottled mouthwash) in the drugstore market in Finland. The promotional messages were published in the banner advertising sections of online sites of seven popular newspapers and magazines in Finland. Consumers were exposed to the ad messages altogether almost two million times ($N_{impressions}$ = 1,957,037). The advertising platform estimated that the gender split was equal among the participants: 50.4% females and 49.6% males. The experiment had a full-factorial 2 X 2 X 2 design. As the main factor, we exposed consumers to a banner ad featuring either a price promotion (–20%) or a regular price for the product. As the additional two experimental factors, we varied the product claims in the ad (organic vs. non-organic) and the label color of the product pack displayed in the ad (green vs. non-green). As the key dependent variable, we measured the click-through rate (CTR), i.e., what proportion of consumers exposed to the ad (in the form of "impressions") clicked the ad. We selected CTR as the ad effectiveness measure following Orazi and Johnson (2020).

Summary of Findings

The results suggest that the price promotion was generally effective in increasing consumers' interest in the organic product, in terms of clickthrough rate (CTR). Specifically, the price promotion increased the CTR when combined with an explicit organic product claim and the implicit green product label cue ($CTR_{Price\ Promo}$ = 0.38% vs. $CTR_{No\ Price\ Promo}$= 0.22%, $p < .001$). Also with a non-green product label, price promotion increased the CTR when combined with an explicit organic claim ($CTR_{Price\ Promo}$ = 0.29% vs. $CTR_{No\ Price\ Promo}$ = 0.20%, $p < .001$). In contrast, surprisingly, we further find that the price promotion was ineffective when used in combination with non-organic claim and non-green product label ($CTR_{Price\ Promo}$ = 0.27%, vs. $CTR_{No\ Price\ Promo}$ = 0.28%, $p > .05$). This is somewhat surprising considering that in the absence of green and organic cues, conventional price promotions could have been, ex ante, expected to enhance consumer interest in the product. At the same time, the results overall suggest that even when there is no organic claim to make, a green label in the product may enhance the effectiveness of a price promotion ($CTR_{Green\ Label}$ = 0.37%) compared to a non-green label ($CTR_{Non\text{-}Green\ Label}$ = 0.27%, $p < .001$).

Statement of Key Contributions

Our research shifts the focus of marketing research on organic FMCGs from studying price levels and price premiums to studying the effectiveness of price promotions of organic products. Specifically, we add to research (Bezawada and Pauwels 2013) that has found price promotions to be approximately equally effective for organic products as for non-organic conventional products. At the same time, our results contrast with prior literature that has implied that price promotions of organic products would be ineffective (due to, e.g., questioning the products' quality image) (Ngobo 2011; Massey, O'Cass, and Otahal 2018; Troiano, Maragon, Tempesta and Vecchiato 2016). Furthermore, the present research also adds to research on advertisements which include the picture of product packaging (e.g., Rundh 2016; Reimann, Zaichkowsky, Neuhaus, Bender, and Weber 2010), as well as literature on colors used in product packaging and advertisements (e.g., Kauppinen-Räisänen 2014; Singh 2006; Spence and Velasco 2018). Therein, we even add to research implying that colors (and other design features) in advertising and packaging may have unconscious influence on consumer behavior, even if the colors had nothing to do with the product features themselves, or the explicit advertising claims.

References are available upon request.

THE INFLUENCE OF FREQUENCY AND TEMPO IN BRAND AUDIO LOGOS ON THE EXPECTED HEALTHFULNESS OF FOODS

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Keywords: Audio logos; Food healthfulness; Frequency; Tempo; Sensory branding

Description: This study demonstrates that high frequency sounds present in audio logos are expected to be matched with healthy foods while the low frequency sounds with less healthy foods.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

The growing shift amongst consumers towards healthier food consumption has urged brands to strive for new strategies by which to promote their healthfulness value amid increasingly competitive markets. An audio logo (or brand sound signature) is one marketing communication tool that companies invest heavily in to embed their brand concept into consumers' minds and some of them have become familiar anthems for the brand over years

(e.g., Intel's chime, McDonald's melody) (Armstrong 2019). Despite this, scant research has examined how audio logos can connote the healthfulness of food products. The present research, therefore, investigates the systematic relationships between sound frequency and tempo and the association with food healthfulness.

The influence of the attributes of music (e.g., frequency, tempo) on food evaluation (e.g., tastes, flavors) has been extensively reported (Bronner et al., 2012; see Knoferle and Spence, 2012; Spence, 2011 for a review). It also appears that high (vs. low) frequency sounds are perceived as smaller (vs. larger) in size (Lowe and Haws 2017; Parise and Spence 2009; Spence 2011), and light (vs. heavy) in weight (Walker and Smith 1984). In terms of tempo, music played in slow tempo induces consumers to spend more time in eating (i.e., slower eating) (Mathiesen, Mielby, Byrne, and Wang, 2020). Moreover, slow-paced eating has been linked to reduced calorie intake, smaller portions of food consumption, and lighter body weight, as opposed to a fast-paced eating (Shah et al. 2014; Tanihara et al. 2011). Similarly, healthy foods are often depicted as smaller portions (vs. larger portions) and lighter foods (vs. heavier foods) (Motoki, Park, Pathak, and Spence, 2021). Given that high-frequency sounds and slower tempos are semantically associated with healthfulness, we thus hypothesized that audio logos with high (vs. low) frequency and slow (vs. fast) tempo sounds would be more associated with healthy (vs. less healthy) foods.

Method And Data

Study 1 (n = 60). A 2 (frequency: high vs. low) x 2 (tempo: slow vs. fast) within-participants design was used. Participants were first presented with hypothetical audio logos

(also called sogos), which were matched in pleasantness, followed by images of food (healthy vs. unhealthy foods). They were instructed to listen to sogo and select a food best suited for it. Participants also rated the sogos on familiarity. A Wilcoxon signed-rank test revealed that participants expected the audio logos with high (vs. low) frequency sounds to be more associated with healthy (vs. unhealthy) foods (M_{high} = 73.89%, SD = 27.16, M_{low} = 48.89%, SD = 32.16; z = 3.64, $p < .001$, r = .33). The association of slow (vs. fast) tempos with healthy (vs. unhealthy) foods was found at a marginally significant level (M_{slow} = 66.11%, SD = 25.85, M_{fast} = 56.67%, SD = 27.82; z = 1.91, p = 0.056, r = .17). No effect of the familiarity of sogos was observed. The next study was conducted to test whether this association would hold true within a food category (e.g., healthy vs. less-healthy salad).

Study 2 (n = 59). Following the paradigm of Study 1, participants were asked to match the food images (e.g., spring salad vs. salad with fries, bacon cheeseburger vs. soy burger) with the hypothetical audio logos. The results revealed that participants expected the high (vs. low) frequency audio logos to be more associated with healthy (vs. less healthy) foods (M_{high} = 69.92%, SD = 28.91, M_{low} = 47.03%, SD = 31.17; z = 3.73, $p < .001$, r = .34); neither the effect of the tempo nor the food category was observed (ps > .05). Data was also analyzed separately for the categories of burger and salad. A Wilcoxon signed-rank test revealed that participants expected the audio logos with high (vs. low) frequency to be more associated with healthy (vs. less healthy) burgers (M_{high} = 68.64%, SD = 34.61, M_{low} = 45.76%, SD = 35.10; z = 3.17, p = .002, r = .29) and salad bowls (M_{high} = 71.19%, SD = 33.74, M_{low} = 48.31%, SD = 371.10; z = 2.93, p = .003, r = .27); no effect of tempo was observed in both the categories (ps > .05).

Summary of Findings

Across two studies, we demonstrated that audio logos constructed with higher (vs. lower) frequency were expected to be associated with healthy (vs. less healthy) food products, while the effect of tempo (slow vs. fast) was not found to be significant. This correspondence was observed across food categories (i.e., healthy vs. unhealthy foods) (study 1) and within food categories (i.e., healthy vs. less healthy burger, and healthy vs. less healthy salad) (study 2). It implies that the frequency of the audio logos plays a vital role to signify the healthfulness of the associated food products. This effect is not limited to categories of healthy and unhealthy food but also generalize to the degree of healthfulness even within a food category. Specifically, audio logos with high (vs. low) frequency influence the perception of healthfulness in healthy (vs. less healthy) food regardless of food category.

Statement of Key Contributions

This paper offers two specific contributions. First, the prior literature demonstrates that lower pitches in voice or music crossmodally associate with a larger product size through a process of visual mental imagery (Lowe and Haws, 2017), and large portion sizes and heavy foods often refer to less healthy foods (compared to healthy foods) (Motoki et al. 2021). Moreover, another study demonstrated that music in high-frequency can cue morality which in turn prompts listeners thoughts to good behaviour leading them to engage in healthy (vs. indulgent) choices (Huang and Labroo, 2019). However, there has been no documented report studying how brands can signify their healthy nature using a marketing communication tool such as audio logos. Bridging this gap, the current research demonstrated that audio logos created with different music frequencies can connote the healthfulness of food products. It thus adds evidence

to the extant literature on crossmodal correspondence by showing that participants expected high (vs. low) frequency audio logos to be associated with healthy (less healthy) foods.

Second, the current study advances the applicability of cross-modal correspondences in businesses by providing guidance to brand managers who want to use optimal audio logos to signify that their food products are healthy. It is worth noting that unlike background music, which is only played in cafes/restaurants and shopping malls, audio logos are typically customised to convey the certain value of the associated brand to consumers and are often integrated in advertising and commercial touchpoints. Given this, our findings provide a primary guideline to brand managers to manipulate high frequencies in an audio logo to connote the healthy value of their food products.

References are available upon request.

YOUR FIRST NAME TELLS YOUR AGE: THE USE OF SOUND SYMBOLISM IN NAMING OVER-THE-TOP MEDIA CHARACTERS

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Keywords: person names, first names, over-the-top media, sound symbolism, perceived age

Description: This paper argues that people with first names having low-frequency sounds are perceived as older than people with first names having high-frequency sounds.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Naming and sound symbolism literature in Marketing have focused mainly on brands. Sound symbolism conveys that sounds of a word provide cues about the word's meaning (Arora, Kalro, and Sharma 2015). This study extends it to peoples' first names. Kawahara, Noto, and Kumagai (2018) tested sound-symbolic effects in proper nouns, specifically Japanese

Pokémon names. Sidhu, Pexman, and Saint-Aubin (2016) found support for sound symbolism in French first names.

The perceived age of the character is essential information that consumers receive through their exposure to video and audio content, especially on the OTT media. The literature on the association of age and sound symbolism was a gap. To measure the perception of someone else's age, one can measure the social-psychological age measure known as the other-perceived age (Huber et al. 2013).

Sapir (1929) confirmed size-sound symbolism to suggest that high-frequency sounds convey smaller sizes than low-frequency sounds (Klink 2000; Sidhu et al. 2019). Since age can be measured as small (young) or big (old), it can be expected to follow size-sound-symbolic associations with sounds in first names.

Therefore, we ask whether people (OTT characters) with first names having low-frequency sounds are perceived as older than those with high-frequency sounds.

Method and Data

We conducted three studies to test our hypothesis. Across all studies, the fricatives (/f/, /s/, /v/, /z/) were used as high-frequency consonant sounds and stops (/b/, /p/, /d/, /k/, /t/) as low-frequency consonant sounds. High-frequency vowel sounds used were (e.g., 'ee' in bee, 'i' in hit), and low-frequency vowel sounds were (e.g., 'oo' in food, 'u' in put). Nasal sounds (/n/) and other vowel sounds such as (/a/) were considered neutral (Guèvremont and Grohmann 2015) and were used in creating both kinds of names. Study 1 was a within-subject experiment with 24 fictitious names of imaginary characters for OTT, having either high- or low-frequency vowel and consonant sounds to estimate perceived age differences through two measures. Study 2 was an observational study where we used real-world data with 19132 unique first names identified from the voter list of Delhi (capital of India). The top 100 names

with the highest coefficients of variation and large occurrences were selected in five age cohorts based on the mean age: 18-27, 28-37, 38-47, 48-57, 58+. Study 3 tested name-age sound-symbolic relationships for real person names in three different languages (Hindi/Telugu/Russian) through a between-subjects experiment within the context of OTT series story plots.

Summary of Findings

In Study 1, we performed a mixed-model ANOVA and found a significant effect of sound frequency on the perceived age scale, $M = 3.26$, $SD = 1.47$ versus 2.93, $SD = 1.22$; $F(1, 22) = 17.24$, $p = .000$, and for the ratio variable age ($M = 29.79$, $SD = 16.52$ vs. $M = 26.30$, $SD = 13.46$; $F(1, 22) = 9.15$, $p = .006$). Characters having fictitious names with low-frequency sounds were perceived as older than characters having names with high-frequency sounds. In Study 2, we performed chi-square tests to estimate the differences in counts of high- and low-frequency names in all cohorts. The count of names with high-frequency sounds was larger for younger cohorts and vice versa for the older cohorts. Directionally, the results followed our hypothesis.

Study 3 tested the effect of sound frequency in real first names of OTT characters on perceived age. We paired story plots randomly with randomly chosen names from a larger pool to control their effect on perceived age. Characters having names with low-frequency sounds were perceived older than those with high-frequency sounding names were ($M = 32.28$ vs. $M = 28.94$; $F(1, 10) = 5.98$, $p = .035$).

Key Contributions

Researchers have found associations of names with individual variables like personality and gender due to sound symbolism. We have contributed by filling the gap in the literature on person names and sound symbolism by establishing a relationship between peoples' first

names and their perceived age. We tested both fictitious names and real person names across languages. We made a methodological contribution through our choice of experimental stimuli. Researchers usually manipulate the vowel sounds in names and keep the consonant sounds constant or vice versa. We created names by manipulating both the vowel and consonant sounds with high or low frequencies. The names presented to respondents were selected from a more extensive set included in the model as a random factor for testing, allowing the sound frequency to be manipulated and minimizing the effect of individual names on age perception. The results are of substantive importance for the managers of OTT media and other content creators. The increasing proliferation of OTT media and content will require more creative names. Managers in the OTT media and content creators are advised to select names for characters that semantically fit well with the story and are also perceived age-appropriate phonetically.

B2B Marketing & Relationship Management

A FRESH PERSPECTIVE ON ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT: EXPLORING THE ROLE OF PARTNER- AND TASK-RELATED FACTORS ON ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT

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Keywords

Academic engagement, academic collaboration, science-business cooperation, partner-related factors, task-related factors

Description

This qualitative field study extends the current knowledge of academic engagement by identifying industry partner-related and task-related antecedents of science-business cooperation.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Academic engagement is of crucial interest to universities and policy makers, as it is seen as a transmission mechanism to ensure academics' impact on economy and society (Perkmann et al. 2021). Universities play a key role in developing knowledge-based innovation (Ferraris et al. 2020). Also, universities are increasingly interested in new forms to engage in solving practical

problems (Ferraris et al. 2020). However, despite the implementation of long-term innovation policies to measure and foster academics' impact, like the Research Excellence Framework in the UK, perceptible effects are yet missing (Perkmann et al. 2021). Structural gaps in the mutual understanding of academics and practitioners apparently remain particularly in the domain of business and marketing.

Building on a recent literature review, Perkmann and colleagues (2021) emphasize that individual academic engagement is driven by individual, organizational and institutional factors. Their framework focuses on the description of factors on the academic side, neglecting the role of industry partner and task characteristics. Hence, this research focuses on the following research question:

Which industry partner- and task-related factors contribute to academic engagement?

Method and Data

This paper uses a qualitative analysis to gain insights in the complex nature of the formation of academic engagement. This approach allows one to consider the varying nature of researchers' motives with regard to industry partner- and task-specific factors to evaluate the attractiveness and congruence of cooperation opportunities for their individual target system (Ramos-Vielba et al. 2016).

The study uses 23 semi-structured in-depth interviews to explore researchers' individual missions, motivations and extent of academic engagement. The study was conducted between August 2020 and December 2021 with senior researchers (full, associate and assistant professors) working in the fields of marketing, management and engineering. The sample includes 13 different universities from five countries (Germany, USA, UK, Austria, Norway). Average age is 47, with

seven females participating in the study. The interviews lasted between 28 and 88 minutes (average: 58 minutes). A qualitative content analysis was conducted to analyze the data (Mayring 2014). Following this approach, the interviews were summarized before the material was condensed systematically with a focus on the specific research question (Mayring 2014).

Summary of Findings

Our findings provide further insights of individual, organizational and institutional determinants of academic engagement emphasized by Perkmann et al. (2013; 2021). However, the main findings are the identified partner-related and task-related factors of academic engagement.

Partner-related factors are scale, innovativeness, commitment and proximity. Scale refers to the size of the partner company and respectively their local importance. Furthermore, innovativeness demonstrates the presence of a ”future-oriented mindset”. Interviewees favor a high commitment and seek long-term relationships with ideally the same contact persons. Further, a high degree of social or cognitive proximity between the partners increases the likelihood of academic engagement.

The task-related factors of academic engagement are relevance, originality, congruence and stability. Projects are of relevance to researchers that offer some potential to apply their results in real-world environments and are of actual importance for business problems or provide input (e.g., data) for academic output. Another important factor is originality. Interviewees emphasize their demand for innovative or conceptual tasks to meet their ambition to advance knowledge. Congruence describes the overlap between project goals and the academic’s individual research agenda. Lastly, the degree of stability also drives the formation of academic engagement and refers to the financial compensation linked to the project.

Statement of Key Contributions

Academic engagement is of crucial interest to universities and policy makers, as it is seen as a transmission mechanism to ensure academics' impact on the economy and society. This study contributes to the understanding of the antecedents of academic engagement. It extends existing frameworks that comprise individual, organizational and institutional factors with industry partner-related and task-related factors. Drawn partly from success factor studies in the areas of academic engagement and collaboration as well as from team performance literature, further determinants are identified that play a role in explaining engagement. Their applicability is theoretically derived and empirically explored. Through a qualitative field study that builds on existing conceptual models in order to extend them by empirical data, we contribute to the stock of knowledge by following a phenomenon-construct-mapping approach. The conceptual framework derived offers a comprehensive perspective on academic engagement and provides avenues for further research to validate the newly identified determinants such as partner proximity and task congruence. Our qualitative data provides a strong indication that both groups of determinants introduced potentially interact with each other and with individual factors. However, this assumption needs to be examined in future research.

References are available upon request.

FACTORS INFLUENCING A SUPPLIER'S ABILITY TO DEVELOP INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR SERVING KEY ACCOUNTS

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Keywords: key account, innovation, SOE, customer knowledge, top management

Description: Through our survey of 185 key account management (KAM) executives from suppliers in China, we study the effects of four types of KAM factors on suppliers' ability to provide innovative solutions: enterprise form (i.e., state owned enterprises (SOEs) vs. non-SOEs), leadership (i.e., top management involvement), personnel (i.e., commitment to KAM), and procedural practices (i.e., customer knowledge utilization).

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Innovative solutions that provide superior value are crucial for serving key accounts (KAs) well. We study the effects of four types of key account management (KAM) factors on suppliers' ability to provide innovative solutions: (1) whether the supplier is a state owned enterprise (SOE) vs. other enterprise forms, (2) suppliers' top management involvement (TMI), (3) suppliers' personnel commitment to KAM, and (4) suppliers' customer knowledge utilization.

Additionally, we investigate the moderating effect of being an SOE on the TMI-innovation link, i.e., does being an SOE amplify or weaken the association between TMI and innovation?

Method and Data

Our sample consists of surveys completed by 185 managers involved with KAM at companies from 22 industries located in China.

For the dependent variable Innovative Solutions for Serving KAs, we developed a five-item measure. For the independent variable SOE, we asked respondents to indicate which type of company they work for, providing three options in the survey: (1) based in China and is an SOE; (2) based in China and is privately owned; (3) has an outside-of-China parent company. Adapting measures used in earlier KAM research and based on our many years of working with companies in China, we developed a three-item measure for TMI, a four-item measure for personnel commitment to KAM, and a three-item measure for customer knowledge utilization.

We followed Feldman and Lynch's (1988) recommendations for countering “self-generated validity” by careful placement of survey questions, extensive pretesting with the subject population, and use of linguistic terms and phrases naturally used by the respondents. Further, we conducted confirmatory factor analysis, analysis of the average variance extracted from each construct, and reliability analysis to ensure good convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability of the constructs. OLS was used to estimate the hypothesized relationships.

Summary of Findings

The estimation results show that all hypotheses except H1 (*H1: Chinese SOEs are less likely to generate innovative solutions for serving key accounts.*) were supported by the data.

First, although SOEs as an enterprise form does not have a significant effect on innovative solutions, the finding that SOEs have a positive moderating effect on TMI – to – innovative solutions suggests that TMI at SOEs has a greater impact on creating innovative solutions than its non-SOE counterpart. It seems plausible that state-mandates for greater innovation by SOEs have succeeded in affecting how top managers engage KAM efforts toward offering innovative solutions to KAs. This does not mean that China's SOEs outperform private enterprises in innovative solutions, as future research needs to tease apart the kinds of innovative solutions by SOEs as opposed to private sector innovations.

Additionally, each of the three factors, i.e., TMI, personnel commitment to KAM, and customer knowledge utilization, has a positive effect on developing innovative solutions.

Key Contributions

KAs are vital to a firm's success and innovative solutions in serving KAs provide suppliers with a competitive advantage in China's complex and highly competitive market. Understanding factors that enable suppliers to be more innovative in serving KAs offers insights for improving KAM effectiveness. The prominence of SOEs in China, accompanied by China's ongoing transition toward a market system encouraging competition, makes the analysis related to SOEs and innovation particularly relevant. In sum, this work adds to the body of knowledge of suppliers' capacities necessary for serving their KAs. Additionally, pursuant to Murphy and Li

(2015), this work grows our understanding of the KAM capabilities of privately held firms versus SOEs.

This research is valuable to KAM executives and top managers, especially those vying for KAs in China. Although our study shows that SOEs as an enterprise form does not have a significant effect on innovative solutions, our finding that being an SOE amplifies the effect of TMI on innovation lends credence to claims that SOEs have regenerated in recent years toward becoming more entrepreneurial. This means that China's SOEs have made great strides toward becoming the globally advantaged innovation-driven competitors the government desires.

References are available upon request.

HAPPY DISUNION: SHAREHOLDER VALUE OF SPORTS SPONSORSHIP TERMINATIONS

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Keywords: Sport sponsorship termination; Event study; abnormal return; interorganizational relationship

Description: This study examines the impact of sports sponsorship termination announcements on the shareholder value (abnormal return) using the event study methodology.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question (200 words)

Marketers spend millions of dollars each year on sports sponsorship. The sponsorship literature has mainly and thoroughly investigated the value created following the formation announcement of such partnerships. However, the dissolution of sponsorship relationships and, more specifically, their impact on shareholder value has been surprisingly overlooked. Given their increasing prevalence, the shareholder value (stock return) performance of sponsorship termination announcements and their underlying factors warrants further investigation. Guided by this gap of knowledge in the literature, in this study, we aim to answer the following two questions: (1) What is the overall effect of sports sponsorship termination on shareholder value? (2) What are the boundary conditions under which the firm experiences a positive/negative impact on shareholder value? Specifically, we intend to investigate whether and how shareholders' consideration of the reasons behind sponsorship termination, other details of the contract (e.g., length, congruence), and economic conditions form their expectations from future cash flow generation of sports sponsorship terminations. Taking an interorganizational perspective, we answer these questions using event study methodology as follows.

Method and Data (200 words)

We address the research questions using a sample of sports sponsorship termination events among publicly traded U.S. firms. We collected data from searches of news and press release announcements in Nexis Uni, the firms' websites, and major newswires between 1992 and 2020. We used various keywords, such as "sponsorship termination," "sponsorship exit," "sponsorship dissolution," "sponsorship non-renewal," and others, to identify relevant announcements. We also extracted other required data from the announcements, such as the

reason for termination. We then complemented our dataset by calculating important financial and environmental factors from the Compustat database. Our data collection led to the final sample of 78 sponsorship termination announcements. We employed the event study method to calibrate the overall impact of sports sponsorship termination announcement on shareholder value. More specifically, we used Fama-French-Carhart four-factor model to calculate the abnormal returns. Then we use cross-sectional regression to test our research hypotheses. Lastly, we addressed the potential selection bias inherent in event studies using Heckman two-stage approach.

Summary of Findings- 200 words

We calculate cumulative abnormal returns using different market models and for different event windows. The most significant cumulative abnormal returns (CAR) belongs to the (-2,0) window, with a .59% magnitude, indicating an increase in CAR upon termination announcements. The cross-sectional Z (BMP) is positive and significant ($p < .05$), suggesting that the sponsorship termination leads to an overall positive stock market reaction. We also observe the same results for other benchmark models and window (-2,2).

We test our hypotheses by regressing the CAR (-2,0) window on our independent and control variables. The results of our cross-sectional analysis show that coefficients for reasons behind termination vary – in the case of strategic and financial reasons, investors react negatively compared to misconduct as the reason for termination. We could not find any significant impact on abnormal returns for congruence and length of the contract. We also find that the shareholders view sports sponsorship termination unfavorably when announcements of sponsorship termination occur during the recession.

Statement of Key Contributions- 200 words

This study offers novel contributions by drawing from and extending the emerging literature in the performance outcome of interorganizational marketing relationship termination. Focusing on sports sponsorship contracts, this study investigates the overall shareholder value effect of sponsorship termination and the underlying contingencies from shareholders' perspectives. This research is the first attempt (to our knowledge) in providing firms with insights into approaching and managing their sponsorship termination to mitigate possible adverse effects.

Our results show that sports sponsorship terminations are not necessarily bad for the sponsors, and our findings indicate that shareholders generally, but not always, view such announcements favorably. However, our findings demonstrate that sponsoring firms would experience a negative shareholder value if the reasons for termination are strategic and financial – warning managers to consider the reasons for termination and whether the termination is inevitable.

Also, shareholders consider the economic conditions as suggested by our results. While some firms reduce their marketing and advertising spending during the recession, others continue with marketing expenditure. The latter would differentiate themselves from competitors, and this is viewed favorably by the shareholders. Overall, these results provide managers with valuable and practical insights into handling the dissolution of sports sponsorships.

JACK OF ALL TRADES, OR MASTER OF NONE? MAXIMIZING B2B FIRMS' REPUTATIONAL EFFECTS ONLINE

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Keywords: B2B; industrial buying; electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM); online reviews

Description: An empirical examination of the distribution of online ratings of B2B firms and how unique features of B2B professional service providers, namely, the range of services they offer and the focus (i.e., how much effort) they devote to each, influence such ratings.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question – Given the inescapable influence of the internet, Gustafson and Pomirleanu (2021) suggest that modern B2B brands and their reputations are now "built, reinforced, and contested in online and offline environments." Thus, the critical role of eWOM in brand and reputation building among B2B firms can no longer be ignored. And while the temptation might exist for B2B managers to deploy online brand strategies developed in the B2C domain, doing so would be detrimental. A B2B firm's online strategy need not focus primarily on establishing a dialogue or building closer ties, as is often seen in B2C settings. Instead, B2B firms need to consider how to leverage their rich relationship experiences with clients and other stakeholders to benefit their firm's online reputation. As Cartwright et al. (2021) suggest, understanding how B2B firms maximize their reputation via eWOM is necessary to developing effective online B2B brand strategies.

However, to the best of our knowledge, no previous study has holistically examined the online reputational effects of B2B eWOM or how B2B firms could maximize their online reputation given the growing prevalence of reviews and evaluations that comprise eWOM in the B2B domain. This research aims to resolve this critical void.

Method and Data – We rely on a secondary data set containing 14,080 online reviews of 7,838 B2B PSFs posted in an online B2B review platform. Reviews hosted on the site were written by client firms and verified for accuracy by the platform, with 59.85% of these being verified by phone and the rest verified online. Slightly over half (58.28%) of the reviews were written for companies located in the US or Canada. Each company's profile page consists of firm-related information such as name and brand logo, basic firmographics, a company biography, services provided, and key clients in their portfolio. Reviews for each firm were displayed below the firm profiles. The clients provided a review title and star ratings (both overall, as well as along dimensions such as quality, on-time scheduling, and cost). Moreover, reviewers provided a testimonial in narrative form.

Regression analysis with fixed year effects and cluster-robust standard errors at the industry level was conducted to assess the review and company characteristics that drive online review ratings in the industrial context. Sentiment analysis was conducted to extract text features such as time focus, analytical style of speech, emotional tone, and others for analysis. provider (e.g., job title), which helps establish review credibility.

Summary of Findings – The results indicate that there is no significant effect of the number of services offered by the PSF. However, service focus is significant, with the parameter implying

an inverted-U shape relationship between service focus and review rating. This result implies that, regardless of the number of services a PSF offers, how focused they are (i.e., what percentage effort they reportedly devote to each service offered) on each of these will substantially influence the review ratings these firms ultimately receive.

Regarding the semantic content of the reviews: higher rated reviews are associated with a shorter review title length and a longer testimonial. Higher rated reviews also involve a positive emotional tone in their title and testimonial, yet an overly positive tone in the company's biography instead results in lower ratings. A review title's focus on the present and future is associated with higher ratings. Finally, a team focus is related to higher ratings, as well as the use of words associated with feelings. Overall, our results suggest that a host of semantic features of a B2B PSF's title, testimonial, and company biography influence review ratings, and can be managed to maximize this critical key performance indicator for B2B online reputation effects.

Key Contributions – There is a gap in the literature as it relates to how business customers go about rating and discussing B2B service providers in the online context and how such ratings influence B2B firms' online reputation. In examining B2B eWOM and online reputation, our contributions are to (1) explore the potential for insightful B2B eWOM research using secondary data; (2) report on the positive skew of B2B reviews; and (3) provide evidence of how a unique feature of B2B companies (their portfolio of services) influences review ratings, which is necessarily new to the literature since this characteristic is not apparent in B2C settings.

Given the increasing importance of eWOM in B2B, as evidenced by the rise and growth of multiple B2B review platforms such as Google, FeaturedCustomers, Clutch, and AgencySpotter, the current findings are topical and important for B2B digital marketers. Our

findings provide a roadmap of the drivers of positive online review ratings, such that these B2B marketers can motivate their clients to deliver reviews that align with these; in addition, we provide guidance on how these B2B firms should position their portfolio of services offered to maximize their online reputation—an increasingly important source of competitive advantage.

References are available upon request.

KEY PROBLEMS OF INTERORGANIZATIONAL COLLABORATIONS: A MULTI-LEVEL AND TEMPORAL ANALYSIS

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Keywords: interorganizational problems, interorganizational relationships, collaboration, coopetition, tourism

Description: This study establishes key problems of interorganizational collaborations and highlight their interactions and evolution over time.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Stronger together. More and more organizations adopt this mindset. Indeed, relational theory suggests that interorganizational relationships (IORs) allow emergence of significant competitive advantages (Dyer and Singh, 1998). Despite their popularity, interorganizational collaborations are quite a challenge. Managers can count on an extensive literature on key success factors. However, they are ill-equipped without adequate knowledge on key interorganizational problems.

Despite a growing number of studies, knowledge on dark side of IORs remains fragmented (Oliveira and Lumineau, 2019a). One reason lies in the way researchers analyze interorganizational problems: one at a time, with one level of analysis and at particular point in time. Yet, interorganizational problems surely appear in groups of interrelated problems, which are nested across several levels of analysis, and evolve over time (Lumineau, Eckerd and Handley, 2015; Lumineau and Oliveira, 2018; Oliveira and Lumineau, 2019a). Moreover, analyzing problems independently hinders ability to assess

their relative importance and their interactions. Therefore, this study aims to establish key problems of interorganizational collaborations and highlight their interactions and evolution over time. More precisely, three research questions guide us:

1. *What are key problems of interorganizational collaborations?*
2. *How are interorganizational problems interrelated?*
3. *How do interorganizational problems evolve over collaboration life cycle?*

Method and Data

Research design is a multiple-case study. We selected the tourism industry as research setting. All three cases are coopetition having experienced major problems. There were three data sources: (1) 28 semi-structured interviews with executives and key employees involved in the collaboration, (2) post-interview surveys, and (3) secondary data.

Data analysis was performed in two stages: within-case and cross-case analysis (Eisenhardt, 1989).

Each case was analyzed as a single case study. We began by a temporal analysis to establish collaboration's chronology. Second, we proceed to a thematic analysis to identify key problems. Third, we performed a multi-level analysis and completed temporal analysis. For each problem identified, we established level of analysis (*individual, interpersonal, interorganizational* and *institutional*), as well as corresponding phase(s) of Caffyn's (2000) life cycle (*Pre-Partnership, Take-Off, Growth, Prime, Deceleration* and *After-Life*). Fourth, we conducted further rounds of data analysis to confirm order in which problems appeared and their interactions.

After each case was analyzed separately, we proceed to cross-case analysis. We formed three pairs of cases, looking for resemblances and differences in nature, interactions and evolution of interorganizational problems. Emerging patterns were confronted to each case results and literature when possible. We refined and integrated them into a model.

Summary of Findings

First, we identified 31 interorganizational problems and classified them into five categories: *personal, relational, operational, strategic* and *external*. Four problems stand out as key interorganizational problems: *interpersonal problems, lack of familiarity, cultural differences* and *roles and responsibilities problems*.

Second, findings demonstrate that problems are nested across levels of analysis and highlight many interactions between them (within and across levels). Problems occur in groups and are interrelated. Analyzes show a recurring pattern: triads. As in a vicious cycle, each problem amplified the others.

Third, we developed a theoretical model illustrating the evolution of interorganizational problems. Our model has three phases: Eruption, Diversification and Proliferation.

Eruption of first triad is more likely to occur at end of Take-Off or at beginning of Growth. This transition period is marked by an increase in interactions between partners and operationalization of first projects. Diversification phase begins with advent of a second triad. This second phase is characterized by emergence of a second category of problems and/or a second level of analysis. Proliferation of problems follows one of two problem-

solving strategies: *competition* or *avoiding*. New waves of problems will follow one another as long as collaborations do not change their problem-solving strategy.

Statement of Key Contributions

By using a multi-level and temporal analytical framework, this study contributes to fill in three blind spots in IORs literature: lack of multi-level analysis, analyzing problems independently and lack of studies on time issues. First, findings demonstrate that problems are nested across levels of analysis and highlight many interactions between them (within and across levels). Without a multi-level analytical framework, our understanding of interorganizational problems would have been incomplete, if not flawed. Second, results prove that problems emerge in groups and are interrelated. Recognizing these interactions is essential to understand evolution of problems. Third, this study proposes a multi-level model illustrating evolution of interorganizational problems.

This study also has several managerial implications, in particular for IORs in tourism industry, SMEs and NPOs. First, *relational* problems are dominant throughout collaboration life cycle and should not be overlooked. Second, managers need to carefully prepare coordination of collaboration. Third, managers must adopt a proactive approach to dealing with problems. Finally, as soon as a problem is detected, managers should check to see if other problems are present. Results prove that interorganizational problems emerge in groups and are interrelated. Therefore, managers must ensure they have a complete picture of situation to effectively resolve it.

SALESPEOPLE AS CORPORATE INFLUENCERS IN BUSINESS-TO-BUSINESS MARKETS: A GROUNDED THEORY STUDY

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Keywords: Corporate Influencer, Social Media, B2B, Salespeople, Grounded Theory

Description: By using a grounded theory approach, we identify intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors that drive LinkedIn usage as well as chances and challenges of corporate influencer activities for salespeople in business-to-business markets.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Business-to-business (B2B) organizations can build a meaningful presence on professional social networking sites (Bill, Feurer, and Klarmann 2020) by encouraging their employees to act as corporate influencers, i.e., as employed individuals who actively share content in line with their professional background (Nestler, Hoffmann, and Poeppelbuss 2021). Corporate influencer activities are particularly recommended for sales organizations because of their fundamental boundary-spanning role (Guesalaga 2016).

Although there is strong managerial awareness of the relevance of corporate influencers in a B2B context, research remains scarce. Existing studies give a first understanding of B2B salespeople who employ social media, as well as the effect on performance and customer relationships (e.g., Agnihotri et al. 2012; Bill, Feurer, and Klarmann 2020; Levin, Hansen, and Laverie 2012). Despite this emerging body of research, we know little about salespeople who purposefully enact the role of a corporate influencer on LinkedIn, which is the most relevant social network in B2B sales. This led us to examine the following research questions (RQ):

RQ1: What motivates B2B salespeople to use LinkedIn?

RQ2: How do B2B salespeople enact the role of a corporate influencer on LinkedIn?

RQ3: What are key chances and challenges of using LinkedIn for B2B sales organizations?

Method and Data

To enlighten our research questions, we conducted a study with 27 in-depth interviews following the grounded theory methodology (Corbin and Strauss 2008; Gioia, Corley, and Hamilton 2013). We collected interview data through semi-structured interviews from March 2020

to August 2021. The average duration of the interviews was 41 minutes. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. The experts represent firms from various B2B industries. During data analysis, we followed an inductive, multi-level coding process. First, we assigned open and in-vivo codes to passages that provide relevant information to our research questions using the software MAXQDA. Second, we condensed the large amount of codes by seeking similarities and differences, and organizing similar codes into categories. We did this by constantly comparing the in-vivo codes and our memos across all interviews. This resulted in ten categories. Following the idea of axial coding (Strauss and Corbin 1998), we grouped relevant categories into emerging dimensions. We then identified connections between the different categories and condensed them into four aggregated dimensions. This iterative coding procedure was repeated until we arrived at a stable scheme of codes, categories and dimensions (Malshe and Sohi 2009).

Summary of Findings

Our interviews indicate that employees' *motivation* to act as corporate influencers can be *intrinsic* because employees simply have fun using LinkedIn or consider it personally relevant. Motivation can also be *extrinsic* and initiated by the marketing department or similar institution or led by example through other colleagues.

B2B salespeople enact the role of a corporate influencer by *interacting with their network* through liking, commenting, sharing content and/or by sending direct messages in order to *collect information* or *spread information* fast and easily. They also *manage existing relationships* and *build their professional network* with colleagues, contractual partners, or other experts in the field.

Corporate influencer activities lead to various *chances* and *challenges*. Looking at chances, LinkedIn enables salespeople to specifically search for relevant members of a customer's buying center, which helps to *bypass gatekeepers*. Furthermore, detailed profile research enables

salespeople to *approach counterparts in a targeted way and on a more personal level*. A challenge arises because this approach is also very *time consuming*. Another one is the *compatibility of personal and corporate interests*. Corporate influencers are acting on behalf of the firm, but do this with their private and personal profile on LinkedIn, which can lead to conflicts of interest.

Key Contributions

Little has been known about salespeople who purposefully take on the corporate influencer role. We contribute to this nascent stream of research by exploring corporate influencer's motivation to use LinkedIn, how they use LinkedIn, as well as their key chances and challenges. While most previous studies, which have examined salespeople's social media usage, include various social networks like Facebooks and Blogs (e.g., Agnihotri et al. 2012; Levin, Hansen, and Laverie 2012; Schultz, Schwepker, and Good 2012), we deliberately focus on LinkedIn, as it has proven to be the most suitable social network worldwide for corporate influencer activities and is seen to have great future potential for B2B sales.

In practice, the topic of LinkedIn usage is still fraught with great uncertainty. In some cases, employees have no connection to social media and firms find it difficult to persuade their employees to use it. On the other hand, firms want to control their employees' LinkedIn activities, which in turn has an impact on their actual usage. We draw attention to key chances and challenges and offer managerial implications for B2B sales organizations across different industries.

Should B2B Salespeople Use an NC2 Sales Strategy?

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Keywords: NC2 sales strategy, personal selling, adaptive selling, intuition, B2B.

Description: This article examines effects of the NC² Sales Strategy on salespeople's performance in a B2B context

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

A recent study of retail salespeople recommended that salespeople should expeditiously disengage from a customer interaction (labeled "No Conversion, No Interaction" or NC2 sales strategy) when they believe that a customer with whom they are interacting is unlikely to make a purchase (Cron, Alavi, Habel, Wieseke and Ryari 2021). The purpose of this study is to examine whether the NC2 sales strategy is similarly effective for B2B salespeople. Seeing the intricacies of B2B settings, combined with the substantial productivity potential of the NC2 sales strategy, this question is of highest relevance for B2B firms and research. The results suggest that use of an NC2 sales strategy and higher sales performance in a B2B environment is contingent on the domain experience and relationship building orientation of B2B salespeople, which was also true for retail salespeople. Unlike retailing, however, the NC2 sales strategy is found to directly increase sales performance but to decrease sales

growth. Additionally, the use of an NC2 sales strategy is related to higher sales the less time a salesperson devotes to customer interactions.

Method And Data

We surveyed all the firm's 911 salespeople and received 279 usable survey responses, for a response rate of 30.63%. Since early and late respondents did not differ on our survey variables, we conclude that non-response bias is unlikely to bias our results (Armstrong and Overton 1977). The average age of the salespeople was 41.35 years (SD = 10.65) and all, but five respondents were men.

We matched the survey data with the objective sales revenue generated by each salesperson over the period of one year on a monthly level, extracted from company records. To analyze the data using a growth modelling approach, we transformed the data set in a long format (Cron et al. 2021).

Summary of Findings

As was found in retailing, B2B salespeople with a high relationship building orientation (RBO) who employ an NC2 sales strategy were able to grow their sales over the year of this study. Like the results in the Cron et al. (2021) study, the sales level of salespeople with greater domain experience who tended to also use an NC2 selling strategy was found to be higher, but the results were not statistically significant. In summary, there is general support for the three hypotheses Cron and colleagues proposed for salespeople in a retail setting, though one of the results was in the hypothesized direction but not statistically significant in this study. Additionally, this study found that perceived scarcity of selling time when combined with use of an NC2 strategy has a statistically significant influence on salespeople's sales level. Therefore, our conclusion is that NC2 is a worthwhile adaptive selling strategy to examine in a B2B setting, particularly when the selling process is one of order-taking.

Statement of Key Contribution

The NC2 sales strategy, recently examined by Cron and colleagues (2021) in a B2C setting, reflects a salesperson's tendency to disengage from an interaction with a customer if he or she judges the customer's purchase likelihood to be low. Given this considerable potential to enhance salespeople's sales performance, this paper's main contribution is to assess the efficacy of the NC² sales strategy in B2B settings. We conducted a study to examine the boundary conditions for the beneficial outcomes associated with using the NC2 sales strategy in a B2B environment. Results show that salespeople's NC² strategy increases sales revenues if salespeople work in an environment marked by time scarcity and if they combine the NC² sales strategy with a relationship building orientation. More precisely, combined with a relationship building orientation, the NC² sales strategy even exhibits continuous effects on sales revenue growth. Critically, if B2B salespeople do not apply the NC² sales strategy with a strong relationship building orientation, results show detrimental effects of the strategy in the course of time. Moreover, unlike in retail settings, in B2B the NC² sales strategy seems to be effective irrespective of salespeople's domain-specific experience.

References are available upon request.

SHOULD MANUFACTURERS CURTAIL UNAUTHORIZED DISTRIBUTION? THE FINANCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF COMBATING GRAY MARKETS

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Keywords: gray markets, distribution channels, marketing-finance interface, event study, marketing investments.

Description: This research examines how gray market combating by manufacturers affects their financial performance and the firm- and action-level factors that moderate this effect.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Questions

This research addresses the following questions:

(a) Should manufacturers combat or tolerate gray markets (unauthorized distribution channels)?

(b) What are the financial consequences of combating gray markets?

(c) What firm-level strategies or performance aspects make a manufacturer in a better or worse position when combating gray markets?

(d) What should managers who decide to combat gray markets do or avoid doing when it comes to combating actions?

Method and Data

In this research, we rely on the stock market to disentangle the impact of gray market combating on financial performance from a shareholder perspective, using abnormal stock returns and the event study method. The data for this research come from several secondary data sources such as Factiva, Compustat, Statista, firms' annual reports, Bloomberg databases, CRSP.

Summary of Findings

Our findings reveal that gray market combating has, on average, a negative bearing on manufacturers' financial performance. However, this effect varies significantly depending on certain firm-level and combating action-level factors. Notably, whereas brand investments and profitability mitigate the negative financial consequences of combating gray markets, innovation investments and sales growth exacerbate these negative consequences. Additionally, gray market combating actions that are of a proactive or punitive nature exacerbate these negative consequences.

Key Contributions

First, we advance gray markets research by addressing the three-decade-old question of whether combating gray markets benefits or hurts firm performance. We find that combating gray markets by manufacturers has, on average, a negative effect on manufacturers' financial performance, as reflected by abnormal stock returns. However, this effect varies depending on certain firm- and action-level factors (brand investments, innovation investments, profitability, sales growth, nature and target of combating action).

Second, we add to the marketing-finance interface literature by drawing attention to the value-destruction potential of combating unauthorized distribution (gray markets) and to the influence of strategic marketing investments on that. This advances a relatively underresearched area in the marketing-finance interface literature -- how distribution channel initiatives affect shareholder wealth.

Third, we extend brand and channel research by shedding light on a compound role for brand investments in channel strategy. Brand investments not only shape the firm's channel management behavior (firms that invest more in their brands are more likely to combat unauthorized distribution i.e., gray markets), but also determine the financial effectiveness of such behavior (brand investments mitigate the negative financial consequences of combating gray markets).

References are available upon request.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF B2B INDIVIDUAL CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS IN THE DIGITAL ERA: CHANGES THAT ARE LIKELY TO PERSIST AFTER THE PANDEMIC

Keywords: B2B customer relationships, social media, digital sales communication, digital sales interaction

Description: This study aimed to investigate how salespeople form, develop, and maintain customer relationships in the digital era and how the pandemic has affected this process.

Research question: To survive, sales organizations must modernize their strategies and daily practices, pursue digital interactions, and find ways to better align with the demands of digital commerce (Bharadwaj & Shipley, 2020). Applying social media tools can help salespeople communicate with customers. However, doing so also requires professionalism in choosing the appropriate channels and flexibility in moving between them (Agnihotri et al., 2012).

Customer relationship development processes are usually based on face-to-face communication. The frameworks for these processes have not been updated since 2016 (Zhang et al., 2016), following which there have been significant technological changes (Syam & Sharma, 2018). The current pandemic has further disrupted the landscape (Campbell et al., 2020). The nature of the customer relationship development process, therefore, deserves renewed attention. This study aimed to investigate how salespeople form, develop, and maintain customer relationships in the new digital era. Recently, there have been calls for sales research to examine the sudden shift from in-person, face-to-face communication to digital interactions (e.g., Fraccastoro et al., 2020). To address this issue, we explored the following research questions:

- How has the pandemic affected the process of business-to-business (B2B) customer relationships?
- How will digital B2B customer relationships develop moving forward?

Methods and Data: We applied a qualitative research approach involving 24 face-to-face interviews (25–60 minutes long) with B2B sales professionals (e.g., sales directors, sales managers, salespeople). We asked our interviewees to tell us their story focusing on one long-term B2B customer relationship and its development and maintenance before (data collection 1) and during the pandemic (data collection 2). The respondents were encouraged

to express their subjective perspectives (Thompson et al., 1989) on using social media tools, digital sales communication tools, and digital sales interaction tools in the relationship development process and how this has changed during the pandemic. The interviews were recorded and transcribed. Two researchers then read the transcripts and created summaries of each interview. We followed a hermeneutical circle, that is, "the methodological process of understanding, constructing and deepening a meaning in the interpretative process during research activities" (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2016, p. 35). We thus focused on the meanings that the respondents expressed regarding the use of digital tools. Furthermore, we asked and analyzed what changes from the pandemic are likely to persist in salesperson–customer relationship development and how they might evolve. B2B customer relationship development was explored across the awareness, expansion, and commitment phases.

Summary of Findings: In the awareness phase, parasocial contact, parasocial relationships, and mediated interpersonal buyer–seller relationships are formed in an online sales communication environment via one-way communication and customer's parasocial contact with the company or salesperson via digital channels. When it occurs multiple times, it develops into a parasocial relationship. A socioemotional bond between the customer and the seller facilitates a transition to digital sales interactions, predominantly in virtual video-based interactions.

In the expansion phase, relational trust is established with social media tools from the calculus-based trust created in the parasocial relationship during the awareness phase. When the relationship progresses digitally and social bonding occurs only through digital media, the relational trust-building process becomes even more critical. The role of social media becomes stronger when creating calculus-based (cost-benefit) trust and develops from a firm's online brand, in this case involving information about a firm's financial standing.

In the future, empathy and emotional intelligence will be even more important at the commitment phase and considering the customer's uniqueness and safety issues will be crucial. Finally, our findings introduce the concept of a mediated interpersonal relationship formed fully online by applying the tools of social media, digital sales interaction, and digital sales communication.

Statement of Key Contributions

Contributions to academia: We show the development of parasocial contact, parasocial relationships, and mediated interpersonal buyer–seller relationships in an online sales

communication environment during the awareness phase (see Dibble et al., 2016). In our study, socioemotional bond between the customer and the seller (see Giles, 2002) facilitates a transition to digital sales interactions in virtual video-based interactions. In the expansion phase, relational trust (Rousseau et al., 1998) is established with social media tools from the calculus-based trust created in the parasocial relationship during the awareness phase. Relational trust-building becomes even more critical when the relationship develops in a completely digital world and social bonding can occur only through digital media. Contrary to Dowell et al. (2015), we show that calculus-based trust is essential for relational trust to emerge. Furthermore, we introduce the new concept of a mediated interpersonal relationship. Social presence plays a crucial role when parasocial relationships move toward mediated interpersonal relationships.

Contributions to practice: The roles of empathy and emotional intelligence will increase, as will the role of participants' individuality and diversity and the requirement to be open to new digital tools. This study provides insights to all organizations and other stakeholders engaged in marketing.

References are available upon request.

AMA Winter Conference 2022 Special Session Proposal

THE FUTURE OF SOLUTION SELLING

Chairs

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Description

In this session, we discuss the past, present, and future of solution selling research and practice. We begin by reviewing the last 15 years of research on solution selling in a panel discussion. Afterwards, four papers will be presented on current topics related to solution selling. At the end, participants have the opportunity to discuss any emerging topic of the session and ask questions to the presenters, and the panel. We hope that this session brings together a broad spectrum of researchers and practitioners active in the fields of B2B marketing as well as personal selling and sales management.

Proposal

Objective and Contribution of the Session

The aim of this session is to discuss the relevance of solution selling in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic and the so-called new normal. Over the last three decades, many business-to-business (B2B) suppliers have started to engage in the process of servitization by adding services to their products with the aim of providing more value to customers, rather than just selling these components individually (Vandermerwe and Rada 1988). Since Vandermerwe and Rada first mentioned the phenomenon of servitization, it has caused significant

changes to how B2B-firms conduct business and engage with their customers. Especially solutions, which are commonly understood as individualized offerings tailored specifically to customer needs, have undergone a major transition. While in its early stages, both researchers and practitioners used the term solutions when referring to standardized product service bundles, Tuli, Kohli, and Bharadwaj (2007) showed in their seminal paper that solutions actually refer to relational processes between customer and supplier, during which (1) requirements are defined, (2) goods and service components are combined into an offering, which is then (3) deployed, and (4) supported in post-purchase activities. To make the relational processes between customer and supplier effective, both parties need to have certain resources and capabilities and engage in a close relationship. In particular, Ulaga and Reinartz (2011) demonstrated in their award-winning paper that suppliers employ different hybrid offerings, ranging from offerings that support suppliers' products to offerings that enhance customers' processes. They further outline the different capabilities and resources needed to engage in selling different types of hybrid offerings. Since then, much research has dealt especially with suppliers' transition towards services and solutions. For instance, Worm et al. (2017) point out that solutions can enhance suppliers' performance, but the effectiveness of solutions from a supplier's point of view depends on a number of different contingency factors. Furthermore, Böhm et al. (2020) and Salonen et al. (2021) give valuable insights into how to build up sales people's solution selling skills, while Macdonald, Kleinaltenkamp, and Wilson (2016) as well as Elgeti, Danatzis, and Kleinaltenkamp (2020) outline how customers perceive solutions, and which capabilities are important in the solution context from the customer's point of view. The COVID-19 pandemic, however, has shown that performance-based solutions can be harmful for both suppliers and customers. Solution providers were confronted with unforeseeable risks as investments had to be cut down and projects postponed, and customers suffered from supply-chain disruptions. The close cooperation necessary to deliver offerings tailored specifically to customer needs became a huge challenge for manufacturers in times of

lockdowns and travel restrictions as well as inflexible governance structures (Bond et al. 2020). These observations raise the question of whether and how suppliers and customers will adapt the processes associated with solution selling in the so-called new normal, and to what extent solution offerings will remain relevant in the future.

Hence, this session aims to provide an overview of the current state of solution selling research and outlines promising avenues for future research. As the topic relates to research streams on servitization, especially in the B2B context, as well as personal selling and sales management, the session is likely to bring together a broad spectrum of scholars from these different research streams, and potentially also attract practitioners involved in strategic questions associated with solutions. All participants are encouraged to share their thoughts on the topic and discuss the current state and future developments of solution selling. We hope that the session inspires further research on the topic, particularly by young scholars and PhD students, as it is highly relevant for both practitioners and academia.

Structure and Papers in the Session

We begin this session by providing an overview of the current state of research on solution selling. Manfred Krafft, Sundar Bharadwaj and Werner Reinartz will discuss the last 15 years of solution research and reminisce about both Tuli, Kohli, and Bharadwaj's (2007) seminal paper on customer solutions as well as Ulaga and Reinartz' (2011) award-winning paper on hybrid offerings and how they have both shaped the field until today. Furthermore, Anna Salonen will give insights into her recent work on solutions and value-based selling and share her perspective on the topic. As a further panelist, Shankar Ganesan, who has significantly contributed to research on inter-organizational relationships, will share his thoughts on the future of solution selling.

Afterwards, four papers will be presented which deal with current topics of solution selling. While the first presented paper contributes to the understanding of solution effectiveness from the customers' perspective, the second presentation demonstrates the potential of using

service technicians, which play a central role for the functionality of services and solutions, for selling activities. The third paper investigates how different sales incentives affect service innovation selling. Lastly, the fourth presentation outlines a theoretical toolbox for advancing value-based selling research, a stream of research closely related to solution selling. Afterwards, the panelists and presenters will discuss their research with the audience, and respond to questions. Details on the participants for each session element and short abstracts of the presentations can be found below. All presenters and participants mentioned in this special session proposal have been contacted by the organizers and have agreed to register for the conference and participate in the entire session, unless indicated otherwise. We plan to organize the session in a hybrid format, i.e. both in person and virtual attendance are possible.

Introduction: Panel Discussion

Description: Manfred Krafft will welcome all participants and give an overview of the session. Thereafter, he will discuss the last 15 years and the current state of solutions research and practice with Sundar Bharadwaj, Shankar Ganesan, Werner Reinartz, and Anna Salonen.

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- **Shankar Ganesan (Panel Participant)**, Professor, The John Cardinal O'Hara, C.S.C. Chair of the Marketing Department, Mendoza College of Business, University of Notre Dame, Indiana, USA, sganesan@nd.edu
- **Werner Reinartz (Panel Participant)**, Professor, Chair for Retailing and Customer Management, University of Cologne, Germany, werner.reinartz@uni-koeln.de

- **Anna Salonen (Panel Participant)**, University Lecturer at the University of Turku, Department of Marketing, and Adjunct Professor in Marketing at University of Jyväskylä, Finland, anna.k.salonen@utu.fi

Presentation 1:

When Are Solutions Valuable for Customers? The Role of Customer Adaptiveness

Abstract: While much research has investigated solution selling from the supplier's point of view, the customer's perspective on solutions has received less attention in the literature. Customer adaptiveness has been identified as a central driver for solution effectiveness. Building on previous research in the area of solution selling and Transaction Cost Economics, we develop a framework to investigate 1) the role of customer adaptiveness for solution effectiveness from the customer's point of view, and 2) customer-, supplier-, and relationship-related drivers of customer adaptiveness. We use data collected in 2021 by means of a large survey of different customer groups purchasing a diverse array of solutions from a large B2B supplier and supplement this data with objective secondary data from the supplier's databases. Our results provide valuable insights for industrial customers into how their adaptiveness facilitates the implementation of solutions and under which circumstances solutions are more or less effective. Furthermore, our results help suppliers to better understand the drivers of customer adaptiveness and assess customers regarding their solution suitability.

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- **Stefan Worm**, Associate Professor, Marketing Department, BI Oslo, Norway, stefan.worm@bi.no

Presentation 2:

Spotting and Exploiting Selling Opportunities During Service Visits: B2B Field Technicians as a "Second" Sales Force

Abstract: As markets mature and competition increases, firms need to extract the full revenue-generating potential of the entire frontline. As a response, some B2B firms have begun to use their technical field service force for tactical selling activities. However, field service employees face a number of challenges to successful selling. Most importantly, selling is only a complementary task embedded in the context of their main task, i.e., the service situation. The authors argue that the service situation has a major influence on both (i) the field service employee's decision to engage in selling (selling activity) and (ii) the customer's decision to purchase in response to the selling activity of the field service employee (selling success). They identify four generic types of service situations, which have asynchronous effects on selling activity and selling success. In particular, the authors show that selling activity is highest in a service situation where selling success is not highest. By analogy, selling success is highest in a situation in which selling activity is not highest. In other words, the results suggest that field service employees do not properly exploit the sales potential during their service visits. In addition, the authors examine the extent to which these inefficiencies vary as a function of employee-specific (specialist versus generalist) and customer-specific (small versus large customers) moderators.

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- Nico Wiegand, Assistant Professor, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, The Netherlands, n.wiegand@vu.nl*

*While all authors have agreed that their paper is presented in the session, currently only Werner Reinartz has confirmed to register for the conference.

Presentation 3:

The Ambivalent Role of Monetary Sales Incentives in Service Innovation Selling

Abstract: Complex service innovations, or in other words, solutions, constitute a cornerstone in the competitive strategy of numerous industrial companies. Complex service innovations combine products and customized services with software and new technologies into new, value-creating offerings which had previously not been available to customers. In a recent industry study of senior executives from manufacturing companies, a vast majority of 79% of the 577 surveyed managers indicated that such innovative solutions constitute an essential facet of their corporate strategy.

The industrial sales force assumes an important role in the selling of these complex service innovations. To clarify the effects of monetary sales incentives in this respect, we draw on self-focus theory to disentangle how complex service innovation selling is shaped by the interplay of salesperson service incentives (i.e., the extent to which variable compensation depends on service turnover) and salesperson share of variable compensation (i.e., the percentage of compensation that depends on performance). To test these interactive effects, we use a multiple-source data set including 294 salespeople, and matched objective firm data. The results reveal that when service incentives are high, the share of variable compensation exhibits

an inverse u-shaped effect on a salesperson's problem-solving behavior, which is an important predictor of innovative service selling success. In addition, the share of variable compensation increases work effort, which in turn drives innovative service selling success. These findings shed light on the intricate "human", employee-related side of service innovation management and provide actionable implications for managers how to increase their firms' innovative service selling success.

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Presentation 4:

Towards a "Theoretical Toolbox" for Advancing Value-based Selling Research

Abstract: Value-based selling (VBS) has become an increasingly important, if not an imperative selling practice in contemporary business-to-business (B2B) markets. More specifically,

as industrial firms increasingly move towards service and solution-based business models, the seller's focus needs to shift to understanding, quantifying, and communicating the value that it co-creates with customers.

Mirroring this managerial need, scholarly research on VBS has steadily accumulated resulting in a relatively sound understanding of what constitutes a VBS capability. At the same time, the domain is mostly lacking in theory-driven research designed to reveal important boundary conditions and to verify the key relationships between proposed variables.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to develop a "theoretical toolbox" that highlights potential opportunities for theory testing studies in the VBS domain. We do this by highlighting ten well-established management theories, discussing their implications for VBS, and suggesting potential research questions for theory testing research. In doing so, this study contributes to VBS research by highlighting the need to improve the fit between the chosen methodologies and state-of-research.

Given the exploratory and phenomenon driven nature of prior VBS research, arguably further theoretical advancement of the concept requires development and application of a robust "theoretical toolbox" that is developed through borrowing of foundational theories from more established streams of research. This "toolbox" can then be applied in ways that helps to explain when, how, and why VBS is (or is not) an effective selling approach in varied settings. For managers, this study offers important insights on how different theoretical lenses can inform and frame managerial decision-making in the context of VBS.

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WHEN DO PRODUCT CO-DEVELOPMENT COLLABORATIONS IN INDUSTRIAL CHANNELS ENHANCE INNOVATION OF HIGH-TECH FIRMS?

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Keywords: Co-development collaborations; Innovation performance; Governance mechanisms; Firm capabilities; Positioning strategy.

Description: In this empirical research, we build on the Governance Value Analysis (GVA) approach to investigate the role of firm-strategic factors (i.e., functional capabilities and positioning strategy) in enhancing a firm's ability to structure effective product co-development collaborations with suppliers to enhance its innovation performance.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question:

Successful innovation in industrial channels is often a collaborative process within the supply chain. In this, a firm's suppliers can be critical partners. Suppliers specialize in cognate technology domains, often have ongoing commercial relationships with other firms beyond the focal one and are often independently engaged in technology development activities. So, product Co-Development Collaborations (CDCs) with suppliers expand the firm's access to external knowledge and other specialized resources, and thus, are useful in shortening the learning cycle, accelerating product development, and reducing R&D costs. Yet, CDCs also expose partnering firms to risks of knowledge spillover and partner opportunism. Thus, the effectiveness of such partnerships is questioned by many

executives. However, should the firm's marketing strategy and strategic functional capabilities impact the effectiveness of the CDCs?

In this research, we propose that commitment to specific market positioning strategies (product differentiation and cost-leadership), binds the firm to resource deployments that not only draw upon the firm's existing functional capabilities (marketing, technological, and operations) but also sorts between the effectiveness of different CDC arrangements with its suppliers. Theoretically, we draw upon the Governance Value Analysis (GVA) framework, to hypothesize that when a firm selects the CDC type that aligns with its capabilities and strategy, it improves its innovation performance.

Method and Data:

This research targeted a sample of industrial firms that formed dyadic co-development partnerships with suppliers in high-tech industries (e.g., telecommunications, electronics, biotechnology, and software). We collected archival data on co-development alliances announced between 1985 and 2016 from the SDC database. From this data, we extracted measures for different CDC governance mechanisms (joint ventures (JVs), agreements, and contracts) and several control variables. In addition, our model required complementary firm-specific data on the strategic factors and innovation performance. To measure these variables, we borrowed the financial ratios developed and used for estimating positioning strategy (differentiation vs. cost-leadership) from the accounting literature. Firm capabilities (marketing, technological, and operations) were measured using the stochastic frontier estimates. Multiple indicators (i.e., patent counts, patent citations, and new product announcements) were used as measures for innovation performance. Obtaining such diverse data necessitated searching several databases such as Compustat, LexisNexis, Thomson one, and the USPTO database besides consulting firms' annual financial reports. We used generalized linear models to test our hypotheses,

utilizing the Gaussian Copulas (Park & Gupta, 2012) and Two-stage residual inclusion (Terza, Basu, & Rathouz, 2008) methods to control for potential endogeneity in our model.

Summary of Findings:

Consistent with our key hypotheses, we found that fit between a firm's positioning strategy, its functional capabilities, and the CDC type (the governance mechanism for the collaboration), result in superior innovation performance. For example, we found agreements to generate superior innovation performance for differentiation-oriented firms with strong marketing capabilities, yet they hurt innovation performance of similar firms adopting a cost-leadership strategy. Also, our results indicated that cost-efficient firms might generate superior innovation performance if they have either strong technological capabilities or operations capabilities and form JVs, while they might have negative innovation performance if they have strong marketing capabilities and establish JVs.

Key Contributions:

We believe our paper makes two key contributions. First, we document the keystone role of the firm's *positioning strategy* in successful innovation collaborations. We believe we are among the few to study this. In the process, we offer a direct test of the GVA framework, in a new context, and with new data, contributing to the interface of innovation governance and marketing strategy. Second, we also offer a more holistic depiction of CDCs and how they impact innovation performance, than heretofore available in the literature. We do this in three ways: (a) We offer more granular insights into CDCs by considering the entire spectrum of contractual arrangements – we believe we are the first to do so. (b) We include all three strategic capabilities – marketing, technological, and operations – to study how they may amplify or mute other effects, to jointly impact effectiveness of the firm's external partnerships. To the best of our knowledge, our paper is the first to do this in the CDC context. (c) We include positioning strategy along with governance and firm capabilities in a single model.

Big Data, Analytics, AI & Machine Learning

WILL ONLINE GROCERY SALES CONTINUE AT A RECORD PACE AFTER COVID-19? INVESTIGATING CONSUMER REVIEWS

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Keywords

Online Grocery Shopping, Covid-19, Consumer Behavior, Consumer Reviews, Structural Topic Modeling

Description

We studied consumer reviews posted online to understand if online grocery sales will continue to rise even after the pandemic ends and what retailers can do to sustain it.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

There was unprecedented growth in online grocery sales in 2020 when the Covid-19 pandemic halted the movement of people around the world. People who were fearful to go to physical stores turned towards online platforms. While this sudden change in consumer behavior and sales has given new hope to an industry that was always lagging overall e-commerce growth, it is still uncertain if this growth will continue once the pandemic ends. Additionally, in order to sustain the growth of online grocery sales in the future, it is important for retailers to understand the consumer's behaviors and perception towards it and the factors important to them during online grocery shopping.

To address these concerns, this study explores two research questions. First, we studied whether the pandemic significantly changed consumers' behaviors and perceptions towards online grocery shopping to expect a lasting increase in online grocery sales. Second, we identified the factors that are important in enhancing consumer satisfaction with their online grocery shopping experience. The findings might help retailers in understanding whether the pandemic has made a significant change in consumers' behaviors and perceptions towards online grocery shopping and what strategies they could formulate to foster future online grocery sales.

Method and Data

We employed online consumer reviews to investigate the research questions. We collected 33,818 reviews posted on the Amazon Fresh website from 5 January 2016 to 28 February 2021. The data was collected for 3 product categories: Fresh produce, Diary, and Meat products as they

represent perishable items that consumers were most hesitant to purchase online before the pandemic.

The data analysis was conducted in two parts. First, data exploration was done to investigate the impact of the pandemic on consumer behavior. This exploratory phase was focused on four main areas: exploring the impact of the pandemic on grocery sales, analyzing whether the pandemic impacted consumers' satisfaction with online grocery shopping, getting a preview of the subjects discussed overtime via n-grams analysis, and examining the impact of the perceived risk of Covid-19 on online grocery shopping. Second, Structural Topic Modeling of the reviews was done to discover the topics discussed in the reviews and distinguish topics associated with the pre-pandemic and post-pandemic periods. The topics associated with both time periods were employed to understand whether the pandemic has changed consumers' perceptions towards online grocery shopping and to extract the factors causing their satisfaction/dissatisfaction.

Summary of findings

Online grocery sales highly increased after the pandemic outbreak, with many consumers making their first-time orders and it fluctuated along with the perceived risk of getting Covid-19. Using STM, we found that consumers might have become more health-conscious after the pandemic outbreak. They also seemed to feel more positive about their online grocery purchase experience during the pandemic than before. However, the factors leading to their satisfaction/dissatisfaction with online grocery shopping largely remained the same. In both periods, consumers were generally keen on the freshness, taste, flavor, smell, texture, appearance, price, and quantity of the grocery products that they receive. It suggests that the

grocery picking process plays a vital role in enhancing consumer satisfaction in online grocery shopping.

Our analysis shows that behavioral changes, such as increased sales in online grocery shopping, reverted once the risk of Covid-19 contagion diminished. Additionally, we found no significant changes in consumers' perception of online grocery shopping after the pandemic outbreak. Therefore, it is likely that the observed sudden increase in online grocery sales was only prompted by this perceived risk of Covid-19 contagion in stores and sales may slow down once the pandemic subsides.

Key Contributions

Our research contributes to marketing research in general and online grocery retailers in particular. A large amount of data is available online and the advancement in data science techniques allows marketing researchers to gain new insights about consumers. However, previous research focused on understanding consumers' behavior and perception of online grocery shopping heavily relied on survey methods. Our methodology exemplifies how online retailers can employ text mining as a tool for understanding their consumers. Specifically, we employ an underutilized approach, named Structural Topic Modeling (STM), to extract topics from reviews while capitalizing on meaningful metadata, in order to extract relevant information from the text. Our study also shows the effectiveness of reviews in getting consumer feedback about products/services.

Consumer reviews posted on a grocery retailer's website are our major data source and they are analyzed to gain an understanding of whether consumers' behavior and perception towards online grocery shopping changed due to the pandemic outbreak. Our findings highlight important

factors leading to consumer satisfaction with online grocery shopping. We also provide recommendations for online grocery retailers to boost consumer satisfaction and potentially sales in the post-pandemic era.

An Approach to Develop Parity Difference Maps Using Consumer Experiences

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Keywords: *Brand Association Network; Concept Maps; Consumer-Based Brand Equity; Points of Difference; Points of Parity*

Description: This paper proposes a method of creating parity difference maps using user generated content.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Marketers put substantial efforts to track, understand and respond to changing market needs. The knowledge of market structure allows marketers to optimize their offerings by swiftly responding to consumer feedback and monitor competitor's activities (Lin et al.2000; Ball et al.1992). A brand could take several cues from its competitors to improve its own offering (Wilke and Zaichkowsky 1999; Vorhies 1997). Knowledge of competitor and overall category enables a brand to create associations which are likely to be perceived favorably by consumers. To achieve that, marketers need a concise representation of consumer knowledge schema indicating the relative positioning of the brand against its competitors. Specifically, a visual tool that effectively captures a brand's competitive profile as reflected in consumers' experiences and interactions with the brand is warranted. Although previous research has created concept maps based on consumer associations (John et al.2006; Henderson et al. 1998), these maps do not segregate associations into points of parity and difference. Previous maps are holistic rather than relative as they do not inform how consumers weigh the brand against competitors. Furthermore, these maps do not indicate the highs and lows of branding efforts and which changes, if any, should be introduced in future marketing efforts.

To address this gap, we developed a set of maps indicating points of parity and difference between two closely competing brands in a consumer-defined product category (Keller et al. 2002) and derive specific managerial insights.

Method and Data

In this paper, we demonstrate a method of developing parity-difference maps from consumer data. In two studies, we select key attributes in consumer reviews from fast-food restaurants and sports utility vehicle (SUV) categories and segregate them into unique and similar associations to develop a set of comparative maps we name as parity-difference maps (PDM). While previously developed concept maps on brand association networks are holistic, the maps in our research are comparative and indicate the relative positioning of the brand against its competitors. We also extend this stream of research by using consumer-generated content to develop our maps and point out specific managerial implications for the focal brand.

Summary of Findings

In this paper, we showed how a corpus of unstructured user-generated information can be organized and represented through a set of comparative maps that make a distinction between unique and shared associations. The comparison between two brands is represented by a set of three maps- a parity map, representing common associations between the two brands, a difference map representing unique associations present in the focal brand, and an inverse difference map, representing unique associations present in referent brand but absent in focal brand. To demonstrate our approach we collected consumer, owners, and expert reviews from fast-food restaurants and SUV vehicle categories in two studies.

Unlike the past research that developed concept maps using one brand (John et al., 2006), we performed an active comparison process to provide more granular insights taking competition into account. Furthermore, our maps are based on publicly available reviews, which let us tap into consumer experiences with brands. PD maps provide compact and visually rich information that may facilitate meaningful changes to the brand. Specifically, in this research, PD maps capture the interaction between a brand and competitor that take place

during the consumer consumption process. Merely looking at the rating or review valence might not provide a complete reflection on consumer experience (Villarroel-Ordenes et al., 2017). On the other hand, network maps pinpoint the areas where the brand's service can be improved at a local level and the necessary changes that can be made such as training frontline staff or cutting the waiting time for drive-thru orders, etc. to improve the overall consumer experience. As comparative maps reveal both points of parity and difference, a brand may strategize to increase or decrease similarity from its competitors to gain a competitive advantage in the market.

Key Contributions

This research makes several theoretical and methodological contributions. First, we extended consumer-based brand equity literature by systematically segregating unique and similar associations. While previous concept maps have measured the strength and favorability of associations in the network (French and Smith 2013; John et al. 2006), not much focus has been given to the similarity or uniqueness of the association.

Second, we contribute to consumer category literature by capturing basic associations consumers relate to a category and expect it to be present in each member of the category. Category based information helps consumer quickly access their knowledge schema and organize the incoming information accordingly. In essence, whether a newly discovered brand would be associated to a specific category will depend on the features that consumers believe are essential for this category. In our research, we segregated these associations by developing parity maps between prototype brand and focal brand.

Third, we adopt the theoretical lens of similarity to explain why consumers and managers focus on unique and similar features. Equipped with the knowledge of similar and unique associations, managers can change their branding strategy accordingly to gain a competitive advantage. On the consumer front, similarity helps consumers classify brands into sub-categories. This helps consumers organize brands around the associations they value, reduce their cognitive load, and make better choices in crowded markets.

Finally, we propose a novel method of developing a parity-difference map. We extend previous research on brand association mapping to generate comparative maps from user-generated data. In doing so, we make two new contributions to this stream of research. First, we address the call of having a relative framework to represent the competitive profile of a brand on a map. Second, instead of directly eliciting associations from consumers, we develop maps using topic modeling and network analysis techniques to tap actual and relevant consumer feedback.

DO YOU TRUST ME? - THE INFLUENCE OF CONVERSATIONAL AGENTS' VOICE AND CONFIDENTIAL DATA ON THE USAGE INTENTION

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Keywords: AI, Conversational Agent, Human-Computer Interaction, Anthropomorphism, Trust

Description: This study investigates the risk-perception during the usage of a conversational agent by examining the influence of humanlike elements represented through the voice in different more or less confidential situations where trust and risk play a major role.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

(1) What is the impact of different confidential data on use intentions of digital voice assistants?

(2) Can human characteristics of a voice assistant be a factor in increasing trust and decreasing perceived risk of sensitive information?

Method And Data

To test the serial effects, a between 2 (voice: artificial vs humanlike) x 3 (setting: low-risk vs. average-risk vs. high-risk) subject quasi-experimental online study was conducted in which an audio file was used as the represented voice of the conversational assistant in order to present the information the assistant need from the consumer. Additionally, the setting in which the consumer should report special information to the conversational assistant was manipulated. The main study includes 250 participants (63.2% female, Mage=25.22, SD=7.32, n > 30 in each condition) acquired via social networks and online-platforms and randomly assigned to a scenario. Concerning the influence of the experimental factors on the behavioral intention, we conducted an ANOVA with SPSS for testing the effects. In order to test the mediating influences between the voice and the risk-perception of the setting and the behavioral intention, PROCESS was used.

Summary of Findings

Generally, results demonstrate the importance of anthropomorphism and especially trust when operating with digital voice assistants in high confidential situations. Based on the quasi-experimental study, we could indicate the influence of anthropomorphic elements and different confidential situations on the intention whereas trust and risk mediate depending on the matter the behavioral intention**.** The findings show that especially trust has a significant impact on the intention to use conversational agents in more or less confidential matters. However, the more confidential the data is the less the usage intention. But a humanlike voice can partly overcome the sceptics resulting in a higher behavioral intention even in more confidential matters. Human characteristics can thereby foster trust and harm the perceived risk when it comes to sensitive information. We can confirm that consumers perceive voice

assistants humanlike as soon as they show social signals in the case represented through the voice.

Statement of Key Contribution

The study emphasizes the importance of human likeness regarding the voice as well as the importance of trust and risk. So, especially in confidential situations like it is the case with finances a humanlike voice should be implemented by marketers because obviously it can create a kind of familiarity which can lead to a higher usage intention. To summarize, it is very important for companies to differ in very confidential situations like it is with financial aspects if they want to increase trust or decrease risk. In the latter case, a human resemblance can be assessed positively whereas with trust too humanlike elements are evaluated negatively. Related to less confidential aspects, human likeness has no negative impact on trust. In contrast, it can increase trust and provide a higher use intention. To the best of our current knowledge, no study has addressed the risk and trust perception of privacy and security of personal data when using a voice assistant and being influenced by anthropomorphic characteristics. So, this research could foster the knowledge about trust, risk and anthropomorphism in daily different confidential situations when using a conversational agent for academics and non-academics.

“References are available upon request.”

DOES IT HELP TO BE CREATIVE ON SOCIAL MEDIA? A MACHINE LEARNING APPROACH TO EXAMINE ORIGINALITY OF USER-GENERATED CONTENT FROM TIKTOK

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Keywords: originality, cognitive dissonance, social media, machine learning

Description: This study finds a negative impact of originality on the success of social media content.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

It is often suggested that originality boosts success on social media as people seem to prefer and share novel, entertaining and surprising information more (Berger, 2014; Berger & Milkman, 2012). But is that always true? Psychological theories suggest that less originality may increase liking of stimuli in our environment.

Indeed, on social media platforms, content that is of surprisingly low originality often becomes viral: on TikTok, many trending videos follow the same dancing and lip-sync screenplay. Accordingly, viewers seeing the same screenplay several times by different users

develop a strong set of expectations regarding the content – expectations that are violated, if more original videos deviate from this screenplay.

Perceiving deviations from existing patterns and the violation of expectations is a form of receiving cognitively dissonant and disfluent information (Elliot & Devine, 1994). Seeing such dissonant information brings individuals into a state of uncertainty and insecurity, and evokes a deeply aversive impression of psychological discomfort (Jiang et al., 2009). We argue that more original content increases uncertainty and disfluency, because viewers do not know what will happen. Overall, we hypothesize that high originality triggers cognitive dissonance and disfluency and thus the liking of social media content.

Method and Data

Three studies provide support for this expectation. Study 1 provides empirical evidence for a negative effect of content originality on liking. We collected a dataset of more than 290,000 videos from TikTok and trained a contrastive learning model that allows to extract semantic features (Qian et al., 2020). Based on these features, we estimated the originality of the videos using the local outlier factor (LOF) algorithm (Breunig et al., 2000), which computes the local density deviation of each video to its neighbors. We used this originality metric in our statistical analyses to explain video liking. We restricted our statistical analyses to videos that follow an established screenplay (indicated by the use of the same song) and focused on within-song comparison of videos.

In studies 2 and 3 we experimentally manipulated content originality and measured content liking. We recruited participants from Prolific and MTurk and randomly assigned them to one of two conditions in a between-subjects design (high vs. low originality). All participants watched three stimulus and one target video. The stimulus videos were either of

low or high originality (i.e. protagonist performed the same or a different screenplay). We asked participants to indicate their likelihood to like the target video.

Summary of Findings

In study 1 we use the LOF as an independent variable to predict the likes a dancing video receives in multiple regression models. In our first model, we find a significant negative effect of originality on the number of likes. The effect persists when we control for user and music fixed effects in models 2 and 3. In the last model, we further included the number of days a video is online, and the position in the sequence of users adopting this video (e.g., how many users have already created a similar screenplay before) and still found a significant negative effect of content originality.

Studies 2 and 3 demonstrate the causality of the negative originality effect. One-way ANOVA shows that participants like the target video less if it is more original. The effect persists after controlling for demographics and social media use. Mediation analysis shows that psychological discomfort fully mediates this effect, supporting our mediation hypothesis.

Statement of Key Contributions

Our findings support our conceptual reasoning that higher originality of content on social media does not generally pay out. These findings are in contrast to prior research promoting the high value of originality of user-generated content (Berger & Milkman, 2012; Hofstetter et al., 2020) and suggest a potential negative mechanism triggered by increased cognitive dissonance when viewing highly original content. Our research contributes to the literature on consumer behavior on social media and advises managers to not overestimate the value of highly original content (e.g., for brand-related user-generated content). A methodological contribution of our research comes from the development of a self-supervised learning

approach that allows systematic investigations of video-based social media content by quantifying its originality.

References are available upon request.

GIVING UP CONTROL: THE ROLE OF AUTOMATION LEVEL, DATA PROCESSING, AND NETWORK IN AUTONOMOUS VEHICLE ACCEPTANCE

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Keywords: dual-process, technology anxiety, perceived technology safety, technology trust, autonomous vehicles

Description: As autonomous vehicles (AVs) are disrupting the car industry, our paper displays two studies with mixed-method research methodologies to gather insights on users' acceptance and attitudes towards AVs.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

The autonomous car global market will grow from 6 billion US dollars in 2018 to 60 billion by 2030. In the United Kingdom, it is expected that most cars will be set out with an automation level defined by SAE international from 1 to 3 before the implementation of level-4 and 5 cars in 2025. Many actors, from car manufacturers such as BMW, Tesla, Audi to tech companies Uber, Intel, Google have already turned Autonomous Car technology into a reality. Nonetheless, there are remaining challenges to be solved before we come to such a fully

automated car environment. Even though many studies have shown the high potential of AVs regarding a car accident, traffic congestion, environmental benefits or disabled people's mobility, apprehensions concerning safety, security, cost, liability, and privacy remain important barriers to the adoption of AVs by the general public.

Method and Data

Study 1: The total number of participants is N=138, 59% of them are women and 41% are men. They are aged between 21 and 78 years old with a mean of 31,9. The four scenarios represent a case where participants have to imagine they drive either a level 2 or 5 car where data processing for automated decisions is made either in a computer directly present inside the car or in a cloud.

Study 2: The sample of Study 2 is slightly less important than the sample in Study 1 with a total number of participants of N=126. There is a majority of men with 52% against 48% for women. Participants are aged between 18 and 79 years old with a mean of 31,7 and most of them are students representing 50%. The four scenarios represent a case where participants have to imagine they drive either a level 2 or 5 car as in Study 1 but this time where data processing for automated decisions is made either through the 5G or Wifi network.

Summary of Findings

Study 1: Automation level has a direct positive impact on the Anxiety topic (β=0.17; p=0.040) suggesting that as the automation level increases the feeling of anxiety also increases. Furthermore, the Anxiety, Technology control and Fear topics all have a direct negative impact on Sentiment (β=-0.16; p=0.047), (β=-0.22; p=0.006), (β=-0.23; p=0.004), suggesting those topics will influence participants in having an unfavorable perception of AVs.

Study 2: Network has an indirect effect on behavioural intentions (β= -0.0762, p<0.05, 95% CI [-0.1516; -0.0009]). First Network has a negative influence on Perceived safety that, as we have previously seen, has a direct impact on Technology trust that itself influences behavioural intentions.

Statement of Key Contributions

Our study aims to investigate different factors that can influence consumers' perception of AVs and their intention to purchase or to use this new form of transport technology. We first contribute to the literature by creating a new model based on the first factor we consider which is the automation level of AVs linked to data processing, to have a more general idea of consumers' feelings and purchase intentions regarding AV technology. Secondly, we analyze another factor which is the automation level of AVs linked to the data network. We try to understand the impact it has on different technology acceptance constructs linked to the cognitive understanding of consumers such as Effort expectancy and Performance expectancy and also on constructs linked to the affective feelings of consumers such as Technology anxiety, Technology trust, and Perceived safety, to analyze its final impact on the intention to use construct.

HOW AND WHEN DOES BIG DATA ANALYTICS CAPABILITY CONTRIBUTE TO MARKET PERFORMANCE?

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Keywords: Big data analytics capability, Market performance, Disruptive business model, Knowledge-based view, Resource-based view.

Description: This study looks at the relationship between big data analytics capability and market performance and how this relationship can be facilitated by adopting disruptive business models in competitive environments.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

RESEARCH QUESTION

Despite prior research demonstrating a potential direct relationship between BDAC and performance, the mechanisms, and conditions under which this relationship occur is not fully understood. Importantly, theoretical articulation is limited on the mechanisms that explain how

BDAC, as a data-driven knowledge-based resource, contributes to firm performance (Yasmin et al., 2020; Ferraris et al., 2019). Additionally, past research has ignored the conditions under which BDAC drives performance; thus, denying scholars and managers knowledge about when BDAC becomes an enabler of firm performance (Vitari & Raguseo, 2020).

This study addresses these two deficiencies by drawing insights from the Knowledge-based view (KBV) and contingency theory to explain how disruptive business model – "activity systems that include new partners and activities configured in a way that is unprecedented in comparison to existing incumbents" (Snihur, Thomas, and Burgelman 2018, p. 1279) – acts as a facilitating mechanism on the relationship between BDAC and performance, and the extent to which this relationship is dependent upon different magnitudes of competitive intensity – "the behavior, resources, and ability of competitors to differentiate" (Jaworski & Kohli, 1993, p. 60).

By doing so, this study addresses three interrelated research questions: (1) how does BDAC contribute to improvement in market performance; (2) how does disruptive business model (DBM) act as a facilitating mechanism on the BDAC–market performance relationship; and (3) to what extent does competitive intensity condition the relationship between BDAC, disruptive business model, and firm performance?

METHOD AND DATA

The first stage of the data collection process involved conducting in-depth interviews with 15 small, medium, and large organizations in the United Kingdom (UK). We thereafter proceeded to the quantitative approach based on findings from the exploratory study in order to ensure that the study's conceptual framework was tested empirically. Following relevant precedent (e.g., Wamba et al., 2017), the study began with assessment of extant literature on the dimensionality of BDAC and its performance outcomes using KBV and contingency theory as theoretical lenses. In addition, the data

collection instrument was first pretested by twenty-five managers in order to ensure that the questionnaire was well understood. The conceptual model of this study was empirically tested on primary data from 360 firms in the United Kingdom.

The measurement properties of the multi-item constructs in the conceptual model were evaluated using CFA. The items were restricted to load on their preassigned factor, while the latent factors were set to correlate freely (Gerbing & Anderson, 1988). Overall, two CFA models were estimated for the first- and second-order factors respectively in order to maintain acceptable observation-to-parameter ratios.

To ensure robust results, we used dual methods consisting of both covariance-based structural equation modelling (CB-SEM) and a series of ordinary least squares (OLS) regressions to test the hypotheses. Following Ping (1995), a multiplicative CB-SEM approach using the ERLS method was used to test the moderating effect hypotheses.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This study argues in hypothesis 1 that BDAC is positively related to market performance. This hypothesis is supported as both the CB-SEM and OLS results show that BDAC is positively associated with market performance ($p < 0.05$). Hypothesis 2, as an alternative argument to H1, argues that how BDAC contributes to improvement in market performance is channeled through disruptive business model. To account for mediating path, a mediation test was conducted using the SPSS macro syntax PROCESS as this estimation method allows for use of bootstrapping procedures to estimate of indirect effect paths (Hayes, 2009, 2017). Mediation is supported if the confidence interval does not include zero and is rejected if the confidence interval includes zero values (Zhao, Lynch Jr, & Chen, 2010). The results support the hypothesis as the conditional indirect effect does not contain zero values (Preacher & Hayes, 2004; Yoshida, Sendjaya, Hirst, Cooper, 2014). Therefore, the conditional

indirect effect of BDAC on market performance through disruptive business model is positive and significant at –1SD below the mean (LLCI = .0213; ULCI = .1236), Mean (LLCI = .0503; ULCI = .1592), and +1SD above the mean (LLCI = .0699; ULCI = .2076).

An additional alternative argument to H1 and H2 is captured in H3 that argues that the positive association between BDAC and market performance through disruptive business model is strengthened when levels of competitive intensity increase in magnitude. Results show that H3 receives support from the data in the SEM results ($\beta = .16$; $p<0.001$), OLS results ($\beta = .07$; $p<0.05$), and SPSS process results as the index of moderated mediation does not contain zero values ($\beta = .028$; LLCI = .0072; ULCI =.0484). Thus, the indirect association between BDAC and market performance through disruptive business model is strengthened as competitive intensity takes on larger values above the mean.

STATEMENT OF KEY CONTRIBUTIONS

By extending the Resource Based view, this study draws insights from the Knowledge based view logic and empirical data to demonstrate that beyond the widely accepted direct association between BDAC and market performance, BDAC is also indirectly related to market performance by contributing to firms' ability to develop disruptive business models (DBMs). As Xu, Frankwick, and Ramirez (2016) and Chaudhary, Pandey, and Pandey (2016) suggest, a greater capability in big data analytics might not contribute to competitive advantage, rather from a KBV perspective, sustained competitive advantage may emerge when BDAC is used to develop data-driven customized knowledge and insights that allows firms to proactively use DBMs to provide new combinations of solutions that market rivals might find unrealistic to duplicate.

An additional deficiency in the BDAC literature is a lack of articulation of the conditions under which investment in BDAC pays off. The existing literature suggests that greater investment in big data analytics capability is a good thing to do because big data provides firms with economic benefits

(Mills, 2019). However, some studies have raised questions about whether big data is always a useful determinant of business success (Côrte-Real, Oliveira, and Ruivo 2017; Ross, Beath, and Quaadgras 2013). This study draws on the contingency theory to argue that the economic benefits of investing in BDACs and DBMs might not be realized in an environment characterized by low and predictable competitive activities.

An implication for big data managers is that it is important to mobilize resources within and beyond the organization to build big data related capabilities to pioneer DBMs to generate sustained performance. As such organizations can facilitate the development of DBMs by investing in personnel expertise in big data analytics (Ciampi et al., 2020) and developing an organizational culture that prioritizes data-driven and evidence-based decision-making (Mikalef et al., 2019a).

SPECIAL SESSION:

IMPROVING THE VALUE OF META-ANALYSES IN MARKETING

Session Chairs:

Gratiana Pol, Hyperthesis LLC

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Participants:

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Keywords:

Meta-analysis, visualization, data extraction, literature search, Machine Learning (ML)

Overview:

Meta-analyses are an increasingly important research synthesis tool in marketing. They allow researchers to draw robust conclusions about the size of cause-effect relationships, identify moderating factors that can explain why different studies investigating the same relationship often produce inconsistent findings, and more effectively convey the implications of scientific research to practitioners (Grewal, Puccinelli, and Monroe 2018).

In recent years, the number of meta-analyses published in marketing has increased exponentially–a phenomenon consistent with the proliferation of meta-analyses in the behavioral and life sciences in general (see Ioannidis 2017). From 192 marketing-focused meta-analyses published between 1976 and 2012 (Eisend 2015), the current number has increased to over 400 papers. While extremely valuable from a knowledge development perspective, the current growth trajectory of the meta-analysis literature comes with its own set of challenges. On the *research production* front, integrating larger and larger bodies of literature into meta-analyses represents a painstaking, error prone, and time-consuming endeavor. On the *research utilization* front, it is becoming nearly impossible to keep track of all the meta-analyses published so far, effectively parse all their findings, and derive meaningful conclusions from their combined insights. It is hence not surprising that results from this growing body of meta-analyses rarely make their way into marketing practice, which means that our field's most heavily researched and robust findings are likely failing to achieve their deserved real-world impact.

The objective of this session is to provide a blueprint for how to maximize the value of meta-analytical research, both for academics and for practitioners. The session will introduce a series of cutting-edge online tools currently under development, and present research insights

collected in conjunction with these tools. The tools are being developed via an international, academic-business partnership that brings together academic researchers from Germany (Viadrina University) and France (INSEAD) and U.S.-based entrepreneurs (representing Hyperthesis, LLC). The tools are being developed with partial funding from the National Science Foundation, the Emerging Marketing Institute at INSEAD, and an AMA/EBSCO *Answers in Action* grant.

For academics, the focus of this session will be on increasing the efficiency of conducting meta-analytical research, via (1) a literature synthesis and visualization tool (***Hyperthesis Meta Mapper)*** that streamlines the identification of research gaps in the meta-analysis literature, and a (2) semi-automatic data coding tool (***Hyperthesis Data Extractor)*** that incorporates Machine Learning. For practitioners, the focus will be on increasing the effectiveness of retrieving and interpreting key marketing findings, with the goal of helping them to translate existing findings into actionable business insights. Across three presentations, the audience will learn the principles underlying the research tools and techniques introduced in this session, participate in live demos of the tools, and receive insights into some key literature findings derived from the application of these tools.

The session builds on the sizable efforts undertaken in recent years by the academic marketing community to broaden both the appeal and the quality of meta-analysis research. Most recent projects and textbooks have been largely focused on education around statistical methods and software for running meta-analyses (e.g., Borenstein et al. 2021, Coopar 2019). The present session takes a complementary approach, by focusing on methods and tools that can enhance other, less emphasized aspects of the meta-analysis creation and utilization processes: *coding the raw data* and *integrating meta-analysis findings*. In doing so, the session is designed to encourage the conduct of meta-analysis research (by making the process more streamlined and accessible to

researchers), while highlighting the value of meta-analysis findings to marketing practitioners and making it easy for them to engage with the plethora of existing meta-analysis findings.

Expected Contribution:

Overall, the three papers included in this session will provide rich insights into how to make meta-analysis research in marketing easier to create, retrieve, synthesize, and interpret, hence maximizing its value both to the academic and the practitioner community.

Presentation 1

Improving the process by which marketing academics conduct meta-analyses

Dominika Niewiadomska, European University Viadrina Frankfurt*

Joseph Riley, European University Viadrina Frankfurt*

Gratiana Pol, Hyperthesis LLC

The first presentation introduces ***Hyperthesis Data Extractor***, a semi-automatic data coding tool that allows users to tag the data for their meta-analysis directly inside the text of each relevant paper, and then export the coded data to Excel. The tool aims to provide a significantly more efficient alternative to the prevailing method for extracting data for a marketing meta-analysis, which involves manually copying from PDF or Word documents the required pieces of data and then pasting them into a spreadsheet—a process that is both slow and error-prone.

The *Hyperthesis Data Extractor* tool includes various features such as:

- Semi-automatic and Machine-Learning based identification and tagging of key data

fields, including variables and effect sizes. The Machine Learning component involves a patented method for identifying and automatically categorizing variables in a study according to their causal role (independent, dependent, and mediator variable), giving users the option to accept or reject each automatically inserted label; automatic labeling of effect size values; and automatic propagation throughout a study of the categorization labels provided by the user;

- Easy and intuitive orientation and navigation within a paper, via running, interactive (i.e., hyperlinked) lists of variables and effect sizes;
- The option to define a coding schema for a meta-analysis and then apply it to each paper included in a project, both in single-author and group collaboration projects.

Presentation 2

Improving the utility of meta-analyses for academics and practitioners

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Martin Eisend, European University Viadrina Frankfurt

Jude Calvillo, Hyperthesis LLC

Abhishek Borah, INSEAD

Deborah MacInnis, University of Southern California

Luciano Silvi, Hyperthesis LLC

Roy Nijhof, Hyperthesis LLC

The second presentation introduces ***Hyperthesis Meta Mapper***, which is a literature synthesis and visualization tool. *Hyperthesis Meta Mapper* aims to provide a significantly more efficient alternative to the prevailing method for distilling key marketing insights from published

meta-analyses, which typically involves identifying meta-analyses via academic search engines such as Google Scholar. Such search engines have the drawback of being unable to consistently differentiate papers that contain a meta-analysis from those that merely reference one, while additionally placing on the reader the onus to compare and integrate different meta-analysis findings once retrieved.

By contrast, *Hyperthesis Meta Mapper* uses a curated repository of all the findings from the marketing-focused meta-analyses published up to date, and represents search results in a visually summarized format that is highly intuitive to understand. Using a patented visualization technology, the system generates aggregate, interactive causal maps of the relevant research. The maps combine a schematic overview of all the cause-effect relationships examined around a given construct with a detailed representation of each relationship (including the relationship's summary effect size, moderating and mediating factors, and corresponding research papers). Usage of this tool aims to improve the speed with which users can identify relevant meta-analyses, the comprehension of the aggregate picture that emerges from related meta-analyses findings, and the identification of potential gaps in meta-analysis research.

Presentation 3

Insights gained from the existing body of meta-analyses in marketing

Martin Eisend, European University Viadrina Frankfurt*

Joseph Riley, European University Viadrina Frankfurt

Dominika Niewiadomska, European University Viadrina Frankfurt

The third presentation describes the insights culled from collecting, coding, and visualizing the findings of the over 400 marketing-focused meta-analyses published up to date. The data coding utilizes the *Hyperthesis Data Extractor* tool, while the visualization uses the *Hyperthesis Meta Mapper* tool. The project updates and expands the findings from Eisend (2015), by applying a meta-meta-analytic approach that synthesizes the findings from traditional or first-order meta-analysis. The method is a straightforward generalization of first-order meta-analytic methods that integrates mean effect sizes across multiple meta-analyses (see Schmidt & Oh, 2013). Some of the questions the research aims to answer include:

- *Which effects are among the most commonly researched in marketing?*
- *Which marketing variables show the strongest effects? How robust and consistent are those effects?*
- *Which moderators can help us best understand inconsistencies among research findings?*
- *Which actionable marketing or consumer variables should marketers pay particular attention to?*
- *Which research areas could stand to benefit from meta-analytical research?*

By answering these questions, the present research aims to highlight potentially valuable meta-analysis research gaps for marketing academics to explore, while informing practitioners on the current state of the marketing discipline and showcasing key findings that result from integrating various meta-analytical results.

Note: references are available upon request.

MINING CEOS' BIG FIVE PERSONALITY TRAITS FROM TWITTER

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Keywords: CEO Personality, Big Five, Social Media, Machine Learning, Natural Language Processing

Description: Using publicly available secondary data, we introduce to upper echelons research in Marketing a novel, linguistic measure of CEOs' Big Five personality traits, specifically developed and validated using CEOs' Twitter texts (tweets).

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Corporate upper echelons are an emerging research area in the field of marketing strategy (Whitler, Lee, Krause, Morgan, 2020). A number of recent studies have looked into the effects of CEOs' personality traits on firm innovation (You, Srinivasan, Pauwels, Joshi, 2020), market performance (Winkler, Rieger, Engelen, 2020), and strategic change (Harrison, Thurgood, Boivie, Pfarrer, 2019). However, personality measurement remains a difficult task, due to CEOs' unavailability to

answer interview questions or filling out questionnaires (Chatterjee and Hambrick, 2007, 2011). Moreover, evidence shows that personality measurement relying on third-party accounts often yields different scores, depending on the inventory used (Woods and Anderson, 2016), and subjectively biased estimates (Barrick, Patton, Haughland, 2000). The aim of this study is to extend this research area by illustrating the methodological steps undertaken to develop and validate an unobtrusive measure of CEOs' Big Five personality traits using a combination of text-mining and machine learning methodologies that 1) is trained on publicly available text data from Twitter (tweets), 2) rely on self-reported Big Five traits scores, made available through a corpus of 10,000 Facebook posts annotated with the authors' Big Five scores (mypersonality.org, Stillwell and Kosinski, 2018).

Method And Data

We processed the Facebook posts using LIWC word categories (Pennebaker et al., 2015) and trained five different linear regression models, one for each Big trait, on 80% of them, using the computational power of six different algorithms, chosen from those mentioned in prior studies (Mairesse et al., 2007; Park et al., 2015; Harrison et al., 2019). We used cross-validation as a resampling technique to iteratively train each of the six algorithms, for each of the five models, on ten different portions of the training set (also known as "folds"). This procedure ensured that the training process applied uniformly to the whole corpus. After resampling, we chose the Random Forest algorithm as it maximized the goodness-of-fit (highest R-square) and minimized the estimation error (Mean Absolute Error - MAE) across all the folds. Then, we validated this choice on a different portion of the corpus (the remaining 20% of posts), to ensure that the goodness-of-fit and accuracy remained unchanged. We finally applied our linguistic tool to a customized dataset

consisting of 5,000 tweets, posted by 50 U.S-based CEOs. At our request, three psychology students, with previous experience in measuring personality traits, read all 5,000 tweets and rated each CEO's personality using the 50-item International Personality Item Pool (IPIP) (Goldberg, 2006).

Summary of Findings

By applying our linguistic tool to the 20% of posts held out, a positive correlation was obtained between actual and predicted scores of Openness (0.15, $p<0.01$), Conscientiousness (0.16, $p < 0.001$), Extraversion (0.19, $p < 0.001$), Agreeableness (0.12, $p<0.001$), and Neuroticism (0.11, $p < 0.01$). Comparison with the correlations reported in the study of Harrison et al. (2019) who used, among others, LIWC word categories, yielded similar average correlations (0.15). Comparison with the MAE values reported by Wang et al. (2020), who applied Personality Recognizer (Mairesse et al., 2007) to the same dataset of Facebook posts, reveals error values, on average, lower (0.58 against 1,14).

Positive and significant correlations were obtained between our tool's and the psychology students' average scores of Conscientiousness (0.28, $p<0.05$), Agreeableness (0.40, $p<0.01$) and Neuroticism (0.39, $p<0.01$), as resulting from the corpus of CEOs' tweets. As for the traits of Openness and Extraversion, interrater agreement was very low, ICC(k)=0.479 and ICC(k)=0.375) respectively, and we could not find any significant correlations with our measures. This is not infrequent in studies of personality traits that use third-party ratings (Funder, 1995).

Statement of Key Contributions

We have strong reasons to believe that Twitter is the source that researchers and practitioners should look at to unobtrusively measure CEOs' personality traits. First because, by leveraging the power of machine learning algorithms, the linguistic tool we trained infers CEOs' personality traits from publicly available data on Twitter, the collection and processing of which does not require any special technical skills, therefore introducing significant savings in time and resources.

Second, using our linguistic tool researchers, practitioners, and stakeholders can unobtrusively measure the dispositional antecedents of top managers' strategic choices, anticipating the likelihood of particularly bold moves, or suboptimal reactions to environmental and organizational stimuli.

Finally, practitioners and board of directors can use this tool to scan CEOs' candidates' profiles in advance and shortlist the ones more fitting with a given corporate culture, or a particular business phase. Similarly, by knowing prospective leaders' personality profiles, Top Management Teams can be formed by favoring CEOs' cohabitation with other personality profiles, among CMOs and CFOs for example, that might present competing, or simply alternative strategic orientations.

References are available upon request.

2022 WINTER AMA Conference in Las Vegas, NV

MIRROR, MIRROR… on the Shelf: The Impact of Perceived Age-Similarity and Gender-Congruence between the Customer and the Voice of a Smart Voice Assistant

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Keywords: Voice Assistant, Communication Accommodation Theory, Social Presence Theory, Data-Disclosure, Interaction-Behavior

Description: This paper focuses on the possible design of voice assistance with a view to the willingness to disclose data and the willingness of customers to interact with this form of service.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question. In traditional, physical retailing, the frontline employee profits from the knowledge on how customers' behave or react in specific situation within a service encounter Due to the fact that service is no longer limited to the interaction with a human counterpart in physical retailing, digital services via smart voice assistances (SVA) are steadily increasing. Nonetheless, besides multi-sensory experience, a digital service is still lacking on interpersonal abilities.

Our paper uses a design theory framework in order to deepen the understanding on how and why to design voices (respectively the underlying AI) of Smart Voice Assistance as customer orientated as possible. Hereby, we address the interplay between customer and designer. In this way, we are able to combine theoretical with practical components. In summary, this essay addresses the research questions, (1) how should a voice of an SVA be designed regarding the level of anthropomorphism, and users' perceived convergence with the voice in terms of age and gender, and (2) what impact has such an accommodation

towards the customer with respect to user's willingness to interact with the voice and to disclose personal information.

Method and Data. By drawing on communication accommodation theory and social presence theory, we conducted an in-between 2 (synthetic vs. human voice) x 2 (younger vs. older voice) x 2 (female vs. male voice) subject quasi-experimental online study (N=439).

Summary of Findings. Design Theory functions as an overall framework in order to differentiate between the questions on how to design such an IT-artifact and why particular design options are beneficial in order to generate the maximal level of service-orientated success. We provide research results, demonstrating an increase of users' willingness to interact and to disclose personal information, by accommodating the customer with regard to age and gender. Hereby, common findings in physical service environment do not seem to be automatically transferable to the digital service context. In general, this research follows Niehaves and Ortbach's (2016) call for further research on the design of (user-oriented) IT-artifacts (in this case, SVAs) in order to improve their handling by customers and to gain further insights for further development about them. In sum, our results are providing meaningful insights for retail managers. Findings show that it is important to create an environment in which customers feel socially-pleasant and welcome, resulting in a higher willingness to interact with the SVA as well as willingness to disclose personal information towards the SVA, particularly in terms of high age-similarity condition.

Statement of Key Contributions. We can basically support the thesis that the customer's perception of the counterpart and his reaction does not only depend on the perceived age or gender of the service provider (employee). In fact, our research does not take into account any additional information about the services' environment or the counterpart's dress, race, or gestures and facial expressions. Based on our work, implications for speech-enabled services in the healthcare, banking, and insurance industries, as well as in the context of psychological or general medical services, can be addressed. In the case of a digital service (which could also take the form of a traditional telephone interaction), a focus on the interaction partner and a possible AI-based optimization of the voice is relevant. Specifically, we were able to show that within such a digital service, female customers seem to prefer lower age differences, especially when it comes to interactions (or private interactions) with the digital counterpart that are not clearly service-related. In terms of information sharing, male customers also prefer a male voice over a female voice, whereas this plays a minor role for female customers. The results should be incorporated into the algorithm to improve general digital services.

NOT SO INTELLIGENT AFTER ALL – CONSUMER PERCEPTIONS OF AI-INDUCED ERRORS

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Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, technical errors, social errors, norm violations, pratfall effect

Description: We investigate consumer perceptions of AI-induced technical errors and social norm violations and find that consumers think of AI committing technical errors as unintelligent, regardless of the severity of the error, while AI committing minor social errors is still regarded as intelligent.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Despite the progress in technology, AI still commonly errs in practice. Google's facial recognition software, for example, failed to identify people of color as humans. This and other examples show that AI is not always error-free and recent literature calls for scrutiny of AI's pitfalls. The present study sets out to explore the 'dark side' of AI, focusing on the consequences of AI-induced errors from a marketing perspective.

While committing errors is usually associated with undesirable outcomes, it is particularly interesting that sometimes errors evoke positive reactions. The pratfall effect describes the phenomenon of increased liking of the person or robot committing a minor error. This effect could prove to be beneficial in managing consumer-AI interactions and developing marketing strategies to deal with AI-induced errors.

Research in robotics concentrated on identifying different error types such as technical errors, representing execution failures within the AI application (e.g., voice assistants misunderstanding vocal commands), and social errors (e.g., social norm violations such as falsely identifying people of color as gorillas). Drawing on this classification of errors, we examine the following research question: How do consumers react to technical vs. social errors in AI applications?

Method and Data

In Study 1 we recruited 329 participants (M_{age}= 40, 36.2% female) from MTurk who were randomly assigned to scenarios describing error incidents from practice. We used established scales to measure AI likability, AI intelligence, use intention and attitude towards the company. We also included error severity as an additional measure. After a median split of our data according to the error severity ratings, we find significant differences in use intention and attitude towards the company when comparing minor social and technical errors (M_{tech_UI} = 3.19 vs. M_{social_UI} = 3.55, t(168) = -1.294, p = .099; M_{tech_ATT} = 3.57 vs. M_{social_ATT} = 3.97 t(168) = -1.658, p = .050).

In Study 2 we recruited 268 US-consumers (M_{age}= 36, 39.2% female) on MTurk for a 2 (error type: technical versus social) x 2 (severity: low versus high) factorial design. Participants were introduced to an AI-based voice assistant that is asked to tell a joke. In the low severity technical error condition, the voice assistant asked to repeat the command several times before stating that it cannot help in this matter, while in the high severity condition the assistant did not respond at all. In the social error low severity condition, the voice assistant told an offensive joke against blondes. In the high severity condition, it told a discriminatory joke against people of color. A scenario with an error-free AI interaction served as a control group.

Summary of Findings

T-tests show that participants not only perceive AI in the social error condition as significantly more intelligent (M_{tech} = 3.78 vs. M_{social} = 4.76; t(216) = -3.691, p < .001), but also as more likable (M_{tech} = 3.98 vs. M_{social} = 4.61; t(216) = -2.529, p = .012). These findings provide evidence that technical errors provoke more negative consumer reactions than social errors.

Additionally, our analysis reveals significant interaction effects between error type and error severity on AI likability (F(1,214) = 10.067, p = .002) and AI intelligence (F(1,214) = 9.159, p = .003). For technical errors, error severity does not influence AI likability nor AI intelligence (ps > .300). Social errors, however, are impacted by error severity and lead to significant differences in AI likability ($M_{lowSeverity}$ = 5.52 vs. $M_{highSeverity}$ = 3.69; t(107) = 5.590, p < .001) and AI intelligence ($M_{lowSeverity}$ = 5.61 vs. $M_{highSeverity}$ = 3.90; t(107) = 5.085, p < .001). Interestingly, AI intelligence and AI likability after minor social errors and

error-free performances are not significantly different (AI likability: $M_{lowSeverity}$ = 5.52 vs. $M_{error\text{-}free}$ = 5.84, $t(103) = -1.501$, $p = .137$; AI intelligence: $M_{lowSeverity}$ = 5.61 vs. $M_{error\text{-}free}$ = 5.76, $t(103) = -.679$, $p = .499$), suggesting that consumers do not differentiate between AI that is error-free or AI committing minor social errors.

Key Contributions

We illustrate that consumers are generally more tolerant towards AI violating social norms than committing technical errors. Thus, our research enables a better understanding of the public perception of AI adhering to social norms and provides policymakers with an enhanced comprehension of a socially responsible application of AI in consumer interactions. Moreover, our research sheds light on consumer reactions to erroneous AI outcomes, focusing on the investigation of the pratfall effect. We show that AI-induced errors do not necessarily trigger negative perceptions of AI, fostering a more nuanced interpretation of consumer reactions to erroneous AI outcomes. These insights are novel and contribute to marketing literature, as they show that consumers can be forgiving when AI commits social errors, while technical errors are not accepted.

References are available upon request.

Branding & Product Development

ABC OF CONSUMER STEREOTYPES ABOUT BRANDS: THE ROLE OF BRAND AGENCY AND BRAND CONSERVATIVE-PROGRESSIVE BELIEFS IN SHAPING BRAND COMMUNION

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Keywords: ABC model of stereotypes, conservative-progressive orientation, corporate political activism, consumer beliefs

Description: This study investigates how consumer perceptions of brand agency and conservative-progressive orientation drive perceptions of brand communion, which promote consumer purchase intentions through positive brand attitudes.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

In the literature on the impact of company practices on society and the environment, there is a dearth of research on consumer beliefs regarding the conservative-progressive orientation of brands. We draw on the ABC model of social perception, according to which people perceive social entities based on their agency/socioeconomic success (A), conservative-progressive beliefs (B), and communion (C). We apply this model to the context

of corporate branding and propose an ABC model of consumers' stereotypes about brands in which brand agency (A), conservative-progressive beliefs (B), and brand communion (C) are the three main dimensions that explain consumers' perceptions of brands and predict their attitudes and behavioral intentions toward brands.

Method and Data

The study was conducted on a nationally representative sample of 677 consumers in Slovenia who evaluated one of 48 real-world corporate brands from various industries, such as banking, insurance, retail, telecommunications, home appliances, fast-moving consumer goods, and food industry. Using established measurement scales and structural equation modelling, we find that brand agency, conservative-progressive beliefs, and brand communion are distinct dimensions of consumer perceptions of brands. We also find empirical support for the proposed conceptual model. We used the bootstrapping approach to estimate the indirect effects of brand agency and conservative-progressive beliefs on purchase intentions, which is mediated by brand communion and brand attitudes.

Summary of Findings

The research shows that consumers' perceptions of brand agency and conservative progressive brand beliefs have a positive influence on their perceptions of the brand communion. In other words, powerful, competent, intelligent, and/or competitive brands, as well as brands that consumers perceive as more modern, science-oriented, and/or progressive, are rated as more trustworthy, sincere, benevolent and/or altruistic. Moreover, such brands are rewarded with more positive brand attitudes and stronger purchase intentions. Our findings highlight the importance of brand agency, which has a stronger influence on purchase intentions than consumers' beliefs about modern, science-oriented, and/or progressive brands. Consumers' conservative-progressive brand beliefs are also critical in rating brands as more trustworthy, sincere, benevolent, and likable. In terms of managerial

(practical) implications, managers could promote brand agency perceptions by developing communication messages and product packaging that emphasize the brand's ability to be competent, capable, and efficient. Given the significant impact of brand beliefs on the brand communion, practitioners can also influence the brand communion by leveraging corporate political activism and promoting the brand as progressive and contemporary.

Statement of Key Contributions

We contribute to the literature on brand management and consumer behavior by incorporating conservative-progressive beliefs into theoretical models of consumer perceptions. Furthermore, our study shows how brands can leverage corporate political activism to develop positive brand attitudes and increase purchase intentions. This work contributes to the literature on branding and consumer behavior by drawing on the Agency-Beliefs-Communion (ABC) model of social perception. Allegedly, this is the first application of the ABC model in a branding context and contributes to a theoretical integration of conservative-progressive brand beliefs into conceptual models of consumer perceptions that goes beyond the stereotype content model with warmth/communion and competence/agency as two main dimensions. Another contribution is made through the development of a theoretical model linking brand agency, brand beliefs, and brand communion with attitudes and purchase intentions. Additional important empirical contribution is the identification of different types of mediating mechanisms for the effects of brand agency and conservative-progressive brand beliefs on purchase intentions. Implications for marketers include the identification of ways to manage consumers' brand perceptions.

Brand Essence Effects on Extension Information Accessibility

Abstract

This study advances the research scope of adverse extension effects by examining the impacts of brand similarity, coupled with extension typicality, upon the accessibility of negative extension information based on the cue-accessibility and group essence theories. Overall, 143 U.S. residents (M_{age} = 37.97, *SD* = 10.66, 69 females, 74 males) participated in the study with a 2 (extension typicality: high vs. low) x 2 (brand breadth: narrow vs. broad) between-subjects experimental design. The research results reveal that, regardless of extension typicality, the accessibility of unfavorable extension information of narrow brands is higher than that of broad brands. As a result, negative extension information exerts more adverse effects on narrow brands than on broad brands. Narrow brands are high-similarity brands implying the existence of obvious underlying essence, which facilitates spontaneous processing of negative extension information. Contrarily, broad brands are low-similarity brands implying vague underlying essence, which leads to less spontaneous processing of negative extension information.

Keywords: cue-diagnosticity, brand essence, brand similarity, extension typicality, narrow brands, broad brands

Statement of Key Contributions

Academic contributions

Cue-diagnosticity theory indicates that impression formation about a group is a diagnosticity-based categorization process, and the judgment of diagnosticity depends upon the accessibility of cues. Highly accessible cues are more diagnostic of subsequent categorization judgments than are lowly accessible cues. Moreover, group similarity moderates perceivers' information integration about the characteristics of group members and subsequent impression formation about the group. Based on the cue-diagnosticity theory, extant research in adverse extension effects uncovered that negative information about close extensions is a diagnostic cue yielding more salient impacts than negative information about far extensions on brand evaluations. However, the research scope has been limited to the influence of the typicality of brand extensions. As with group perceptions, brand similarity and extension accessibility are expected to moderate adverse extension effects in addition to extension typicality. Therefore, this study advances the research scope of adverse extension effects by examining the impacts of brand similarity, coupled with extension typicality, upon the accessibility of negative extension information based on the cue-accessibility and group essence theories.

Managerial implications

The research results reveal that, regardless of extension typicality, the accessibility of unfavorable extension information of narrow brands is higher than that of broad brands. As a result, negative extension information exerts more adverse effects on narrow brands than on broad brands. Given that, developing narrow brands by leveraging typical extensions is presumably easier and less risky than developing broad brands by leveraging atypical extensions because leveraging typical extensions deserves less production capability than leveraging atypical extensions for producers. However, the leveraged typical extensions will be more detrimental to narrow brands than to broad brands if the typical extensions are unfavorable or unsuccessful (negative extension information) because the accessibility of negative extension information is higher in narrow brands than in broad brands, which exerts stronger negative impacts on narrow brands than on broad brands.

Brand Essence Effects on Extension Information Accessibility

Introduction

Cue-diagnosticity theory indicates that impression formation about a group is a diagnosticity-based categorization process (Skowronski and Carlston, 1987), and the judgment of diagnosticity depends upon the accessibility of cues (Feldman and Lynch, 1988). Highly accessible cues are more diagnostic of subsequent categorization judgments than are lowly accessible cues. Moreover, group similarity moderates perceivers' information integration about the characteristics of group members and subsequent impression formation about the group (Crawford et al. 2002; Lickel et al. 2000; Spencer-Rodgers et al. 2007).

Based on the cue-diagnosticity theory, extant research in adverse extension effects uncovered that negative information about close extensions is a diagnostic cue yielding more salient impacts than negative information about far extensions on brand evaluations (Ahluwalia and Gurhan-Canli, 2000). However, the research scope has been limited to the influence of the typicality of brand extensions. As with group perceptions, brand similarity and extension accessibility are expected to moderate adverse extension effects in addition to extension typicality. The influences of brand similarity and extension accessibility on adverse extension effects are important, but were not explored yet. Therefore, this study advances the research scope of adverse extension effects by examining the impacts of brand similarity, coupled with extension typicality, upon the accessibility of negative extension information based on the cue-accessibility and group essence theories.

We propose that brand similarity and extension typicality jointly moderate extension accessibility, and therefore empirically examined the proposal with a two-factor between-subjects experimental study. We demonstrate that, regardless of extension typicality, the accessibility of unfavorable extension information of narrow brands is higher than that of broad brands. As a result, negative extension information exerts more adverse effects on narrow brands than on broad brands, regardless of extension typicality.

Conceptual background

Group similarity and group perceptions

Extant research on group perceptions has investigated the moderating effects of group structures on group impression formation (e.g., Callahan and Ledgerwood, 2016; Crawford *et al*., 2002; Dang *et al*., 2018; Lickel *et al*., 2000; Phillips *et al*., 2018). Specifically, group similarity moderates the information integration of the group members and the subsequent impression formation of the group (Crawford *et al*., 2002; Lickel *et al*., 2000; Spencer-Rodgers *et al*., 2007). Similarity denotes the demographic commonality of group members, which is a concept similar to categorical variability (or brand breadth) in branding.

The moderation of group similarity on group perceptions is predetermined by perceivers' expectations concerning the existence of the underlying essence, or explanatory structure, of the groups (Crawford *et al*., 2002; Wittenbrink *et al*., 1997). Information processing is more thorough for groups that have a salient essence than for groups that have a vague one (Yzerbyt and Schadron, 1994). The expected existence of an underlying essence is more salient for high-similarity groups than it is for low-similarity groups (Crawford *et al*., 2002; Spencer-Rodgers *et al*., 2007). This means that the information processing is less thorough for low-similarity groups than it is for high-similarity groups. Consequently, high-similarity groups are more extremely evaluated than are low-similarity groups, and the impacts of group members upon the

perceptions of high-similarity groups are more pronounced than are those upon low-similarity ones (Crawford *et al*., 2002; Hamilton and Sherman, 1996; Sherman *et al*., 1999; Susskind *et al*., 1999).

Cue-diagnosticity and group perceptions

Cue-diagnosticity theory indicates that impression formation about a group is a diagnosticity-based categorization process integrating positivity and negativity biases (Skowronski and Carlston, 1987). The judgment of diagnosticity is determined by comparing the perceived probability of occurrences. A diagnostic cue (e.g., cheating at exams) is salient information suggesting one category (e.g., dishonest people) over an alternative one (e.g., honest people). A cue (e.g., cheating at exams) is diagnostic if it induces a higher perceived probability that an object belongs to one category (e.g., dishonest people) and a lower perceived probability that the object belongs to an alternative category (e.g., honest people). In other words, a cue is diagnostic if the difference in perceived probabilities of a target category and an alternative category is significant. Diagnostic cues are unexpected and extreme and, thus, receive more weight and generate more impact on the impression formation of a subject (e.g., Anderson 1981).

Moreover, the judgment of diagnosticity may depend upon the accessibility of cues (Feldman and Lynch 1988). Perceivers are more likely to utilize highly accessible cues than lowly accessible ones for their categorization judgments. As a result, highly accessible cues are more diagnostic of subsequent categorization judgments than are lowly accessible cues. By comparison, the underlying essence theory recognizes the thoroughness of information processing within brands (e.g., high-similarity vs. low-similarity), whereas the accessibility-diagnosticity theory identifies the dominance of competing information on brand perceptions (e.g., high-similarity vs. low-similarity) and adverse extension effects (e.g., typical extension vs. atypical extension).

Accessibility of unfavorable extensions

Narrow brands are high-similarity brands implying the existence of obvious underlying essence, which facilitates the spontaneous processing of negative extension information (Crawford *et al*., 2002; Spencer-Rodgers *et al*., 2007; Wittenbrink *et al*., 1997; Yzerbyt and Schadron, 1994). Contrarily, broad brands are low-similarity brands implying the lack of underlying essence, which leads to less spontaneous processing of negative extension information (Crawford *et al*., 2002; Spencer-Rodgers *et al*., 2007; Wittenbrink *et al*., 1997; Yzerbyt and Schadron, 1994). As a result, regardless of extension typicality, the accessibility of negative extension information of narrow brands will be higher than that of broad brands, which suggests that negative extension information will exert more adverse effects on narrow brands than on broad brands, regardless of extension typicality. Therefore,

H1: The accessibility of negative extension information in narrow brands is higher than that in broad brands, regardless of extension typicality.
H2. The adverse effect of negative extension information on narrow brands is more pronounced than that on broad brands, regardless of extension typicality.

Methodology

Materials

In line with previous research (Loken and John, 1993), two fictitious brands (X and Y brands; see the Appendix) were crafted using *Consumer Reports'* statements representing high- and low-similarity brands (narrow and broad brands), respectively. The brand statements for these two brands consisted of two elements to capture the effect of the brand structure on the quality of the parent brand. The first element was a generic brand (G brand) statement describing the composition and quality of the X and Y brands (e.g., "one of the 100 Best Global Brands", "received an average 4-star rating on the 5-star quality rating scale of *Consumer Reports"*). The generic statements of these two brands were identical. The second element of the brand statements was a list of portfolio products. Extant research reports that group size affects the formation of the group impression (Brewer and Harasty, 1996; Lickel *et al*., 2000). In addition, Miller's law reveals that the average person can accurately hold seven items in their working memory (Miller, 1956). Therefore, both X and Y brands were crafted as moderately leveraged brands with an identically sized portfolio of seven products.

Specifically, the seven portfolio products of the X brand were in similar categories of dental care products, such as toothpastes, toothbrushes, and flosses. The considerations deemed important for the selection of the dental care products, mimicking Colgate, were their popularity and relevance. Colgate is a popular global brand used daily by a wide range of consumers of varying ages. Conversely, the seven portfolio products of the Y brand were in dissimilar categories, such as toothpastes, alkaline batteries, smartphones, LED monitors, facial tissues, light bulbs, and DVD players. Both brands originated from the same first brand of classic toothpastes but were leveraged in different directions. The X brand remained in categories relevant to dental care and became a high-similarity brand (narrow brand). In contrast, the Y brand was extended to various other categories and became a low-similarity brand (broad brand). The effect of the brand structure on the quality of the parent brand was captured by contrasting the quality of the parent brand information without (G brand) and with (X or Y brand) the list of portfolio products.

Anticavity toothpastes and pain relievers were identified as the operative typical and atypical extensions for the X (Ms = 5.78 and 2.56, $t(17) = -5.30$, $p < .001$) and Y (Ms = 5.06 and 1.56, $t(17) = -13.52$, $p < .001$) brands, respectively. The anticavity toothpaste was in the same product category as the classic toothpaste, the flagship product of both the X and Y brands, while the pain relievers were in a different category from any of the existing categories of the parent brands. As with the X and Y brands, the brand extensions were created using *Consumer Reports*' statements containing negative product information. Both the anticavity toothpaste (Ms = 2.06 and 4.00, $t(18) = -11.01$, $p < .001$) and the pain relievers (Ms = 2.00 and 4.00, $t(16) = -10.37$, $p < .001$) were perceived as unfavorable brand extensions.

Measures

Consistent with previous research (Crawford *et al*., 2002), brand similarity was investigated using a 9-point Likert scale with the statement, "the product categories of these seven portfolio products are similar to each other." The X and Y brands were perceived as similar (or narrow) and dissimilar (or broad) brands, respectively (Ms = 8.47 and 1.83. $t(29) = 23.91$, $p < .001$).

The brand and extension quality were measured using three 7-point semantic differential attitude scales with endpoints labeled "low quality"/ "high quality", "unfavorable"/"favorable", and "undesirable"/"desirable" (Keller and Aaker, 1992; Kempf and Smith, 1998). The participants were asked to indicate their opinions about the brand by selecting a corresponding number on the scales. The brand and extension quality indices were formulated by averaging the

values of these three attitude scales ($\alpha_s \geq .91$). The typicality of the brand extensions was measured using a single 7-point scale of typicality (Loken and John, 1993). Finally, the adverse extension effects were represented by the brand quality change index, which contrasted the prior and posterior brand quality.

Participants and procedure

Overall, 143 U.S. residents (M_{age} = 37.97, *SD* = 10.66, 69 females, 74 males) participated in the study with a 2 (extension typicality: high vs. low) x 2 (brand breadth: narrow vs. broad) between-subjects experimental design. The data were collected online via M-Turk utilizing Qualtrics questionnaires. The participants started by rating the narrow or broad brand. Then they evaluated the unfavorable typical (i.e., anticavity toothpastes) or atypical (i.e., pain relievers) extension and reevaluated the narrow or broad brand. Finally, they were asked to write down any thoughts that they had about the narrow or broad brand.

Results

Test of hypotheses

Hypotheses 1 and 2 state that the accessibility of negative extension information in narrow brands is higher than that in broad brands, regardless of extension typicality. As a result, the adverse effect of negative extension information on narrow brands is more pronounced than that on broad brands, regardless of extension typicality. To test the hypotheses, the accessibility of the unfavorable extension information was identified by the frequency and primacy (whether it was stated in the first two thoughts) of the extension-related cognitions in the participants' listed thoughts (Ahluwalia and Gurhan-Canli, 2000; Higgins *et al*., 1982). Two independent judges identified the number and primacy of the extension-related thoughts in the thought-listing task. One-way ANOVAs on the frequency of extension-related thoughts yielded the main effect of brand breadth on both of the information accessibilities of unfavorable typical (M_{narrow} = 1.90, M_{broad} = 1.29, $F(1, 68) = 4.54$, $p < .05$) and atypical extensions (M_{narrow} = 1.39, M_{broad} = .61, $F(1, 71) = 20.03$, $p < .001$). The participants generated more thoughts about the unfavorable typical and atypical extensions of narrow brands than those of broad brands.

To test the primacy effect of accessibility, an arcsine-square root transformation of the percentage of respondents who indicated extension-related information in the first two thoughts was performed to normalize the distribution of the percent data (Ahluwalia and Gurhan-Canli, 2000; Higgins *et al*., 1982). One-way ANOVAs on the transformed percentage yielded the main effect of brand breadth for unfavorable typical (M_{narrow} = .71, M_{broad} = .30, $F(1, 68) = 9.86$, $p < .01$) and atypical extensions (M_{narrow} = .40, M_{broad} = .06, $F(1, 71) = 16.31$, $p < .001$). A higher percentage of participants generated extension-related thoughts earlier in the narrow brand conditions than in the broad brand conditions.

Both of the tests of the frequency and primacy of extension-related thoughts reveal that the accessibility of the adverse extension information of narrow brands is higher than that of broad brands, regardless of extension typicality. As a result, hypothesis 1 was confirmed. The results explain that the adverse effects of unfavorable extensions on narrow brands were more pronounced than those on broad brands, regardless of extension typicality (M_{narrow} = -2.18. M_{broad} = -1.06, $F(1, 68) = 12.72$, $p < .001$; M_{narrow} = -2.04, M_{broad} = -1.07, $F(1, 71) = 8.21$, $p < .01$). As a result, hypothesis 2 was confirmed.

Conclusion and Implications

The research results reveal that, regardless of extension typicality, the accessibility of unfavorable extension information of narrow brands is higher than that of broad brands. As a result, negative extension information exerts more adverse effects on narrow brands than on broad brands. The findings verified that narrow brands are high-similarity brands implying the existence of obvious underlying essence, which facilitates the spontaneous processing of negative extension information. Contrarily, broad brands are low-similarity brands implying the lack of underlying essence, which leads to less spontaneous processing of negative extension information.

Moreover, the findings suggest that developing narrow brands by leveraging typical extensions is presumably easier and less risky than developing broad brands by leveraging atypical extensions because leveraging typical extensions deserves less production capability than leveraging atypical extensions for producers. However, the leveraged typical extensions will be more detrimental to narrow brands than to broad brands if the typical extensions are unfavorable or unsuccessful (negative extension information) because the accessibility of negative extension information is higher in narrow brands than in broad brands, which exerts stronger negative impacts on narrow brands than on broad brands.

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CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO BRAND LOYALTY TO DISNEY RESORTS: AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF CONCEPT, CASTS, ATTRACTIONS, AND CHARACTERS

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Key words: *theme parks; customer experience; brand loyalty; concept recall*

Description: *This study examines the effects of four specific contributors to brand loyalty in the context of the Tokyo Disney Resort in Japan, namely, brand concept, casts (staff), attractions (rides), and characters.*

ABSTRACT

This study comprehensively examined the effects to loyalty toward the Tokyo Disney Resort in Japan. As a result, it was clarified that consumers who recall a brand concept as its brand image are more likely to exhibit loyalty than consumers who recall specific features like casts, attractions, and characters.

INTRODUCTION

Currently, due to technological advancements, a service's functionality often exceeds customer standards. Accordingly, brands have begun to compete over emotional rather than functional value. The most important component of emotional value is customer experience. This is especially true within the theme park industry aiming to provide an immersive experience (Manthiou et al., 2016). Accordingly, theme park companies plan their investments and human resource development efforts around improving the quality of their customers' experience. Consequently, several theme parks have improved the interiors and exteriors of their built

environments and have introduced advanced technologies, such as virtual reality. However, despite these changes, consumers may still perceive them as quite similar.

The aforementioned problem can be attributed to ambiguity in companies' brand concepts. For instance, while consumers may be attracted to new technology and superficial features such as design, they may easily switch brands when a different service offers higher functionality and a more fashionable design. Moreover, a consumer's brand loyalty stems from how well they understand, sympathize with, and value a brand's concept (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000).

Disney Resorts are a telling example of how the consistent embodiment of a well-defined brand concept can contribute to a strong brand value. Since its establishment in 1923, the Walt Disney Company has developed several theme parks such as Disneyland (California, USA 1955), Walt Disney World (Florida, USA 1971), Tokyo Disneyland (1983), Disneyland Paris (1992), Tokyo DisneySea (2001), Hong Kong Disneyland (2005), and Shanghai Disney Resort (2016; The Official Disney Fan Club, n.d.). These theme parks are highly valued by consumers worldwide, and attracted approximately 157 million visitors in 2018. Additionally, the return rate of first-time visitors to Disney Resorts is approximately 70% (Morgan, 2020). According to Interbrand's (2020) evaluation, Disney's brand value reached 40,773 million dollars (USD) last year, and was ranked the 10th best global brand.

In Japan, the Tokyo Disney Resort is operated by the Oriental Land Company under a license agreement with the Walt Disney Company. Both Tokyo Disneyland and Tokyo DisneySea embody the concept of the kingdom of dreams and magic (Oriental Land Company, n.d.). Owing to its strong brand value, Disney has frequently featured in research worldwide (Bellido & Bowrey, 2018; Bennett & Schweitzer, 2014; Best & Lowney, 2009; Coyne et al., 2016; Hausman, 2003; Hernández-Pérez, 2016; Holcomb et al., 2015; Milman, 2013; Sandlin & Garlen, 2017; Tepeci, 1999; Van Maanen, 1992; Wasko, 2001; Wei, 2018; Wills, 2017; Winsor, 2015). Although numerous studies have examined Disney's brand concept in terms of business administration and marketing, a qualitative evaluation of its effect on brand loyalty requires further research. Therefore, this study comprehensively examined the impact of four factors, namely, concept, staff, rides, and characters, on customer loyalty toward the Tokyo Disney Resort. At Disney Resorts, the staff members are called casts, and the rides are called attractions; hence, for simplicity, Disney terminology was used to refer to these variables in this paper.

A theme park is a project that requires substantial investment to build an artificial environment to entertain its visitors. Without a quantitative examination of the factors that contribute to brand loyalty, theme park companies risk wasting their investments (Tasci & Milman, 2019). In addition to casts, attractions, and characters, this study investigated brand concept as an important factor related to consumer loyalty toward the Tokyo Disney Resort. The present findings will equip the theme park industry with useful decision-making information, and, in doing so, encourage other industries to realize the importance of their brand concepts.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

Services solve consumer problems, thus their concept should reflect both practical and psychological consumer needs (Park et al., 1986). Recently, brands have increasingly started paying attention to the latter issue, also relevant to theme parks, whose value primarily constitutes an emotional element. Disney aims to entertain consumers through the unparalleled power of storytelling (Disney, n.d.), and is a leading brand that excels at providing emotional value based on a well-defined concept.

Consumers tend to form a brand image and attitude through their experience of a company's services, that are developed based on concepts devised by its marketers (Campbell & Keller, 2003; Hoeffler & Keller, 2003). A company's brand concept is at the root of its service, and consumers develop their brand knowledge by experiencing the value generated from the concept. Branding helps consumers distinguish between available services; consumers who value the meaning of a brand tend to show greater brand loyalty. Hence, a service can strengthen its brand value if its concept is clearly defined before it enters the market, after which it should be consistently embodied as per consumers' perceptions to retain the market position of the brand.

Although brand concept greatly influences brand success, few studies have evaluated it as a contributor to customer loyalty. Some studies have divided brand concepts into general categories e.g., functional and symbolic (Bhat & Reddy, 1998; Hagtvedt & Patrick, 2009; Jeon, 2017; Park et al., 1986). However, because these categories are too broad, it is difficult to determine whether they highlight consumer understanding of brand concepts.

An immersive visitor experience is crucial to customer loyalty, especially in theme parks (Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Fu et al., 2017). Theme parks should aim to

integrate individual customer experiences into their overall concept (Schmitt, 1999), because the attractiveness of the concept influences consumers' selection of theme parks (Cheng et al., 2016; Kao et al., 2008). For example, visitors who enter Disney Resorts often feel as though they are entering a different world, because Disney's brand concept is thoroughly embodied in the theme park's landscape design, services, music, and human resource development efforts (Bennett & Schweitzer, 2014; Morgan, 2020; Tepeci, 1999; Wills, 2017). Within the context of the Tokyo Disney Resort, this study aimed to examine the relationship between brand concept and brand loyalty by investigating whether customers could recall Disney's brand concept based on certain keywords when asked about its brand image. Customers' ability to recall the brand concept through its brand image was used as an indicator of brand loyalty. Accordingly, the following hypothesis was formulated:

H1: Recalling the Tokyo Disney Resort's brand concept as its brand image will positively influence brand loyalty.

Disney's brand concept is embodied by the theme park's casts, attractions, and characters. According to Heskett et al. (1994), in a successful company, the internal services for employees enhance employee satisfaction and contribute to customer satisfaction and corporate growth. Therefore, creating an environment where employees can work comfortably while improving their abilities is an important concern of the management of the company. However, this study did not examine these indirect effects. Within the theme park industry, employees play a key role as the face of service provision. The casts' clothing, attitudes, and professional skills directly influence consumer perceptions of quality (Grove et al., 1992; Grove et al., 1998). Winsor (2015) has argued that Disney's brand loyalty begins with its casts. Accordingly, the following hypothesis was formulated:

H2: Recalling the Tokyo Disney Resort's casts as its brand image will positively influence brand loyalty.

Rides or attractions are often situated at the center of theme parks. Research findings on theme parks suggest that thrill rides and new attractions are an important source of customer satisfaction (Chang et al., 2014; Ryan et al., 2010; Wu et al., 2018). Hence, to differentiate themselves from competing brands, theme parks aim to set up distinctive rides to attract more visitors (Bakir & Baxter, 2011). Accordingly, the following hypothesis was formulated:

H3: Recalling Tokyo Disney Resort's attractions as its brand image will positively influence brand loyalty.

Disney was originally known for its animation, that has led to the creation of numerous popular characters. Disney's growth and reputation as a global brand that creates compelling entertainment can be attributed to the careful brand management of its characters (Wasko, 2001). At Disney resorts, consumers can meet these characters. This service, that enables consumers to take photos in an exclusive space by visiting the character's living place, is called Character-Greeting (Tokyo Disney Resort, n.d.). The presence of these characters in the theme parks offers powerful emotional value to the consumers. Accordingly, the following hypothesis was formulated:

H4: Recalling Disney characters as the Tokyo Disney Resort's brand image will positively influence brand loyalty.

As already mentioned, it is presumed that consumers with higher loyalty place more emphasis on the concept that is the essence of the product, and the following hypothesis was derived.

H5: Consumers who recall a brand concept are more likely to exhibit loyalty than consumers who recall specific features.

METHODOLOGY

Survey

To test the hypotheses, an online survey was conducted in Japan from November 5–10, 2020. Eligible respondents were aged 20–59 years and had visited the Tokyo Disney Resort (Disneyland/DisneySea) at least once every three years. The survey questions assessed the following: (1) gender; (2) age; (3) occupation; (4) annual household income; (5) frequency of visits; (6) preference; (7) recommendation intention; (8) revisit intention; and (9) the brand image of the Tokyo Disney Resort.

Based on their responses to questions 2 and 5, participants who did not meet the inclusion criteria were automatically excluded, leaving 400 remaining responses. Responses regarding gender and age were evenly distributed, and loyalty indices 6–8 were rated on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = not at all preferable, 7 = extremely preferable). The survey included a question on brand image because, as mentioned in

section 2, consumers form brand images through their personal brand experiences. Therefore, item 9 tested pure recall without presenting any options, because aided recall assessed by providing options can introduce biases, and the responses may be overestimations. By using pure recall, the respondents could provide answers regarding the resort's brand concept only if they had understood it.

Verification

This study used text analytics to extract words related to the factors that influence brand loyalty (e.g., concept, cast, attraction, and character) from the survey responses related to the Tokyo Disney Resort's brand image. Table 1 presents definitions for the words pertaining to each factor. Frequently appearing negative factors, namely, price and virus, were also included. Additionally, although previous studies have examined factors such as souvenirs (Wei, 2018), food (Milman, 2013), and communities (Hausman, 2003), they were not investigated in this study because they were rarely mentioned. The five most frequently appearing words (nouns and adjectives) were defined for each factor to eliminate arbitrariness. Therefore, the words of interest were extracted from the respondents' sentences using morphological analysis, and the detected words were marked with mention flags. Japanese open-source software MeCab was used. In total, 357 words were extracted from 400 responses, and 287 mention flags were identified for all the factors combined. This implies that respondent mentions of the same factor were not counted twice; henceforth, each factor was represented by their respective mention flags. Morphological analysis revealed that a large number of consumers could recall Tokyo Disney Resort's brand concept when asked about its brand image. Table 1 illustrates the distribution of respondent flags.

The mean value of loyalty indices were as follows; preference 5.750, recommendation intention 5.650, revisit intention 5.888. The reason why the recommendation intention is the lowest value can be that while preference and revisit intentions are fulfilled based on individual emotions, recommendation intention requires action toward others and thus involves strong psychological barriers. This explains why it is often used as an index of brand loyalty.

In hypotheses testing, structural equation modeling was used, with R as the analysis environment and the lavaan package. The model represents a structure in which each factor influences the loyalty factor based on the observed loyalty variable.

Factor	Word 1	Word 2	Word 3	Word 4	Word 5	Number of detected words in each factor	Number of mention flags for each factor
Concept	concept	dream	magic	kingdom	fantasy	236	185
Cast	cast	staff	hospitality	customer service	professional	35	29
Attraction	attraction	ride	roller coaster	Jungle Cruise	It's a small world	24	22
Character	character	greeting	Mickey	Minnie	Duffy	21	16
Price	price	admission fee	ticket fee	expensive	price increase	21	16
Virus	corona	virus	infection	pandemic	COVID-19	20	19
Total						357	287

Table 1. Words extracted for each factor and number of detected / mention flags

RESULTS

Figure 1 illustrates the results of structural equation modeling. The model indices indicate high suitability, CFI = .965, GFI = .935, SRMR = .023, and RMSEA = .080. Of the four main factors, concept made the strongest contribution to loyalty, followed by character and cast. These three factors had significant positive effects at the 5% level. In contrast, attraction had no significant effect. Accordingly, the results supported H1, H2, H3, and H5; H4 was rejected. In addition, price and virus had strong negative effects. These results were highly reliable because, to avoid biases, the respondents were not presented with preexisting options.

IMPLICATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

The present results have two implications for corporate marketing practices. First, the findings reaffirm the importance of brand concepts across industries. Many services equipped with new technologies and attractive designs continue to project ambiguous brand concepts. Consumers may be attracted to superficial functionality

and design, but they may easily switch brands when another company offers a service with higher functionality and a more fashionable design. If a consumer remains loyal to a brand, it is because they understand, sympathize with, and value the brand's concept. The present findings confirm that the recall of a brand concept through brand image in the eyes of the consumer greatly influence their brand loyalty. Therefore, brand managers should adopt the concept recall so that they can increase the number of consumers who can recall the concept as a brand image. Given that only a few studies have examined the role of brand concept in brand management, the index of concept recall examined in this study will be relevant in not only the industrial world but also the academic world and domains of consumer behavior and brand management.

Second, the present findings suggest that brands should take a bird's eye view of consumer behavior and try to understand the contributors to loyalty quantitatively; this will enable them to be more effective in their investment allocations. Many studies have examined the effects of various factors (e.g., casts, attractions, character, souvenirs, food, communities). While each factor is relevant, an independent evaluation narrows the field of view, that is unhelpful for branding-related decision-making. In contrast, companies should focus on developing an objective standard to evaluate each contributor to brand loyalty and determine the priority of the project plans created by each department from a company-wide perspective. For example, the current findings suggest that, in a theme park, casts and characters are more relevant for building loyalty than attractions were. Therefore, while large-scale attractions are noticeable, theme parks should adopt the following measures to improve consumer loyalty: invest in cast training and create a sustainable environment for consumers to find more opportunities to interact with characters. These implications are significant, because few studies have comprehensively examined the different contributors to loyalty toward Disney theme parks.

This study has two limitations. First, because this study was conducted in Japan, the generalizability of the findings to other countries remains limited. Second, the results may vary depending on the evaluation method used. As this study identified only five words as factors, the results may vary slightly depending on the number of keywords and assessment method used (pure recall or aided recall). In brand management practice and research, there is inadequate delineation of the method of concept evaluation. Further research is required in this area.

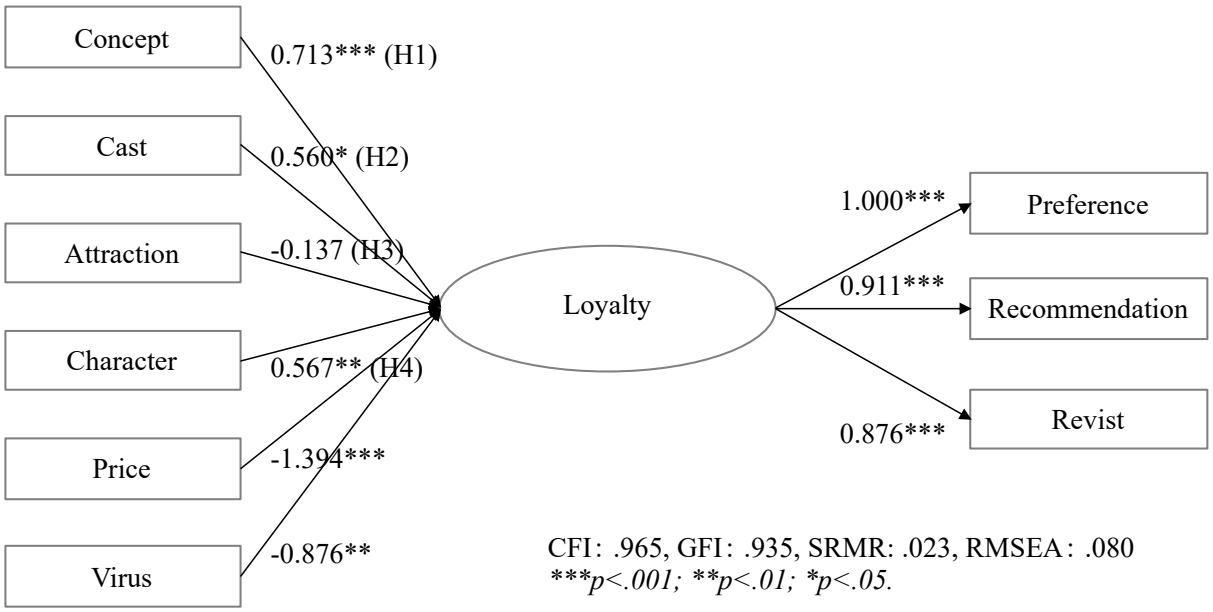

Figure 1. Results of Structural Equation Modeling.

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DESCRIBING ROSÉ: AN EMBEDDING-BASED METHOD FOR MEASURING PREFERENCES

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Keywords: preference measurement; embedding; machine learning; marketing.

Description: In this paper, we present a novel preference-measurement method for experiential products and develop a novel embedding-based utility model to value product attributes and attribute-levels from participant choices between products described in (unstructured) prose.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

As consumer experiences are rich and nuanced, descriptions of many products are typically delivered in prose—restaurants describe their ambience, travel operators describe the sight-seeing experience at an exotic locale, and theme parks describe the exhilaration of a rollercoaster ride. Similarly, tasting notes of wines are presented in prose to capture the sensory nature of wine consumption. In extant preference-measurement methods (e.g., conjoint analysis), products are described to participants and portrayed in the utility model as a list of product attributes (Green et al. 2001, Toubia et al. 2004).

In the present research, we develop an embedding-based utility model and preference method in which products are presented to market research participants in (unstructured) prose (human language). We propose a new preference-measurement method in which we present participants with two prose product descriptions and ask the participants to choose between them. The method provides three benefits: products are described more completely, improved study realism, and a more detailed measurement of consumer preferences.

Method And Data

We draw on two distinct literatures—embeddings in computer science and machine learning, and choice modeling in economics and marketing—to develop a novel embedding-based utility model. We construct utility models that incorporate product embeddings from three methods: (1) a model with the non-neural embedding; (2) a model with the feedforward embedding; and (3) a model with the recurrent embedding. In addition, we estimate three benchmark models based on extant research: (4) a benchmark model that includes region, country, and grape varietal fixed effects; (5) a benchmark model with Latent Semantic Analysis (LSA) feature loadings (Eliashberg et al. 2007); and (6) a benchmark model with Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) topic intensities (Toubia et al. 2019). We use our method to investigate consumer preferences for wines made in 427 wine-growing regions in 44 wine-growing countries, from 708 wine-grape

varietals, in Australia, New Zealand, and the United States (henceforth US). We first obtained a large-scale dataset of wine descriptions with the name, region, country, varietal (or blend), and tasting notes of 119,955 wines from 44 countries. We trained product embeddings using this product dataset. We then conducted a preference-measurement study—across the US, Australia, and New Zealand—to demonstrate our proposed method.

Summary of Findings

First, our analyses show that the proposed embedding-based models fit the data better than the extant benchmark models. Second, we show an important benefit of our method that it can be used to compute individual-specific partworths for all participants in a study and for attribute-levels in the data (i.e., for all 427 regions, 44 countries, and 708 grape varietals). This is far more than would be feasible using extant methods and participant choice data of equivalent length. Finally, to showcase the managerial benefits of the increased specificity of our proposed embedding-based utility model, we construct a decision support system from the perspective of a brick-and-mortar wine retailer. We identify wines that are likely to sell best, and that are therefore optimal for the wine retailer to carry—at finer granularity than is feasible using extant methods at the same cost of the research. We find that the wines selected by our method are much more likely to be chosen by consumers than wines selected at random.

Statement of Key Contributions

We propose a novel embedding-based method with a simple and realistic study design that is straightforward to administer. Our primary contribution lies in the development of an embedding-based utility model to infer consumers' valuations of product attributes and attribute-levels from their responses to unstructured prose product descriptions. The model is based on the mathematical theory of an embedding as applied to products. We demonstrate the value of our proposed method in a study of wines, an experiential product category characterized by rich and complex qualitative attributes. We establish our embedding-based method is better at predicting (in-sample and out-of-sample) consumer choices than extant approaches. We detail individual-specific partworths for wine attributes and use our estimates to conduct individual-level analyses to support substantively critical managerial decisions.

Relative to extant methods, our proposed method provides three key benefits. First, it enables products to be described in prose, and hence more completely than if they were described using categorical variables. Second, describing products in prose enhances study realism. Third, it enables a more detailed measurement of consumer preferences than is feasible using extant methods.

References are available upon request.

DIGITAL DESIGN OF 3D PRINTING

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Keywords: 3D Printing; Digital Design; Personal Fabrication; Project Characteristics

Description: This research examines how 3D printing design characteristics affect peer-to-peer consumption of the design.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question – This research aims to seek answers for the effects of design orientation of 3D printing in the personal fabrication age via peer-to-peer sharing.

Method and Data – We collected data of 3D printing projects via a peer-to-peer sharing website. Independent raters examined each project's utilitarian orientation and hedonic orientation. Project complexity was directly adopted from each project's webpage. Project comprehensiveness was coded based on the length of project descriptions.

Summary of Findings – Hedonic orientation, rather than utilitarian orientation, of 3D printing design positively affects the number of downloads. In addition, project complexity respectively negatively and positively moderates the relationships between utilitarian/hedonic orientations and the number of downloads. Last, project comprehensiveness positively moderates the relationship between hedonic orientation and the number of downloads.

Key Contributions – 3D printing market size experienced a sudden surge in recent years, but limited empirical studies have examined the personal fabrication sector. This research fills the gap by examining how 3D printing design characteristics affect peer-to-peer consumption of the design. This research finds that the effects of design orientations rely on project characteristics. This provides practitioners with insights into how to maximize the effects of 3D printing design orientations.

Investigating the Profiles of Premium Luxury and Masstige Consumers and How their Perceived Luxury Values Drive Purchase Intentions

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Keywords: Masstige, Luxury, Purchase Intentions, STP Strategy

Description: The current study provides a STP framework for effective customer profiling which is based on consumers past experiences with masstige and premium luxury products, values, and demographic descriptors.

ABSTRACT

RESEARCH QUESTION

The concept of brand prestige has reaped considerable attention in branding and consumer behavior research lately (Paul, 2018). Traditionally, prestige products were classified based on their price (high) and distribution (exclusive). This description fits 'classical' premium luxury, where price and distribution prevent the mass market from accessing the products (Kumar et al., 2020). In the last decade, however, the luxury branding concept has become more democratized allowing more customers to purchase "Mass prestige" or masstige products and services that command a high price compared to conventional goods, but below premium luxury goods. They

are selectively distributed ‘more than’ premium luxury products yet ‘less than’ middle-class mass (Kumar et al., 2020). “Masstige” is a recent topic that has been scarcely researched (Paul, 2018).

Premium luxury and masstige consumer segments may vary in their socio-demographic profiles as well as their perceptions of luxury. The current paper aims to offer a profile of masstige buyers, explicitly position this group vis-à-vis premium luxury buyers and non-luxury buyers, and clarify how do members of each segment perceive luxury. Additionally, we are interested in knowing how premium luxury and masstige brands can improve the definition of their target markets by distinguishing consumers' motives to purchase premium versus masstige brands. For this purpose, we refer to the luxury values (purchase motives) model by Al-Issa and Dens (2021). Finally, we suggest a targeting map and a value-based positioning framework based on what values drive purchase intentions toward luxury in the different segments. The proposed framework can assist in evolving branding strategies that widen brands' reach and enhance target consumers' purchases (intentions).

METHOD AND DATA

In the current study, we investigate 601 consumers based on their prior experience with masstige and premium luxury. An online questionnaire is developed based on previous research with a few adjustments to suit the current research context. Luxury was defined to participants to include both premium and masstige based on price and distribution. Data were collected through Prolific online panel in the United Kingdom. All constructs were measured using a 7-point Likert scale. The reliability of scales is acceptable for all constructs.

As the segments are highly imbalanced in the number of members, we proceed with applying Chawla et al.’s (2002) Synthetic Minority Over-sampling Technique (SMOTE) to the whole data set. We used the imbalanced-learn library (Lemaitre et al., 2017) available in Python. After executing the SMOTE algorithm, we have a dataset of 1392 divided into four equal groups of 348 data points. Afterward, a series of ANOVA tests are carried out to describe market segments and highlight significant differences based on luxury perceived values, Next, we provide a socio-demographic description for each segment that represents the current target market for each category. This is followed by the results of logistic regression analysis to identify values that can enhance consumers' purchase intentions for value-based brand positioning.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The results interestingly indicate that premium buyers are "conspicuous materialists" who purchase luxury to signal their status and distinguish themselves from others. Masstige consumers are "hedonic" consumers. They are the least materialistic and the least identifying oneself by luxury. When compared to the premium segment, they are less conspicuous and more conforming to the group of luxury buyers. Buyers of both categories are the "conforming perfectionists". They purchase premium and masstige products for their outstanding quality and to confirm their membership to the high social class. Consumers who do not buy luxury are the "sustainable symbolic" group who perceive luxury as a means of symbolism and signaling.

Regarding consumers' demographics, consumers are not limited by their income. We observe that low-income highly educated consumers are purchasing premium luxury as a means of status and success signaling, while the ones who earn more are more oriented to pleasure and group conformity. Majority of consumers who do not purchase any of the luxury categories are high school graduates with low income on average. Although they may not currently afford luxury purchases, they have the intention to purchase. Masstige consumers, who are the least materialistic and self-identifying with luxury, are the eldest. With increasing age, spiritual and ethical beliefs tend to get stronger, and one becomes less focused on materialism (Nwankwo et al., 2014).

Furthermore, our results confirm that masstige buyers can be encouraged to buy more and/or to buy premium downward brand extensions by showing them as means for self-extension, display of success, pleasure, and belonging to the high-class. Premium consumers can be stimulated to buy masstige products by communicating the masstige's outstanding quality, design, and services, and the materialistic and hedonic values that masstige brands offer. Premium consumers are the only segment that can be fascinated by sustainable products or practices. However, sustainability is found to demotivate masstige consumers. Accordingly, premium brands may communicate the sustainability of the old luxury products but not the masstige extensions. It is also important to note that purchases of premium and masstige consumers who perceive luxury as means of conspicuousness would be discouraged if products/brands are presented in a way that signals their wealth and status. Remarkably, consumers who do not buy any of the luxury categories (52% middle to high income) present a new opportunity for brand expansion and sales improvement. Their purchase intentions can be almost doubled by emphasizing brands' perfectionism and

materialism. However, highlighting luxury sustainable value is not found to affect their purchase intentions.

KEY CONTRIBUTIONS

The study provides profiles of consumers based on their past experiences with luxury and perceptions of luxury values. This is the first consumer profile that involves luxury sustainability as a luxury buying criterion (value). To our knowledge, no prior studies have distinguished consumers' motives to purchase premium versus masstige brands. Knowing values that consumers ascribe to each luxury category can help understanding why certain firms build brand equity and achieve international success, while others fail. We also shed the light on consumers who purchase both categories and consumers who do not purchase any, thus offering guidelines for better differentiation (premium versus masstige) and conversion (from non-buyers to buyers). Moreover, we offer a map for a premium versus masstige brands target market expansion, and suggests a value-based positioning framework. The advised framework can benefit luxury marketers in improving their branding strategies to increase market share and profits.

References: available upon request

Is your fitness tracker turning you into a self-centered egoist? Identity and reflexivity in wearable technology engagement

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Description: This paper investigates the relationships between consumer engagement with wearable fitness trackers and consumer self-concept composition in terms of identities sampled for self-presentation both in the context of wearable technology engagement and afterward.

Keywords: wearable, technology adoption, fitness-trackers, identity, self-concept

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Wearable devices connect customers to the 'internet of things' through direct contact with their bodies. The primary reasons people use wearable devices are to track exercise, fitness, and health in general. Consumers' projected social image and self-image congruity have been identified among the most important determinants of wearable technology adoption (e.g. Jeong et al., 2016; Nieroda et al., 2018). The goal of this study is to explore the interplay between wearable technology engagement and the consumers' self-concept composition in terms of identities sampled for self-presentation.

We argue that consumer engagement with wearable devices such as fitness trackers increases body awareness and thus the salience of personal identity as compared to social identities. Wearables provide detailed information about one's bodily state and processes that would be unavailable otherwise, such as blood pressure, sugar level, and hydration level. They serve as extended mind

vehicles for they extend consumers' cognitive capacity and draw a new version of reality and a new version of one's self so as one's body occupies a much more important position.

The research question of interest is how much the 'quantified' self is different in terms of a self-concept repertoire and sampling different types of identities? To what degree does consumer engagement with wearable devices re-shape the balance in working self-concept between consumers' sampling of personal and social identities, and whether this effect is context-specific or global? That is, whether wearables' users are likely to focus on themselves and sample their personal identity more often only when they engage these devices, or permanently afterward?

Method and Data

Our studies employ quasi-experimental designs and instrumental variable (IV) identification strategy as well as difference-in-difference estimation. We have analyzed social media behaviors such as branded posts related to wearable devices as a proxy measure for consumer engagement with wearable tech to explore consumers' self-positioning and identities in interaction (Baker, 2000; Deppermann, 2013). Our analysis of thousands of conversations related to wearable fitness trackers is focused on identity-relevant pronounces and self-references, e.g. *I, me, myself, we, ours* to capture if the conversations about wearable devices are more likely to be focused on personal identity than any other brand-related conversations. The event of social media communication(measured by dependent variables happens after the product engagement measured my independent variable, thus the time difference enables the use of a quasi-experimental design.

Study 1 is focused on uncovering context-specific effects of engagement with wearable tech, then Study 2 considers global effects for consumers' self-concept. Context-specific effects are observed directly in the context of wearable tech engagement: customers' first social media conversation that mentions one of wearable fitness trackers brands (Fi or Ga). Global effects are observed

through all their consequent behaviors during the study period: social media conversations that can be related or unrelated to wearables or any other brands.

Summary of Findings

Our findings indicate that in the context of wearable tech engagement consumers are more likely to sample their personal identity and exercise individualistic behavioral orientation but afterward consumers strive to regain the balance of their self-concept by sampling their social identities more often and focusing on their social connections and relational orientations.

Context-specific social media communications dedicated to wearable devices are 28% more likely to be linked to one's personal identity and 6% least likely to sample one's social connections for self-presentation. Afterward, the global effect of wearable technology engagement is consistently negatively associated with consequent self-centered speech acts and positively associated with sampling social identities and social connections, independent of the topic of conversation, and whether any products or brands are mentioned in the conversation. The estimates suggest a 38-41 % decrease in consumers' sampling of personal identity following an engagement with wearable fitness trackers, and a 9.4% increase in the sampling of social identities. These findings are surprising and counter-intuitive. It appears that after engaging with wearable tech and tweeting about themselves and their personal achievements with the use of these devices consumers become much more likely to focus on others, and their connections to others, rather than on themselves, in all consequent conversations

Key Contributions

Across two empirical studies, we identify and measure the effect of consumer engagement with wearable devices on the salience of personal and social identity. Our findings contend that in the hybrid context of private consumption and public engagement personal identity and social identity

appear as distinct components of one's self-concept as consumers' strivings for self-verification fall short of transcending the self–other barrier (Gómez et al., 2009). However, as consumers are exposed to different context cues during their wearable technology engagement wand afterward, they may easily maintain a consistent identity structure of their self-concept through a temporal distance between contexts. Self-concept re-balancing ensues as the relevance and salience of social identities increase. While these findings may seem counter-intuitive they are consonant with the extended self theory proposition that consumers strive to coordinate their identities so that their self-concept maintains some degree of internal consistency across consumption contexts and product categories (Kleine et al., 1995).

Our studies fill an important lacuna in social identity theory by uncovering an asynchronous, intertemporal dynamics of self-concept as consumers invoke personal identity when they engage with wearable devices but then restore a relatively stable structure of their self-concept by invoking their social identities and social connections.

REJUVENATING BRANDS: THE ROLE OF BRAND CONSISTENCY IN BOX OFFICE PERFORMANCE

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Keywords: brand strategy; movie marketing; line extensions; brand consistency

Description: This paper provides a nuanced view of how brand consistency and other factors such as the performance of previous films influence the performance of movie sequels.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Much of prior research in branding focuses on building and maintaining brands based on the assumption that investments in brands have long-term prospects with long life cycles. Yet, brands with short life cycles abound in marketing with many examples ranging from motion pictures to video games to bestselling books to children's toys. Given the short life cycles of some brands, firms in various industries understand that they must rely on rejuvenating their brands on a regular basis to maintain their flow of revenues and profits (Keller 1999; Maklan and Knox 1997; Thomas and Kohli 2009). Brand rejuvenation represents an effort by firms to relaunch brands in industries where new brands generate most of their revenues shortly after their initial launch. When launching new brands, managers must decide whether to be consistent with the brand or make significant changes to address satiation issue. Therefore, does brand

consistency lead to performance of rejuvenated brands? In addition, are there situations in which brand consistency is detrimental to performance?

Method And Data

For this study, multiple data sources are used. Data covering elements of each motion picture were collected from IMBD. Performance and distribution data were collected from The Numbers. Lastly, critic and audience review data were collected from Rotten Tomatoes. In total, our sample consisted of over 300 movie franchises from 1962-2013 with a total of more than 500 movie sequels. Regression analysis was used to analyze the data to examine the effects on box office performance. Corrections for endogeneity were considered.

Summary of Findings

This study examines the role of brand consistency and previous product performance in the success of brand rejuvenation efforts with a sample of movie sequels from the Hollywood studios. Study findings suggest a nuanced view of consistency in the context of brand rejuvenation. Specifically, findings demonstrate that brand rejuvenation using consistent brand elements enhances financial performance, but this effect is moderated by the performance of the previous film in the franchise. When previous films perform well, consistency can improve the performance of the focal film. In contrast, when previous films perform poorly, consistency elements can be detrimental to the performance of the focal film. As such, the study provides important managerial and theoretical implications for brand management.

Statement of Key Contributions

We introduce the concept of brand rejuvenation to illustrate how firms relaunch new products to revive their brands in the minds of consumers and generate more revenues. Our findings indicate that the performance of brands is tied to brand consistency but can change based on the performance of past products. In brief, our study provides important implications for brand managers, firms and the research community in marketing. Specifically, our study offers useful insights for managers and firms that compete in industries like motion picture industry, where brands may need to be re-vitalized on a regular basis. Our study demonstrates that brand consistency is critical in brand rejuvenation. Furthermore, we show that there is a nuanced answer to the brand consistency question. In certain situations, more consistency products perform better, but in other situations brand consistency is a detriment to performance. We provide brand managers a framework for developing brand rejuvenations. Finally, our study makes an important contribution to research on motion pictures by tying the concepts of brand consistency and rejuvenation to sequels from the Hollywood studios.

SUSTAINABILITY AND BRAND TRUST: THE CASE OF THE PROFESSIONAL SERVICE PROVIDER

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Keywords: professional service providers, brand trust, sustainability, corporate social responsibility

Description: The purpose of this study is to determine how trust in sustainable brands is built in the mind of unaffiliated professional service providers.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

This study examines environmental sustainability as a shared value of interest between brands and unaffiliated professional service providers (PSPs). We investigated how unaffiliated PSPs build trust in sustainable brands due to their influence in the brand decision-making process of their clients. Specifically, we sought to determine if self-assigned expertise in sustainability would impact trust in brands that demonstrate a commitment to sustainability. Further, we examined the impact of professionals' perception of sustainability as a meaningful concern and how that relates to their trust in brands that are marketed as sustainable. Then, we measured how unaffiliated PSPs interpret the motives brands have for engaging in sustainability initiatives. We used the typology advanced by Armstrong Soule and Reich (2015) to determine the impact that

perceived strategic motives have on brand trust. We anticipated that if unaffiliated PSPs believed brands engaged in sustainability for strategic reasons, trust would be negatively impacted. Conversely, we predicted that if these professionals believed that brands were active in sustainability for altruistic reasons, these brands would be rewarded with elevated trust.

Method and Data

A major supplier to veterinarian practices and hospitals helped collect data from 457 veterinarians. Structural equation modeling using AMOS 27 showed good model fit: CMIN/DF = 3.26, CFI = 0.952, NFI = 0.929 and RMSEA = 0.049. Hypothesis 1 predicted that as the perception of professionals' expertise (PE) in sustainability increases so does perceived sustainability importance (SI; $\beta = 0.466$, $p < 0.05$). Hypothesis 2, relating PE to brand trust (BT), is supported ($\beta = 0.294$, $p < 0.05$). It was postulated that PE increases both perceptions for brand altruism (H3a) and brand strategy (H3b). Results show, however, that these hypotheses are not supported (H3a: $\beta = 0.056$, $p = 0.298$; H3b: $\beta = -0.028$, $p = 0.525$). Hypothesis 4, as SI increases BT increases, is supported ($\beta = 0.141$, $p < 0.05$). While the positive relationship between SI and altruistic motivation (AM) is confirmed (H5a: $\beta = 0.285$, $p < 0.05$), the relationship between SI and strategic motives (SM; H5b) is not supported ($\beta = 0.059$, $p < 0.199$). The path AM → BT (H6) is significant ($\beta = 0.326$, $p < 0.05$), while the path SM → BT (H7) is not significant ($\beta = 0.018$, $p = 0.572$).

Summary of Findings

The key findings of our study are the discovery of two positive predictors of trust in sustainable brands for unaffiliated PSPs: perception of altruistic motives of brands engaging in sustainability programs and a belief in the importance of sustainability. Accordingly, communicating a genuine commitment to sustainability to professionals has the potential to

result in an array of desired brand outcomes as they each possess a network of clients who attentively consider their recommendations. The results also indicate a robust relationship between expertise in sustainable products and the perception of the importance of sustainability. As such, brands engaged in sustainability should develop marketing materials that encourage unaffiliated PSPs to develop interest and expertise in sustainability.

While we predicted that a perception of strategic motives would have a negative drag on brand trust, we found that brands were not punished by unaffiliated PSPs if they perceived brands were involved in sustainability for strategic reasons. We surmise that these types of professionals may realize that sustainability is part of the strategic vision of numerous companies. Even so, brands are only rewarded with elevated trust when altruistic motivations are assigned. Thus, brands must effectively convey their interest in environmental stewardship.

Statement of Key Contributions

The study's uniqueness centers on how influential individuals interpret sustainability messages of brands and how that impacts their trust in the brand. We investigate sustainability as a shared value between brands and unaffiliated PSPs and find that expertise in sustainability increases the perception of its importance in the mind of the professional and facilitates trust in sustainable brands. Therefore, a high level of self-perceived proficiency in sustainability helps professionals develop trust in sustainable products. Previous research demonstrated the perils brands face if perceived as acting in an exploitative manner. Our focus is on the more nuanced differences between strategic and altruistic motivations and the role they play in building trust in sustainable brands. We find that if unaffiliated PSPs believe that a brand is promoted as sustainable for strategic reasons it will not penalize trust in the brand. However, increased trust in sustainable brands comes only if professionals believe the sustainability actions result from

altruistic intentions. Furthermore, two predictors of building trust in sustainable brands in the mind of the professional are found to be critical: perception of altruistic CSR motives of brands engaging in sustainability programs and a belief in the importance of sustainability.

THE INFLUENCE OF VOICELESS CONSONANTS IN BRAND NAMES ON THE EXPECTED CARBONATION IN BEVERAGES

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Keywords: Audio logos; Food healthfulness; Frequency; Tempo; Sensory branding

Description: This study demonstrates that "spiky" consonants embedded in brand names connote a stronger sense of fizziness in carbonated beverages.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Brand names and carbonated drinks are relevant to consumers' daily lives. However, the connections between brand names and the expected carbonation level of the named products are rarely documented. Little is known about whether brand names can enhance or diminish the expected carbonation strength of beverages. Prior literature has demonstrated that consonants

and vowels present in a brand name can influence expectations of tastes in foods and beverages (e.g., sourness, acidity) (Pathak and Calvert 2020; Motoki, Saito, Park, Velasco, Spence, and Sugiura, 2020). The current study investigates whether voiceless (vs. voiced) consonants present in brand names can influence the expected carbonation strength of beverages.

The influence of brand names on taste perception has been extensively reported. For example, food items are perceived as sweet or sour (vs. bitter) when their brand names contain voiceless (vs. voiced) consonants (Pathak and Calvert 2020; Motoki et al. 2020). Furthermore, the manipulation of the phonetic structure of brand names can meaningfully link a brand name with many other product attributes (e.g., spikiness and roundedness) (Pathak and Calvert 2020). For example, voiceless (vs. voiced) consonants are matched to spiky shapes or harsh (e.g., abrasive) products (D'Onofrio 2014; Pathak, Calvert, and Lim 2020). Carbonated (vs. still) beverages are typically associated with spiky (vs. rounded) shapes and sharper (vs. softer) sounds (Ngo, Piqueras-Fiszman, and Spence 2012; Spence and Gallace 2011). Indeed, perception of bitterness or sourness is also induced by the fizziness or bubbly feeling of carbonation in beverages (Chandrashekar et al. 2009). Accordingly, if voiceless consonants are considered spiky and harsh, and are associated with sourness, we hypothesized that brand names incorporating voiceless consonants will connote a stronger sense of fizziness in a beverage relative to their voiced counterparts.

Method And Data

Across four studies, the experiment used a within-subject design with two levels of consonants. The stimuli contained voiceless (p, k, t, f) vs. voiced (b, g, d, v) consonants. The

sample size (n≈60) was calculated using G*Power 3.1.9 (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, and Buchner, 2007) and revealed 95% power to detect a medium-sized effect (0.24).

Study 1 *(n = 61)*. Participants were asked to rate the extent to which they thought the hypothetical brand names (HBNs) containing voiceless or voiced consonants were appropriate for still (vs. carbonated) beverage brands. The results revealed that participants rated HBNs constructed from voiceless (vs. voiced) consonants as more appropriate for carbonated (vs. still) beverage brands (p = .004, η_p^2 = .14).

Study 2 *(n = 54)*. Participants were given a set of voiceless and voiced consonants and were instructed to create six brand names that could connote the carbonation strength of the beverage. Results revealed that voiceless consonants were used significantly more than voiced consonants for creating carbonated water and cola drinks names *(*p = .006, η_p^2 = .14). Next, we used the sound-shape paradigm to test the indirect association of consonant sounds with abstract shapes.

Study 3 *(n = 59)*. Participants were asked to read the HBNs aloud and rate how rounded or spiky they thought the name was. Brand names incorporating voiceless (vs. voiced) consonants were rated as spikier (vs. more rounded) (p < .001, η_p^2 = .55). This finding is consistent with the existing evidence that carbonated drinks are generally associated with spikiness or angularity (Ngo, Piqueras-Fiszman, and Spence 2012).

Study 4 *(n = 60)*. As different voiced (and voiceless) consonants (and phonemes) vary in angularity (and roundedness), this final study aimed to investigate the role of individual phonemic sounds and letters in conveying the overall angularity (or roundedness) in the HBNs. Participants rated how angular (vs. rounded) they would expect the phonemic sounds (acoustic

stimuli) and individual letters (visual stimuli) to be. In the phonemic condition, although the rating of voiceless and voiced phonemes was not significantly different, the voiced phoneme /v/ was rated as significantly more angular. In the letter condition (visual), all voiceless consonants were perceived as more angular than their voiced counterparts ($p < 0.001$), except that voiced consonant /v/ was considered as more angular than voiceless consonant /f/. We assume that the combination of phonemic and orthographic angularity influences the overall perception of any brand name and it is impossible to separate the orthographic roundedness (or angularity) of any written BN from the spoken namee. Relevant to this fact, we combined the rating responses of both the letters and phonemes together and found that voiceless (vs. voiced) consonants were considered as significantly more angular (vs. rounded) ($p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .66$).

Summary of Findings

Across four studies, we have demonstrated that voiceless consonants embedded in brand names play a critical role to signify the carbonation strength of associated beverages. In the first two studies, we demonstrate that voiceless (vs. voiced) consonants in brand names can influence consumers' expectations of carbonation strength (in water and cola drinks). In Study 3, we examined the crossmodal correspondence between consonants (voiceless vs. voiced) and abstract shapes (spiky vs. rounded). In Study 4, we examined the role of individual phonemic sounds and letters on the overall perception of a name’s angularity or roundedness.

Statement of Key Contributions

This paper provides two specific contributions. To the best of our knowledge, these findings are the first to demonstrate the connection between linguistic features embedded in brand names and the expected carbonation strength of beverages. Thus, it adds to the extant literature on sound-symbolic associations. Second, the findings provide a direction to brand managers who are seeking a sensory branding strategy to communicate a sense of strong fizziness to consumers using appropriate brand names.

References are available upon request.

VOICES OF MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS: EXPLORATORY DEVELOPMENT AND VALIDATION OF A VOICE TYPOLOGY

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Keywords: Voice typology, sensory marketing, branding, cluster analysis

Description: In this paper, we develop and examine a typology for voices used in marketing communications by the use of cluster analysis and experimental examinations.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Voices have been omnipresent in marketing communications ever since as they are, besides others, an important component of tv and radio ads. As customers increasingly interact with brands via smart assistants like Apple`s Siri or Amazon`s Alexa, they become even more important nowadays (Dawar and Bendle 2018). Nevertheless, it remains unclear which voice types companies and brands may use for different purposes as marketing research did mainly investigate single voice characteristics (e.g., Chattopadhyay et al. 2003). Research from psychology suggests that humans infer speaker characteristics like trustworthiness and competence from voices (Oleszkiewicz et al. 2017). Such inferences can shape the effects of marketing messages and become part of a brand`s identity if a voice is

used in marketing communications. To actively manage these inferences, companies and brands must understand which voice types they can use and how they differ in their effects on marketing outcomes. Consequently, the goal of this research project is twofold: (1) the development of voice types, and (2) the empirical examination of their impact on important marketing outcomes such as brand personality.

Method and Data

To achieve our research goals, we employ a four-step approach, which has been employed similarly by Henderson, Giese, and Cote (2004) and Orth and Malkewitz (2008): (1) We collected adjectives that describe voice by a systematic literature review in Web of Science and adjectives from practice by a systematic review of websites of voice actor agencies. In total, we collected 850 different adjectives describing voice from research and practice. We systematically reduced this number to a manageable amount of 68 adjectives. (2) We collected a sample of 462 voice recordings in different areas of marketing communications like radio and tv ads, online ads, corporate communication, artificial voices in products like smart assistants, voices used for services (i.e., call centers), and voices from sales channels (i.e., home shopping). For each of the fields of application, we employed a systematic approach for collecting voices. 3) We employed a cluster and factor analysis based on adjective judgments collected in a large-scale study with about 2,350 consumers to obtain voice types. (4) Finally, we examine the impact of voice types on relevant marketing outcomes (i.e., brand personality) by experimentally examining voice types.

Summary of Findings

In this section, we report a preliminary analysis with a reduced number of 2,000 participants of our cluster and factor analysis study considering all 462 recordings. For the analysis, we used data on the stimulus level instead of the level of individual subjects. To do

so, we calculated the average judgments for each variable and voice recording across subjects. With this data, we ran a hierarchical cluster analysis using Ward`s method, which resulted in a five-cluster solution. Based on the adjectives that are highly descriptive for a cluster (high scores of this adjective in the respective cluster) and those that are highly undescriptive for a cluster (low scores of this adjective in the respective cluster), we named the clusters warm, professional, rapid, dramatic, and neutral. Seven factors describe the clusters (i.e., friendly, calm, heroic, persuasive, professional, rough, and strange).

Statement of Key Contributions

With our research, we provide several contributions for research and practice. First, we develop a voice typology and, therefore, foster the theoretical understanding of voice in research and practice. Researchers can take advantage in building on our typology in further examinations and practitioners may benefit as it describes managerial options concerning voice selection. Second, we show that voice can affect important marketing outcomes as we establish relationships between voice types and brand personality in subsequent studies. These findings guide further investigations as well as practical decision-making. Third, we propose a new way to examine voice in marketing research. In our studies, we develop voice types that consider the holistic nature of sensory elements which is different from existing literature on voice in marketing research and may ground the way for similar examinations.

References are available upon request.

Consumer Behavior

ALL FOR A BUN AND A BUN FOR ALL: AN S-O-R PERSPECTIVE ON COLLECTIVE PANDEMIC PURCHASING IN MUMBAI

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Keywords: Stimulus-Organism-Response, Collective Purchasing, Emerging Markets, Covid-19 pandemic

Description: Using the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework, we investigate the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic on a group of consumers in an emerging market and find that retail upheaval results in consumers experiencing scarcity mindsets and emotional distress, eventually resulting in collective consumer action to regain access to household essentials.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Given the seismic changes brought by the Covid-19 pandemic to consumer habits and lifestyles worldwide (Goldsmith, Kelly, and Lee 2021; Sheth 2020), there is an urgent need for research on how the pandemic has impacted different facets of the market landscape. We make an attempt in this direction by focusing on a specific phenomenon that arose during the

advent of Covid-19 in one of India's largest and most populous cities: collective pandemic purchasing among the consumers of 'skyrise markets' (cohesive markets embedded within gated communities) in Mumbai (Roy and Kamath 2020).

What makes the rise of collective pandemic purchasing in skyrise markets noteworthy is its distinctiveness as similar behavior was not observed in many other nations. We believe this is due to two main reasons: an emerging market retail landscape overwhelmingly dominated by traditional mom-and-pop stores and an element of collective action seen among consumers in response to the pandemic. Consequently, our focal research question is as follows: How did consumers in skyrise markets experience and respond to retail interruptions that occurred in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic?

Method and Data

Given the exploratory research question and the distinctive focal phenomenon, we decided to use the depth interview methodology (McCracken 1988) to elicit detailed descriptions about how consumers engaged in collective pandemic purchasing. Respondents were recruited through researchers' personal contacts and successive referrals. As the focus of our study was collective pandemic purchasing, we included only those consumers who were either following that practice at the time of the interview or had done so within the last few weeks. We drafted a semi-structured interview protocol to guide the course of the interview wherein respondents were asked about how they started participating in collective purchasing and their experiences with it in the past few weeks.

Data was collected over 6 months, resulting in a final sample of 14 consumers. The interviews, conducted via Zoom or Google Hangouts, lasted between 38 and 125 minutes. The core dataset comprised about 239 pages of interview transcripts which were then uploaded to NVivo 12 and coded in three successive stages: open coding (assigning relevant

quotes to lower-level categories), axial coding (grouping lower-level categories into larger sets), and selective coding (abstracting higher-order thematic categories) to arrive at our final framework (Creswell 2007; Strauss and Corbin 1990).

Summary of Findings

Based on our analysis, we postulate a processual account comprising four central themes across the three components of the Stimulus-Organism-Response or S-O-R framework (Mehrabian and Russel 1974) that we used to anchor our findings.

At the Stimulus level, we observed *retail upheaval* as rapid changes occurred in the retail landscape for skyrise market consumers, starting with panic buying that quickly resulted in stock outages as established retailers found themselves unable to fulfill consumer demand. This sudden massive change in the market landscape led to cognitive and affective changes for consumers at the Organism level who reported experiencing *scarcity mindsets* and *emotional distress*. Thus, not only did respondents experience a hoarding mentality due to lockdowns and retail closures but they also underwent a troubled affective experience as they found themselves juggling additional worries about running out of household essentials in the midst of the more usual concerns accompanying the pandemic. Collectively, these experiences resulted in *collective consumer action* at the Response level among a select group of consumers who started engaging in collective pandemic purchasing to regain access to household essentials by working together for a common goal.

Key Contributions

We believe our research makes three key contributions to marketing literature. First, we answer calls for research urging scholars to study how the pandemic has impacted different facets of the marketplace. Second, by virtue of studying consumers in India, we bring an emerging market perspective that is often missing in mainstream marketing research (Sheth

2011). Finally, by virtue of using a processual account, we are able to provide a stage-based account of collective pandemic purchasing that is able to capture the temporal passage of the phenomenon without sacrificing its underlying complexity.

From a marketing practice perspective, our findings show that marketers would benefit from quicker turnaround times during crises and disruptions as consumers are likely to reward them with stronger engagement and loyalty. Moreover, as a high degree of resilience among marketing practitioners can prove to be crucial in such uncertain times, our findings also illustrate the advantages of providing greater agency to consumers and the possible merits of involving them when designing resilient supply chains and adaptive market channels. Finally, given the use of technology platforms by our respondents, we also add to extant work on omnichannel retailing.

References are available upon request.

ANTHROPOMORPHISM OF HEALTHY FOOD ACTIVATES NONCONSCIOUS HEALTH GOALS

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Keywords: anthropomorphism, health goals, healthy-eating nudges, nonconscious goal pursuit, transformative consumer research

Description: The present study examines how anthropomorphism of healthy food influences consumers' consumption behavior

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Questions

Research on anthropomorphism of food is gaining much traction. However, the effect of anthropomorphized healthy food on consumers' consumption behavior has not been studied in the literature. The present study answers two research questions. First, how does anthropomorphism of healthy food impact consumers' preference for anthropomorphized food? Second, can anthropomorphism of healthy food activate consumers' health goals?

Method and Data

Three studies were conducted (S1: N = 200, student participants; S2: N = 270, online participants; S3: N = 196, student participants) that examined the impact of anthropomorphized (vs. non-anthropomorphized) healthy food, contingent on the moderating role of health-consciousness. Studies 1 examine consumption intentions, whereas Study 2 examine consumption goals in a subsequent food choice. Study 3 explores the underlying mechanism of the observed effects,

Summary of Findings

Study 1 results show that anthropomorphism of healthy food increases the willingness to consume, with this effect being stronger among high health-conscious individuals. Study 2 further reveals that anthropomorphized healthy food can stimulate preference for healthier food among high health-conscious consumers (in subsequent choices). Study 3 includes some additional factors and lays out the full process- (i) in high health-conscious consumers, anthropomorphized healthy food activates health-goals, in turn increasing (a) consumption intentions, and (b) subsequent healthier food choices, but (ii) in low health-conscious consumers, anthropomorphized healthy food does not activate health goals.

Key Contributions

The present research proposes several significant contributions to the anthropomorphism, consumer psychology and consumer well-being literature. Our study extends the literature on anthropomorphism, healthy-eating interventions, and consumer goal-pursuits. Specifically, we offer a unique mechanism through which anthropomorphism can activate consumers' long-term goals. Further, prior research on food anthropomorphism has primarily examined the

consumption behavior towards anthropomorphized indulgent food (Hur et al., 2015). However, consumers' attitudes towards anthropomorphized healthy food have not been explored. Our work fills this research gap.

The current research has implications for food marketers, retailers, food outlets, organizations and policymakers. Anthropomorphism of food and food packaging is a common practice today. The empirical findings of the present study indicate that anthropomorphism of healthy food products is a good strategy for marketers and retailers to increase their sales. Our work can also be useful for organizations, schools and workplaces that wish to promote healthy eating behavior among their students and employees by offering anthropomorphized healthy food in their canteens.

References are available upon request.

CAN A COMPLEMENT-BASED ORGANIZATION LEAD TO HEALTHIER CHOICES? HORIZONTAL AND VERTICAL DISPLAY OF FOODS AND BEVERAGES

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Keywords: Food Displays, Healthy and Unhealthy Choices, Horizontal versus Vertical, Complementary Items, Field Experiment

Description: This research examines the effects of horizontal versus vertical placement of foods and beverages on healthfulness of overall choices and demonstrates that a horizontal (vs. vertical) arrangement leads to healthier choices overall.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Retail and restaurant managers often strategically arrange food and beverage options on shelves or menus by product type. The organization might be horizontal or vertical. Specifically, horizontal display is one where all the foods are placed or listed to the left or right of beverages. Vertical display relates to having all the foods placed or listed above or below the beverages. This research examines the effects of horizontal versus vertical placement of foods and beverages on healthfulness of overall choices. Prior research has investigated the directional effects of placement of healthy and unhealthy options and information (Dallas et al., 2019; Romero & Biswas, 2016). We extend this research by focusing on relative positioning of foods and beverages. Such a focus is relevant since in most eating episodes, people consume both foods and beverages. In contrast to Van Kleef et al.'s (2012) work, and Romero and Biswas's (2016) work, we do not examine display effects of healthy and unhealthy items horizontally or vertically; in our research, we are interested in investigating a context in which healthy and unhealthy items are mixed, like on a restaurant menu or in a display case.

Method and Data

We expect a horizontal arrangement of complementary products (foods and beverages) to induce healthier choices. To test this prediction, we conducted a lab study and a field study at a café. Food and beverage items were displayed either vertically (with food on top and beverages on the bottom or the other way around) or horizontally (with foods on the left and beverages on the right, or the other way around). In the lab experiment, participants were shown a menu, with

food and beverage options organized horizontally or vertically. We asked participants to make a food choice and a beverage choice. All menu options were pretested and coded into healthy and unhealthy. Next, we conducted a field experiment with a café. The café management changed food and beverage placements within their grab-and-go refrigerator. The refrigerator contained items such as different kinds of beverages and different kinds of food items. For the first two weeks, the café displayed the items vertically. For the second two weeks, the items were displayed horizontally. All items in the refrigerator were pretested and coded into healthy, unhealthy, and neutral items.

Summary of Findings

In the lab experiment, we found significant effects of food/beverage arrangement on food choice (Wald $\chi^2 = 4.29$, $p = .038$), such that 57.58% chose one of the healthy food options when arranged horizontally, with 32.35% of participants choosing one of the healthy food options when they were arranged vertically. These findings provide evidence that horizontal arrangement of options leads to choices of relatively healthier food and beverage options in a menu context. For the field study, we received sales data for the four weeks of study duration. An ANOVA using the mean healthfulness of items (based on the pretest) as a dependent variable and arrangement as the independent variable revealed that healthier items were chosen in the horizontal (vs. vertical) arrangement ($M_{vertical}$= 3.53 vs. $M_{horizontal}$= 3.41; $F(1, 1455) = 7.86$, $p <$ .01). We also investigated percentage of healthy items chosen. Customers chose significantly healthier items in the horizontal food/beverage arrangement ($HealthyPercentage_{vertical} = 60\%$ vs. $HealthyPercentage_{horizontal} = 67\%$; $\chi^2 = 6.66$, $p = .01$). Hence, our findings hold when items are placed on a refrigerator or shelf.

Statement of Key Contributions

We find evidence that presenting food and beverages horizontally next to each other (versus on top or bottom of each other) leads to healthier choices overall. Our research contributes to several major literature streams: First, we contribute to existing research on processing fluency. We show that a horizontal (that is, complement-based) assortment of foods and drinks leads to healthier choices, which builds on previous research on fluency (Romero and Biswas 2016). Further, we contribute to research on complement- and substitute-based assortment organizations (Diehl et al. 2015; Sarantopoulos et al. 2019). Lastly, by examining a way to nudge consumers toward healthier decision-making, we also build on existing literature streams on menu design and healthful consumption (Dallas et al. 2019; Parker and Lehmann 2014). While most menus present drink option below food items, a lateral presentation of options should lead to healthier consumption.

References available upon request.

CONSUMERS' CORRECTION ON CONTRASTIVE BIAS IN PRODUCT JUDGMENT

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Keywords: Contextual Bias, Bias Awareness, Contrast, Involvement, Correction

This paper examines how consumers may engage in contrastive bias corrections when evaluating products.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Questions

Bias correction theories have been developed over the past four decades to investigate how attitudes are recalibrated against various perceived contextual biases in social and marketing settings. Even though context researchers have engaged in the nearly equivalent effort to examine how assimilative or contrastive biases might exert impacts on target assessments, research in correction for contrastive bias has received surprisingly much less attention than its counterpart in correction for assimilative bias. In particular, none has worked on the scrutiny of how involvement to correct for contrastive bias might be independent of awareness of contrastive bias. This research aims at disentangling the potential interplay between involvement and bias awareness of the contrastive bias.

Method and Data

A series of experiments of correction for contrast were conducted. In the first study, 360 college students were recruited to participate in the experiment. Participants were run in a series of laboratory recruiting sessions of varied sizes. In each laboratory session, participants were randomly assigned to a 2 (Bias-Alert Article: yes vs. no) × 2 (Involvement to Correct: high vs. low) × 2 (Context: high prestige vs. median prestige) between-participant factorial design.

In the beginning of the experiment, research participants were informed that the questionnaire was used to collect college students' thoughts and opinions on some situations they might encounter in their daily lives.

Then, on the next page of the questionnaire, research participants were asked to indicate how thinking and evaluating a particular (high prestigious) brand would influence their subsequent prestige rating of another brand. Research participants were then asked to further answer several different questions unrelated to contexts and targets. These irrelevant questions served as the filler. Research participants were then instructed to enter another laboratory room. Participants were then randomly manipulated by three factors and asked to indicate their attitudes toward the target. After the measurements of manipulation checks, participants were thanked, debriefed, and dismissed.

Summary of Findings

Manipulation checks were consistent with the experiment setting. A 2 (Bias-Alert Article) × 2 (Involvement to Correct) × 2 (Context) ANOVA on the index of product assessment showed a main effect of context, $F(1, 352) = 35.85$, $p < .001$. Participants receiving the high prestigious context brand reported the target brand less favorable, $M = -.84$, than those receiving the low prestigious context brand, $M = .16$. Most importantly, such a main effect was qualified by the three-way interaction, $F(1, 352) = 4.25$, $p < .05$. Supportive to the proposal of the current research, when the context brand was at the median level of prestige, involvement to correct did not differ participants' target assessments, be it with the bias-alert article, $F(1, 352) = .75$, $p = .39$, or without the bias-alert article, $F(1, 352) = .07$, $p = .79$. When the context brand was high prestigious, involvement to correct did not differ participants' target assessments only in the condition without the bias-alert article, $F(1, 352) = .54$, $p = .47$, but not in the condition with the bias-alert article, $F(1, 352) = 7.81$, $p < .01$.

Key Contributions

The contribution of the current study is threefold. First, the current study produces the most compelling evidence to date of the moderating role of involvement to correct and awareness of bias in the research stream of theory-based correction for contrast. Above and beyond the typical theorization supporting theory-based correction for contrast, the current study complements correction theories by postulating and substantiating the moderating role involvement to correct and awareness of bias may play to instigate the correction.

Second, the current study pushes over the implicated edge of correction research. Instead of being constrained in the laboratory design manipulated by factors incompatible with the true marketing circumstances, the current study establishes the stage with which bias correction for contrast is likely for general consumers when they encounter marketing campaigns in their daily lives.

Third, most research in bias correction measures the idiographic theories of bias implicitly or indirectly. The current study directly measures the theories of bias that respondents are supposed to hold, and therefore provides the evidence associating the measured theories of bias with involvement to correct contrastive bias and awareness of the potential for contrastive bias. The theorization of the theory-based correction for contrast can now be further complemented.

CONSUMPTION AS THERAPY: DEALING WITH SUSTAINED STRESS THROUGH CONSUMPTION

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Key words: Crisis, stress, consumption therapy, consumer sentiment, multinational study, optimism, utilitarian and hedonic purchases

Description: Multinational research on consumption as therapy to increase optimism and reduce stress during a global stressor.

ABSTRACT

A life-threatening organism has created stress around the globe. Across four countries, we explore coping with stress through consumption. This research provides insight about changes in stress over time, country factors, consumer sentiment, coping activities, types of goods purchased and spending pattern effects on stress and optimism for the future.

INTRODUCTION & THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The COVID pandemic has created stress around the globe related to health and finances. A search on Google, February 5, 2021, for stress and COVID-19 yielded over 869 million results. Individuals express stress regarding others they may come in contact with, family, illness, death, finances, and not finding products they want to purchase (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2020). The pandemic is a unique global stressor. Stressful situations have often been studied in lab settings (Mather and Lighthall 2012, Kahneman 2011) where the stressor tends to be manipulated by recall and last only minutes or hours. We report on the impact the pandemic stressor has had on individuals across four countries, their coping strategies and their success with particular attention to the role of consumption as a coping strategy.

Consumption as a coping mechanism

A review of 35 years of literature examining stress and consumption documents a variety of phenomena including avoidance, seeking well-being thru increased consumption of activities and goods, increased socializing, turning to vices, delayed consumption and increased desire to purchase (Yap and Kapitan 2017). Research shows consumer sentiment and happiness gained from consumption can be therapeutic (Dunn et al. 2015), relieve stress and increases happiness (Petersen et al. 2018). The COVID pandemic affords us the unique opportunity to examine

consumption behavior to manage stress and increase optimism in response to a real-time, sustained stressor.

Optimism is a hopeful approach to a stressful situation and can impact whether a person continues or gives up (Scheier and Carver 1992). Thus, one way to assess the utility of coping mechanisms is to examine their impact on optimism. Optimism is distinct from happiness, which is a positive emotional state associated with a high level of positive affect in the moment (Yang et al. 2021). Optimism and happiness are unique from each other and both have positive components, as such they provide information about the impact of coping mechanisms.

This research is an investigation across multiple countries in different stages of the pandemic. We address whether stress levels are sustained due to the presence of a sustained threat and if stress levels vary based on the phase the disease is in (increasing, flat or in decline). We also explore how consumer sentiment alters in response to stress, consumption and spending patterns during, compared to before the pandemic, and the impact of consumption on optimism using individual and country level data. To the best of our knowledge, this research is the first to provide insight about consumption behaviors of individuals from multiple countries living through an extended crisis.

STUDY METHOD

This study was run over three days ending April 7, 2020 in India, Italy and the United States (U.S), with a lag in China data collection ending April 13. Each country was in a different phase of virus spread and had access to online surveys. On April 7th it was announced that over 70,000 people around the globe had died of COVID-19. There were over one million substantiated cases of COVID-19 with ten times that amount estimated to be infected but undiagnosed (Washington

Post Staff 2020). There were no vaccinations available and there was a great deal of uncertainty about the pandemic.

In China, the novel coronavirus was detected in late 2019 (Xinhua 2020). The spread of the disease resulted in 3,337 reported deaths by April 7, 2020, when no new cases were reported, and it appeared the curve was no longer going up. In Italy, COVID-19 had led to 17,669 deaths and the curve of reported cases diagnosed was approaching 5% growth per day (Washington Post Staff 2020). India's confirmed cases were growing at 48% daily with 5,311 confirmed cases so far. It was suggested that India was in the early high growth phase of the disease (Washington Post Staff 2020). The United States had 12,285 deaths as of April 7, 2020 (Fox et al. 2020). Confirmed cases had grown 15% over the previous 24 hours and the effects of COVID-19 were growing and expected to continue escalating.

A survey was administered online in India, Italy, China and the U.S. All participants that completed the survey and passed the attention checks were paid moderate compensation. The survey was described to participants as 'questions about their consumption and perceptions at this time' and included questions about stress, how they cope, and consumption.

Stress was measured by the participants response to five questions including 'I feel this much stress about my health; the health of people I care about; my income; food; and being close to others' (0 not at all - 7 a great deal). Optimism, a measure of hope for the future, was measured with four questions including 'My optimism about the future; my ability to cope; my family; and my finances' (0 not at all - 7 a great deal).

Participants reported consumption they engaged in to deal with stress by prioritizing what they do most (1) to least (8) to cope with the pandemic. The items included avoiding the topic, playing games, socializing, learning as much about it as I can, medicating or drinking, watching

movies or online videos, creating projects and working, and preparing for the worst. To assess consumer sentiment, participants reported 'how much shopping made them happy' before COVID-19 and also in the last few days (0 not at all – 7 a great deal).

Consumer spending patterns were assessed by asking participants to think about what they spend money on and respond to "Currently I spend (-7 less to +7 more) than I did two months ago on the following items". They were asked about eight different product categories including four hedonic goods (candy, entertainment, clothing, luxury items), and four utilitarian goods (food in general, basic nutritional food, transportation, nonfood grocery items).

RESULTS

Four hundred seventy-five participants completed the survey, passed four attention checks and provided the data for analysis (India n = 90, USA n = 97, China n = 215, Italy n = 73, total n = 475), 54% were male. The average age was 29.7 years old, ranging 18 to 72 years.

Stress and country specific factors.

Country specific factors such as finances, population, health measures and cultural dimensions that may impact stress felt by its citizens were measured. Financial measures included the national GDP, a sign of wealth of its citizens, and population. Health measures included health care spending per capita, doctors per thousand people, and hospital beds per thousand. Hofstede's 6 measures of cultural dimensions included power distance, individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, long term orientation and indulgence (Hofstede 2011).

Multilinear regression results indicated the model was a significant predictor of stress with country specific factors (GDP, population, health spending per capita, Doctors/1000 population, hospital beds/1000 people, and Hofstede factors) (R^2 = .06; F(3,475) = 10.18; p <.0001). Significant negative predictors (all p < .001) of stress included national GDP (β = -.0045),

hospital beds/1000(β = -.001), and long-term orientation (β = -.0027). These results make sense in that if an individual knows there are fewer resources in national financial strength and hospital beds, stress will increase. In addition, the greater a person's long-term orientation the lower their stress was as they may be able to look past the immediate crisis.

Significant positive predictors of stress (p <.0001) by country included population (β < .0001), doctors/1000 (β = .0003), power distance (β = .0077), individualism (β = .0215), masculinity (β = .009), uncertainty avoidance (β = .0162) and indulgence (β = .0038). Likely mechanisms for these results include 1) greater population increases perceived risk of contagion, 2) the presence of more doctors might increase the frequency of news about the virus leading to increased stress, 3) inequality might indicate a lack of resources to deal with a contagion-based stressor, 4) the lack of control over the stressor might be more alarming for more masculine and individualistic cultures as it is possible that group-based cultures expect members of the group to comply with contagion guidelines and support each other while individualists might not, and 5) stressors are presumably more upsetting for those with a desire for stability and indulgence.

Due to the focus on four countries, there are multicollinearities when utilizing simple regressions. The HLM approach allows us to factor in the nested nature of the data (individuals nested in countries) and permits us to account for the heterogeneity due to country specific effects, thereby alleviating the problem of alternative accounts based on culture and nationality. HLM analyses revealed that there was much greater variance at the individual level than the country level, suggesting that individual differences were much larger than country level differences.

Stress by time in the area.

Participants reported their level of stress on five questions which were summed and averaged into a personal stress scale (chronbach α= .78). The regression model of the predictor 'weeks COVID-19 has been in the area they live' against the dependent variable stress was significant ($F(1, 474) = 1062$; $p < .00001$; $R^2 = .69$). A simple regression demonstrated that there was a significant difference in stress across countries ($F(3, 471) = 10.18$; $p = .0001$). We therefore utilized HLM where individuals are nested in countries. Stress was influenced positively by the length of time the virus had been present ($\beta = 0.03$; $F(1, 469) = 4.12$; $p < .05$) and interestingly stress kept building with the length of time the stressor was present, rather than reaching a point and then stopping.

Stress by rate of virus spread

There was an influence of the perceived rate of spread on stress ($\beta = 0.04$; $F(1, 469) = 4.85$; $p < .03$). There was little evidence to suggest differences in the relationship of stress as a function of the presence of the virus and the rate of spread across countries. Given that stress is a hardwired physiological reaction to danger, this is perhaps unsurprising. While individuals in different countries may have differing set points, once the stressor is introduced, responses appear similar across countries suggesting that the stress response is a human, rather than cultural, phenomenon.

Effects on shopping sentiment

Making purchases can produce positive emotions and be a form of coping with stress (Petersen et al. 2018). During this time of stress, with financial concerns and social distancing with stay at home orders, shopping could be useful therapy. Analysis of sentiment (happiness) towards shopping before COVID- 19 and after it emerged yielded main effects for country ($F(3, 464) = 14.81$; $p < .0001$), for time (pre vs. during COVID- 19; $F(1, 464) = 103.08$; $p < .0001$) and a time x country interaction ($F(3, 464) = 4.86$; $p < .002$). Individuals from all four countries reported

that happiness derived from shopping had significantly declined in the wake of COVID- 19 (all p's <.001).

Since there was considerable variation across countries, we utilized HLM models for subsequent analyses. Specifically, the change in happiness from shopping was regressed on stress. A reasonable hypothesis is that stress impacts the enjoyment derived from shopping. We tested this mediational hypothesis. There was an independent significant influence of stress (β = 0.16; $F(1, 463) = 4.52$, $p < .03$) on the change in shopping enjoyment. As stress increased there was a reduction in happiness.

Consumption of various activities

We collected data on a number of potential coping strategies individuals could use. If these were successful, it should be reflected in the optimism experienced and reported by consumers. Consumers reported on the extent to which they engaged in the following behaviors: playing games, avoiding the topic, socializing, learning as much as I can about the virus, watching movies or online videos, drinking or medicate, socializing, working on projects and preparing for the worst. Participants reported their level of optimism on 4 items which were summed and averaged into an optimism scale (Cronbach α= .84).

A simple regression again demonstrated that there was a significant difference in optimism across countries ($F(3, 471) = 3.03$; $p = 0.03$) suggesting that the use of an HLM model would be more appropriate in examining the effects of variables on optimism. Consumption of the eight activities as coping strategies aimed at managing stress had an impact on optimism, albeit sometimes in a perverse fashion. Increased socializing (β = -0.06, $F(1, 470) = 4.01$, $p < .05$), learning about the virus (β = -0.11, $F(1, 470) = 10.93$, $p < .001$), and creating projects and work (β = -0.07, $F(1, 470) = 6.02$, $p < .02$) increased optimism. Socializing is interesting in that it

bolsters optimism but obviously could be dangerous from a contagion point of view. Perversely, avoiding thinking about the problem decreased optimism (β = 0.12, $F(1, 470) = 20.8$, $p < .0001$) as did drinking and medication, albeit marginally (β = 0.05, $F(1, 470) = 2.16$, $p < .14$). Playing games, watching movies and preparing for the worst had no influence on optimism. It should be noted that stress did not have a significant effect on optimism (p's > .2), underlining that optimism is a product of coping strategies rather than the stressor and controlling for them did not change the results reported above substantively.

Consumption of products

Participants reported their spending on eight different categories. Spending on candy, clothing, entertainment online and luxury items were classified as hedonic while expenditure on food overall, basic nutritional food, non-food grocery items and transportation were classified as utilitarian. Main effects for country and type of spend were qualified by a significant country x type of spend interaction ($F(3, 471) = 4.29$; $p = .01$).

The change in happiness (sentiment) derived from shopping (pre-COVID- 19 – during-COVID- 19) was utilized as a dependent variable – positive values indicate greater enjoyment pre-COVID- 19. Negative values indicate greater enjoyment during-COVID- 19. An HLM model revealed main effects for hedonic spending (β = -0.31; $F(1, 462) = 41; 45$, $p < .0001$) and utilitarian spending (β = 0.19; $F(1, 462) = 12.68$; $p < .0004$). Hedonic spending tended to make people enjoy shopping during COVID- 19 while utilitarian spending was more enjoyable pre-COVID- 19.

An HLM model controlling for country level heterogeneity revealed, perhaps counter-intuitively, that while hedonic spending did not impact optimism (β = 0.02; $F(1, 469) = 0.31$; $p >$

.5), utilitarian spending did have a positive influence on optimism for the future ($F(1, 469) = 8.14$; $p < .005$).

DISCUSSION

Across analysis of individuals from Italy, China, India and the U.S. we show the impact of a long-term stressor on individual stress and the effect of consumption activities on optimism and happiness. First, new to stress research, this research reveals that individual factors are more critical than country level differences in stress response. In other words, the stress response is more individual than culturally based. Our findings show that stress during the COVID-19 pandemic continued to increase based on the length of time the disease had been present rather than flattening out or being blocked due to stress fatigue. Second, a novel finding was that stress did not decrease as the phase of the virus flattened or decreased, but was a function of length of time. The stress response appears to be tuned to the first order (length of time) rather than higher order (rate of change over time). These results may have been impacted by other ongoing factors such as media representation and social distancing.

Third, we found individuals from nations with greater wealth, more hospital beds and more long-term attitudes experienced less stress during the pandemic. Knowledge that resources are available appeared to alleviate stress. We also found that countries with greater inequality, assertiveness, and individualism experienced increased stress. These bring up interesting concerns about coping with stress. We further learned individuals in countries with more doctors/1000 experienced more stress. It could be that the presence of doctors increased the frequency of the disease being discussed rendering thoughts about the disease more accessible.

Fourth, most consumption of activities such as watching movies, playing games, preparing for the worst, avoiding thinking about the problem, drinking or medicating to cope with the

prolonged stress reduced, or had no effect, on optimism. This is disappointing as research has found optimism is a strong predictor of well-being and coping with stress. On the other hand, socializing, learning about the virus or creating projects and working increased optimism. We also found that utilitarian spending had a positive impact on optimism, even though it was less enjoyable to shop for utilitarian goods during this stressful time. This suggests that once COVID-19 arrived, utilitarian shopping was now for items that were perhaps matters of 'survival' and if procured, hope for the future (optimism) increased.

Finally, previous research shows that consumption can be a form of therapy and increases happiness. Analysis revealed that overall happiness from shopping decreased in all four countries. However, hedonic spend did make people enjoy shopping more and thus provided some consumption therapy value, although it did not provide the emotional lift of optimism which can have a strong positive effect on well-being.

This research uncovers that in an extended crisis most forms of consumption therapy engaged in were not effective – at the very least, we can reach the conclusion that individuals have little insight into what activities will enhance their optimism and help them cope with stress. Beyond understanding the stress response to a pandemic, this research has implications for marketing and public policy leaders as they look at country specific factors that increase stress during a pandemic. There may be approaches that can increase the nurturance, equality, and identification with the group to effect more positive responses in individuals that feel overwhelmed with stress. Consumption activities that have a positive impact on optimism can be encouraged. In a time where stress continues to increase, recognizing proven ways to cope may help increase a person's well-being and ability to live with increased optimism.

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CONTEXT MATTERS IN VIRTUALITY: WHEN AND WHY AUGMENTED REALITY HARMS OR BENEFITS OWNERSHIP PERCEPTION AND CONSUMER REACTIONS

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Keywords: augmented reality, context, perceived ownership, psychological distance, construal level

Description: This study introduces a new psychological process, perceived proximity, through which product presentation in AR operates, and identifies a managerial and theoretically relevant boundary condition inherent in AR that attenuates positive consumer reactions such as increased ownership perceptions.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Augmented Reality (AR) is a technology that supplements the real world with digital content on consumers' screen devices in real-time (Azuma et al. 2001). So far, more than 1.5 billion consumers have already used AR, and, in some countries, usage rates climb up to more than 50% of consumers (Statista 2021; Finken et al. 2021). Its popularity has prompted Forbes to advise CMOs to start experimenting with AR (Evans 2021). Due to its managerial relevance, the MSI has declared AR a research priority.

One of the most popular consumer AR appliances allows for virtual product inspection, for example, from the comfort of consumers' homes (Porter & Heppelmann 2017). Yet the home is not the only place virtual product inspection occurs: many consumers shop online while commuting (Jashan 2018).

We are curious about what happens when consumers virtually inspect products in a context that is unrelated to a product's intended usage (e.g., imagine observing a blender on a train). This dichotomy has inspired the following main research question: When and why does context[1] influence how consumers perceive products that appear virtually in AR?

Method and Data

We answered our research question by first reviewing prior literature and conceptualizing our theoretical framework based on psychological distance and construal level. We believe that consumers' perceived proximity to a product is one major conceptual route through which product presentation in AR operates.

We tested our expectations (e.g., "The positive influence of AR (vs. alternative) product presentation on consumer preferences (e.g., perceived ownership) is moderated by contextual congruity, such that it is attenuated in less congruent contexts.") in a series of controlled online- and lab experiments with more than 2,500 participants.

To generalize our results, we used multiple products (mugs, plants, kitchen devices, outdoor equipment) and varying forms of product presentation (i.e., AR vs. 3D product image (360-degree) vs. multiple 2D images). Additionally, we pretested several products in terms of their contextuality (i.e., whether a product has incongruent contexts of placement or use). All experiments took place on participants' mobile devices. Participants received instructions to observe the product of the study and answered measures taken from prior literature and adapted to the context of the study (e.g., perceived ownership, perceived proximity, WTP and

[1] Context relates to the current context in which consumers use AR to inspect a product.

purchase intention). We also tested for other mechanisms taken from prior literature (e.g., novelty or behavioral control).

Summary of Findings

In experiments 1a and 1b (pre-registered on OSF), we tested our causal expectations against various presentation formats. Experiment 1c tested the robustness of our mechanism against other conceptual accounts (e.g., novelty, immersion, behavioral control, etc.). All these experiments revealed convincing evidence for our conceptual account of perceived proximity, specifically for non-contextual products (i.e., products that can be placed or used anywhere).

Next, experiment 2 tested for the impact of usage context by manipulating presentation format (AR vs. 3D) and contextual cues (congruent vs. incongruent) for contextual products (kitchen devices). Our results show a significant index of moderated mediation through perceived proximity. The incongruent usage context dampens the effect on perceived ownership in the AR condition, but not in the control condition.

Finally, experiments 3 and 4 highlighted the impact of AR product presentation on downstream consequences. First, experiment 3 revealed evidence of AR's (vs. 3D's) impact on purchase intentions. Second, experiment 4 again showed that context matters: we found a significant interaction of presentation format (AR vs. 3D) and context (congruent vs. incongruent) of consumers' actual WTP for a tent applying the BDM method (Miller et al. 2011).

Key Contributions

This article makes important contributions to both theory and practice. First, our research contributes to literature on psychological distance and construal level theory by introducing a novel process, distinct from prior research. Specifically, we show that superimposing a virtual product onto consumers' reality operates through proximity, which ultimately affects consumer reactions (i.e., perceived ownership, product attitudes, purchase intentions).

Second, this research contributes to our current understanding of ownership theory—consumers' feeling that something is THEIRS without having legal possession (Pierce, Kostova, & Dirks 2003)—and the mere ownership effect (Peck & Shu 2009). We show that perceived proximity matters in virtuality and triggers ownership perceptions independent of touching or controlling products, which have been considered key antecedents of ownership in a real-world setting (Peck & Shu 2009).

Third, this research extends prior research on AR by systematically looking into real-time contextual embedding and the resulting consumer reactions. In doing so, we extend our understanding of context effect theory to virtuality. Importantly, we show that an incongruent contextual embedding of contextual products attenuates positive consumer reactions.

Our findings also imply downstream consequences: Firms are well-advised to encourage consumers to use AR for product presentation in a contextual embedding congruent with their products.

References are available upon request.

Culture and Gender Effects on How Healthcare Consumers Respond to Adverse Medical Diagnoses

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Keywords: healthcare, medical diagnoses, cross-cultural consumers, gender

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

In a multicultural country like the US, we can observe how people from different cultural backgrounds react differently to adverse medical diagnoses (AMDs, which we define as the pronouncement of a debilitating medical condition that elevates healthcare consumers' uncertainty over future life trajectory). A parallel example is the observed vaccination hesitancy observed during COVID-19. But, what role do different cultural backgrounds play in these healthcare consumers' acceptance of an AMD? Is the cultural syndrome of honor responsible for these reactions in highly endorsing of honor populations? And what moderating roles do Gender Norms and Perceived Stigma, both of which are social constructs and culture-dependent, play in the acceptance of AMDs? Understanding these phenomena and creating interventions that address them can help save lives and contribute to social justice.

- **H1**: The more (less) a healthcare consumer endorses the honor syndrome, the less (more) likely s/he will be to accept an adverse medical diagnosis

- **H2**: The more (less) a healthcare consumer endorses traditional gender norms, the less (more) likely a male (female) healthcare consumer will be to accept an adverse medical diagnosis
- **H3**: The more (less) stigmatized the perception of the adverse medical diagnosis, the less (more) it will be accepted

This research brings cultural syndromes and honor theories to the healthcare services marketplace and healthcare decision making marketing research areas.

Method and Data

The lab experiment is a 2x2 factorial design that measures the acceptance of AMD by participants based on endorsement of honor syndromes and gender factors and condition stigma as acceptance moderators. Data were collected via Prolific from USA and Spain and separated between high endorsers and low endorsers of the cultural syndrome of honor. Materials were translated into Spanish following Construct Measurement Equivalency Methodology (CMEM; Martín Ruiz & Rosa, unpublished). All participants completed Rosenberg's 1979 Self-Esteem Scale followed by Botella et al. (2018) Openness to the Future Scale. Next, participants were exposed to an Honor prime (created by the authors) and responded to questions related to the prime. Participants were randomly exposed to two (out of three) manipulation vignettes (created by the authors). Each manipulation vignette represented an AMD of low, moderate, or high perceived stigma, namely: Leukemia (low perceived stigma), heart arrhythmia (moderate perceived stigma), and antibiotic-resistant chlamydia (a type of STD very high on perceived stigma). After each vignette, participants randomly responded to the items in Raijlic et al.'s (2019) Global Self-Esteem Scale and Botella et al.'s (2018) Openness to the Future Scale. Participants also answered questions from Arcienaga et al.'s (2008) Traditional Machismo and

Caballerismo scale and Castillo et al's (2010) Marianismo Beliefs scale after each vignette, which served to separate high- vs. low-endorsers of honor cultural syndromes.

Summary of Findings

Participants who highly endorse honor syndromes are more likely to not accept an AMD, as hypothesized (H1). Leukemia, the control condition, showed no significant results. However, both STD (high endorsers $M = 5.25$, low endorsers $M = 5.64$; $F = 14.819$, $p < .001$) and Heart Arrhythmia (high endorsers $M = 6.05$, low endorsers $M = 6.34$; $F = 13.038$, $p < .001$) show significantly different results for both groups of participants, in support of H1.

Results also show that gender and perceived stigma of the AMD do moderate the acceptance of an AMD so that higher the perceived stigmatized of the condition the less accepted the AMD, in support of H3. The acceptance also differs by gender so that, overall, females are more accepting of AMDs except in the case of the STD vignette among high endorsers of honor syndromes, in line with the expectations of chastity of the honor syndrome for females, providing partial support for H2.

Participants experienced a decline in self-esteem and future outlook after responding to the manipulation vignettes for both high endorsers of honor (pre-manipulation $M = 3.47$, post-manipulation $M = 3.10$, $F = 8.836$, $p < .001$) and low endorsers of honor (pre-manipulation $M = 3.56$, post-manipulation $M = 3.03$, $F = 9.341$, $p < .001$). Results for self-esteem are also significant for high endorsers of honor cultural syndrome ($M = -.035$, post-manipulation $M = -.542$, $F = 11.607$, $p < .001$) and low endorsers of honor cultural syndrome ($M = .042$, post-manipulation $M = -.309$, $F = 8.63$, $p < .001$).

Key Contributions

Our research shows the importance that cultural syndromes play in healthcare consumers' wellbeing in multicultural marketplaces, and could be utilized for the creation of culturally-sensitive interventions that could reduce the denial of adverse medical diagnoses (AMDs). For example, doctors could modify the delivery method of the diagnosis to the healthcare consumer by making it less threatening, increasing the acceptance of the diagnosis. Additionally, different delivery methods could be utilized that ensure the privacy of the healthcare consumer, such as telehealth. These types of interventions could increase the number of healthcare consumers accepting AMDs and the likelihood of these consumers of adhering to prescribed treatments. They could also reduce healthcare costs for both the healthcare consumer, hospitals, and government agencies and decrease the number of people dying from treatable and preventable conditions around the world. Our research helps with the basic understanding of this behavioral phenomena, expands the theory of honor cultural syndrome to the healthcare decision-making arena, and it helps support decision-making and maladaptive behaviors research. We believe that this research is even more relevant today given the COVID-19 pandemic since it has highlighted many of the consumer wellbeing disparities in the healthcare consumer marketplace.

References are available upon request

CUSTOMER ADOPTION INTENTION OF VOICE SHOPPING SERVICE: THE INFLUENCES OF TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTANCE FACTORS, PERSONALIZATION, PRIVACY, AND CUSTOMER TRUST

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Keywords: Voice Shopping Services, Customers Adoption Intention, TAM, PPP, Trust

Description: This research examines the role of perceived ease-of-use, perceived usefulness, privacy, personalization, and customer trust in driving customers' adoption intention of voice shopping service.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Despite the fact that voice shopping service has been increasingly developed in recent years with consumers in the United States as the pioneer, few studies investigated the factors influencing customer adoption intention of voice shopping, especially in Asian emerging markets. In recent years, voice shopping service has been increasingly applied by retailers in many countries outside the US. Online shopping platforms have also been more popular in Southeast Asia developing countries such as Thailand, Indonesia, Vietnam, and Malaysia. Asian consumers are also starting to embrace voice shopping services. In this respect, this research addresses questions such as Which factors attract customers to adopt voice shopping instead of traditional e-shopping? Do technology acceptance factors influence customers adoption intention? Does personalization play a vital role in performing customers' experiences when they utilize technologies operated by AI? Is privacy considered to be the drawback of voice shopping as this service is provided via 'always listening' devices as a tool to bring the most personalized services to customers? Does trust reduce perceived risk? Do any of the utility-related factors and trust encourage customer adoption intention?

Method And Data

Survey responses were collected from 158 respondents living in Asian countries (58.86% female). All questions utilized 7-point Likert-type scales (from 1 'Strongly disagree' to 7 'Strongly agree'). Perceived ease of use, Perceived Usefulness, Personalization, Privacy, Customer trust, and Adoption intention were measured using validated scales (see Davis 1989, Rhee and Choi 2020, Wolfinbarger and Gilly 2003, Xu et al. 2011, Eid 2011, Ranganathan and Ganapathy 2002, Bawack et al. 2021, Gao et al. 2011, Lee 2005, and Kim et al. 2010). The collected data were analyzed with Partial least squares—structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) approach.

Summary of Findings

The findings of this study contribute to voice shopping literature which has not been comprehensively studied in e-commerce research. Perceived usefulness was demonstrated as the most significant antecedent in adoption intention towards voice shopping; nevertheless, ease-of-use did not appear to have considerable influence. This result is in line with Fernandes and Oliveira (2021)'s research about voice assistant adoption. In addition, while personalization was found to have a positive and significant influence on potential customers' adoption intention, privacy was not an influencer. A possible explanation for this unrelatedness could be that consumers only become directly aware of the negative consequences of revealing personal information after using the voice shopping service. Therefore, privacy is more likely to be the focal point of consumers' continued usage rather than adoption intention towards an unfamiliar service (Xu and Gupta 2009). Last but not least, the positive association between consumers' trust and their adoption intention in the context of voice shopping service was verified. The significant factors were evidenced to explain a moderate level, 55.6%, of the variation in customer adoption intention of voice shopping service.

Statement of Key Contributions

Theoretically, this study would contribute to the knowledge in the field of customer behavior towards voice shopping by investigating the role of utility-related factors and trust in encouraging customer adoption. Practically, the research results are expected to provide retailers, or e-commerce businesses owners/managers with the guidelines to develop voice-activated shopping systems, especially e-commerce service providers in emerging markets in Asia. For example, e-commerce businesses should concentrate on developing the voice shopping service that conveniently performs a diversity of tasks (i.e., recommending items to repurchase based on customers' information, learning consumers' unique preferences whenever they go shopping online, providing promotional products that match customers' interests). Personalization is activated not only based on users' habits, lifestyles, but also on the data of other customers who have identical behavioral patterns or interests. Service providers should build potential customers' trust by widely introducing legal or technological structures such as encryption and certification to guarantee security in terms of payment as well as other personal information usage (e.g., voice, location).

References are available uponrequest.

DESIGNING PERSUASIVE VOICEOVER NARRATION IN CROWDFUNDING VIDEOS

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Keywords: video marketing, persuasion, voice, voiceover, crowdfunding

Description: Across four studies (real-world datasets and controlled experiments), we find that consumers who heard a persuasive message voiced by multiple narrators (vs. one narrator) would be more receptive to the new product in crowdfunding videos and video ads.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Consider two product videos. In one video, multiple narrator voices sequentially describe the features of a new product. In another video, a single narrator voice convey the same product message. Does the number of voices narrating a message affect consumers' processing of the message and subsequent behavior? If so, is the effect disruptive or facilitative? In this research we examine these questions in the context of video marketing, which have become increasingly prevalent and important in consumer decision making.

We posit that in broadcast videos, consumers who heard a persuasive message voiced by multiple narrators (vs. one narrator) would be more receptive to the new product, due to increased consumer attention and processing. Our rationale is as follows: Consumers' cognitive resources are constrained, thus they deliberate on features which capture their attention (Lynch and Srull 1982). Research has shown that a voice change can involuntarily capture attention (Cherry 1953). When a new narrator's voice carries on an ad message, there should be a momentary increase in consumers' attention and processing of the next piece of spoken message that might not have been processed otherwise. The enhanced processing of the message would increase the persuasive appeal of the product.

Method And Data

We employed a multi-method approach, including experimentation, natural language processing, text mining, and machine learning. We test our predictions in four studies (plus validation and replication studies), including large-scale, real-world datasets (with more than 11,000 crowdfunding videos and more than 1,600 broadcast ads) and controlled experiments (with over 2,200 participants). Study 1 examines the hypothesized effect using a dataset we collected from Kickstarter, a leading crowdfunding platform for innovations, with consequential dependent measures. We processed the video data using machine learning, text mining, and natural

language processing; we then related video and project characteristics to consequential dependent measures in the crowdfunding context. Whereas Study 1 observes consumers' responsiveness to product videos in crowdfunding, Study 2 examines the effect using real-world online video advertising from international (English-based) markets. It thereby generalizes the effect to another context of importance for marketing practice: video advertising. The next two studies are controlled experiments to further test our conceptualization underlying the effect—that it is driven by enhanced cognitive attention and processing. Study 3 tests for the effect when consumers have varied processing resources. Study 4 investigates the effect as a function of consumers' dispositional differences in cognitive processing.

Summary of Findings

First, we find that the measured effect size has consequential, economic implications in a real-world marketplace. In Study 1, our results show that for each additional voice in the project video, the average project sees an increase of (1) about $12,795 in pledged amount (a 39% increase), (2) 118 customers supporting the project (backers) (a 38% increase), and (3) 1.6% probability that the project is successfully funded (a 6.5% increase). In Studies 1 and 2, the hypothesized effect is consistently moderated by the rate at which the spoken ad message was delivered. Given that faster speech rate disrupts cognitive processing (Moore et al. 1986), the results are consistent with the notion that the effect is driven by enhanced processing. Study 3 finds that the effect is moderated by consumers' processing resources and is more pronounced when consumers have the capacity to process the ad message. Study 4 shows that the effect applies mainly to consumers who tend to enjoy and engage in cognitive endeavors.

Statement of Key Contributions

Voice-based marketing communications are becoming increasingly popular and important to consumer decision making in the modern marketplace. However, research on the effect of sound and narrator's voice on consumer behavior remains fairly under-researched (cf. Krishna and Schwarz 2014; Dahl 2010). We aim to contribute to the sensory marketing and consumer behavior literatures by identifying and showing a novel design element—the number of voices narrating a marcomm message—can systematically affect consumer behavior. Moreover, we aim to contribute to practice by offering concrete recommendations on voiceover narration for marketing practitioners (e.g., brand/marketing managers, media designers) and architects of the consumer information environment (e.g., UX designers, entrepreneurs) to consider in designing persuasive marketing communications using video marketing.

References are available upon request.

DOSE PRO/CON MESSAGE LEAD TO BETTER PRODUCT PERCEPTIONS THAN CON/PRO MESSAGE? THE INTERACTION EFFECT OF MESSAGE ORDER AND SOURCE IN USER-GENERATED CONTENT

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Keywords: message order effect, product attitude, primacy effect, recency effect, message source

Description: The current research examines the message order effect of two opposing messages on product attitude in the context of user-generated content, when consumers are highly involved in processing the messages.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

The current research is designed to examine the message order effect of two opposing messages on product attitude in the context of user-generated content, when consumers are highly involved in processing the product messages. It is proposed that, when two opposing messages are from two difference sources, primacy effects will be more likely to occur. That is, the pro/con message order will lead to better product attitude than the con/pro message order. It is because product attitude formed after the first message is stronger and able to resist the second message. However, when two opposing messages are from the same source, primacy effects will be eliminated; that is, the pro/con message order will lead to the same product attitude as the con/pro message order. This is because, in this case, product attitude assumedly will not be formed until consumers have processed the two opposing messages, and thus the message order is unlikely to have any impact. In summary, different vs. same source serves as a moderator for the effect of message order on product attitude.

Method and Data

Two hundred college students participated in the main experiment through online survey. Participants were randomly assigned to the 2 (message order: pro/con, con/pro) X 2 (source: two sources, one source) between-participant factorial design. Participants were told that the survey was designed to investigate their attitudes toward a new brand of laptop backpack. All participants were manipulated to have high involvement in processing the target message. Participants read a user-generated content about a Swiss brand of laptop backpack (“Whitcheer” laptop backpack) which

was just launched in the local area six months ago. Participants were told that the blogger's name and product pictures were not disclosed to participants because this study was designed to merely study the effects of the verbal content. The content presented eight arguments or opinions about the product; four were positive arguments promoting the product's strengths and four were negative arguments complaining the product's shortcomings. Half of participants read the content presenting the arguments from two different sources, while the other half of participants read the arguments from the same source. Then, they were asked to answer some questions about product attitude, some dependent measures, and manipulation checks.

Summary of Findings

The mean involvement index was significantly higher than the scale midpoint of 4 ($M = 4.91$, $t(199) = 20.42$, $p < .001$). The product attitude index was submitted to a 2 (Message Order) X 2 (Source) ANOVA. The analysis revealed that there was a main effect of Message Order ($F(1, 196) = 29.05$, $p < .01$). That is, the pro/con order generated more favorable product attitude than did the con/pro order, irrespective of different source conditions. More important, Message Order X Source interaction was significant ($F(1, 196) = 14.40$, $p < .01$). That is, when participants read the contents from two different sources, they rated the target product as more favorable after receiving the pro/con message order ($M = 4.35$) than after receiving the con/pro message order ($M = 3.63$, $F(1, 196) = 42.18$, $p < .01$), suggesting a primacy effect. Besides, when participants read the content from only one source, they rated the target product indifferently, irrespective of whether receiving the pro/con message order ($M = 3.97$) or the con/pro message order ($M = 3.85$, $F(1, 196) = 1.27$, $p = .26$), suggesting

the elimination of primacy effect.

Statement of Key Contributions

The current research may provide several contributions to consumer research and marketing implications. First, to my knowledge, it is the first investigating message order effect for two opposing messages in the context of user-generated content. Previous studies for message order effect have generally focused on social issues or policies. Although there exists lots of two-sided ad research, two-sided ads are not close to the settings of user-generated content in that the former settings involve the information coming from product suppliers rather than product users, and the amount of positive and negative information is not on equal or similar basis. Second, it is the first proposing and examining the moderating role of two-source vs. same source in message order effect. This new insight would offer contributions to theoretical advances as well as practical strategic implications in consumer research.

Finally, the current research offers important managerial implications to marketers. More and more companies have found that using user-generated content to promote products is more powerful and effective than using traditional commercial ads due to higher credibility. Thus, the current research suggests marketers to take advantage of message order effects to enhance consumers' product perceptions.

DON'T SHOW THE PRICE TOO EARLY: HOW (AND WHEN) UNCERTAINTY IMPROVES PERCEIVED PRICE FAIRNESS

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Keywords: uncertainty, price fairness, expectation management, judgment and decision making

Description: We find that consumers perceive a price to be fairer if the price is first hidden and then revealed (vs. shown directly), because temporary uncertainty regarding the price increases expectation of the price, and the effect reverses when the price is expected to be favorable.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Consumers often see a hidden price and need to engage in an action to reveal it (e.g., "see the price in cart," "scratch the card to see the price," etc.), which can create temporary uncertainty about the price. Will consumers perceive a price differently after experiencing this temporary price uncertainty, compared with when the price is presented directly? In this research, we investigate this question and propose that price uncertainty raises consumers' expected price of the product, and therefore increases perceived fairness of the price and willingness to accept the offer. We also argue that the effect reverses in contexts that suggest the price is favorable (e.g., sales events).

Method and Data

Study 1 tested both the positive effect of price uncertainty on perceived price fairness and the mediation effect of expected price, using a two-cell (price uncertainty: certain vs. uncertain) between-subjects design. Participants imagined that they were living in an apartment for $600 per month, and needed to decide whether to renew the lease for next year. Those in the certain condition simply read that their monthly rent next year would be $650. Those in the uncertain condition, however, clicked on a button to log in to the resident portal, waited for six seconds on a loading page, and then saw the monthly rent next year ($650). Study 2 sought to replicate the results of Study 1 in a different product domain and examined an important downstream consequence of perceived price fairness—purchase intention. This study also used a two-cell (price uncertainty: certain vs. uncertain) between-subjects design. Study 3 tested the uncertainty effect in a domain which entailed some form of gain for consumers (i.e., a discounted price) and encouraged them to brace for the best. This study used a 2 (price uncertainty: certain vs. uncertain) × 2 (discount: present vs. absent) between-subjects design.

Summary of Findings

Study 1 offered direct evidence for our propositions: the same $650 monthly rent was perceived to be fairer if it was first hidden and then revealed than if it was shown directly, because participants in the uncertain (vs. certain) condition expected a higher rent. Study 2 replicated these effects in the context of online shopping and also found a positive effect of price uncertainty on purchase intention. Study 3 not only replicated the positive effect of price uncertainty on perceived price fairness when there were no contextual cues (e.g., a discount) that implied a good price and consumers braced for the worst at default, but also illustrated a reversed effect when contextual cues suggested that the price would be favorable.

Statement of Key Contributions

Despite the popularity of the hidden-price tactics in the marketplace, little is known about how such marketing tactics influence consumers' price perceptions and purchase behavior. In the present research, we investigate this question by focusing on the impact of such tactics on price fairness perceptions, a critical construct in marketing theory and practice. We argue that those tactics create a temporary uncertainty regarding the price, and find that such price uncertainty can improve (decrease) perceived price fairness when the price is expected to be unfavorable (favorable). Our research contributes to both the uncertainty literature, by examining the impact of epistemic uncertainty (e.g., not knowing) rather than aleatory uncertainty (e.g., probability), and the price fairness literature, by documenting a novel antecedent regarding the presentation of prices. Our research also has important practical implications. For example, our findings suggest that marketers can use techniques to create price uncertainty and enhance price fairness perceptions when prices are considered to be unfavorable (e.g., an increase in the apartment leasing fee, price increases owing to inflation), but avoid using such techniques when prices are considered to be favorable (e.g., sales events).

EXPLORING 360˚ VIRTUAL TOUR EXPERIENCE OF TOURISTS: A GROUNDED THEORY APPROACH

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Keywords: 360˚ video, virtual tour, pandemic, grounded theory method

Description: Experiences of 360˚ video for a virtual tour on consumer behavior.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

The coronavirus pandemic has led to a fast transformation in consumer preference for 360˚ virtual tours which operate without the need for VR gadgets. A 360˚ virtual tour can be experienced through 360˚ videos available on YouTube. The pandemic has been a catalyst factor in pushing towards the adoption of such technology in the tourism sector. A 360˚ video provides one with travel information, a demo of the destination, and further arouses actual visit intention. During travel restrictions, such virtual tour satisfies both utilitarian and hedonic needs (Kim and Hall 2019) without having to visit the actual destination. The previous research has focussed upon variables extended to Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Huang et al. 2016; Vishwakarma, Mukherjee, and Datta 2020a), Stimulus-Organism-Model (SOR) (Kim, Lee, and Jung 2020; Yeh et al. 2017) that describes the resultant technology experience on behavioral intention. Research studies on 360˚ virtual tour experience are scant and particularly

the adoption in an Indian context is said to be at a nascent stage (Rahimizhian, Ozturen, and Ilkan 2020; Vishwakarma, Mukherjee, and Datta 2020b).

This research study seeks to determine the following research question:

What are the experiential factors of a 360˚ virtual tour experience?

Method and Data

Many tourism research has followed the Grounded Theory Method (GTM) when trying to seek theories from the data using the inductive method (Matteucci and Gnoth 2017), when the topic is comparatively new (Yeh et al. 2017). GTM supports the sample selection based on purpose (Nunkoo and Ramkissoon 2016). The sample size comprises 47 tourists. The informants are the young domestic tourist who are visiting top destinations of Himachal Pradesh state, India. These participants were selected based on initial questions on travel history, familiarity with 360˚ VR technology, and a virtual tour. The open, axial, and selective coding process is followed to determine data relationships and the core categories (Strauss, A. and Corbin 1990).

The participants were shown a 360˚ video titled *'Incredible India in 360˚,* launched by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India in collaboration with Google Arts and Culture. The video is available on YouTube at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xf_MlReoHLM

Summary of Findings

The themes from the overall experience description are discussed below:

A 360˚ video generates **imagination** of the destination through visualization and aroused expectation. The visualization influences emotions and place attachment (Reijnders 2016).

Curiosity needs are fulfilled to satisfy both interest and the feeling of being deprived when information is absent (Jani 2014). Such motivation influences tourists to derive more information for future travel.

360˚ videos help in **destination familiarization**. Tourists would like to watch such videos to familiarize themselves with the destination of interest and further have visit intention.
Next, as a **travel information source,** 360˚ videos guide tourists seeking destination information for travel planning. It helps them decide the exact place of visit.

360˚ videos are **easily accessible** in a situation of travel restrictions. One may resort to such tours which are easily accessible through mobile devices at a low cost and effort.

A 360˚ virtual tour stimulates sensory cues by highlighting the destination attributes with the help of attractive music and videography. This results in a positive **destination image and positioning**.

Besides, a few tourists have shared their **discomfort** with a 360˚ video experience such as motion sickness, eye issues, information overload, and lack of effort in customization.

Statement of Key Contributions

Previous research has emphasized the technology properties and the experience which persuades tourists to adopt such technology. Variables like presence, telepresence, immersion, the flow are under extensive exploration. The new variables such as imagination, curiosity, information source, destination familiarity, easy accessibility, destination positioning, and discomfort which are studied in the travel or destination marketing context are a useful addition to VR tourism literature. The relationship of such variables with behavioral intention should be explored further.

From this study, it can be said that tourists have a positive opinion on technology adoption. At the same time, the discomfort issues need to be addressed.

From a managerial implication perspective, the tour operators or the destination marketing organizations need to focus on developing rich video content highlighting the USP of the destination. Availability of customized video (adventure, eco-tourism, mountain, snow) catering to different tourist segments is suggested. Marketers should emphasize promotional efforts on VR-based tourism to direct the future of virtual tourism consumption.

“References are available upon request.”

FRAMING DATA FOR BEHAVIORAL CHANGE: AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY OF COVID-19 DASHBOARDS

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Keywords: actionable dashboard; COVID-19; norms; behavioral control; attitudes

Description: Building on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), this study investigates how community members react to different types of digital dashboards describing COVID-19 in their community and specifically focuses on the impact of dashboards on behavioral intentions related to disease mitigation.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

We seek to increase understanding of how digital dashboards can influence behavior during a public health crisis. The public accessibility of dashboards and attention paid to them during a public health crisis create a unique situation for potentially influencing behavior of a broad, diverse audience of decision-makers in real time. Given the context of public health, appropriate assessment of risk is also an important outcome of dashboards. Risk information, such as COVID-19 prevalence in a community, is particularly susceptible to distorted interpretations due to framing (Gigerenzer et al. 2005). On the one hand, low probability events may be underestimated and treated as if they posed no risk (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979). On the other hand, the risk of highly emotional events tends to be overestimated (Slovic et al. 2004). The significant impact of COVID-19 pandemic on individuals' lives worldwide (e.g., family and friends ill or hospitalized, job loss, lockdowns) has created an emotion-laden event, which can

lead to misinterpretation of risk. Our research question is: Can a public health focused, actionable dashboard persuade constituents during a public health crisis to engage in infection mitigation behaviors?

Method and Data

Participants (N = 200; age M = 20.21; 47.5% male) responded to a scenario that placed them in the role of a student attending a hypothetical US university during the fall of 2020. Participants examined the university COVID-19 dashboard as it would have appeared on three different days in December 2020 and saw either a basic dashboard or an actionable dashboard. The dashboard conditions varied with respect to the dynamic behavioral guidance and risk assessment through trended data visualizations, but they displayed the same number of cases across the same period. The basic dashboard displayed a column chart with the daily number of new cases across the most recent 14 days and text-based guidance on how to take precautions to protect themselves and the community. The actionable dashboard displayed a line chart depicting the 7-day rolling average of new cases per day over the prior 14 days, identified a risk level, and included dynamic behavioral guidance and graphical icons. When cases per day increased above a pre-determined risk threshold, dynamic behavioral guidance appeared in the actionable dashboard, but not in the basic dashboard. Participants reported their attitudes, norms, behavioral control, and behavioral intentions related to avoiding indoor gatherings and parties.

Summary of Findings

Despite the underlying data being the same in the two dashboard conditions, the actionable dashboard was perceived as providing more credible information than the basic dashboard about the prevalence of COVID-19 in the community. Furthermore, the actionable dashboard was

positively associated with stronger norms and stronger perceptions of behavioral control over avoiding indoor gatherings.

More importantly, we demonstrate that the actionable dashboard had a positive impact on intentions to avoid indoor gatherings, which was mediated uniquely via norms. The effect of norms merits special attention. Due to the novel nature of this disease and the unprecedented mitigation behaviors implemented, individuals may be more inclined to look at what others are doing to determine appropriate behavior. This is especially true for students and young adults who are more susceptible to peer influence. Moreover, the design characteristics of the actionable dashboard (e.g., graphical icons depicting mask wearing or avoiding indoor gatherings) may have made norms more salient.

We also examined fear of COVID-19 and demonstrated its positive impact on the TPB variables. These results replicate recent studies in which fear of COVID-19 affected adherence to lockdown rules (Winter et al. 2020) and engagement in recommended public health behaviors (Harper et al. 2020).

Statement of Key Contributions

This is one of the first studies to use a well-established model of health behavior, TPB, to investigate the effect of different dashboards on disease mitigation behavioral intent. We demonstrate that storytelling features of a dashboard focused on behavioral guidance and risk assessment can strengthen health cognitions related to prevention behaviors. Consistent with prior health research, norms, attitudes and behavioral control have a strengthening effect on behavioral intentions. Nevertheless, in the context of the present research, the effect of the dashboard conditions on behavioral intentions is only mediated by norms. This highlights the

importance of social norms for the group tested in our study, university students, and the impact that social norms have on the uptake of prevention behaviors.

Community leaders are more successful in encouraging disease mitigation behaviors when they communicate public health information clearly and credibly (Ivanković et al., 2021). The present study helps identify some of the necessary information that practitioners should include in a community dashboard communicating pandemic-related indicators. In contrast to a basic dashboard, an actionable dashboard combining trended graphs, dynamic behavioral guidance, risk thresholds, and graphical icons has demonstrated increased effectiveness in strengthening norms and intentions to engage in mitigation behaviors.

References are available upon request.

FRIENDLY AND RELIABLE:
ANTECEDENTS OF SMART AGENT PERSONALITY

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Keywords

smart agents, social perception, anthropomorphism, personality, construct validation

Description

While prior work suggests a “personality” model for smart agents that includes two primary factors (“friendly” and “reliable”) and seven underlying facets, we extend the personality model to confirm the utility and demonstrate that emotional language and the ability to be customized serve as unique antecedents of friendliness and reliability, respectively.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Artificially intelligent devices are becoming rapidly established in the lives of ordinary consumers. Our research focuses on “smart agents" (SAs), which we define as “modern technological tools that perform one or more tasks and interface with their users in mutual and dynamic ways” (Gray et al., 2011). Popular examples of SAs include Amazon Alexa, Apple Siri, and Roomba. Although consumers interact with, form relationships with, and often humanize such devices, little is known about how the devices are socially perceived (Schmitt, 2019). More importantly, researchers agree on the need for better understanding of smart agent perceptions (Clark et al., 2018, Doyle et al., 2019). Therefore, we address following questions: What personality traits do consumers attach to these devices? How do characteristics of SAs influence perceptions of their personalities?

To address these questions, we developed a parsimonious and psychometrically valid instrument to capture perceptions of SA personality with two overarching dimensions independent of one another (“friendly” and “reliable”), with seven underlying facets. In present research, we examine the nomological validity. First, we explore how the dimensions relate to established constructs in psychology and marketing. Next, we identify two unique theoretical antecedents of each dimension, and we test their influence experimentally.

Method and Data

To investigate convergent and discriminant validity of the IA personality constructs, we recruited 243 participants from Mechanical Turk (130 females, M Age = 35). Participants

evaluated one of six popular IA devices (Siri, Alexa, etc., chosen at random). They completed the IA personality measure along with 16 other measures covering anthropomorphism, human and brand personality, product attitudes, and social cognition.

In the next two studies, we manipulate two potential antecedents to each of the SA personality dimensions, friendliness and reliability. To test the prediction that emotionality uniquely influences the friendliness dimension, 249 US Prolific workers were asked to interact with an audio-based "interactive agent" ("Eva"). We manipulated emotionality by varying the audio script so that the high-emotion but not the low-emotion script contained positively-valenced, emotionally expressive words (e.g., I am happy to assist you, I feel so proud to be your assistant). The next antecedent, customization, was examined to 195 US Prolific workers with a procedure similar to the prior study. In the *high-customization* condition only, participants were first asked to choose a name, location, and color for the device, and their selections were then reflected on the subsequent interaction screens. Otherwise, the two conditions were identical.

Summary of Findings

Analyses confirmed good fit of the two proposed dimensions ("friendliness" and "reliability") with theoretically overlapping constructs. For example, perceptions of friendliness were positively associated with brand sincerity ($r = .716$, $p < .01$) and extraversion ($r = .608$, $p < .01$), while reliability were associated with brand competence ($r = .753$, $p < .01$). Analyses also confirmed adequate discriminant validity for all scale comparisons.

Analyses supported the role of emotional expressiveness as a unique antecedent to friendliness: compared to participants in the *low-emotion* condition, those in the *high-emotion* condition rated "Eva" substantially more friendly ($M = 3.60$, $SD = 1.15$ vs. $M = 2.86$, $SD = 1.23$,

$p < .001$; $\eta_p^2 = .089$), but ratings of reliability did not significantly differ ($M = 5.04$, $SD = 1.29$ vs. $M = 4.98$, $SD = 1.19$; *ns;* $\eta_p^2 < .001$). In the next study, compared to participants in *low-customization* condition, those in *high-customization* condition rated device higher in reliability ($M = 5.19$, $SD = 1.04$ vs. $M = 4.89$, $SD = 1.10$, $p < .05$; $\eta_p^2 = .020$). Ratings of friendliness did not significantly differ ($M = 3.03$, $SD = 1.34$ vs. $M = 2.91$, $SD = 1.13$; *ns*; $\eta_p^2 = .002$).

Key Contributions

Given the rapid development, emergence, and adoption of smart agent devices like the ones examined here, scholars face the important task of how those devices are perceived by their users. Adopting the perspective of social cognition, our research addresses this task by establishing specific, stable traits that together represent how users perceive the "personality" of their devices. Moving forward, our model raises a variety of interesting questions that suggest opportunities for future research. For example, how are SA personality traits "constructed" from brand and product characteristics, consumer-level variables, and marketing activities? One constructed, how do these traits influence specific consumer responses and interaction with the device (willingness to disclose information, performance expectations, trust, relationship formation, etc.)? For marketers of SA products, our findings suggest that careful construction of product "personalities" may provide a means of differentiation, diversification, and targeting to specific segments. We encourage further research on these and other implications of SA personality for consumer-device interactions, transactions, and relationships.

HOW CONSUMER CHARACTERISICS INFLUENCE THE EFFECTS OF VALENCE, VOLUME, AND VARIANCE OF ONLINE REVIEWS

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Description: This study examines the role of consumer characteristics in relation to the effectiveness of the valence, volume, and variance of online reviews.

Keywords: Online reviews, valence, volume, mindsets, need-for-cognition

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Online reviews have become increasingly influential among today's consumers due to high reach and ubiquitous presence. Industry reports suggest that online reviews influence purchase decisions for over 90% of consumers (Qualtrics 2021). Research is equivocal regarding the effects of valence, volume, and variance of online reviews on consumer attitudes/behavior (Zablocki et al. 2019). Absent from current discourse is the influence of individual differences, such as personality traits, beliefs systems etc. in relation to the effectiveness of the valence, volume, and variance of online reviews. This gap is addressed in the current study. Across three studies, this research shows how consumer characteristics

(mindsets, need for cognition (NFC) and need for uniqueness (NFU)) affect the processing of different attributes of online reviews (e.g., valence, volume, and variance) and how this subsequently affects consumer attitudes and choice. We also wanted to see whether the effects mentioned above are more evident for experience products relative to non-experience products.

RQ1: Are the effects of valence of online reviews on product attitudes attenuated as consumers' growth mindset increases?

RQ2: Does NFC influence the choice of products with high volume of online reviews?

RQ3: Does NFU influence the choice of products with high variance of online reviews?

Method and Data

In Study 1 (*n*=252), a 2 (valence of online reviews: positive vs. negative) x 2 (product type: holiday apartment vs. suitcase) between subject factorial design was employed. Consumers' mindset was also measured. Results showed a significant three-way interaction between valence, mindset, and product types. The effects of positive valence of online reviews are attenuated when consumers' growth mindset increases. This occurs for experience products (holiday apartment) but not for non-experience products (suitcase).

Study 2 (*n*= 327) tested the influence of NFC on consumers' choice of products with high volume of online reviews. We utilised a single factor (high volume vs. low volume of online reviews) within subject choice task replicated for two product types: hotel and suitcase. Results showed that for individuals who correctly recalled the volume of online reviews, high NFC leads to preference for products with high volume of online reviews. This effect holds true only for experience products (hotel), not for non-experience products (suitcase).

Study 3 (*n*= 325) tested the influence of NFU on consumers' choice of products with high variance of online reviews. There was no statistically significant relationship between need for uniqueness and choice of products with high variance of online reviews.

Summary of Findings

We found significant results in Study 1 and Study 2 that were consistent with our expectations. In Study 1, the findings show that consumers with a high growth-oriented mindset rely less on positively valenced online reviews particularly for experience products (e.g., holiday apartments). In Study 2, results demonstrate that for consumers who pay attention to the volume of online reviews, higher NFC shows greater preference for a product with high volume of reviews. This effect is evident for experience products only. These studies demonstrate the importance of consumer characteristics in the context of online review effectiveness.

Key Contributions

Theoretically, our research contributes to the existing consumer behavior literature, particularly in the context of online reviews. We demonstrate how consumers with different personality traits (mindsets and NFC) process various attributes of online reviews (valence and volume), which has downstream effects on product attitudes and choice. Prior work on mindsets has suggested that growth mindset individuals process information differently from those with fixed mindsets (Dweck 1999). We add to the literature by demonstrating that the positive effects of positively valenced online reviews are attenuated for consumers with high growth mindsets. We also show that for consumers who pay attention to the volume of online reviews, high NFC leads to preference for products with higher volume of online reviews.

The results provide managerial implications for enhancing the effectiveness of online reviews. Managers need to recognize that growth mindset consumers are less likely to be

affected by the positive valence of reviews. Firms can improve their marketing communication effectiveness by customizing offers based on mindsets. Firms marketing experience products can highlight the volume of reviews so that consumers with high NFC are more likely to be attracted to their products.

HOW DO END-USERS CHOOSE BETWEEN TECHNOLOGIES? IMPLICATIONS FOR B2B BUYERS AND SELLERS

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ABSREACT

In today's changing work environment employees often use different technologies to accomplish the same work. In this context, we examine how users choose the tools they use at the workplace. A correct understanding of this process will not only enable organizations deploying these technologies to influence the choice of tools they want their employees to use at the workplace but will also help providers of these technological tools to design them for maximum adoption among users.

Keywords

Utilitarian Value, Hedonic Value, Social Value, Product Choice

STATEMENT OF CONTRIBUTION

The findings of the study show that abstract values such as hedonic and social values play a critical role in user choice of software tools. Therefore, organizations involved in development of software tools should focus not only on functional features but also features that make the product socially engaging and enjoyable. Also, buying organizations in their purchase decisions should not only consider commercial return-on-investment consideration when buying technology but also whether the technology promotes social exchange amongst team members and makes working fun rather than a chore.

INTRODUCTION

Today, there are multiple tools that workers themselves own and choose to use at the workplace in addition to personal use. While allowing users to use their own preferred technology to accomplish work does have some negatives, yet there is an increasing realization that wherever possible organizations must provide choice, simplicity, and service as if users were consumers. This approach is likely to build greater trust, responsibility and ownership of tools workers use at the workplace (Kakar, 2017b). The one-size fits all and top-down approach to providing tools to the users may not only alienate employee but also result in lost avenues for improvement.

Further, with consumerization of IT (Information Technology) users often bring their own tools to the workplace and are increasingly using the official tools at home. Further, the work environment is changing rapidly. Increasingly cross functional and virtual teams are deployed to accomplish work. (Kakar, 2017a) These functionally and geographically distant team members often use different technologies. Asking them to adopt only one technology may result in resistance, time delays due to learning curve as users may not be accustomed to using the new prescribed technologies. Therefore, specification of work technologies or their standardization across all team members is often impossible and unwise.

Keeping this context in view, it is relevant to investigate how workers choose their work technologies. It will not only help organizations that that deploy them to influence the choice of tools they want their employees to use at the workplace, but also help provides of these technological tools to design them for maximum adoption among users. In our investigation we adopt a value perspective using concepts gleaned from a multi-disciplinary review of literature. The user value perspective says that user choice is determined by the value derived by her through the use of a product or service.

LITERATURE REVIEW

From a value perspective, the computing discipline had focused largely on utilitarian aspects of software products and technologies. The reason may lie in the computing disciplines' origins in disciplines that emphasize hard science, efficiency, and utility (Tractinsky, 2006). Practitioners in general took a narrow view of users' experience by considering only user requirements for work related activities (Stelmaszewska, Fields, and Blanford, 2004).

However, today, employees desire a fun workplace. Most workers under the age of 30 listed having coworkers who "make work fun" as an important factor in their job search (Belkin, 2007). It has also been suggested that people who have fun at work experience less stress (McGhee, 2000; Miller, 1996), demonstrate lower turnover and absenteeism (Marriotti, 1999; Zbar, 1999), and are more energized and motivated (Stern and Borcia, 1999). People who have enjoyment at work get along with others better (Meyer, 1999) and provide better customer service (Berg, 2001).

In line with these expectations, organizations have made numerous attempts to hedonize the workplace from the omnipresent college-campus feel of the Googleplex (Schoeneman, 2006, Kakar, 2014) to the free gourmet bistros and cafes onsite ("There's always a free lunch", 2007), Google embodies a fun workplace. In a similar vein, Southwest Airlines" "corporate culture of fun" encourages employees to engage in outrageous behaviors with the goal of fostering a friendly and fun work environment (Sunoo, 1995). The Kodak headquarters office in New York allows employees to go to a "humor room" to take a "fun break" (Caudron, 1992).

The software literature perhaps as a reflection of these trends recognized the need to consider perceived enjoyment in the core TAM (Technology Adoption Model) as one of the determinants of behavioral intention of users to use the system in addition to perceived usefulness (Venkatesh, 1999). In fact, meta-analysis of TAM studies by Gerow, Ayyagari, Thatcher and Roth, (2013) showed that both perceived usefulness and perceived enjoyment are equally important in behavioral intention of users to use a system.

Also, the utilitarian – hedonic conceptualization of product values as distinct and independent constructs was already established in consumer research literature. This, according to Diefenbach, Kolb and Hassenzahl (2014), led to the introduction of equivalent constructs of hedonic and pragmatic quality later in Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) literature (Hassenzhal, Platz, Burmester and Lehner, 2000; also see Diefenbach, Kolb and Hassenzahl, 2014) and of perceived usefulness and perceived enjoyment in Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) literature (Davis, 1989; Venkatesh, 1999).

However, although perceived usefulness and perceived enjoyment are the more popular constructs used in IS literature, the terms HV (Hedonic Value) and UV (Utilitarian Value) have also been introduced to IS literature before (Ogertschnig and Heijden,

2004; kakar, 2012, a, b, c; Kakar, 2015a, b, c, d). Also, across literatures both UV as well as HV provided by the utilitarian software product is considered important to its users (Wu and Lu, 2013; Hasasenzhal, 2003; Tractinsky, 2000; Kakar, 2017c, Kakar, 2018acdef, Kakar and Kakar, 2018bc, Kakar 2020abcdef). While HV as an end valued for its own sake provides intrinsic motivation to the users, UV as a means to accomplish instrumental goals provides extrinsic motivation to the user to use the software.

Yet, although the HV and the UV are well researched in Human Computer Interaction and Information Systems literature, less attention has been focused on social value (SV) provided by software products (Kakar, 2018e). Users are known to identify themselves in relation to other users or group of users (Bagozzi, 2007; Kelman, 1974). One can expect software products and services will also provide self-esteem and status benefits to its users (Kakar, 2018d). By sharing their knowledge and expertise users can enhance their own self esteem as well as status within the desired community of users. Self-esteem and status can provide immense psychological and emotional benefits to the user. Status is often pursued by users as an ego reward (Emerson, 1962), or a source of gratifying social contract (Homans, 1950) and serves as a psychological asset (Fornbrun, 2001). In addition, enhanced status can be used by users to seek economic and social advantage. Therefore, all three benefits – UV, SV and HV - are likely to be influential in user choice of technological systems. A consolidated summary of differences between UV, HV and SV are listed below:

Summary of Hedonic-Utilitarian-Social Product Characteristics

UTILITARIAN VALUE	HEDONIC VALUE	SOCIAL VALUE
Represents "shoulds" or reasoned preferences (Bazerman, Tenbrunsel and Wade-Benzoni, 1998)	Represents "wants" or affective preferences (Bazerman, Tenbrunsel and Wade-Benzoni, 1998)	Represents social meaning and self-expression choices of the user (Elliot, 1997)
Targets Homo Economicus - Consumers are utility calculator (Rintamaki, 2006)	Targets Homo Ludens - Consumers are guided by senses (Rintamaki, 2006)	Targets Homo Faber - Consumers convey their personalities, lifestyles and beliefs through conspicuous consumption (Rintamaki, 2006)
Is functional and practical (Stelmaszewska, Fields and Blandford, 2004)	Is enjoyment, novelty, aesthetics, unexpectedness, fun (Stelmaszewska, Fields and Blandford, 2004)	Is symbolic, expressive, relational (Smith and Colgate, 2007) (Belk, 1988)
Is a means to an end (Babin and Harris, 2011)	Is an end in itself (Babin and Harris, 2011)	It can be both a means (social status) and an end in itself (self-esteem) (Rintamaki, 2006)
Helps accomplish practical goals/ tasks ((Smith and Colgate, 2007)	Provides sensory benefits (Smith and Colgate, 2007)	Provides relational and network benefits (Smith and Colgate, 2007)
Generates cognitive satisfaction response when fulfilled (Chitturi et al., 2007; Berman, 2005)	Generates affective delight response when fulfilled (Chitturi et al., 2007; Berman,	Builds self-esteem and social status when fulfilled (Elliot, 1997)
Can be Objectively appraised (Chitturi, 2009)	Is Subjective, Experiential (Chittri, 2009)	Is Interactional , Relational (Elliot, 1997)

HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

In the consumer behavior literature, the value provided by the product is suggested to lead directly to favorable outcomes such as behavioral intentions (BI) to choose, use or remain loyal to a product or service (e.g., Holbrook, 1994; Cronin et al., 1997; Sirohi, McLaughlin and Wittink, 1998; Sweeney, Soutar, and Johnson, 1999; Wakefield and Barnes, 1996). Sirdeshmukh, Singh and Sabol (2002) argue that customer value is a superordinate goal and behavioral intention is a subordinate goal; according to goal and action identity theories, a superordinate goal is likely to regulate subordinate goals. Thus, "customer value regulates behavioral intentions toward the service provider as long as a product or service provides superior value" (Sirdeshmukh et al., 2002, p. 21). Further, choice is the result of the individual's belief that the value received from consuming a product or service is greater than the value of non-consuming (Hallowell, 1996). In response to this greater value obtained, the individual is motivated to choose, remain loyal to the product, and also promote it by, for instance, positive WOM (Word-of-Mouth) behaviors (Luis, Carlos and Migue, 2008).

The UV that the user derives from the utilitarian attributes of a software product is the degree to which it helps her achieve functional and practical goals. The HV that the user derives from hedonic attributes of a software product is the degree to which it gives her pleasure, enjoyment or fun. The SV that users derive from the use of the software product is the extent to which it provides both self-esteem and status benefits to the users. Thus, UV, SV and HV are determinants of user choice. The greater the UV, SV and HV derived by the user of the software product the greater will be their influencing impact on user choice. All three values provided by the software product, SV, UV and HV, will therefore significantly and positively impact user choice, leading us to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: The choice of software will be positively influenced by the perceived UV, HV and SV of the software product to the user

Norman (1998) suggested that once software meets the functional requirements of the users, considerations of convenience and reliability, and, later, of appearance and symbolic ownership will become more important. The watch industry today, Norman (1998) noted, after having met the consumer needs of accurate time keeping and durability is focusing on styling and exclusivity e.g., Rolex watches are purchased as a symbol of status, image and prestige. Thus, the SV and HV derived from the use of even software products may become important to users than UV.

Further, studies have shown that utilitarian product features are like Herzberg's (1959) Hygiene factors and hedonic product features are like Herzberg's (1959) Motivators (Zhang and von Dran, 2002; Hassenzahl, Diefenbach and Göritz, 2010). Thus, we can expect that products that provide the basic level of functionality (UV) as these two and most other software products in general can be reasonably expected to do, HV and SV will have a higher impact on user choice than UV.

Hypothesis 2: HV and SV will have a higher impact on user choice than UV

METHOD

Study Setting and Design

As part of their creative advertising curriculum students were asked to choose between two softwares tools commonly used by advertising agencies– Ziflow and Monday.com to be used in the completion of their capstone project involving creation of a social media platform ad. We shall hereinafter refer to them as A and B software, with A representing one of the two project management tools and B as another, so that the findings are not attributed to a particular software and to protect their commercial interests. The choice made by students is then used by the college to determine groups for the software development course with students preferring particular software getting assigned to the same group/s. In all 272 student subjects participated in the study conducted over four semesters.

Measures Used

Tested measures were used to capture data. Rintamaki et al. (2006) scales were used for SV, the Babin, Darden and Griffin (1994) scale was used for HV and the Venkatesh and Davis (2006) scale was used for UV. The UV scale represented by items U1 to U5, the HV scale represented by items H1 to H5 and the SV scale represented by items S1 to S6. All measures used a 9-point Likert scale with anchors of 9 (strongly agree) and 1 (strongly disagree) in line with the recommendation that increasing the number of choice-points increases scale sensitivity without damaging scale reliability (Cummins and Gullone, 2000). For a complete set of items used in these scales. Responses were coded such that high levels of the constructs are represented by high values. Some items were reverse coded. The overall value for each construct was created by averaging the subject responses.

Control Procedures

The survey was designed to minimize compounding and order effects. If the respondent is first asked to respond to the values they derived from the use of the product and then asked about his choice of product then his answer to the first set of questions may influence his response to the second. We therefore asked the paticipants to respond to these two questions with a time gap of 5d days. By grouping all of the value related questions in one round and choice related question a little later in the second round, a temporal separation is created. Past research demonstrates that the temporal separation between measures reduces potential effects due to Common Method Variance (Sharma et al., 2009).

Method of Analyses

Factor analysis was performed on the data set obtained from the subjects to establish that validity and reliability of the measures used in the study. Further, the correlation matrix and internal reliabilities of the measures were also examined. Logistic regression was used to model the impacts of value on user choice of software. In recent years, logistic regression has become a preferred statistical technique for multivariate modeling of categorical dependent variables (DeMaris, 2012). Research has shown that using linear regression with expected value E(Y) as dependent variable is problematic because of its underlying assumptions (for more details see Aldrich and Nelson, 1984; Hanushek and Jackson, 1977; Maddala, 1983).

RESULTS AND ANALYSES

The results of the factor analysis using IBM© SPSS© Statistics Version 19 show that the factors extracted using Varimax rotation represented the scales used in the study (the UV scale represented by items U1 to U6, the HV scale represented by items H1 to H6, the SV scale represented by items S1 to S6, and the SL scale represented by items SL1 to SL4). The high loadings (>.50) within factors demonstrated convergent validity of items within scales, and the no cross loadings (>.40) between factors demonstrated discriminant validity between scales. The internal reliabilities of all the scales used in the study were greater than .70 (see Table 1). Further none of the inter-correlations between the scales were greater than .65 (Tables 2).

Name of the scale	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
Utilitarian Value (UV)	0.90	5
Hedonic Value (HV)	0.94	5
Social Value (SV)	0.82	6

Table 1. Internal Reliability of Scales

	UV	HV	SV
UV	1.00		
HV	.22	1.00	
SV	.16	.24*	1.00

*** p < .05**

Table 2. Correlations between variables

	A	B	Difference
UV	7.9	6.6	1.3**
HV	6.6	7.8	-0.6**
SV	4.4	8.3	-3.9***

*** p < .05 , **p < 0.01, ***p<0.01**

Table 3. Comparison of values provided by softwares A and B

The results of the logistical regression for user choice of Softwares A and B are shown in Table 4. As can be seen from the results, age and gender did not impact user choice significantly. Also, HV, UV and SV had a significant impact on user choice, for both products, despite a pair t-test for difference showing that software A provided higher UV to the shopper, while software B provided higher HV and SV to the shopper. Thus Hypothesis 1 was supported. Further, HV and SV had a higher impact on user choice of software than UV for both products A and B, thereby supporting Hypothesis 2. Hypothesis 2 is further

supported by the finding than even though product A provided lower UV than product B, 68% of users opted for product B rather than product A as it provided higher HV and SV than Product A.

Variable	Software A	Software B
Intercept	0.024	0.013
Utilitarian Value (UV)	**0.372****	**0.312 ****
Hedonic Value (HV)	**0.489****	**0.521*****
Social Value (SV)	**0.586*****	**0.631*****
Age	0.008	-0.002
Gender	--0.019	-0.005

*** p < .05 ** p < .01 ***p<.001**

Table 6. Logistic regression of the log odds of choice for Softwres A and B

DISCUSSION AND SUPPLENTARY ANALYSIS

Thus, both hypotheses were fully supported in the study. Efforts were made in the study to ensure that the participants were not aware of the goals of the study. However, during the debriefing session when the results were presented to the participants, while many agreed with the findings, in every session some of the participants strongly disagreed that they gave more importance to HV and SV rather than UV in their choice of software. We debated the reasons why this could happen. Age and gender were ruled out based on the findings in Table 6. Could it be due to social desirability factor? Perhaps these participants wanted to be seen as pursuing "concrete" valuers from the use of the product such as UV rather than the "frivolous" abstract values such as HV and SV. Yet, in our findings 32% did choose software A which provided significantly higher UV than product B but significantly lower HV and SV than Product B (see Table 3). So, is it that the participants who chose product A were in some fundamental way different than the participants who chose product B.

We scrounged existing literature for an answer. The best clue we could find was in the regulatory focus theory from the human behavior literature and which has been applied in decision making and product management domains. The regulatory focus theory states that people can either target their attention towards the achievement of ideals and gains, or the fulfillment of duties and the avoidance of losses (Werth and Forester, 2005a). Depending on how individuals direct their attention, they find themselves in either a promotion or prevention focus (Higgins, 1997). Studies have shown that depending on their regulatory orientation users and consumers seek values from product s and services that match their dispositions. Florack and Scarabis (2006) showed that the claim of providing "safe protection" by a sun lotion brand appealed more to prevention focused consumers while the positioning of another sun lotion brand of "enjoy the sun" appealed more to promotion focused individuals. Thus, people process information or make trade-off decisions that fit their regulatory orientation (Motyka et al., 2013).

It is therefore possible that participants who are prevention focused experience regulatory fit when they derive UV such as from the use of Product A while promotion focused people experienced regulatory fit when they derive HV and SV such as from the use of the product B. To investigate this line of reasoning we requested the participants with providing response to another set of data. Fortunately, we had access to all the participants and got their response to the 11 item (RFQ) Regulatory Focus Questionnaire (Higgins, Tory, Friedman, Harlow, Idson, Ayduk and Taylor, 2001) consisting of two subscales assessing chronic prevention and promotion focus of participants. A sample item from the chronic prevention subscale is "Not being careful enough has gotten me into trouble at times." A sample item from the chronic promotion subscale is "Do you often do well at different things that you try?". The complete questionnaire is provided in Appendix C. Participants were classified into chronic prevention or chronic promotion focused categories based on the median split on the difference between their RFQ promotion and RFQ prevention scores (e.g., Louro, Pieters and Zeelenberg, 2005; Avnet and Higgins, 2006).

The results of supplementary analysis show that 131 (49%) participants were categorized as preventive focused and 141 (51%) as promotion focused. Of the 87 (32%) of total participants who chose Product A 77 (89%) were

prevention focused and only 10 (11%) were promotion focused. Of the 185 (689%) of total participants who chose Product B 54 (29%) were prevention focused and 131 (71%) were promotion focused. From another perspective, a majority (59%) of prevention focused participants chose Product A and a vast majority of promotion focused participants (93%) chose Product B. The results are summarized in Table 7 below. Thus, regulatory focus did moderate the impact of the various values derived by the user from the use of software on product choice, thereby explaining the participant feedback during debriefing session

	Prevention focused	Promotion focused	
Product A	77 (59%)	10 (7%)	87 (32%)
Product B	54 (41%)	131 (93%)	185 (68%)
	131 (48%)	141 (52%)	272 (100%)

Table 7. Participant choices of Product A and Product B based on their Regulatory focus

CONCLUSION

The results of the study thus support the hypotheses proposed in the study. Users derived higher UV than HV and SV than UV as can be expected from utilitarian systems. Also, all three values UV, SV and HV impacted user choice significantly. However, the impact of HV and SV was found to be higher than UV for both softwares A and B. The results imply that HV and SV cannot be ignored as they play an important role in user choice of even utilitarian software. However, regulatory focus was found to moderate the impact of values on product choice. While 68% of all participants chose Product B due to its higher abstract values, only 41% of all prevention focused individuals did so. On the other hand, 71% of all promotion focused individuals chose Product B. These findings are unique contribution to our body of knowledge and can be used by product managers to develop products targeted towards meeting specific user needs. Also, the findings imply that users today not only want products to meet their functional needs but those which are enjoyable to use and meets their social aspirations.

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APPENDIX A. Measures for User Value used in the Study

Measures and Items
Utilitarian Value (Venkatesh and Davis, 2000)
Using Ziflow improves my job performance
Using Ziflow in my job increases my productivity
Using Ziflow enhances my effectiveness in my job
I find Ziflow to be useful in my job
I find Ziflow to be helpful in my job
Hedonic Value (Babin, Darden and Griffin, 1994)
While using Ziflow, I feel happy.
Compared to other similar things I could have done, the time spent using Ziflow was truly enjoyable
When using Ziflow, I feel excited
I have a very nice time while using Ziflow
While using Ziflow I am able to forget my problems
Social Value (Rintamaki, Kanto, Kuusela and Spence, 2006)
Patronizing Ziflow fits the impression that I want to give to others
I am eager to tell my friends/acquaintances about Ziflow
I feel that I belong to the user cohort of Ziflow
I found Ziflow to be consistent with my style
I felt like a smart user by selecting Ziflow
Ziflow gave me something that is personally important or pleasing for me

APPENDIX B. Results of Factor Analyses of User Value

Items	**Factors**		
	1	2	3
S1	**0.830**	-0.014	0.082
S2	**0.867**	-0.004	0.012
S3	**0.869**	0.095	0.003
S4	**0.839**	-0.096	0.146
S5	**0.797**	0.043	0.216
S6	**0.901**	0.011	0.225
U1	0.030	**0.917**	0.135
U2	0.082	**0.842**	0.131
U3	0.004	**0.877**	0.123
H1	-0.068	0.010	**0.742**
U4	-0.002	**0.897**	0.111
H2	0.066	0.086	**0.878**
U5	-0.033	0.**916**	0.178
H3	0.012	0.122	**0.851**
H4	0.012	0.120	**0.859**
H5	-.089	.148	**0.800**

Appendix C. Regulatory Focus (Higgins, Shah and Friedman, 1997),
Compared to most people, are you typically unable to get what you want out of life? (R)a
Growing up, would you ever "cross the line" by doing things that your parents would not tolerate? (R)
Accomplishing things gets you "psyched" to work even harder? a
You get on your parents' nerves when you were growing up? (R)
You often obey rules and regulations that were established by your parents?
Growing up, did you ever act in ways that your parents' thought was objectionable? (R)
Do you often do well at different things that you try? a
Not being careful enough has gotten me into trouble at times. (R)
When it comes to achieving things that are important to me, I find that I don't perform as well as I ideally would like to do. (R)a
I feel like I have made progress toward being successful in my life. a
I have found very few hobbies or activities in my life that capture my interest or motivate me to put effort into them. (R)a

a promotion item.
(R) = reverse scored.

HOW DO OTHERS FEEL ABOUT IT? HOW EMOTIONAL CONTAGION VIA CUSTOMER REVIEWS INFLUENCES CONSUMER JUDGMENTS

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Keywords: emotional contagion, customer reviews, consumer judgments, feelings-as-information

Description: This paper investigates the impact of others' feelings as conveyed in online customer reviews on consumer judgments.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

This study investigates whether emotional contagion via others' responses to a certain service or product as expressed in online customer reviews influences consumers' assessment of the service or product. Second, it is assessed whether the influence of others' feelings on consumer judgments is mediated via positive feelings of the consumers making these judgments. Third, the study examines whether this emotional contagion effect extends beyond experience goods to search goods. Lastly, the study tests whether the emotional contagion effect also occurs when customer reviews feature negative feelings.

Method and Data

The study features five online scenario experiments with 1 x 2 (review emotionality: low vs. high) between-subjects designs. About 750 participants were recruited from Amazon Mechanical Turk across all experiments and randomly assigned to the respective experimental

conditions. Review emotionality manipulations were created by adapting actual reviews, such that the high review emotionality conditions included emotional supplements within the texts while review valence and length was held constant. The studies feature two different types of goods, i.e., experience and search goods. Participants were sequentially exposed to different reviews while review order was randomized. Dependent variables included consumers' willingness to pay (Study 1a), behavioral intentions (Studies 1b, 3, 4), choice (Study 2), and confidence in choice (Study 2). Further, data on positive feelings such as joy and excitement (Studies 2, 3) as well as on negative feelings (Study 4) was collected to carry out mediation analyses testing the proposed emotional contagion effect.

Summary of Findings

The results indicate that others' feelings toward an experience good as conveyed in online customer reviews influence consumer judgments of this experience good. Specifically, the findings demonstrate the existence of an emotional contagion effect in showing that the influence of others' feelings on consumer judgments is mediated via positive feelings of the consumers making these judgments. Further, the experiments provide first evidence for this emotional contagion effect to extend beyond experience goods to search goods. Lastly, the experiments identify a boundary condition of the contagion effect in illustrating that the contagion effect does not occur when customer reviews feature negative feelings. These results highlight the so far neglected indirect effect of feelings evoked by online customer reviews as an important antecedent of consumer judgments. Further, the findings provide managerial implications regarding the power of emotional expressions in marketing experience and search goods.

Statement of Key Contributions

First, this study contributes to the literature on emotional contagion by providing evidence for the existence of emotional contagion emanating from customer reviews. Specifically, the findings demonstrate the consequences of emotional contagion for consumer acceptance of services or products that are featured in online reviews. Second, despite consumers' increasing use of customer reviews as a basis for their purchase decisions, the underlying mechanisms that drive consumers' reactions to these reviews are yet to be fully explored. By investigating the emotional contagion of positive feelings as a potential underlying mechanism explaining the influence of customer reviews on consumer judgments, this research adds to the literature on emotional contagion and Feelings-as-Information Theory. The findings complement knowledge on the use of both positive and negative feelings as information in judgments. Third, the present results add to literature on consumer judgments by emphasizing the powerful influence of feelings in consumer judgment and decision-making. The study helps companies to better understand the drivers of consumer responses to their offering and to manage customer reviews appropriately. Finally, a better understanding of associative processes like emotional contagion enables consumers to pin down their reactions to customer reviews and make informed judgments.

References are available upon request.

I WANT YOU TO LIKE ME, SO I'LL WAIT TO SHARE THE BAD - THE INFLUENCE OF SELF-PRESENTATION CONCERNS ON CONSUMER RATINGS

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Keywords: Online product reviews, Ratings, Reviewers, Self-presentation

Description: Using both real-world Yelp data and a series of laboratory studies, we document a negative trend in reviews at the reviewer level, driven by reviewers' apprehensions regarding being perceived negatively for posting negative reviews early in their review history.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Are online reviews impacted by more than consumers' experiences themselves? This research suggests the answer is yes. Evidence includes a negative trend in ratings for *individual reviewers across products* that we identify and explain. While prior work has documented a negative trend in ratings at *the product level across reviewers*, the downward trend documented

here focuses on ratings at *the reviewer level*. Just as prior research suggests a negative trend at the product level is evidence of a systematic bias among consumer ratings, we believe the same can be said of a negative trend at the reviewer level.

Our data suggest the observed downward trend can be attributed, at least in part, to reviewers censoring themselves. While the phenomenon is likely multi-determined, we find compelling evidence that self-presentation concerns play a significant role. Evidence from a series of studies suggest reviewers exhibit a reluctance to post lower ratings earlier in their review history because reviewers, like everyone, have an innate desire to be liked. Given online review sites are inherently and increasingly social, concerns about being perceived negatively by others (e.g., fellow reviewers and platform users) drives the observed reluctance to post negative ratings early on.

Method and Data

In Study 1, we analyze a Yelp dataset comprised of 38,554 reviews by 1,245 reviewers. Our empirical estimation employs a fixed-effect ordered logistic regression. The dependent variable is the star-rating associated with the focal review and the core predictor is the number of ratings posted before the focal one. In study 2, respondents recalled either a positive or negative experience and imagined having already posted either few or many reviews on a platform. Participants indicated the likelihood that they would post about the experience and provided a star-rating. Study 3 replicated study 2 focusing only on the negative experience. Participants also indicated the extent to which they expected to be perceived negatively if they were to post about the recalled experience. Study 4 was similar to study 2 but had an additional condition: participants imagined having recently joined a new platform where they posted just a few reviews, while having posted many reviews on a prior platform. In study 5, participants

evaluated 18 experiences in which the 2nd and 17th ones were negative. Participants were either informed that each review will appear on their profile sequentially, or that all reviews would be bundled and posted together.

Summary of Findings

Using the Yelp dataset in Study 1, we document a negative trend at the reviewer level in the valence of ratings when reviewers commence reviewing for a specific platform. Studies 2-5 explore the psychological mechanism underlying the observed decline in ratings. In Study 2, we replicate the basic effect in the lab showing consumers exhibit a greater (lesser) reluctance to post a negative rating when they have posted few (many) ratings associated with their profile. Notably, the results suggest they are *not* more inclined to rate the earlier experience more positively, ceteris paribus. Study 3 shows consumers expect to be perceived more negatively if they post a negative rating earlier (versus later) in their reviewing history. In Study 4, we explore our proposed process through moderation, demonstrating that it is not the number of ratings a reviewer has posted overall, but the number of ratings associated with their profile on a specific platform that drives the effect. This adds further evidence in support of a self-presentation explanation. Study 5 provides additional evidence in support of the proposed mechanism through moderation. We find that bundling a negative rating with more positive (subsequent) ratings before sharing with others can dilute the effect.

Key Contributions

This research contributes to the existing literature in several ways. First, substantively, we document a trend that should be of interest to both review platforms and managers alike; ratings tend to become more negative as new reviewers begin accruing reviews. We provide further insight for managers by offering a stylized solution with respect to how the phenomenon

might be attenuated. We find reviewers who expect negative ratings to be "bundled" with more positive ratings before being posted (i.e., presented simultaneously) are less reluctant to share negative ratings of early experiences. Second, theoretically, we identify self-presentation as a driver for this effect. In doing so, we add consumer ratings to the growing list of domains in which people exhibit a reluctance toward sharing negative information, otherwise known as the "mum" effect. In this vein, we extend the "mum" effect to situations in which the negative information individuals are reluctant to share does not pertain to the communicator or recipient, but instead applies to a third party (the service provider being reviewed). Future research could explore how our proposed effect might extend to consumers who frequently share either positive or negative information about firms and brands on social media.

IT'S NOT FAIR! CONSUMERS' REACTIONS TO SHARING PLATFORMS WHEN THEY GET REVIEWED

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Keywords: Sharing economy, reputation systems, platform intermediation, psychological contract, negative word of mouth

With this research, we provide the first empirical examination of the largely overlooked, novel phenomenon of consumers being reviewed when using a sharing economy platform such as Airbnb or Uber, and illustrate their subsequent reactions and behavioral responses.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Imagine you rent a vacation home through a platform such as Airbnb. If you find out that your host has left you a negative review, do you hold the sharing economy platform accountable? Integrating platform intermediation (Perren & Kozinets, 2018) and psychological contract (Robinson & Morrison, 2000) theories, we propose that the platform becomes a target of retaliation in response to peer-to-peer reviews. We investigate the role of psychological contracts in driving consumer reactions to negative reviews. In particular, we examine whether consumers hold platforms accountable for a negative review despite the fact that it comes from a provider. We predict that based on perceived promises to monitor reputation systems, consumers will feel betrayed by the platform for failing to meet the terms of their psychological contracts and engage in negative word of mouth. We also seek to show that the effect will be attenuated in the absence of a psychological contract, or when the consumer has not fulfilled their own obligations. Lastly, when the consumer is allowed to restore justice through one channel (e.g., responding to a negative review), we predict their need for restoration should subside, rendering the other channel's (e.g., taking revenge) influence on betrayal weaker.

Method and Data

Pilot (N = 1000 Mturk). Surveyed sharing platform users about negative reviews.

Study 1 (N = 87 lab). Using an ostensibly real sharing platform, participants borrowed, used and returned a textbook, later receiving a [negative (2-star) vs. positive (5-star)] review from the lender. NWOM intentions were measured [in all studies].

Study 2. (N = 482 Mturk). Single-factor design included 8 review valence levels (5/4/3/2/1-star, no review), using a ride-hailing platform. Betrayal by the platform was measured.

Study 3a. (N = 195 Mturk). Single-factor (reviews in (vs. out) PC terms/control) design; participants read platform monitoring is (vs. is not) expected by sharing platform consumers, followed by a scenario involving a negative review; NWOM was measured.

Study 3b. (N = 391 Mturk). 2 (review valence) x 2 (consumer's obligation fulfillment) design, participants imagined they did (did not) follow rules of a homestay platform, then received a positive (negative) review. Behavioral NWOM measured using bonus to promote a platform-bashing post.

Study 4. (N = 525 Mturk). In a 2 (Response Opportunity: Yes/No) x 2 (Revenge Opportunity: Yes/No) design with hanging control. Participants read that they could (not) change and could (not) respond to a negative review. Behavioral NWOM measured sending emails to support a complaint about the platform.

Summary of Findings

Pilot reveals 10% of platform users had received a review that was less positive than they deserved, and a third of those generated NWOM, showing this phenomenon is not rare.

Study 1, an ANOVA revealed lower platform ratings ($p = .006$) and higher NWOM ($p = .052$).under the negative (2-star) [vs. positive (5-star)] review condition ($p = .006$).

Study 2 revealed the effect of review valence on NWOM was mediated by betrayal. NWOM decreased with each drop in rating, even from 4-star (3.01) vs. 5-star ($M=1.43$; $ps < .001$).

Study 3a revealed that when reviews monitoring was outside the PC terms (vs. in contract or control) condition, NWOM was lower ($M_{Out}=4.04$ vs. $M_{In}=5.12$; $p=.001$), mediated by betrayal, with no differences between in-contract and control. Study 3b provides further support for a PC; after receiving a negative review, participants were more likely to generate NWOM when they had fulfilled (vs. not fulfilled) their own obligations ($M_{Unfulfilled} = 3.47$ vs. $M_{Fulfilled} = 4.88$; $p < .001$).

Study 4 shows that without a response opportunity, NWOM was lower when they could exact revenge (M= 4.28) than not (M= 5.58; p <.001); a response opportunity attenuated the effect (p = .022).

Key Contributions

We provide a first empirical look at a turn of the tables in which consumers are evaluated based on their performance in market exchanges. Reputation systems, in which peers evaluate one another, mark a turn of the tables where the consumer, who hitherto has been "always right," is now subject to public critique based on their behaviors in the marketplace. Even though reviews emanate strictly from peers, we show that consumers retaliate against the platform by generating negative word of mouth (NWOM) about the platform. This effect is rooted in consumers' psychological contracts with platforms based on a perceived promise to ensure that they will be treated fairly in the reputation process, rather than a mere spillover of reactions to peers. We isolate betrayal as a key underlying mechanism, and use measures that reflect market trends, including reviews in crowd-sourced sites (e.g., TripAdvisor) and contributions to others' posts (e.g., Reddit coins).

Platforms should consider the impact of their intermediation choices on consumer reactions. Incongruences between implicit promises in the individuals' mind and what organizations are willing or able to deliver give rise to psychological contract breaches which can lead to betrayal and NWOM.

LINGUISTIC CONCRETENESS, EXPLICIT CREDIBILITY CUES, AND REVIEW PERSUASIVENESS

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Keywords: Linguistic Concreteness, Review Persuasiveness, Platform design

Description: While the concreteness of detailed reviews for restaurants leads to fewer check-ins, providing explicit credibility tags for such reviews (e.g., *elite* reviewers in Yelp) reduces the negative impact of review text concreteness, thereby leading to more persuasive reviews and higher restaurant check-ins.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Can expertise cues increase the persuasiveness of linguistically concrete reviews? Linguistically concrete messages have been demonstrated to be less persuasive than abstract ones. Compared to concrete messages, readers exposed to positive, abstract messages infer that the message source has strongly favourable attitudes towards the described product. However, it can be argued that experts- who are generally believed to be more persuasive than non-experts- use a more finely-honed vocabulary and are also more likely to use specific, concrete words. In this research, we attempt to reconcile this disparity between these two streams of literature. Using restaurant data from Yelp, we find that experts do write more concretely worded reviews compared to non-experts. We also find that the impact of linguistic

concreteness of reviews on restaurant check-ins decreases with an increase in the proportion of expert reviews. Our results have important implications for online review platforms, for instance, by helping identify which restaurants have received more persuasive reviews and then presenting these restaurants to platform users.

Method and Data

We use restaurant reviews and check-ins data from Yelp. Our dataset has information on 2400 restaurants, with 764,243 reviews posted between January 2005 and December 2019 (around 180 months). For each review, we have details on the review text concreteness, review rating, whether the reviewer is an elite user, the number of usefulness votes the review has received, common restaurant-level factors (such as price, restaurant rating etc.), and the number of check-ins to the restaurant in the thirty days following the date the review was posted. Our analysis is based on sets of reviews, with each set containing four reviews. Therefore, we use the number of check-ins to the restaurant in the thirty days following the date the latest review in the set was posted, the average linguistic concreteness, the number of usefulness votes received, the proportion of reviews written by elite reviewers, and the average rating of the four reviews per set in our analysis. We repeat the analysis by expanding the number of reviews per set from four to eight and twelve to check for robustness.

Summary of Findings

We find that experts (as identified by the platform) are likely to write more concrete reviews. Next, we examine the impact of review text concreteness and explicit credibility cues on review persuasiveness. Since recent surveys suggest that platform users read more than one review, we base our analysis on sets of four reviews. We also find that the number of check-ins within thirty days of the latest review in the set of four reviews decreases with the linguistic

concreteness of the reviews, suggesting that concrete reviews are less persuasive. However, the presence of an explicit expertise cue ("elite reviewer" tag in the Yelp setting) dilutes the impact of linguistic concreteness on review persuasion.

Key Contributions

Our results make important theoretical contributions. First, our results add to research on differences in language used by experts and non-experts. Second, our results add to the literature on the persuasiveness of linguistic concreteness by examining the role explicit source credibility cues have on the persuasiveness of review text concreteness. Although past research focuses on the impact of a single message on consumer choice, most platform users read more than one review to make their decisions. We use real-world data to re-examine past lab-based findings by using multiple reviews to understand the impact of linguistic concreteness on consumer choice. Thus, our work is also novel from a methodological standpoint. Finally, our research has interesting practical implications for online review platforms. First, given that multiple restaurants have similar overall ratings, the platform can recommend to users restaurants with more abstract reviews to drive more restaurant visits. Second, the platform can increase visits by presenting to a user the more abstractly worded reviews for a recommended restaurant first. Third, online review platforms can use reviewers' historical use of linguistically concrete language based on the reviews they had posted in the past to decide which reviewers to award explicit credibility cues to. The addition of explicit credibility cues will dilute the negative impact of a concrete review, further increasing restaurant check-ins.

References are available upon request.

LINKING CONSUMER MATERIALISM, STATUS-BASED CONSUMPTION, BRAND ENGAGEMENT, MARKET MAVENISM AND BRAND LOYALTY

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Keywords: consumer materialism, status-based consumption, brand engagement, market mavenism, brand loyalty.

Description: This is the first study in Lithuania revealing the links among consumer materialism, status-based consumption, brand engagement, market mavenism and brand loyalty.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

The topic of consumer materialism (CM) is relevant not only among marketers, but also researchers in the field of psychology, who have revealed the relationships between this phenomenon and various social and psychological, often negative, features of society (Burroughs, Rindfleisch, 2012; Ruvio et al., 2014; Santini et al., 2017; Villardefrancos, Otero-Lopez, 2016). Although there are clear negative materialism consequences for consumers in scientific literature, a positive attitude towards it also exists (Podoshen, Andrzejewski, 2012). One of such examples is brand loyalty, which is valuable not only to organizations, but also to consumers themselves. The emergence of CM can be prompted by various stimuli (de Oliveira Santini et al., 2017; Duh, 2015; Moschis, Davis, 2011; Segev et al., 2015). The consequences of this phenomenon can be both positive (brand involvement, market mavenism) and negative (impulsive and compulsive buying). Status- based consumption (SbC) is one of the consumer materialism consequences (de Oliveira Santini et al.,

2017) and the relationship between these constructs has been extensively studied (de Oliveira Santini et al., 2017; Bevan-Dye et al., 2012; Goldsmith, Clark, 2012). Thought the brand loyalty (BL) has been reported as a consequence of CM, brand engagement (BE) and market mavenism (MM) (Rashid et al., 2019; Podoshen, Andrzejewski, 2012; Dwivedi, 2015; Fernandes, Moreira, 2019; Goldsmith, Flynn, 2016), the present knowledge on links among these constructs is sparse. Thus the problem question is: *what are the links between consumer materialism, status-based consumption, brand engagement, market mavenism and brand loyalty?*

Method And Data

In this study, a survey questionnaire has been developed, pretested and digitally distributed. The study involved 461 respondents aged 16 to 68 years from Lithuania. To measure the constructs in the research model, we used previously established and validated scales. The construct of consumer materialism is measured within three dimensions (success, centrality, happiness) formulated by Richins and Dawson (1992) and a scale consist of 18 items. We used items from Eastman et al. (1999) to measure the status-based consumption construct and that consist of 5 items. To measure brand engagement we used 8 items scale developed by Sprott, Czellar and Spangenberg (2009). We used 6 items from Feick and Price (1987) to measure market mavenism. The brand loyalty were measured within 6 items scale by Bolton and Mattila (2015). All items were measured using 5-point Likert-type scales. Descriptive analysis and nonparametric tests were computed to describe the demographic characteristics of respondents. An assessment of the reliability of the measurement scales was also performed. To discover the links between constructs, we employed the factor, correlation and regression analysis and mediation.

Summary of Findings

Regression analysis confirms that consumer materialism, within three dimensions of CM, i.e. success, centrality, and happiness, has a positive effect on status-based consumption. The present research shows that the dimension of success has the strongest impact on status-based consumption.

Regarding mediation effect of the status-based consumption (SbC), the results reveal that consumer materialism has a positive effect on SbC, which in turn has a positive effect on brand engagement (BE). Moreover, the analysis also indicates that SbC mediates the relationship between materialism and market mavenism (MM) in such a way that materialism has a positive effect on status-based consumption, which in turn has a positive effect on MM. Regression analysis confirms that MM and BE have a positive significant effect on brand loyalty (BL). Regarding the non-parametric tests, results show that the age of respondents has the highest impact on consumer materialism, SbC, BE, MM, and brand loyalty. The gender of the respondents has no significant effect on all constructs. The youngest group of research participants (19 years old and younger) is most prone to materialism. The education level of the study participants has a significant effect only on BL, and their financial situation significantly affects only the happiness dimension of CM.

Statement of Key Contributions

The current study extends the literature on the relatively under-investigated consequence of materialism, i.e. brand loyalty. Within our empirical research, we contribute to the consumer materialism literature while exploring the relationships between consumer materialism, status-based consumption, brand engagement, market mavenism and brand loyalty.

Research findings suggest some managerial implications. Taken together, brands those seek to develop long-term attitude and behavior based loyalty should encourage stronger brand engagement, develop synergies, inspire consumers to take an interest in new products, and provide detailed product information for Lithuanian consumers. In order to reach loyal consumers of brands, it is worth focusing on females aged 20-25 with incomplete higher or higher (university) education who think that they live much better than most Lithuanians do.

"References are available upon request."

LOVE YOU(,) BUNCHES!? –
HOW THE USE OF BASIC EMOTIONS IN POINT-OF-SALE COMMUNICATION DRIVES CONSUMERS' CHOICE OF IMPERFECT PRODUCE

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Keywords: food waste, anthropomorphism, point-of-sale communication, emotions, choice

Description: Using the example of single bananas, this article investigates how the use of basic emotions in humanized point-of-sale communication drives consumers' choice of imperfect produce.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

1.3 billion tons of food get lost and wasted every year. While the reasons are manifold, in industrialized countries waste mainly results from picky consumer behavior regarding visual perfection. This affects especially fruit and vegetables, which, in most cases, are 'too good to go' as there is no impairment of quality or safety. However, trade norms have accustomed consumers to visually flawless products, so they reject to consider buying flawed ones. While past research has shown that price discounts or consumer education ('pesticide free' labels) are successful means to increase sales of imperfect produce, it lacks insights into how consumers may be incentivized without such compensations. Recent research has identified anthropomorphism or humanization, i.e. the attribution of humanlike characteristics or emotions to nonhuman agents, and in-store

communication (product described as authentic, sustainable, or particularly 'ugly') as potential approaches to reach the abovementioned goal.

Building on that, this paper aims to investigate how the combination of humanization and in-store communication can be leveraged to increase advertising effectiveness. Specifically, we test whether the additional use of basic emotions (happiness and sadness) in point-of-sale communication drives consumers' choice of imperfect produce. Herein, we are interested in both online and offline (actual) choice behavior.

Method and Data

Two experiments were conducted. Study 1 was run online and used a 4x1 (emotion: none/neutral/happy/sad) between-subjects design (N = 480, 49.6% female, M_{age} = 42.63). The stimuli showed pictures of supermarket shelves with single bananas on the left and bunches on the right side; the signs above the singles were varied. Participants were randomly assigned to the conditions (119/119/121/121), instructed to 'purchase' bananas, and asked to indicate the side they choose from. For exploratory purposes, we measured warmth, positive affect, and compassion towards the singles and subsequently evaluated the data using ANOVA.

Study 2 was conducted as field experiment. The study followed two parallel research designs:

- Number of bananas sold per hour (timeslot; N = 192 (64/64/64))
- Likelihood of an individual customer buying bananas to choose single (vs. bunch; customer; N = 3,810)

The study was conducted on eight days à 12 hours in two supermarket branches. We physically installed emotionalized signs (except neutral) above the single banana shelves, watched customers' choice from a hidden spot in the store, and counted the number of bananas sold when rotating the signs. We also collected data on estimated age and gender of buyers; subsequent analyses were done using ANOVA and logistic regressions.

Summary of Findings

This paper sheds light on the role of anthropomorphism and emotions in reducing food waste. While our results are not as clear as expected, we can show that imperfect produce is chosen more when being humanized and that adding a basic emotion does indeed leverage the effect. A particularly interesting finding is that especially sadness works well as emotional trigger for choice. Yet, it must be weighted up carefully until what point using sadness is beneficial, and when it starts alienating consumers; thereby diminishing rather than increasing sales.

Another interesting insight is that consumers do not only perceive positive feelings towards anthropomorphized imperfect produce, but also negative ones. Yet, these emotions still seem to drive sales. That is, participants in the sad-condition perceived most compassion with the single banana while having the least positive associations (warmth and positive affect) of all groups – yet, sales of single bananas were highest in this condition. Here, an underlying 'compassion effect' might cause consumers' intention to 'help' the sad produce, an idea that finds support in the fact that more women (who are said to be more empathetic and compassionate) than men buy single bananas. Further studies will have to explore this idea.

Key Contributions

Our findings are relevant to both marketing theory and practice. From a theoretical perspective, we contribute to the understanding of basic emotions' use in point-of-sale communication. Specifically, adding basic emotions to signs is an effective means to leverage anthropomorphism's effect in promoting imperfect produce. From a managerial perspective, our findings may be used as a guideline on how to incorporate anthropomorphism in point-of-sale communication. That is, we demonstrate that especially sadness, evoking compassion in consumers' minds, may be used as emotional trigger when the product's human schema is ambiguous. Yet, this needs to be monitored closely as the use of sadness may also cause reverse effects. On a more general level, we demonstrate that there is indeed a business case for imperfect products as selling them on discount is not required when using adequate communication strategies. Consequently, our

findings are highly relevant not only to academics and food retailers, who may reduce their waste and improve their brand images, but also to non-profit organizations and policy makers aiming to make consumers aware of the food waste issue. This may be done by fighting ‘only beautiful is good’-attitudes through anthropomorphism, ultimately supporting the strive for a more sustainable development.

References are available upon request.

MEASURING THE BANDWAGON EFFECT:

DEVELOPMENT OF A GENERALIZED LUXURY BANDWAGON EFFECT SCALE

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Keywords: Bandwagon Effect, Luxury, Scale Development, Luxury Motivation

The authors present a reliable, valid, and generalizable four-item unidimensional scale that captures generalized luxury bandwagon effect motivations.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

A key luxury consumer is the bandwagon consumer, driven by herd behavior and wanting to fit in with others (Leibenstein, 1950; Kastankis & Balabanis, 2012; 2014; Shaikh et al., 2017). However, the luxury market is not homogeneous, as luxury consumers are influenced by different motivations (Kastankis & Balabanis, 2012; 2014; Leibenstein, 1950). As luxury consumption can manifest itself in different ways (Eastman, Shin & Ruhland, 2020) driven by a variety of factors (Kastankis & Balabanis, 2014), there is a need to understand the different motivations driving luxury consumption and different characteristics of luxury consumers (Wilcox, Kim, & Sen, 2009). This requires valid measures so nomological networks can illustrate how different motivations relate to different luxury consumption behaviors. Kastankis & Balabanis (2012; 2014) created a bandwagon measure, but it is domain specific. Given the growing masstige market driven by bandwagon consumers (Kumar et al., 2020), a better

understanding of bandwagon luxury consumers is needed (Shaikh et al., 2017; Bahri-Ammari, Coulibaly & Mimoun, 2020). The purpose of this research study was to develop a generalizable, reliable, and valid generalized luxury bandwagon effect (BW) scale.

Method and Data

To develop and test the relationships between the bandwagon effect and the constructs of interest, the BW scale was created following Churchill's paradigm (1979) for scale development and DeVellis's (1991) guidelines. Study One involved item generation based on the review of literature, feedback from experts, to determine content validity. After a thorough review, eight items were developed for the study. These were administered to a sample of 162 business undergraduate students. The analysis involved two subsamples to test for dimensionality and factor loadings, and confirmatory factor analysis of 4 items (unidimensional) were established that demonstrated construct reliability, convergent validity, and nomological validity with related constructs including status consumption, brand visibility, and inconspicuous luxury motivation (ILM). Study Two utilized a non-student sample made up of 299 adults in the Midwest to further demonstrate the reliability and validity of the scale and generalizability. Study Three tested the BW scale with a national US sample of 360 adults. Nomological validity was established with related constructs including status consumption, conspicuous consumption, and brand congruity with one's internal self. With all studies, confirmatory factor analysis demonstrated the measurement models testing the BW scale had an acceptable fit with the data and was reliable and valid.

Summary of Findings

With three studies, this research confirms the BW scale is a valid, reliable, and generalizable measure. In all three studies, the BW was found to be positively related to the status

consumption scale (Eastman et al., 1999) as past bandwagon measures have been (Kastankis & Balabanis, 2012; 2014). ILM did not have an effect for the two younger samples (Study One and Two) but had a significant negative effect with a national sample (Study Three), suggesting that consumers want their luxury consumption to be visible (as found in all three studies) and conspicuous (as found in Study Three). An interesting finding was the importance of elites both in ILM and to BW consumers. The role of others is further demonstrated with the non-relationship between the BW scale and independent self-construal, suggesting the importance of social others with the bandwagon effect to the point where others' views are congruent with who they are. With successful scale development, market researchers are better able to understand complex relationships among constructs (Rowley, 2014). This research contributes to the literature through the development of a reliable, valid, and generalizable unidimensional scale that captures generalized luxury bandwagon effect motivations.

Key Contributions

With the growth of the luxury market, there is confusion as to what is luxury and who is the luxury consumer. What is luxury has included everything from masstige to traditional luxury which highlights the heterogeneity of luxury consumers and the need for better measures of luxury motivation. Reliable and valid scales to measure luxury motivations are vital. This study contributes by developing a generalizable, reliable, and valid luxury bandwagon effect (BW) scale made up of a unidimensional four-item scale to measure the bandwagon effect that is not limited to one product domain. With the BW measure, luxury researchers can gain a better understanding of who is influenced by the spectrum of luxury offerings from masstige to traditional luxury consumption. Luxury researchers can better determine the relationship between BW and other marketing constructs and their impact on luxury consumption.

References are available upon request.

NEGATIVE CONSUMER REACTIONS TO DYNAMIC PRICING WITH PERSONAL AND EXTERNAL CRITERIA

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Keywords: Dynamic pricing; Complexity; Feeling of being exploited; Complaint intention; Intention to search for alternative offers

Description: This study examines negative consumer reactions to dynamic pricing based on different types of criteria (personal vs. external) as well as on moderate vs. high involvement.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

The objective of this study is to examine negative consumer reactions to dynamic pricing based on different types of criteria (personal vs. external) as well as on moderate vs. high involvement. The immediate reactions that we will examine are perceptions of price complexity and the feeling of being exploited. In addition, we will examine two behavioral consequences of these immediate reactions: search for alternatives and intention to complain. These two variables illustrate two types of negative customer reactions that are highly relevant for companies. On one hand, customers who decide to complain to the company opt to continue to engage in a relationship with the company and possibly resolve negative purchase experiences. On the other hand, customers who search for alternative offers decide to terminate the relationship and possibly begin a new one with a competitor (Huppertz, 2007). Dynamic pricing has already been shown to increase both search intentions and complaint intentions, but the effects of perceptions of price complexity and feelings of being exploited on these variables are yet to be observed in the context of dynamic pricing.

Method and Data

The study used a 2 (dynamic pricing criteria: personal vs. external) x 2 (customer involvement: moderate vs. high) design. The test product was a ski pass. In the scenario, the respondents (n=125, predominantly students, 50.4% women, average age: 27.8 years) were put in the situation of a price-disadvantaged customer who learns that prices vary dynamically based on personal criteria (student/senior discounts, place of residency) or on external factors (weather conditions). The scenario also manipulated customer involvement (high involvement: the respondents had to imagine that they were excited and looking forward to the trip, which they had planned long in advance; moderate involvement: the respondents should imagine that they decided on a spontaneous ski trip the same day). Perceived price complexity was measured with two items (r=0.428). As the feeling of being exploited by the company is still new to pricing literature, we measured it directly using one item. The different dimensions of customer involvement were measured with five items (α=0.791; M_{high}=4.477, $M_{moderate}$=4.076; t=2.019, $p<0.05$). Intentions to search for alternatives or to complain were both measured using one item. All items were measured on 7-point scales (1=totally disagree, …, 7=totally agree).

Summary of Findings

Dynamic pricing based on personal criteria leads to higher price complexity perceptions of price-disadvantaged customers ($M_{=}$4.294) than dynamic pricing based external criteria ($M_{=}$3.766; F=4.368, $p<0.05$). Involvement has no direct effect on price complexity perceptions (moderate: M=3.960, high: M=4.105; F=0.465, $p>0.10$), but the interaction of type of criteria and involvement is significant (personal criteria: $M_{moderate_involvement}$=4.624, $M_{high_involvement}$=3.933; external criteria: $M_{moderate_involvement}$=3.233, $M_{high_involvement}$=4.266; F=11.599, $p<0.01$). Being disadvantaged through dynamic pricing triggers strong feelings of being exploited, but these feelings do not depend on criteria type (M_P=4.75, M_E=4.95;

F=0.603, p>0.10), different levels of involvement (M_{Im}=4.83, M_{Ih}=4.87; F=0.019, p>0.10), or the interaction between criteria type and involvement (F=0.248, p>0.10). The regression (R^2=0.089) analyzing the effects of perceived price complexity and the feeling of being exploited on intentions to complain to the company about the pricing shows that higher price complexity perceptions lead to higher intentions to complain (β=0.326, t=3.147, p<0.01) but feelings of being exploited have no effect (β=0.095, t=0.892, p>0.10). The regression for intentions to search for an alternative offer (R^2=0.118) reveals the opposite pattern: while price complexity perceptions have no effect on search intentions (β=0.010, t=0.125, p>0.10), higher feelings of being exploited lead to higher search intentions (β=0.329, t=3.962, p<0.001).

Statement of Key Contributions

For moderate involvement, dynamic pricing based on personal (as compared to external) criteria leads to higher perceived price complexity (and therefore more complaints) while for high involvement, price complexity perceptions do not depend on the criteria used for dynamic pricing. Service providers who have little information about customer involvement levels, should avoid personal dynamic pricing criteria to keep price complexity perceptions low. If CRM software provides service providers with indicators of the customers' involvement level (e.g., volume of interactions with the customer), service providers should mitigate the price complexity perceptions of moderately involved customers through communication and price framing. As the results show that dynamic pricing generally leads to strong feelings of being exploited, we recommend service providers that implement dynamic pricing to consider the adverse effects that negative feelings towards the company may have on their customer relationships. Furthermore, the results indicate that perceptions of high price complexity mainly trigger high intentions to complain to the service provider while strong feelings of being

exploited lead customers to forgo communication with the service provider and directly search for an alternative offer.

References are available upon request.

New Insights on Identity and Consumption Presented by the Consumer Behavior Track

Session Description:
In this special session, we first explore how consumers construct their identities (Dr. Andre F. Maciel). We then discuss how everyday consumption contexts threaten identities (Dr. Gita V. Johar) and what strategies consumers employ to protect their identities in the face of such threats (Dr. Naomi Mandel). Finally, we examine how multiple identities intersect (Dr. Julian K. Saint Clair) and interact (Dr. Karen Page Winterich) to influence a variety of judgments and behaviors in the marketplace.

1. Athletic Identity Projects: How Consumers Construct High Physical Performance
Ronan Quintão, Instituto Federal de São Paulo
Andre F. Maciel*, University of Nebraska—Lincoln

2. Consuming Personalized Recommendations Shakes Sense of Identity
Byung Cheol Lee, Columbia University
Gita V. Johar*, Columbia University

3. On the Flexibility of Self-Repair: How Holistic versus Analytic Thinking Style Impacts Fluid Compensatory Consumption
Qin Wang, Arizona State University
Monika Lisjak, Arizona State University
Naomi Mandel*, Arizona State University

4. Gender, Race, and Class: Contemporary Exploration of the Boundaries and Intersections of Multiple Identities in the Marketplace
Julian K. Saint Clair*, Loyola Marymount University

5. The Effect of Self-Heterogeneity on Choice Difficulty When Choosing Between Identity-Linked Goods
Sara Loughran Dommer, Pennsylvania State University
Karen Page Winterich*, Pennsylvania State University

*Presenting author

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1. Athletic Identity Projects: How Consumers Construct High Physical Performance
Ronan Quintão, Instituto Federal de São Paulo
Andre F. Maciel*, University of Nebraska—Lincoln

Many consumers engage in physically intense experiences such as running marathons, climbing mountains, and hiking challenging trails. Although research has often considered the meanings and outcomes of such experiences for consumers, it has overlooked the path by which individuals develop athletic skills in the first place. To address this gap, the authors conduct a multi-site ethnography of road cycling, sampling amateurs with diverse performance levels in this sport. The conceptualization of consumer efforts to construct high physical performance, herein termed “athletic identity project,” helps advance understanding of a focal area of identity work in contemporary culture: the body.

2. Consuming Personalized Recommendations Shakes Sense of Identity

Byung Cheol Lee, Columbia University
Gita V. Johar*, Columbia University

Consumers often rely on recommender systems that understand their preferences and suggest products tailored to these preferences. We explore whether using personalized recommendations reinforces a consumer's sense of identity or strips it away. In a series of experiments and surveys we find that consuming products that are tailored (vs. not tailored) to one's preferences increases product enjoyment but shakes self-perception, resulting in reduced preference clarity and lowered agency in self-expression. As a result, consuming personalized recommendations invokes compensatory behaviors to restore agency in self-expression, such as avoiding delegation of decisions. We discuss implications for consumer well-being and marketing.

3. On the Flexibility of Self-Repair: How Holistic versus Analytic Thinking Style Impacts Fluid Compensatory Consumption

Qin Wang, Arizona State University
Monika Lisjak, Arizona State University
Naomi Mandel*, Arizona State University

This research investigates when and why consumers cope with self-discrepancy by affirming the self in important domains unrelated to the self-discrepancy (fluid compensation). Across six lab experiments and one field study, we show that holistic (vs. analytic) thinkers are more likely to engage in fluid compensation because, by perceiving things as part of a larger whole, they are more likely to view fluid compensation as instrumental to self-worth enhancement. We further test the effectiveness of fluid compensation in restoring self-worth and identify boundary conditions for the effect. Finally, we discuss the implications for theory and practice.

4. Gender, Race, and Class: Contemporary Exploration of the Boundaries and Intersections of Multiple Identities in the Marketplace

Julian K. Saint Clair*, Loyola Marymount University

People aren't just one thing. In fact, a growing body of marketing research implicates the importance of understanding how consumers manage their multiple identities. However, it is unclear whether there is agreement among consumer behaviorists regarding a cohesive theoretical framework for this endeavor. The present research discusses the Multiple Identity Network as one such framework for integrating extant and future work. Results from published and unpublished studies on gender, race, and class are shared and discussed in the context of this framework. Implications for research and practice include the domains of stereotypes, intersectionality, and marketplace equity.

5. The Effect of Self-Heterogeneity on Choice Difficulty When Choosing Between Identity-Linked Goods

Sara Loughran Dommer, Pennsylvania State University)
Karen Page Winterich*, Pennsylvania State University)

Consumers hold multiple identities, and thus frequently choose between multiple identity goods. However, the identity literature has typically focused on choice sets containing one identity good and one neutral (no identity) good. Advancing this literature, we theorize and demonstrate that the difficulty of choosing between two identity goods depends on self-heterogeneity. The results show that consumers high in self-heterogeneity, who have self-structures in which attributes are more variably

distributed across identities, have greater difficulty choosing between two identity goods, compared to when only one identity good is present in the choice set.

*Presenting author

Parenthood Increases Desire for Conspicuous (vs. Inconspicuous) Luxury Goods

CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

This research contributes to a broader understanding of status-signaling, parenting, and evolutionary influences on consumption. Past research has primarily focused on how engaging in conspicuous luxury consumption benefits the users themselves. The current findings build on this previous work by examining whether consumers may use such products to benefit others. To our knowledge, this work is the first to examine how consumers may strategically seek conspicuous luxury products because of a perceived benefit to another person – one's existing children. The current studies also contribute to recent research highlighting how parenthood changes consumer preferences. While prior research has focused on how parents make spending decisions when their children are the direct recipients of the product, the current work focuses on how parenthood can change the desire for certain products for the parents themselves. Finally, this work also contributes to research on evolutionary influences on consumption. Whereas evolutionary-informed research has examined how conspicuous goods can advance mating goals by attracting a mate, we find conspicuous luxury products may also advance parenting goals by enhancing the social status of current children.

Our findings have important implications. This work suggests that marketers selling conspicuous luxury goods may benefit from targeting parents. Because there are specific times during the year when events involving children take place (e.g., beginning of the school year), marketers may benefit from timing promotions for conspicuous luxury products to coincide with these times. As such, the current findings have implications for understanding trends, product planning, and improving market forecasts. This research is also notable because parents often sacrifice spending on themselves and feel guilty for self-purchases. The findings here suggest

that parents may be encouraged to buy such products by tapping into their underlying belief that when they invest in themselves, both children and parents can benefit.

ABSTRACT

Rather than rising anew in each individual, people across history acquired their social status from their parents. Thus, becoming a parent may heighten status-signaling motivations because a parent is signaling status not just for the self but also for existing, dependent children. Drawing on the historical practice of an individual's social status being affected by that of their parents, the current research proposes that parents have a stronger preference for conspicuous (vs. inconspicuous) luxury products than non-parents. This effect is reasoned to occur because the status signaled by a parent's conspicuous luxury possessions is believed to impact perceptions of their children's social status. Five studies find that parents (vs. non-parents) have a stronger preference for conspicuous luxury goods. This effect is mediated by perceptions that one's own social status affects the social status of existing children, which increases the desire to signal high social status. Individual differences in the belief that a parent's social status impacts that of their children, the closeness between parents and their children, and children's ages moderate the effect.

INTRODUCTION

A parent's drive to ensure their children are successful is arguably one of the most robust of human motivations. Given the myriad of survival and reproductive benefits associated with possessing high status (Bellezza, Gino, and Keinan 2014; Doob and Gross 1968; Li, Spitzer, and Olson 2014; Reiman and Leighton 2015), particularly when accrued over time, one enduring way parents can set their children up for future success is to help them attain high status. Here, we test the prediction that parenthood predicts a stronger preference for conspicuous (vs. inconspicuous) luxury goods because of a parent's perception that their social status affects their children, leading to a stronger desire to be seen as a high-status individual. Five studies support this hypothesis.

THEREOTICAL FOUNDATION

High social status is defined as possessing "a higher position compared to others on some dimension (wealth, hierarchy, etc.)" that garners respect from one's peers (Bellezza, Gino, and Keinan 2014). There are many benefits to possessing and signaling high status. For example, high-status individuals are given priority access to resources when they are scarce, aiding in survival (e.g., shelter; Fowler 2020). They are also not held to the same societal constraints as lower-status people (Doob and Gross 1968). For example, even when committing the same crime, offenders with high (vs. low) status are less likely to be arrested and receive lighter sentences if convicted (Reiman and Leighton 2015). Notably, research suggests that conspicuous (vs. inconspicuous) luxury consumption is motivated by the desire to signal social status and garner these benefits (Dubois and Ordabayeva 2015; Rucker and Galinsky 2008).

While status signaling motivations are typically self-serving in nature (e.g., to garner preferential treatment from others), we offer that the parent-child relationship dynamic elicits a context in which status-signaling motivations occur out of a desire to benefit another person. There are few relationships that are characterized by as much investment in another's welfare as the parent-child relationship (Hamilton 1964; Nikiforidis et al. 2018). The parent-child relationship is arguably one of the few relationships where (1) an individual is heavily invested in the welfare of another person, and (2) an individual's reputation, including status, also impacts perceptions of the other person (i.e., a parent's status affects that of their children). Thus, becoming a parent may enhance status motivations, leading to a stronger preference for conspicuous luxury products because these consumers believe that they are signaling status not only to benefit the self, but also to benefit their children.

This prediction is predicated on the proposition that consumers hold the normative belief that a parent's social status affects their children's social status. The existence of this lay belief has converging support. First, people generally assume that a parent's traits and behaviors are evident in their children. For instance, Bressan and Dal Martello (2002) found that even when no genetic relationship exists, people perceive similarities between two individuals assumed to be parent and child. Second, people believe that a parent's behaviors affect their children. That is, people often see parents as one of the key teachers and orchestrators of their children's lives, indicating that parents' behaviors and decisions are believed to affect their children (Maccoby 1992). Third, people may assume that a parent's social image dictates their children's social image because a parent's social status has historically influenced that of their children. For example, caste systems in early societies gave children no choice but to follow in the footsteps of their parents in terms of occupation or trade, leading them to the same socioeconomic status

positions as their parents (Coffey and Spears 2017). Notably, a pretest ($N = 46$) demonstrated that on average, consumers (both parents and non-parents) are likely to agree with statements (e.g., "A parent's social status in society dictates their children's social status"; 1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree) that a parent's social status impacts that of their children ($M = 5.30$ vs. mid-point, $t(45) = 8.20$, $p < .001$). Additionally, these results show that this belief is not invariant. Participants' agreement with the idea that a parent's social status impacts that of their children ranged from 2.2 to 7.

If consumers generally believe that a parent's social status affects that of their children, parents and non-parents may differ in their desire for conspicuous (vs. inconspicuous) status-signaling luxury products. That is, the benefits of possessing and signaling high status, coupled with the notion that parents believe that they are signaling status for two (self and child), should lead parents to have a stronger desire to signal high social status through owning status-signaling products than non-parents.

H1: Parenthood predicts a stronger preference for conspicuous (vs. inconspicuous) luxury goods.

H2: The effect of parenthood on desire for conspicuous luxury goods is mediated by the perception that one's own social status impacts the social status of existing children, which, in turn, leads to an increased desire to convey high status**.**

These hypotheses are dependent on a chronic, normative belief that a parent's social status affects that of their children. The pilot study suggests that the strength of this belief varies

depending on the individual. Thus, the effect of parenthood on preference for conspicuous luxury products should be greater for those who endorse high levels of this belief.

> **H3**: The effect of parenthood on the desire for conspicuous luxury goods emerges for consumers with a stronger normative belief that a parent's social status impacts that of their children.

Furthermore, parents with a close (vs. distant) relationship with their children should be more likely to prefer conspicuous luxury goods. That is, they should be more willing to engage in behavior that they think will benefit their children. In sum, we expect that the normative belief that a parent's social status impacts that of their children will affect their desire for conspicuous (vs. inconspicuous) luxury goods, but the effect should be strongest for parents who have close (vs. distant) relationships with their children.

> **H4A**: Among parents, those who have a close (vs. distant) relationship with their children will have a stronger desire for conspicuous luxury products.

> **H4B**: The effect of parent-child closeness on desire for conspicuous luxury products will be moderated by the normative belief that a parent's social status impacts that of their children.

Finally, this effect should weaken as a parent's children become independent (i.e., reach the age of 18). As children get older, they are in a better position to contribute to their own social

standing and well-being. In this way, just as parents are less likely to administer direct care to their children as they age because the children can care for themselves, they should similarly be less motivated to engage in status-signaling behavior on behalf of their children.

H5: Among parents, those who have dependent children (i.e., < 18 years of age) will be more likely to have a stronger desire for conspicuous luxury products.

STUDY 1

Study 1 tested H1. Two hundred participants were recruited to take part in this study through Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk). The study involved a 2-level (parenthood status: parent vs. non-parent) between-subjects design (preregistered at osf.io/98urp). Forty-seven percent of participants were married and 54% had children. Before beginning the study, participants reported their parenthood status (1 = parents; -1 = non-parents). Parenthood was measured in this way to capture perceptions of being a parent regardless of whether their children are biological, adopted, or stepchildren. According to our theorizing, the proposed effect is predicated on having children regardless of whether the children are biological, adopted, or stepchildren.

Next, participants were presented with a picture of three different products: a Gucci t-shirt, a Prada wallet, and a Mercedes hat. Each participant was told to imagine that they were going to purchase each product, and to select a logo size of each respective brand to be shown on the front of the product. The three sets of logo sizes were anchored on a 7-point scale (1 = small;

7 = large), and participants reported their preferred logo size for each of the three luxurious brands.

The dependent variables were collapsed into one variable by creating an index of the average (α = .78). A one-way ANCOVA including standardized age, standardized income, and marital status as covariates revealed a significant main effect ($F(1, 195) = 11.58$, $p < .01$), where parents desired significantly larger logos than non-parents ($M = 3.98$ vs. $M = 3.33$).

STUDY 2

Study 2 investigated the proposed mediation process (H2). We expected that parents would report relatively stronger perceptions that their social status affects the social status of a child (proximal mediator), which would subsequently increase their desire to appear to be a high-status person (distal mediator). This would ultimately increase their preference for conspicuous luxury goods.

The study involved a 2-level (parenthood status: parent vs. non-parent) between-subjects design. Forty-nine percent of participants were married and 53% had children. Participants ($N = 201$) recruited via Prolific began the study by reporting standard demographic questions, including whether they had children (-1 = no; 1 = yes). Next, participants completed the same dependent variable task used in study 1. However, in this study, participants were told that some of them would be selected to receive one of the products with their preferred logo size. Indeed, two participants were selected to receive one of the products with their preferred logo.

Participants next responded to items designed to measure the mediating process. We created four items to measure the proximal mediator: the perception that their own social status

impacts that of a child (e.g., “To what extent do you feel like your standing in terms of status impacts the social status of a child?”; 1 = not at all; 7 = a great deal; α = .96). We also created four items to measure the distal mediator: the desire to appear as a high-status person (e.g., “I want to appear to be a high-status person.”; 1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree; α = .90).

The dependent variables were collapsed into one variable by creating an index of the average (α = .82). An ANCOVA (including age, income, and marital status as covariates) revealed a significant main effect of parenthood on preferred logo size ($F(1, 195) = 5.89$, $p = .02$). Consistent with study 1, parents favored larger logo sizes than non-parents ($M = 3.94$ vs. 3.51). This effect was fully mediated by the proximal and distal mediator process (β = .04, $SE = .02$, 95% CI: .01, .08). That is, parenthood status predicted the perception that one’s own social status influences existing children’s social statuses, and, in turn, the perception that one’s own social status influences existing children predicted their desire to appear to be a high-status person. Ultimately, the desire to convey high status increased participants’ desire for conspicuous luxury products. Furthermore, while parents preferred more conspicuous logos than non-parents prior to accounting for the mediators, this effect was not significant after accounting for the mediating variables ($p > .07$).

Importantly, while we propose that the proximal mediator is specific to one’s social status affecting an existing child, we acknowledge that the mediator items measuring this construct may appear peculiar to participants who are not parents. For this reason, we conducted a follow-up study where we reworded the items pertaining to the proximal mediator to refer more generally to impacting the social status of another person (e.g., “To what extent do you feel like your standing in terms of status impacts that of another person?”; α = .94). The results

replicated the main effect found in study 2 ($F(1, 227) = 3.95$, $p = .05$), as well as the serial mediation analysis ($\beta = .09$, $SE = .03$, 95% CI: .04, .17).

STUDY 3

Study 3 aimed to conceptually test the proposed mechanism through moderation. That is, the effect should be moderated by the extent that consumers hold the chronic, normative belief that a parent's social status affects that of their children (H3). Participants ($N = 374$) were recruited to take part in this study through Amazon MTurk and compensated for their participation. Thirty-nine percent of participants were married and 47% had children. In contrast to the earlier studies, participants reported whether they had children *after* completing the dependent measure to ensure that reporting parenthood status prior to the dependent measures was not responsible for the effect found in previous studies.

Participants began the study by viewing two keychains. The products were gender specific: men saw two Rolex keychains, and women saw two Coach keychains. No effects were found based on gender and therefore are not mentioned further. In each product pair, one of the keychains had a visible luxury brand logo while the other keychain had a less luxury brand logo. Participants were instructed to choose the keychain they preferred. They were also told that this portion of the study involved a real lottery where one participant would receive the keychain they selected. Indeed, one participant was selected at random and received their preferred keychain. The dependent variable was the proportion of participants that preferred the keychain with the visible logo (conspicuous keychain coded as "1"; inconspicuous keychain coded as "-1"). In addition, participants responded to the five statements used in the pretest (mentioned in

the theoretical foundation) to measure the normative belief that a parent's social status influences that of their children (α = .76). They then reported their parenthood status and demographic characteristics before being dismissed.

As expected, parents chose the keychain with the visible logo more often than did non-parents (M = 66% vs. M = 43%; β = .83, SE = .25, $Wald$ = 10.77, $p < .001$). More importantly, there was a significant interaction between parenthood status and belief that a parent's social status impacts that of their children on keychain choice (β = .85, SE = .33, $Wald$ = 6.71, $p < .01$). The slope of belief was significant and positive for parents (β = .61, SE = .25, z = 2.44, p = .01), indicating that for parents, the more they held the normative belief that a parent's social status affects that of their children, the more likely they were to prefer the conspicuous luxury product. This slope was not significant for non-parents ($p > .26$), indicating that the normative belief that a parent's social status affects that of their children had little influence on non-parents' preference for conspicuous luxury products. Looked at differently, for those who had a strong belief that a parent's social status affects that of their children (+1 SD), parents chose the keychain with the conspicuous logo more frequently than did non-parents (β = .70, SE = .17, z = 4.07, $p < .01$). However, for participants who had a weaker belief that a parent's social status influences that of their children (-1 SD), no significant difference emerged ($p > .43$).

STUDY 4

Study 4 examined H4. Parents (N = 239) were recruited to take part in this study through Amazon's MTurk. Seventy percent of participants were married. Parents recruited for this study completed a similar logo selection task as that used in the earlier studies. Specifically,

participants selected one of seven logos of varying sizes for a Gucci t-shirt and a Prada wallet (collapsed into a single item; α = .79). As a more explicit measure of desire for status-signaling products, participants also reported their agreement with each of the five items used in Eastman, Goldsmith, and Flynn's (1999) status consumption scale (α = .91).

After completing the dependent measures, parents reported their belief that a parent's social status influences that of their children as in study 3 (α = .83). Participants then reported their closeness with each of their children using the overlapping circle task from Aron, Aron, and Smollan (1992). Specifically, the response scale ranged from one to seven, with seven showing two circles overlapping the most and representing the closest relationship between the parent and their child.

We analyzed the results of preferred logo size using a logistic regression. We entered the standardized covariates (income, age, and marital status), normative belief that a parent's social status impacts that of their children (standardized), relationship with one's children (standardized), and the interaction between belief and relationship with one's children into the model against the collapsed measure of preferred logo size of the Gucci and Prada products. Consistent with parents in study 3, the normative belief that a parent's social status affects that of their children correlated positively with preferred logo size ($t(232) = 4.26$, $p < .01$). No significant effect was revealed between a participant's relationship with their children and preferred logo size ($p > .23$). These effects were qualified by a significant 2-way interaction ($t(232) = 2.50$, $p = .01$). Among those with a closer relationship with their children (+1SD above the mean of relationship with one's children), the normative belief that a parent's social status influences their child's social status correlated positively with preferred logo size ($t(232) = 2.68$, $p < .01$). That is, for those who had a close relationship with their children, the normative belief

that a parent's social status influences that of their children predicted a preference for larger logos. Among those with a weaker relationship with their children (-1SD below the mean of relationship with one's children), the normative belief that a parent's social status affects their child's social status did not significantly correlate with preferred logo size ($p > .39$). An interaction mirroring these results was found for the Eastman et al. status consumption scale ($t(232) = 2.48$, $p < .01$).

STUDY 5

In study 5, we used a choice-based conjoint experiment to replicate the effect of parenthood on preference for conspicuous luxury products and provide support for H5. The primary benefit of this conjoint design is that it can statistically differentiate the weight that participants place on the expense of the product versus the ability for the product to function as a status signal. That is, one could ask: are the effects demonstrated earlier occurring because parents are more likely to seek products that are expensive *regardless* of the product's ability to convey wealth? To answer this question, we varied both the price and the conspicuousness of the luxury product in this study. By doing so, we could extrapolate the weight placed on the price of the product and the weight placed on the conspicuousness of the luxury logo, thereby disentangling the two.

Participants ($N = 151$) were recruited to take part in this study through Prolific. Thirty-eight percent of participants were married, and 49% had children. Participants completed a choice-based conjoint survey where they read that they were purchasing a new phone case from Gucci. Prior to beginning the conjoint, participants read that they would see various sets of

phone cases and pick the one they would buy. They saw 16 different choice sets, each consisting of three cases and a "no choice" option. We created these choice sets following the guidelines of Bunch, Louviere, and Anderson (1996) and Huber and Zwerina (1996). The cases varied on four attributes: logo presence, material, shipping time, and price. The key attribute of interest, logo presence, varied in that each case either included a conspicuous Gucci logo on the back of the phone case or only subtle Gucci logos that blended in with the black coloring of the case. The second attribute varied was the case's price ($250, $300, $350). The third attribute varied was the phone's material (leather vs. carbon fiber). The final attribute varied was shipping time (3 vs. 7 days). After completing the 16 choice sets, participants reported their age, income, marital status, and whether they had children. Those who reported that they had children also reported the age of each of their children.

An analysis using the *Survival* package within *R* revealed the results shown in Table 1. After accounting for the influence of income, marital status, and age on the utility of the logo presence, there was a significant difference between parents and non-parents in their utility of the presence of the logo ($\beta = 0.82$, $SE = 0.08$, $z = 10.05$, $p < .01$). Parents had a significantly higher partworth utility for the presence of the logo ($\beta = 1.84$, $SE = 0.35$, $z = 5.19$, $p < .01$) than did non-parents ($\beta = -0.16$, $p > .65$). Next, we examined the role of child independence by creating a dichotomous variable that represented whether the parent's children were all over the age of 18 (0 = no; 1 = yes), as 18 years of age is generally considered the age of adulthood in the United States where we conducted this study ("State Legal Ages Laws" 2021). We reran the model on only parents with this variable added. Results revealed that the partworth utility of the presence of the logo significantly decreased when the participant's children were all 18 years of age or older ($\beta = -0.61$, SE = 0.27, z = -2.28, $p = .02$).

CONCLUSION

The current research offers a novel motivation that drives consumers' desire for conspicuous luxury products—the desire to increase the social status of one's children. Specifically we proposed that consumers hold a chronic, normative belief that a parent's social status influences that of their children. We support this hypothesis across five studies. In doing so, we offer notable implications outlined in the contribution statement for theory, marketers, and parents.

TABLE 1

PARTICIPANTS' UTILITIES FROM CHOICE-BASED CONJOINT

Attribute	Level	Average Utility	Significance
Logo	Absent vs. Present	.69	$p < .01$
Price	$250 vs. $300 vs. $350	-0.02	$p < .01$
Shipping	3 Days vs. 7 Days	-.60	$p < .01$
Material	Leather vs. Carbon Fiber	0.94	$p < .01$
ASC	No Choice vs. Choice	5.87	$p < .01$
Logo x Income		0.08	$p < .01$
Logo x Married		-1.06	$p < .01$
Logo x Age		-0.04	$p < .01$
Logo x Parenthood Status		**0.82**	$\mathbf{p < .01}$

Notes. Attributes listed first in the table were coded as baseline. The ASC variable was included in the model under the advice of Aizaki (2012) and Aizaki and Nishimura (2008) and represents whether the participant preferred the product options or the "no choice" option. Log-likelihood at zero and at convergence, respectively: -3349.29, -2852.66. χ^2 (9) = 993.3, $p < .01$).

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PRICE DEPENDENCY IN THE TIMES OF CORONA

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Keywords: COVID-19, uncertainty threat, price-quality heuristic

Description: We examine how the Covid-19 perceived threat, both situationally manipulated or measured, can enhance consumers' reliance on using price to infer the quality of a product.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

In this paper, using the 2020-21 Covid-19 pandemic as a contemporaneous backdrop, we investigate how pandemic threats can influence consumer behavior. Specifically, we examine how the Covid-19 perceived threat, both situationally manipulated or measured, can enhance consumers' reliance on using price to infer the quality of a product. We argue that the Covid-19 perceived threat, by evoking a generalized sense of uncertainty, makes consumers resort to decision strategies which are perceived to reduce choice uncertainty.

Method and Data

We test our predictions across three studies. In Study 1 (n = 435), we manipulated participant's Covid-19 perceived threat and price of target stimuli using pre-established

methodology. Results show that participants with high Covid-19 perceived threat showed greater reliance on the price-quality heuristic than participants with lower Covid-19 perceived threat. In Study 2 (n = 194), using a self-report correlational study with pre-established scales, we found that uncertainty avoidance mediated the association between Covid-19 perceived threat and reliance on the price-quality heuristic (95% CI = [0.02, 0.10]). Study 3's (n = 357) design was similar to Study 1 except that we manipulated decisional uncertainty. Results replicated previous studies that high Covid-19 perceived threat enhances consumer reliance on the price of the product to infer its quality. More importantly, there was a significant three-way interaction among Covid-19 perceived threat, price of target product and decisional uncertainty. When evaluating the product with uncertainty, there was a significant effect of Covid-19 perceived threat on price-quality heuristic. However, when uncertainty is low, the effect of Covid-19 perceived threat on price-quality heuristic become nonsignificant.

Summary of Findings

In this paper, using two experimental studies and a self-report correlational study, we examined whether and how price-quality judgments are influenced by the Covid-19 perceived threat. We predicted and confirmed that evoking the Covid-19 perceived threat is associated with a greater tendency to use price to judge product quality, and that this effect is mediated by uncertainty-avoidance motivations.

Statement of Key Contributions

In three studies (n = 986), we demonstrate that the Covid-19 perceived threat, by evoking uncertainty avoidance, enhances consumer reliance on the price of the product to infer its quality. However, when situational uncertainty is reduced by providing additional diagnostic cues that

signal product quality, the relationship between Covid-19 threat and price-quality heuristic is moderated.

This research makes significant theoretical contributions. While other researchers have deployed various alternate means to induce uncertainty threats and examine their impact on consumer behavior, ours is the first paper to definitively establish that Covid-19 perceived threat, either measured or manipulated, can also lead to uncertainty management behaviors in consumption decisions. Besides just demonstrating that the Covid-19 perceived threat moderates the price-quality heuristic, our research suggests that managers should also consider the psychological state of their consumers before resorting to such strategies. Some consumers, like older people, or those having pre-existing health conditions are more vulnerable to health-related threats. It is therefore conceivable that such groups may display stronger susceptibility in using price to infer product quality.

PRINCIPAL SEMANTIC COMPONENT ANALYSIS: TRACKING 25 YEARS OF CONSUMER KNOWLEDGE THROUGH LARGE-SCALE TEXT ANALYSIS

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Keywords: diachronic word embedding, natural language processing, consumer knowledge, consumer perception

Description: We propose a novel text analytic technique which can extract the changes in consumer knowledge from time-indexed text corpora.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Consumer knowledge, the set of consumers' understanding of brands and product offerings, is known to be an important driver of consumer responses. Notably, consumer knowledge is constantly evolving and can change substantially over time. Just fifteen years ago, Facebook and MySpace were both rising stars in the social media category. Now, one is nearly synonymous with social media, while the other has fallen out of the mind of many. The ability to understand and predict such changes are thus valuable from both scientific and managerial perspectives.

To our knowledge, however, no method exists that can provide a quantitative, data-driven description of the evolution of consumer knowledge. Although longitudinal databases exist, it is difficult to capture the full trajectory of every brand due to difficulties in documenting the constant entry and exit of brands in the marketplace.

In the current study, we propose a novel text analytic technique, Principal Semantic Component Analysis (PSCA), to track the changing meanings of words from time-indexed text corpora and characterize the evolution of consumer knowledge. Specifically, PSCA represents a combination of Principal Component Analysis (PCA) and the Dynamic Word Embedding (DWE) model, a recently developed diachronic natural language processing (NLP) approach that captures semantic changes.

Method And Data

First, we scraped all New York Times articles from 1996 to 2019 and performed standard preprocessing. We then trained a 50-dimensional DWE model using the codes provided by the authors. The parameters were set using the default values in the codes.

To visualize the semantic trajectory of words, we used Multidimensional Scaling (MDS), a dimension reduction method which preserves the pairwise semantic similarity between word vectors, to project the word vectors onto the two-dimensional plane. Words with higher semantic similarity are plotted closer to each other by MDS.

To quantify the direction and timing of critical events in the semantic trajectory, we proposed the PSCA method. In the first step, we extracted the direction of brand meaning movement by computing the first principal component of the word vectors of the brand. In the second step, we made explicit the timing of brand meaning movements by plotting the time series of semantic similarities between the brand (varying over time) and its first principal component (fixed).

Finally, we compared the PSCA measures with several external marketing metrics, including word frequency, two brand equity measures, and monthly active users. Crucially, our results do not depend on particular choices of external metrics.

Summary of Findings

First, we show that semantic trajectories of brands as computed by DWE correspond well to our intuitive understanding about the rise and fall of the brands, e.g. the meanings of the word "blackberry" change from fruit to smartphone and back again.

Building on the finding, we demonstrate that PSCA can be used to quantitatively characterize the critical events observed in the semantic trajectory. Specifically, PSCA quantifies both the direction and timing of the brand movement. In particular, PSCA identifies 2010 as the time when Blackberry reached its peak as a smartphone brand, before dropping sharply after.

To explore the generalizability of PSCA beyond brands, we applied PSCA to detect changes in more intangible concepts, such as fashion trends and fads. For example, PSCA identifies the sudden rise of the Atkins diet in 2004.

Finally, we show that PSCA findings correspond with, and can even forecast, commonly used marketing metrics such as brand equity and monthly active users. Specifically, we found that for brands which have peaks in the external metrics, e.g. Blackberry, peaks of PSCA coincide with those of external metrics. Moreover, we found that PSCA acts as a leading indicator of other metrics in the rising stage.

Statement of Key Contributions

This project contributes to the literature on consumer knowledge by developing a computational method that leverages big data to extract a wide range of consumer perceptions across a long time period, which are otherwise difficult to quantify. The method can be used to establish the missing link between consumers' minds and their actual behaviors. We also contribute to the nascent literature on the use of text analysis methodologies in consumer research by introducing the technique of diachronic word embeddings, which provides richer, more context-aware characterization of textual data than existing methods, and demonstrating how diachronic word embeddings extract marketing insights through concrete applications.

For practitioners, we provide new ways for managers to understand current and past consumer perceptions of offerings. Firstly, PSCA can track the changing consumer perception toward a range of brands with similar temporal resolution as survey-based measures, but at much lower

cost and is almost real-time. Secondly, PSCA can be used for competitive analysis and brand positioning. A unique feature of PSCA is its ability to answer intuitive questions like “what is the next Facebook of 2021?”. This could help managers in positioning decisions, e.g., if a product is moving to a highly competitive position.

Scarcity in COVID-19 vaccine supplies reduces perceived vaccination priority and increases vaccine hesitancy

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Keywords: at-risk populations, compassion, COVID-19, scarcity, trust, vaccine hesitancy, vaccination intentions.

Description: Results from two studies demonstrate that perceived scarcity in COVID-19 vaccine supplies reduces vaccination intentions, suggesting policymakers need to deemphasize the scarcity of vaccines to increase vaccine acceptance.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

The development of effective vaccines against COVID-19 are paramount for containing the pandemic and preventing deaths. However, even though several successful vaccines were approved worldwide, available doses are insufficient to meet current demand. How this vaccine scarcity affects individuals' willingness to be vaccinated? This paper aims to address this important public policy question, as vaccine hesitancy can hinder controlling the pandemic. In addition, what key variables moderate the relationship between vaccine scarcity and intentions to be vaccinated?

Method and Data

In two pre-registered experimental studies (total $N = 927$), we manipulated whether COVID-19 vaccines were scarce or widely available, and tested the effect of scarcity frame on one's vaccination intention. Using moderated mediation models, we also explored the role of trust in doctors and compassion for others. Study 1 was conducted with a student population, while study

2 sampled participants with or without pre-existing conditions that can make one more vulnerable to COVID-19.

Summary of Findings

We find that scarcity of COVID-19 vaccines decreases willingness to be vaccinated (contrary to most scarcity research findings) due to lower perceived priority to receive the vaccine. Perceived scarcity in vaccine supplies reduced average intentions to vaccinate by up to10 points on a 100-point scale. Trust in doctors decreased the deleterious effect of low perceived priority due to vaccine scarcity on vaccination intentions. For participants with high compassion, namely a greater ability to understand or be aware of the suffering of others and the need to act to end that suffering, (top 48.4% of the distribution), scarcity reduced their vaccine intentions, while for participants with low compassion scores (bottom 1.4% of the distribution), scarcity increased their vaccine intentions.

Statement of Key Contributions

Results from two studies indicate that public health authorities should deemphasize COVID-19 vaccine supply scarcity to improve public acceptance of the COVID-19 vaccine. Trust in doctors may be an important lever for improving COVID-19 vaccination acceptance when supplies are scarce. Public health messaging should also target highly compassionate individuals to emphasize how accepting a COVID-19 vaccine when available helps other people, even when vaccines are scarce.

References are available upon request.

SHOULD REVIEWERS AND WEBSITE MODERATORS CENSOR SWEARWORDS IN REVIEWS?

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Keywords: censorship, swearwords, attribution, reviews, word-of-mouth

Description: Can reviewers and website moderators use censored swearwords to convey similar information without causing offense?

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Swearing in product reviews is offensive because it violates social norms and conventions (Hair & Ozcan, 2018). Yet, swearwords remain helpful to readers because they convey diagnostic information about the product's attributes and the reviewer's feelings (Lafreniere, Moore, & Fisher, 2022). Given that censored swearwords convey politeness (Allan & Burridge, 2006), can website moderators and reviewers use censored swearwords to convey similar information and impact readers?

We propose that censorship changes the meaning of swearwords by suggesting that the product's attribute and reviewer's feelings are weaker. Thus, a censored (vs. uncensored) swearword in a review should have less favorable effects on readers. Still, reviews containing censored swearwords may be less impactful only when readers attribute censorship to the reviewer (e.g., the reviewer did not think the product's attribute was strong enough to use a swearword), rather than to the website (e.g., the website censored the reviewer). Thus, website moderators may be able to censor swearwords because the reader still infers the reviewer's intentions from the swearword.

Method and Data

We explore this model using field data and two experiments. The field data tested whether censorship impacts the number of helpful votes in proportion to total votes. Two hundred thousand reviews that were randomly selected from a public repository (He & McAuley, 2016). We used LIWC software to categorize reviews with uncensored and censored swearwords (Pennebaker et al., 2015). The negative binomial regression model controlled for star rating, months posted, and review length.

The first experiment tested the effect of censorship on product attitudes by comparing a censored review to an uncensored review. Two hundred and eighty-eight participants were recruited from MTurk. Participants imagined they wanted to buy a portable battery to charge their electronics and were shown a webpage with one 4-star review. Participants then answered

questions related to product attitude, attribute strength, feeling strength, and attribution (i.e., who they thought censored the swearword).

The second experiment tested the effect of censorship on product attitudes by comparing a review with a censored swearword to a review that was censored by a website moderator. Two hundred and sixty-eight participants were recruited from a student subject pool. Participants were given the same scenario and survey questions as the first experiment.

Summary of Findings

Field data. As expected, Amazon reviews received a higher proportion of helpful votes when uncensored swearwords were present (vs. absent). As expected, there was no difference in the proportion of helpful votes when censored swearwords were present versus absent.

Experiment 1. A factor analysis confirmed the independence of the constructs. We found that participants liked the battery less in the censored condition compared the uncensored condition. This effect was mediated by attribute strength but not feeling strength. Further, one-third of participants attributed the censorship to the website, so we retested the model as a 3-level factor (uncensored, website-attributed censorship, reviewer-attributed censorship). We found that participants liked the product more in the uncensored condition compared to the reviewer-attributed censorship condition. There was no difference between the uncensored and website-attributed censorship condition.

Experiment 2. Over half of participants attributed the censorship to the website, so we tested the model as a 3-level factor (website censored, website-attributed censorship, reviewer-attributed censorship). As expected, we found that participants liked the product more in the website censored condition compared to the reviewer-attributed censorship condition. There was no difference between the website censored and website-attributed censorship conditions.

Key Contributions

We contribute to marketing and linguistics by being the first to empirically test the effects of censored language. While prior work in linguistics theorized about the meaning of swearwords (e.g., Löbner, 2013), it remains unclear if censored swearwords convey the same meaning. Likewise, while prior work in marketing shows that consumers make inferences from swearwords (e.g., Hair & Ozcan, 2018), it has not yet considered the impact of less offensive alternatives. Our research shows that censorship reduces the meaning and impact of language. However, readers can infer the reviewer's intentions when they know the source of the censorship.

This work also qualifies past research suggesting that attributions in word-of-mouth occur on a product-reviewer continuum (e.g., Chen & Lurie, 2013). Although readers commonly make product or reviewer attributions, we show that the causal locus may also be platforms and that these platform inferences impact readers. Specifically, censored swearwords can be as impactful as uncensored swearwords if readers infer that the swearword was censored by the website because it clarifies the reviewer's intentions. Thus, platforms can maintain the meaning of censored swearwords in reviews by disclosing when they censored content.

THE EFFECT OF DISPLAY ORIENTATIONS ON POST-CHOICE SATISFACTION FROM EXPERIENTIAL AND MATERIAL PURCHASES

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Key Words: display orientation, horizontal versus vertical, experiential versus material, fluency, choice satisfaction

Description: This paper investigates how display orientation influences choice satisfaction for experiential and material purchase types

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

How products are displayed can have a significant impact on how consumers evaluate their purchases. A common way in which products are displayed online is either horizontally or vertically. Does this impact how consumers choose their products and the consequent post purchase satisfaction? and does this differ by purchase types? We investigate how product display orientations (horizontal or vertical) facilitates greater choice satisfaction from experiential and material purchases. We predict that consumers experience greater choice satisfaction from choosing material purchases displayed horizontally rather than vertically, but satisfaction from choosing experiential purchases is not significantly affected by the display orientation. This is because material purchases are evaluated more by their attributes and hence require greater comparisons, while experiential purchases are chosen by alternatives and are not compared much. It is easier to compare when products are displayed horizontally since the human field of vision is horizontally skewed. This compatibility between the display orientation,

field of vision and processing style associated with the purchase type should result in greater processing fluency and thus choice satisfaction for material products displayed horizontally rather than vertically, but the effect would be mitigated for experiential products.

Method and Data

We conducted three experiments to test our hypotheses. In all our studies we presented participants with a set of four or five options of different purchase types and across the three studies, we used different products to represent experiential or material purchases. In the first study (n=138), we used an eye tracking device to measure the extent of attribute vs alternative based processing for experiential or material products displayed either horizontally or vertically. In the second study (n=193), we measure the downstream consequences such as choice satisfaction stemming from the compatibility of the display orientation and purchase type as also the mediating effect of fluency. In the third study (n=394) we keep the product constant but modulate comparability by framing of the attributes to be either more or less comparable to reflect its material or experiential properties and measured choice satisfaction and processing fluency.

Summary of Findings

We found that there was a greater degree of attribute level processing when material products were displayed horizontally rather then vertically, but this was mitigated for experiential products as expected. Thus, our first hypothesis was validated. We further found that choice satisfaction was greater for material products displayed horizontally rather than vertically, but as expected this effect was mitigated for experiential products. This effect was fully mediated by fluency. In addition, we found that this is driven by the inherent comparability of attributes of

material purchases such that when we keep the product constant but modulate the level of comparability to reflect either the material or experiential characteristics, the effect still holds. Hence our second and third hypotheses were also validated.

Thus, displaying material products horizontally rather than vertically leads to greater choice satisfaction, but this is mitigated for experiential products. This is due to the fluency stemming from the compatibility between the display orientation, field of vision and processing style associated with the purchase type.

Key Contributions

This research has important implications for both academics and practitioners alike. We look at a relatively unexplored area of how horizontal and vertical display orientations as commonly found on online platforms facilitate satisfaction from material and experiential purchases. This adds to our understanding of the consumer decision making journey for different purchase types and answers Gallo et al. (2017) call for greater research in this area. This furthers our understanding of both experiential/material purchases and also how different product displays are evaluated. It takes further the works of Deng et al. (2016) and Shi et al. (2013) by showing how different purchase types elicit varying levels of choice satisfaction due to how they are displayed and the role played by the human field of vision, decision making strategies and processing fluency.

This also has important implications for marketers. In a world of abundance, companies are constantly searching for ways to efficiently display their products. Our research offers one avenue- that is by matching the purchase type to the display orientation. If the products are more material, then displaying the options horizontally such that their attributes become more

comparable would lead to greater fluency and satisfaction for the consumers. On the other hand, for purchases which are more experiential, the display orientation would not be an important factor.

References provided upon request.

THE EFFECT OF REFERENCE NUMBERS ON PRODUCT PACKAGE PREFERENCES

Abstract

We examine the role of hexadecimals and duodecimals (i.e., multiples of 16 and 12), which we refer to as reference numbers, on product preferences. First, within the context of inch-pound measurements, we illustrate that the use of reference numbers is disproportionally frequent, even more so than round numbers (i.e., zero- and five-ending numbers). Second, we show that reference numbers are frequently used in estimations of size and quantity in diverse domains and are considered by consumers to be ideal amounts; thus, they function as benchmarks. Third, we demonstrate that consumers prefer products with reference number package sizes in inch-pound units, even when those options provide inferior economical values. Finally, we examine the mediating role of the sense of completeness provided by reference numbers on consumer preferences when product quantity is declared in inch-pound vs. metric units. Our findings provide actionable insights for marketers and retailers across a variety of contexts.

Statement of Key Contributions

To our knowledge, this research is the first to demonstrate that hexadecimals and duodecimals (i.e., reference numbers) are frequently used in estimations of size and quantity and are considered as ideal amounts even in unfamiliar domains. This suggests that reference numbers function as benchmarks in numerous measurement contexts – even more so than round numbers. The present research provides valuable insights on the important role of reference numbers (which are not round numbers) and further illustrates the underlying mechanism. Specifically, our studies demonstrate that consumers express a strong preference for product sizes that

correspond to reference numbers, when quantity is declared in inch-pound units. These findings are consistent across a variety of choice situations, relative product sizes, and product categories. Furthermore, we demonstrate that reference numbers are perceived as more complete than other numbers and the preference for reference number sizes is mediated by the perceived completeness of products labelled with them.

The fact that differences in measurement systems are associated with the significant effects observed in this research offers a wide range of implications for marketers, consumers, and policy makers. When manufacturers or marketers engage in the downsizing or upsizing of a product without considering consumers' sensitivity to reference numbers, the sizes of product offerings may lead to unfavorable consumer responses. Knowledge of the potential positive influence of reference numbers on consumer preferences may help manufacturers determine whether to use inch-pound vs. metric measurement units for product labels, and it can help to inform the decision-making processes for offering package varieties in new product lines. This is especially beneficial for multi-national firms and foreign companies planning to enter the US market because they can maximize consumer preferences by strategically adjusting their initial product size offerings based on our findings.

Introduction

The quantity of a good (e.g., food, drink, lotion, soap) offered for retail sales is a fundamental driver of choice in many purchase decisions, since it is a key component of perceived value (Zeithaml, 1988). Because different sized packages often appeal to distinct user segments, determining the optimal combination of product sizes is a key component of strategic brand management. Clairol Shimmer Lights shampoo is sold in 8, 16, and 31.5 fluid ounce (fl. oz.) bottles while Nivea body lotion comes in 2.5, 6.8, and 16.9 fl. oz. bottles. Starbucks cup sizes are branded distinctively as Tall (12 fl. oz./ 355 ml), Grande (16 fl. oz./ 473 ml), and Venti (20 fl. oz./591 ml) among several others. Given these product variations, the influence of package size on consumers' affective, cognitive, and behavioral responses is of substantial interest to both academics and practitioners (Argo and White 2012; Zlatevska, Debelaar and Holden 2014).

It is important for managers and marketers to understand how specific package sizes affect product perceptions and preferences. While lower unit prices, convenience, negative environmental impact of packages, and increasing amount of waste associated with product disposal may affect consumer decisions for what size to purchase, the rising costs of raw materials and production in many industries and restocking concerns may affect retailers and manufacturers' decisions for what product sizes to offer (e.g., Dornbusch 2014).

Numbers that end in zero (e.g., 10, 500, 1000), as well as their halves which end in fives (e.g., 5, 25); are commonly known as round numbers in the numerical cognition literature (Dehaene and Mehler 1992; Thomas et al. 2010) and round numbers serve as benchmarks for the metric units based on the decimal system (e.g., 1 kg = 1000 g, 1 m = 100 cm, etc.). As round numbers are known to be evaluated more positively (Dehaene 2001; Gunasti and Ozcan 2016), metric quantities expressed in round numbers are expected to be favored over those expressed in

precise (non-round) numbers (e.g., 15 grams might be better than 14 grams or 16 grams). Would the same idea apply to non-metric units (e.g., Will 15 oz. be better than 14 oz. or 16 oz.?)

Unlike the metric system, which is based on decimals, the inch-pound system is based on duodecimals (i.e., multiples and halves of 12 such as 6, 24, 36, and so on) and hexadecimals (i.e., multiples and halves of 16 such as 8, 32, 64, and so on). Our research introduces these numbers as an alternative benchmark and accordingly, we refer to them as Reference Numbers. We show that reference numbers are frequently used by U.S. consumers to estimate quantity and size; and form ideal points in measurements. Importantly, reference numbers are highly desirable as product package sizes - even more so than round numbers – and they are preferred over products that offer greater economic value. We further demonstrate that these preferences are moderated by measurement unit labels and mediated by the sense of completeness that is associated with reference number quantities and sizes. These findings have important implications for managers and consumers.

Conceptual Background

Round numbers, the universal benchmarks, are used more frequently than other numbers (Coupland 2011) and they are often used to estimate and approximate exact values (see Santana, Thomas and Morwitz 2020 for a detailed review). For example, a brand manager might state that "around 100" different cereal varieties are offered for sale, although the actual number of cereals may be slightly more or less (Ferson et al. 2015). This high frequency of benchmarks increases their overall favorability (Jain et al. 2020) and intensifies affective reactions toward them (Wadhwa and Zhang 2019). Accordingly, round numbers are preferred in all monetary domains such as when trading stocks and currencies (Bhattacharya et al. 2012), cognitive price encoding

(Schindler and Kibarian 1996; Schindler 2006; Carver and Padgett 2012) and setting house prices (Thomas et al. 2010).

We propose that round numbers based on the universal decimal (10) system are not the only numerical benchmarks and, in all inch-pound measurement domains reference numbers based on the hexadecimal (16) and duodecimal (12) systems will assume the benchmark role. Earliest records show that humans used one hand with its thumb and four fingers (with three bones each) when counting; this method created a numerical base of 12 and may have formed the foundation of the duodecimal system (Macey 1989). Duodecimals were widely adopted for the measurement of length (e.g., inches) along with counting (dozen of items). There is also a Dozenal Society that proposed the adoption of duodecimals as the dominant numerical system as an alternative to decimal system due to its superior counting properties.

The hexadecimal (16) system also dates back to the traditional Chinese measures of mass and initially became popular for appraising precious metals where 1 ounce is 16 drams and 16 ounces is 1 pound. The hexadecimal system was also adopted for volume measures as follows: 16 fl. oz. = 1 pint; 16 cups = 1 gallons; 8 fl. oz. = 16 tablespoons = 1 cup, and so forth. Some mathematicians have proposed the adoption of hexadecimals as the universal system due to the superior divisibility of 16 and counting methods that make it possible to count up to 1024 using only 10 fingers (Nystrom 1862).

Prior literature indicates that numerical benchmarks are used to estimate and approximate exact values (Dehaene and Mehler 1992), they are strongly associated with high frequency of use (Dehaene 2001) and generate favorable reactions (Bornstein and D'Agostino 1994; Jones et al. 2002). Following these findings from past research, we propose that duodecimals and hexadecimals (i.e., reference numbers) will be also used more frequently in quantity and size

estimations than other numbers, and they will be considered as ideal amounts in the inch-pound system. For example, a consumer may refer to a 7 or 9 oz. steak as a “8 oz. rib eye”, or estimate the length of 20- or 30-inch boxes to be about 24-inches.

We propose that the choice of measure on product labels will significantly influence consumers’ product preferences. For example, when inch-pound labels (ounces) are used we expect 16 oz. / 453 g to be preferred over 15 oz. / 425g or 17 oz. / 500 g. Conversely, 17 oz. / 500 g should be preferred over the other two sizes when metric labels (grams) are used. Thus, we hypothesize:

H1: In the inch-pound system, hexadecimals and duodecimals (reference numbers) will be

a) used more frequently than other numbers including round numbers,
b) used more in estimations and function as ideal benchmark amounts,
c) the more preferred product sizes.

The preference for completeness has been widely studied in the goal literature dating back to Hull (1932) and it has been shown that people prefer complete outcomes (Kivetz et al. 2006). In the product package domain, Sevilla and Kahn (2014) introduced the completeness heuristic mainly based on aesthetics (Arnheim 1974) and the idea that complete looking designs signify unity (Veryzer and Hutchinson 1998). The completeness heuristic refers to the preference of completely shaped products and packages over incompletely shaped ones (e.g., a full round pie vs. a donut shape).

In the number cognition domain Gunasti and Ozcan (2016) showed that alphanumeric brand names including round numbers (e.g., X100 vs. X99 or X101) are preferred more as they create perceptions of more complete products. This finding was reinforced by Yan and Pena-

Marin (2017) who found that when bargaining reaching round prices (i.e., numerical benchmarks) led to completion of negotiation processes. Finally, Gunasti and Ozcan (2019) showed that reaching numerical benchmarks (e.g., 10,000 steps) in goal context creates an artificial sense of goal completeness.

We have proposed that reference numbers (hexadecimals and duodecimals) will serve as benchmarks in all inch-pound measurements. As consumers will use these numbers in their estimations and when setting ideal points, we expect that reference numbers will create a sense of product completeness which will mediate their preferences over other numbers. For example, consumer may prefer a 32-oz. detergent container over a 30-oz. or a 34 oz. because it will feel more complete or they may set a goal to consume 64 fl. oz. of water a day, an amount that should be associated with a greater sense of completeness than drinking 62 or 66 fl. oz. We hypothesize:

H2: The positive effect of reference numbers on consumer preferences will be
a) mediated by perceptions of product completeness and
b) moderated by the use of specific measurement systems

Pilot Study: Usage Frequency of Reference Numbers in Product Packaging

Prior research has demonstrated that numerical benchmarks are used more frequently (e.g., Allen et al. 2016; Coupland 2011). As we proposed that hexadecimals and duodecimals have benchmark properties, we expected that most product packages in the marketplace to be set at multiples and halves of 12 and 16 (e.g., oz., fl. oz., inches, etc.). Accordingly, we searched for the package sizes of 14 packaged product categories (bread, beverage, cereal, condiment, meat, milk, pasta, vegetable oil, rice, seafood, sugar, vegetable, yogurt) at a publicly available user generated website (https://us.openfoodfacts.org). There were 149 types of different products

forming a set of 2224 individual product listings. Forty-three percent included only inch-pound measures, 28% included only metric measures, and 29% included both. When the inch-pound measures included multiples of 12 or 16, we coded it as a reference number.

We observed that 698 out of 2224, i.e., almost one-third (31.4%) of all product sizes (including the metric measures) was a reference number, which was more than double the frequency of round numbers (15.4%, $t_{2223}=11.5$, $p<.001$). When we excluded the packages that included only metric measure labels, the frequency of reference numbers among inch-pound measure labels reached 44%, which was more than three times that of round numbers (12.9%, $t_{1594}=18.2$, $p<.001$). More specifically, 11% of all labels had number 16 (e.g., 16 oz.), 11% had number 12; 5% had number 32; 2.5% had number 24 and 2% had number 64. All these frequencies were significantly higher than chance and these indicated that multiples of 12 and 16 are used more frequently in product packaging at the marketplace providing support for our proposition that they are indeed reference numbers.

If the high use frequency of duodecimal and hexadecimals stems from their usage in estimations, then we expect that people are more likely to use these reference numbers in their quantity estimations. Accordingly, these numbers should be sought after as benchmarks when people are asked to identify or set their ideal targets. In the next set of studies, we examined these expectations.

Study 1a – Identification of Reference Numbers as Ideal Points

Sixty-three mTurkers were asked to identify their ideal product quantity, in non-metric units, of each the items listed below:

- What is the ideal volume of a shampoo bottle (in fluid ounces)?

- What is the ideal height of a lawn fence (in inches)?
- What is the ideal size of a ground meat package (in ounces)?
- What is the ideal size of cereal box (in ounces)?
- What is the ideal size of a sirloin steak (in ounces)?
- What is ideal volume of an olive oil container (in fluid ounces)?
- What is the ideal length of a golf club (in inches)?
- What is the ideal height of a ceiling (in inches)?

We removed two participants who consistently provided nonsensical answers (over ten standard deviations away from the regular ranges such as 24000 in. for a golf club or 500 fl. oz. for shampoo). The results remained virtually identical regardless. We coded the multiples/halves of 12 and 16 as *reference numbers* and multiples of 5 and 10 (i.e., five and zero ending numbers) as *round numbers*. Note that there were several numbers falling into both categories (e.g., 60 and 120) yet any alternative coding excluding them from reference numbers category did not change the findings. All results are summarized in Figure 1.

Study 1b – Use of Reference Numbers in Estimations

One might argue that when people are asked about ideal measures of quantity, they recall the most familiar and accessible values they frequently encounter in daily life. In fact, this alone actually provides evidence that hexadecimals and duodecimals are perceived as reference numbers. Yet, as another, more conservative, test of reference number properties we examined whether people use hexadecimals and duodecimals when making estimations about quantities in less familiar domains. Fifty-three mTurkers answered the following estimation questions for a

diverse set of domains ranging from somewhat familiar (detergents, laptops) to extremely unfamiliar (bird wing, dog neck):

- Everyone looks forward to the arrival of robins in the springs. What is the average wingspan of a robin (in inches)?
- If you juiced three fresh oranges, how much juice (in fluid ounces) would you get?
- Labrador retrievers are one of the most popular breeds of dog. What is their average neck circumference (in inches)?
- How much does a typical laptop computer weigh (in ounces)?
- What is the circumference of a professional size basketball (in inches)?
- What is the average length of a garden cucumber typically sold in grocery stores (in inches)?
- What is the typical length of the stem of a long-stemmed rose (in inches)?
- How much does an average TV remote control weigh (in ounces)?
- How much do 1000 pennies weigh (in ounces)?
- What is the size of a typical detergent container (in fluid ounces)?

One participant who consistently provided nonsensical estimates that were ten standard deviations away from the regular range (e.g., 5000 oz. for a laptop) was excluded from the analysis (this did not change any results). Following Study 1a, we coded the multiples of 12 and 16 as *reference numbers* and all five and zero ending numbers as *round numbers*. All the detailed frequency distributions are provided in Figure 1.

Study 2 - Consumer Preferences with Real Consequences

The main purpose of this study was to demonstrate that consumers prefer reference number package sizes. To have a robust test we created an actual choice situation with monetary consequences. At a large American university, we randomly approached 100 people walking on the campus grounds and solicited their interest in receiving $5 worth of products for free after completing a study. Participants were presented two products within each of the two product categories and asked to choose their reward from the following: Organic Safari Fruit Roll in 11 and 12 in. packages for $2.10 and $2.44; and Organic Progresso Minestrone Soup in 16 and 17 oz. cans (packages) for $2.55 and $2.89. Participants were asked to pick one of each product type without exceeding their $5 allowance. The products were strategically priced so that there were only 3 possible pairs of product combinations that did not exceed $5: 11 in. fruit roll and 16 oz. soup ($4.65); 12 in. fruit roll and 16-oz. soup ($4.99); and 11 in. fruit roll and 17 oz. soup ($4.99). Note that we made sure that the combination of the two largest quantities (12 in. fruit roll and 17 oz. soup) was not a possible option as it exceeded the $5 limit, because it seemed reasonable to assume that if it was available most participants would simply choose that alternative to maximize the amount of food received. After making their selections, participants were presented $5 cash in lieu of the chosen products.

Results

Since there were three different combinations of products, each choice pair had a 33.33% chance of being selected. The proportion of options selected with duodecimal and hexadecimal package sizes was of primary interest thus a multi-nominal regression analysis was conducted. The options were coded as follows*: 0:* the 17 oz. soup and the 11 in. fruit roll; *1:* the 16 oz. soup and the 11 in. fruit roll; and *2:* the 16 oz. soup and the 12 in. fruit roll. The overall model was significant ($\chi^2(2) = 9.54$, $p<.008$) indicating a non-uniform distribution. The 16 oz. - 12 in. pair

(i.e., when both product quantities were reference numbers) had the highest choice share (M= 44%). It was significantly preferred over the 17 oz. - 11 in. pair with an identical $4.99 price (M=20%, b=.788, Waldχ^2 = 8.55, p <.003). In addition, choice of the 16 oz. - 12 in. pair option was significantly higher than chance (t(99)=2.21, p<.05).

The 16 oz. - 11-inch pair, which included one reference number quantity, provided the lowest economic value (i.e., $4.65 vs. $4.99 vs. $4.99) and it was clearly dominated by the 17 oz.- 11 in. pair. Yet, it was the second popular choice (M=36%) receiving even higher choice share than the 17 oz.- 11 in. pair (M=20%, b=.588, Waldχ^2 = 4.44, p<.05). This effect seems to have occurred due to presence and favorability of the 16 oz. size, a reference number, in the 16 oz – 11 in. pair. Finally, although the 17 oz. - 11 in. option (i.e., the choice pair without a reference number quantity) and the 16 oz. - 12 in. option were equally priced, and roughly equivalent, the 17 oz. – 11 in. option received the lowest choice share (M=20%), which was also preferred significantly less than chance (t(99)= -3.2, p<.002).

Study 3 - Choice Among Multiple Product Sizes

We conducted four studies with a diverse set of products. Our main purpose was to demonstrate the preference for reference number sizes more directly when they are presented among a set of multiple product sizes (another test of H1c). Second, we have proposed that reference numbers would be perceived as more complete than others. Thus, we measured perceptions of product completeness and examined its mediating role for the choices of reference number sizes (H2a). Finally, we expected the preferences to shift when metric vs. non-metric sizes were used (H2b). Note that to rule out the effects of any idiosyncratic preferences for smaller or larger sizes, we alternated the positioning of the reference numbers in the set of different product sizes, to be

larger (e.g., Study 3b), smaller (e.g., Study 3c), or middle size (e.g., Study 3d-a) relative to other available options. The results of these five studies are summarized in Table 1.

Study 3a - Detergent

One hundred mTurkers were randomly assigned to either the metric or non-metric condition. They were informed that Ilter brand Organic Detergent came in 15, 16, 17, and 18 fl. oz. (non-metric condition) or 444, 473, 500, and 532 ml (metric condition) package sizes. Participants were first asked to choose which option they would like to buy, given that unit prices were equivalent across product package sizes. Then, for each of the four package sizes, they indicated their agreement with the following statement on a seven-point Likert scale: "A **15 fl. oz**. *[16, 17, 18 – in non-metric condition] or* **444 ml** *[473, 500, 532 – in metric condition]* detergent feels like a complete product". Higher values indicate higher perceived product completeness. Finally, participants rated their familiarity with the metric and non-metric systems (endpoints: not at all familiar/very familiar) and answered demographic questions.

Study 3b – Dish soap – Larger

One hundred seven mTurkers were randomly assigned to either the metric or non-metric condition and informed that Ata brand Organic Dish soap was available in 61, 62, 63, and 64 fl. oz. (non-metric condition) or 1800, 1834, 1863, and 1893 ml (metric condition) packages. As in Study 3a, participants first selected the product they would like to buy. Then, they rated the completeness of each product option, and indicated their familiarity with the different measurement systems.

Study 3c - Dish soap – Smaller

This study was very similar to Study 3b with an important difference. While the reference number 64 fl. oz. was the largest size available in the previous study, in the current study it was the smallest size available. This enabled us to generalize our effect regardless of relative product sizes. One hundred six mTurkers were randomly assigned to either the metric or non-metric condition and informed that Ata brand Organic Dish soap came in 64, 66, 68, and 70 fl. oz. packages (non-metric condition) or 1893, 1951, 2000, and 2070 ml (metric condition) package sizes. Following Study 3b participants first chose the product they would like to buy, rated the completeness of each product option, and indicated their familiarity with different measurement systems.

Study 3d - Fences

One hundred three mTurkers were randomly assigned to either the metric or non-metric condition and presented a scenario in which they were asked to imagine that they were purchasing a Derin brand vinyl fence for their lawn. The fence came in the following sizes: 69, 72, 75, and 78 inches in the non-metric condition and 175, 183, 191, and 200 cm in the metric condition. Note that 72 is a reference number and the second shortest option. Participants first selected the preferred fence size and rated the completeness of each product and indicated their familiarity with metric and non-metric measures.

General Discussion

Retailers and manufacturers offer products in a variety of sizes labeled with metric and non-metric measurement units (e.g., metric, non-metric). It is essential for managers and marketers to understand how different package sizes influence consumer preferences in order to identify an ideal product assortment. This research demonstrates the important influence hexadecimals and

duodecimals have in the construction of consumers' product perceptions and choice preferences and in doing so, contribute to the literatures on packaging and product labels, numerical cognition, numerical benchmarks, round numbers, and consumer preferences. Perhaps more importantly, our results provide actionable insights for marketers and retailers.

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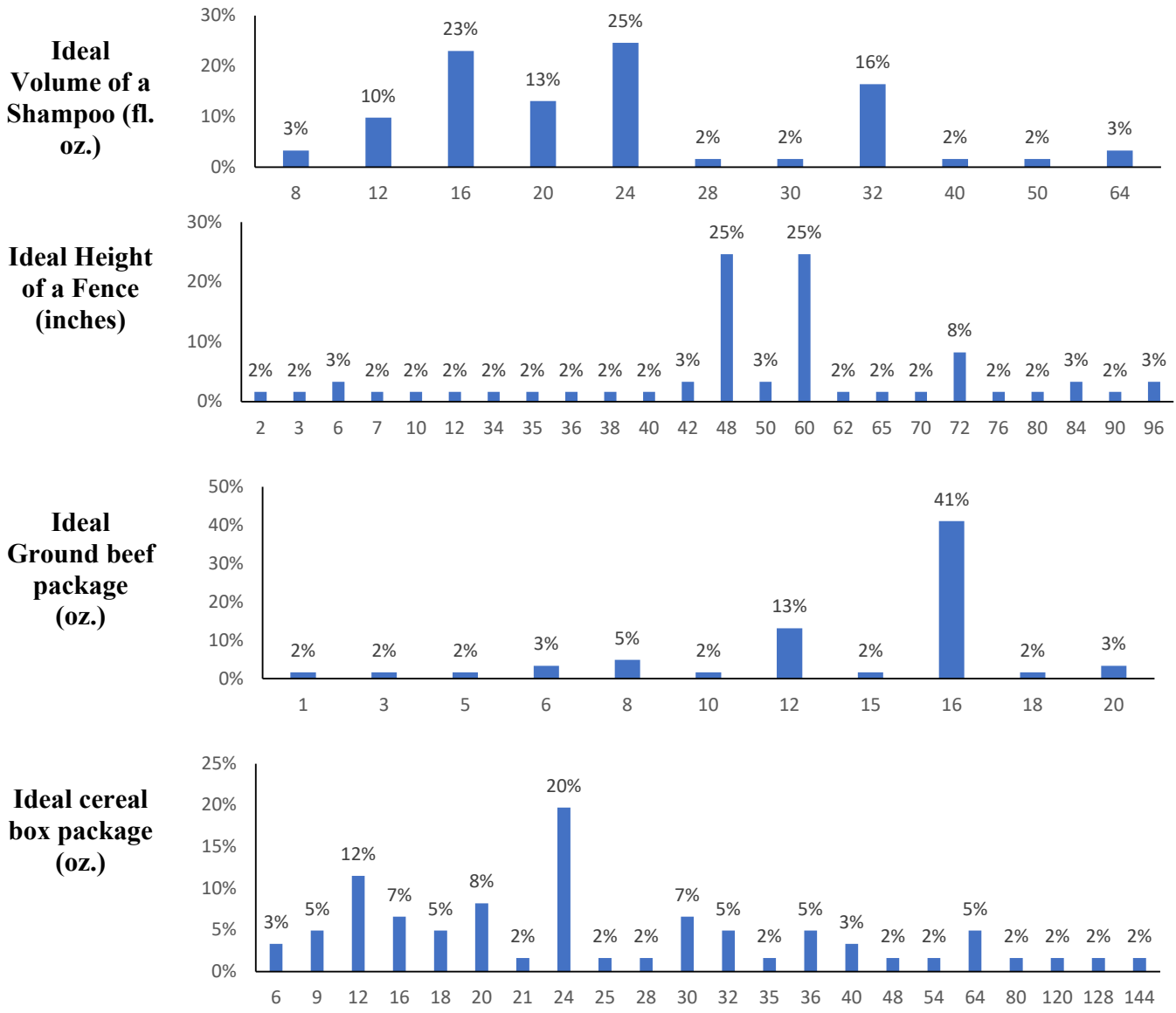
Table 1 (Study 3)

Study 3a				
Non-metric condition	**M_{Met}**	**$M_{Non-Met}$**	**Wald/F**	**p**
Choice %	10.2%	31.4%	6.18	.013
Completeness	4.20	5.12	13.7	.001
Metric condition				
Choice %	67.3%	2%	19.31	.001
Completeness	5.98	4.63	35.9	.001
Mediation*	**b**	**t/z**	**p**	**95% CI**
Condition --> Complete	.91	3.70	.001	
Complete--> Choice	.92	3.11	.002	.3090 ~ 1.8277
Study 3b				
Non-metric condition	**M_{Met}**	**$M_{Non-Met}$**	**Wald/F**	**p**
Choice %	43.4%	77.8%	12.53	.001
Completeness	6.35	5.38	19.8	.001
Metric condition				
Choice %	41.5%	5.6%	14.40	.001
Completeness	5.49	3.78	30.5	.001
Mediation*	**b**	**t/z**	**p**	**95% CI**
Condition --> Complete	.98	4.45	.001	
Complete--> Choice	.46	2.38	.017	.0825 ~ 1.0272
Study 3c				
Non-metric condition	**M_{Met}**	**$M_{Non-Met}$**	**Wald/F**	**p**
Choice %	17.3%	57.4%	16.5	.001
Completeness	5.76	4.00	44.4	.001
Metric condition				
Choice %	55.8%	3.7%	20.4	.001
Completeness	6.02	5.70	2.6	.11
Mediation*	**b**	**t/z**	**p**	**95% CI**
Condition --> Complete	1.76	6.67	.001	
Complete--> Choice	.55	2.85	.004	.3579 ~ 1.7948
Study 3d				
Non-metric condition	**M_{Met}**	**$M_{Non-Met}$**	**Wald/F**	**p**
Choice %	9.8%	48.1%	15.36	.001
Completeness	4.16	5.42	23.5	.001
Metric condition				
Choice %	66.7%	40.4%	6.97	.008
Completeness	5.73	5.75	.01	.9
Mediation*	**b**	**t/z**	**p**	**95% CI**
Condition --> Complete	1.27	4.85	.001	
Complete--> Choice	.34	1.63	.10	.0147 ~ .9484

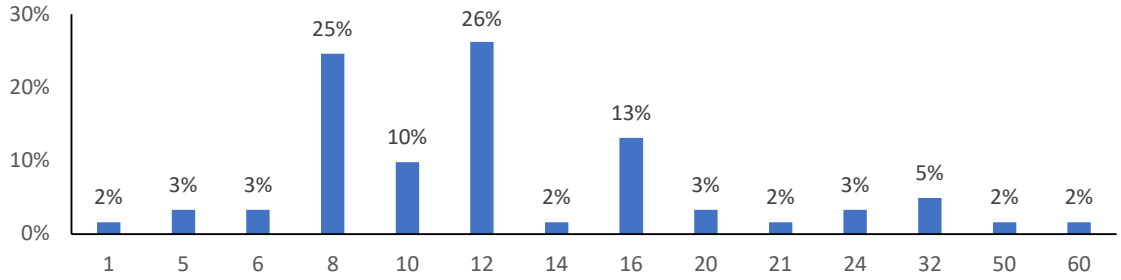
*Mediation test model =Metric vs. Non metric condition->Completeness->Choice using Process Model 4, Hayes 2014

Figure 1 (Study 1a and 1b)

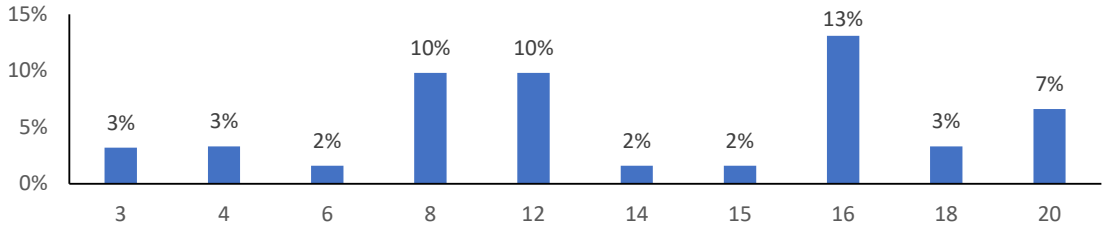
Study 1a: Frequency Distributions of Ideal Targets



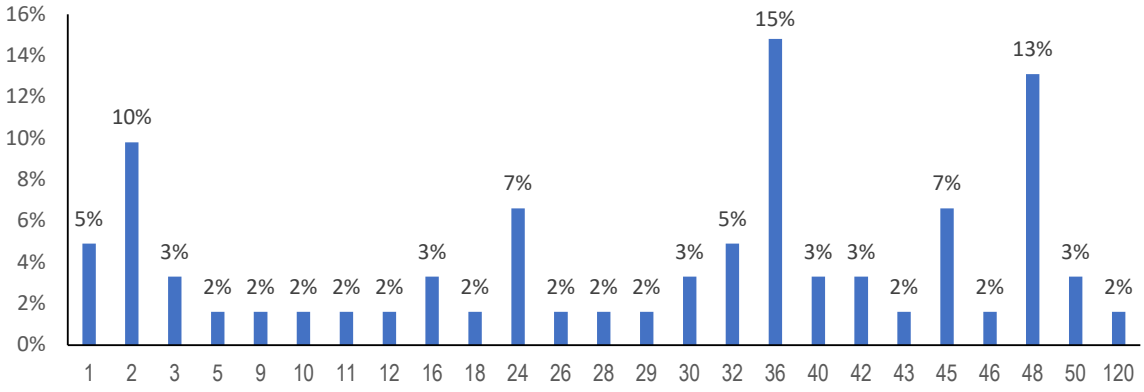
Ideal steak size (oz.)



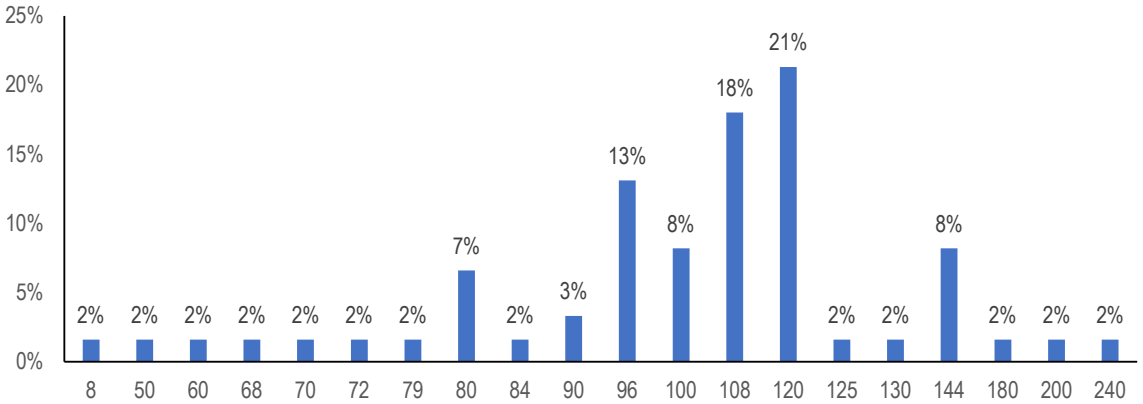
Ideal olive oil container (fl. oz.)



Ideal golf club length (inches)

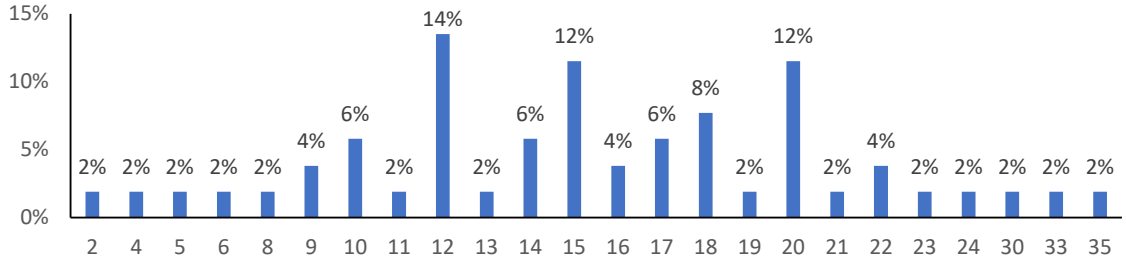


Ideal ceiling height (inches)

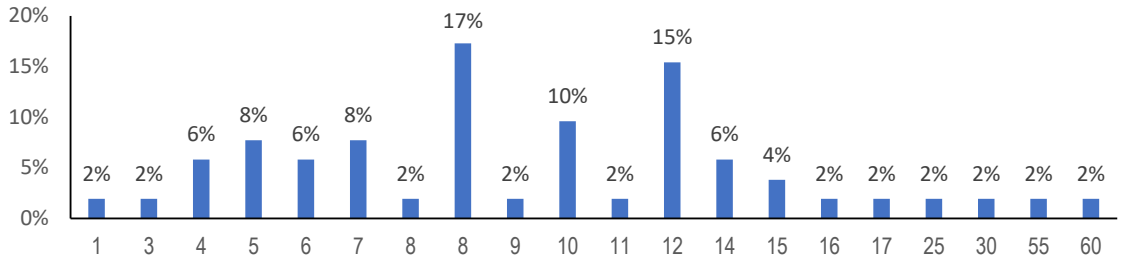


Study 1b: Frequency Distributions of Estimations

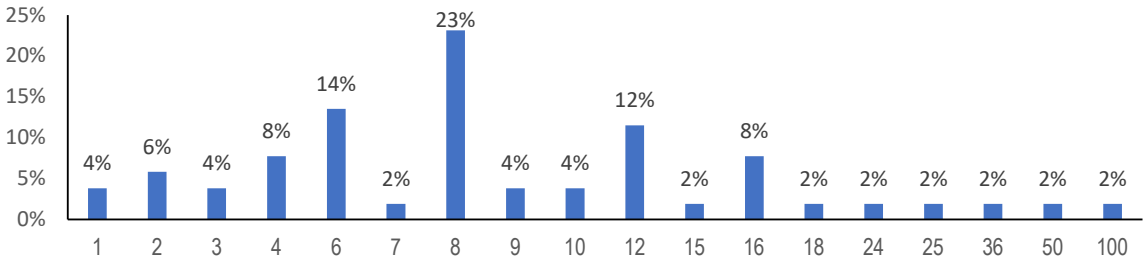
Estimate of Dog neck circumference (inches)



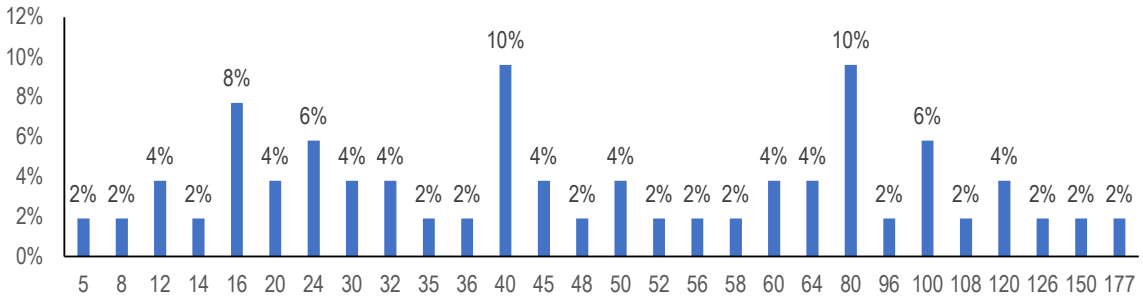
Estimate of Bird Wingspan (inches)



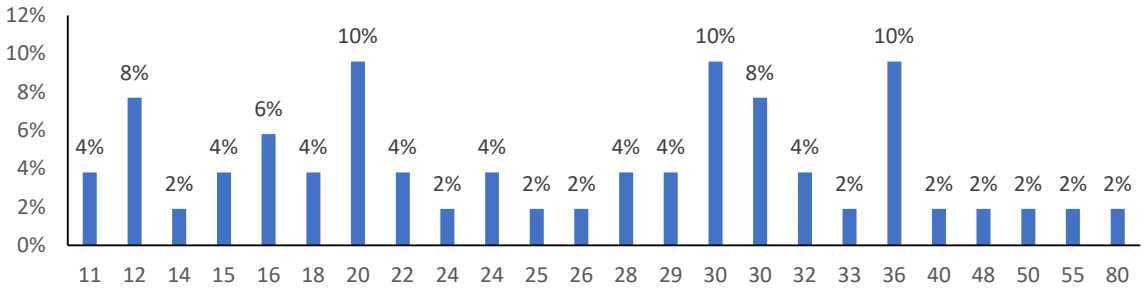
Estimate of Juice from three oranges (fl. oz.)



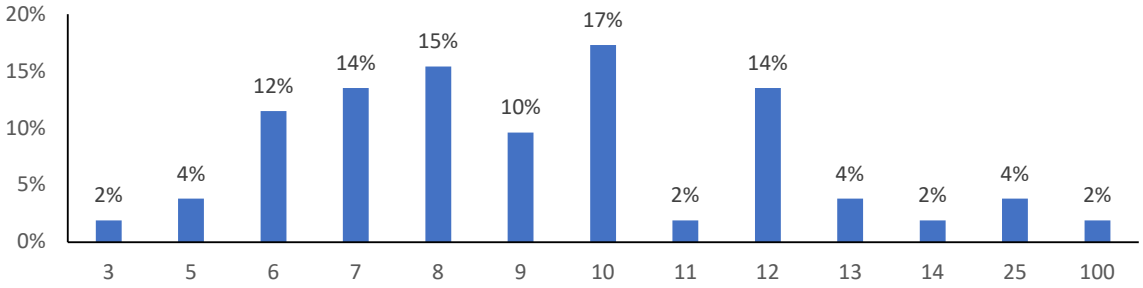
Estimate of laptop weight (oz.)



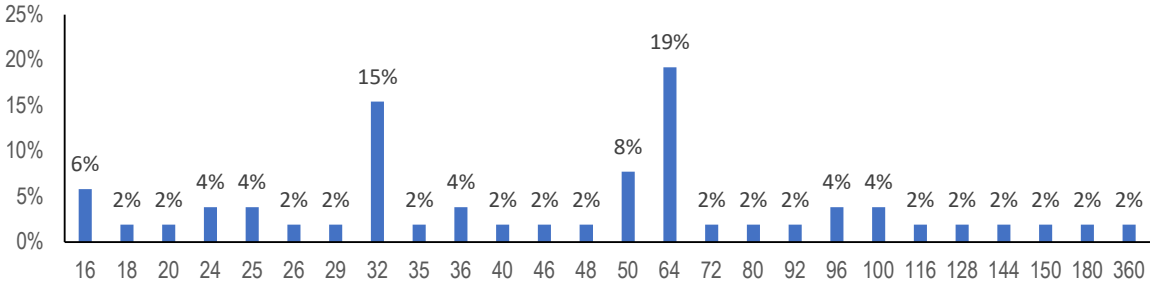
Estimate of basketball circumference (inches)



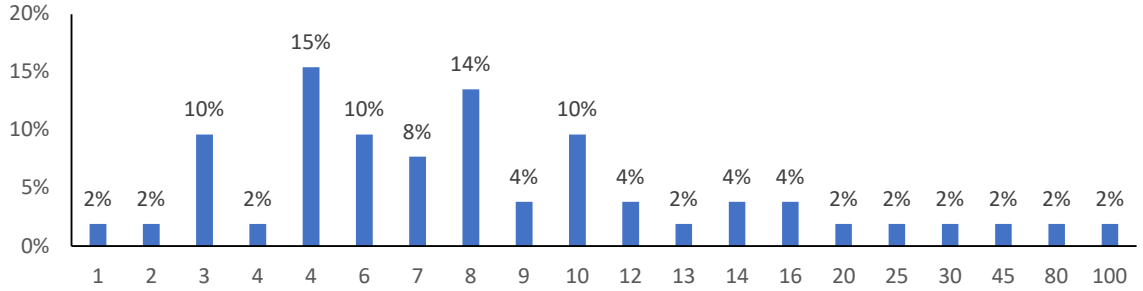
Estimate of cucumber length (inches)



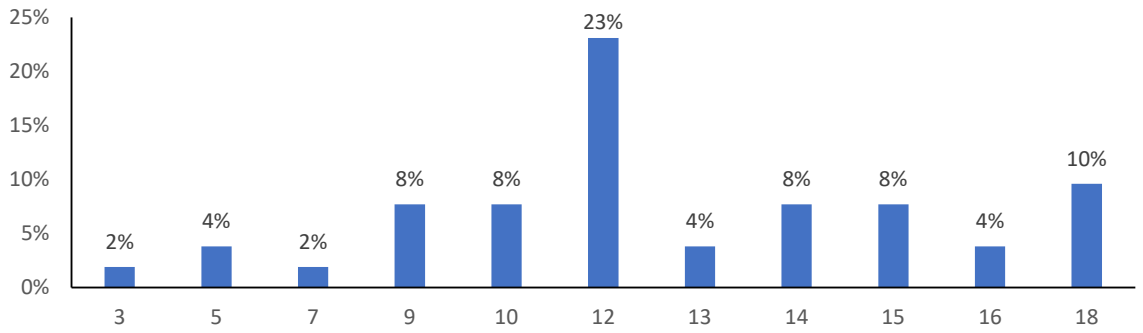
Estimate of detergent bottle volume (fl. oz.)



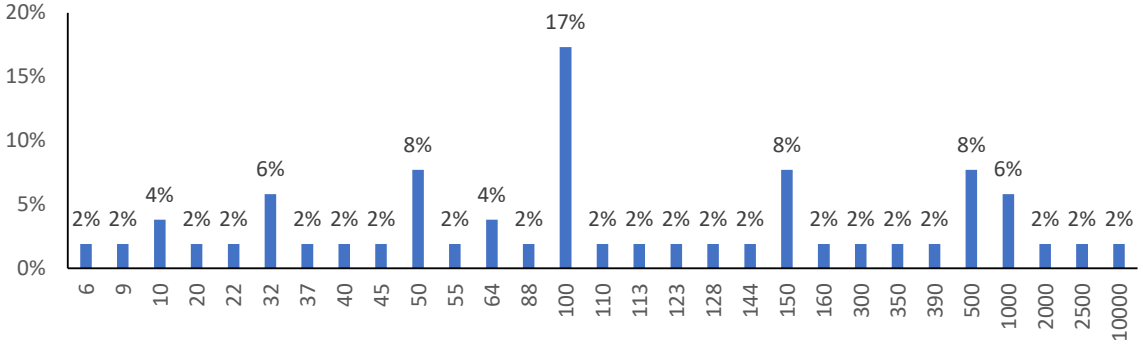
Estimate of tv remote weight (oz.)



Estimate of Long stem rose length (inches)



Estimate of 1000 pennies weight (oz.)



THE IMPACT OF AIR POLLUTION ON UNIQUENESS-SEEKING BEHAVIOR

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Keywords: Air pollution, uniqueness-seeking behavior, pollutant type, social crowding, perceived controllability of air pollution

Description: The current paper explores how and when air pollution influences consumers' uniqueness-seeking behavior.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Individuals have an inherent motivation to seek for uniqueness and attempt to differentiate themselves from the majority through consumptions. While previous research has examined diverse antecedents of uniqueness-seeking behavior from micro-level factors, such as individual differences, product categories and situational contexts, much less work has been done on how a broader and more macroscopic factor can influence the tendency of seeking uniqueness. Building on ecological psychology, we focus on how air pollution, an environmental factor, drives consumers' uniqueness-seeking behavior. Notably, air pollution is a crucial environmental problem prevalent across the globe. Mindful of this question, the current work aims to address the following questions: (1) How will air pollution influences

uniqueness-seeking behavior? (2) What's the underlying process of air pollution effect? (3) When will the air pollution effect be attenuated? (Word count: 130)

Method and Data

We conducted an analysis of the secondary data and three laboratory-setting experiments, including an online pre-test. The analysis of secondary data used air quality index and APPs usage data, involving an observation of 1680 samples. In the following three studies with a total of 743 participants, we used both online survey platform participants as well as students from a university in China with implementing imaged scenarios to manipulate air pollution. With an online pre-test, we chose appropriate stimuli for the main study. To analyze the data, we used linear regression, moderation-of-process analysis, ANOVA and mediation analysis. (Word count: 96)

Summary of Findings

Across four studies, we document that polluted (vs. clean) air results in greater tendency to seek uniqueness, exhibiting intensified preference for visually unique and minority-endorsed products. We further demonstrate that polluted air undermining self-concept clarity underlies the relationship of air pollution and uniqueness-seeking behavior. Finally, in line with our theorizing, we show that the effect of air pollution on uniqueness-seeking behavior will be weakened under three conditions: (1) the majority pollutants in the atmosphere are gaseous types, (2) when consumers are in a less crowded environment, (3) when people are

led to a diminished sense of perceived controllability of air pollution. (Word count: 101)

Statement of Key Contributions

Our work makes several contributions. First, of most important, we extend the literature on uniqueness-seeking behavior from a perspective of ecological psychology by exploring the effect of air pollution. A commonality across previous research related to seek uniqueness is largely micro-level, whereas little research has documented the effects of more macroscopic variables - how specific environment-related variables affect people's intentions to seek uniqueness. We introduce air pollution - an environmentally macroscopic factor into the realm of uniqueness-seeking. Moreover, our work identifies self-concept clarity as a new underlying mechanism accounting for the effect of air pollution. In most cases, research discussing the psychological processes of air pollution is primarily based on negative emotions induced by poor air quality. Our work, in contrast, differs from these studies by emphasizing the role of weakened self-concept clarity. Finally, past research mainly examines how scarcity of mere possessions (e.g., money, food) impact mindsets and judgments, so far ambient air pollution is largely overlooked, which is free from any situations and not specific to individuals. (Word count: 169)

THE IMPACT OF HERD MENTALITY, CONSUMER RESILIENCE AND MINDFULNESS ON ONLINE SHOPPING POST-ADOPTION DISCONFIRMATION

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Keywords: *Online shopping; Herd mentality; Consumer resilience; Mindfulness; Post-adoption*

Description: This study investigates the impact of herd mentality dimensions, consumer resilience and mindfulness on online shopping post-adoption disconfirmation.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Questions

The Covid-19 pandemic has prompted "late innovators" to buy online the first time (Kim, 2020). Researchers and practitioners in the retail sector question whether consumers who have adopted online shopping as a technology-acceptance behaviour since the pandemic will continue to change their online shopping behaviour in the post-pandemic period. Under expectancy-disconfirmation theory (Bhattacherjee, 2001), post-adoption disconfirmation of expectations will affect satisfaction, ultimately determining continuance intention. The pandemic provides an uncertain condition which is appropriate to study the effects of herd mentality (Lee et al., 2021), and consumer resilience – one's coping self-efficacy – being little attended in the extant research literature (Milakovic, 2021). As consumers interact with a completely different environment (Rigby, 2011), there could be an influence of mindfulness. The increased attention and awareness activated by mindfulness could also moderate other mechanisms that drive consumer behaviour (Nadeem & Koschmann, 2021). The research aims to address the following questions

RQ1: To what extent do herd mentality dimensions influence post-adoption disconfirmation?

RQ2: To what extent does consumer resilience influence post-adoption disconfirmation?

RQ3: What is the contingent role of mindfulness in the relationship between herd mentality and post-adoption disconfirmation and the relationship between consumer resilience and post-adoption disconfirmation?

Method and Data

This study was conducted using a survey with convenience sampling during the strictest lockdown period in Vietnam between May-July 2021, with Vietnamese consumers who switched to online shopping for the first time or increased online shopping since the pandemic outbreak. Vietnam provides a meaningful context for the study as the majority of Vietnamese consumers are still hesitant and unwilling to accept online shopping before the pandemic (McKinsey & Company, 2019). Respondents were invited to forums and social media. Though not hypothesised, the research also retested the relationships between post-adoption variables. The study adopted scales from the literature: herd mentality (discounting own information and imitating others) (Sun, 2013); consumer resilience (Milakovic, 2021); mindfulness (Frauman & Norman, 2004); disconfirmation and satisfaction (Bhattacherjee & Premkumar, 2004); and online shopping continuance intention (Vedadi & Warkentin, 2020). Respondents rated statements using a five-point Likert scale, with 1 completely disagree and 5 completely agree. The study stopped collecting information when 308 answered questionnaires were collected, as a sample size of about 200 is sufficient to perform the necessary quantitative analysis (Hair et al. 2010). After the quality screening, the usable data of 292 responses was analysed using PLS-SEM with SmartPLS 3.3.3.

Summary of Findings

The results provided evidence supported the expectancy-disconfirmation theory (Oliver, 1980), with the relationships between disconfirmation and satisfaction, satisfaction and continuance intention, disconfirmation and continuance intention being statistically significant. The results indicated that, among herd mentality elements, discounting own information has a significant impact on imitating others, which significantly influences disconfirmation (all $p<0.05$). A plausible explanation is that in online shopping, consumers consider not only the convenience and safety benefits but also other customers. The impact of consumer resilience on disconfirmation, while not being statistically significant at alpha = 0.05 ($p=0.056$), still suggests it might not be ignored in reality. Besides, the finding indicated meaning that mindfulness is a crucial driver of disconfirmation ($p<0.05$). This finding is consistent with arguments that mindfulness would affect the post-change attitude (Kieu & Le, 2020). Furthermore, the findings concerning the moderating role of mindfulness were mixed. The moderating effect of mindfulness on the relationship between imitating others and disconfirmation was not statistically significant ($p>0.05$), whereas mindfulness significantly lessens the impact of consumer resilience on disconfirmation ($p<0.05$). Nonetheless, the finding provided support for the role of mindfulness as a possible regulatory mechanism of behavioural change (Charoensukmongkol, 2020).

Statement of Key Contributions

This study contributes to theoretical development by integrating expectancy-disconfirmation theory, social cognitive theory, herd psychology, and mindfulness literature to examine the antecedents leading to post-adoption variables such as disconfirmation, satisfaction, and, ultimately, continuance intention. The examination of acceptance of technology in the form of online shopping in the unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic context could also help maintain the practical relevance of those theories in jointly predicting consumer behaviour after things return to normal. The study provides insights on the relationship between herd mentality elements and

between them and disconfirmation. The findings also have set light on how consumers construe their disconfirmation from psychological mechanisms such as resilience and mindfulness.

From a practical perspective, managers may promote a general attitude toward online shopping among the public, as a herd mentality mechanism will reinforce an individual's positive disconfirmation of a former decision. Additionally, marketers can design and implement communication initiatives that educate and orient their clients, thereby increasing their coping self-efficacy and mindfulness in successfully tackling obstacles. For customers to remain predominantly with this purchasing channel, particularly after the pandemic, there must be mechanisms in place to ensure customer satisfaction.

References are available upon request.

THE INFLUENCE OF COLOR LIGHTNESS ON PERCEIVED COMFORT AND DURABILITY

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Contact Information: "For further information, please contact Seth Ketron, Clinical Assistant Professor, University of North Texas (seth.ketron@unt.edu)."

Keywords: color, lightness, haptics, cross-modal correspondence

Description: This investigation finds that lighter (darker) colored products are perceived as more comfortable (durable) due to a cross-modal correspondence between color lightness and softness/hardness.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Touch is important to consumer evaluation and decision making (Krishna and Morrin 2008; Tu, Yang, and Ma 2015), but the advent of remote shopping channels (e.g., online and catalog shopping contexts) and other situations in which touch is not possible prior to purchase have necessitated a search for feasible surrogates for actual touch (Liu, Batra, and Wang 2017). One such solution may lie in the role of color in product-related sensory expectations, such as products' anticipated haptics. Prior research outside marketing suggests that color lightness and haptics are associated in consumers' minds (Jraissati et al. 2016; Ludwig and Simner 2013 Wright et al. 2017). The goal of this work is to show that color lightness is diagnostic for product features based on a cross-modal correspondence effect between color lightness and haptics: namely, lightness (darkness) is associated with softness (hardness) in objects, which leads consumers to form perceptions of soft (hard) products in light of the products' color lightness.

Method And Data

Three studies were conducted. Study 1 was a laboratory study with undergraduate students in which participants viewed a series of products paired randomly together and selected the product they felt was more appealing. These products varied in softness vs. hardness/toughness desirability and were presented in lighter vs. darker versions of a variety of colors (each product was shown in the same hue and saturation but varied in lightness). Studies 2a and 2b were conducted using two separate groups of MTurk participants; in these studies, participants viewed a sofa (2a) and a furniture cover (2b) in a lighter vs. darker version of green (sofa) and gray (furniture cover), with hue and saturation constant within each study. Participants rated anticipated comfort and durability as well as purchase intentions with nine-point semantic-differential items; participants also responded to manipulation check and demographics items.

Summary of Findings

For study 1, participants selected the lighter versions of softness-desirable products at a significantly higher rate (M = 4.29 times, SD = 1.92 times) than the hard product category (M = 2.48 times, SD = 1.66 times; t (1, 83) = 9.654, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 1.01$). Further, in study 2a, purchase intentions toward the sofa were significantly higher for the light green sofa (M = 5.74, SD = 2.61) than for the dark green sofa (M = 4.45, SD = 2.52; F (1, 109) = 6.991, p = .009, η^2 =

.060). Anticipated comfort mediated the relationship between lightness and purchase intentions (effect = -.80; CI = -1.43 to -.18), but durability did not (effect = -.10; CI = -.36 to .09). Meanwhile, in study 2b, purchase intentions toward the cover were significantly higher when it was dark gray (M = 6.01, SD = 2.02) versus light gray (M = 5.09, SD = 2.40; F (1, 116) = 5.013, p = .027, η^2 = .041). Anticipated durability significantly mediated (effect = .58; CI = .16 to 1.03), but comfort did not (effect = .14; CI = -.38 to .68).

Statement of Key Contributions

We extend prior literature by showing how a correspondence between lightness and softness influences perceptions of related product attributes (i.e., comfort for products intended to be soft and durability for products intended to be hard or rough). Those attributes, then, lead to downstream effects on consumer responses, which allows us to contribute to both theory and practice by connecting the lightness-softness correspondence to downstream consumer outcomes through comfort and durability perceptions. Scholars and managers should find the results useful as we both 1) expand knowledge of how a correspondence between lightness and softness can affect responses in the consumer domain and 2) apply the correspondence to practical product-related situations. Thus, aside from extending theoretical knowledge, we also offer managers insights into how products could be designed (i.e., using levels of lightness that correspond to the product's desired attributes) to enhance consumer responses, especially in situations in which touch prior to purchase is not feasible or possible (i.e., online shopping).

References Available Upon Request

THE RATING SCALE EFFECT: HOW CONSUMERS AGGREGATE RATINGS FROM SOURCES THAT USE DIFFERENT SCALES INTO PRODUCT ATTITUDES

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Keywords: Rating Scales, Numerosity, Information Aggregation.

Description: We found that when aggregating ratings from different sources that use different scales, ratings expressed on larger scales (vs. smaller scales) have a stronger effect on product evaluations.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Many of the product review websites use different rating scales. For instance, Amazon's customer review and Trustpilot use a 5-star rating scale, whereas the Consumer Reports website's ratings are on a 100-point scale. Some review websites display several ratings on different scales simultaneously. For example, Rotten Tomatoes displays the critics' score on a 10-point scale and the audience score on a 5-point average rating scale. When customers have to aggregate two ratings from two review websites with different rating scales, which of these two ratings will more strongly influence the customer's decision?

Previous research focuses primarily on non-rating-aggregation settings and leads to conflicting predictions even in those settings. Research on the numerosity effect suggests that larger-scale ratings have a more substantial influence on product evaluation. By contrast, research on default units suggests that ratings on the more familiar scale will have a stronger influence. Furthermore, research on the effect of scale bounds suggests that a numerosity effect would

apply to low ratings, but a reverse numerosity effect would apply to high ratings. Because of these conflicting predictions, we set out to measure the relative influence of large-scale and small-scale ratings in a set of experiments.

Method And Data

In Study-1 (N=151), participants evaluated eight video games based on two ratings on different scales. We found correlational evidence for a positive association between scale size and relative influence on evaluations. In Study-2 (N=101), we manipulated the scales on which the two ratings were expressed and obtained causal evidence for the effect.

Study-3 (N=1205) and Study-4 (N=1084) compared the effect of rating scales in evaluations based on one rating (without rating aggregation – like prior research) and two ratings (with rating aggregation). Study-3 used a sequential single-product evaluation design. Study-4 used a joint evaluation design. The results provided evidence for a stronger and more robust effect of larger scales in settings that require rating aggregation.

In Study-5 (N=151), participants reported their subjective strengths of small-scale and large-scale ratings. They also reported their product evaluations based on two ratings on different scales. We found that the rating scale does not affect the subjective strength of ratings but affects their relative weights.

We manipulated the perceived rating informativeness in Study-6 (N=501) by describing them as average ratings based on few or many consumer reviews. The scale effect was reversed when the small-scale rating was described as based on more reviews.

Summary of Findings

We find that the rating scale effect in single rating evaluation settings is too weak and unstable to directly imply the consistent evidence supporting a strong rating scale effect we obtained in settings where evaluations were based on two ratings expressed on different scales. Consistent

with these findings, we found evidence that the rating scale does not systematically affect the subjective strength of ratings but instead the relative weights given to the two rating sources. In post-evaluation surprise recall tests, we found that participants were more likely to correctly recall the upper bound of the large scale than that of the small scale. This suggests that they gave more attention to large-scale ratings than small-scale ratings in the evaluation task. We also found that people who claim they should give the same weight to ratings on both scales tend to be more strongly influenced by large-scale ratings but that when they are told that small-scale ratings are more informative, they give more weight to small-scale ratings. This suggests that people rely on a default strategy according to which they give more weight to large-scale ratings unless there are clear reasons for not doing so.

Statement of Key Contributions

Products review websites use different scales such as the 5-, 10- or 100-point scale. The present work is designed to be the first to analyze how people form product attitudes based on ratings from sources that use different scales. We find that ratings expressed on larger scales tend to have a stronger effect on product evaluation than ratings expressed on smaller scales. We call this phenomenon the rating scale effect. Though prior research on the effect of attribute numerosity and evaluations suggests that large-scale ratings should have a larger effect on evaluations than smalls-scale ratings in settings in which products are evaluated based on one rating, our findings do not support this prediction in the context of the 5-, 10- or 100-point scale. Yet, we found consistent evidence for a numerosity effect when evaluations are based on two ratings on different scales. The finding that the effect of numerosity is magnified in rating aggregation settings is a novel phenomenon that could not be predicted based on prior research on attribute numerosity. This finding is important because it implies that a change in scales used to report product evaluations could lead to systematic preference reversals.

“References are available upon request.”

THE ROLE OF MINDFUL OBSERVATION IN AUTOMATED DRIVING CONTEXTS

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Keywords: automation, consumer well-being, emotion, mindfulness

Description: This paper investigates the impact of driving automation on emotional states and well-being, and identifies stimuli that help foster positive effects on the same.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Questions

The aim of this research is to explore the intended and unintended effects of automated driving on emotional states and consumer well-being. One potential way of promoting positive emotional states in the context of automated driving may be through mindful awareness and observation. From existing studies, it is evident that exposure to nature reliably produces improvements in affect and reductions in both perceived and physiological stress, with the minimum requirement being a brief viewing of nature scenes or natural elements. Thus, we ask: 1) Do consumers perceive the restorative quality of the environment passing by in the context of automated driving? 2) Does the type of environment outside an automated vehicle improve passengers' subjective well-being, measured by a) positive affect b) negative affect c) self-reported stress d) arousal and e) situational well-being? And if so, 3) do mindfulness interventions in the form of brief instructions foster this effect?

Method and Data

We conduct two experimental studies to test our hypotheses. In both studies, we use a 2 (natural vs. urban environment) x 2 (mindfulness intervention vs. no intervention) factorial design to investigate the effects of natural elements in the context of automated driving (1) without any additional instructions given and (2) when paired with an accompanying mindfulness instruction. We obtain data via an online panel provider. In both studies, a total of 280 German consumers were recruited and were randomly assigned to one of the four experimental conditions. To analyze our data, we use a one-way MANOVA with type of environment as the independent variable to assess the perceived restorative quality of the environment (RQ1) and determine effects of the environment on subjective well-being (RQ2). Additionally, we conduct a two-way MANOVA to assess the interaction effect of type of environment and the mindfulness intervention on our five measures of well-being.

Summary of Findings

Results from Study 1 indicate that while the concept of perceived restorativeness can be transferred to the driving context, the natural environment outside the vehicle does not exert restorative effects on passengers by itself. However, we find that employing an instruction to mindfully focus on natural elements in the environment can lead to statistically significant improvements in certain measures of subjective well-being in the context of automated driving. Results indicate that participants in the nature condition experienced significantly lower negative affect following the mindfulness intervention compared to the non-intervention condition as well as significantly higher situational well-being. Additionally, we found a marginally significant effect of the mindfulness instruction in the nature condition on perceived stress. Finally, we found a marginally significant decrease of arousal in the urban condition following the mindfulness instruction.

Study 2 replicated Study 1 in terms of the experimental setup and variables investigated, but additionally included trait mindfulness as a moderating variable. We did not find a significant moderating effect of trait mindfulness on any of the dependent variables, suggesting that the mindfulness instruction is able to unlock positive effects of nature experience independent of a person’s general disposition to be more mindful in everyday life.

Statement of Key Contributions

To our knowledge, this is the first study to empirically investigate the impact of mindful awareness on emotional states in the context of automated driving, following the call for research on the emotional dimension of AI-enabled automation. Theoretically, we advance understanding of the well-being impacts of AI-enabled automated travel modes, thereby contributing to the fields of transformative service research and consumer behavior. We make two important contributions to extant research. First, we show that, contrary to popular belief, driving automation itself does not promote more positive emotional states and reductions in perceived stress. As such, our research provides important insights with regard to intended and unintended effects of AI-enabled automation on individuals, and contributes significantly to a better understanding of the role of consumers as passive occupants in automated driving. Second, we develop an intervention geared at inducing more mindful states of mind to allow for a more meaningful engagement of the passenger with their environment. In doing so, we provide evidence for strategies to cope with stress experienced in the context of driving as well as the unfamiliar situation of relinquishing control to an AI-enabled automated system.

References are available upon request.

THE STRUCTURE OF A PRODUCT, RETAIL ENVIRONMENT, AND BRAND LOGO CAN AFFECT JUDGMENTS OF VALUE

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Keywords: aesthetics, branding, structure, design

Description: this paper investigates the concept of structure in marketing visual communications.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

We demonstrate that visual structure (symmetry, balance) increases perceived utilitarian value when a product/brand fulfills utilitarian goals. However, when a product/brand fulfills hedonic goals, lack of structure increases hedonic value. Value, in turn, influence an array of marketing-relevant outcomes. This research has theoretical implications and actionable insights for marketing managers.

Method and Data

Six studies were used to investigate the hypotheses. Study 1 is a large-scale field experiment using Facebook Ads demonstrating that products with structured (unstructured) imagery generate higher click-through rates when the product offers utilitarian (hedonic) benefits. Study 2 shows, across several different organizational principles, that products with structured (unstructured) imagery are preferred when they offer utilitarian (hedonic) benefits. Study 3 uses industry brand equity data to show that structured (unstructured) brand logos are associated with more brand value for brands offering utilitarian (hedonic) benefits. Study 4 demonstrates process mediation -- a structured (unstructured) environment increases perceived utilitarian (hedonic) value, leading to higher evaluations when the positioning is utilitarian (hedonic). Studies 5a and 5b demonstrate process by moderation -- when diagnostic information about benefit performance is accessible (i.e., information on actual utilitarian/hedonic performance is available), so that an inference about benefits is unnecessary, consumers do not use structured (unstructured) perceptions as a cue to infer utilitarian (hedonic) value.

Summary of Findings

The current research examines the construct of structure and its role in the marketplace. Drawing on prior research on inference-making (Kardes et al. 2004) and utilitarian and hedonic considerations in consumer choice (Babin et al. 1994; Botti and McGill 2011; Hirschman and Holbrook 1982; Khan et al. 2005), we hypothesized when a product/service promises to deliver utilitarian benefits, a structured perception encourages inferences that increase confidence in this claim and, consequently, increases the perceived utilitarian value of the product/service. However, when a product/service promises to deliver hedonic benefits, a unstructured perception encourages inferences that increase confidence in this claim and, consequently, increases the perceived hedonic value of the product/service. These different notions of value, in turn,

influenced an array of marketing outcomes, including product interest (S1), choices (S2), consumer-based brand equity and the financial performance of brands (S3), the appeal of a retail environment (S4), and product evaluations (S5). These hypotheses were supported using data from six studies that used a variety of actionable structure manipulations, including a large-scale field experiment, four preregistered experiments, and a study using secondary data on brand equity.

Key Contributions

This research makes five contributions. First, we research how a property of a perception (as opposed to a visual organization principle) influences consumer inferences and/or behaviors. Second, we illustrate how structure can be an organizational theme in an integrated visual communication strategy. Third, we provide insight into how to create consistency in visual marketing communications, similar to how consistency is created in integrated marketing communications. Fourth, we document multiple antecedents to structured perceptions, a useful insight when one wants to encourage structured perceptions of a logo, product, package design, merchandise display, or retail environment. Finally, we illustrate how structure can be used as an efficient marketing communication tool. Structure can encourage consumer inferences at the point of purchase, hence is a relatively costless way to support brand claims.

Watch Out! How Strikethrough Price Crosses Out Purchase Intention

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Keywords: Strikethrough, Pricing, Retailing, Promotion

Description: In this research, we examine the novel factor of discount price presentation format, strikethrough, on consumers' deal evaluation.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

The current research proposes a novel factor of discount presentation, strikethrough, to explore its impact on consumers' deal evaluation and consequential purchase intention. While some retailers choose to present the sale price with the original price, there are some other cases when retailers choose to put a line strikethrough – a typographical presentation of words with a horizontal line crossed out through their center – on the original price and display price. For example, one of the biggest online retailers, Amazon.com, presents a strikethrough on their products which are on price promotions. Strikethrough prices are also prevalent among grocery stores and mail-in flyers. Based on the unique effects of different price promotion types on the price discount perception, presenting the sale price with a strikethrough on the original price may intervene the numerical information processing and consequently influence consumers' reaction to the price promotion. We predict that strikethrough price presentation leads to a less favorable deal evaluation than normal price presentation, by creating greater difficulty in calculating a discount. Moreover, when consumers become cognitively busy, the effect of strikethrough pricing through the calculation will be reversed as consumers rely more on heuristics to process the price information.

Method And Data

Three studies were conducted to examine our two key hypotheses. For our initial exploration, we conducted study 1. Participants (N = 409, 43.8% female, M_{age} = 39.02) were randomly assigned to one of 2 (strikethrough vs. normal) experimental conditions. Participants in the strikethrough (vs. normal) price condition saw a promotion flyer of an electronic toothbrush, with the original price crossed out (vs. not crossed out), and the sale price presented underneath. Next, participants reported their purchase intention using three items. Study 2 was designed to explore the process for the effect. Participants (N = 301, 45.0% female, M_{age} = 37.91) were randomly assigned to one of two experimental conditions similar to study 1, reported their purchase intention using the same three items in study 1, and indicated their perceived difficulty of calculating discount using two items. In study 3, we tested the moderating role of cognitive busyness. Participants (N = 263, 65.8% female, M_{age} = 20.62) were randomly assigned to one of four (2: strikethrough vs. normal × 2: high vs. low cognitive busyness) experimental conditions. Cognitive busyness was manipulated by asking participants to count and report their eye blinks.

Summary of Findings

In study 1, participants who were presented with the strikethrough price indicated lower purchase intentions ($M_{strikethrough}$ = 5.18, SD = 1.66) than those presented with the regular price presentation ($M_{regular}$ = 5.52, SD = 1.49); $F(1,408) = 4.69$, $p = .031$). In study 2, participants reported lower purchase intention ($M_{strikethrough}$ = 4.44, SD = 1.80 vs. M_{normal} = 4.85, SD = 1.63; $F(1,300) = 4.27$, $p = .04$) and higher perceived difficulty of calculating the discount ($M_{strikethrough}$ = 3.40, SD = 2.00 vs. M_{normal} = 1.65, SD = .97; $F(1,300) = 92.38$, $p < .001$).) with the strikethrough price. A mediation analysis (Hayes, 2017; PROCESS model 4 with 5,000 bootstrapped samples) showed that perceived difficulty of calculating the discount mediated the effect of strikethrough price presentation on purchase intention (b = -.14, SE = .06, 95% CI [-.26, -.03]). In study 3, a two-way ANOVA on purchase intention revealed a significant interaction ($F(1,259) = 4.01$, $p = .04$). Specifically, participants who were cognitively busy indicated a slightly higher purchase intention when presented with a strikethrough price ($M_{high\text{-}load*strikethrough}$=3.24 vs. $M_{high\text{-}load*normal}$=2.41; p=.09). On the other hand, under low cognitive busyness, purchase intention was not affected by the strikethrough ($M_{low\text{-}load*strikethrough}$=2.72 vs. $M_{low\text{-}load*normal}$ =2.86; p=.63).

Statement of Key Contributions

Previous research on price promotion has investigated different formats of price promotion presentation – dollar-off, percentage-off, and comparative price promotions (Blair & Landon Jr, 1981; Coulter & Roggeveen, 2014; DelVecchio, Krishnan, & Smith, 2007). Among the array of comparative price promotions, recent research has investigated the impact of visual and imagery aspect of price presentation, such as location (e.g., left or right) and verticality (versus horizontality) (Barone, Coulter, & Li, 2020; Coulter & Norberg, 2009). The present research advances this body of work by introducing the impact of widely-used strikethrough pricing on deal evaluation and purchase intention. This research contributes to the extant literature on price promotions by identifying an unintended negative impact of the prevalent strikethrough price presentation format. The findings in this research suggest that crossing out the original price to display discount price could hinder consumers' perceptions of discount depth. In turn, strikethrough price presentation may result in unfavorable deal evaluation and purchase intention toward discounted products, an effect that is driven by difficulties consumers experience in calculating the discount they receive. The current research broadens the understanding of strikethrough price by connecting its effect with the role of cognitive load and consumer information processing. Finally, findings in this research provide implications to marketers and retailers as to when and how strikethrough price presentation can be effective.

References are available upon request

‘WHEN BIRDS OF A FEATHER FLOCK TOGETHER’- UNDERSTANDING ONLINE HERDING IN WEARABLE TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION

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Keywords: Homophily, Herd Behaviour, Wearable Technology Adoption, Online Reviews

Description: The present study investigates the influence of herd behavior in wearable technology adoption for personal healthcare in online context.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Drawing upon extended herd behaviour theory by integrating the tenets of uncertainties based on initial trust theory and theory of homophily, we propose a research model to elucidate the process of herding in consumers’ wearable technology adoption in online context. Accordingly, following research question is developed:

RQ: Under what conditions does herd factors influence wearable technology adoption for personal healthcare on the basis of information obtained from online reviews?

Method And Data

The study uses partial least square based structural equation modelling to empirically test the data collected from Indian consumers with knowledge of wearable technology. In the study, self-administered online survey was conducted for empirical testing of the research model. The target respondents were people with knowledge of wearable technology for personal healthcare in India. The survey was promoted and invitations were sent through email, Facebook, Whatsapp, Instagram, Telegram and LinkedIn for approximately 10 weeks between 8th March, 2021 to 14th May, 2021. Two screening questions were used as exclusion criteria to ensure survey validity. Respondents with no prior knowledge/experience were excluded and a total of 434 final responses collected were used in this study.

Summary of Findings

This study presses upon the significant role of herding in wearable technology adoption for personal healthcare. The results indicate the significant influence of homophily on herding behaviour in the context of wearable technology adoption for personal healthcare which is in congruence with earlier research studies (Shen et al., 2016; Mattke et al., 2020). The observation of others' behaviour was found to be an insignificant predictor of herding as the condition of observation of adoption behaviour from "crowd" is more likely to trigger awareness and less of consumer desire to herd. The results also show that uncertainty based on personal propensity of consumers adopting wearable technology for personal healthcare leads them into discarding their own information and has no impact on imitation. The results also show that the conditions of uncertainty related to firms' reputation drives one into imitation which could be attributed to the fact that when consumers are not sure about the new brand or firms market reputation, they are

likely to rely on the opinion of others (online reviews in this context) (Erkanand Evans, 2016). Findings suggest that people tune their initial trust to integrate the information shared by initial adopters (Jiang et al., 2021) which subsequently becomes the major determinant of intent to adopt technology (Tang et al., 2019).

Key Contributions

In context of COVID pandemic situation, the study investigates how herd behavior facilitated by online reviews significantly influence wearable technology adoption for personal healthcare.

This research makes three novel theoretical contributions. Firstly, it enhances the current understanding of herding in wearable technology adoption in online context. Secondly, it augments the present understanding of herding antecedent 'observing other users' by examining not just random and popular others but homophilous others as well. Third, it explicitly examines uncertainties by extending its purview to factors forming initial trust related to wearable technology adoption. The study also provides important implications for practitioners. The results highlight the critical role of homophily in herding thus suggesting marketers and managers of online platforms to encash the herding effect by providing filters based on homophilous attributes so that one may read online reviews by similar others. The important role of uncertainty related to personal propensity and firm reputation suggests that managers of online review communities should solicit high-quality online reviews by encouraging consumers to provide semi guided information on brand popularity, ease of use etc. Through these eWOM practices marketers can alter individuals' initial trust to enhance their wearable technology adoption intention.

References are available on request.

THE SAMPLING ORDER MODERATES THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AUTOTELIC NEED FOR TOUCH AND WILLINGNESS-TO-PAY

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Keywords: Sensory marketing, Order effect, Haptic perception, Need for touch, Beverage

Description: This paper investigates whether the sampling order moderates the role of autotelic need for touch on the willingness-to-pay.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Autotelic need for touch refers to consumers using touch for fun, enjoyment, and sensory stimulation. Consumers with greater autotelic need for touch are more experienced and knowledgeable to omit non-diagnostic haptic cues in their evaluations. Earlier research shows that consumers with low autotelic need for touch are willing to pay more for a firmer beverage container than for a flimsier container, while consumers with greater level of autotelic need for touch show no difference in willingness-to-pay regardless of the container quality. Consumers often sample products in a sequence. Researchers claim that a strong (weak) first cue leads to a favorable (negative) perception of a product and positively (negatively) influences on subsequent product judgments. Consequently, the first sample is likely to serve as an anchor for the subsequent samples. We study consumer willingness to pay for a beverage served in a firm versus a flimsy container. We hypothesize that autotelic need for touch decreases the difference in willingness-to-

pay across firm and flimsy containers. Furthermore, due to the order effect and anchoring theory, we propose that this holds only when the sampling begins with a strong cue (firm container), but not when the sampling begins with a weak cue (flimsy container).

Method and Data

A professional market research company collected the data online. To photograph identical smoothies in firm (glass) and flimsy (plastic) containers, we used a professional photographer. The sample consisted of 200 participants (52.0 % females, mean age = 46.1), representing the distribution of the Finnish population. Each participant first completed their demographic information. We provided the respondents with the following orientation: "Consider you want to enjoy a smoothie for breakfast. We ask you to evaluate the following samples". Thereafter, the participants indicated their willingness-to-pay for the product presented in a firm and a flimsy container on a slider ranging from 0 to 10 euros with 10 cent intervals. To create the dependent variable, that is willingness-to-pay difference (WTP_{diff}), we decreased the willingness-to-pay of the second sample from the willingness-to-pay of the first sample (first sample – second sample). The sampling order (firm-flimsy/flimsy-firm) was random. This was followed by a manipulation check and the autotelic need for touch questionnaire. To test whether the sampling order moderates the effect of need for touch on WTP_{diff}, the authors used model 1 of PROCESS v. 3.5 in SPSS 27.

Summary of Findings

The results show that autotelic need for touch has a negative effect on WTP_{diff} (β=-0.119, $p<0.05$). To illustrate if the interaction differs depending on the container sampling order, we used the Johnson-Neyman technique. When the sampling starts with a firm cup, the autotelic need for touch has a significant negative effect on WTP_{diff} (β=-0.119, $p<0.05$). However, when the sampling begins with a flimsy cup the effect of the autotelic need for touch on WTP_{diff} is non-significant

(β=0.018, $p>0.10$). In addition, we conducted a manipulation check where the participants rated the firmness (1=extremely flimsy to 7=extremely firm) of the containers presented side by side. This manipulation check shows the participants (N=200) rating the firm cup (M=5.70, SD=1.27) significantly firmer ($p<0.001$) than the flimsy cup (M=3.00, SD=1.34).

Key Contributions

Our findings show that autotelic need for touch has a significant negative influence on WTP_{diff} meaning that consumers with greater autotelic need for touch are willing to pay more similar prices for smoothies in firm and flimsy cups than their lesser autotelic need for touch counterparts. However, the order of the sampling cues affects the effect which autotelic need for touch has on WTP_{diff}. When the sampling starts with a stronger cue, the difference in willingness to pay decreases as autotelic need for touch increases. However, when the sampling order starts with a weaker cue, the autotelic need for touch does not influence the willingness to-pay difference. Anchoring theory, which states that consumers experience subjective losses greater than subjective gains, offers a potential explanation for this. Those consumers with lesser interest in touching products for pleasure perceive the loss in container quality greater when the sampling starts with a firm cup in contrast to the perception of the gain when the sampling starts with the flimsy cup. Given the managerial ease of controlling the order in which products are presented, it is vital for managers to understand how the order effect influences consumers' purchase decision-making and their willingness-to-pay.

References are available upon request.

Consumer Culture Theory & Marketing Systems

CAN'T STOP LOVING IT: HOW FANDOMS RECOVER FROM TRANSGRESSIONS

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Keywords : moral transgressions, consumer recovery, brand communities, consumer culture theory, assemblage theory

Description: This research examines how consumers maintain their love for a brand after a transgression, when no redemption is attempted by the transgressors.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

During the summer of 2020, J.K. Rowling, author of best-selling franchise Harry Potter, made a series of transphobic comments that hurt and disappointed many of her fans. Rowling's perceived betrayal of her fans created a moral dilemma for them. They had grown up with her novels, met friends in the fandom, and made Harry Potter an essential part of their identity. How could they continue supporting the Harry Potter media franchise after the author made hurtful remarks targeting their friends and community?

Prior research has looked at the moral rationalizations that allow motivated consumers to maintain their support by framing transgressions as less immoral (e.g. Mazar, Amir, & Ariely, 2008; Paharia, Vohs, & Deshpandé, 2013) or separating judgments of morality from judgments

of performance (Bhattacharjee et al., 2013). In such cases, consumers can usually expect redemption attempts from transgressors. Little is known however, about the way recovery is achieved when no reparation is expected from a transgressor, and this transgressor is indissociable from the brand. Thus, the present research asks the following question: how can consumers maintain support for a brand while condemning a transgressive and unapologetic actor?

Method And Data

To examine how fans recover from a brand transgression, and the role that community plays in this recovery, I collected data from YouTube and mainstream media using a netnographic approach (Kozinets, 2010).

To identify videos in which YouTubers commented on J.K Rowling's transgression, I used search terms such as "harry potter controversy", "JK Rowling controversy", and "can I still love Harry Potter". I also browsed through content recommended by Youtube, as well as videos recommended by YouTubers and people commenting their videos. For each YouTube video analyzed (six in total), I downloaded the transcript, and the comments posted under the video. The sample used in this study consists of six transcripts (99 pages in single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font), and 13,345 comments.

I followed a similar approach to find articles from mainstream media websites, using the same keywords in a Google search. I included 15 articles to enrich my interpretation.

Finally, I analyzed the data using an iterative process of interpretation, moving back and forth between data collection, data coding and interpretation, developing new questions, confirming

and rejecting interpretations until reaching theoretical saturation. Assemblage theory was then used to help conceptualize the recovery phenomenon that this research focuses on.

Summary of Findings

Through coding and analysis, I uncovered several strategies employed by consumers and fans to maintain a positive consumption experience with their beloved brand. I find that consumers try to (1) increase the distance between the problematic element(s), or (2) decrease the relative importance of the element(s) in their current consumption. These strategies include reclaiming, re-ordering, and diverting support.

First, by reclaiming the brand, fans appropriate brand narratives and meanings: They create artifacts and content that support their vision for the brand, and collectively interpret the work of fiction.

Second, fans engage in re-ordering strategies: they emphasize the role of other brands contributors, such as movie directors and movie actors, and categorize products as more or less acceptable depending on the perceived importance of JK Rowling's contribution at the time of consumption.

Finally, the third and final set of strategies consists in re-evaluating support. These strategies imply strengthening "non problematic" support links while weakening links with problematic elements. This includes pulling support away from the transgressive elements and diverting towards morally acceptable components (e.g., buying merch from Etsy creators), and compensating (e.g., donating money to charity after benefitting from an association with the Harry Potter brand).

Statement of Key Contributions

This study focuses on the role of community in recovering from transgressions, and how consumers maintain their love for a brand when transgressions are committed by an unapologetic actor. It contributes to the literature on moral transgressions in two ways. First, it examines the role of community and authority figures in dealing with moral dilemmas, expanding the recovery literature beyond the dyadic brand-consumers relationship. Second, it identifies strategies that allow consumers to morally justify their love of a brand while condemning an immoral actor of this brand. This contribution is important as previous research has mostly focused on processes that either condone transgressions by reducing, disregarding, or justifying immoral acts (e.g. Bandura, 1991; Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, & Pastorelli, 1996), or processes that separate judgments of performance from judgments of morality (e.g. Bhattacharjee, Berman, & Reed, 2013). In the present research, consumers do not attempt to separate moral judgments from judgments of performance but strive to maintain their relationship with a brand while critically acknowledging problematic behaviour from one or more brand actors.

As social media contribute to rapidly spreading scandals involving public figures, not only in the art domain but also in sports, politics, and business (e.g. the Tiger Woods sex scandal, or Martha Stewart's conviction for insider trading), this research is of interest for for-profit firms working with public figures. It will help practitioners understand consumers' successful recovery strategies after a transgression and the importance of these strategies for consumer's well-being.

Note: References are available upon request

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CARE CONSUMERS IN PURSUIT OF MEANING: CONSUMPTION PRACTICES, MARKET RELATIONSHIPS, AND TENSIONS IN INSTITUTIONAL CARE REGIMES

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Keywords: elderly care, consumption practices, meaning-making, relationship tensions

Description: This study explores how elderly consumers, who require institutional care, pursue existential meaning through everyday consumption practices in constrained institutional care regimes and why these practices fail, due to persistent tensions.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Prior research demonstrated that elderly consumers find ways to remain active consumers, realize their personal growth and engage in desired identity search either independently or with the support of third persons (Schau et al. 2009, Price et al. 2000, Barnhart & Penaloza 2013). Becoming care dependent means a major life upheaval for the affected person and often involved personal caregivers. It disrupts established routines and habits and vaults them into an institutional care regime that entails a lot of restrictions which constrain the individual pursuit for existential meaning. The aim of this study is to develop a comprehensive understanding of care consumers' everyday practices in a context of constrained consumption. We explore consumption practices - and the tensions involved - in institutional care regimes as a consumer's attempt to pursue existential meaning. Thus, our research question is: How do elderly consumers pursue existential meaning through everyday consumption practices in constrained institutional care regimes and what aggravates or prohibits the meaning-making processes?

Method And Data

To gain deep insights into the care consumers' reality, we chose a qualitative approach. In-depth interviews with care recipients and with members of their care networks were conducted. Thus, the sample is comprised of different perspectives of care recipients, personal caregivers (family members), and professional care experts (care personnel and care managers). In total, 24 semi-structured interviews with care recipients, personal caregivers, expert caregivers, and care managers were available for analysis. Purposeful sampling was used to choose the interviewees at the three different elderly care facilities. The interviews provided an understanding of the practices elderly care consumers apply in their care consumption, how these relate to the establishment of life meaningfulness and what inhibits this process. The interview material resulted in transcripts of 289 single-spaced pages (equivalent to 15.4 hours of conversation), for which an inductive analysis approach was

employed. When possible, information from interviewees pertaining to one recipient's network was matched to form a cohesive data set that provides the perspectives of care recipient (elderly), his or her personal caregiver (e.g., son), and an involved expert caregiver (e.g., nurse). Original respondent names were pseudonymized. The inductive analysis of the material followed an iterative qualitative content analysis approach.

Summary of Findings

Based on our analysis, we develop a model of care consumers' meaning-making process. Within the boundaries of a care regime care consumers apply different practices to navigate themselves through times of upheaval and to find new meaning in their care recipient life episode. We identified three consumption practice types that care consumers apply to pursue life meaningfulness: (1) positioning, (2) authentication, and (3) resistance practices. These consumption practices, embedded in the institutional care regime, involve the integration of existing resources as well as finding new resources. We outline how these meaning-making consumption practices are carried out to pursue existential actualization in the aftermath of major upheaval. The institutional care regime, in which these processes are situated, defines the boundaries within which care consumers can negotiate and re-negotiate the attainment of existential meaning in relation to their peer-consumers, care experts, and family caregivers. The interplay between the actors of the mixed care networks, as well as the prevailing institutional boundaries potentially provoke tensions and may hinder the achievement of a meaningful goal. Moreover, undesired outcomes become more likely as tensions persist.

Statement of Key Contributions

This research adds to studies on elderly consumption behavior. In addition to the rather optimistic outlook of literature that has explored outcomes of meaning-making or identity processes, e.g. identity renaissance (Schau et al. 2009) or identity reconstruction (Noble and Walker 1997), our study offers a critical take on why care consumers engage in consumption practices. As such our study explores how care consumers who are reliant upon an elderly

care system with imposed norms, rules and policies engage in everyday consumption practices to strive for existential meaning. We also illustrate how such meaning-making processes might lead to undesired outcomes. Our study follows recent research that highlights a family perspective on identity bundles (Epp & Price 2008) and adds to research on elderly consumption ensembles (Barnhart & Penaloza 2013) by looking at the negotiations and tensions in mixed care networks as a response to care consumers' consumption practices. By identifying tensions that arise within mixed care networks we add to literature on institutional boundaries that restrict consumers and shape their consumption patterns (Arnould & Thompson 2015).

References are available upon request.

COMFORT, PLEASURE AND SCHADENFREUDE: EXTENDING AFFECT INTO NEUTRALISATION THEORY AMONG UK BREXIT PREPPING CONSUMERS IN CRISIS

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Keywords: neutralisation theory, affect, food consumption, prepping, motherhood

Description: This paper extends neutralisation theory, by augmenting with affect-laden neutralisations, in light of contemporary discontinuous changes to household food consumption in the UK.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question How do UK consumers incorporate affective responses to neutralise the contentious consumption activity of prepping in the light of anticipated Brexit and Covid related food shortages?

Method and Data Scholars have bemoaned the fact that nuanced research on prepping is scant, and due to the secrecy that often surrounds such practices, research fields are slow to catch up with this emerging consumer trend. To gain initial insight into the prepping community, a year-long (April 2018-April 2019) non-participatory sensitising netnography of the online communities (comprising 16,000 members) that emerged to offer support to Brexit preppers was undertaken. 21 respondents actively engaging with Brexit prepping were then purposively recruited to take part in a series of in-depth interviews, with approval of site moderators. Only women (who previously to the Brexit crisis had never formally practised prepping) responded to our recruitment appeals, and all were mothers (which reflects broad membership of the online Brexit prepping sites studied). Phone or video-conference interviews were conducted which were semi-structured in nature, exploring broad themes covering prepping experiences and motivations.

Summary of Findings In empirical terms, we contribute towards understanding of a growing consumer trend: prepping (those who gather and manage food/water, and other associated goods, in anticipation of perceived resource scarcity). Prepping is often associated with delusional certitude of apocalyptic collapse among a marginal subculture, most commonly in the USA (e.g. doomsday preppers). In our research, we explore prepping amongst more mundane preppers, recognising how prepping, although still a controversial consumption activity, is fast becoming a mainstream precautionary tactic. Our respondents engaged in neutralisation activities throughout our research engagements commensurate with the five classic neutralisation strategies. However, we found three additional themes relating to affect-laden neutralisation responses, comfort, pleasure and schadenfreude.

Key Contributions This paper develops neutralisation theory to incorporate affect-laden consumer neutralisations. We offer extensions to the five main neutralisation strategies and add a discussion of the ontological underpinning of classic neutralisation theory, in terms of its hitherto rejection of the validity of affective responses, such as pleasure and comfort, to contentious behaviour within

the neutralisation theory field. We argue, drawing on evidence from our data, that these responses should form part of the neutralisation lexicon; and, as such, provide a development of this classic framework for analysing contentious and/or secretive consumer behaviour

CONSUMER GOSSIP AND BRAND COMMUNITY DYNAMICS

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Keywords: consumer gossip, digital methods, brand community

Description: As gossiping practices of brand fans within communal structures is not well understood, we explore the role of gossip in the dynamics of a brand community to understand the ways in which forms of gossiping contribute to structure and change within an established brand community.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Gossip is a cherished consumer practice that offers individuals social purpose (Rosnow 1977). Within groups, gossip can be used to maintain social order and the practices of gossiping within a group enable members to convey the boundaries and norms within a community (Suls 1977) while also exerting control over those within the group (Gluckman 1963; Rosnow and

Fine 1976). Consumers who gather around cherished brands often engage in 'idle chatter' relating to their brand interests, and it is well documented that consumers gather to discuss the substance of brands (Brown 2007; Holt 2002; McAlexander and Schouten 1998; Parmentier and Fischer 2015). Such communities offer heterogeneous resources that may unite disparate consumer groups (Thomas, Price, and Schau 2013), and further, these groups may not always align with or maintain synergy with the corporate goals of the brand (Brown 2007; Guschwan 2012). However, gossiping practices of brand fans within communal structures is not well understood. In this research, we explore the role of gossip in the dynamics of a brand community (McAlexander, Schouten, and Koenig 2002; Muñiz and O'Guinn 2001) to understand the ways in which forms of gossiping contribute to structure and change within an established brand community.

Method and Data

In this research, we explore the online brand community surrounding micro-celebrity (Marwick 2013) Stephanie Jarvis and her YouTube Channel, "The Chateau Diaries." The channel saw quick growth through 2020 and 2021; the channel surpassed 150,000 subscribers in June 2021. While fans gather in live chats on videos and in the comments to discuss the brand, beginning in September 2020, consumers of the YouTube channel organically began a forum discussion on the Tattle.Life forum website. Tattle.Life is a website which enables consumers to engage in "critiques of people that choose to monetize their personal life as a business and release it into the public domain" (Lime Goss 2021). While engagement with "The Chateau Diaries" forum threads began slowly, the number of participants and frequency of engagement

quickly increased. Tattle is not an anti-brand community (Hollenbeck and Zinkhan 2006) but rather a self-selected sub-group focused on specific issues (Fligstein and McAdam 2012).

Our data set for this project employs a Digital Methods perspective (Caliandro and Gandini 2017; Rogers 2013) and includes 52 Tattle.Life forum threads which comprise 52,947 individual posts. We supplement this data set with depth interviewing with the content creator and analyze the data through a constant-comparative model consistent with grounded theoretic approaches (Glaser and Strauss 2017; Spiggle 1994).

Summary of Findings

The Tattle.Life forum enables brand fans to interact in ways that are prohibited and penalized within the main brand community due to their connection with the negative perceptions of gossiping. Fans who gather within the Tattle.Life forum employ gossiping related to their original critiques of the content creator. Consumers gain entry and membership to the forum through contributions conforming to the emergent expectations of other Tattle.Life forum members, consistent with understandings of gossiping as a means to social inclusion, which is structed by rules and norms.

Our analysis illustrates consumers engaging in two broad practices rooted in gossiping behaviors – sleuthing and enlightening – that contribute to the ongoing development of the focal brand community. Both practices involve consumers leveraging their conversations and other interactions on Tattle.life to contest the nature of reality presented by the brand through its YouTube channel. Sleuthing involves consumers critiquing the brand's presentations of reality, specifically the nature of social relationships and experiences of daily life portrayed in YouTube content. Consumers work from the bottom-up, puzzling over specific often disparate details of

the brand's activities and the relations between representatives of the brand and theorize alternatives by uncovering connections and information and sharing with other Tattle.life members. In this way, consumers connect the presented self of the brand with its supposed authentic or real self in order to establish the truth of the brand's reality for other community members to consume. Enlightening is a top-down process whereby some members of the Tattle.life forum present themselves as insiders with special insights that have accrued due to their special status. Perceived as a 'higher power' by others, these consumers work to establish truths about the brand's reality through self-focused narratives that emphasize their uniqueness and status as a basis for the believability of their information.

Key Contributions

The marketing literature has a limited understanding of gossip and gossiping practices. While it has previously been studied from anthropological and social psychological perspectives, the present-day marketing and consumer behavior literature is constrained by small, passing references to gossip. We explore how gossiping practices impact brand community dynamics. We explore how brand community members construct spaces within the larger fabric of the community that enable forms of interaction and exchange that are constrained by other community members.

Brand managers will benefit from this research by further developing their understanding of how gossiping practices contribute to the structuring and interactions of consumers within their brand communities. Specifically, our work illustrates the ways in which consumers who are ousted, displaced, or excluded from a brand community due to their dissenting or critical voices may construct new spaces that enable continued brand engagement while also affording space to

continue engaging in gossiping behaviors. Further, we find such spaces to be valuable information resources from which brand managers can learn and develop new value-based offerings.

References are available upon request.

COVID 19 AS AN EYE-OPENER: TENSIONS AMONG THE WORK OF CLASSICAL MUSIC ACTORS TO RESPOND TO AN INSTITUTIONAL CRISIS.

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Keywords: Institutional theory; Institutional Work; Democratization; Classical music; Covid-19;

Description: This conference paper presents the institutional tensions and work currently experienced by the actors of the classical music market in France, against the backdrop of the covid-19 crisis which precipitated the need for a democratization strategy.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

How do the Classical music market actors attempt to transform their elitist field –which struggles with internal and external crises– through institutional work and democratization strategies?

Method and Data

We conducted seven in-depth interviews in French with professionals in the sector (professional musicians, concert hall managers and employees). The interviews lasted from 20 to 55 minutes and took place either by phone or in the informants' office. The expertise of the interviewees gave us a fairly comprehensive view of the sector, since these experts are in contact with all the existing network around their organization and directly witness the influences leading to the transformation of the institution. Data were analyzed following the interpretivist approach, as suggested by Reay and Jones (2015) when working on institutional work and logics.

Summary of Findings

Not all actors agree on the marketing strategies to follow to democratize and save the classical music market. Indeed, they either want to maintain the institution or destabilize it (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Slimane & Leca, 2010). Regarding the maintenance logics of the institution, institutional work involves supporting, repairing, or recreating social mechanisms that ensure conformity to the founding norms of the institution. In particular, we observed one specific way to maintain the institution and ensure the legitimacy of the field for new generations of audiences: Embedding and routinizing practices and discourses, such as education of new customers, brand's endorsement, and price drop policies, which instil norms and values into people routines.

Unlike maintenance logics, the disruption logics of the institution question the beliefs and norms set up by the institution (Slimane & Leca, 2010). We found two types of destabilization work: the dissociation of the moral foundations (e.g., a disruption of the experience offered by the organizations) and the undermining of traditional assumptions and beliefs regarding classical music. These strategies are meant to legitimate the field to a new audience while insuring classical music profitability.

Key Contributions

If the urgency is to minimize the impact of Covid-19, the ingrained idea that a crisis is the possibility of a revival for an institution raises tensions between actors that deserve to be studied in the field of marketing. In the case of the classical music market, Covid-19 highlights disagreements regarding which democratization strategies to implement because they involve institutional work based on different logics; actors must find a balance between legitimacy and profitability while proposing solutions that can either maintain or completely disrupt the field. In this vein, this research enriches the macro-marketing literature on institutional theory (Yang & Su, 2014; Humphrey, 2010), and contributes to the study of an elitist market's institutional crisis through the prism of both an external and global crisis (Covid-19).

References are available upon request.

CULTURAL RISK NARRATIVES, DIFFERENTIATED INDIVIDUAL NARRATIVES, AND RESULTING CONSUMPTION ACTIONS

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Keywords - risk communication, risk narratives, consumer culture theory, risk interpretation, shared risk

Description – We study culturally constructed risk narratives and examine how individuals make sense out of multiple coexisting, often conflicting risk narratives to arrive at an interpretation, informed by their ideology and socio-economic position and how one's position so arrived at impacts the adoption of risk mitigation actions.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Risk communication literature in marketing has focused on consumers as individual entities and has not paid close attention to how consumers construe risk in the context of their culture. In this research, we examine how culturally constructed risk attributions and accountability inform consumer's risk interpretation and adoption of risk mitigation actions. Specifically, we explore the culturally construed risk narratives to uncover the cultural elements of risk attribution and accountability as key drivers of individual risk interpretation. Further, we consider how individuals interpret risk in the context of their ideology and socio-economic position and adopt risk mitigation actions in the context of shared risk.

Method and Data

We examine cultural evaluation of risk by conducting 24 in-depth interviews in two rounds among respondents in rural South Rajasthan, India. The region, with its population having varied education, socio-economic status, exposure, and ideologies, provided us a microcosm of respondents from different sub-cultures with diverse perspectives, exposing multiple cultural risk narratives and individual interpretations. We choose the context of COVID-19, a shared risk, which gained prominence rapidly allowing us to observe when and how individuals participate in risk narratives.

Our purposive sample, capturing varying socio-cultural profile of respondents, comprised residents of the villages and returning migrants. Our aim was to capture the lived experiences of our participants during the pandemic. Therefore, our questions flowed in a temporal recollection, beginning from the first time the respondents learnt about COVID-19, their experiences during the period, and their response. Subsequently, we asked them about different sources and spaces through which they learnt about the disease and their reactions.

The interviews were recorded, translated, transcribed, and coded independently by the two authors and a postgraduate research assistant. Themes were arrived at over multiple rounds of inductive analysis.

Summary of Findings

We find the coexistence of culturally construed risk narratives drawing on pre-modern, modern, and reflexive modern risk orientation and practices. Specifically, the narratives anchored around attributing risk accountability to God or religious beliefs, rationality based scientific beliefs, or reflexive modernity based doubts. The cultural embeddedness of individuals in these narratives results in risk-related decisions that come from a structure of feelings (Thompson 2005). Individuals draw from multiple cultural risk narratives, decode them, and form their own individual risk interpretations. One's ideological position, supported by occupation and socio-economic position, anchors individuals to a particular risk attribution and interpretation. The emergence of culturally construed risk narratives and the individual-level risk interpretations drawn from them is not a linear progression. Rather, the risk narratives in the community and individual interpretations are iterative and reinforce each other. The risk interpretations induce participants to enact various risk mitigation actions, such as enforcement, education, compliance, adoption of an alternative, or resistance, which sometimes result in conflicts as individuals differ in their risk outlook.

Statement of Key Contributions

We contribute by, first, moving the conversation on culturally constructed risk narratives forward by identifying multiple co-existing risk narratives and the underlying risk attribution orientations that bind them. These co-existing risk narratives echo Raymond Williams's (1973; 2014) theory on co-existing dominant, alternative, and oppositional cultures in a society. Second, we dive deeper into how individuals interpret risk in the presence of co-

existing and conflicting risk narratives. While ideologies play a role in anchoring the individual to a particular culturally construed risk narrative, their socio-economic position impels them to prioritize the risk and informs their risk mitigation strategy. Third, we contribute to bridging a key theoretical gap by studying risk evaluation in a social and shared risk context, identifying the tensions between the different risk interpretations and attendant risk mitigation actions. Finally, and importantly, our research contributes to the marketing literature on risk communication. Our suggestions based on culturally construed risk narratives and the risk attributions, provide a basis for creating risk communication strategies – including risk-attribution based segmentation, message strategy, message framing, message source/influencers, and message channels.

References

References are available upon request.

Customer Journey Design: Four Winning Strategies

Abstract

Marketing experts agree that the secret to holding on to one's customers is providing them with a compelling series of customer experiences, also known as a customer journey. However, marketing experts have yet to develop a framework that product managers can use to guide their journey design choices and keep their customers returning many times over. The customer journey matrix highlights four journey archetypes to keep customers engaged: the routine, the joyride, the trek, and the odyssey. Each of these journey archetypes necessitates a unique set of design principles. Routines demand service consistency. Joyrides thrive on endless variation. Treks call for journey goalposting. Odysseys require both journey goalposting and endless variation. And all four journey archetypes benefit from regular streamlining.

Key Contributions

This paper advances the field of customer journey design (CJD) theory and practice by developing a practitioner-oriented matrix of four winning CJD strategies. The article also seeks to help product managers with four key CJD steps: (1) identitying the best journey archetype for their product, (2) applying appropriate design principles, (3) promoting subscriptions at the right time, and (4) streamlining the customer journey at every opportunity.

This submission follows the style guidelines for the *Harvard Business Review*, where the manuscript is currently under review. Word count: 3461.

Introduction

How can product managers keep customers returning again and again? Marketing experts agree that it's not enough to provide customers with a satisfying initial experience. Instead, product managers must offer customers a compelling series of experiences—or journey—that keeps customers returning many times over.[1] As McKinsey consultants David C. Edelman and Marc Singer assert in their influential Harvard Business Review article, the customer journey is "as important as the products themselves in providing competitive advantage."[2] Simply put, customer journey design is the new marketing battleground.

At the same time, however, marketing experts have yet to develop a framework that product managers can use to guide their customer journey design choices. We begin to develop such a framework by highlighting two universal facets of customer journeys.

1. **Customer journeys can be effortless or effortful.** Some journeys require little customer effort (e.g., watching movies on Netflix; reordering meals on Seamless). Other journeys require considerable mental and/or physical effort (e.g., learning a new language on Duolingo; working out at CrossFit).

2. **Customer journeys can be predictable or unpredictable.** Some journeys tend to be rather predictable, familiar, and comforting over time (e.g., using a Philips Sonicare toothbrush, grabbing breakfast at Starbucks). Other journeys are almost continuously unpredictable, surprising, and exciting (e.g., matching, chatting, and meeting with other Tinder users; playing World of Warcraft with friends).

Crossing these two dimensions creates a 2 x 2 framework that we call the customer journey matrix. Inside the quadrants of this matrix are four journey archetypes. (1) A routine is effortless and predictable. (2) A joyride is effortless and unpredictable. (3) A trek is effortful and predictable. (4) An odyssey is effortful and unpredictable.

There is no universally superior type of customer journey. All four types can be used to keep customers returning again and again. All four types are potentially applicable to all kinds of products, including goods and services, both physical and digital. All four types

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Thomke, S., 2019. The Magic That Makes Customer Experiences Stick. MIT Sloan Management Review, 61 (1), pp. 56-63.
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can unfold at any pace (e.g., monthly, weekly, or daily) and persist for any duration of time (e.g., from a few weeks to several years).

In this article, we illustrate each of the four journey archetypes and their corresponding design principles with examples from the contemporary marketplace. Thereafter, we offer product managers a step-by-step guide to designing the ideal customer journey for their products.

Four Customer Journey Archetypes

The Routine

Routines are simple procedures performed at regular intervals to complete a daily, weekly, or otherwise recurring task. A typical routine involves a trigger (e.g., a time of day), activity (e.g., brushing one's teeth), and reward (e.g., a minty fresh mouthfeel). While all customer journeys include some recurring patterns, routines are especially repetitive given their simplicity and frequency. Over time, routines tend to become effortless and predictable. Of the four archetypal journeys in the customer journey matrix, routines are the most well-established in the marketing imaginary. They are sometimes also called customer habits or rituals.

Routines are well-suited for utilitarian products such as ultrasonic toothbrushes, mobile banking apps, and quick service chains, all of which make recurring tasks a bit more effortless and predictable. Ultrasonic toothbrushes increase the efficiency and effectiveness of customers' oral care regimens. Mobile banking apps save busy professionals from making unnecessary trips to the bank. Quick service chains provide commuters with rapid access to food and beverages. Customers seek routines to complete their recurring tasks as quickly and easily as possible, with bare minimum effort on their part. The easier the task, the happier the customer.

Product managers can help customers to build enduring routines by first streamlining the service encounter, then ensuring consistency across encounters. The principle of streamlining is eliminating all non-value-added touchpoints from the service encounter. Thereafter, the principle of consistency is ensuring that customers see familiar touchpoints in familiar sequences at every service encounter. Whereas streamlining simplifies the customer routine, consistency helps customers to learn the routine and subsequently perform the routine without much thought.

Among quick service chains, Starbucks has been especially relentless about streamlining its mobile ordering process, especially for its grab-and-go customers at

high-traffic locations. For instance, the current version of the Starbucks app streamlines the mobile ordering process by remembering the customer's preferred locations and payment methods; enabling rapid re-orders from previous orders and favorite items; locating the nearest store and estimating the wait time; and clearly designating where customers can pick-up their mobile orders once inside the store. New "Starbucks Pickup" stores are exclusively devoted to mobile take-away orders.

Starbucks has also mastered the principle of service consistency with standardized protocols for preparing its menu offerings. Whatever one's favorite beverage or snack might be, one can rest assured that it will taste more or less the same every time one visits a local Starbucks store. Standardized protocols also ensure that customers have the same experiences across Starbucks stores. A caramel macchiato is prepared exactly the same way in Los Angeles and New York City. And of course, the Starbucks mobile ordering process works the same way irrespective of the customer's location. Such service consistency across stores as well as encounters helps to perpetuate routine customer behavior.

The Joyride

Joyrides are amusing journeys to escape the tedium of everyday routines. They tend to be effortless, unpredictable, and a whole lot of fun. Joyrides are applicable to products that deliver any sort of on-demand thrill. Examples include music streaming platforms, photo sharing networks, sports news media, and mobile video games. Joyrides are also possible in brick-and-mortar settings. Consider fast fashion stores with perennial sales, local cinemas with weekly releases, neighborhood restaurants with rotating menus, and downtown bars with happy hour specials. A joyride keeps customers returning frequently because customers yearn for moments of fun away from their otherwise tedious daily routines.

The principle of streamlining is necessary but not enough to produce joyrides. Streamlining only mitigates pain points; it does not produce pleasure. To facilitate joyrides, companies must also offer customers endlessly varied moments of delight. The importance of endless variation cannot be understated. No matter how much excitement a piece of content invokes the first time, the same content over and over again cannot spark excitement again and again.

Product managers can learn a lot about creating a seemingly endless flow of fun experiences from the world's most popular video games. Take Candy Crush Saga, for example. Players must swap adjacent candies to create rows or columns of three matching candies. To make this otherwise repetitive activity fun, the game varies the assortment of virtual candies, color schemes, sound effects, types of challenges, and

types of constraints across the different levels of the game (and there are almost ten thousand levels). In this manner, the design principle of endless variation converts repetitive activities into a sustainable source of customer fun.

Taking a cue from video game design, BuzzFeed draws attention away from its traditional media competitors with its similarly colorful mediascape of "articles, lists, quizzes, and videos."[3] Unlike the relative gravitas of traditional news feeds, Buzzfeed's are intermittently shocking, silly, and serious. The unpredictability of content keeps customers stimulated. Some critics bemoan the gamification of the media, but for better or worse, the trend is here to stay. Even the venerable New York Times has introduced fun interactive content into its news feed, from swipe-through photo essays to word games.

An endless stream of fun experiences can also be achieved via crowdsourcing. No contemporary product better exemplifies this possibility than TikTok. Beginner users are instantly immersed into an algorithmically generated "For You" stream of trending videos. One video might feature a cat pouting to sad music. The next video might feature a recipe demonstration with pop music. The staggering variety of consumer-generated content is part of the fun. As users get accustomed to the app, they might begin to like some videos, comment on others, and follow some of their favorite creators. TikTok's algorithms are continuously absorbing this customer engagement data and further customizing the "For You" stream. If a user decides to become a creator themselves, their journey can quickly evolve from a joyride (effortless, unpredictable) into an odyssey (effortful, unpredictable).

The Trek

Treks are effortful and predictable journeys driven by a mission. Treks match products that help customers to achieve ambitious, challenging, and long-term goals such as learning a new language, recovering from surgery, and saving for retirement. Examples of such products include educational apps that structure one's learning; wearable biometric devices that monitor one's key health indicators; and personal finance apps that track one's expenditures. Treks keep customers returning frequently because customers need considerable support to make cumulative progress toward their ambitious end goals.

Companies can ease the laboriousness of treks by goalposting the customer work. Goalposting is deconstructing a formidable long-term goal into a series of smaller short-term goals such as weekly, daily, or hourly goals or domain-specific episodic goals (e.g., per meal, per trip, or per workout goals). In essence, goalposting involves

[3] BuzzFeed, https://www.buzzfeed.com/about.

partitioning ambitious customer goals into smaller and smaller goals, until the next goal is so very small that it motivates the customer to take immediate action. Once companies have decided on the optimal framing of the short-term goals in their product category, they can further motivate the customer with rewards for each goal. These rewards could be as simple as a few words of congratulations (e.g., “Good job!”) or color changes on a goal-tracking dashboard (e.g., red to green), something that affirms customers’ efforts.

A product that excels at goalposting customer work is MyFitnessPal. This app helps customers with the notoriously difficult goal of weight loss. One of the app’s core features is a food diary. This feature deconstructs the customer’s long-term body recomposition goals (e.g., lose 20 pounds) into weekly goals, daily goals, and per-meal goals. The customer’s per-meal goals are further deconstructed in terms of macronutrients (i.e., grams of protein, fat, and carbohydrate), net calories, and other items that the customer might wish to track (e.g., sodium). The app also streamlines the work of inputting one’s meals into the food diary with clever tools such as a searchable library of foods, a barcode scanner for packaged foods, and the ability to copy friends’ meals. The latter tool is especially useful when one is sharing a home-cooked meal with other MyFitnessPal users. Only one person must input the meal into the app; others can copy the data input into their own food diary with a few taps.

Another product that facilitates treks well is You Need a Budget. This budgeting app helps customers with the relatively large and abstract goal of saving money by encouraging customers to set smaller and concrete goals to save up for specific financial projects such as a home purchase, college tuition, or retirement. The app invites customers to set goals in terms of debt payoffs, spending limits, or savings targets. These goals can be scheduled in a variety of ways, including weekly, monthly, or by target dates. The app’s intuitive budget-tracking interface keeps customers motivated to control their expenses. Moreover, it's easily generated weekly, monthly, and annual reports invite customers to “obsess over [their] progress.”[4]

As the examples of MyFitnessPal and You Need a Budget indicate, goalposting can transform ambitious customer goals into achievable next steps. Moreover, tracking a diversity of metrics allows customers to watch themselves progress on multiple dimensions. Some marketing experts argue that high-effort journeys must be infused with game-like fun to be motivating.[5] In other words, they advise product managers to convert treks (effortful, predictable) into odysseys (effortful, unpredictable). This advice certainly merits consideration, but we caution that not all customers love the bells and

[4] You Need A Budget, https://www.youneedabudget.com/features.

[5] Berger, A., Schlager, T., Sprott, D.E. and Herrmann, A., 2018. Gamified interactions: whether, when, and how games facilitate self–brand connections. Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 46(4), pp. 652-673.

whistles of gamified services. A trek with a well-defined series of achievable goals and affirming rewards can be just as motivating.

The Odyssey

If routines are the most ordinary type of customer journey, odysseys are the most extraordinary. They are challenging, thrilling, and unpredictable adventures that are fueled by passion, determination, and a sense of purpose. Odysseys tend to require a lot of effort and generate a lot of excitement. While customers can have several routines in their lives, they tend to have only a handful of odysseys at any given time.

Odysseys are perfect for products that facilitate personal or professional passion projects for which customers already have considerable intrinsic motivation. Examples include cultivating followings on social media, playing complex strategy games, learning performance arts, filming amateur documentaries, and training for fitness contests. Odysseys keep customers returning frequently because customers want to learn, grow, and thrive at their chosen passion project. Unlike goal-directed treks and thrill-seeking joyrides, odysseys tend to have multiple, broad, and evolving motivations.

Companies can produce odysseys by combining select design principles from the trek and joyride strategies. Specifically, companies must goalpost the work of passion projects to motivate customer progress. At the very same time, companies must also endlessly vary the fun of passion projects to keep customers excited. As a result, odysseys can be as laborious as treks, but they are far more entertaining, and they can be as thrilling as joyrides, but they are far more meaningful.

Companies that excel at both goalposting the customer's work and endlessly varying the customer's fun are especially common in the recreational services industry. CrossFit is a noteworthy example in the group fitness space. In a typical CrossFit workout, coaches lead athletes through dynamic warm-ups, skill-development segments, and high-intensity workouts. Goalposting the customer's progress across workouts is achieved via CrossFit's physical and digital performance-tracking dashboards. CrossFit seeks to help customers "accomplish any goal, from improved health to weight loss to better performance."[6] CrossFit's constantly varied workouts draw on innumerable aerobic, calisthenic, and weight-lifting exercises from global fitness traditions such that no two workouts are the same. Athletes experience the resulting CrossFit journey as a never-ending roller coaster of painful and pleasurable moments. As one of our interviewees put it, "it's always thrilling!"[7]

[6] CrossFit, https://www.crossfit.com/what-is-crossfit.

[7] Siebert, A., Gopaldas, A., Lindridge, A., and Simões, C. (2020). Customer Experience Journeys: Loyalty Loops Versus Involvement Spirals. Journal of Marketing, 84 (4), pp. 45–66.

Customer odysseys are also common in the creative professions. Consider the laborious yet engrossing journeys facilitated by Adobe Creative Cloud's "collection of 20+ desktop and mobile apps and services for photography, design, video, web, UX, and more … so you can make anything you can imagine, wherever you're inspired."[8] Likewise, consider Juilliard's intensive and multidisciplinary performance arts programs that seek to "provide the highest caliber of artistic education for gifted musicians, dancers, and actors from around the world, so that they may achieve their fullest potential as artists, leaders, and global citizens."[9] What these quite different organizations have in common is that they facilitate passion projects (e.g., landing a Broadway role, qualifying for the CrossFit Games, building a YouTube channel). Such intrinsically motivating personal and professional projects lend odysseys their unique sense of transcendence above the relatively ordinary world of routines, joyrides, and treks.

Customer Journey Design: A Step-by-Step Guide

The customer journey matrix can help product managers to design ideal customer journeys for their products. In the following subsections, we recommend a five-step customer journey design process.

Step 1. Identify the Best Journey Archetype for Your Product

Begin your customer journey design process by choosing the best journey archetype for your product. Two questions can help you to make this choice. The first question for you to consider is whether your product facilitates relatively effortless or effortful customer experiences. The second question is whether your product facilitates relatively predictable or unpredictable customer experiences.

The customer journey matrix reveals the best journey archetype for your product depending on the answers to these two questions. If your product facilitates effortless and predictable customer experiences, the best journey archetype for your product is a routine. If effortless and unpredictable: a joyride. If effortful and predictable: a trek. If effortful and unpredictable: an odyssey.

For example, oral care products (e.g., Colgate toothpaste) and banking apps (e.g., the Citi Mobile app) facilitate effortless and predictable experiences, nurturing routines over time. By contrast, group fitness services (e.g., CrossFit workouts) and day-trading

[8] Adobe, https://www.adobe.com/creativecloud.html.
[9] Juilliard's Mission, https://www.juilliard.edu/school/about/juilliards-mission.

platforms (e.g., Interactive Brokers) facilitate effortful and unpredictable experiences, creating odysseys in the long run.

Step 2. Apply the Design Principles for Your Journey Archetype

Once you have identified the best journey archetype for your product, the next step is to put its corresponding design principles into action.

Routines demand service consistency. Ensure that your product delivers a predictably satisfying experience at every service encounter via familiar touchpoints in familiar sequences (e.g., Starbucks' standardized mobile-ordering process). Such consistency will enable customers to perform their routines easily and quickly, even in new contexts (e.g., during a business trip in another city).

Joyrides thrive on endless variation. Ensure that your product delivers endlessly varied moments of delight (e.g., TikTok's For You Page). Such endless variation can be generated by in-house teams of content producers, or via machine learning algorithms, or even via crowdsourcing content production to consumers.

Treks call for journey goalposting. Partition the customer's long-term goal into a series of much shorter-term goals (e.g., MyFitnessPal's per meal goals for long-term weight loss) and reward the customer for achieving every little goal (e.g., in the form of badges, checks, or progress icons).

Odysseys require both journey goalposting and endless variation. As CrossFit demonstrates, journey goalposting can be achieved with a performance-tracking dashboard, and endless variation can be achieved via a diversity of solo, partner, and team activities. Whereas goalposting keeps customers motivated, variation keeps customers excited.

Step 3. Promote Subscriptions at the Right Time During the Customer Journey

The ideal time to promote subscriptions to customers varies across the journey archetypes, and it largely depends on the predictability of the journey archetype. For predictable journeys such as Routines and Treks with knowable future outcomes, customers are generally motivated to make complex subscription decisions at the outset. They are willing to sift through various product and pricing details. However, once customers have developed their routine or embarked on their trek, they generally do not want to be bothered with detailed subscription options again. As such, it is wise to help customers make subscription decisions at the beginning of their customer journey, when they are willing to make complex decisions.

For unpredictable journeys such as Joyrides and Odysseys with unknowable future outcomes, customers are generally not motivated to make complex subscription decisions at the outset. Instead, they are eager to get a taste of the excitement as soon as possible. Only later, once they have become more involved in the customer journey, are they willing to invest in a subscription. As such, it is wise to give customers ample time with the product before inviting them to make complex subscription decisions in later usage cycles. If providing free service to your customers at the beginning of the customer journey is too costly for your business, consider offering customers a cheap starter plan. What is vital is that customers are not faced with complex subscription decisions at the outset. When the timing is right, subscriptions become an easy "yes."

Step 4. Streamline the Customer Journey at Every Opportunity

The design principle that applies to all four journey archetypes is streamlining—the elimination of non-value added touchpoints from the service encounter. To keep their brands competitive, product managers must keep finding new ways to streamline customer journeys.

Among routines, the current version of the PayPal app automatically lists customers' frequently used contacts on the landing page. This design choice enables customers to send payments to their frequent contacts within seconds. First, the customer taps on one of their automatically generated frequent contacts. Second, the customer inputs the payment amount. Third, the customer reviews their transaction and hits "send." As PayPal's design exemplifies, companies should strive to make customer routines so obvious that they require almost no customer thought or effort.

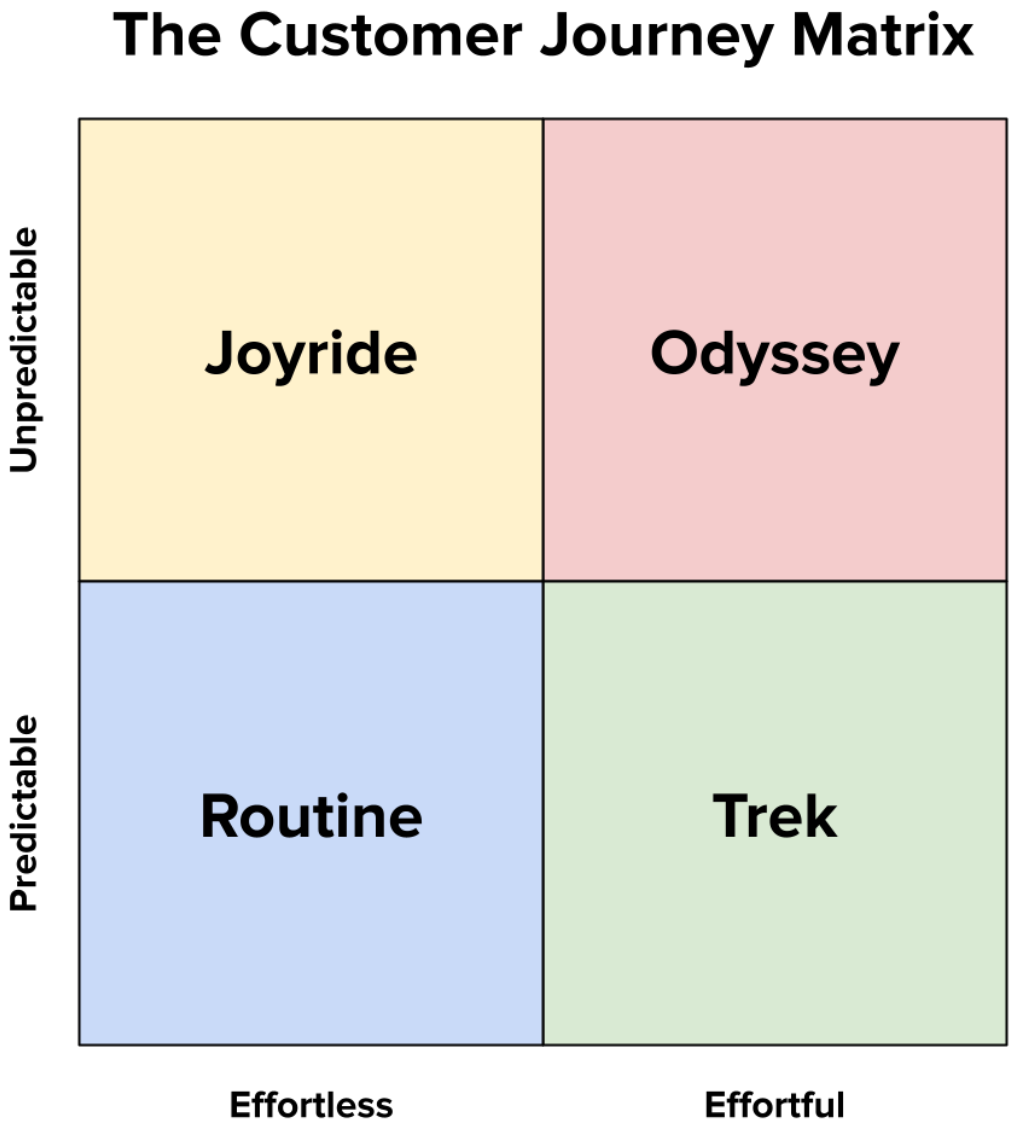
Among joyrides, Singapore Airlines' in-flight entertainment system recalls where customers stopped watching movies on their prior flights, saving customers from having to manually fast-forward to where they left off. Among treks, MyFitnessPal recently introduced a barcode scanner feature whereby customers can scan barcodes from packaged grocery items to quickly log their calories and macronutrients. Among odysseys, some CrossFit gyms allow customers to place their post-workout smoothie orders at the front desk before their workout such that they can grab and go with their smoothie without wait time.

Conclusion

CUSTOMER JOURNEY DESIGN IS THE LATEST MARKETING BATTLEGROUND. For products to succeed in today's hypercompetitive markets, companies must facilitate a compelling customer journey. The customer journey matrix distinguishes among four

winning strategies. Companies would be wise to consider the best possible journey archetype for their unique products. Some products such as video streaming platforms lend themselves to joyrides, while other products such as personal fitness trackers lend themselves to treks. For the diversity of products in the contemporary marketplace, the customer journey matrix showcases a proven set of strategic options.

Figure 1


The Customer Journey Matrix
Unpredictable
Predictable
Joyride
Odyssey
Routine
Trek
Effortless
Effortful

DEFINING SILENCE IN CONSUMER EXPERIENCE: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

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Keywords: silence, noise, restorative experience, sensorial strategy

Description: Using a qualitative method guided by long interviews, this exploratory research investigates silence's definition, meanings, and functions from a consumer perspective.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

In contrast with multidisciplinary literature and the growing market of silent objects and services, marketing research on silence is scarce and has so far neglected its social and cultural nature. The purpose of this exploratory research is twofold: 1) to understand how consumers define and perceive silence, 2) to explore in which ways the marketplace contributes to their experience of silence.

Method and Data

In line with the exploratory nature of our research, we conducted depth interviews in order to enable participants to express their personal views, understandings and meanings related to their experiences of silence (McCracken, 1988). Informants were recruited through social media and snowball technique until sampling reached saturation at 14 interviews. All participants were French citizens with varied occupation, familial situations and locations. Of the 14 participants, 8 were female, 6 were male and ranging in age from 22 to 71 years old.

Due to sanitary restrictions, all interviews were conducted via video-call and phone calls and audio-recorded. Lasting from 70 to 120 minutes, interviews were transcribed verbatim into 235 pages of data. Conducting interviews and transcriptions in parallel, data analysis process was iterative and allowed us to develop new prompts during the discussion. In the initial analysis phase, we used Nvivo software to assign data-derived codes (Braun and Clark, 2013) to the entire dataset using informants' wording. Moving back and forth between the individual interviews and the whole dataset, we then identified categories and themes pertaining to our research questions.

Summary of Findings

First, and contrary to existing conceptualizations of silence as an absence of sonic stimuli such as sound or voice, we find that consumers conceive silence rather as an absence of noise. In line with existing research on crossmodal correspondences (Spence, 2011), consumers' definitions of silence include but are not limited to their sonic experience, thus encompassing the multisensorial stimulations encountered.

Secondly, consumers highlight the restorative function of silence on both physiological and psychological level. This finding deserves closer examination to understand to which extent and in which conditions silence could participate to the health potential of servicescapes (Rosenbaum and Massiah 2011) and to consumers' well-being enhancement.

Thirdly, our findings shed light on the paradoxical nature of the restorative function of silence: while their accounts of restorative silences evocate a "refuge" distancing them from their hectic lives and social imperatives, it appears that silence also facilitates their engagement with their surroundings.

Finally, the marketplace is described as a source of noise experienced both in the servicescape and throughout the market actors' communication practices. Contrasting with their accounts

of silence, noise in the marketplace is defined by its manipulative intent, its uselessness and its pervasive character.

Statement of Key Contributions

The present research is to our knowledge the first to explore the experience of silence from a consumer perspective. This admittedly exploratory study thus contributes to develop a first understanding of silence's meanings and functions in consumption experiences and offers significant implications and research avenues for both marketing academics and practitioners. While current research in marketing is scarce and limit silence to an absence of sound, our study reveals that consumers define metaphorically silence in opposition to noise, encompassing multisensory and cognitive stimulations. This study also highlights the potential restorative function of experiencing silence, especially valuable to consumers subject to stressful and fast-paced lifestyles. Thus, if silence appears crucial for stakeholders involved in consumers' well-being enhancement, it could also constitute a differentiating marketing element for most actors of the market. As soundscape is not always controllable, the multisensory nature of silence evocated by our informants also suggest that quietness can be designed not only through the sonic atmosphere but also through the visual environment and the type of communication developed between firms and consumers.

References are available upon request

DRIVING A NEW MARKET: AN INTERPLAY BETWEEN CONSUMERS, INSTITUTIONS, AND THE EMERGING FIELD

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Keywords: market creation, deinstitutionalization, institutional theory, theorization

Description: The research adopts institutional theory and theorization framework to explore new markets' emergence as a four-step interactive process of constructing institutional structure (specification of general institutional failing, construction of normative system, reconfiguration of cultural-cognitive system, and progression of regulative system) between an emerging field and its consumers.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The research adopts institutional theory and theorization framework to explore new markets' emergence as an interactive process of constructing institutional structure between an emerging field and its consumers. Regarding a three-year investigation in robot-assisted learning and functional diet for healthy aging, we reconfigured them as issue-centered emerging fields. The research accords three critical categories of actors for institutional creation: individuals, organizations, and the society, and analyzing data gathered through participant observation, archival sources, and in-depth interviews. Theorization of institutional structure is outlined as

a four-step process: specification of general institutional failing, construction of normative system, reconfiguration of cultural-cognitive system, and progression of regulative system. This research suggests that deinstitutionalization through changing institutional level is a necessary stage before institutional creation. At the beginning of driving a new market, the field co-construct an institutional structure with its consumers is likely to be relatively unconstrained by competing institutions.

Research Question

Resource-limited firms posed a daunting challenge to drive a new market in mature fields (i.e., education, foods). Besides integrating a vertical supply chain of product and service, market-driving firms are devoted to initiating cross-industry collaboration in the opening stage of market creation. Despite supporting a technological or a disruptive idea, cross-industry collaboration can form a social issue (i.e., learner-centered environment, healthcare in the super-aged society). Under an institutionalized environment of mature fields, the field-level constituency is reconfigured as an issue-centered emerging field differentiated from the existing industry landscape. Therefore, actors in different industrial are involved in the market exchange process. Such diverse actors represent an issue-centered market representation of emerging field and influence the notion in which new markets are identified by consumers.

However, the existing research in market creation has not addressed how emerging field debates the dominant institutional meanings and interpret institutional creation of a new market at the same time. This research aims to clarify the process of constructing institutional structure between an emerging field and consumers in the early market emergence stage. Moreover, this

research also examines the individual consumers who theorize competing institutions. The findings provide a clear understanding of the new emerging market.

Method and Data

This research aims to investigate the construction of institutional structure between an issue-centered emerging field and its consumers in the opening stage of a new market emergence. To identify a generalizable process, this research examines two field contexts in Taiwan: robot-assisted learning of children education and protein-enriched diet of healthy aging. Both emerging markets have focal firms to bridge resources from multiple professions for co-developing a new solution. When launching the new solutions, a specific social issue is highly addressed. Not only focal firms but also professional actors continuously interact with consumers for enhancing knowledge sharing and further understanding of the issue.

A qualitative study of participating observation in focal firms, examining archival data for two emerging fields, and in-depth interviewing fields' customers were conducted. One author regularly attended two focal firms' internal meetings once a month, lasting for two or three hours. The data collection process was from November of 2018 to June of 2021. Semi-structured in-depth interviews with 30 informants were conducted. The interview duration ranged from 79 to 167 minutes at informants' houses or coffee shops. All data were coded and followed a grounded theory approach.

Summary of Findings

The analysis reveals that the issue-centered emerging field cooperated among varying actors but with the unity agenda and interest shifts the institutional level of customers'

interpretation. Thus, the new institutional structure is created initially at the societal level and theorized with four major processes.

Specification of general institutional failing Issue-centered emerging fields force competing institutions to be removed from the level of preexisting mature industries. The customer's institutional structure pertains to the societal level. Therefore, the initial theorization is that customers frame the problem about themselves or their families with society.

Construction of Normative System The professions of issue-centered emerging fields formally define achievable goals and standards of solving the emerged problem to customers. The changing of partially life habits or living routines is generalized to customers. Through theorization of normative system, institutional meanings and related actions embedded in changing society have been objectified.

Reconfiguration of Cultural-Cognitive System Cultural-cognitive beliefs are very and frequently contested by individual customer's social reality. As the emerging field has a new institutional meaning, take-for-granted beliefs associated with which context remains unclear.

Progression of Regulative System The emerging fields continuously reveal updated certifications and professions' claims, which gradually enhance customers' shared understanding of relative regulations.

Key Contributions

The analysis has highlighted that the institutional structure is constructed through interaction between the field actors and consumers. Issue-centered emerging fields create new markets by shifting institutional competition from field-level to societal-level. Consumers

spontaneously make sense of their similar status and interpret the problem in the individual context. However, to elicit a shared understanding of the problem requires sustained repetition of the instituional meanings between the field actors and consumers.

In addition, the analysis also indicates that three interconnected institutional systems present a different structure of new market creation. Compared to the cultural-cognitive system dominating the existing institutions in mature fields, new markets' institutional structure is determined by the normative system. The professions who are essential creators of new institutional framework foster consumers' new objectives and new standards. Cultural schemes' relevance governs the diffusion of institutions while regulative legitimacy remains dynamic.

This research provides some practical implications. From a theoretical perspective, this research extends the institutional creation process into new market emergence. It identifies deinstitutionalization through changing institutional level as a necessary stage before institutional creation. From a managerial perspective, this research addresses institutional innovation as the alternative strategy for new market creation.

“References are available upon request.”

Frozen – a case of unintentional purpose marketing

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Keywords: purpose marketing, sociopolitical branding, gender, feminism, qualitative analysis

Description: What happens when a brand is embraced as a having a specific 'purpose' (sociopolitical stance) despite no such intention being part of the marketing strategy?

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Recent years has seen a rising academic interest into 'brand activism' and the idea of brands having a sociopolitical 'purpose'. We suggest that this development mirrors the fact that marketing is taking place in contexts where tensions of ideology and sociopolitical issues are not just strategically relevant, but unavoidable. What happens when a brand is embraced as

having a specific 'purpose' (sociopolitical stance), despite no such intention being part of the marketing strategy?

In this paper, we analyze and discuss a case of 'unintentional' purpose branding. Theoretically, we outline the changes to the understanding of the concept of *purpose* in marketing to point out a new direction in the conceptualization of purpose.

Method And Data

Methodologically, we build on an extended rhetorical analysis including text (marketing and branding communications), paratext, and context to understand how purpose can develop in the reception and interpretation of a branded text rather than simply as a core part of its marketing strategy.

To understand how the reception of *Frozen* became a representation of purpose within the Disney brand, we analyze reviews and consumer comments to the movie *Frozen*. The reviews are all part of the paratext and context of the movie *Frozen*, and they demonstrate how the audience interpreted the unusual princess narrative with two female protagonists in contradiction to the advertised ensemble comedy with the snowman Olaf center stage.

The reviews were collected in April 2021 from online sources, and they are the original reception written in November - December 2013, additionally we included several later features that address the extended popularity of *Frozen*. The point of adding these later perspectives is to demonstrate the lasting impression and interpretation of the narrative as carrying a feminist or queer message. Further, a fan-made *Frozen* Wiki was included in the data material because we argue that the feminist reading was a mainstream reading of the movie and not the result of a specific critical perspective from media professionals. We also incorporated both the movie

Frozen, the original marketing material, and trailers into the dataset as representations of Disney's intended brand purpose. Finally, popular marketing texts detailing and analyzing the strategy behind the marketing of *Frozen* were also included.

Summary of Findings

Based on our analysis of the marketing related to *Frozen*, we argue that the lack of feminist or other ideological messages in the marketing is an important, though counterintuitive, element of the success of *Frozen*. Allowing the audience to perform their own reading against the grain of the marketing campaign created an opportunity for Disney to emerge as an unintended purpose brand, where reading feminism, queerness, or plain liberation into the narrative became *a* liberating act in itself. Thus, reading a purpose into the movie gave audiences something to talk about thereby facilitating word of mouth based on consumer interest rather than corporate marketing. Because Disney's marketing campaign had mainly focused on Anna and the secondary characters, there was an online void of Elsa and her place in the narrative – leaving space for the consumer-driven viral flooding of for example YouTube of versions of 'Let it go'. If there is one simple, pragmatic insight from the case of *Frozen*, it is this: do not overstate your sociopolitical purpose. Counter to current theory on brand activism, we suggest letting stakeholders and consumers engage with brand meanings and allow freedom to interpret what it could mean in their life worlds. Thereby the brand acquires relevance to the individual consumer and becomes a participant in the wider society.

Key Contributions

The key contribution of this paper is to point to the rarely discussed, paradoxical phenomenon of brands finding themselves in the situation of becoming an 'unintended purpose brand'. This should not even be possible, as literature in this field claim that, for 'brand activism' to manifest itself as 'authentic', the purpose must be 'holistically' integrated in the strategies and culture of the brand organization (Vredenburg et al 2020, Schultz et al 2005).

Through the method of rhetorical analysis of the reception of *Frozen*, the paper offers academic insight into the phenomenon of 'unintended purpose branding' and the following discussion suggests potential theoretical implications for the rapidly developing field of research into brand activism and purpose branding.

The pragmatic contribution of the paper is to highlight the potential benefits and pitfalls of unintentionally being embraced as a purpose brand. The presented case is a cultural product that is marketed globally, and it suggests that, particularly in the cultural industries, this phenomenon is likely to be an increasingly relevant consideration for marketers. The analysis presents insights into how the brand purpose and meaning was negotiated among key stakeholders and consumer segments, which may be of particular interest to practitioners working with branding in the cultural industry.

References are available upon request from the first author.

How is the future of nascent technology created? The case of Non-Fungible Tokens (NFTs)

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Keyword: Market shaping, NFT, discourses, technology

Description: We inform how the discourse of market actors involved in a nascent technology serves three functions that contribute to shaping the future of this technology.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question: Bitcoin and non-fungible tokens, the Internet of Things, and artificial intelligence are or were in the recent past nascent technologies with an uncertain future. For the potential of these technologies to be realized, investors must be convinced, governments might be lobbied, and stakeholders such as universities must be recruited. Importantly, these efforts often happen before the commercialization of the innovative technology to end consumers.

Work on technology and innovation in marketing has been most informative in explaining success factors for the diffusion of innovations that are ready-to-market. Yet, previous research in marketing does not inform how the future of nascent technologies is shaped and negotiated. This is an important research question, both theoretically and managerially. Theoretically, for opportunities to be materialized, they first need to be socially constructed (Ramoglou and Tsang 2016). Although we know much about how ready-to-market innovations are diffused in a market, we know less about the socio-construction of the future of nascent technology. Managerially, better understanding how firms can work towards creating a viable path for a nascent technology should support their development and future commercialization.

In this conference paper, we ask: How is the future of a nascent technology discursively shaped?

Method and Data: We answer how discourse contributes to shaping the future of a nascent technology by analyzing a qualitative dataset composed of secondary data in the forms of news and magazine articles, podcasts, conferences, and secondary interviews. Our main goal when collecting data was to identify legitimate sources representative of the future-oriented discourses around NFTs.

Our dataset is composed of 112 newspaper articles, three webinars, two conference keynotes, 24 secondary interviews, and 22 podcast episodes on the future of NFTs. We analyzed our dataset inductively and abductively, where we coded our dataset from the ground up and analyzed our descriptive codes informed by theory and existing work associated with the shaping of the future of technologies and our research question (see Dolbec et al. 2021). First, we generated descriptive, emic codes. Then, we abstracted these codes into the main roles that discourse plays in shaping the future of NFTs, which constitute our findings. We now briefly present our research context and then expand on our findings.

Summary of Findings: Our analysis uncovers three roles that discourse plays in shaping the future of nascent technology.

First, by recruiting market actors, we refer to the role of discourse in seducing market actors, such as entrepreneurs, venture capitalists, media analysts, and governmental organizations, in contributing to the development of the nascent technology, which helps bring in resources. Our analysis shows at least three ways through which this is achieved: forecasting future market potential, connecting communities and industries, and forecasting the involvement of established players.

Second, by normalizing, we mean emphasizing how a nascent technology, which may seem disruptive and revolutionary, is already accepted by a niche of early adopters. We argue that this facilitates future development by showing existing commercial potential and usage by consumers. Our analysis shows how normalization is achieved by describing normal uses for an existing group of consumers and showing existing and commercially successful applications.

Last, by drafting a developmental path, we refer to future-oriented stories that narrate how the evolution of nascent technology should unfold. Drafting a developmental path addresses two key institutional characteristics: foreseeing potential barriers and advocating for a regulative framework.

Key Contributions: Our analysis contributes to work in marketing, which has been present-focused and concentrated on the commercialization of existing new products. Rather, our work looks at the future of nascent technology. It shows how, for such technology, there exists an array of future-oriented discursive actions that may contribute to shaping future development.

Managerially, our analysis is important because it provides three potential strategies for market actors who might want to work on shaping the future of nascent technology. First, regarding the recruitment of market actors, an important strategic decision relates to the kind of actors that should be recruited. We recommend market actors working on a nascent technology to think broadly and strategically, such as recruiting stakeholders related to potential future barriers in the greater ecosystem. Second, regarding the normalization of the nascent technology, we argue that firms should work on the pragmatic legitimacy of the technology, i.e., making sure that interested stakeholders believe that the technology can become useful. Last, market actors can develop discursive strategies to draft a developmental path. We suggest here that firms be intentional in discussing with the media and other stakeholders a development path centered on their own activities.

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS ON CONSUMERS' DIGITAL WELLNESS

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Keywords: social media, social media influencers, digital wellness, consumer wellness, mental health

Description: Using qualitative methods this paper explores the impact of social media influencers on consumers' digital wellness or well-being revealing both positive and negatives ways social media influencers influence consumers' well-being.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

In the current digital climate, consumers live in a hyperconnected world where the use of technology can continually occupy consumers. The average consumer spends around two hours scrolling through their social media, while Gen Z scrolls nearly three hours daily (Bump, 2021). Concerns regarding the influence of technology on consumers' mental health and well-being are described as digital wellness. Digital wellness is defined as "the optimum state of health and well-being that each individual using technology is capable of achieving" (Royal et al., 2017, p. 103).

Consumers are spending more time online and often follow a social media influencer, for instance 76% of consumers from Generation Z follow a social media influencer (Bump, 2021). Social media influencers are third-party endorsers who shape attitudes and promote brands to their followers on their social media accounts (Freberg et al., 2011). Previous research on influencer marketing has typically investigated the effectiveness of brands (Schouten et al., 2019). However, little research has investigated consumers' well-being when interacting with social media influencers. Therefore, we seek to fill this gap at the intersection of digital wellness and social media influencers by answering the research question: how does following social media influencers impact consumers' digital wellness?

Method And Data

Using social comparison theory as a lens, we use an inductive method guided by semi-structured interviews with consumers to investigate this phenomenon. With the interactive nature of social media, social comparison theory offers a valuable lens to investigate this phenomenon as it is focused on the tendency humans have to compare the self with others in their social worlds (Buunk & Gibbons, 2007; Festinger, 1954). Interviews conducted lasted seventy-five minutes on average with eight consumers (average age = 26.4; female = 6) using theoretical sampling (Spiggle, 1994). This resulted in 121 single-spaced pages of data. Copious notes and

memos supplemented the data collection process. Specifically for analysis, we use the constant comparative method in MAXQDA (a qualitative data analysis software; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Additionally, informants were asked to provide 5 of their favorite recent posts from social media influencers they follow. The purpose of this analysis was to better inform the authors' theorizing and yield additional insights through critical visual analysis guided by Rose (2016). An additional 139 images related to influencer posts provided were analyzed.

Summary of Findings

The data reveal preliminary insights into how following social media influencers effects consumers' digital wellness. Informants consistently discussed the numerous connections they can create with their digital technology. The social media connections offered beneficial information and inspiration to the informants. Influencers helped informants find products or other information that was not readily available from other sources. There are many positives when that stem from using digital technology and following influencers, however there are also negative consequences informants discussed. Digital technology can be overwhelming, and informants discussed how often they feel stunned by the number of notifications they receive on their smartphones in general, but especially from their social media accounts.

Additionally, consumers felt their self-esteem and self-image could be negatively impacted. One informant curated their feed specifically as *"a reflection of goodness,"* so they only followed influencers who would positively impact their digital wellness. Others felt the curation of the posts and how that can impact their well-being. With the inherent need to compare ourselves with others (Buunk & Gibbons, 2007; Festinger, 1954), consumers can fall into the trap of the "highlight reel" of social media and decrease their self-esteem.

Statement of Key Contributions

The findings contribute to the literature on digital wellness by exploring this phenomenon in the context of social media influencers. Additionally, the findings extend the knowledge of social media influencers in the context of well-being. The findings offer several important implications for marketing managers and public policymakers. First, as marketers, we have a duty to make ethical contributions to society. As such, understanding the negative impacts products or services have on consumers is vital to continue the reciprocal relationship marketing has with society. Specifically, using social media platforms to connect with consumers should be done in a responsible way (e.g., not exploiting influencer marketing to manipulate consumers' self-esteem). Public policymakers should also be aware of the negative impacts social media has on society and should create legislature aimed at improving consumers' lives. For example, the Federal Trade Commission's requirement of disclosing sponsored content (FTC, 2019) or Norway's recent law for disclosing image editing (Grant, 2021) can increase transparency in this digital landscape. Additional legislature regulating transparency or paths to exploitation are pertinent to improving consumers' digital wellness and lives.

References available upon request.

CONSUMING TO SLEEP

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Keywords: sleep; consumer wellbeing; institutional enrollment

Description: We propose the concept of sleep styles to capture how consumers engage with bedroom design, sleep paraphernalia, services, and practices in different ways to enhance their wellbeing.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

What is the role of the marketplace and consumption in our experience of sleep?

Method and Data

We sampled thirty U.K. residents living in southern England, aged 20-51, both male and female, who are fully employed, have their own households, and return to their bedroom every evening to pursue a single, extended session of sleep at night. Given the intimate nature of the bedroom, respondents controlled a photo-documentation exercise, allowing them to decide what aspects of their bedroom they were willing to divulge. Photo-documentation created material reference points for the subsequent ninety to 120-minute, semi-structured, in-depth interviews. The interview was structured according to three stages, covering general life circumstances, details of the sleep experience itself, and then a deeper reflection on the wider meaning of sleep. When data collection reached empirical saturation, we turned to thematic analysis of the transcribed interviews and photos. Data analysis involved a process of reading, memos, coding, structuring codes into nodes, and theorizing relationships.

Summary of Findings

Our analysis identifies five market-mediated sleep styles associated with five main field positions: 1) the healer, who engages with bedroom design and sleep paraphernalia as release from maintaining a dominant field position; 2) the searcher, who engages bedroom design and sleep paraphernalia as release from processes of status improvement among institutional insiders, 3) the anarchist, who engages with bedroom design and sleep paraphernalia as release from the pressures of institutional powerlessness, 4) the nester, who engages with bedroom design and sleep paraphernalia as release from the demands of being an institutional outsider, and 5) the time traveler, who engages with bedroom design and sleep paraphernalia as release from the demands of coordinating participation in multiple institutions. Through market mediation, sleep

styles not only shape distinct forms of bedroom materiality (design, decoration, furniture, layout, colors, electronics, etc.), but also consumer sleep practices in the bedroom (praying, reading, meditating, listening to podcasts, etc.).

Key Contributions

This paper explores contemporary bedroom and sleep-related consumption. We argue that the growing marketplace emphasis on sleep reflects increasing pressures of institutional enrolment in consumers' daily lives. While prior research stresses how consumers are "continually shaped by and reliant upon" institutions (Dolbec and Fischer 2015), we propose a view of institutional participation that accounts for episodic engagement, with sleep as a primary form of release. Overall, sleep has largely been addressed as a marginal activity that occurs after or before conscious consumption activities, or at best as a human necessity that is affected by a range of sociological and institutional circumstances. We argue that sleep is not only a biological necessity, but an active disruption, a platform for interpretive activity that shapes field engagement in profound ways.

References are available upon request.

SELF-CENTERED CARE CONSUMPTION: HOW CONSUMERS PRIORITIZE THEMSELVES

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Keywords: care, indulgence, feeling rules, emotion work, self-centered care consumption

Description: Caring for yourself through self-centered care consumption has shifted from a medical prescription to an avenue for emotional healing among consumers and is justified by consumer emotion work strategies of normalizing self-care, developing agency, setting boundaries, and indulging mindfully.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

This research investigates a cultural shift in the meaning of care and specifically, what it means to care for yourself. Building on emotion work and feeling rules as an enabling theory, we find that feeling rules related to caring for yourself differ from feeling rules governing caring for others. Consequently, the related focal research questions are: 1) how has the cultural meaning of caring for yourself changed over time in North America, and 2) how do consumers manage cultural and interpersonal tensions that arise when they prioritize themselves?

Method and Data

To answer our research questions, we analyzed the self-care movement in the United States. We collected a data set of 600 news articles with “self-care” in the headline or body text of an article in the three newspapers with the largest circulation in the United States (New York Times, Wall Street Journal, USA Today). Semi-structured interviews were then conducted with 19 young adults from the United States. Netnographic data included analyzing videos related to self-cares on TikTok. The data was analyzed through a hermeneutic process where we iterated between interviews, news articles, and netnographic data to evaluate codes and themes across the data sources and across time

Summary of Findings

Our findings show that caring for yourself has shifted from being a medical prescription to being a method of emotional healing pursued by consumers. Building on emotion work and feeling rules as an enabling theory we find that feeling rules related to caring for yourself have changed over time and differ from feeling rules governing caring for others. By normalizing self-care, developing agency, setting boundaries and indulging mindfully with their self-centered care

consumption consumers establish feeling rules that caring for yourself is for everyone, defies social expectations, is self-protective, and enhances self-growth.

Key Contributions

These findings contribute to research at the intersection of consumption and well-being by extending researchers' and marketers' understanding of care. Previous research on caregiving has mainly focused on how parents, and mainly mothers, care for others. This paper extends this literature by focusing on how individuals care for themselves. We also extend consumer research on feeling rules by identifying consumption-driven emotion work strategies that allow feeling rules to change.

References are available upon request.

TRUSTING CLOSED COMMUNITIES? THE IMPLICATIONS OF ONLINE SOCIAL RELATING FOR BELIEF SYSTEMS DURING THE PANDEMIC

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Keywords: Trust, Expertise, Social group, Religion, Fake news, WhatsApp

Description: In this paper I try to explicate how multi-source authoritative knowledge is negotiated in digital environments when traditional religious participants are forced into using this as the primary means of meaning-making.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question – How the pandemic has changed consumer perceptions of expertise has been relatively understudied. For instance, we know little about how consumers active in trust-based, physical forms of community navigate meaning-making once they are forced to socialize in non-physical modes as a result of exceptional circumstances such as those created by the pandemic. Moreover, while previous research has argued that reckless dissemination of information occurs pervasively particularly in a digital world, we are yet to realize the full social implications of such acts, particularly at a time of heightened risk such as the pandemic. For instance, while we know why digital citizens may share such information and when such news may be deemed credible, we are yet to understand what the implications of spreading unverified information has on social understanding, practice, and relating. This is of particular importance to certain groups such as those based on religion, where communal harmony is central to meaning making and progression. In this vein, I ask how does unverified sharing of information

shape sensibilities and relationships in traditional communities where absorption of authoritative information is a critical component of their belief system.

Method And Data – I conducted this investigation from the start of the pandemic in Pakistan in February 26, 2020 till the time when the first wave began to recede June 30, 2020. I determined the start time for the data as the time when the first Coronavirus-related post was reported in the group and the end time as the time when the Coronavirus cases had dropped significantly from their peak such that there was little discussion in the group on them, i.e., the end of the first wave of COVID-19 in Pakistan.

I consider the site of a communal religious movement called *Tablighi Jamaat* (TJ) in Pakistan whose everyday social and consumption behavior relies on physical proximity and is disrupted due to the social restrictions of the pandemic. I draw my data mainly from a netnographic study of a WhatsApp group comprising university alumni who are also members the TJ and secondarily via my experiences of living through the pandemic.

Summary of Findings – In the TJ, sensemaking is realized by listening to and obeying those higher up in the hierarchy. Thus, order is maintained through univocal, one-way communication that the physical space can afford. However, as discourse transfers to social media, polyphony strikes and unties the very glue that unites the group, creating ruptures in social bonding. In the WhatsApp setting, democratic voice becomes a source of discord. Pre-COVID, such conversations were left for one-on-one or small group physical interaction spaces. However, once physical access to religious authorities is severed and is displaced with multiple unverified sources, the locus of authority becomes difficult to situate and fragments the community. In

addition, group protocols are violated regularly, which adds to the instability and anarchy. However, despite the ebb and flow of tensions and consolidation, eventually the group resolves towards normalcy to pre-COVID levels. This is perhaps due to a physical new normal being established in the real world that influences the cooling in the WhatsApp space. However, while traditionally such groups are thought to be uniform and harmonious in thought, I see here the unusual situation whereby social media platforms enable closely knit groups to splinter.

Statement of Key Contributions – The present study offers three contributions to the consumer research literature. First, I explicate how collective behavior is disoriented by the pandemic creating new modes of relating and producing novel discourses. Second, I unravel how religious belief and sensemaking in the digital space occurs and creates anxieties because of cacophony of verified and unverified information sources, i.e., it fosters an infrastructure that is asynchronous to the logics of traditional religion. Third, I examine another dimension to the deleterious role of social media on society in that it harmfully impacts traditional religious community bonding. In the following sections, I offer the research context, method and data analysis, findings, and discussion of my study.

Digital & Social Media Marketing

A LITERATURE REVIEW IN THE AREA OF VOICE MARKETING

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Keywords: Voice Marketing, Voice Assistants, Smart Speaker, Literature Review

Description: This paper identifies research gaps regarding marketing issues of voice marketing as scarcely examined research field.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Voice assistants accompany us every day by enabling us to make phone calls and order products by voice (Poushneh 2021). This gives rise to voice marketing, a research field of growing importance due to increasing popularity of voice assistants (McLean et al. 2021). However, the research field of voice marketing is scarcely explored (Ashfaq et al. 2021; Lee and Cho 2020).

Therefore, it is necessary to identify and fill existing research gaps to gain comprehensive knowledge.

In the research field of voice marketing, different thematic research focuses can be identified. This includes technical issues with regard to, for example, hardware, or software (Ashfaq et al. 2021), product-related issues which observe facets like design and functionality of voice assistant devices (Park et al. 2018), and marketing issues which comprise branding and advertising opportunities (Hasan et al. 2021; Lee and Cho 2020; Smith 2020).

However, studies show that there is ample need for more detailed investigations on marketing issues (Ashfaq et al. 2021; Lee and Cho 2020). This paper attempts to identify existing research gaps concerning marketing issues. For this purpose, it conducts a theme-based semi-systematic literature review on 61 scientific papers published between 2018 and 2021 and applies qualitative content analysis.

Summary of Findings

The literature review results in four key content categories in which research gaps are identified: consumer motivations, advertising opportunities, marketing message design, and the impact on consumer-brand relations.

In studies on **consumer motivations to use voice assistants** some motivational aspects such as curiosity or having fun seem not yet to be considered. Thus, re-examining consumer motivations and identifying motivation types including their impact on consumer-voice assistant interaction – also regarding reuse and long-term use – should be conducted (Moriuchi 2021). Future studies on **advertising opportunities** can examine the relevance of different advertising types for individual

product categories, identify methods to measure advertising effectiveness, investigate skills for voice assistants as further advertising opportunity, and detect future advertising opportunities (Kim et al. 2018). Regarding **marketing message design** extensive studies on brand-voice and marketing message development for different product categories and investigations on brand-specific vocal traits mix are required. For a positive **consumer-brand relation** the interaction between consumers and voice assistants is key. However, the literature doesn't provide sufficient guidance on how to enhance interaction through voice – a gap that should be filled. Additionally, negative effects for consumer-brand relations as research gap requires more research.

Statement of Key Contributions

The small number of available research papers indicates that voice marketing a research field has not received the attention it deserves. Therefore, many research gaps remain to be addressed in future studies. Furthermore, scientific researchers can explore each of the four content categories in more depth through a hybrid review. For instance, results of this paper can be complemented by conducting bibliometric analyses as more quantitative approaches or by applying frameworks such as TCCM.

Even though further research is needed, this paper provides first insights for marketing practitioners to leverage marketing opportunities through voice assistants. Findings show the importance of the fit between the voice assistant's voice and brand personality. Additionally, they help practitioners to develop relevant marketing messages. Regarding advertising through voice assistants, it is recommended that marketers choose contextual advertising types since they provide high value to the customer and currently represent the most effective advertising form. For a positive impact on consumer-brand relations, marketers should ensure high interaction with

customers and prevent their concerns. Voice marketing constitutes a new marketing form with growing importance, which should therefore be considered as relevant part of the marketing strategy of companies and brands.

References are available upon request.

BRAND-INFLUENCER COLLABORATIONS AND CHANGE IN CONTENT STRATEGY

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Keywords: Social media influencers, Influencer marketing, Content Strategy, Online word-of-mouth, Text analysis

Description: This paper explores the impact of changes in content strategy by social media influencers on brand engagement when brands collaborate with influencers.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Questions: How do collaborations between brands and social media influencers impact engagement? Do influencers change their content strategy for such collaboration, and, if so, how do these changes in content strategy impact engagement?

Method and Data: We use the content of over 130,000 tweets posted by 75 Twitter influencers across health and wellness, beauty, and fashion industries from Brandwatch from January 2019 to December 2019. We collect information on the engagement (number of replies and shares) with these tweets, the number of tweets, the number of followers, and followees when the tweet was posted. We also extract the Twitter handles and hashtags mentioned in each tweet to identify 1,782 brands. We use text analysis to measure the change in influencer content for each individual tweet. In our primary analysis, we focus on the arousal expressed in the content, scoring each tweet for how much it deviates from the influencer's baseline expressed arousal.

Since we only observe the influencer's choice to mention a brand in their tweets, we first model the probability that the influencer will mention the brand (*BrandMention*) using a probit

model, with the influencer's characteristics and change in arousal of the tweets as the explanatory variables. We then model engagement as a function of *BrandMention* and other influencer and tweet characteristics, resulting in a system of equations that are jointly estimated. Therefore, we use a simultaneous equations model.

Summary of Findings

When influencers mention brands in their posts, they see a decrease in engagement in terms of replies. We find that brand mentions in influencer posts reduce the number of replies to such posts by 69%. Additionally, while influencers with more followers and followees garner more engagement, they are less likely to mention brands in their content.

Our results also show that when influencers mention brands, they are more likely to deviate from their typical content in terms of the arousal expressed in the language. Interestingly, we find that this strategy may further reduce engagement with branded content. Specifically, changing the arousal of branded content further reduces engagement both in terms of the number of shares and replies. When influencers change the arousal of the content by one standard deviation, we find that posts with brand mentions garner an 8% reduction in the number of shares and an 11% reduction in the number of replies. We probe two potential mechanisms that could be driving this result. Do followers respond negatively to changes in content strategy by influencers because it seems (1) inauthentic and/or (2) overly promotional. We find some evidence that the second mechanism may be driving the results we see.

Key Contributions:

Our research makes two key contributions. First, our work is among the first to detail how influencers change their content when they post about brands. Importantly, we show that changes in content strategy through the change in arousal of the branded posts hurt engagement. We show

that this may be the result of changes in content strategy coming across as overly promotional. These insights are particularly valuable as our results show that influencers commonly deviate from their typical content strategy when posting about brands, which our analyses suggest is a sub-optimal strategy.

Second, while influencer marketing is exploding in popularity, we identify some of the limits of this strategy that can help both brands and influencers better understand this medium. Chiefly, branded posts by influencers garner fewer replies, and influencers with more followers and followees are less likely to mention brands in their posts. Thus, we suggest that influencers engaging in fewer or less frequent brand collaborations are more likely to maintain their engagement levels. Additionally, despite the potential attractiveness of popular influencers, such the collaborations may prove to be counterproductive for brands not only in terms of the fewer brand mentions but also in terms of lower engagement.

CAN'T WAIT FOR CHRISTMAS? EXPLORING CONSUMER MOTIVES FOR WATCHING UNBOXING VIDEOS

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Keywords: unboxing, qualitative research, uses and gratifications approach, consumer motives

Description: This study aims at discovering motives of viewers watching unboxing videos.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

The video format has become increasingly popular in social media (Collins and Conley 2017) and videos currently account for 66.2% of the global mobile data volume every month (Statista 2021a). Firms more and more realize the popularity of videos. 71% of the companies in a global survey state that they want to use YouTube more intensively in the future (Statista 2021b).

Within the video format, unboxing videos have become prevalent. These videos are publicly available audiovisual media that focus the process of unpacking—sometimes also on the assemblage and demonstration—of a specific product (Craig and Cunningham 2017). Since unboxing videos are ubiquitous and have the potential to influence viewers' attitudes and buying behavior with regard to the unboxed product (Mowlabocus 2018), it is important for companies to learn more about unboxing videos. However, the topic of unboxing videos has only received little attention in academic literature.

With our research, we take an important first step in order to better understand the phenomenon of unboxing videos by investigating viewers' motives for watching such videos. Therefore, this study investigates the following research question: What motives lead individuals to watch unboxing videos?

Method and Data

We conducted ten problem-centered in-depth interviews with viewers of unboxing videos. To identify interview candidates, we took a theoretical sampling approach which is common in qualitative research (e.g. Tuli et al. 2007). Having already watched unboxing videos was the required precondition for participation. When potential participants responded to the request, we ensured that the precondition was fulfilled before inviting them to take part in the interview. Interviewees reported watching unboxing videos on average once or twice a week.

One of the authors interviewed the experts one at a time until information redundancy occurred, which happened after ten unboxing video viewers had been interviewed. All interviews except one, which was conducted in English, were carried out in German. They were conducted online via video conference between January and October 2021. The interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim followed by a qualitative content analysis. The interview participants' age ranged from 25 to 31 years, with an average of 27 years. A total of four males and six females was interviewed. The interviews varied in length from 20 to 40 minutes with an average of 30 minutes.

Summary of Findings

Our identified motives for watching unboxing videos can be differentiated into general motives which are already identified by the uses and gratification approach (surveillance, pass time, entertainment, information) and can be applied to other media activities as well, and specific motives that are exclusive for watching unboxing videos.

The first specific motive is the **joy of unwrapping presents**. Here, consumers are interested in experiencing positive emotions similar to those when unwrapping presents. Second, some viewers also watch unboxing videos after the purchase of a product but before delivery to **stimulate their anticipation**. Third, in the context of surprise products consumers watch unboxing videos after they have already ordered them but before they have received them because they want to **satisfy their childlike curiosity** – resembling young children who cannot wait to unwrap their Christmas presents. Fourth, consumers watching unboxing videos of luxury goods that they cannot (easily) afford to **fulfill an otherwise unrealized desire**. Fifth, the last specific motive – the fear of missing out (**FOMO**) – usually refers to the fear of not sharing an experience or missing an event, but according to our interviews can also be applied to the context of not purchasing a product.

Key Contributions

Relying on a qualitative approach and the uses and gratification approach, our research makes three important contributions. First, we identify five new motives for watching unboxing videos. Companies producing or encouraging unboxing videos need to consider these motives in order to get the whole picture and to fully understand why consumers watch unboxing videos and do not e.g. consume other content.

Second, our results give new insights to providers of subscription boxes which are products with unknown content at the time of purchase. Individuals watching unboxing videos of subscription boxes can do so because they become so curious that they cannot wait until their already ordered box gets delivered or consumers are afraid to miss a box with good content. Hence, it is important for subscription box providers to identify the motives relevant to their target group and design or encourage videos that address these motives.

Third, for luxury goods manufacturers we recognize unboxing videos as a tool to better connect with customers who are not able to purchase their products due to financial constraints. Manufacturers can use unboxing videos to build stronger relationships with new groups other than their target group which can further increase their brand image.

References are available upon request.

Changing Evaluation of Influencers as They Move into Broadcast Media

Abstract

Today, social media and consumer behavior are inextricably linked. Ordinary people who are active and influential on Instagram and YouTube are called influencers, and many companies use them for marketing because of their familiarity and credibility when compared to traditional celebrities. In recent years, they have expanded activities to the broadcast media such as television. However, existing studies on influencers assume that SNS influencers are only active in participatory media. Therefore, this paper attempts to identify the conditions for success of influencers in participatory media to enter broadcast media. In doing so, we will focus on the conditions such as whether the capabilities required by the participatory media and the broadcast media are similar, and whether they were able to demonstrate the required capabilities in the broadcast media. Then, to examine the empirical validity of the hypothesis, multiple comparisons and two-way analysis of variance will be conducted using the data obtained from the experimental survey. Finally, based on the findings, academic and practical implications will be presented, and future research topics will be discussed.

Statement of key contribution

This paper explores the conditions for the success or failure of celebrities who have gained popularity in participatory media such as Instagram to enter broadcast media such as television. In the paper, we only considered the characteristics of the influencers, whether their popularity was due to their content or their aesthetics. In this regard, it is likely that different characteristics exist between YouTubers and Instagrammers, and a more detailed analysis of these characteristics would provide deeper insights.

Considering the above points, we believe that the results of this study will make a significant contribution by presenting the success or failure of influencers' entry into broadcast media. We also believe that this study will help organizations and individuals engaged in influencer marketing to develop strategies and contribute to the literature on marketing and consumer behavior. We believe that this research will generate literature that can be used to propose more realistic strategies in the future.

1.Background/Objectives and goals

In today's media, participatory media, such as Instagram and Twitter, where content can be created, manipulated, and distributed by anyone with access to the Internet, are

gaining prominence. Ordinary people who gain popularity on these media have emerged as a new type of celebrity and are known, as micro-celebrities or influencers (Jin al. 2018).

Existing research has shown that influencers are considered more accessible and credible than traditional celebrities on TV and other media, which makes them a more effective advertiser compared to traditional advertisers.

However, these studies assume that influencers are only active in participatory media without considering that they might be simultaneously advancing into traditional broadcast media such as television and radio as well. However, their image and reputation as influencers might not translate as well. In broadcast media, influencers cannot edit their own content, which might result in them having a different image in broadcast media. In addition, while an influencer might be the sole presence in their posted content, multiple celebrities often appear in broadcast media programs. As a result, fans of the influencer might change their mind regarding the quality of the influencer, whom they generally evaluate by appearance, once there is a point of comparison.

While this indicates that there might be different criteria of success in both participatory and broadcast media, there might be overlapping criteria of success as well. For example, an Instagrammer whose appearance is highly valued may be required to be keep that up in broadcast media as well. However, they might be expected to be good at other aspects of being a celebrity as well, like being a good storyteller, being able to engage well with a live audience etc. Nonetheless, how fans evaluate them may or may not change depending on their competencies, which has yet to be explored in the current literature.

The purpose of this paper is to clarify the conditions for the success or failure of influencers entering broadcast media, hereafter referred to as source (participatory media) and destination (broadcast media). Based on the above discussion, the following six hypotheses are proposed.

Hypothesis

H1-1: When the skills required by the source and the destination are similar, the fans' evaluation of the influencer when he or she is able to demonstrate the skills will be higher than when they are not able to demonstrate the skills.

H1-2: When the skills required by the source and the destination are different, there will be no significant difference in fans' evaluations of influencers whether or not they are able to demonstrate the skills required by the destination.

H2-1: When the capabilities required by the source and the destination are similar, non-fans' evaluations of influencers when they are able to demonstrate the capabilities

will be higher than when they are not able to demonstrate the capabilities.

H2-2: When the capabilities required by the source and the destination are different, there will be no significant difference between non-fans' evaluation of influencers whether or not they are able to demonstrate the capabilities required by the destination.

H3-1: When the competencies required by the source and the destination are similar, the evaluation by fans will be higher compared to non-fans when the competencies are demonstrated.

H3-2: When the competence required by the source and the destination are similar, the difference in the evaluation of influencers by fans and non-fans are more significant whether or not they are able to demonstrate the required competencies.

2.Methods

An empirical analysis was conducted. The subjects of the experimental survey were male and female students and adults, and an online response form was used to collect the data. For each question, a 7-point Likert scale ("1=not at all agree" to "7=very much agree") was used. In the experiment corresponding to hypothesis 1, the total number of participants was 145, and the number of valid responses was 98 (68%). In the experiment corresponding to hypothesis 2, there were 145 subjects in total, with 85 (59%) valid responses. In the experiment corresponding to hypothesis 3, the total number of participants was 145, and the number of valid responses was 125 (86%). The subjects were asked, "Please mention one YouTuber (Instagrammer) that you like and you think is not on TV". Thus, as a first step, we measured the subjects' evaluation of influencers they already knew and liked as "fans" of the influencers. Immediately after the presentation of each scenario presented below, we measured the influencer's evaluation (Feick and Orsen, 1981; Feick and Higie, 1992). After "answer the following questions" within each scenario, the following questions were asked to measure the evaluation of the influencer. (1) I originally like the influencer. (2) The ability that the influencer originally demonstrated, and the ability required in this situation are the same. (3) The influencer surpassed other celebrities in the required ability. (4) I have a good feeling about that influencer. (5) I have a favorable impression of the influencer. (6) The influencer is attractive.

Prompt 1 through 4 were presented to the fans. Those prompts were: (1) Please think of a time when the YouTuber or Instagrammer you mentioned was able to demonstrate his or her abilities in a situation where his or her abilities as a YouTuber or Instagrammer were needed, and answer the following questions (2) Please think of a time when the

YouTuber or Instagrammer you mentioned were unable to demonstrate their abilities in a situation that needed their abilities as a YouTuber or Instagrammer, and answer the following questions (3) Please think of a time when the YouTuber or Instagrammer you mentioned was a good actor in a situation that required their acting skills, and answer the following questions and (4) Please think of a time when the YouTuber or Instagrammer you mentioned was a bad actor in a situation that required their acting skills, and answer the following questions.

A fictitious YouTuber was then presented to the subjects. This allowed us to measure their evaluation of the influencer as a "non-fan" as a second step. For non-fans, we presented prompts 5 and 6 based on them watching a variety show in which the cooking YouTuber "Takamin" appears. The prompts are as follows: (5) Please think of a time when Takamin was able to demonstrate his cooking abilities such as presentation and knowledge of ingredients in a situation where his abilities as a cooking YouTuber was needed, and answer the following questions (6) Please think of a time when Takamin was unable to demonstrate his cooking abilities in a situation where his abilities as a cooking YouTuber was needed, and answer the following questions. As a continuation of the second step, prompts 7 and 8 were also presented to non-fans based on them watching a TV drama in which they learn, one of the student actors was cooking YouTuber Takamin. The prompts are as follows: (7) Please think of a time when Takamin was a good actor in a situation that required his acting skills, and answer the following questions (8) Please think of a time when Takamin was bad actor in a situation that required his acting skills, and answer the following questions.

As the next step, prompts 1-8 were repeated for the fictional beautiful Instagrammer “Satomin”.

3.Results

First, we found a significant difference in the evaluations of influencers, whether they are fans or non-fans, whether they are required to perform similarly or differently at the source and the destination, and whether they can do so or not. Second, when the influencer was able to demonstrate the same capabilities in the destination media as in the source media, fans will give the influencer a higher rating than non-fans. Fans feel as if they have been recognized for their foresight through the success of influencers in broadcast media, which brings them greater satisfaction than those who are non-fans. Finally, non-fans, regardless of the similarity of required capabilities between the source and the destination, will give the influencer a very low rating when the influencer fails to perform at the destination.

Tables

Results of the analysis of Hypothesis 1-1

For Hypothesis 1-1, the result of the F-test for the entire model when the dependent variable was set to fan evaluation, showed an F-value of 67.557, which was significant at the 0.1% level. The coefficient of determination R2, which indicates the explanatory power of the model, was 0.302. When the competencies required at the source and the destination were similar, the mean ratings by fans for "when the influencer could demonstrate the competency" and "when the influencer could not demonstrate the competency" were 6.337 (S.D. = 0.812) and 4.633 (S.D. = 1.649), respectively. The difference between these two means was 1.704 (SD =0.133), which was significant at the 0.1% level. A comparison of these means is presented in Table 1. Based on these results, hypothesis 1-1 was supported.

Results of the analysis of Hypothesis 1-2

As for Hypothesis 1-2, the result of the F-test for the entire model when the dependent variable was set to the evaluation of fans, showed an F-value of 127.131, which was significant at the 0.1% level. The coefficient of determination R2, which indicates the explanatory power of the model, was 0.247. When the capabilities required at the source and the destination are different, the mean ratings by fans for “the cases where the influencer was able to demonstrate the capabilities required at the destination” and “the cases where the influencer was not able to demonstrate the capabilities required at the destination” were 5.976 (S.D.=1.206) and 4.373 (S.D.=1.577), respectively. The difference between these two means was 1.603 (SD =0.133), which was significant at the 0.1% level. Based on these results, hypothesis 1-2 was not supported.

Table 1. Comparison of differences in ratings by fan (Hypothesis 1)

Results of the analysis of Hypothesis 2-1

As for Hypothesis 2-1, the result of the F-test for the entire model with the dependent variable set for the evaluation of non-fans showed that the F-value was 261.999, which was significant at the 0.1% level. The coefficient of determination R2, which indicates the explanatory power of the model, was 0.436. When the competencies required by the source and the destination were similar, the mean ratings by non-fans for "when the influencer could demonstrate the required competency" and "when the influencer could not demonstrate the required competency" were 5.247 (S.D.=1.362) and 3.010 (S.D.=1.

181), respectively. 181), respectively. The difference between these two means was 2.237 (SD =0.142), which was significant at the 0.1% level. These values are presented in Table 2. Based on these results, Hypothesis 2-1 was supported.

Results of the analysis of Hypothesis 2-2

As for Hypothesis 2-2, the result of the F-test for the entire model with the dependent variable set for the evaluation of non-fans showed that the F-value was 288.048, which was significant at the 0.1% level. The coefficient of determination R2, which indicates the explanatory power of the model, was 0.460. When the competencies required at the source differed from those required at the destination, the mean ratings by non-fans for "the cases where the influencer was able to demonstrate the competencies required at the destination" and "the cases where the influencer was not able to demonstrate the competencies required at the destination" were 5.369 (S.D.=1.252) and 3.055 (S.D.=1.055), respectively. 055 (S.D.=1.261), respectively. The difference between these two means was 2.314 (SD =0.142), which was significant at the 0.1% level. Based on these results, hypothesis 2-2 was not supported.

Table 2. Comparison of differences in ratings by non-fan (Hypothesis 2)

Results of the analysis of Hypothesis 3-1

As for Hypothesis 3-1, the result of the F-test for the entire model with the dependent variable set for the evaluation of fans and non-fans showed that the F-value was 88.604, which was significant at the 0.1% level. The coefficient of determination R2, indicating the explanatory power of the model, was 0.196. When the competencies required at the source and the destination were similar, the mean values of the ratings by "fans" and "non-fans" of the competencies were 6.337 (S.D.=0.812) and 5.247 (S.D.=1.362), respectively. 362), respectively. The difference between these two means was 1.090 (SD =0.138), which was significant at the 0.1% level. These values are presented in Table 3. Based on these results, hypothesis 3-1 was supported.

Table 3. Comparison of differences when influencer was able to demonstrate his or her ability (Hypothesis 3-1)

Results of the analysis of Hypothesis 3-2

As for Hypothesis 3-2, the result of the F-test for the entire model with the dependent variable set to fan and non-fan ratings showed that the F-value was 209.365, which was

significant at the 0.1% level. The coefficient of determination R2, which indicates the explanatory power of the model, was 0.464. As a result of the F-test for each variable, the F-value for "fan/non-fan" was 201.239, which was significant at the 0.1% level. The F-value for "Influencer was able/unable to demonstrate their abilities" was 424.956, which was significant at the 0.1% level. The F-value for "fan or not x Influencer was able to demonstrate their abilities or not" (interaction effect) was 7.770, which was significant at the 1% level.

For Hypothesis 3-2, when the ability required by the source and the destination are similar, the mean values of "evaluation by fans when Influencer was able to demonstrate their ability" and the mean values of "evaluation by fans when Influencer was unable to demonstrate their ability" were 6.337 (S.D.=0.058) and 4.632 (S. D.=0.118), respectively. The difference between these two means was 1.704, which was significant at the 0.1% level. Similarly, the mean values of "Evaluation by non-fans when Influencer was able to demonstrate ability" and "Evaluation by non-fans when influencer was unable to demonstrate ability" were 5.247 (S.D.=0.104) and 3.010 (S.D.=0.091), respectively. The difference between these two mean values was 2.237, which was significant at the 0.1% level. These values are presented in Table 4. Based on these results, hypothesis 3-2 is not supported.

Table 4. Comparison of differences in evaluation of similar required competencies (Hypothesis 3-2)

4.Discussion and Conclusion

The analysis in this study revealed the following findings. First, there is a significant difference in the evaluations of influencers, whether they are fans or non-fans, and whether they are required to perform similarly or differently at the source and destination. Second, when the influencer can demonstrate the same capabilities in the destination media as in the source media, fans give the influencer higher ratings than non-fans. Fans gain greater social pleasure than non-fans by recognizing the influencer's ability as a market guru through the influencer's performance in broadcast media. Finally, non-fans will give the influencer a very low rating when the influencer fails to perform at the destination, regardless of whether the competencies required at the source and destination are similar.

Based on the above results, the following recommendations can be made to influencer marketing organizations and influencers. First, influencers should only enter broadcast media when they are comfortable doing so, that is, when their current skillset is required

at the destination. Influencer marketing organizations and influencers will be able to maintain the loyalty of their existing fans if they demonstrate similar capabilities at both source and destination. Finally, when moving into broadcast media with the aim of gaining new fans, organizations should consider the high risk of failing to demonstrate their capabilities and only choose favorable situations that can avoid that.

In conclusion, the results of our study has provided clearer insight into the conditions that influencers should meet before entering broadcast media. Our study has also made practical contributions to the development of strategies for organizations and individuals engaged in influencer marketing, as well as academic contributions to marketing research and consumer behavior research.

Future Research

Several issues remain to be addressed in this study. The following issues may be addressed in the experimental survey. First, due to time and budget constraints, the majority of the respondents were university undergraduates. In future research, it will be necessary to examine the reliability and external validity of the analysis by conducting a survey with a wide age range of randomly selected participants. Second, this study did not take into account what kind of content influencers are popular in the participatory media they are entering. In the future, it would be meaningful to examine how the type of content distributed affects the evaluation of influencers after they enter the broadcast media. Finally, we did not examine the difference between YouTube and Instagram as influencers in this study. It is likely that there are different characteristics between YouTubers and Instagrammers, and analyzing them separately will provide richer insights.

Although there are still some issues to be addressed, this paper has made a significant contribution to consumer behavior and marketing by addressing the research void of changes in viewer evaluation before and after influencers enter broadcast media.

Tables

Table 1. Comparison of differences in ratings by fans (Hypothesis 1)

X_{11}：Similar		Mean (Standard error)	Mean difference (Standard error)
H1-1	X_{21}：Demonstrated	6.337 (0.058)	1.704^{***} (0.133)
	X_{22}：Not demonstrated	4.632 (0.118)	

F=167.557(p<0.001), ***significant at the 0.1% level

X_{12}：Different		Mean (Standard error)	Mean difference (Standard error)
H1-2	X_{21}：Demonstrated	5.976 (0.086)	1.603^{***} (0.133)
	X_{22}：Not demonstrated	4.373 (0.113)	

F=127.131(p<0.001), ***significant at the 0.1% level

Table 2. Comparison of differences in ratings by non-fans (Hypothesis 2)

X_{11}：Similar		Mean (Standard error)	Mean difference (Standard error)
H2-1	X_{21}：Demonstrated	5.247 (0.104)	2.237^{***} (0.142)
	X_{22}：Not demonstrated	3.010 (0.091)	

F=261.999(p<0.001),***significant at the 0.1% level

X_{12}：Different		Mean (Standard error)	Mean difference (Standard error)
H2-2	X_{21}：Demonstrated	5.369 (0.096)	2.314^{***} (0.142)
	X_{22}：Not demonstrated	2.314 (0.097)	

F=288.048(p<0.001), ***significant at the 0.1% level

Table 3. Comparison of differences when the influencer was able to demonstrate his or her ability (Hypothesis 3-1)

X_{11}：Similar	Mean (Standard error)	Mean difference (Standard error)
X_{31}：Fans	6.337 (0.058)	1.090^{***} (0.138)
X_{32}：Non-fans	5.247 (0.104)	

F=8.661(p<0.01), ***significant at the 0.1% level

Table 4. Comparison of differences in the evaluation of similar required competencies (Hypothesis 3-2)

	X_{21}：Demonstrated his or her ability	X_{22}：Could not demonstrate his or her ability	Mean difference (Standard error)
X_{31}：Fans	6.337 (0.058)	4.632 (0.118)	1.704 (0.133) ***
X_{32}：Non-fans	5.247 (0.104)	3.010 (0.091)	2.237 (0.142) ***

F=209.365($p<0.001$), ***significant at the 0.1% level

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CROSSING THE (PROPERTY) LINE: IN-STREAM ADVERTISING ON SMARTPHONES AND CONSUMERS' TERRITORIAL RESPONSES

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Keywords: territorial responses, in-stream advertising, smartphone, PC

Description: This study investigates the impact of in-stream advertising on smartphones (vs. on PCs) on consumers' territorial responses.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Ad-supported streaming services (e.g., YouTube, HBOmax) are on the rise, but little is known about consumers' responses to in-stream advertising (i.e., ads shown before or during streaming content is played) on two major devices, smartphones and PCs. This raises the following research question: Does the device influence how consumers respond to in-stream advertising? We hypothesize that in-stream advertising elicits territorial responses and that device type (smartphone vs. PC) is a major driver in this regard.

Method and Data

We conduct three studies that examine in-stream ads for different products (e.g., e-book readers), several ad-supported services (e.g., TV streaming), and two major types of territorial responses (i.e., regaining control, retaliating against the infringer). Regaining control over the device refers to responses such as leaving a streaming platform. Retaliation refers to responses aimed at punishing the infringer such as devaluating the advertised product and rejecting cookies. In Study 1, we investigate how long consumers accept in-stream ads on YouTube before they leave the platform with regard to the device they use. Study 2 examines perceptions of territorial infringement and anger as mechanisms mediating the effect of in-stream advertising on smartphones (vs. PCs) on territorial responses. Study 3 explores the moderating role of advertising legitimacy.

Summary of Findings

The results show that consumers perceive in-stream ads on smartphones (vs. PCs) as a greater territorial infringement which triggers stronger feelings of anger and ultimately leads to

stronger territorial responses aimed at regaining control over the device and retaliating against the advertiser and the streaming platform. In addition, we find that advertising legitimacy (e.g., providing a legitimate reason for the ad: "We offer you [service] for free—ads help us fund it") attenuates the effect of in-stream advertising on smartphones (vs. PCs) on territorial responses, showing how advertisers and streaming platforms can mitigate consumers' territorial responses to in-stream advertising.

Key Contributions

This research reveals how consumers respond to in-stream advertising on the smartphone and the PC. We thus address the call for new studies to examine campaigns with mobile and non-mobile ads, which would enable a comparative study of the effectiveness of mobile and non-mobile advertising (Bart, Stephen, and Sarvary 2014). Moreover, we show that in-stream advertising elicits territorial responses and shed light on the underlying mechanisms. By pointing out that smartphones represent important consumer territories, we address the call to take a look at territoriality that goes beyond physical spaces (Kirk 2017). For practitioners, we identify how territorial responses to in-stream advertising can be mitigated. We thus not only demonstrate the negative effects of in-stream advertising, but also highlight actions to enhance the effectiveness of in-stream ads.

References are available upon request.

Determinants of customers' responses to online service failure and recovery strategies during Covid-19 pandemic: the difficulties of transition

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Key words: Covid-19, online service failure, recovery strategies, interviews, millennials

Description

While the debate on online service failure and recovery strategies has been given considerable attention in the marketing and information systems literature, the evolving Covid-19 pandemic has brought about new challenges both theoretically and empirically in the consumption landscape. To fully understand customers' responses to service failure during a crisis we asked 70 millennials from three European Countries – Italy, France and the UK – to describe their responses to service failure during the Covid-19 pandemic (30 completed a 4-week diary and 40 completed a 4-week qualitative survey). Drawing on phenomenological, constructivist and hermeneutical approaches, and utilising an actor–network theory perspective, the current study proposes a new framework for understanding customers' responses to online service failure and recovery strategies during Covid-19 pandemic. Conclusions highlight implications for theory, policy and management practice through extending comprehensions of service failure recovery processes by examining how marketing policies generate different social impacts during a crisis situation which facilitate the achievement of customer satisfaction and positive outcomes.

Research Question

Research reveals that the evolving Covid-19 pandemic represents an unprecedented and unanticipated set of challenging circumstances for several business sectors. A stream of researchers and media outlets have largely documented the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on consumer buying behaviour, and have identified the social barriers that have an impact on their everyday life, particularly digital forces (Blackburn et al., 2020). More specifically, researchers have demonstrated that the Covid-19 pandemic is increasingly prompting consumers to undertake behavioural changes, such as shifting their consumption to online environments, under conditions of mandatory domesticity (Hennekam and Shymko, 2020). Fashion providers are increasingly facing challenges in meeting demand and maintaining image quality and authenticity, prompting many fashion brands to balance their digital transformation and brand identity (Lay, 2018). As fashion retailers look for innovative ideas and flexible ways to deliver sustainable customer services in the wake of rapidly changing market environments, service failure is becoming an increasingly important mode of customer experience created by social distancing and lockdown rules (Osborne, 2020). A unique characteristic of these failures fuelled by the Covid-19 crisis is the breakdown of service during the process of delivery and/or outcomes, thus creating the emergence of dissatisfied customers (Duffy, Miller and Bexley 2006). In the event of these failures, customers expect effective service failure and recovery strategy (SFR) to address their negative experience (McCollough, Berry and Yadav, 2000). In our view, consumers' responses to online SFR differ under conditions of "mandatory domesticity and social distancing rules" when faced with threats such as the Covid-19 crisis and they tend to rely on contextual rationality (Hennekam and Shymko, 2020, p. 790). To our knowledge, no previous study has investigated how consumers' responses to SFR strategies are affected by crises such as the Covid-19 pandemic. The aim of this paper, therefore, is to assess both the changing nature of consumers' behaviour during the Covid-19

pandemic in the UK, France and Italy and, equally, to assess consumers' perceptions and experiences of online SFR in relation to a crisis situation. Finally, of central importance for the current paper is the broader question of whether the impact of Covid-19 leads to the emergence of new online SFR processes.

Methodology and Methods

To fully understand the data collected for this study we utilised a phenomenological hermeneutical methodological approach. The aim was to comprehend the impact of Covid-19 on millennials' perceptions of SFR in three European countries. To facilitate this methodological approach we employed a grounded theory sampling technique (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) which enhanced the idea of "givenness" and how this emerges through the research process. In the context of the research, we explored the construction of a reality in terms of online interaction through an investigation of the development of this reality through an analysis of qualitative data. In terms of methodological orientation and fit (Dubois and Gadde, 2002: Ozuem, Willis and Howell, 2022), we employed exploratory qualitative methods with the aim of obtaining detailed insights into the perceptions of service recovery experiences under situational crises, and within a millennial consumer context. We conducted two studies using self-completion qualitative diaries (Wilson, 2016) and qualitative surveys. The participants were millennials from Italy, France and the UK. A plethora of meaningful distinctions suggests that the birth years of millennials are between 1980 and 2000 (Dimock, 2019). Millennials are highly networked and constantly engaged in digital systems; they expect a seamless shopping experience, are the growth engine of the fashion industry (Helal, Ozuem and Lancaster, 2018) and are experts at finding alternatives during service failures. We approached a 108 individuals, however, 70 actively participated in the study. For both studies, we recruited millennials between 18 and 39 years of age from three European countries: France, Italy and the UK.

Data Collection methods

Study 1 was a qualitative diary study conducted in the UK, France and Italy. Forty eight individuals were approached and asked if they would participate in the study. Of those approached, 30 individuals (10 UK, 10 France, 10 Italy) wrote about their experiences on a daily basis for 4 weeks focussing on SFR strategies during the Covid-19 crisis. The use of diaries allowed individuals to record their daily experiences within locations convenient to them. In Study 2, we used a qualitative survey method to collect data from participants. Semi-structured questionnaires were sent to the participants electronically, enabling them to complete the survey at a place of their convenience, which is a beneficial factor for time-limited research or samples of individuals that are geographically dispersed (Braun, Clarke, & Gray, 2017). This technique was useful for data collection during a situation such as the Covid-19 crisis. Forty participants (15 UK, 13 France and 12 Italy) successfully completed the survey over 4 weeks. It comprised 16 open-ended questions concerning perceptions and experiences of SFR during the Covid-19 crisis.

Conclusion

This study is the first to empirically investigate how customers respond to SFR processes during a global pandemic crisis. Thus, it extends knowledge about customers' emotional reactions towards firms' service recovery processes. The study identifies how customers responses to SFR strategies in a crisis are more emotionally inclined and incorporate the crisis environment and their relationship with brands. The characteristics and behaviour of customers described in this study may provide insight to marketers on how customers respond to crises and what recovery strategies would be most appropriate for them under such circumstances. To maintain customer retention, providers must focus their attention on their customers' state

of mind and demonstrate genuine care towards them. While customers appreciate the challenges firms face from the global pandemic, it is important to deliver customer service that is perceived by customers as treating them with fairness and dignity. Such treatment will increase the likelihood of customers' forgiveness for service failure, even if the service failure was not fully resolved.

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HEY, I'M TAKING OVER THIS ACCOUNT! LEVERAGING SOCIAL MEDIA TAKEOVER IN BRAND COMMUNICATIONS

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Keywords: Social media takeover, brand communications, parasocial interaction, owned media.

Description: This paper addresses how brands can leverage different sources of marketing communications on owned media to drive parasocial interaction with consumers.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

In the crowded online world, brands find it increasingly important to connect and engage with consumes (followers) through owned social media accounts. While brands commonly target a range of communication initiatives on social media accounts from their own perspective, some have recently started to rely on new practice called social media takeover, which has become especially popular on Instagram. Social media takeover can be seen as a brand advocacy initiative, which occurs when brands invite their employees and consumers (usually one at the time) to share different types of content relevant to brands and answer questions coming from the followers. During social media takeover employees introduce themselves to brands' followers and lead communications from their own (first-person) perspective, which makes this practice different from traditional (faceless) brand communications.

Generally, communications through owned social media accounts allow brands to foster an intimate connection with their current and potential consumers, also known as parasocial

interaction. Parasocial interaction plays a critical role in strengthening long-term consumer-brand relationships. However, extant literature provides limited information about how brands can foster parasocial interaction with brands (Labrecque 2014). The purpose of the present paper is to examine the role of different communication sources in influencing development of consumer-brand relationships through brand communications on owned media.

This study relies on a pretest and an experiment with typical social media users following brands on social media recruited from Mturk and Prolific self-service data collection platforms. For the experiments, Instagram social media platform was chosen as a context because of ever-increasing importance of Instagram in social media brand communications as well as the popularity of social media takeover practice on this platform. During the pretest and the main experiment, participants were randomly assigned to one of two experimental conditions: communications shared either (1) by a brand or (2) by a selected employee as a part of social media takeover. The pretest (N = 59) allowed to confirm that consumers distinguish social media takeover (i.e., communications lead by selected employees) from traditional brand communications, which allowed to proceed with the main experiment.

The outcomes of the main experiment (N = 117) demonstrate that consumers experience stronger parasocial interaction with brands after being exposed to communication initiatives shared by an employee than by brands ($M_{(Brand)} = 4.10$, $M_{(Employee)} = 4.82$; ($F(1, 113) = 16.37$; $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .13$. The experiment further points that this impacts can be explained by the increased social presence – the feeling of another party being present and involved in the communications. That is, in the context of owned media, brand communications shared by employees have stronger positive impact on parasocial interaction than traditional brand communications because of improved social presence.

This paper contributes to the ongoing discussion in the literature focusing on social media marketing communications as well as research on development of parasocial interaction with

brands in digital media. Most importantly, it proposes sources of brand communications as an additional antecedent contributing to the development of parasocial interaction with brands through social presence. For managers, the present paper provides with insights on how they can leverage different communication sources in the context of owned media to improve relationships with consumers.

HOW DO I TELL THEM?

ANALYZING COMPANIES' PROVISION OF REJECTION REASONS IN PRODUCT TESTING PROGRAMS

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Keywords: product testing, rejection management, scarcity effects, experimental research

One sentence description: Rejecting potential product testers can have positive as well as negative effects for companies.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Product testing programs—defined as marketing instruments providing consumers with a free product in exchange for writing an online review—have evolved as a popular online

marketing tool as they increase positive word-of-mouth intentions and online reviews (Garnefeld et al. 2021). However, as companies typically offer a limited number of free test products, many applicants get rejected (Yao et al. 2017). Analyzing the consequences of such rejections and considering the provision of rejection reasons by companies is important, since our theoretical analysis and two experimental studies show both positive and negative consequences of rejecting applicants for companies. On the one hand, compared to non-applicants, rejected participants perceive the test product as more attractive, which increases their purchase intentions. On the other hand, fairness perceptions decrease among rejected participants, thereby reducing purchase intentions and increasing negative word-of-mouth intentions. One way for companies to increase perceived fairness following a rejection is to provide applicants with a reason for rejection in response to their application. Our findings suggest both bad luck and low personal fit are equally effective in increasing fairness perceptions.

Method and Data

We test our hypotheses in two experimental studies. In Study 1, we used a unifactorial between-subjects design and manipulated the rejection in a product testing program on two levels (rejected application versus no application). Using the PROCESS procedure, the study examines the effect of a rejected application on customers' purchase intention and negative word of mouth as well as the mediating role of perceived attractiveness and perceived fairness. In Study 2, we employed a unifactorial between-subjects design. We manipulate the provision of rejection reasons in product testing programs on three levels (bad luck versus low personal fit versus no reason). To analyze the effects of the provision of rejection reasons on rejected applicants' perceived fairness, we used the PROCESS procedure and

dummification (Henseler and Fassot 2010), transforming our categorical independent variable into two distinct binary variables.

Summary of Findings

We find positive as well as negative effects of rejecting potential product testers for companies. While rejected participants, as compared to non-applicants, perceive the test products as more attractive, leading to increased purchase intentions, their perceived fairness decreases, which negatively impacts their purchase intentions and increases negative word-of-mouth intentions. However, companies can restore perceptions of fairness among rejected applicants by providing them with a reason for rejection. Both bad luck in a random drawing of product testers and applicants' low personal fit with the product test requirements are equally effective rejection reasons to increase perceived fairness as compared to a rejection with no response.

Key Contributions

Based on commodity theory, equity theory, as well as two experimental studies, our research makes three important contributions. First and against common sense, we find a positive effect of rejecting product testers for companies. In line with literature on scarcity, rejected applicants perceive the test product as scarce. Therefore, a rejection increases applicants' perceived attractiveness of the product, which in turn raises their purchase intentions.

Second, however, rejecting potential product testers also involves a dark side. Rejected product testers exhibit decreased fairness perceptions. As a consequence, they will less likely purchase the respective product and more likely negatively talk about the company.

Third, we identify the provision of rejection reasons as an important contingency variable influencing perceived fairness levels. To increase the perceived fairness, companies should provide rejected applicants with a reason for the rejection and not leave the application unanswered. As rejection reasons, both bad luck in a random drawing of product testers as well as the applicant's low personal fit with the product test requirements vis-à-vis other applicants are equally effective for establishing perceived fairness.

References are available upon request.

HOW PRIVACY TRANSGRESSION UNDERMINES CONSUMER MORAL INTUITIONS

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Keywords: Privacy, Moral Foundation Theory, Ethical Transgression

Description: This study investigates how privacy transgression impacts indirectly and negatively users' ratings, via moral intuitions.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Muslim Pro application, which claims 98 million users, is suspected of having sold geolocation data to a third-party broker, a supplier to the US military. This practice has drawn the ire of privacy advocates and the situation resulted in consumers' online outrage and brand crisis. Brand misbehavior refers to brands that commit ethical or even regulatory violations. Ethical transgression is defined as harmful actions that infringe on the freedom and dignity of individuals. Despite the great body of literature on brand transgression, previous research almost focused on negative reactions of users such as negative word of mouth or call for a boycott. In

this study, we investigate users' reactions to brand ethical transgression. Relying on moral foundation theory, we investigate how moral intuitions underlie users' challenging behavior towards brand ethical transgression. By addressing the following research questions, this study investigates the moral consequences of a privacy breach with sensitive data: How do users react to the commercialization of their data? Does ethical brand transgression lead systematically to negative evaluations? What are the moral consequences of a privacy breach with sensitive data?

Method and Data

Apps for religious communities have been growing in recent years. Muslims have access to applications that allow them to recite the Quran or locate a mosque. MuslimPro is a religious application that claims 98 million Muslims users in over the world. The recent crisis regarding the sale of Muslim user data to a third-party company in the markets has outraged and challenged Muslim consumers. We retrieved 5338 reviews English-written reviews on MuslimPro's from the U.S. Google Play Store. We use the three months before Vice article release as baseline data. We thus selected the following period for our analyses: July 16th, 2020–February 16th, 2021. To analyze the reviews, we used automated text analysis. Research on social psychology identifies five universal moral domains; care, fairness, sanctity, authority, and loyalty, we used the extended moral foundations' dictionary.

Summary of Findings

Our finding confirm that privacy transgression indirectly and negatively impacts users' ratings, via the five moral intuitions. The results show that the ratings are lower (M = 2.28, SD = 1.79) after a data breach than before (M = 4.34, SD = 1.27, $t(5336) = 44.76$, $p < .001$). Similarly, care is lower after a data breach (M = .58, SD = 1.80) than before (M = 1.02, SD = 2.48, $t(5336) = 7.43$,

$p < .001$), just like sanctity ($M_{after} = .49$, $SD_{after} = 1.43$, $M_{before} = .89$, $SD_{before} = 2.07$, $t(5336) = 8.40$, $p < .001$). Conversely, the means difference is reversed for fairness ($M_{after} = .29$, $SD_{after} = 1.20$, $M_{before} = .00$, $SD_{before} = .08$, $t(5336) = –10.51$, $p < .001$), loyalty ($M_{after} = .24$, $SD_{after} = 1.08$, $M_{before} = .05$, $SD_{before} = .42$, $t(5336) = –7.36$, $p < .001$), and authority ($M_{after} = .12$, $SD_{after} = .69$, $M_{before} = .04$, $SD_{before} = .33$, $t(5336) = –4.72$, $p < .001$). Bootstrapping analysis using 5,000 samples, shows that the total indirect effect that goes from privacy transgression to ratings, via moral intuitions, is negative and significant (b = –.19, p < .01, 99% CI = [–.2292, –.1660]).

Statement of Key Contributions

In terms of the contribution to marketing literature, our research is one of the studies to investigate moral intuitions in the context of privacy breaches with sensitive data. Our results show that brand ethical transgression has an important impact on the brand-user relationship. Based on social identity theory, Muslim users belong to a social group that wants to be seen by the out-group as a moral group. Prior studies show that group reactions vary depending on the identity of the transgressor whether they belong to the group or not. Furthermore, previous studies suggest that consumers' emotional reactions are primarily negative to unethical behavior. However, recent studies have shown that brand attachment attenuates judgments of unethical brands behavior. Thus, to understand the positive evaluations of MuslimPro after the transgression of an ethical norm it would be interesting to conduct a qualitative study with users to understand the reactions that motivate the increase in ratings.

IMPACT OF ONLINE FIRESTORMS ON NETWORK POLARIZATION

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Keywords: Online firestorms; Social network polarization; Digital mitigation strategy

The study quantifies social media polarization of Twitter retweets and mentions networks in terms of controversy scores (indicating the level of echo-chamberness between pro-brand and anti-brand commentators) that turn out to be instrumental in recommending network-level interventions as effective mitigation tools in de-escalation of social media firestorms.

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

The study tries to answer the following research questions:

- How do different categories of brand transgressions affect the polarization of brand-related conversation networks in social media? Does network polarization help develop a framework for better understanding (and mitigating) the harmful impacts of digital brand crises?
- What firm responses at the social network level can manage and mitigate negative brand perceptions in the aftermath of social media firestorms?

Method and Data

Empirically, the authors treat online firestorms as special cases of brand crises and analyze them using event studies (i.e., by treating the crisis outbreak as an exogenous shock to the social media platform) based on similar techniques adopted by multiple studies in the past. Specifically, they investigate abnormal changes in Twitter network polarization and average brand perception levels on social media across multiple event windows after consumers become aware of a brand transgression. They investigate this for a cross-industry focus group of ~300 social media firestorm events (and a pairwise matched control group for robustness checks) during the period 2012-2019. Using historical tweets from an event window starting one month before each incident and ending one month after, they compute network-level controversy measures (Garimella et al. 2018) by building network graphs around brand-related conversations, then partitioning them to identify brand-lovers and haters, and finally calculating the probability of inter-group communications. They aggregate brand perception scores over those intervals from Atlas Infegy's social media-listening platform, and finally run a three-stage least squares (3SLS) system-of-equations path analysis to show that network polarization mediates the impact of different kinds of brand crises (functional vs. values-based) on the ensuing dips in brand perception.

Summary of Findings

The authors show evidence of an increase in network polarization in the immediate aftermath of brand crises, which is exacerbated further when these crises are functional in nature. Furthermore,

they find that that the differential levels of increases in postcrisis network polarization explains to a significant extent the variance in brand perception levels observed on social media. Overall, the findings suggest that the greater polarization of Twitter conversations following functional brand crises translates into a greater intensity and proportion of negative social media posts, which combine to produce a greater dip in average brand perceptions. These effects persist for a period of four days, and hold true across multiple robustness checks, including multiple criteria for crisis classification, analysis of alternative polarization metrics, and comparisons with a k-nearest-neighbor-matched control group of brands. Finally, they provide an algorithmic demonstration of how brands can reduce consumer polarization by creating a small number of bridges across opposing sides — that is, by proposing brand-positive content from social media influencers to members of the antibrand community, with the hope to create a critical mass of endorsement edges in the form of likes, retweets, mentions, or other types of engagement.

Key Contributions

This study marks a first inquiry into consumer polarization in a brand crisis setting and tackles it from a dynamic network analysis perspective. Whereas previous studies have shown how online negative WOM affects marketplace (Hansen, Kupfer, and Hennig-Thurau 2018) and financial (Hsu and Lawrence 2016) outcomes, this framework complements and adds to extant marketing knowledge (Figure 1) by demonstrating that reducing consumer polarization is a promising crisis management tactic that can mitigate both these harmful effects. This research shows how managers can not only track Twitter network polarization on a weekly, daily, and even hourly basis but also take actionable steps to curb it. This digital capability of executing network-level interventions that reduce polarization by connecting opposing viewpoints could prove crucial in deescalating social media firestorms.

INFLUENCER AUTHENTICITY

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Keywords: Authenticity, influencer marketing, social media, key opinion leader

Description: This paper conceptualizes and develops the measurement scales of influencer authenticity (IA) and tests its impact on consumer behavioral outcomes.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question – This paper has addressed several research questions. First, what is IA, and what are its underlying dimensions? Second, how can IA be measured as a construct? Third, how does IA affect customer engagement and sales performance, two important objectives that practitioners aim to achieve through influencer marketing campaigns, and what are the contingent factors of its impacts on these objectives?

Method And Data – We conducted two main studies to develop, purify, and validate the IA scale; test its role in predicting customer engagement and sales performance; and identify boundary conditions. Specifically, in Study 1, we conducted several surveys to develop, purify, and confirm the scales of IA. Study 2 tests our research hypotheses, including the main effect of IA on customer engagement and sales performance and the moderating roles of follower size, expertise, brand popularity, and brand premium.

Summary of Findings – Based on a multi-method approach, this study finds that authentic influencers are passionate, interactive, symbolic, original, and transparent. For brands and marketers, cooperating with authentic influencers will promote customer engagement and enhance sales performance. Specifically, Study 1 used a paper-and-pen questionnaire and online surveys to generate, purify, and validate the measurement scales of IA and confirm the five subdimensions of the multidimensional construct of IA—passion, interactivity, symbolism, originality, and transparency—with 18 measurement items. Furthermore, the results of Study 2 reveal that IA increases customer engagement and leads to better sales performance. Evidence from a popular short-video platform in China shows that influencers with higher authenticity received larger numbers of likes, comments, and shares, and the sales volume of the products that they endorsed is also greater.

Statement of Key Contributions – First, it contributes to the authenticity literature by identifying a new type of authenticity – *influencer authenticity* (IA) – and formally conceptualizing it as a multidimensional construct encompassing five dimensions. Prior research on authenticity has primarily focused on four areas – namely, authentic consumption, brand authenticity, advertising authenticity, and celebrity authenticity. Second, IA adds to the influencer marketing literature by introducing an underexamined influencer characteristic that shapes customer engagement and sales performance. Previously, influencer marketing research examined different influencer characteristics, including number of followers (e.g., Gong et al. 2017) number of followees (Valsesia, Proserpio, and Nunes 2020), overall posting frequency (e.g., Stephen et al. 2017) and source credibility (Lou and Yuan 2019). Our focus on IA sheds light on an overlooked, yet important factor that can

inform influencer selection decisions to enhance customer engagement and improve sales performance. Third, this study goes beyond investigating the impact of IA on engagement and is one of the first to demonstrate that authenticity can lead to desirable sales outcomes based on the field data. Finally, our work provides a more nuanced understanding of IA for influencers to manage and demonstrate their authenticity in terms of the five aspects (i.e., passion, interactivity, symbolism, originality, and transparency).

INFLUENCER MARKETING: HOW ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE INFLUENCERS AFFECT CONSUMERS' RESPONSE TO BRANDS?

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Keywords: Artificial intelligence influencers, influencer marketing, social presence, brand trust, brand attitudes

Description: This research examines the effect of artificial intelligence influencers on consumers' trust in and attitude towards a brand.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

A growing number of brands such as KFC, Luis Vuitton and Blamian have utilized artificial intelligence influencers (AIIs). AIIs are defined as computer-generated imagery influencers with a social media presence (Thomas and Fowler, 2020). AIIs are intricately designed with the purpose of appearing human (Hoffower, 2019; Sokolov, 2019), though they are not. AIIs are robots, and their stories and content are real in that they exist, but they are fictitious and their real nature (e.g., that they are not human) is not required to be disclosed. Should consumers believe AIIs are human, their expectation will be disrupted when they find out they are not. This can happen in the form of a disclosure by the AII or another consumer. Such disclosure could affect AII credibility and consumers' trust in and attitude towards the brand.

Consequently, this research aims to examine the following questions: (1) Can consumers glean that AII's are not human? (2) How does knowing this (via a disclosure), affect consumers' trust in and attitude towards a brand? Furthermore, to address the global nature of this phenomenon, we examine two countries (Brazil and United States) in which consumers possess different self-construal (collectivistic vs. individualistic).

Method and Data

In order, to test our hypotheses, a within subjects two factor disclosure (before vs. after) x prior knowledge (absent vs. present) experimental design was conducted. Two hundred fifty-two undergraduate business students from a southern university participated in the U.S. study (50% male, 50% 18 to 21 years old), and one hundred people participated in the Brazilian study (26% male, 48% 22 to 25 years old). To test the moderated serial mediation proposed by H1-H6, and H7, which suggests that culture factors influence the impact of AII disclosures on consumers perception and attitudes, two Preacher and Hayes process models 83 were conducted for the U.S. and Brazil samples. For the first model, the outcome variable was brand attitudes, and for the second, the outcome variable was brand trust. For both models, the predictor variable was disclosure, mediator 1 was social presence (SP) perceptions of the AII, and mediator 2 was AII credibility. The moderating variable was prior knowledge. Unstandardized indirect effects were computed for each of 5,000 bootstrapped samples, and the 95% confidence interval was computed.

Summary of Findings

AII credibility was higher before the disclosure than after it and SP perceptions positively predict AII credibility. Moreover, prior knowledge moderates the effect of disclosure on SP perceptions, which indicates that the effect of disclosure on SP perceptions was stronger for

those without prior knowledge than for those with prior knowledge. However, in the case of Brazil, disclosure was not a significant predictor of SP perceptions and prior knowledge did not moderate the effect of disclosure on SP perceptions. AII credibility positively predicts brand attitude and brand trust. Lastly, the indirect effect of disclosure on brand attitudes was found to be statistically significant. Also, the indirect effect of disclosure on brand trust was found to be statistically significant when prior knowledge was absent. However, the indirect effect of disclosure on brand trust was found to be stronger when prior knowledge was present. On the other hand, the indirect effect of moderated mediation was not found to be significant for the Brazil sample, nor was significant for brand trust. This comparison between the U.S. versus the Brazilian results indicates that Individualism/Collectivism moderates the indirect effect of the disclosure the AII is not human on brand trust and attitude, and perceived credibility.

Statement of Key Contributions

This research offers several contributions to theory and practical considerations for marketers interested in knowing the impact of AIIs on consumers' response to brands. Specifically, it examines the potential negative effect that AIIs might have on a brand. Findings reveal that a disclosure negatively affects consumers perceptions towards the AII, which in turn affects brand trust and attitudes. In doing so, this study evidences a psychological process underlying consumers response to the disclosure that AIIs are not human. Moreover, this study reveals a cultural boundary by indicating that the general propensity to trust by consumers in collectivistic countries overrides the impact of AII's social presence. Furthermore, this research offers directions for brands regarding the implementation of AII. Foremost, marketers must be aware that, although counterintuitively, the good design of AII unintendedly puts brands in a position where a disclosure that the AII is not human is inevitable. As a result, it is recommended

that brands reconsider the design of their own AII or the AII they choose to work with. Specifically, the design should not evoke suspicion of the real nature of the AII so that the negative effect of disclosure won't happen.

"References are available upon request."

MITIGATING THE RISK OF BRAND ACTIVISM ON SOCIAL MEDIA

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Keywords: Brand activism, CSR, Social media, Instagram

Description: We investigate how brands can mitigate the inherent risk of brand activism.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Despite noteworthy advances in the corporate activism literature focused on the net effect of activism, a critical research gap exists regarding (1) the implication of activism occurring at the brand level that customers most commonly encounter, and (2) factors that enable brands to mitigate brand activism's potential risk and effectively implement activism. Against the background of little strategic guidance for successful brand activism implementation, this study attempts to fill the research gap by investigating the following research question: how can a brand mitigate the risk of brand activism?

Method and Data

We analyze a unique dataset composed of 1,407 brands' Instagram brand activism posts from October 2010 to May 2021 using a Bidirectional Encoder Representation from Transformers (hereinafter BERT) model with causal inference techniques.

Summary of Findings

Our results suggest that the negative effect of brand activism can be offset when the brand has historically been nurturing the activist identity in a consistent manner, when the brand's activist effort includes its unique interpretation of the social issue, and when brand's activist effort is supported by sufficient elaboration.

Key Contributions

Notwithstanding the inherent risk of speaking out about social controversies, brands are feeling the pressure to participate in the wave of activism and take stands on social problems. Our research sheds light on how brands can mitigate the risk of participating in activism and how they should implement activist communication on social media.

NAVIGATING MARKETING ANALYTICS GOVERNANCE: SCOPE AND BOUNDARY CONDITIONS OF DATA PROTECTION OFFICERS' SELF-ACCOUNTABILITY

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Keywords: Privacy, Data Protection Policies, Self-discrepancy Theory, Self-accountability

Description: As GDPR sets up Data Protection Officers (DPO) functions within organizations and disrupts the governance of data-driven companies, we show that DPOs' self-efficacy weakens the positive effect of self-accountability on their behavioral intentions (i.e., protecting consumer privacy and complying with GDPR).

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) disrupts marketing analytics governance and introduces data protection officers (DPO). DPOs' behavioral intentions are intentions to protect consumers' privacy, from GDPR compliance to other actions. Given the tensions in DPOs' environment (e.g., analytics culture, competitive pressure), we draw from self-discrepancy theory to examine the scope and boundary conditions of DPOs' self-accountability. DPOs' self-accountability should have a positive influence on DPOs' behavioral intentions (H_1). However, DPOs' self-efficacy should negatively moderate this first positive relation (H_2), because ethical

behaviors need consciousness of self-capabilities. Considering data-driven environments, data are core firm resources to be protected, and analytics culture should have a positive influence on DPOs' behavioral intentions (H_{3a}). But competitive pressure should also lead to follow leading firm usages (because of complexity), potentially leaving privacy protection issues behind; thus, having an opposite effect (H_{3b}). Finally, perceived benefits of GDPR compliance (resp. perceived cost of GDPR non-compliance) should have a positive (resp. negative) influence on DPOs' behavioral intentions (H_{4a}; resp. H_{4b}).

Method and Data

We administered a questionnaire to all French, internal DPOs listed by the CNIL (n = 24,858), via Qualtrics, between April and November 2021. The platform reported that 1,006 DPOs completed it. We filtered respondents based on three criteria: those who were not in France and working for a French company; those who did not work for an organization using marketing analytics; and those who were not aware of their organization's privacy rules. This resulted in a final sample of 226 DPOs (M_{age} = 45.60, SD_{age} = 11.40, 59.7% male). We adapted the following 7-point Likert scales from the literature: self-accountability, self-efficacy and behavioral intention, perceived benefit of compliance, and perceived cost of noncompliance, analytics culture, competitive pressure.

Summary of Findings

We show that self-accountability significantly increases behavioral intention regarding consumer privacy protection (b = 1.61, p < .001) and GDPR compliance (b = 1.40, p < .001), supporting H_1. In line with H_2, self-efficacy significantly and negatively moderates the positive effect of self-accountability on behavioral intention regarding consumer privacy (b = –.23, p < .01) and GDPR compliance (b = –.19, p < .01). Regarding marketing analytics, analytics culture significantly impacts behavioral intention regarding consumer privacy protection (b =

.09, $p < .05$), but not GDPR compliance ($b = .01$, $p > .05$), which partially supports H_{3a}. Conversely, competitive pressure significantly decreases behavioral intention regarding GDPR compliance ($b = –.08$, $p < .05$), but not consumer privacy ($b = –.04$, $p > .05$), thus partially supporting H_{3b}. The results show that the perceived benefit of compliance significantly improves the behavioral intention regarding consumer privacy ($b = .20$, $p < .001$) and GDPR compliance ($b = .09$, $p < .05$), which supports H_{4a}. We partially support H_{4b} as the effect of the perceived cost of noncompliance significantly decreases behavioral intention regarding consumer privacy ($b = –.11$, $p < .05$), but not regarding GDPR compliance ($b = .07$, $p > .05$).

Statement of Key Contributions

Our research demonstrates that DPOs' self-efficacy weakens the positive effect of self-accountability on their behavioral intentions: DPOs' self-accountability is all the more activated than DPOs feel confident to take effective actions. Moreover, DPOs' behavioral intention scale has proved to be bi-dimensional (consumers' privacy protection versus GDPR compliance), which illustrates tension or contradictory injunctions DPOs are faced with. Therefore, organizations have to support DPOs efficiency, with financial means, legitimacy, and the development of an analytics culture. Indeed, our results also prove that analytics culture has a greater effect on behavioral intentions towards consumer privacy than external competitive pressure. In doing so, our research shows the importance of developing not only regulations but also privacy awareness and privacy literacy. In particular, in data-driven organizations, managers play a key role to develop a privacy responsibility framework. Thus, our research aims to shed light on factors' effects such as self-accountability or contexts' effects such as data-driven organizations: between DPOs responsibility and self-guidance, what could contribute to behavioral intentions to consumer privacy defense?

Title

Overlooked Benefits of Online Reviews: An Examination of Spending Shifts Following Online Engagement

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Keywords: Online Reviews, Customer Relationship Marketing, Engagement

Description: This paper examines the extent to which the act of generating online reviews and engaging with a firm online can contribute to loyalty formulation, which drives future spending with a firm.

PICTURES AS CUES OF ONLINE REVIEW CREDIBILITY: MODERATING ROLE OF VALENCE AND STYLE OF PROCESSING

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Keywords: Online Consumer Reviews (OCR); OCR Format (text vs. image vs. hybrid); OCR Valence; Verbalizers vs. Visualizers.

Description: This study examines the role of accompanying images on credibility of differently-valenced (positive, negative, and two-sided) online reviews, in isolation and in conjunction with the review text, using experimental research method, along with studying the moderating role of information processing style of review readers (visual vs. verbal).

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

A typical online consumer review (OCR) format comprises of reviewer details and the review text (that itself comprises of a numerical star rating and the review content). However, more and more third-party review websites and e-commerce platforms, like Zomato.com, Myntra.com and Amazon.in now give reviewers an option to add pictures and videos to their reviews to enhance the review-receiver's cognitive elaboration and processing of product information/review experience (Lin et al. 2012; Wu et al. 2020). While online consumer reviews and their content have got traction

in the scholarly literature, the value of images accompanying OCRs is in the nascent stage, due to theoretical and methodological barriers (Wu et al. 2020; Qingxiang et al. 2020). Thus, the focus of this current study is to examine the role of review message format on determining review credibility. Further, while past research has shown that the valence (i.e., positive vs. negative vs. two-sided) of textual information differently influences attitude towards online reviews, similar studies are missing for images accompanying OCRs or standalone visual reviews. Finally, and most importantly, none of the previous studies have considered the impact of inherent differences, such as a review-receiver's information processing styles (e.g., verbal vs. visual style) and other cognitive characteristics (e.g., need for cognition) on the evaluation and adoption of different OCR formats [text vs. purely pictorial (image) vs. hybrid (text and image)]. The key hypotheses tested are as follows:

H1: Reviews that have both text and images will be considered more credible than reviews which have only text, followed by reviews which have only images.

H2: Negative hybrid OCRs will be considered more credible than two-sided hybrid OCRs, followed by positive hybrid OCRs as against image- or text-only OCRs, where two-sided OCRs will be considered more credible than negative, followed by positive OCRs.

H3: The effect of OCRs with images on perceived review credibility is greater for visualizers than for verbalizers.

Method and Data

A 3 [OCR Format: Text vs. Image vs. Hybrid (Text and Image)] * 3 (Message Valence: Positive vs. Negative vs. Two-sided) between-subjects factorial design was used for this experiment. Reviews with textual format only had the review text, whereas those with only image had a title and images. In comparison, hybrid reviews had both review text and images. Positive reviews had an evaluative direction of the review as positive. In negative reviews, the evaluative direction was negative. Two-sided reviews comprised of both positives and negatives of the restaurant. The two-items valence scale by Khare, Labrecque, and Asare (2011) and Kim and Gupta (2012) (the

reviewers' opinions about the restaurant were 1=unfavorable to 7=favorable, and the reviewers' opinions about the restaurant were 1=bad to 7=good) were used for manipulation check. For the review format, respondents were asked to tick whether they could see images or not in the review to validate the review format. The results showed that the manipulations were successful.

Summary of Findings

Participants were randomly assigned to the six manipulations. 235 valid responses were filled. Hypothesis 1 examined the main effect of review format on review credibility. This hypothesis was tested using ANCOVA. The results showed that there is a significant univariate main effect for hybrid OCRs on review credibility, followed by text only reviews and last image only OCRs (M_{Hybrid} = 4.855, M_{Text} = 4.808, M_{Image} = 4.108; [F (2, 234) = 11.074, p <0.000, partial η2 = .094]). Thus, Hypothesis 1 was supported. Hypothesis 2 examined the interaction effects of OCR format and review valence on review credibility. The between-subjects univariate ANCOVA analysis showed there was a significant interaction effect between OCR format and valence [F (4, 234) = 2.762, p <0.05, partial η2 = .049]). Thus, Hypothesis 2 was supported. Finally, the results show that the review readers processing style (verbalizer vs. visualizer) has a statistically significant impact on perceived review credibility of images across formats and valence F (1, 234) = 13.422, p <0.000, partial η2 = .059]), supporting Hypothesis 3.

Statement of Key Contributions

The following key contributions from this study emerge:

1. **Examines the value of images in OCRs on review credibility:** This study is one of the few studies that attempts to examine the value of images accompanying OCRs on OCR outcomes and consumer attitude, specifically the perceived credibility. This study shows that only text or only pictures are not sufficient in OCRs to convey the product review and usage experience as they elicit higher degree of mental imagery that helps the review readers in decision-making. A hybrid OCR is much more valuable in terms of information provided to readers, thereby impacting its credibility.

2. **Explains the inconsistency in valence-related research:** The inconclusiveness in valence literature can be reduced by accounting for other accompanying attributes such as the presence and content of accompanying images. This study shows that while text-only positive reviews might be equally credible (or inconclusive) than text-only negative reviews, reviews that have only negative/unfavorable images, or reviews that have images which are congruent with negative information in the review text are more likely to be considered more credible.
3. **Pioneering attempt to consider review readers' style of information processing on OCR outcomes:** Given the abundance of visual and verbal cues on review websites or within online consumer reviews, style of processing (SOP) is likely to have significant implications for perceived credibility and attitude towards OCRs. Yet, SOP has not been studied in the context of online consumer reviews. Based on prior research related to SOP, this study shows that hybrid reviews will have a will have a greater impact on visualizers, whereas purely textual will have a greater impact on verbalizers. Also, this study shows that the interaction effect between the OCR format and readers' processing style impacts the notions of perceived credibility.

References are available upon request.

THE EFFECTS OF VIRAL VIDEO ADS ON BRAND-RELATED OUTCOMES

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Keywords

TikTok, attitude toward the ad, attitude toward the brand, brand awareness, purchase intention, experiment

Description

An empirical analysis of the effects of viral video ads published on TikTok on attitude toward the ad, attitude toward the brand, brand awareness, and purchase intention.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Questions

Short vertical videos have become an attractive marketing tool due to their viral potential. However, knowledge of what features drive the diffusion of these video ads is limited, and little research exists about the overall impact of viral video ads on marketing objectives. Although several previous studies have analyzed the effects of single video ad characteristics, it remains unclear how marketer-generated micro-videos, as a social media advertising format, affect consumer attitude and intention. Therefore, the study's objective is to measure the direct effect of vertical viral video ads on advertising outcomes. The goal is to explore the impact on non-economic outcomes (creating awareness and improving brand perception) and economic

outcomes (increasing both sales and purchase behavior). Hence, attitude toward the ad, attitude toward the brand, brand awareness, and purchase intention are considered as common measures of advertising effectiveness and we pose the following four research questions: How do vertical viral video ads on social media affect attitude toward the ad? How do vertical viral video ads on social media affect attitude toward the brand? How do vertical viral video ads on social media affect brand awareness? How do vertical viral video ads on social media affect purchase intention?

Method and Data

We conducted a one-way randomized-groups between-subjects experimental design to capture the impact of viral video ads as a stimulus on attitude toward the ad, attitude toward the brand, brand awareness, and purchase intention. As the respondents' product category involvement had a potential effect on their responses, it was considered as a covariate. Two experimental stimuli were used. To control for participant familiarity with or preference for a specific brand, a fictitious brand in the product category food was designed. The experimental stimuli were based on real-life ads to capture realistic consumer responses and interpret the results for marketing practice. The final data set was a sample of 373 respondents from the German-speaking part of Europe. To analyze the data and identify the main effect of viral video ads on advertising outcomes, we used multivariate analysis of covariance ((M)ANCOVA).

Summary of Findings

The MANCOVA with product category involvement as a covariate showed a significantly different effect of the stimuli on attitude toward the ad, attitude toward the brand, brand

awareness, and purchase intention at a five percent level. The ANCOVAs determined that social image ads lead to significantly better consumer attitude toward the ad, attitude toward the brand, and purchase intention than viral video ads at a five percent level when controlling for product category involvement. No significant difference in the impact of the stimuli on brand awareness was established. Concerning the research questions, vertical viral video ads on social media have a significantly lower effect on attitude toward the ad, attitude toward the brand, and purchase intention than social image ads, whereas no significant effect on brand awareness was identified.

Statement of Key Contributions

This research makes significant contributions to understanding vertical viral video ads and their effects on advertising outcomes and provides the groundwork for future research in this field. The theoretical implications refer to the findings that social image ads have a more positive influence on respondents' ad likeability, brand attitude, and purchase intention than viral video ads when controlling for product category involvement. Thus, this study confirms previous research on the significant covariate effect of product involvement on brand attitude and purchase intention. This study further shows that the short-term impact is stronger for social image ads. However, it is unclear whether viral video ads are more influential in the long run. For marketing practitioners, the findings give useful insights on the effectiveness of video content on social media, although the results did not show a positive effect of viral video ads on brand-related outcomes compared to image ads. If the primary advertising goal is to reach many users and increase brand visibility, short video clips can be beneficial. However, if the goals are to improve ad and brand likeability or drive the ad viewer to make a purchase, a concise social image ad might be a better solution.

References are available upon request.

THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS IN TOURISM MARKET-INGRESEARCH:

DERIVATION OF A PROCESSUAL MODEL OF INFLUENCING, INFLUENCER CHARACTERISTICS, AND RESEARCH OPERATIONALIZATIONS

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Keywords: *Social media influencers (SMIs), Consumer Behavior, eWOM, SO(MOA)R-Model, Digital Marketing, Tourism Decision-Making.*

Description:

Option 1: This research aims to segment social media influencers (SMIs) into five groups based on eight main criteria and to derive a processual model of influencing to determine under which context settings the deployment of SMIs has an appetitive or aversive effect on purchase decisions.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

What is the status quo regarding the decision-making impact of social media influencers (SMIs) in tourism research? Do the findings differ from the current understanding of influencer-related factors in other sectors (e.g., retail, luxury, etc.) within the marketing literature? A mixed research approach was chosen to partially explain the appetitive or aversive influence of SMIs and their messages on recipients in the tourism marketing context and to segment SMIs based on eight main criteria. This approach applied a comprehensive literature analysis and a positivistic SO(MOA)R model, adapted to context-related factors in connection with the effects of digitalization and electronic word-of-mouth. Preliminary results reveal that there are thus far no comprehensive answers regarding the context-related influence of SMIs in tourism. Based on eight criteria, SMIs are classified into five groups. Finally, influencers, their characteristics, and research operationalizations are categorized, and a first processual model of influencing in tourism research is established. These findings still reveal numerous research gaps

in the understanding of SMIs-influence and serve as a reference point for future research efforts.

Research Questions

As Taylor (2020) and Hudders, De Jans, and De Veirman (2021) postulate, the main drivers that affect social media influencing (SMI) are still under-researched and a better understanding of the effects of this "emerging research topic" would be desirable. Although the economic relevance of social media influencers (SMIs) in areas such as beauty, luxury, and fashion (Sokolova and Kefi, 2020; Lee and Watkins, 2016) has already been scientifically established, there are still no conclusive findings regarding the strength of the effects of SMIs on the tourism-related decision-making processes of recipients (Liu, Wu, and Li, 2019). Since the decision-making process regarding tourism decisions has further complexity layers (Laesser and Bieger, 2021; Juvan and Dolnicar, 2014), it seems meaningful to analyze whether current findings also hold for this industry. Therefore, the following research questions arise: RQ1: What is the status of research on the decision-making impact of social media influencers in tourism? RQ2: What determines the influence of a travel-related informational message (content) in the SMI context? RQ3: What determines the "influence" of a travel-related messenger (influencer) in the SMI context? Additionally, it is to be examined which context configurations of SMI signals lead to an endorsing (appetitive) or contradicting (aversive) effect. RQ4: Do these findings correspond to known influencing factors in other industries? RQ5: Based on which main criteria can SMIs be segmented?

Method and Data

The basis of this research endeavor is a literature review on the state of the art of SMI within the marketing, consumer behavior, psychological, and tourism literature streams. A mixed research structure was chosen by applying a positivistic SO(MOA)R model (Laesser, Luo, and Beritelli, 2019), adapted to personal and environmental context-related factors in connection

with the effects of digitalization, eWOM, and persuasion literature. The goal was to identify the sufficient/necessary conditions for classifying SMIs as influential and for determining whether findings related to SMI influence in other industries also apply to tourism decision-making. The literature was screened for potential influence-related factors besides various SMI characteristics and operationalizations. These findings may be used as the basis for experimental settings to test various detected influence factors. To operationalize positive or negative changes in behavior according to the motivation-activation theory (Hsu, Cai, and Li, 2009; Parrinello, 1993), the terms aversive and appetitive were utilized as in the research by Bradley et al. (2001), Lang, Bradley, and Cuthbert (1997) and Laesser et al. (2019).

Summary of Findings

The extensive literature analysis resulted in various influence-related factors that led to a processual model of influencing and potential operationalizations for different experimental settings. Additionally, five influencer groups could be defined using the following eight characteristics: follower numbers, cost structures, content quality, necessary search efforts, relevant application areas, engagement rates, authenticity, and relationship duration. Thus, various settings may be explored; for example, whether perceived authenticity and engagement rate decrease in parallel with the increase of follower numbers, as found in other marketing areas. Generally, the quality of content increases in influencer groups with more followers even though influencers with a smaller follower base have also become more professional over the last years. For marketers, the search efforts for SMIs with fewer followers are higher, but the costs are lower, and a longer relationship is recommended to exploit the full potential of the higher perceived authenticity. These findings are essential for developing a robust experimental fit for further tests to learn more about the different influence variables and to help marketers determine their social media strategy.

Key Contributions

This research contributes to the literature in four ways. First, it summarizes the current understanding of the effects of social media influencers and additionally examines the complexity of tourism decision-making. Second, it examines whether established findings, e.g. on the number of followers and the (active) perceived influence regarding an appetitive or aversive effect also apply to decision-making processes within tourism. Third, this research proposes a matrix of various influencer types and their differences with respect to eight main criteria. These findings extend the literature on digital marketing regarding decision making in tourism and the impact of SMIs and their messages. Lastly, based on the literature analysis and a SO(MOA)R-approach a processual model of influencing was established which may be further tested and developed in continuing behavioral experiments. For this purpose, a list of operationalizations has already been developed for every model component. This research endeavor will shed further light on the question under which context settings the deployment of SMIs may be beneficial.

References are available on request.

What Do Hair Products Have To Do With A Waterfall? The Role of Remoteness, Social Comparison, and Envy in Sponsored Social Media Content Effectiveness.

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Keywords: Remote Conveyor, Social Comparison, Envy, Social Media, Influencer Marketing

Description: This study specifically looks at how creativity through remoteness in sponsored social media images affects purchase intentions and upward social comparison.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Questions:

RQ1: How can social media influencers leverage creativity in their sponsored posts to attract more purchase intentions from followers?

RQ2: How do individual psychological differences (i.e., self-esteem) affect the upward social comparison and envy relationship felt when viewing sponsored content?

Method and Data:

This dissertation study consists of two experiments. One using panel data, and one consisting of field data (followers) with a social media influencer. Study 1 is a randomized between-subjects design where all respondents will first read a definition of a social media influencer, then randomly fall into one of two conditions. The level of remoteness manipulated in the conditions (remote v. non-remote) will correspond to how similar or dissimilar the context of the image is to the product in the photo. For example, this study is focusing on beauty products, specifically how moisturizing a product can be. Thus, an image suggested to be non-remote will display an influencer putting on facial moisturizer in front of the camera. The follower then must read the description (constant between both conditions) to understand that the product is moisturizing. In other words, non-remote posts do nothing to suggest the key benefit claim without further

cognitive work from the follower. However, an image suggested to be remote will display an influencer surrounded by water, like a waterfall, applying the same facial moisturizer. Study 2 will replicate study 1 in a real-world context. Sola from Discovering Natural partnered with this study to provide external validity to the findings of study 1.

Summary of Findings:

By examining how the remoteness of the influencer to the sponsored product affects purchase intentions directly, and through the mechanisms of upward social comparison, envy, and self-esteem, this research builds on the advertising literature in the context of influencer marketing. Additionally, by partnering with a social media influencer to conduct this study, the present research contributes to the influencer marketing literature by offering real-world data from the followers of a macro influencer.

Statement of Key Contributions:

This study applies the Remote Conveyor Model, specifically the originality component of the creativity dimension, to help explain a sponsored content's effectiveness through the processes of social comparison, envy, and self-esteem. To the researcher's knowledge, this study will be the first to apply the conveyor-product-benefit claim model from the advertising literature to the influencer marketing literature. Drawing on associative memory theory, and social comparison theory, this study provides needed clarity on what social media influencers can do to create more original and creative content to encourage purchases from their followers. This study brings the literature of advertising and cognitive psychology, and applies the associative memory, visual persuasion, and remote conveyor theories in the influencer marketing context. This study

specifically looks at how creativity through remoteness in sponsored social media images affects purchase intentions and upward social comparison. This study then reaffirms the literature relationships between upward social comparison and purchase intentions through envy, while establishing a psychological boundary condition of self-esteem. Between two studies, this dissertation tests the conceptual model through fabricated Instagram posts, and with the partnership of a lifestyle influencer and their following.

WHAT DRIVERS OF CUSTOMER-AGENT INTERACTIONS IN ONLINE STORE CHAT PREDICT SALES OUTCOMES?

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Key:words: sales, chat, synchronicity, message feelings

Description: We draw on social response theory and synchronicity theory and analyze how *positive and negative message feelings* explain sales revenue, sales volume, and sales conversion, while controlling for the work overload (simultaneity of messages and time pressure).

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

In agent-customer interactions, messages have different classifications and conditions. Content of the message refers to the text content with a social and amicable content or with a functional and rational information (Kohler et al., 2011). Our research questions in this paper for dealing with salesperson-customer chat interaction are RQ 1: How do social and functional message content boost sales performance? RQ 2: Do positive and negative message feelings influence sales performance? RQ 3: What are the main effect of asynchronous interaction (agent instantaneous response Moffett et al., 2020) and

response proportion on sales outcomes? To reconcile the seemingly contradictory best practices emerging from prior research, we sought to compare the effects of the content of the messages (social and functional), with salespeople's positive and negative valence, and synchronicity and proportion of responses. We draw on social response theory and synchronicity theory and analyze how these drivers explain sales revenue, sales volume, and sales conversion, while controlling for the work overload (simultaneity of messages and time pressure).

Method And Data

We obtained data from a retail company that sells vehicle accessories (e.g. brake pad, belt, ignition coil, rearview mirror, windshield wiper). The auto-part company operates in a marketplace (similar to eBay, Amazon) and sells its products nationally. Industrial consumers went to this e-commerce platform and opened an online interaction with the auto-part company, asking information about the offer's features. From a database of an auto parts company in a B2B context, we used text-mining technique to encode 19,817 interactions (aggregated in 713 days), of which 3,433 resulted in sales (17.32% conversion rate)

Summary of Findings

The results showed that functional content had a significant impact on sales revenue (β = .013, $p < .05$) and sales volume (β = .009, $p < .05$), but not for sales conversion (β = .000; p=ns), supporting H_{2a} and H_{2b}. These results indicated that the functional and rational feature in the message-exchange increased sales outcomes. This evidence is expected based on logical and rational information provided by the agent that help customer decide toward the purchase. Whereas, the social content of the message did

not explain sales outcomes, (β = -.00, p=ns for sales revenue; β = -.00, p=ns for sales volume, and β = -.00, p=ns for sales conversion rejecting $H_{1a, 1b \text{ and } 1c}$). These results exhibited in the agent-customer interaction, using words that foster social tie, communal links and mutual relationship did not translate into sales. Considering message valence, positive interaction feedback increased sales revenue (β =.017, $p < .05$), sales volume (β = .016, $p < .01$) and sales conversion (β = .001, $p < .01$), according to expected and supporting $H_{3a\text{-}c}$. Whereas, the negative interaction feedback did not explain sales revenue (β = .006, p=ns), sales volume (β = .003, p=ns) and sales conversion (β = -.001, p=ns), rejecting $H_{4a\text{-}c}$. By having a non-significant effect, one can infer that consumers' comprehend the lack of product and its unavailable.

Statement of Key Contributions

Drawing on the social response theory, we analyze how consumers view online agents as human personas when these virtual agents employ social and functional cues across interactions. By merging unstructured data from customer-agent interactions obtained through the text-mining technique with data from the company's ERP system, our research contributes to the social response theory by expanding the understanding that functional content drives sales performance. By using functional content, agent explains technical features that matter in online purchase. Whereas, although social content matters because consumers want see online agents as human personas, this construct does not predict sales outcomes. Social content might be relevant to social tie and personal contact; however, when using it for explaining the offer and persuading consumers, this variable does not translate into sales. When considering positive and negative valence, we expand previous research that analyzed positive and negative

expressions (Kang 2019), positive and negative electoral candidate sentiment in twitter (Vries, Gensler and Leeflang 2017), the positive and negative side of having the product (Steinhart, Mazursky and Kamis 2013), the positive and negative sentiment expressed in social media (Gopinath, Thomas and Krishnamurthi 2014) and focus on agent's message.

note "References are available upon request."

WHAT DRIVES VIEWERS TO CLICK ON YOUTUBE RECOMMENDED VIDEOS? THE MODERATING EFFECT OF ALGORITHM APPRECIATION AND ITS LINK WITH ADDICTION

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Keywords: YouTube, Recommendation System, Algorithm Attitude, Addiction, Motivation

Description: This study investigates user motivations on their intention to click on YouTube recommended videos and further examines the moderating effect of user attitude towards algorithms through the use of the YouTube recommendation system.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Every day, viewers worldwide consume one billion hours of content on YouTube (Goodrow, 2017). Of all the viewed content, recommended videos make up 70% of views, which are generated through algorithms (Rodriguez, 2018). An algorithm is a statistical model that can make forecasts (Dietvorst et al., 2015). Algorithms are used in YouTube's recommendation system to suggest videos that users may like and want to view (Davidson et al., 2010). Given that 70% of YouTube views are generated from algorithms, it is important to find out what motivations lead users to click on videos from the YouTube algorithm-based

recommendation system. However, to our knowledge, no study has attempted to explore these specific motivations. Meanwhile, scholars have called for attention on understanding addiction in the digital age as a major problem (e.g. Belk, 2015). To fill the above gaps, this research scrutinizes four research questions: (1) What drives users to click on YouTube recommended videos? (2) What are user attitudes towards YouTube algorithms? In particular, what do viewers think of the YouTube recommendation system? (3) How does algorithm attitude moderate the relationship between motivational variables and the click intention on recommended videos? (4) What relationship does the recommendation system have with addiction?

Method and Data

Data was collected from a sample of YouTube users in the United States through an online survey distributed on Amazon Mechanical Turk (N = 406). After removing samples with incorrectly answered attention check questions, the final sample size was 400. The sample profile consisted of 56.3% as male and 44% were between the ages of 25 to 34. For education, 54.5% had a bachelor's degree and 31% reported their annual household income as "Just above average".

The two dependent variables in the questionnaire are the *Intention to Click on YouTube Recommended Videos* and *Addiction*. The independent variables are *Perceived Video Relatedness*, *Entertainment Seeking* and *Information Seeking*. Next, the moderating variable is *Algorithm Attitude* and the control variables are demographics such as age, gender, education and income. Lastly, the questionnaire also asked users questions on how they used YouTube such as their most visited YouTube channel category, time spent per day, frequency of use per week, and their content creator status. The statistical methods employed are an

exploratory factor analysis (EFA), confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and a hierarchical regression analysis.

Summary of Findings

An EFA was conducted using a maximum likelihood method with direct oblimin rotation. A total of 6 factors were extracted with 24 items, which explained 71.61% of the cumulative variance. All factors loaded to their constructs as represented in previous literature. A CFA was further performed to validate the factor structure. The CFA results indicated model fit: $\chi 2(235) = 562.128$; $\chi 2/df = 2.392$; CFI = 0.960; SRMR = 0.064; RMSEA = 0.059.

The hierarchical regression analysis results reveal that *perceived video relatedness* ($\beta = .581$, $p < 0.001$), *entertainment seeking* ($\beta = .130$, $p < 0.01$), and *information seeking* ($\beta = .200$, $p < 0.001$) all have a positive significant effect on the *intention to click on YouTube recommended videos*. Next, the moderating effect of *algorithm attitude* enhanced the relationship between *entertainment seeking* and the *intention to click on YouTube recommended videos* significantly ($\beta = .112$, $p < 0.05$). Lastly, *algorithm attitude* has a significant positive relationship with *addiction* ($\beta = .180$, $p < 0.001$).

Key Contributions

This research contributes to the literature of digital and social media marketing by exploring user motivations on utilizing YouTube's recommendation system. In particular, it has three main contributions. First, we extend the uses and gratifications (UG) framework from pure traditional media to the social media platform of YouTube. Secondly, this is a pioneering research that probes into understanding YouTube user attitudes towards algorithms. We found that YouTube users express favorable attitudes towards YouTube algorithms, which shows an inclination of "algorithm appreciation". This is another major contribution that is

less discovered in literature. Lastly, the positive link between using the recommendation system and forming addiction signalizes the perils of overusing algorithms, which draws attention for marketing ethics, sustainability and consumer well-being.

For managerial contributions, this study can be applied to any firm that utilizes a recommendation system. Our advice is that firms should prioritize finding new ways to improve their algorithms to enhance the perceived relatedness in relation to the previous object (e.g. video, product, profile) to increase click intention. Next, YouTube can focus on adjusting entertainment and information videos to appear more on the recommendation system to improve views as users have needs on fulfilling hedonic and information gratifications.

References are available upon request.

WHAT'S UP DOC? TRANSPARENCY, CONTROL, AND THE PERSONALIZATION-PRIVACY PARADOX

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Keywords: Personalization-privacy paradox, Transparency-control framework, Intrusion of information boundaries, Tracking technology, Health datafication

Description: Although several studies examined the consequences of transparency and privacy control on consumers' online experience, several limitations invite further research and we overcome these issues by implementing an innovative methodology.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

According to recent research, transparency and control improve the digital experience by empowering consumers and building trust. Studied separately or together, transparency and control are considered on a static level in prior studies. However, with more interactive interfaces, such as for web cookies management, control features depend on the degree of transparency offered in a first instance. Hence, we want to analyze with more realism the roles of

transparency and control. Although several studies examined the consequences of transparency and privacy control on consumers' online experience, several limitations hinder their contribution. We overcome some of them (e.g., the static view of transparency-control) by implementing an innovative methodology.

Method and Data

In order to investigate the personalization privacy paradox within the transparency-control framework, we conducted two experiments. In Study 1, we carry out an experiment by manipulation the level of transparency of the cookie banner (i.e., low vs. high) in an inter-subject design. Just after the stimulus, we ask an open-ended question about the cookie banner. We then use measurement scales for transparency, personalization over privacy and click-through intention. We also conduct topic modeling via a tidy data model for natural language processing on the answers of the open-ended question. We finally integrate the bottom-up approach (i.e., the topics) inside the top-down approach (i.e., measurement scales) in an exploratory mediation analysis. Building on the Study 1, we conduct a second experiment with an intra-subject design. The intervention is displaying the privacy controls of the cookie banner. Respondents answer a set of questions before and after the experiment of displaying the privacy controls. These measures are adapted from the literature: privacy control, information boundaries, personalization over privacy and click-through intention.

Summary of Findings

The impact of the low vs. high transparency conditions was fully mediated by the topics and participants’ relative interest in personalization concern over their privacy: a 5,000-sample bootstrap analysis using a self-implemented PROCESS syntax indicated a significant total

indirect effect (b = .20, SE = .10; 99% confidence interval: [.01, .48]). The impact of the control was fully mediated by the intrusion of information boundaries and participants' relative interest in personalization concern over their privacy over: a 5,000-sample bootstrap analysis indicated a significant indirect effect (b = -.03, SE = .03; 90% confidence interval: [-.08, -.00]).

Statement of Key Contributions

The contributions of this study are threefold. First, we improve the understanding of the link between transparency and consumers' relative desire for the personalization over their concern for privacy. The results highlighted the key role of the intrusion of information boundaries as a mediator of the relationship between transparency and consumers' relative desire for the personalization over their concern for privacy. Second, while prior research studied transparency and control in a two-by-two inter-subject design, we studied the constructs separately because, while consumers can easily assess the transparency of a cookie (i.e., it is the first information that is given in all web pages), learning about control requires more efforts, hence the assessment of control is delayed. Third, we assessed the effect of privacy controls through a psychological mechanism lens, contrary to prior research on privacy controls which mainly focuses on direct effects only, which is common in marketing to explore consumers' decision-making.

Extended Abstract

WHEN CGI MEETS INFLUENCER MARKETING: THE EFFECTS OF CGI INFLUENCERS ON CONSUMER TRUST AND CONSUMPTION CHOICES

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Keywords: CGI Influencers, Anthropomorphism, Trust, Influencer Marketing, Gender

Description: Despite the growing presence and use of virtual (computer generated imagery, CGI) influencers in social media, there is limited knowledge of their influence on consumption implication; In this research, we compare CGI and human influencers to evaluate their effects on downstream consumption consequences.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question – A CGI influencer is a virtual social media influencer with a high following crafted through computer-generated imagery (Drenten and Brooks, 2020). A tech company will transpose a CGI head onto a real body and background and manage the influencers' social media profile with a team of content marketers, data analysts, publicists and more (Drenten, and Brooks 2020). CGI Influencers, a novel alternative to human influencers, are never late, sick or double-booked, have no uncalculated drama, give brands full control over the message, but are not real. The most famous CGI Influencer in Instagram, @Lilmiquela has over 3 million followers and has advertised for brands such as Louis Vuitton, Prada, Mini Cooper, and Doritos. Despite the growing presence of CGI influencers on social media there is limited knowledge of their influence on consumption implication. In this research, we compare consumer perceptions of CGI influencers against their human counterparts, to understand their effects on consumption behavior. Furthermore, we aim to examine the role of consumer trust while exploring the influence of gender on attitudes toward CGI influencers and their downstream consumption consequences.

Method And Data – In Study 1a, we examined how the type of influencer affects user's attitudes and behaviors by experimentally manipulating whether participants saw a CGI influencer or a human influencer. One hundred and sixty participants (77 male and 82 female) ages 19 – 72 (M=37) from Cloud Research participated in this study. For this study we used an Instagram picture of a young woman sitting in a restaurant for both conditions. Her face was airbrushed such that it was possible that she could have a CGI or an edited face. We manipulated the conditions by giving participants a description of the influencer, one as a CGI influencer and the other as human. We analyzed our outcome variables in 2 (Influencer type: human, CGI) x 2 (Gender: male, female) between subjects' design. Our outcome variables where purchase

intentions, trust, anthropomorphism, and attitudes towards the influencer. In this study, we used a female human versus CGI influencer and found there was an interaction between gender and influencer type. Study 1b Explored the effects of male CGI influencers on purchase intentions and the same outcome variables as in the first study including the uncanny valley effect.

Summary of Findings – The results revealed a significant interaction between gender and influencer type on purchase intention, $F(1,143)=10.06$, $p<.01$ with females showing higher PI for products recommended by a human influencer ($M= 4.41$, $SD=1.47$) versus a CGII ($M=2.40$, $SD=1.55$) ($F(1,143)=33.68$, $p<.0001$), but there were no differences between PI between influencer type for males ($F(1,143)=1.10$, $p=.30$). There was a significant interaction of influencer and gender on trust ($F(1,143)=10.87$, $p<.01$) with females trusting CGIIs less than males ($M_{male}=3.67$, $SD=1.60$, $M_{female}= 2.19$, $SD=1.40$; $F(1,143)=20.87$, $p<.0001$). Similar results were found for anthropomorphism, $F(1,143)=12.09$, $p<01$. In the CGII condition, males ($M=4.38$, $SD=1.12$) perceiving this influencer more humanlike than females ($M=3.26$, $SD=1.56$; $(1,143)=15.96$, $p<.0001$). A serial moderated mediation using the PROCESS macro (Model 86; Hayes 2013) indicate there was a significant serial moderated mediation effect, $b = -.44$, 95% CI [-.84, -.13], driven by a significant indirect effect of women $b = -.87$, 95% CI [-1.35, -.50] and men, $b = -.42$, 95% CI [-.73, -.20]. These results indicate that men are more open to CGIIs when the CGII is female. Study 1b used a male influencer. The results found significant main effects and a significant serial mediation (Model 6) consistent with part of our model, $b = -1.28$, 95% CI [-1.76, -.83]. Overall, participants preferred the human influencer on all proposed outcome variables.

Statement of Key Contributions – 200 words Findings from this research help illuminate the limited knowledge on CGI influencers while providing an empirical comparison against the more common human influencers, and their effects on consumer attitude and choice. Further, this research contributes to theory by bridging the social media and AI research while providing a strong theoretical foundation for future research. Findings from this research suggests that men are more receptive to CGI influencers than women are, particularly when a CGI influencer is female. This innovative form of social media marketing provides a great opportunity for marketing managers. First, managers can use CGI influencers for brand promotion and product placement, with very little risk of human error while enhanced control of the influencers' rhetoric, behavior and storyline. Second, marketing managers can use these findings paired with their knowledge of their target marketing to determine whether or not the use of CGI influencers aligns with their target marketing segment. Finally, marketing managers can plan the impact of CGI influencers on important marketing metrics such as attitudes and purchase intentions.

Global & International Marketing

DRIVERS OF FIRM CUSTOMER CENTRICITY: A META-ANALYTIC REVIEW OF THE ROLE OF NATIONAL CULTURE

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Keywords: firm customer centricity, national culture, meta-analysis.

Description: This meta-analytic study examines the role of national culture in the implementation of firm's customer centricity.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

In the past twenty years, marketing research has increasingly focused on firm's customer centricity as a more targeted definition of marketing concept at the organizational level (Crecelius et al. 2019; Jayachandran et al. 2005; Shah et al. 2006). Firm's customer centricity refers to a firm's strategic orientation that emphasizes understanding of the customer needs and prioritization of customer interests (Deshpande et al. 1993; Narver and Slater 1990). This study investigates the contextual role of national culture in the implementation of customer centricity at multinational firms.

Method And Data

We employed meta-analytic research techniques to test the proposed hypotheses. We conducted moderator analyses to investigate whether the significant between-study variation in the magnitude of the correlations involving customer centricity and its drivers is attributable to the country level variables (Hedges & Olkin, 1985; Lipsey & Wilson, 2001).

Summary of Findings

We examine the impact of national culture on the relationship between firm's customer centricity and its antecedents: market-based reward systems, formalization, interdepartmental connectedness, and top management emphasis. The cumulative empirical evidence obtained through our meta-analysis indicates that the drivers of customer centricity may play a different role in enabling or hindering firm's customer centricity in diverse country markets.

Key Contributions

The findings presented in this paper contribute to the extant literature by empirically assessing the impact of the national cultural values on the relationships involving firm's customer centricity. The study helps resolve some of the previous conflicting findings on the relationships involving customer centricity and its antecedents. Thus, it provides useful insights for researchers and practitioners regarding the challenges that companies face when implementing customer centricity across countries.

References are available on request.

Proposal for Global SIG Special Session – AMA Winter Educators' Conference 2022

Culture and the Global Challenges: the Good, the Bad and the Ugly

Session Chairs: Linda Shi and Annie Peng Cui*

***This is one of the two special sessions proposed by Global SIG board.**

Session Abstract

This session will address the overarching issue of challenges firms face in the global market place. Across three research projects, we aim at offering theoretical and managerial insights to advance our knowledge about how firms can overcome the challenges from counterfeit industry, devaluation of second-hand shopping and the negative image of emerging companies in terms of lack of organizational legitimacy. Jointly, these papers contribute to the conversation of reconnecting and reconceiving the marketplace, the theme of this conference.

The first presentation examines bicultural consumers' consumption of counterfeit luxury products and provide insights on how to tackle the counterfeit industry by reducing demand. Previous counterfeiting literature assumes bicultural consumers reflect the same counterfeit consumption patterns as monocultural consumers. However, unlike their monocultural counterparts, bicultural consumers usually have two conflicting identities and experience more complex moral emotions assessing benefits and risks associated with counterfeit purchase. In addition, most extant literature only examines pre-purchase motivations. This research expands the timeframe relevant for anti-counterfeiting interventions by examining how post-purchase emotions lead to regret and reduce future repurchase intention, especially among bicultural consumers.

The second paper examines how social value uncertainty, defined as consumers' uncertainty of how others will respond to their consumption choice and therefore may affect their

social images and relationships, affects the purchase of second-hand (or used) products across cultures. While research suggests consumers are becoming more environmentally conscious, consumers' sustainable consumption behavior, including the purchasing of second-hand or used products, often lags behind their attitudes and intentions. This study extends extant research by examining whether consumers' social value uncertainty contributes to the attitude-behavior-gap in the second-hand market. Specifically, this research argues that social value uncertainty will result in product devaluation (e.g., reduction or underestimation of the product's worth), which in turn will lower purchase intentions and behavior. Further, we examine two cultural dimensions that may moderate these relationships—uncertainty avoidance and collectivism. By examining one explanatory mechanism (i.e., product devaluation) and two moderators, this study aims to provide insight to consumers, policy makers, and managers seeking to increase second-hand shopping.

Lastly, the third presentation examines how global firms from emerging markets overcome its negative images of lack of organizational legitimacy. Firms from emerging markets, such as China, face unique challenges in the global marketplace (Ferreira and Ferreira, 2018). One of these challenges is the lack of organizational legitimacy in established markets due to the information asymmetry existing between the firms and stakeholders in overseas markets. Lacking organizational legitimacy makes those firms difficult to obtain support from local markets and to develop positive perceptions of local stakeholders (Reimann, Ehrgott, Kaufmann, and Carter, 2012). One potential solution for solving this legitimacy dilemma is to signal a firm's underlying quality to stakeholders so that they can develop positive perceptions of the firm (Kölbel and Busch, 2021). Drawing on signaling theory, this study suggest that a firm's

innovation capabilities can serve as a signal to reflect its latent quality to stakeholders, thereby reducing information asymmetry between the firm and its stakeholders.

PRESENTATION 1

Do Bicultural Consumers Regret Buying Fakes: A Moral Emotion Perspective on Counterfeit Post-purchase Regret

By Linda Hui Shi, Annie Peng Cui, and Stacey Fitzsimmons

In today's global world, bicultural consumers are becoming an increasingly important group for luxury counterfeits. Bicultural consumers' counterfeit purchase poses an ethical challenge as they usually have two conflicting identities and experience more complex moral emotions assessing benefits and risks associated with counterfeit purchase. Prior literature implicitly assumes their counterfeit purchasing replicates the monocultural ones. Much of the counterfeiting literature examines only pre-purchase motivations. This research expands the timeframe relevant for anti-counterfeiting interventions by examining how post-purchase emotions lead to regret and reduce future repurchase intention, especially among bicultural consumers.

Wilcox and Zaichkowsky (2020) argued that an effective anti-counterfeiting effort is not on legal enforcement, but on the motivational factors that influence consumers' desire to purchase luxury counterfeit. An extensive search on prior counterfeit research indicates past literature relies mainly on the antecedents before counterfeit purchase intentions, such as novelty seeking (Pueschel et al. 2017; Randhawa et al. 2015), pursuit of pleasure and thrill (Perez, Castaño, & Quintanilla, 2010), desire to be viewed as a smart shopper (Penz & Stottinger, 2005), and cognitive dissonance to justify the immoral counterfeit purchase (Eisend 2019), the *post counterfeit purchase moral emotions* have been largely ignored. Furthermore, cross-cultural

consumer research argued consumers with inconsistent cultural identities rely more on emotion rather than rational cues in making purchasing decisions (Gao et al., 2020). Two moral emotions relevant to conflicting bicultural identities are shame and guilt (Baek and Yoon 2017). Shame is external oriented, as consumers might experience shame after purchase counterfeit if found out by other members (Davidson 2019); while guilt refers to an internal emotion reflecting consumers' self-evaluation that their past behaviors violate moral order (Gregory-Smith et al. 2013). Prior literature about the role of moral emotions in counterfeit purchase is fragmented as they either study emotions related to shame (Davidson 2019) or investigate identity related guilt (Chen and Moosmayer 2020). An integrated conceptual framework and a large scale multicultural empirical study is needed to reconcile previous findings and extend the timeframe of counterfeit purchase to include post-purchase moral emotions. Thus, our research answers an important question: *How does bicultural identity conflict (BIC) interact with shame and guilt to influence post-purchase regret among bicultural consumers?*

Accordingly, this study makes four major contributions to advance knowledge on counterfeit luxury consumption. First, we build a model of counterfeit purchasing that expands the time horizon beyond the point of purchase to also include post-purchase regret and intentions toward a subsequent purchase. Post-purchase regret refers to a painful emotional state of feeling sorry for a purchase decision made in the past (Bui et al. 2011). It is such a powerful emotion that consumers often choose to avoid future similar purchases (Bui et al. 2011). Second, we test moral emotional that depict potential ways to deter subsequent counterfeit purchases by heightening feelings of regret. Yet much of the consumer ethics counterfeiting literature overemphasizes pre-purchase motivations (Eisend 2019), downplaying the role of post-purchase moral emotions, therefore limiting the explanatory potential for repeated counterfeit purchases

over time (Wilcox et al. 2009).Third, we examine how this process works differently for bicultural consumers than for their monocultural counterparts, given their identity differences. Specifically, the conflicting identities generate emotional arousal which may weaken the linkages between moral emotions, such as shame and guilt, and post-purchase regret. Finally, we conducted one survey and one experiment with a total of 1,694 participants across two languages and multiple cultures to find that both shame and guilt mediate the relationship between consumers' attitudes towards counterfeits and post-purchase regret. Also, the degree of conflict between biculturals' cultural identities weakens both relationships. Our experiment also found that it is possible to prime shame and guilt to artificially high levels, such that neither attitudes nor cultural identity conflict influence post-purchase regret, although both continued to matter in the control condition where shame and guilt were not manipulated. The implication is original brands can detect counterfeit purchase by engaging post-purchase regret through two mediating moral emotions, but bicultural group is an ethically challenging group due to their complex emotion processing mechanisms.

PRESENTATION 2

A Cross-cultural Examination of Social Value Uncertainty and Product Devaluation of Second-hand Purchases

By Liguo Liu, Jody Crosno, and Annie Cui

Consumers' environmental consciousness has been on the rise (Krause 1993; Lim 2017; Balderjahn et al. 2018). However, research often reports a gap in consumers' attitudes and behaviors; consumers report positive attitudes toward green, sustainable behaviors, such as purchasing used products, but they often do not engage in sustainable behaviors due to various constraints and concerns (Carrington et al. 2010; White et al. 2019; Orazi and Chan 2020). This

study examines how social value uncertainty, defined as consumers' uncertainty of how other people's response to their consumption choice may affect their social images and relationships, affects the purchase of second-hand (or used) products across cultures.

Social value refers to a product's ability to enhance social self-concept (Sweeney and Soutar 2001; Gallarza and Saura 2006). That is, a well suitable product can enhance consumers' social images or relationships (e.g., wearing a Rolex), while an inappropriate product may bring shame/stigma and damage consumers' social reputation (e.g., wearing dated and ragged clothing). Social value uncertainty emerges when a product's social value is unpredictable due to the related social uncertainty. We introduce the construct of social value uncertainty to designate the situation where consumers are uncertain of other people's response to their purchasing and consumption choice. That is, consumers' uncertainty of product's social value is built on other people's uncertain responses. Social value uncertainty is expected to result in product devaluation (e.g., reduction or underestimation of the product's worth), which in turn will lower purchase intentions and behavior. Further, we examine two cultural dimensions that may moderate these relationships—uncertainty avoidance and collectivism.

Consumers often make predictions about the future (Bar 2007; Barrett and Simmons 2015). The uncertainty related to these predictions is normally accompanied by negative feelings like uneasiness or anger, providing incentive for people to reduce it (FeldmanHall and Shenhav 2019). In short, it is human nature to reduce uncertainty, including social value uncertainty, and take greater control over events. According to the cultural dimension theory (Hofstede 1980), cultures have different levels of tolerance for uncertainty, ambiguity, and risk-taking. Consumers' whose uncertainty avoidance level is high have a higher need to reduce uncertainty (Xu et al. 2014). Hence, we anticipate consumers with higher uncertainty avoidance will report a

stronger relationship between social value uncertainty and product devaluation, resulting in lower purchase intentions and behaviors of second-hand products.

Since social value uncertainty is built on *other people's* uncertain responses toward the product/purchase, the level of collectivism of the consumers is also expected to moderate the relationship between social value uncertainty and product devaluation. According to Samaha, Beck, and Palmatier (2014, p. 82), "The individualism-collectivism cultural dimension captures the extent to which people are expected to be self-reliant and distant from others (individualism) instead of mutually dependent and closely tied to others (collectivism)." Collectivist cultures value interdependence and affiliation with others (Hofstede et al. 2010). Compared to consumers from individualistic cultures, consumers from collectivist cultures may respond more negatively to social value uncertainty, as any potential social loss would weigh heavier for them. Therefore, we argue that consumers with a higher level of collectivism will report a stronger relationship between social value uncertainty and product devaluation, resulting in lower purchase intentions and behaviors of second-hand products.

This research has implications for consumers, policy makers, and managers as it identifies social value uncertainty as a potential deterrent of more sustainable behaviors, such as second hand shopping. Further, it highlights how cultural dimensions may exacerbate the negative effects of social value uncertainty on second-hand shopping. Lastly, it explores one explanatory mechanism—product devaluation—through which social value uncertainty impedes second-hand purchases. By addressing social value uncertainty via marketing communications (e.g., influencers), policy (e.g., sustainable labeling), managerial decisions (e.g., Nordstrom placing used products alongside new products in store), consumers may be less likely to devaluate used products, and hence be more willing to engage in second-hand shopping.

PRESENTATION 3

Innovation capability, internationalization scope, and organizational legitimacy

By Yu Chang and Xinchun Wang

As firms from emerging markets, such as China, increasingly expand their businesses to the global markets, they face both opportunities and challenges (Ferreira and Ferreira, 2018). On the bright side, globalization brings more opportunities and a larger market base for those multinational firms from emerging markets. On the dark side, those firms face challenges when establishing organizational legitimacy in established markets due to the information asymmetry existing between the firms and stakeholders in overseas markets. For example, customers and investors may lack sufficient knowledge about an emerging firm's underlying quality (e.g., sustainable competitive advantage) that may not be directly observable. Yet, lacking organizational legitimacy makes those firms difficult to obtain support from local markets and to develop positive perceptions of local stakeholders (Reimann, Ehrgott, Kaufmann, and Carter, 2012).

One potential solution for solving this legitimacy dilemma is to signal a firm's underlying quality to stakeholders so that they can develop positive perceptions of the firm (Kölbel and Busch, 2021). Signaling theory suggests that, to reduce information asymmetry, firms need to communicate their strategic information that can reflect their underlying qualities to stakeholders (Connelly et al., 2011). Drawing on signaling theory, we suggest that a firm's innovation capabilities can serve as a signal to reflect its latent quality to stakeholders, thereby reducing information asymmetry between the firm and its stakeholders. A firm can innovate through two ways, namely explorative innovation and exploitative innovation (March, 1991). Explorative innovation refers to innovation activities that focus on searching, experimenting, and discovering

new products or services. In comparison, exploitative innovation emphasizes refining, executing, and appropriating value from the existing market opportunities. We propose that a firm's innovation focus in terms of exploration vs. exploitation can help an emerging multinational firm improve legitimacy but may work differently depending on the firm's internationalization scope.

Using data collected from 121 high-tech companies listed on China's Shanghai and Shenzhen stock exchange from 2013 to 2017, we find that while exploitative innovation can help a firm improve organizational legitimacy under broad internationalization scope, explorative innovation creates more value for a firm when its internationalization is deeply engaged with fewer countries.

This study brings new insights to several research streams. First, we add to the internationalization literature by testing the signaling role of a firm's innovation capability on its organizational legitimacy in the global market. While firms face increasing challenge in the global market when developing organizational legitimacy, we provide evidence supporting the role of innovation capability on signaling a firm's underlying quality to local stakeholders.

Second, we bring new insights to the signaling theory by systematically exploring how innovation capability serves as a signal to reflect a firm's latent quality in the global market and by investigating the boundary conditions of this signaling mechanism. Specifically, our findings show that explorative innovation offers differential impact than exploitative innovation depending on a firm's international scope.

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PARALLEL IMPORTS OF STATUS GOODS: A STRATEGIC ANALYSIS OF AESTHETIC DESIGN

Abstract

Parallel imports of gray products across markets are a worldwide concern for manufacturers. Extant research has focused on parallel imports of regular goods that do not provide status value. In this paper, we investigate the parallel imports of conspicuously consumed status goods. We consider a manufacturer that directly sells a status product to consumers in two markets that value the product differently and a gray marketer that can import the product across markets. Our analysis shows that, though parallel imports decrease a manufacturer's profit from selling regular goods, it can increase its profit from selling status goods. Furthermore, the manufacturer decides whether to use the same or different aesthetic design for products across markets. With the same design, the gray and manufacturer-authorized products look identical, while different designs make them distinguishable, which affects their status value. We find that parallel imports benefit the manufacturer in a broader range of situations under the different-design strategy, whereas the same-design strategy increases the gray marketer's profit. When the two markets are sufficiently similar, the manufacturer uses the same design to induce parallel imports. When the two markets are sufficiently different, the manufacturer uses different designs to either deter parallel imports or improve its profit while competing with the gray marketer.

Statement of Key Contributions

Existing research on parallel imports has focused on regular goods that do not provide status value to consumers. Thus, how parallel imports affect status-goods manufacturers when consumers are concerned about the status value of purchase is unclear. Furthermore, existing research has shown how parallel imports can benefit a manufacturer by alleviating its double-marginalization problem in channel settings (i.e., when the manufacturer sells products to consumers through an independent retailer). However, in non-channel settings (i.e., the manufacturer sells directly to consumers), parallel imports are harmful for the manufacturer. We show that with consumers' status preferences, parallel imports can benefit the manufacturer in non-channel settings. Moreover, when gray and authorized products coexist in a market, the status value of each version depends on whether they look visually

distinguishable. Status-goods manufacturers need to make a unique aesthetic design decision, which the literature has not addressed. Lastly, prior research has typically assumed the exogenous presence of gray markets. By contrast, we examine a manufacturer's design and pricing decisions by considering their impact on the gray marketer's endogenous entry decision, which in turn affects the manufacturer's profit.

This research will guide manufacturers of status goods to make product design and pricing decisions when they face the threat of gray markets. This research can also guide public policy makers in deciding when to regulate gray markets to improve consumer surplus and social welfare.

Paper

In 2013, Supap Kirtsaeng, a student from Thailand, discovered that some of his textbooks in the United States were sold for much cheaper in Asia. These books in Asia were identical to those inthe United States but bore an inscription saying they could not be exported. He shipped many textbooks from Asia to the United States, sold them on eBay, and made approximately $100,000 profit. John Wiley & Sons, publisher of the textbooks, sued Kirtsaeng for copyright infringementand won in the lower court but lost in the Supreme Court. Judges noted that Congress was free to change the law if it believed copyright holders needed more protection against such import-and-resale schemes (Totenberg 2013, Sills 2012).

Kirtsaeng's case is a ramification of parallel imports, defined as the sale of genuine branded goods by third parties ("gray marketers") outside authorized channels (Duhan and Sheffet 1988,Antia et al. 2006, Autrey et al. 2014). The gray market is a $20 billion marketplace and is estimated to be worth $41 billion by 2022 (Shannon 2017, Heuritech 2018). Gray

products range from luxury status goods, which consumers use conspicuously to signal wealth or social status (e.g., automobiles, handbags, watches), to regular goods, which do not provide status value (e.g., information technology products, textbooks, health equipment, and prescription drugs) (Antia etal. 2004).

Market sentiments from regular-goods manufacturers suggest that gray markets harm manufacturers. Gray marketers often discount branded items 25% or more, luring consumers away from more expensive authorized products (Casabona and Derby 2006, Dobrian 2018, Taylor 2019). The gray market drains approximately $40 billion of revenue and $5 million in profit from information technology manufacturers worldwide (Nakra 2006). In a 2016 survey, 67% of technology manufacturers stated that they have taken legal action (civil or criminal) against gray market activity (KPMG 2016). In addition to seeking legal protections, regular-goods manufacturers also change pricing and product or service strategies to deter gray markets. Sometechnology manufacturers monitor and control global pricing by maintaining less than 20% of price discrepancies between countries to reduce the profit margin for gray marketers to parallelimport products (KPMG 2002). Other manufacturers offer regional specific warranty, or deny pre- and postsale support, recall information, and entitlement to updates for items acquired throughgray channels (Tanck and McLaughlin 2019). These actions decrease the utilitarian value that consumers derive from consuming gray products. Prior research on parallel imports of regular goods echoes this sentiment, discussing various strategies to curb gray market activities (Antia etal. 2006, Assmus and Wiese 1995, Zhang 2016).

Parallel imports are particularly prominent for status goods (Menon 2016). In the

personal status-goods sector, gray products make up almost 10% of $300 billion annual sales (D'Arpizioet al. 2020, Shannon 2017). The gray market accounts for 20% of the global market for luxury watches (Cox 2019, Trecul 2019). More than 65 gray market sites sell luxury watches and jewelryat discounts ranging from approximately 33% to as much as 65% (Schupak 2017). However, according to various industry experts, status-goods manufacturers often ignore or tacitly allowparallel imports (Perman 2017). One industry report notes that "few luxury brands will discussthe practice [of parallel imports], most participate in some form, including Gucci, Prada, Dior, and Valentino" (TFL 2019). Why status-goods manufacturers often permit parallel imports, despite arange of legal and regulatory measures to counteract its occurrence, is puzzling (Dobrian 2018; Post 2015; Tanck and McLaughlin 2019). This observation calls for a theoretical investigation into how parallel imports affect status-goods manufacturers differently than regular-goods manufacturers.

Unique to status goods, manufacturers can create region-specific configurations by varying the aesthetic design or product appearance across markets, essentially exposing gray buyers and distinguishing them from the authorized version's user cohort (Menon 2016, Tanck and McLaughlin 2019). Such distinction in design between gray and authorized products decreasesthe social status value that consumers derive from gray products, enhancing the status appeal of authorized products. Industry experts suggest that "when you package and name your product differently in different territories, you make it harder for gray market sellers to offer productsfrom one geo to another geo, as consumers will not recognize the package or the product name,and will be less willing to purchase a different product than the one that appears in local advertising and marketing materials" (Wiser Market 2019). Sections

32, 42, and 43 of the Lanham Act also suggest that trademark owners may stop unauthorized resellers from selling gray market goods by showing a difference between the authorized and unauthorized goods (Tanckand McLaughlin 2019). Indeed, some luxury brands launch region-specific designs for products sold in high-valuation markets to differentiate them from cheaper gray products shipped from overseas. For example, Vacheron Constantin launched specially designed watches Patrimony Traditionnelle for the Chinese market (Luxuvere 2019); similarly, Minolta Camera marketed an identical camera in the United States and Japan with different names and designs (Nakra 2006). However, some other luxury brands use the same design across markets. For example, carmakers such as BMW and Mercedes-Benz sell cars with the same design across countries. Unclear, however, is how this design decision affects manufacturers and gray marketers in status-goods categories and when manufacturers should vary product design across countries.

To fill these gaps in the existing literature, we build a game-theoretic model in which a manufacturer sells a conspicuously consumed status product in a high-valuation domestic market and a low-valuation foreign market. A gray marketer can purchase products from the foreign market at a lower price to sell as gray products in the domestic market at a higher price. The status value of a product is determined by the average status of consumers who buy the same-lookingproduct. If the manufacturer uses the same design for products sold in the two markets, gray products look identical to authorized products; as a result, both products provide the same status value to consumers. Otherwise, if the manufacturer uses different designs for products sold in the two markets, gray products are visually distinguishable from authorized products. In this case, the status value of the gray

or authorized product is determined by the average status of consumers who buy the respective product.

Our analysis shows several important findings. First, we demonstrate how the status value ofproducts qualitatively changes the impact of parallel imports on a manufacturer: Whereas parallel imports always hurt a manufacturer of regular goods, it can benefit a manufacturer of status goods. Parallel imports hurt a regular-goods manufacturer because importing products across markets shifts sales without creating new value or demand. However, gray products compete with the authorized product in the domestic market, leading the manufacturer to distort pricesdownward in the domestic market and upward in the foreign market from the optimal levels without parallel imports. Product cannibalization results in the negative *price-distortion effect* ofparallel imports.

For status goods, consumers purchase products to signal social status. Consumption of the status product signals membership into the same social group as higher-status consumers whocan afford the product and separates from lower-status consumers who cannot afford it. The signaling value is stronger in a market in which consumers are more heterogeneous in status and weaker in a market when consumers are more homogeneous. Given that consumers in the domestic market have an overall higher valuation for the product than consumers in the foreignmarket, consumers are more heterogeneous in the domestic than the foreign market. When thegray marketer shifts products from the foreign to the domestic market, the status value of the product increases. This *status-creation effect* provides additional arbitrage opportunity for the gray marketer. Thus, the gray marketer diverts more gray products than what would have beensold in the foreign market

without parallel imports, expanding the manufacturer's total sales. Therefore, the positive *status-creation effect* of parallel imports generates a positive *sales-expansion effect*, which can dominate the negative *price-distortion effect*, making parallel imports beneficialfor the manufacturer.

Consequently, parallel imports can increase both the manufacturer's and the gray marketer's profits, leading to a win-win outcome. This benefit holds regardless of whether the manufactureruses the same or different designs for products across markets; moreover, this finding provides a theoretical explanation to business observations that status-goods manufacturers tend to be more tolerant of parallel imports than regular-goods manufacturers.

Second, although parallel imports can benefit the manufacturer under either design strategy, the benefit arises in a broader range of situations when the manufacturer uses different designs across markets. This different-design strategy allows consumers to discern both the gray and authorized products, which increases the status appeal of the authorized product over the gray product. Accordingly, the manufacturer can charge a higher premium for an exclusive authorized item with little risk of the gray version cannibalizing sales. Furthermore, under the different-design strategy, status-concerned consumers become less price sensitive, which reduces price competition between the manufacturer and the gray marketer. This indirect competition-dampening effect further benefits the manufacturer under the different-design strategy. Third, despite the benefit of the different-design strategy for the manufacturer, our analysis shows that the same-design strategy increases the gray marketer's profit. This occurs because a same-design strategy means that gray and authorized products look identical; accordingly, the gray product enjoys higher status value,

enabling the gray marketer to sell the product at a higher price to more consumers.

Fourth, the manufacturer's optimal design strategy depends on its anticipated impact on the gray marketer's entry and pricing decisions. Our analysis shows that when two markets are sufficiently similar, the manufacturer should use the same design to encourage parallel importsand benefit from it. When the two markets are sufficiently different, the manufacturer should usedifferent designs to either deter parallel imports or obtain a higher profit when competing withthe gray marketer.

Related Literature

This research is closely related to analytical studies on the conspicuous consumption of status goods. Psychological research reveals that status-seeking drives luxury product consumption (Dreze and Nunez 2009), as luxury products provide a costly signal of wealth and social status(Saad 2007, Ball and Eckel 1998, Nelissen and Meijers 2011). To model this effect, Amaldoss and Jain (2005a, 2005b) introduce a framework with two segments of consumers: snobs, who preferexclusivity, and conformists, who prefer conformity. The utility of a product for snobs decreaseswith the number of buyers, while the utility of the product for conformists increases with it. Usingthis framework, Amaldoss and Jain (2008, 2010, 2015) examine firms' optimal pricing, product,and branding decisions when firms are horizontally differentiated. In contrast with these studiesthat use horizontal models, we adopt the formulation of status preferences that Rao and Schaefer(2013) introduce to vertical models where buyers have different valuations for the product. Withthis formulation, they find that consumers' status concerns lead a monopolist to reduce the pricesof its durable goods more sharply over time. Gao et al. (2016) similarly capture status preferencesto examine the entry

of copycats. They show that copycats with a high physical resemblance but low product quality are more likely to enter the market successfully. In contrast with these studies, we examine how status preferences affect a manufacturer that faces the threat of parallel imports. This research is also closely related to previous work on gray products and parallel imports. Previous research has commonly assumed or found that parallel imports harm firms, investigating various approaches to deter parallel imports or to alleviate its negative impact. For example, Antia et al. (2006) assess how and whether enforcement effectively deters gray markets. Assmus and Wiese (1995) examine how price coordination can address the problem of parallel imports. Autrey et al. (2014) investigate conditions under which a firm should centralize or decentralizes decision making when it faces gray market distribution. analyze the impact of market conditions and product characteristics on the manufacturer's strategy to control parallel imports. Zhang (2016) evaluates consumer rebates as a strategy to deter parallel imports. In addition, Iravani et al. (2016) examine the role of demand-enhancing services in combating parallel imports. They show that additional services can significantly help manufacturers curb the competition from the gray market.

Some research has shown conditions under which parallel imports can benefit the manufacturer. Specifically, Ahmadi and Yang (2000), Xiao et al. (2011), and Liu and Pazgal (2020) assess parallel imports under various channel structures and show that a manufacturer may be better off in the presence of parallel importations. The reason is that when the manufacturer distributes products through an independent retailer, the double marginalization problem will emerge, which is a potential threat to the manufacturer's

profit. In this case, if there is a parallelimporter who competes against the retailer, the retailer will have to reduce its markup, therebyalleviating the double marginalization problem and benefiting the manufacturer. Our research supplements these studies by showing the benefits of parallel imports for the manufacturer. However, we show that even in a non-channel setting, the status nature of products, rather thanthe double marginalization reason, can make parallel imports beneficial for the manufacturer.

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Title: Reverse Knowledge Transfer and Product Innovation in Emerging Market MNEs: Evidence from China

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Keywords: Emerging markets multinational enterprises (EMNEs), reverse knowledge transfer, international benchmarking, agility, new product performance

Description: This study provides a new theoretical lens to investigate reverse knowledge transfer in EMNEs.

Extended Abstract

Research question:

As latecomers from technologically and economically laggard countries, emerging markets multinational enterprises (EMNEs) suffer from a lack of necessary resources including skilled talents, advanced knowledge, and state-of-the-art technology (Li 2007; Luo et al. 2011; Peng 2012). For this reason, whether EMNEs can effectively identify and acquire strategic assets plays a critical role for EMNEs to engage in competitive catch-up and close the gaps with world leaders (Cui et al. 2014). Reverse knowledge transfer (RKT), in which knowledge and skills from the overseas subsidiaries flow to their parent units at home (Ambos et al. 2006; Gupta and Govindarajan 2000), acts as an important solution for EMNEs to alleviate its knowledge shortage problem (Nair et al. 2016). In the current study, we answer the following research questions:

(1) How could headquarters add value to reverse knowledge transfer in EMNEs?
(2) What is the effect of reverse knowledge transfer on EMNE's unique product innovation performance?
(3) How would internal and external factors condition the link between reverse knowledge transfer and product innovation?

Method and Data:

We used a survey of EMNE executives from China as the data source. As one of the major emerging countries, China provides an appropriate research setting for the study of EMNEs' unique strategies in their internationalization process. We collaborated with an EMBA program at a top-ranked university in China for our data collection. Faculty members at the universities first verified the qualification of the EMBA students to make sure the executives who participated in the study are from EMNEs and are familiar with their firms' international business activities.

We developed a structured survey instrument in the following stages. First, we screened the literature on emerging markets firms to identify verified scale items for measuring the factors in this research. Second, a list of items that would be potentially useful as measures of the factors was developed based on the literature. We then expanded these items into Likert-type statements anchored by a seven-point scale ranging from "strongly disagree (1)" to "strongly agree (7)".

Based on these items, we developed an English version of the questionnaire and translated it into Chinese. All measures are adopted from the existing literature.

Summary of Findings:

We performed a path analysis to assess the proposed model. Our results show that reverse knowledge transfer positively affects EMNE's innovation performance relative to industrial leaders (i.e., relative innovation performance) and that this effect is strengthened by EMNE's internal agility emphasis but weakened by external technology turbulence. HQ's internal search (i.e., R&D intensity) has a stronger positive effect than external search (i.e., international benchmarking) on reverse knowledge transfer. Together, this finding shows that it is theoretically valuable to adopt the view of problemistic search to explain EMNE-HQ's reverse knowledge transfer. We also advocate that future studies focus more on the proactive role of headquarters in facilitating reverse knowledge transfer. Especially, future studies show to explore other internal and external search-related activities to enrich our understanding of EMNE's unique knowledge management and innovation practices.

Statement of Key:

First, we expand the understanding of RKT in EMNEs through the *problemistic search view—a* firm's search process for a solution to a specific problem (Posen et al. 2018). Specifically, we conceptualize RKT in EMNEs as a search process proactively initiated by the HQ to address knowledge gaps. This view significantly departs from the extant literature that largely ignores the role of EMNE-HQ or views it as a passive knowledge receiver.

Second, we offer a systematic account of RKT in EMNEs. We present *international benchmarking* and *R&D intensity* as key factors enabling knowledge gap identification. In addition, we link reverse knowledge to EMNE's innovation performance relative to industry leaders—relative innovation performance, which is of strategic importance for EMNEs' to compete with world leaders and catch up. This study thus advances the understanding of how HQ can create value through knowledge management and innovation.

Lastly, we clarify the conditions under which EMNEs can derive the most value of reverse knowledge to improve innovation and product development performance. Our findings can provide valuable guidance to EMNEs on how to effectively leverage RKT to catch up with incumbent leaders in product development and innovation performance.

SHOULD I STAY OR SHOULD I GO: EXPLORING THE CONSEQUENCES OF EXITING INTERNATIONAL MARKETS

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Keywords: De-internationalization, International Market Exit, Effects, Conceptualization

Description: We contribute to theory building by developing a new conceptual framework that categorizes and interrelates triggers, types, and effects of international market exits.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question: The process of exiting international markets or relationships is a relevant but rarely studied phenomenon (Hoppner and Griffith 2015). For example, Pay Pal just exited the competitive Indian payments market in 2021. At the same time, General Motors announced its withdrawal from Australia and New Zealand after years of declining market share. While international market entry and expansion has been identified as an important topic in the literature, there is still little research that examines the withdrawal of companies from foreign markets (Sousa and Tan 2015). This is mainly due to the fact that a company's internationalization is still predominantly understood as a linear process whereby the company gradually increases its foreign market activities over time. In practice, internationalization processes often are non-linear, that is, characterized by various market exits and re-entries Vissak (2010). From a marketing perspective, the focus is mainly on exiting international markets (Tang et al. 2021). While there is preliminary evidence on the reasons and types of exit, the effects on the exiting company are still largely unexplored.

"Future research should examine these issues, while remembering, that not all exit decisions have to be negative, as some firms have been found to continually restructure their international operations in order to maintain competitiveness (Hoppner and Griffith 2015, p. 622).

Method and Data: In this study, we use an interpretative, qualitative approach to examine the de-internationalization process. The ultimate goal of this interpretive approach is to build theory that is grounded in rich, qualitative data (Gioia, Corley, and Hamilton 2012). We carried out semi-structured expert interviews with 21 experts from different industries. The experts consist of managers at top management level and external consultants who have been responsible for or accompanied an average of two to three international market exits within the last ten years. Thus, experts shared their experience based on about 50 international market exit cases. We recorded all interviews and then transcribed them for further analysis. Subsequently, the transcripts were coded and categorized into first-order terms, second-order themes, and aggregate dimensions using the Gioia method (Gioia, Corley, and Hamilton 2012). The full set of first-order terms and second-order themes and aggregated dimensions provided the basis for building the data structure. Finally, based on this data structure, the grounded theory model was developed, which shows the dynamic relationship between the emergent concepts, and explains the phenomenon of international market exit.

Summary of Findings: Based on our analysis, four different categories of triggers for international market exits emerge: Foreign market conditions, financial factors, strategic factors, and disruptive events. Regarding the different types of exit, we found that the majority of companies carry out a partial market exit. Only in three cases the companies withdrew completely from international business. While two companies focused on the domestic market, the other ceased business operations completely. In the context of partial market exits, two forms dominated above all. First, a reduction in the degree of

internationalization. Second, a reduction in the number of country markets. As a third, significantly less common form of partial exit, we identified operational optimization, such as the merger of two retail brands of the same parent company. Thus, our results confirm the different de-internationalization modes introduced by Turcan (2006). The identified effects of market exit can be divided into three different categories: Financial effects, personal effects, and strategic effects. Especially in the case of financial and strategic effects, the positive consequences outweigh the negative ones. Accordingly, international market exits can have positive financial effects by minimizing the exiting companies` losses in foreign markets and freeing up funds for investment. Furthermore, our results indicate that international market exits can have a positive impact on the international channel strategy, by reducing operational complexity, improving focus on the core business, and freeing up management capacity.

Key Contributions: With this study, we want to make three major contributions to theory and international marketing practice. First, we consolidate the existing literature by validating and complementing the triggers and types of international market exits discussed in previous research. In addition, we investigate whether certain triggers and types are more common in practice than others. Second, our study disentangles and categorizes the effects of de-internationalization processes on the exiting company. More specifically, we identify the potential positive impact of an exit on companies` international channel strategy and performance. Third, we develop a new conceptional framework that categorizes and interrelates triggers, types, and effects of international market exits. Thus, our model contributes to theory building in this under-researched area, and provides the basis for further empirical research on the interrelationships of triggers, types and the resulting effects of international market exits. Finally, these findings help managers of MNEs to better understand the potential consequences of international market exits.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONSUMER ANIMOSITY AND PRODUCT JUDGMENT – A META-ANALYSIS

Extended Abstract

More than twenty years of research in the field of consumer animosity brought up important evidence about different antecedents, consequences, conditional effects and underlying mechanisms. Consumer animosity was examined first by Klein, Ettenson and Morris (1998) who conceptualized consumer animosity as related but distinct from consumer ethnocentrism due to the relationship with consumers' product judgment. However, research findings regarding the effect of consumer animosity on product judgment are inconsistent. Thus, this meta-analysis aims to solve this inconsistency. Extensive literature search has brought up more than 200 studies and more than 100 different country dyads under investigation. For the analysis, more than 180 effect sizes could be used from published and unpublished material examining the relationship between consumer animosity and product judgment. Moderators on macro level and on micro level—on business and on consumer level—were included within the analyses. The results reveal, that moderators of macro level significantly influence the strength of the relationship between consumer animosity and product judgment, which can turn the main effect insignificant.

Statement of Key Contributions

To the best of our knowledge, this study is the first meta-analysis focusing specifically on moderators influencing the relationship between consumer animosity and product judgment. Previous meta-analysis in the research field of consumer animosity have already identified total effects of consumer animosity and ethnocentrism on product judgment and willingness to buy, respectively (Shoham, Gavish and Rose 2016, Westjohn et al. 2019). Thereby, these meta-analyses from Shoham, Gavish and Rose (2016) and Westjohn and colleagues (2019) represent

the basis for this meta-analysis. This meta-analysis is the first study specifically focusing on the identification of potential moderators, who can explain heterogeneous research findings between consumer animosity and product judgment. Thereby, country, product and consumer characteristics were investigated. This study therefore aims 1) to identify the true relationship between consumer animosity and product judgment on a large study basis and 2) to examine significant moderators on macro and on micro level, which explain the inconsistent research findings.

Thus, this study fills the research gap within the research field of consumer animosity, which is important not only for academics, but also for practitioners and decision-makers by providing a deeper understanding of how and when consumer animosity affects consumers' judgment of associated products. Only when a clear understanding of the underlying mechanisms is given, appropriate and evidence-based strategy recommendations for practitioners can be derived. This evidence is of special interest for practitioners of for-profit and not-for-profit organizations, who act internationally and need to face animosity feelings of their consumers and stakeholders.

Manuscript

New or emerging geo-political conflicts or tensions between subgroups are ubiquitous in todays' globalized world. Military conflicts are thereby only an extreme form of conflict, but the expenditures for the military reached a new maximum value of 1981 billion USD worldwide (Lopes da Silva, Tian and Marksteiner 2021). Politically, the resurgence of nationalistic parties in national governments and the pro-national decisions like e.g. the Brexit highlight the shift from multilateral to rather national perspectives. Also economically, the trade war between the U.S. and China or the disputes regarding the trade tariffs between the U.S. and the European Union in 2019 (Swanson 2019) underline rise tensions within bilateral relations. Those tensions between country dyads are more visible for the consumer due to the digitalized and interconnected world, which fosters feelings of animosity towards specific target countries. In the international business research, the concept of consumer animosity encompasses factors that influence consumers' negative attitudes and feelings toward a specific country, which decreases consumers' buying behavior of products from that specific country. Thus, consumer animosity can affect economies on macro level with national call for boycotts and on micro level by damaging the sales of businesses. Country-specific attitudes, such as consumer animosity, are hence still of great relevance for businesses as well as policy-leaders and decision-makers.

To derive sufficient action recommendations for policy-makers and practitioners, profound evidence about antecedents, consequences, conditions and mechanisms of consumer animosity is needed. Various studies in the research field of consumer animosity have hence aimed to answer those questions by conducting experiments and surveys in different country settings. Whereas some research findings are consistent across studies (e. g. the negative effect of consumer animosity on willingness to buy) (Shoham, Gavish and Rose 2016; Westjohn et al. 2019), the effect of consumer animosity on product judgment is inconsistent. This meta-

analytic approach aims to 1) confirm robust evidence about the main effect of consumer animosity on product judgment and 2) to investigate significant moderators who influence the strength of the relationship between consumer animosity and product judgment and hence explains the heterogeneity of past research findings. Before elucidating the applied meta-analysis, the next chapter outlines the concept of consumer animosity. On the basis of that, initial results of the meta-analysis will be presented and discussed. Lastly, implications for academia and practitioners in terms of policy, for-profit as well as non-for-profit organizations will be derived.

Literature Review

After the first conceptual paper introducing the Animosity Model of Foreign Product Purchase (AMFPP) and the concept of consumer animosity (Klein, Ettenson and Morris 1998), the research area experienced great attention resulting in more than 200 studies publicized in more than 90 scientific journals since. Within this research area, there is widespread agreement on the common understanding of consumer animosity. Klein, Ettenson and Morris (1998) define consumer animosity as the "remnants of antipathy related to previous or ongoing military, political, or economic events", which is widely adopted (e.g. Nijssen and Douglas 2004; Russell and Russell 2006; Funk et al., 2010). Thus, consumer animosity refers to a hostile country-related attitude between two parties evoked by a former or concurrent negative incident. Past research has replicated the AMFPP and examined the animose attitudes between e.g. China and Japan (Fong et al. 2013; Harmeling et al. 2015; Ishii 2009; Klein, Ettenson and Morris 1998), USA and Japan (Klein 2002), USA and France (Russell and Russell 2006), Korea and Japan (Hong and Kang 2006) and the Netherlands and Germany (Nijssen and Douglas 2004). In total, 100 different country dyads with bilateral specific histories and tensions have been studied yet. Whereas most of the animosity literature focuses on bilateral relationships on country level,

some authors shift their focus towards regional or domestic animosity (Shimp, Dunn and Klein 2004; Hinck 2005) and inter-ethnic or religious subgroups, respectively (Shoham et al. 2006; Rose, Rose and Shoham 2009; Little and Singh 2014). Thereby, consumer animosity can be of situational or stable and national or personal nature, respectively (Jung et al. 2002).

Consumer animosity is distinct from but related with consumer ethnocentrism with respect of its influence on consumers' product perceptions. Ethnocentric consumers avoid buying products from *all* foreign countries, as they perceive foreign products as a threat to the domestic economy and generally of lower quality (Klein 2002). Consumers with animosity feelings avoid buying products from *one* specific target country independently of consumers' quality perceptions of the respective products (Klein, Ettenson and Morris 1998; Klein and Ettenson 1999). Both—consumer animosity and ethnocentrism—negatively affect consumers' willingness to buy products from or associated with that country (Klein, Ettenson and Morris 1998; Leong et al. 2008; Funk et al. 2010). The reduced intention to purchase products from a specific target country is a negative result out of negative emotions such as anger, fear, contempt or regret (Antonetti, Manika and Katsikeas 2019; Harmeling, Magnusson and Singh 2015; Khan, Daryanto and Liu 2019). For consumer ethnocentrism, the reduced buying intention refers to the low product quality judgments of foreign products and the aim to support the home country (Klein 2002; Shimp and Sharma 1987).

Past research has mainly focused on the consequences and antecedents of consumer animosity. The findings reveal that consumer animosity increases consumers' boycott intention (Ali 2021; Hoffmann, Mai and Smirnova 2011; Smith and Li 2010) and influences consumers' product preference (Shimp, Dunn and Klein 2004; Russell and Russell 2006). On brand level, consumer animosity decreases consumers' attitudes towards the brand (Russell and Russell 2010) and brand trust (Lee and Mazodier 2015) of businesses and products originating from or associated with that target country.

The type of incident that can evoke animosity attitudes is thereby diverse: Besides military, economic or political events identified in the first conceptual paper by Klein, Ettenson and Morris (1998), other drivers such as religious or socio-cultural disputes could be verified since (Kalliny and Lemaster 2005; Nes, Yelkur and Silkoset 2012). Research has further identified several antecedents such as nationalism (Shoham et al. 2006; Mrad, Sheng and Hart 2013; Al Ganideh and Elahee 2018), dogmatism (Shoham et al. 2006) and patriotism (Férnandez-Ferrín et al. 2015), which foster consumer animosity. The drivers and antecedents of consumer animosity underline the complex nature to build animosity attitudes.

Whereas antecedents, consequences and mechanisms are largely examined in past research, some basic questions stay unsolved: Klein, Ettenson and Morris (1998) found a non-significant effect of consumer animosity on product judgment, which could be replicated in several studies (e.g. Heinberg 2017; Khan, Daryanto and Liu 2019). Against this, other studies identified a significant negative effect between both latent variables (e.g. Gineikiene and Diamantopoulos 2017; Soham, Gavish and Rose 2016). A meta-analysis by Westjohn et al. (2019) investigated the influence of consumer animosity on product judgment and willingness to buy. With more than 40 effect sizes, the authors could confirm a significant correlation between both variables on aggregated level. The question, however, why and when consumer animosity significantly influences product judgment and indicators that explain the heterogeneity of past research findings, still remains. This meta-analytic approach aims to fill this research gap.

Method

Study retrieval

To ensure a complete and extensive database, we followed a multi-step procedure for the literature retrieval as recommended by several researchers (e.g. Hunter and Schmidt 2004;

Rosenthal 1994). Thereby, electronic databases (e.g. GoogleScholar, EBSCO, ResearchGate) were systematically searched using the keywords “consumer animosity” and “animosity”. Additionally, reference lists of the available literature were examined for further material. To be included in this meta-analysis, the papers needed to contain independent and measurable effects of consumer animosity. Thus, qualitative research, literature reviews, conceptual papers and meta-analyses were excluded from this meta-analysis. As journals oftentimes are biased against studies with non-significant results, considering only published papers would only mirror a distorted view of past research findings (Greenwald 1975). To avoid a publication bias, all types of English written research work was hence included independently of their publication status following the procedure of Shoham, Gavish and Rose (2016) suggested by Borenstein et al. (2011). Thus, also hard-to-find sources, such as unpublished papers, conference proceedings, working papers and dissertations, were included for the analyses. The final database for this meta-analysis contained 187 independent samples of 132 papers, resulting in a cumulative sample N_{cum} = 56,494. The literature covers a period from 1998 through end 2020.

Coding procedure

After completing the literature retrieval end of December 2020, a coding scheme and coding rules were developed. Thereby, characteristics on paper level (e.g. type of publication, publication year, study quality), on study level (e.g. sample size, respondent characteristics, home country and target country, method used) and on effect size level (variables, reliability values, effect size) were taken into account. According to Grewal, Puccinelli and Monroe (2018), we included as many study and effect size specific moderators as possible, which may explain the heterogeneity of past research findings. Thus, we included additional information on macro and micro level, which could not be coded from the papers directly. Moderators on

macro level reflect country-specific characteristics and capture geographical, economic and political dimensions. Therefore, the GDP, foreign direct investments, the Economic Freedom Index, the population density and the geographical distance of the home country and the country dyade, respectively, were included. Moderators of micro level can further be differentiated on business level (e.g. product vs. service, technical vs. non-technical products) and consumer level (cultural values, respondent characteristics). As Westjohn and colleagues (2019) examined Hofstede's cultural values as moderators between the link of consumer animosity and willingness it seems reasonable that the cultural background of a consumer will also influence the effect of consumer animosity on product evaluation. All moderators and the sources of coding are summarized in table 1.

The high inference coding was done by two independent researchers in the field of consumer animosity. Thereby, the first researcher coded all data, followed by the second coder, who independently coded the same data set (Roschk and Hosseinpour 2019; Rubera and Kirca 2012). The intercoder-agreement rate with 94% indicates suitable coding conformity. Disagreements were solved after group discussions as suggested by Szymanski and Henard (2001).

Meta-analytic procedure

For the meta-analytic regressions, effect sizes were exclusively based on correlations, which are easy to interpret and hence the most predominant effect size measurement (Eisend 2006; Grewal, Puccinelli and Monroe 2018). We did not transform regression coefficients into correlation coefficients, as the computation may include confounding effects (Roth et al. 2018). In those cases, where only regression coefficients were reported, we contacted the authors for the correlation matrices. If no correlations were available or could not be provided by the authors, we followed the procedure of De Matos and Rossi (2008) and excluded those studies from the database. All correlation coefficients were reliability-corrected and variance and

sample size weighted as suggested by Hunter and Schmidt (2004). Dependent effect sizes were aggregated by computing the mean in order to avoid under- or overestimation (Eisend, Hartmann and Apaolaza 2017; Schmidt and Hunter 2015).

We used a random effects model, which represent the data more appropriate (Borenstein et al. 2010) by accounting for subject-level sampling error (within-study variation) and study-level sampling error (between-study variance). To document our analyses we followed the Meta-Analysis Reporting Standards (MARS). After checking necessary requirements for meta-analytical regressions we used metafor by R to conduct the analyses. All metric values were standardized to enable comparability across the years for all countries.

Results

In total, we received 182 effect sizes based on correlations examining the effect of animosity on product judgment. The analyses confirm sufficient variation among the effect sizes (I^2 = .983), which confirms the basic requirement for conducting a meta-analysis. The meta-analytic regression confirms a significant negative effect of consumer animosity on product judgment (β = -.202, p = .000). This is in line with previous meta-analyses, which also investigated the main effect of consumer animosity on product judgment (Shoham, Gavish and Rose 2016; Westjohn et al., 2019). The robustness of this main effect is also reflected by the file drawer N, which determined that 84,597 null effect studies would be needed to turn the significant main effect of consumer animosity on product judgment not significant (Rosenthal 1979).

To explain the heterogeneity within past research findings, multiple meta-analytic regression analyses were applied for the metric moderators and sub-group analyses for binary moderators. The effects show that mainly macro moderators significantly influence the effect of consumer animosity on product judgment (see table 1 for a summary of all moderators). Thereby, a

country's population density and the Economic Freedom Index significantly weaken the effect of consumer animosity on product judgment (β = -.13, *p* = .000 and β = -.07, *p* = .023, respectively). Against that, a country's GDP and its foreign direct investments significantly strengthen the effect of consumer animosity on product evaluation (β = .04, *p* = .011 and β = .05, *p* = .009, respectively). The meta-analytic regression further identified a non-significant effect of the geographical distance between the home and target country under examination (β = .02, *p* > .05).

On product level, product specific characteristics (technical vs. non-technical products and durable vs. non-durable products) significantly influence the strength of the relationship between consumer animosity and product judgment. For technical products, consumer animosity has a significant positive influence on product judgment (β = .18, *p* = .009), whereas non-technical products show a significant negative effect (β = -.35, *p* = .000). Thus, the group-specific contrasts between technical and non-technical products are significant (β = .18, *p* = .036). Also, the distinction between durable vs. non-durable goods significantly influence the main effect between consumer animosity and product judgment. Whereas durable goods exhibit a positive main effect (β = .25, *p* = .003), non-durable goods show otherwise (β = -.39, *p* = .000). Thus, the contrast between both groups is again significant (β = .25, *p* = .012). Other moderators on product level (product vs. service, convenience vs. shopping goods and culturally connected vs. unconnected goods) did not show significant differences between the groups.

On consumer level, none of Hofstede's cultural values shows a significant influence on the relationship between consumer animosity and product judgment. Only the binary variable of respondent type (students vs. non-students) has a significant influence on the above mentioned link. Thereby, non-student samples show a significant negative effect size of consumer

animosity on product judgment (β = -.27, *p* = .000) compared to student samples (β = .31, *p* = .003).

Table 1. Moderators of animosity—product judgment relationship

Macro level (country characteristics)	**Type**	**Source**	**k**	**β**
Population density[a]	metric	Worldbank	166	-.13***
Geographical distance[b]	metric	CEPII	164	.02
GDP[c]	metric	Worldbank	175	.04*
Economic Freedom Index[d]	metric	World Heritage Foundation	175	-.07*
Foreign direct investments[e]	metric	UNCTAD	175	.05**
Micro level (product characteristics)	**Type**	**Source**	**k**	**β**
Product vs. service	binary	Study-specific	48	—
Technical vs. non-technical				
Technical	binary	Study-specific	16	.18**
Non-technical	binary	Study-specific	21	-.35***
Convenience vs. shopping	binary	Study-specific	48	—
Cultural connectedness vs. unconnectedness	binary	Study-specific	48	—
Durable vs. non-durable				
Durable	binary	Study-specific	20	.25**
Non-durable	binary	Study-specific	12	-.39***
Micro level (consumers characteristics)	**Type**	**Source**	**k**	**β**
Students vs. non-students				
Students	binary	Study-specific	17	.31**
Non-students	binary	Study-specific	149	-.27***
Masculinity Index	metric	Hofstede	175	.01
Individualism Index	metric	Hofstede	175	.05
Power Distance Index	metric	Hofstede	175	-.03
Uncertainty Avoidance Index	metric	Hofstede	175	.02
Longterm Orientation Index	metric	Hofstede	175	-.02
Indulgence Index	metric	Hofstede	175	.00

Notes: significant at * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$; k = number of observations; β = standardized coefficients; — = non-significant differences between the groups; [a] Population density is midyear population divided by land area in square kilometers; [b] Distances are calculated following the great circle formula, which uses geographic coordinates of the capital cities; [c] GDP is the sum of gross value added by all resident producers in the economy plus any product taxes and minus any subsidies. Dollar figures for GDP are converted from domestic currencies using single year official exchange rates; [d] The Economic Freedom Index is based on the rule of law (property rights, government integrity, judicial effectiveness), government size (government spending, tax burden, fiscal health), regulatory efficiency (business freedom, labor freedom, monetary freedom) and open markets (trade freedom, investment freedom, financial freedom); [e] Foreign direct investments are measured in U.S. dollars at current prices in outward direction.

Discussion

On micro (consumer) level, the type of respondent turned out to significantly influence the relationship between consumer animosity and product judgment. Whereas consumer animosity positively influences students' product judgment, non-student samples show a negative relationship between consumer animosity and product judgment. This can be explained by the different age and educational background of both groups. Student samples are typically younger and have fewer knowledge about historical and past incidents. Older consumers are typically older and have a broader knowledge about bilateral country relationships. Jung et al. (2002) categorized animosity as national vs. personal and stable vs. situational dimensions. Thus, it seems reasonable, that consumer animosity toward a target country is rather nationally learned for student samples and personally experienced for non-student samples. It is noteworthy to mention, that the number of observations for student samples with k = 17 is comparably low. Although the cumulative sample size with N_{cum} = 3918 is fairly large, the moderating effect of respondent type should be special focus of future studies.

The results further underline, that consumers' cultural background has no significant influence on the relationship between consumer animosity and product judgment. Although more than 100 different bilateral country settings have been investigated and despite the sufficient amount of observations included within this meta-analysis (k = 175), the results show no significant moderating effect. Thus, consumers' cultural values moderate the strength between consumer animosity and willingness to buy (Westjohn et al. 2019), but do not influence the relationship between consumer animosity and product judgment. It highlights that product-related (micro) and country-related (macro) moderators are more relevant for consumer judgments.

On product level, the distinction between technical vs. non-technical products and durable vs. non-durable products significantly changes the relationship between consumer animosity and product judgment. Whereas technical (and durable) goods show a positive influence of

consumer animosity on product judgment, non-technical (and non-durable) goods show a negative influence. This seem to be reasonable considering the nature of technical and durable goods, which mainly imply functional values (e.g. special features for technical products and reliability for durable goods). In contrast to that, non-technical and non-durable goods, such as clothing or food, are more strongly motivated by cultural values (e.g. Gardetti and Torres 2017; Genovese et al. 2017) and are hence more strongly linked with emotions. Thus, it seems reasonable, that consumers are able to objectively evaluating technical or durable goods, whereas the product judgment of non-technical and non-durable goods is more emotionally driven. Thus, consumer are not able to differentiate between their animosity feelings and their product judgment and make use of their preexisting attitude in cases of non-technical and non-durable products. It needs to be mentioned, however, that the number of observations for product specific characteristics are comparably low. This is due to the fact, that many studies did not provide information on specific product categories under examination so that many studies could not be coded according to the product specifications.

On macro level, focusing on country-specific characteristics, this meta-analysis could confirm several significant moderators on the effect of consumer animosity on product judgment based on a sufficient amount of past studies. Focusing on the Economic Freedom Index the meta-analytic regression confirms a significant negative effect on the effect between consumer animosity and product judgment. Thus, a higher Economic Freedom Index strengthen the negative effect of consumer animosity on product judgment. Similarly, a country's population density also strengthens this negative effect. This can be explained by the fact, that countries with high economic freedom (e.g. Australia, Canada, New Zealand) (World Heritage Foundation 2021) experience a high level of governmental integrity and judicial independence, as well as freedom for business, labor and monetary transactions and trade. Thus, it seems arguably that consumers from countries with high economic freedom are more willing and fearless to critically express their meanings and thoughts.

Additionally, the meta-analytic regression analyses could confirm significant positive moderating effects of a country's GDP and its foreign direct investments on the link between consumer animosity on product judgment. Thus, the consequence of consumer animosity turns insignificant in countries with high foreign direct investments in outward direction and countries with high GDP. Those countries with high levels of foreign direct investments and GDP are mostly industry nations with investment potentials who do not feel the risk of rivalry with other countries. Thus, consumers from those countries are able to objectively evaluate products from a target country.

Whereas country-specific moderators as e.g. a country's GDP was found to be a non-significant moderator on the effect of consumer animosity on willingness to buy (Westjohn et al. 2019), the results of this meta-analysis show otherwise for the relationship between consumer animosity on product judgment. Thus, the link between consumer animosity and willingness to buy seems to be mainly influenced by consumer characteristics (collectivism and long-term orientation) (Westjohn et al. 2019). The link between consumer animosity on product judgment, is hence mainly influenced by country and product characteristics, respectively.

Implications

The results of this meta-analysis show, that meta-analytic approaches are relevant for academia to examine main effects on aggregated level and for practitioners to derive evidence-based recommendations in terms of product and brand positioning. As consumer animosity embodies a country-specific attitude evoked by certain negative incidents it becomes clear, that also country-specific characteristics such as a country's economic power and institutional freedom changes the magnitude of the effect between consumer animosity and product judgment.

For academia, this meta-analysis build up on the meta-analysis of Westjohn and colleagues (2019), who examined the main effect of consumer animosity on product judgment and willingness to buy, respectively, and cultural values as moderators between consumer animosity and willingness to buy. The findings of this meta-analysis confirm the overall negative effect of consumer animosity on product judgment on the basis of a large set of studies in the research field. Additionally, it answers questions on the heterogeneity of effect sizes of the relationship of interest. Only when academia can explain inconsistent research findings, evidence-based and purposeful implications for decision-makers can be made.

For practitioners, this meta-analysis aggregates existing knowledge from more than 130 studies and more than 170 independent samples. The results of this meta-analysis hence condenses past research findings and confirms reliable effect sizes on a broad set of studies The results further underline, that country-specific characteristics are most relevant when considering the consequences of consumers' animosity attitudes. This is of special interest in cases, where a firm's or product's COO is a target country of consumers' animosity feelings due to recent or former negative events. The results of this meta-analysis show that consumer animosity generally lowers the evaluation of products from or associated with that target country. Thereby, this meta-analysis investigates country-specific characteristics, which can turn this effect insignificant (e.g. a country's GDP). Managers and decision-makers should hence not only focus on the historical background of a bilateral country relationship, but should also consider geo-political and economic standings of the country dyad.

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Market Strategy and Dynamics

Artificial Intelligence in Managerial Decisions: Understanding Perceived Responsibility and Willingness to Accept Recommendations

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Keywords: Marketing, Marketing Management, Decision Making, Artificial Intelligence, Perceived Responsibility

Description: This paper analyzes marketing manager's perceived responsibility and how including Artificial Intelligence in the managerial decision process influences the acceptance of AI-generated compared to human advice.

Abstract

The paper focuses on understanding the perceived responsibility of marketing managers, and how Artificial Intelligence (AI) influences the acceptance of recommendations during the managerial decision process. AI's impact is compared to the influence of human advice. Two experiments differentiate AI-based vs. human recommendations: The first study extends prior research on managerial decision making by showing that managers, who feel highly responsible for decisions, are less likely to accept recommendations in general. Interestingly, this effect differs between the source of recommendation. Managers tend to accept an algorithmic recommendation less when their perceived responsibility is high. In contrast, human recommendations do not differ by the degree of responsibility. The second study analyzes this moderation effect by including sense of ownership as mediator. Results show a significant indirect interaction between perceived responsibility and managers' willingness to accept a recommendation through sense of ownership and source of recommendation. Overall, these findings contribute to understanding the psychological mechanism underlying the individual perception of responsibility and the acceptance of AI-derived recommendations. Thus, this paper offers valuable insights into improving AI acceptance.

Key Contributions

This research contributes to both academia and marketing practice. The two experimental studies make several important contributions to the literature on managerial decisions, AI, and psychology. They examine the impact of a manager's perceived responsibility on their willingness to accept a recommendation by comparing human and machine decision inputs. This paper highlights the importance of integrating both perceived responsibility and AI into managerial decision making in order to better assess managers' willingness to accept a recommendation. Further, rather than simply trusting AI recommendations as a black box, it is paramount to properly explain the recommendations obtained through AI—otherwise, positive decision outcomes cannot be assured. Hence, a clear understanding of the decision background is crucial to ensuring transparency and thus to increasing its acceptance.

These two studies also make an important practical contribution to marketing. AI systems are capable of improving decision processes, and hence performance, by complementing human decision abilities. Especially in the field of marketing, using different AI applications has provided marketers with new and more reliable information on process automation, market forecasting, and decision making. Marketing managers must be aware of both the added value and the potential opportunities arising from AI. Thus, managers at all levels will need to be willing to include AI tools in their daily work and, most importantly, must be willing to accept their recommendations. Providing transparency and explanations were found to increase managers' acceptance of AI and proved crucial to ensuring trust, effectiveness, and efficiency. Therefore, it is important to better integrate the factors influencing decision responsibility as well as to examine how sense of ownership potentially impacts managerial decision making. This will enable increasing the acceptance of AI recommendations.

1. Introduction

Additional information can be included in a decision-making process by using a recommendation (Sniezek & Buckley, 1995; Yaniv, 2004). Managers tend to seek advice to be able to make more accurate decisions and to improve their decision making (van Bruggen, Smidts, & Wierenga, 1998; Bonaccio & Dalal, 2006). This enables managers to make better-informed decisions, which are likely to be closer to optimal decisions (Sniezek & Buckley, 1995; Yaniv, 2004). The additional value of any recommendation is to provide new information, to initiate a change in perspective (Bonaccio & Dalal, 2006), or to provide orientation on unfamiliar topics (Yaniv, 2004). Moreover, managers can profit from the insights gained from people possessing greater expertise (van Bruggen, Smidts, & Wierenga, 1998). Beyond these practical reasons, managers may also seek recommendations from others in order to share their responsibility for the decision outcome (Harvey & Fischer, 1997). Botti and McGill (2006) define responsibility as "the extent to which decision makers feel a sense of ownership of the outcome and so may credit themselves for good and blame themselves for bad outcomes" (Botti & McGill, 2006, p. 212). In the managerial context, the attribution of responsibility has been examined both on the company and on the individual level. This paper focuses on the individual perception of responsibility, which has been investigated concerning the specific consequences for managers (e.g., accountability for the decision process). Managers must be accountable for both their decisions and their actions (Hales, 1986). Wierenga (2011) addressed this lack of research in the field of marketing managers' decision making.

The deployment of AI applications provides marketing managers with new information on market forecasting, process automation, and decision making (Huang & Rust, 2021). AI's abilities to analyze large amounts of data help managers to gain extensive knowledge. These insights support marketing managers in making better decisions and more generally in improving their decision-making capabilities (Paschen et al., 2019). These two factors are critical for an organization's success (Abubakar et al., 2019). Indeed, AI-based technologies are predicted to keep disrupting managerial decision making even further (Davenport et al., 2020). Using AI in decision making has been a major accomplishment in recent years (Duan, Edwards, & Dwivedi, 2019). In particular, today's AI systems are technically capable of improving decision quality by complementing human decision-making abilities (Jarrahi, 2018). However, research has largely explored how people perceive AI- or human-generated managerial decisions rather than (also) considering how managers' perceived responsibility and its drivers (e.g., sense of ownership) influence managers' willingness to accept a recommendation (e.g., Kyung Lee, 2018; Newman, Fast, & Harmon, 2020).

Specifying the source of recommendation (human vs. non-human, i.e., AI) might play an important role in managers' perceived responsibility and the willingness to accept a recommendation. Based on the managerial decision-making process in marketing (Lilien, 2011), and on AI-driven decision making (Colson, 2019), this paper proposes a modified marketing decision model. The input for a (marketing) management problem can be provided either by a human or by AI.[1] Thus, managers take decisions based on recommendations and their managerial judgment, in order to derive a decision to solve a managerial problem.

Based on prior research, the two experimental studies presented here investigate how marketing managers' perceived responsibility affect their willingness to accept algorithmic or human

[1] In the two studies presented here, AI was further specified by using the term algorithm.

recommendations. More specifically, the proposed model integrates various factors, including a sense of ownership and how this influences the perception of a marketing manager's responsibility and their willingness to accept a recommendation. Both studies provide evidence for the indirect effect of perceived responsibility on the willingness to accept a recommendation through sense of ownership, which is contingent on the source of recommendation. The results indicate that executives are less willing to accept a recommendation when their perceived responsibility is high. This relationship was identified to be particularly strong for an algorithmic recommendation and to be independent of human advice. What follows considers the theoretical foundations of the findings, presents the results, and elaborates on the implications and limitations of this empirical research.

2. Theoretical Background and Hypotheses

One way of improving managerial decision making is by accepting recommendations (van Bruggen, Smidts, & Wierenga, 1998; Bonaccio & Dalal, 2006). However, managers must still be accountable for their decisions and actions (Hales, 1986). The higher the impact of a decision, the more responsible decision-makers feel (Harvey & Fischer, 1997). Franklin and Guerber (2020) demonstrated that managers less concerned about the ethical implications of the decision outcomes are more likely to accept a recommendation, and thereby reduce their perceived responsibility. According to Palmeira, Spassova, and Keh (2015), a person's responsibility also rests on their advisor's responsibility. Advisors receive more responsibility for a successful decision outcome compared to a negative one. This shift in responsibility is rooted in the perception of the advisor having a certain control over the decision. Managers also tend to share responsibility in order to avoid emotional distress as well as uncertain and potentially negative outcomes. Thus, sharing their responsibility may serve as protection against bad outcomes (El Zein, Bahrami, & Hertwig, 2019).

The decision process including a recommendation can be described as an expert suggesting a course of action or a decision (Bonaccio & Dalal, 2006). In the end, the manager chooses whether or not to follow the recommendation. Thus, the decision-maker prefers not to bear full responsibility for the decision outcome, which leads them to seek advice (Harvey & Fischer, 1997). Thus, it is hypothesized:

H_1: *Managers have a greater willingness to accept a recommendation with a decreasing perceived responsibility.*

Recent research has found that people prefer algorithmic advice over human judgment, although only in very specific situations such as objective or numerical tasks (Castelo, Bos, & Lehmann, 2019; Logg, Minson, & Moore, 2019; Newman, Fast, & Harmon, 2020). Nevertheless, many people still mistrust algorithms and prefer human recommendations (e.g., Dietvorst, Simmons, & Massey, 2015; Yeomans et al., 2019). Decision-makers often reject algorithms when they can actively choose between human and algorithmic recommendations (e.g., Eastwood, Snook, & Luther, 2012).

Decision making is usually connected with a direct perceived responsibility by the decision-maker (Neri et al., 2020). However, using an AI system makes it harder to hold managers and businesses responsible and accountable for their actions (De George, 2008). Especially when an algorithm makes mistakes,

individuals tend to trust humans rather than AI (Moon & Nass, 1998; Moon, 2003; Dietvorst, Simmons, & Massey, 2015). Thus, the greater autonomy of an algorithm tends to make humans attribute negative outcomes to a machine while taking the credit for successful outcomes (Jörling, Böhm, & Paluch, 2019). In the medical field, for instance, studies show that participants favor a physician's advice over a computer program's. This effect was demonstrated by participants' diminished sense of responsibility when accepting the physician's advice (Promberger & Baron, 2006). According to Bonaccio and Dalal (2006), the motivation to seek advice is to share responsibility. Thus, in the algorithmic condition managers are more likely to discount a recommendation when their perceived responsibility is high, because the responsibility cannot be shared. Thus, the following hypothesis can be formulated:

H_2: *The source of recommendation moderates the relationship between a manager's perceived responsibility and willingness to accept a recommendation.*

One keyword emerges from the definition of perceived responsibility (Botti & McGill, 2006): sense of ownership. Beggan (1992) suggested that ideas or thoughts are seen as positive when people have a feeling of ownership about them. This feeling may arise for both physical and nonphysical objects, such as ideas or decision output (Beggan, 1992). Hence, a feeling of ownership may be positively linked to perceived responsibility (Furby, 1978). According to Jörling, Böhm, and Paluch (2019), sense of ownership is directly linked to a higher perceived responsibility. Baer and Brown (2012) demonstrated that having a sense of ownership negatively affects the acceptance of a recommendation when the advice is contrary to one's own beliefs, triggering feelings of anger. Therefore, a sense of ownership may mediate the relationship between the perception of responsibility and the willingness to accept a recommendation and is contingent on the source of recommendation. Accordingly, it is hypothesized:

H_3: *The indirect effect of a manager's perceived responsibility on their willingness to accept a recommendation through sense of ownership is contingent on the source of recommendation.*

3. Experimental Studies: Design, Methodology, Results

3.1 Sample and Research Procedure

Data Collection and Sampling: *First,* an online pre-study was conducted with 50 managers (M_{age} = 36, SD = 11.73, 54% female), who were asked to select two out of three ice cream products for the main studies (Fischer & Volkmar, 2022). The products were displayed in random order, controlling for question order effects (Blankenship, 1942). As a result, overperforming or underperforming ice creams were excluded[2] to control for a social desirability bias (Nederhof, 1985). *Second,* data were collected from 300 managers (M_{age} = 38, SD = 11.06, 41% female) for the first online experiment to examine the proposed moderation effect. *Third,* a second experiment with 350 managers (M_{age} = 37, SD = 10.36, 43% female) was conducted to investigate the moderated mediation effect by including sense of ownership

[2] Using a chi-square independence test, one product was found to be significantly different from the other two ice creams ($p < 0.1$), leading to the product being excluded. Thus, two products with similar results ($p > 0.1$) were chosen for the experiment.

as a mediator. To ensure a high-quality marketing management sample in both studies, participants without employee responsibility were excluded. Their attention was further controlled by including attention check items,[3] resulting in an effective sample size of n = 258 (study 1) and n = 331 (study 2) (Oppenheimer, Meyvis, & Davidenko, 2009).

Method: The two experiments were conducted in the field of *marketing decisions*: Decision fields can be distinguished in communication management, price management, and product development (Kotler, 1967). Using forecasting information technologies is highly relevant for marketing decisions, especially in developing a new product with high uncertainty (Polat, 2008). The studies were constructed by including an active product choice.[4] In both studies, marketing managers chose between different products and had to decide which one to launch into a test market. After their first choice, they received either an algorithmic or a human recommendation. The experiments manipulated the advice to produce an opposite recommendation to managers' previous choice. The between-subjects design assigned managers randomly to one of two conditions.

Measuring Scales: At the end of both experimental studies, participants were asked to complete a short questionnaire measuring their perceived responsibility and how this affected their willingness to accept a recommendation. *First*, the willingness to accept a recommendation was measured by comparing the final choice with the initial opinion and whether managers changed their decision (e.g., Sniezek & Buckley, 1995). *Second*, the degree of perceived responsibility was measured by adapting the items developed by Botti and McGill (2006). In addition to the first experiment, one open question was included to determine the reasons for accepting or discounting the recommendation. The proposed mediator, sense of ownership, was measured by adapting the items developed by Peck and Shu (2009).

3.2 Results

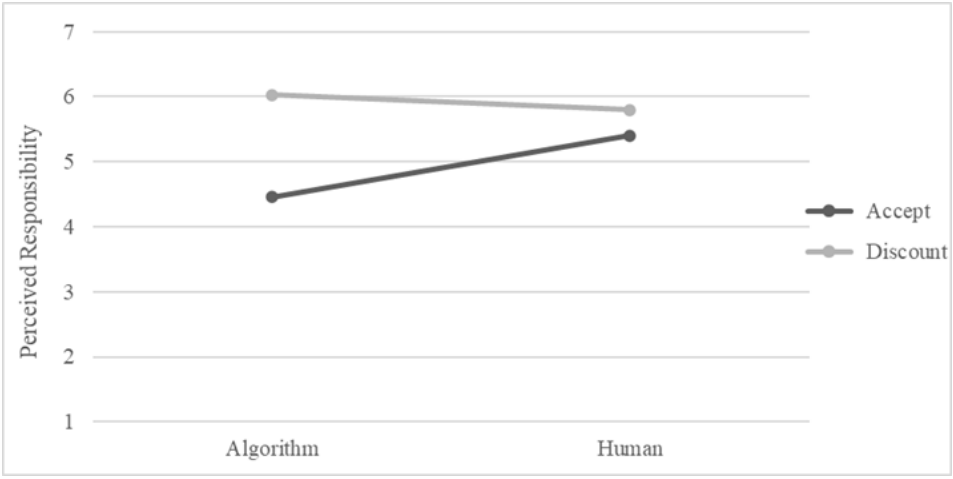
Hypothesis Tests: The first study examined Hypotheses 1 and 2. *First*, the relationship between perceived responsibility and willingness to accept a recommendation was tested (H_1). The regression results show that a manager's perceived responsibility significantly affects the willingness to accept a recommendation (β = -.13, t = -6.12, p < .001). Hence, the willingness to accept a recommendation increases with a decreasing perceived responsibility, thus supporting the first hypothesis.

Second, in order to test the moderating effect (H_2) of the source of recommendation between a manager's perceived responsibility and the willingness to accept a recommendation, Hayes' (2017) PROCESS was applied. Basic moderation model number 1 was used with 10.000 bootstrapped samples. The results showed that the interaction of the source with perceived responsibility impacted the willingness to accept a recommendation, adding 13% (R^2 = .13, p < .001) of the variance explained. The source of recommendation significantly moderated this relationship (b = -.81, 95% CI [-1.48, -.28]). In order to further understand the nature of this relationship, two analytical approaches were applied: (1) simple slope analysis (to differentiate different levels of the moderator); and (2) line graphs of the slopes (to illustrate the moderating role).

[3] Participants had to first recall the source of recommendation and second, their attention was tested by asking them to leave a question blank. In the last part of the study, participants had to describe their perceived goal of the study to control for demand characteristics (Orne, 1962).
[4] Research suggests that including an active choice option increases the feeling of perceived responsibility, resulting in more realistic experimental results (Botti & Lyengar, 2004; Botti & McGill, 2006).

The results of the simple slope analysis revealed no significant effect between perceived responsibility and willingness to accept a recommendation (b = -.25, 95% CI [-.56, .05]) in the human condition. In contrast, a significant effect (b = -1.01, 95% CI [-1.48, -.65]) was found in the algorithmic condition. According to the line graph (see Figure 1), the human source does not change the perceived responsibility, and thus does not affect the willingness to accept a recommendation. Interestingly, when a manager's perceived responsibility is lower for an algorithmic recommendation, the tendency to accept a recommendation is higher—compared to greater responsibility, which leads to more recommendation discounting. Additionally, the perceived responsibility differs significantly between the human and the algorithmic condition when managers accept the recommendation. These results show the moderation effect in the algorithmic condition, and thus support Hypothesis 2.

Figure 1: Results of the Moderated Effect



The second study examined Hypothesis 3 by using bootstrapping with the PROCESS macro to investigate the moderated mediation effect. This study utilized Hayes' (2017) PROCESS Model 14, where the effect of a manager's perceived responsibility on the willingness to accept a recommendation via sense of ownership is moderated by the source of recommendation. The results demonstrate that perceived responsibility positively influences sense of ownership (b = .95, SE = .05, p < .001). Further, sense of ownership (b = -.46, SE = .15, p < .01) directly impacts the willingness to accept a recommendation. The interaction effect of sense of ownership and the source of recommendation on the willingness to accept a recommendation was significant (b = -.43, SE = .19, p < .05). The indirect effect was significant for both the human (b = -.43, 95% CI [-.75, -.15]) and the algorithmic (b = -.84, 95% CI [-1.29, -.53]) condition. However, the findings show that the indirect effect becomes stronger with an algorithmic recommendation. As hypothesized, a significant indirect interaction between perceived responsibility and the willingness to accept a recommendation through sense of ownership is contingent on the source of recommendation (b = -.41, 95% CI [-.81, -.09]). Therefore, the proposed moderated mediation hypothesis (H_3) is supported. This model is able to account for a large portion of the overall variance (R^2 = .55, p < .001).

Content Analysis: An open question captured why participants accepted or discounted the recommendation. Inductive coding was used to categorize participants' answers (Gioia, Corley, & Hamilton, 2013). In order to increase coding reliability, another researcher coded and confirmed the

intercoder reliability of the content analysis (Charmaz, 2014). The results show eleven codes, which are categorized into two main dimensions: Reasons for accepting and discounting the recommendation.

Reasons for accepting the recommendation: Managers were unsure about their choice (low confidence), or thought that the advisor had more information or expertise than they did (advisor expertise). Some managers mentioned that including multiple perspectives was better than basing their decision only on a single opinion (include other perspectives), whereas others felt they had to appreciate the recommendation (value the opinion of others). Some participants believed that the advisor was competent or that the advice was accurate (positive advisor reputation).

Reason for discounting the recommendation: Managers used opposing arguments, such as being very confident with their decision (high confidence) or that they doubted the advisor's intentions and competence (negative advisor reputation). In addition, their argumentation included their reliance on their gut feeling (reliance on intuition) or that it was their decision to make (decision ownership). The greatest issue causing advice discounting was the lack of explanation of the recommendation (no explainability). This reason was mentioned by 23% of managers in the algorithmic condition, compared to roughly 10% in the human condition. More specifically, most managers failing to follow the algorithmic advice (48%) used this reason to justify their decision.

4. Implications and Future Research

These results show that including AI and a manager's perceived responsibility in the decision process strongly affects the acceptance of a recommendation. In the first experimental study, H_1 and H_2 were examined while H_3 was analyzed in the second study. *First*, the results demonstrated that when confronted with recommendations for action, a manager's perceived responsibility powerfully influences the willingness to accept a recommendation. Managers who feel responsible for a decision are less likely to accept a recommendation (H_1). *Second*, as a result, when specifying the source of recommendation this effect differs in the human and in the algorithmic condition. These results illustrate this moderating role in the algorithmic condition: A manager's low perceived responsibility when receiving an algorithmic advice increases the tendency to follow a recommendation, whereas high perceived responsibility lowers advice acceptance, thus discounting the recommendation (H_2). *Finally*, to understand the mechanism underlying the moderation, sense of ownership was included as a mediator. The results demonstrated that perceived responsibility positively influences sense of ownership, and thus affects the willingness to accept a recommendation. The source of recommendation moderates this effect by decreasing sense of ownership, resulting in a stronger tendency to accept a recommendation. This effect is greater in the algorithmic condition compared to the human one (H_3).

Beyond these three hypotheses, additional drivers for discounting the recommendation were investigated. The content analysis offered insights into the importance of explainability. Many managers had an issue with the low explainability of the recommendation, and led them to discount the advice. The black box algorithm used in the experiment and the related lack of transparency, which is often associated with algorithms (Davenport & Ronanki, 2018; Burton, Stein, & Jensen, 2020), could account for the lower explainability. Further, managers who discounted the recommendation were more likely

to accept the advice with more detailed explanation. In addition, decision ownership, high confidence, and reliance on intuition play further an important role. According to Yaniv and Kleinberger (2000) and Krueger (2003), the egocentric bias, that people favor their own opinion in general due to assumed superiority, might be a possible reason for these three arguments.

Given these results, this paper has important implications for both researchers and practitioners. *First*, for researchers, it makes several important contributions to the literature on managerial decisions, AI, and psychology. In particular, it highlights the importance of combining managers' perceived responsibility and AI in the decision process to better assess the willingness to accept a recommendation. Further, rather than simply trusting AI recommendations as a black box, it is paramount to clearly understand the decision background in order to ensure transparency and thus increase acceptance. *Second*, for practitioners, an increasing number of companies are already using or planning to implement AI in their work structures. Managers at all levels will need to be willing to include AI tools in their daily work, and hence to accept their recommendations for action. Algorithm transparency and explanations were identified as driving advice acceptance and serve several key purposes, among others, ensuring trust, effectiveness, and efficiency. It is therefore crucial to better integrate the factors influencing decision responsibility and how a sense of ownership impacts the decision-making process in order to increase the acceptance of AI recommendations.

However, the studies also have limitations and therefore open up opportunities for future research. *First*, the sample used in both studies might have included participants who did not reflect the desired population (managers with direct responsibility for at least one employee). There is a danger that participants gave wrong information on their personal background, so they could participate in the online study (Buchanan & Scofield, 2018). Further research could, therefore, replicate these studies in a field experiment, in order to increase external validity and to ensure a representative sample. *Second*, the scenario refers to a specific marketing task in product management. Hence, it is uncertain whether the same results would be obtained with different marketing tasks. These studies could be replicated with other marketing tasks, derived from the "4 Ps," for instance, in pricing, promotion, or placement. *Third*, the recommendation was presented without any reasoning. As the findings show that higher explainability positively affects the willingness to accept a recommendation, further research could include a detailed explanation of the advice. By taking into account the requirements for good advice, different levels of explainability could be included (black box vs. explainable AI). *Finally*, in these two studies participants received a recommendation by default. However, it would be interesting to investigate the effect when managers have to actively request a recommendation.

Without doubting the relevance of AI and managers' perceived responsibility, this paper has shown that it can change existing patterns of managerial decision making. In particular, managers need to realize that they may perceive AI- or human-generated recommendations significantly different, which may result in various consequences as far as acceptance is concerned.

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DETERMINANTS AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF BUSINESS MODEL INNOVATION: EVIDENCE FROM INITIAL PUBLIC OFFERINGS

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Keywords: business model innovation, product innovation, IPO, firm valuation

Description: This research examines the determinants and financial consequences of business model innovation and contrasts it with that of product innovation when firms go public.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Questions

The innovation literature has primarily focused on product (goods and services) innovations. Empirical evidence on a prevalent form of innovation—business model innovation—remains scarce. Yet, firms are increasingly developing and introducing business model innovations. This study examines firms' focus on this type of innovation versus product innovation at the time of their Initial Public Offering (IPO). Specifically, the authors examine the following research questions: (1) What are the firm- and industry-level determinants of firms' propensity to engage in a business model innovation? (2) What are the effects of business model innovation on firm stock market performance in an IPO? (3) Is a focus on business model innovation more valuable than a focus on product innovation?

Method and Data

We use a sample of 1,680 firms that went public in the U.S from 2002 to 2019 to empirically test our hypotheses on the determinants and performance consequences of business model innovation. The focal variable that captures the firm's IPO performance, the IPO first-day returns, comes from the IPO Scoop database. The firm and industry-level variables to identify the determinants of business model innovation come from Compustat and CapitalIQ.

Empirically, the authors propose an operationalization of firms' innovation focus at the time of IPO using text analysis of the business description section in the IPO prospectuses of 1,680 firms collected from the SEC EDGAR database. We use a combination of dictionary-based and machine learning methods to identify the innovation focus of the sample of IPO firms as one of the four – business model innovation, product innovation, both, or neither. We then examine the three firm-level and two industry-level determinants of firms' innovation focus at

the time of IPO by estimating a multinomial logit model. To test the hypotheses on the valuation consequences of innovation focus, we employ propensity score weighting on the sub-samples of the four innovation foci followed by t-tests on the balanced samples.

Summary of Findings

We examine three firm-level determinants – firm size, firm age, firm technical knowledge and two industry-level determinants – industry technical knowledge and industry growth. We find that compared to firms that focus on product innovation, firms that pursue business model innovation and both business model and product innovation are larger in size and younger. Firms with less technical knowledge pursue business model innovation. Industry technical knowledge does not influence the pursuit of business model innovation. Further, firms operating in higher growth industries also pursue business model innovation compared to product innovation. Finally, investors value business model innovation more than product innovation.

Key Contributions

This proposal advances the idea that the notion of innovation needs to be expanded to include business model innovation, a prevalent but understudied form of innovation. From a theoretical standpoint, this research contributes to the emerging stream of research on business model innovation in the marketing literature by providing conceptual arguments to define business model innovation as a marketing related construct and by showing that when firms go public, a focus on business model innovation is valued highly by investors compared to a focus on product innovation. This research also contributes to the innovation and IPO research streams by examining the pre-IPO determinants of innovation focus and the effect of this innovation focus on firm value.

From an empirical standpoint, this research advances the business model literature by proposing an operationalization of a firm's focus on business model innovation that leverages text analysis. We hope this will open up new avenues in empirical research in business model innovation in marketing and other disciplines. Findings from this study can help managers determine if pursuing business model innovation is financially advantageous for their firms and provides them with initial insights on how to approach designing this important type of innovation.

(References are available upon request)

EFFECT OF GOVERNMENT-TO-CONTRACTOR REVOLVING DOOR APPOINTMENTS ON CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP PERFORMANCE

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Keywords: revolving door appointment, customer relationship performance, federal contractor, business-to-government

Description: This paper focuses on the firm's strategy of appointing the prior government officials as directors, and examines its impact on customer relationship performance in business-to-government markets.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Federal government has been regarded as an important customer by many companies, and the business-to-government (B2G) market has increasingly received attention among marketing scholars. Firm in B2G markets, namely federal contractors, often engage in the practice of government-to-contractor *revolving door appointments*—appointments of former public employees from government agencies as corporate board members. For those firms, revolving door appointments provide a critical path to attain political connections and enhance the relationship with government customers. Despite of the prevalence of revolving door

appointments, marketing scholarship has yet to shed much academic light on the firm's political ties with government customers. Prior studies closely examine the ramifications of various characteristics of upper echelons but have neglected their political connections via their past employment. Besides, studies on political ties predominantly examine short-term performance metrics (e.g., abnormal returns) as outcome variables, ignoring the relational dynamics between suppliers and customers. Addressing these gaps, we focus on customer relationship performance in B2G markets and decompose it into *customer acquisition, cross-selling,* and *customer retention performance* because they are key indicators of relationship management success. As such, we answer the following research question: *what is the effect of the government-to-contractor revolving door appointments on customer relationship performance?*

Method and Data

We used multiple sources to collect the data. We compiled a unique data set that contains the firm's director background information using proxy statements, where the firm discloses senior leader's working experience. For some directors who do not disclose their career history, we sought other sources such as official biography, news reports, and LinkedIn accounts to have a comprehensive record of their prior careers. We then matched firms with their customer relationship performance from the Usaspending.gov database, which provides the contracting data of the federal government. We relied on COMPUSTAT to obtain the firm's other characteristics such as size and resource. We first retrieved a list of top 100 government contractors each year; then, we removed private companies for data availability consideration. We only focused on the public contractors that have average sales of over $40 million every year to ensure they are important contractors in the B2G market. After accounting for missing values in variables, the sample is finalized with 108 firms in the B2G market, covering a thirteen-year

period (2005-2017). To test our conceptual model, we ran a random-effect model and accounted for a potential endogeneity concern with a control function approach.

Summary of Findings

Overall, we find that revolving door appointment has a positive effect on customer acquisition performance; that is, revolving door executives can leverage their connections with prior colleagues to facilitate the firm's exchange of information with new customers. We also find the positive effect of revolving door appointments on cross-selling and customer retention performance; that is, firms gain precious customer knowledge and improve their products to meet the customer needs, hence creating opportunities to sell more items to and maintain the relationship with existing customers. In addition, we find that firms can leverage the revolving door director's political ties to gain new customer relationships more effectively when they have more market knowledge and experiences in serving government customers. However, for firms that operate in highly regulated industries (e.g., pharmaceutical, finance), the positive effects of revolving door appointments on cross-selling and customer retention performance are weakened; that is, firms in highly regulated industries have more concerns over the public monitoring regarding their revolving door practice.

Statement of Key Contributions

This study makes several contributions to marketing theory and practitioners. First, this is the first marketing study that theorizes and tests the firm's strategy of appointing key personnel with political ties with the government and contribute to relationship marketing theories by conceptualizing revolving door appointments as an important marketing tool that the firm can use to manage relationships with government customers. Second, this research contributes to the literature on customer relationship management by focusing on customer relationship

performance as an outcome of the firm's revolving door appointments. Extant studies predominantly examine short-term financial performance or contract allocation as outcome variables. This is a significant gap in the relationship marketing literature as the performance in managing government customers are very critical for firms in the B2G market, a marketplace where both buyers and suppliers are highly regulated. Third, this study proposes a new path for federal contractors that firms should appoint the directors with the appropriate prior work affiliations to monetize the relational capitals from the political ties of those appointed directors. We also suggest policymakers that they should incorporate close monitoring on the behaviors of both contractors and government agencies to minimize the conflict of interest.

References are available upon request

HOW DO BASE OF PYRAMID FIRMS SHAPE MARKETS? MARKET SHAPING IN RESOURCE-CONSTRAINED ENVIRONMENTS

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Keywords: base of pyramid (BoP), base of pyramid producers (BoPP), market-shaping

Description: The research study explores market shaping in context of base of pyramid markets, using insights from four base of pyramid producer firms in an emerging market, India.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question- Markets are routinely viewed as 'given' and little attention is paid on how they are formed or changed over time (Buzzell 1999; Vargo et al. 2017). Market shaping is considered as an important strategy for firms to optimize the value potential of a market (Nenonen et al. 2019). Since firms across markets operate in a competitive environment, researchers place increased attention on how markets can be adequately molded by firms for better results (Nenonen et al. 2014). However, with few exceptions (e.g., Viswanathan and Rosa 2007; Anderson et al. 2010), researchers looking at dimensions of market shaping have largely focused on 'relatively resource rich settings' (Herlin and Pazirandeh 2011; Mele et al. 2015; Baker and Nenonen 2019; Nenonen et al. 2019; Kaartemo and Nystrom 2021). Limited attention has been paid at the base of pyramid (BoP) markets and firms operating in such 'resource constrained environments' and how they navigate such market conditions to shape markets. Thus, this study investigates how BoP firms operating in resource-lean market environments adapt, create and recreate the market systems.

RQ- How do BoP producer firms structure and execute their deliberate attempts to change their markets and to what effect?

Method and Data- We did in-depth interviews with 43 key stakeholders in four BoPP firms in India. We followed the guidelines of conducting qualitative case study methodology (Eisenhardt 1989, Yin 2015) using an abductive approach (Dubois and Gadde 2002). Using theoretical sampling (Strauss and Corbin 1997; Eisenhardt and Graebner 2007) and replication logic (Yin 2017), firms were selected based on parameters such as geographical diversity, promoter type, ownership type, commodity or product focus, years of operation, size of operation, availability of production and marketing capabilities and financial performance of past three years. In addition, organizations covering the complete spectrum from production to marketing of their products, were preferred during the selection process.

The key informants in our sample included stakeholders who have actively participated in conceptualizing and executing the activities and mobilizing resources that have led to market-shaping of the firms. The data analysis was structured around the established methods of open-ended inductive theory-building research prescribed by (Glaser and Strauss 2017; Strauss and Corbin 1998) and as prescribed by (Gioia et al. 2013). Our analysis followed an iterative process through repeated comparisons of emergent data and themes. While analysis was iterative in nature, it was progressed through several recognizable phases.

Summary of Findings- Study found that transaction transparency increases BoPP firms' influence in market shaping through mechanisms of trust building and legitimacy seeking. These are important mechanisms given the low levels of trust displayed in BoP environments. Establishing power structures to positively influence relational dynamics is also an important market shaping approach which BoPP firms develop. We also establish that BoPP firms develop intra-firm alliances as well as inter-firm alliances for influencing market shaping. These networks often act as substitutes for low levels of resource use in these environments. Developing innovative ecosystems where only a few exist also helps the BoPP firms to shape markets in positive ways. The salience on nurturing local ecosystem of market actors have also been emphasized in market shaping literature. In the same vein, internal and external resource re-configurations are strong mechanisms of market shaping given the resource lean environments in which BoPP firms operate. This is much more challenges for BoPP firms compared to their counterparts operating in resource-rich environments. We also develop mechanisms through which BoPP firms sense, relate and share abilities in their markets to enhance their adaptive capabilities that aids their goal attainments in BoP markets which are otherwise so challenging.

Statement of Key Contributions- Through rigorous analysis of data from four BoPP firms, we develop a framework by which firms in resource constrained environments can develop

their market shaping efforts. First, we propose a set of propositions, where we show that market shaping by focal firms can be better understood through an interconnected triad of its activities, resources and capabilities, which influence the factors that are responsible for market shaping. We show that the result of the focal firm's interaction with the external market through such factors brings changes in market-level characteristics and influences the market's behavioral dimensions. Second, we identify seven market-shaping dimensions based on firms' activities, resources and capabilities. BoPP firms' activities towards their market enable them to redefine relationships, redefine norms and redevelop markets. These activities were supported through internal and external resource reconfiguration within and outside the firm and, finally, the capabilities developed by firms for market shaping i.e., enabling and altering capabilities. Third, we establish that unlike traditional market shaping, market shaping by BoPP firms may not always be a deliberate attempt but may also occur as a by-product of the firm's focus and actions towards bringing a positive change for its key stakeholders and while establishing itself in their respective markets.

References are available upon request

HOW E-COMMERCE ASSURANCE MECHANISMS AFFECT CORPORATE REPUTATION

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Keywords: E-commerce, assurance mechanisms, corporate reputation, power distance beliefs

Description: In this research, the authors examine the impact of online marketplaces' reputation- vs. regulation-oriented assurance mechanisms on the cognitive and affective corporate reputation of e-commerce platforms.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Previous research has suggested that reputation-oriented assurance mechanisms can boost buyer-seller transaction efficiency, which in turn can enhance consumers' trust regarding the ability of the online platform (i.e., competence trust); whereas regulation-oriented mechanisms can help build trust concerning the good faith and integrity of the online platform (i.e., goodwill trust) by proactively constructing safeguards or safety nets. However, there is a dearth of research that explores the underlying differences between these two assurance mechanisms and the extent to which they can effectively influence corporate reputation (CR). Furthermore, considering that cultural differences can impact consumer perceptions significantly, how consumers from contrasting cultural backgrounds are influenced by these two assurance mechanisms remains unknown. Developing an understanding in this regard is imperative, as it

can in turn affect the role the two assurance mechanisms play on shaping CR. To fill this gap, this research empirically investigates the evaluative processes consumers undergo when influenced by different online platform assurance mechanisms (e.g., regulation- vs. reputation-oriented). In particular, we aim to address an important managerial question: should e-commerce companies be selective about the type of assurance mechanism they use to administer their online platforms based on variations in cultural contexts (e.g., power distance beliefs or PDB)?

Method And Data

Through a cross-cultural study with participants from China (who are high in country-level PDB) and the United States (who are low in country-level PDB), this study examined 1). the main effect of an ecommerce platform's reputation- vs. regulation-oriented assurance mechanisms on the company's cognitive and affective CR; 2). PDB's moderating role on the effect of reputation- oriented (vs. regulation-orientated) mechanisms on cognitive CR; and 3). the effect of regulation-orientated (vs. reputation-orientated) mechanisms on affective CR.

The participants were recruited from the United States and China (for Americans, N = 95, 48.2% female, Mage = 29.3; for Chinese, N = 96, 52.3% female, Mage = 28.4). American participants were recruited through Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk), while Chinese participants were recruited through Sojump, a Chinese survey platform (https://www.wjx.cn) that has been widely used in research concerning Chinese subjects. This study employed a 2 (culture: American vs. Chinese) x 2 (assurance mechanisms: regulation-orientated vs. reputation-orientated) between-subjects, quasi-experimental design.

Summary of Findings

Based upon the theoretical groundwork of signaling theory (Wang et al., 2018; Kirmani

& Rao, 2000) and a two-dimensional theoretical model of CR featuring affective and cognitive components (Manfred, 2004; Zhang et al., 2020), this research explores the pivotal effects of online marketplace assurance mechanisms on CR. In particular, our findings highlight the important role of PDB as a moderator of the effects online marketplace assurance mechanisms have on cognitive and affective CR and uncover the psychological processes that lead to such effects.

Statement of Key Contributions

Theoretically, we add incremental knowledge to the extant literature on the influence of online marketplace assurance mechanisms and how consumers from different cultural backgrounds may respond differently to them. To the best of our knowledge, this research is among the first to tie the two types of online marketplace assurance mechanisms (reputation-oriented vs. regulation-oriented) to the two components of CR (cognitive and affective). Furthermore, by operationalizing PDB in various ways, this research provides greater external validity regarding the moderating role of the construct in the context of our research topic. Managerially, this research demonstrates that e-commerce companies can use the conclusions of this research to improve their cognitive or affective CR by adjusting platform governance strategies. Second, this research provides a reference for international e-commerce companies to 'go global' more effectively. If overseas e-commerce companies want to truly integrate into the local market, they cannot simply copy their successful experience from their domestic markets. The cultural background of the target market is an important basis for adjusting the governance strategy of the online platform in a targeted manner.

References are available upon request.

Identifying the dimensions of user value of software products: A grounded theory approach

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Abstract

In this study we identify the independent dimensions of value derived by users from the use of utilitarian software and the impacts on their loyalty. We use the grounded theory approach to generate the initial set of response from software users through focus group sessions. The responses are content-analyzed and after codification of the emerging themes a list of items are generated. The items so generated are subjected to Exploratory Factor analysis to identify the distinctive and independent value dimensions. After the identification of the value dimensions a survey is administered to another group of participants to assess the impact of these factors on user loyalty. This study a replication of our previous study in the context of ecommerce presented at a top conference (Kakar, 2020f) led to the emergence of psychological safety as a new construct that had the highest correlation with loyalty of software users. The findings of the study have important implications for software product development.

Keywords

User Loyalty, Utilitarian Value, Hedonic Value, Social Value, Quality Value, Epistemic Value, Quality Value, Psychological Safety, User Loyalty

Statement of Contribution

The key contribution of the study is the identification of Psychological Safety (PS) as one of the value dimensions. We used the nomenclature "Psychological Safety" from a similar construct in work literature (Edmondson (2003). Marketing literature has borrowed constructs in the past too from work literature. Customer satisfaction a popularly used construct inn marketing, was derived from job satisfaction construct in work literature (Pfaff, 1973; Czeipiel, Rosenberg and Akerele, 1974). As in work literature, PS measures the degree of comfort that users feel from not having to face unpleasant consequences of software use. The importance of this construct can be gauged from the finding that it had the highest correlation with user loyalty. These findings can be used by software product managers in developing software that maximizes user value and product loyalty.

Introduction

The information systems is well familiar with the concepts of Utilitarian value(UV), Hedonic Value (HV) and Social Value (SV) (Davis, 1989, Heijden, 2004; Kakar 2018a,b,c,d,e). However, do UV, SV and HV together comprehensively captures the various values sought by the user from the use of software? In the evolution of the value constructs, studies have used various theories, models and paradigms in their investigation including the expectancy-confirmation paradigm, flow theory, symbolic interactionism perspective and technology adoption model (Blumer, 1969; Guo and Poole, 2009; Koufaris, 2002; Mathwick and Rigdon, 2004; To, Liao and Lin, 2007). In this study we use the grounded theory approach (Corbin and Strauss (2008) to understand directly from software users the various values sought by them. We feel that by using this approach in the study we will be able to more comprehensively capture the various dimensions of value sought by software users. will help software development organizations in developing products that meet the evolving value needs of users of software benefitting themselves and the users as a result.

For testing the validity of the value constructs identified using the grounded theory approach we did a correlation with user loyalty (UL) as it not only measures the behavioral intention of the users but also measures their intention not to switch to another software in the same

application category. Past studies have shown that user derived values from a software positively are positively correlated with user loyalty. Loyal users are not only more likely to remain with the software vendor but are also more likely to promote the software through word-of-mouth. Assessing the correlation of the various dimensions of value to user loyalty is therefore important. If will enable product managers of software development organization to design and develop software that is competitive and able to retain existing users as well as increase the market share.

Literature Review

Diefenbach, Kolb and Hassenzahl (2014) noted that the concept of hedonic and utilitarian values (HV and UV) provided by products and services originated in the consumer behavior literature. The corresponding constructs of hedonic and pragmatic quality in Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) literature (Hassenzhal, Platz, Burmester and Lehner, 2000; Diefenbach, Kolb and Hassenzahl, 2014) and of perceived usefulness and perceived enjoyment in Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) literature (Davis, 1989; Venkatesh, 1999; Kakar 2015a,b,c,d,e) were introduced later (see summary below).

Literature	Utilitarian Value	Hedonic Value
Consumer Behavior	Utilitarian Value (Babin et al., 1994)	Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982)
Human Computer Interaction	Pragmatic Quality (Hassenzahl, Platz, Burmester, and Lehner, 2000)	Hedonic Quality (Hassenzahl, Platz, Burmester, and Lehner, 2000)
Information Systems	Perceived Usefulness (Davis, 1989)	Perceived Enjoyment (Heijden, 2004)

UV is the degree to which products or service is functional, useful, practical, and helps you in achieving a goal (Strahilevitz and Myers, 1998). HV is the degree to which a product or service is enjoyable, appeals to your senses and is pleasant and fun (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982). UV provides extrinsic motivation to the user to use the software such as accomplishing a task efficiently and reflects a means to an end (Gerow, Ayyagari, Thatcher and Roth, 2013; Kakar 2012a,b,c,d). HV provides intrinsic motivation to the user to use the system and is an end in itself (Wu and Lu, 2013).

However, while it is well acknowledged that UV and HV are distinctive and independent dimensions of value provided by a software to its users, later research showed that there was another type of value derived by consumers. Social value (SV) was earlier considered as part of hedonic value(HV). A clear distinction between the two construct emerged later (e.g. Park et al., 1986; Keller, 1993). SV adopted in ecommerce and information systems literature (e.g. Gan and Wang, 2017) is a distinctively different dimension of value representing the symbolic values of product or service (Rintamaki et al., 2006). In the software context SV reflects the degree to which its use impacts the self-esteem and social status of the user (Kakar, 2017, Kakar, 2020abcdef). A summary of key differences between UV, HV and SV constructs is presented below:

UTILITARIAN VALUE	HEDONIC VALUE	SOCIAL VALUE
Represents “shoulds” or reasoned preferences (Bazerman, Tenbrunsel and Wade-Benzoni, 1998)	Represents “wants” or affective preferences (Bazerman, Tenbrunsel and Wade-Benzoni, 1998)	Represents social meaning and self-expression choices of the user (Elliot, 1997)
Targets Homo Economicus - Consumers are utility calculator (Rintamaki, 2006)	Targets Homo Ludens - Consumers are guided by senses (Rintamaki, 2006)	Targets Homo Faber - Consumers convey their personalities, lifestyles and beliefs through conspicuous consumption (Rintamaki, 2006)

Is functional and practical (Stelmaszewska, Fields and Blandford, 2004)	Is enjoyment, novelty, aesthetics, unexpectedness, fun (Stelmaszewska, Fields and Blandford, 2004)	Is symbolic, expressive, relational (Smith and Colgate, 2007) (Belk, 1988)
Is a means to an end (Babin and Harris, 2011)	Is an end in itself (Babin and Harris, 2011)	It can be both a means (social status) and an end in itself (self-esteem) (Rintamaki, 2006)
Helps accomplish practical goals/ tasks (Smith and Colgate, 2007)	Provides sensory benefits (Smith and Colgate, 2007)	Provides relational and network benefits (Smith and Colgate, 2007)
Generates cognitive satisfaction response when fulfilled (Chitturi et al., 2007; Berman, 2005)	Generates affective delight response when fulfilled (Chitturi et al., 2007; Berman, 2005)	Builds self-esteem and social status when fulfilled (Elliot, 1997)
Can be Objectively appraised (Chitturi, 2009)	Is Subjective, Experiential (Chittri, 2009)	Is Interactional, Relational (Elliot, 1997)

Differences between Hedonic-Utilitarian-Social Value Dimensions (adapted from Kakar (2017) and enhanced for Social Value characteristics)

However, in the non-software context studies in the past had also identified other values that users derived from the use of products and services. Are these values also relevant to software users? Are there any other as yet unidentified values that may also be relevant to software users?

Method

The study was conducted in three phases.

Phase 1: Initial Item-Pool Generation

The first phase of research is aimed at open discussions with software users. 6 focus group sessions were conducted with 10 participants each. In the first half of the session, the focus group participants were asked to think about their favorite software and describe the various benefits they derived from its use. In the second half of the focus group session, the participants were encouraged to think about the software which they avoid using or use it only when necessary to complete a task. In this case they were asked to provide their wish list of features which if provided by the software would make them want to use it. They were told not to let technological constraints come in the way of providing the wish list. After collecting the information, we made a list of 67 statements. After removing redundant statements, the list got narrowed down to 46 unique statements or items. These statements were then concisely worded a standard language and style.

Phase 2: Data collection and Item Reduction

The 46 items generated in Phase 1 and 4 items from an existing User Loyalty construct (Casaló, Flavián. and Guinalíu, 2008) were used to design the questionnaire. Some questions pertaining to the demographic information of participant were also included such as their name, age and gender. Loyalty is "a deeply held commitment to re-buy or re-patronize a preferred product/ service consistently in the future, thereby causing repetitive same- brand or same brand-set purchasing, despite situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behavior" (Oliver, 1999, p. 34).

A survey was then conducted using this questionnaire with 274 students. Participants responded to all items on a 9-point Likert scale with anchors of 9 (strongly agree) and 1 (strongly disagree). Some items were reverse coded. After analysis of student responses and feedback received from the debriefing session 6 items were removed as they were seen as too software product specific or repetitive and some items were reworded.

Results and Analysis – Phase 2

An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) of data collected in Phase 1 using VARIMAX rotation and

eigenvalue of 1 revealed 8 new factors and a scale for UL. Based on an analysis of the magnitude and scree plot of the eigenvalues, the total number of factors were reduced to 6 and the total number of items reduced from 40 to 37 (Table 1). The two factors which were removed had only one item each. The high loadings (>.50) of the items which were retained demonstrated convergent validity of items within factors, and no cross loadings (>.40) between factors demonstrated discriminant validity between factors (see Table 2).

Items	Description
	Utilitarian Value (UV)
UV1	Using this software improves my work performance.
UV2	Using this software increases my productivity.
UV3	Using this software enhances my effectiveness.
UV4	I find this software to be useful.
UV5	Using this software helps me to complete my tasks effectively.
UV6	I find this software to be helpful in accomplishing my functional goals.
	Hedonic Value (HV)
HV1	While using this software product, we feel happy.
HV2	Compared to other similar things I could have done, the time spent using this software was
HV3	When using this software, I feel excited.
HV4	I have a very nice time while using this software.
HV5	While using this software product, I am able to forget my problems.
HV6	While using this software product, I feel happy.
	Social Value (SV)
SV1	Patronizing this software product fits the impression that I want to give to others.
SV2	I am eager to tell my friends/acquaintances about this software product.
SV3	I feel that I belong to the user cohort of this software product.
SV4	I found this software product to be consistent with my style.
SV5	I felt like a smart user by selecting this software product.
SV6	This software product gave me something that is personally important or pleasing for me.
	Psychological Safety (PS)
PS1	I know if I make a mistake in using the software, I can recover easily.
PS2	I have security concerns while using this software. R
PS3	The diagnosis and correction of software defects require minimal time and effort.
PS4	The help function is very useful in resolving problems.
PS5	The software can resume working quickly and recover affected data in case of a failure.
PS6	Software updates can be installed easily and continue to work ss expected after the change.
PS7	The software warns me if I commit an error.
PS8	The response of customer support is prompt and effective.
PS9	The software is capable of maintaining a specified level of performance in case of software
	Epistemic Value (EV)
EV1	I can intuitively navigate the software menu options to explore its various functions.
EV2	There is always something new and exciting every time I use the software.
EV3	It is as if I am embarking on a great adventure while using the software.
	Quality Value (QV)
QV1	The software utilizes resources efficiently.

QV2 The software is easy to use.
QV3 The software is easy to learn.
QV4 The software can be modified easily.
QV5 The software is defect free.
QV6 The software can be moved easily to another hardware or software environment.
QV7 The software can be installed easily.

User Loyalty (UL)

UL1 If asked, I will recommend others to use this software.
UL2 If I want to buy anything, I first consider this software.
UL3 I can hardly consider changing to another similar software.
UL4 I will continue to use this software frequently in future.

Table 1. Final List of Items

Items	Factors						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
SV1	**0.930**	-0.026	-0.048	0.023	0.030	-0.003	-0.026
SV2	**0.914**	0.001	0.013	-0.006	0.024	0.028	0.001
SV3	**0.913**	0.104	-0.059	-0.004	0.091	0.002	0.104
SV4	**0.806**	0.089	0.022	-0.141	0.068	-0.042	0.089
SV5	**0.844**	0.044	0.010	0.082	0.046	0.007	0.044
SV6	**0.834**	0.010	0.079	-0.001	0.072	0.113	0.008
UV1	0.030	**0.908**	0.135	0.107	0.052	0.012	0.007
UV2	0.078	**0.841**	0.133	0.231	0.045	0.087	0.089
UV3	0.004	**0.875**	0.124	0.081	0.015	0.034	0.089
HV1	-0.064	0.146	**0.645**	0.085	0.031	0.108	0.135
UV4	-0.001	**0.895**	0.113	0.165	0.078	0.041	0.133
HV2	0.069	0.016	**0.886**	0.057	0.004	0.075	0.124
UV5	-0.026	**0.918**	0.170	0.069	-0.057	0.199	0.036
HV3	0.012	0.002	**0.859**	0.062	0.073	0.217	0.045
UV6	0.132	**0.882**	0.021	0.11	0.074	0.007	0.030
HV4	0.019	0.378	**0.733**	0.029	0.064	0.006	0.022
HV5	0.002	0.135	**0.858**	0.002	-0.057	0.199	0.097
HV6	0.032	0.079	**0.844**	0.066	0.217	-0.057	0.199
UL1	-0.010	0.016	0.373	**0.796**	0.229	0.073	0.217
UL2	0.018	0.025	0.095	**0.855**	0.067	0.074	0.007
UL3	0.023	-0.013	0.143	**0.802**	0.013	0.094	0.023
UL4	-0.001	0.021	-0.023	**0.905**	0.267	0.037	0.034
PS1	-0.058	0.196	0.079	0.041	**0.805**	0.032	0.035

Items	Factors						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
PS2	0.082	0.258	0.075	-0.017	**0.865**	0.099	0.010
PS3	0.108	0.046	0.092	0.083	**0.844**	0.036	-0.050
PS4	0.032	-0.039	-0.022	-0.083	**0.829**	0.070	0.003
PS5	-0.029	0.240	0.064	0.044	**0.809**	-0.015	0.078
PS6	0.210	-0.090	0.208	-0.005	**0.798**	-0.038	0.078
PS7	0.241	0.057	0.235	0.020	**0.818**	-0.015	0.053
Ps8	0.077	0.100	0.051	0.037	**0.830**	0.125	0.002
PS9	-0.008	0.094	-0.031	0.114	**0.830**	0.059	0.021
EV1	0.241	0.113	0.014	0.083	0.025	**0.913**	0.107
EV2	0.070	0.052	0.044	0.065	0.032	**0.858**	0.073
EV3	0.039	0.071	0.016	-0.006	0.040	**0.941**	0.113
QV1	-0.026	0.190	-0.057	0.180	-0.085	0.164	**0.871**
QV2	0.072	0.235	0.060	0.213	0.088	0.240	**0.867**
QV3	0.085	0.017	0.109	0.021	0.082	0.016	**0.778**
QV4	0.029	-0.001	0.054	0.011	0.074	0.017	**0.885**
QV5	-0.072	0.201	-0.040	0.196	-0.020	0.205	**0.858**
QV6	0.034	0.017	0.227	-0.094	0.192	-0.043	**0.882**
QV7	-0.054	0.222	0.201	0.072	0.251	0.056	**0.841**

Table 2. Results of factor Analysis

From Table 3 we can see that the internal reliabilities of constructs were greater than .83. Further none of the inter-correlations between the scales were greater than .65 (see Table 3 and the average variance extracted for each pair of constructs was found to be greater than the squared structural path coefficient between them. The discriminant validity between the constructs was supported as the maximum value of the squared path was found to be .44 and the average variance was in the range of .72 to .77. The convergence validity was also supported as the average variance was greater than ,50. All factors were found to be positively correlated to UL thereby supporting criterion-related validity.

Name of the scale	Cronbach's Alpha	Items	UV	HV	SV	QV	EV	PS	UL
Utilitarian Value (UV)	0.95	6	1						
Hedonic Value (HV)	0.90	6	0.2	1					
Social Value (SV)	0.83	6	0.15	.25*	1				
Quality Value (QV)	0.86	7	.28*	.26*	.24*	1			
Epistemic Value (EV	0.84	3	0.17	.24*	0.17	0.21	1		
Psychological Security (PS)	0.84	9	0.14	0.16	0.08	0.16	0.11	1	
User Loyalty (UL)	0.88	4	.35**	.29*	.25*	.30*	0.26*	0.46**	1

Table 3. Reliability of Constructs and their Correlatio

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Discussion of Findings and Contribution

The study makes multiple contributions to product development literature which is well familiar with the tripartite conceptualization of value – UV, HV and SV. However, in addition to these three dimensions of value, we discovered three more, EV, QV and PS. Previous research by Sheth et al (1991a, 1991b had identified EV and CV (Conditional Value) derived by users from the use of non-software products and services, but while we did not discover CV in this study, we found EV relevant in the software context. Similarly, previous research by Sweeney (2001) had identified QV as one of the values dimensions but the construct was similar to UV in its composition of items, ee discovered QV in addition to UV. While UV reflects the external functional benefits derived by the user from the use of the software, QV reflects the internal product features that makes the system efficient and easy to use.

However, the most important contribution of the study was the identification of PS as one of the value dimensions. We used the nomenclature "Psychological Safety" from a similar construct in work literature (Edmondson (2003). Marketing literature has borrowed constructs in the past too from work literature. Customer satisfaction a popularly used construct inn marketing, was derived from job satisfaction construct in work literature (Pfaff, 1973; Czeipiel, Rosenberg and Akerele, 1974). As in work literature, PS measures the degree of comfort that users feel from not having to face unpleasant consequences of software use. The importance of this construct can be gauged from the finding that it had the highest correlation with user loyalty. These findings can be used by software product managers in developing software that maximizes user value and product loyalty.

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INNOVATION, ANTECEDENTS AND FIRM VALUE: A RESOURCE BASED VIEW APPROACH

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Description: This paper investigates the chain of effects among intangible resources and firm value.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

- How do employee engagement (EE) and corporate social responsibility (CSR) contribute to innovation together?
- What is the true impact of each intangible resource, including EE, CSR, and innovation, on financial performance?

Method and Data

For the intangible resources, we use a unique dataset provided by the Drucker Institute, which includes innovation, CSR, and EE scores for B2C and B2B publicly traded U.S. based firms. We use Tobin's q as our measure of firm value. We compute Tobin's q as the ratio of the market

value to book value of the firm's assets. In addition, we control for firm size, operationalized by the log of the number of employees, total assets, and previous financial performance using ROA and organizational slack. We also control for the competitive intensity of different industries using the Hirschman-Herfindahl Index (HHI). The final dataset is a balanced panel of data that is composed of 500 firms over a 7-year period (2014–2020) resulting in a total of 3500 firm-year observations.

We test the outlined hypotheses using the generalized method of moments (GMM) estimation. GMM is a dynamic panel data model for situations involving short time series with a large number of observations. Moreover, GMM specification accommodates the possible biases of endogeneity, heteroscedasticity, and serial correlation.

Summary of Findings

- We show a positive effect of EE on innovation (at the firm level and in a general) and on CSR, empirically demonstrating the prediction of natural RBV.
- CSR partially mediates the influence of EE on innovation, which indicates that engaged employees contribute to innovation practices that are beneficial to stakeholders in a socially responsible manner.
- Consistent with prior research on CSR, our results showed an insignificant direct effect of CSR on firm value. However, we demonstrate an indirect path through innovation. Thus, CSR activities increase firm value by contributing to innovation. In other words, firms that engage in CSR activities that require being innovative should enjoy higher firm value.
- Our results show a positive direct and indirect effect of EE on firm value through innovation. According to the obtained results, we conclude that employee engagement attracts investors, which enhances firm value directly, while employee engagement

also strengthens firm capabilities such as CSR and innovation. This increases the total impact of EE and demonstrates the vital role of innovation in transmitting the full effect of EE and CSR on firm value.

Statement of Key Contributions

Our study contributes to the marketing and business literature in several ways. First, we examine the tenability of the reverse path whereby EE is an antecedent of CSR. Second, we look into the influence of EE on innovation at the firm level directly and indirectly through CSR activities. Although previous research supports the positive effect of EE on innovative work behavior, there appears to be no investigation of this relationship at the firm level. In addition, prior research has neglected the role of CSR in that relationship, even though it has been separately associated with both innovation and EE. Third, despite the extensive research on the effect of CSR and innovation on firm value, there is surprisingly limited empirical evidence on the influence of EE on financial performance. A recent study looking into the EE-firm value link found an insignificant relationship. However, the researchers neglected to consider potential mediating process. Finally, by including EE, CSR, and innovation in the same model, we capture a more holistic view of the effects of intangible resources on the firm value.

RE-INSTITUTIONALIZING MARKETING

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Keywords: Marketing theory; discipline culture; research impact;

This Special Session centers around Hunt's (2020) notion of the re-institutionalization of marketing as a discipline—a context with which to be forward-looking and address issues our entire discipline faces and must reconcile.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Key Contributions

The purpose of this session is to highlight four critical areas Hunt (2020) identified based on a response to Key et al. (2020) paper that spawned a discipline wide conversation about the future of the marketing discipline. Hunt's diagnosis of the de-institutionalization of marketing is most evident from consideration of three key movements in the field: a) of our doctoral students being increasingly fed less, rather than more of the core knowledge of marketing history, thought, and theory (Hunt 2020; Yadav 2020); b) of a discipline-wide culture that either can't or won't reward high impact research (Yadav 2018); and c) of a discipline that largely ignores the actual practice of marketing. When young scholars in a discipline find it "…less risky to study well-defined problems that quickly lead to publications and a first job" (Bolton 2020, p. 174), the hope that our best and brightest, our most elastic minds are being directed toward the most pressing issues is dimmed. This "quick hit" phenomena also encourage young scholars to borrow theories and perspectives from other disciplines and attempt to apply them to the marketing phenomenon, rather than do the hard work of developing home-grown theory.

SHOULD I STAY OR SHOULD I GO: THE IMPACT OF MERGER AND ACQUISITION (M&A) ACTIVITIES ON BRAND COMMUNITIES

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Keywords: Brand community, merger &acquisition (M&A), social identity theory, acquirer, and target.

This paper examines the impact of a merger and acquisition event (M&A) on the exit behavior of brand community members.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Firms are increasingly building brand communities as a way to enhance the value of the firm, making them attractive targets for M&A activity. Acquiring a firm with a strong brand community may lead to value for an acquirer depending in part on how community members react to the merger. If members of the target firm's community exit following M&A, the acquiring firm may fail to realize the full value of the acquisition. To date, there has been no research on whether and how brand community members respond to M&A events. Consequently, managers have little to no guidance on what factors may increase or decrease the likelihood of a target firm's members to exit following a merger. Given these limitations, this study addresses the following questions: do the acquisition target's BC members exit or stay after the acquisition at different rates depending on (i) membership duration of BC members, (ii) the affect of reactions of BC members, (iii) the acquisition's perceived implications for the target, (iv) members' reactions about the target, (v) members' reactions about the acquirer, and (vi) future orientations of the target.

Method and Data

We collected publicly available data (n = 273) on individual members from the online BC forum of MyFitnessPal, Inc. for the three months following the acquisition by Under Armour on February 4, 2015. A two-year time frame after the acquisition is considered the dependent variable wherein members who were still active after 24 months were coded (0) as remaining in the community, and those who were no longer active were coded (1) as having exited. Alike, six independent variables were constructed, where (i) membership duration of BC members was measured in units of 100 days, (ii) the affect of reactions, and (iii) implications of the acquisition

were coded as binary variables with a value of 1 if a member posted one or more messages with a negative affective reaction or posted a message suggesting detrimental implications of acquisition for the target respectively, and 0 otherwise. All other variables are coded as binary variables with the value as 1 if (iv) members react about the target, (v) react about the acquirer, and (vi) future orientation of the target is forward-looking respectively, 0 otherwise. Since the outcome variable was continuous and all predictor variables' binary nature, logistic regression was used.

Summary of Findings

We find that whether and how members react to M&A activity predicts whether they remain in the community over the subsequent two years following the merger. This research also explores that discussion about a merger in the target firm's community may actually benefit the acquiring firm by highlighting that members may be able to support one another as they seek to cope with the community's potential implications, thus reducing the likelihood to exit. In terms of sharing messages, we also find that when a member posts a forward-looking message about the target, their likelihood to exit following the acquisition increases dramatically. Similarly, members who post messages with a negative affective reaction or who view the acquisition as detrimental to the target and contain negative affective terms bode ill for the acquiring firm as they are are also more likely to exit. These results suggest that reactions to a merger in the target's brand community can be a double-edged sword for the acquiring firm. Finally, our results reveal that longer duration members show a reduced likelihood to exit post-merger while shorter duration members show an increased likelihood to exit.

Key Contributions

We contribute both in theory and practice by exploring the relationship between members’

reactions to M&A activities and the likelihood of members' staying with or exiting the brand community. Drawing on Social Identity Theory (SIT), this study examines the relationship between members' behavior in an online BC and their likelihood of remaining in the BC following an M&A activity involving the brand. This study provides important insights for managers assessing M&A targets with strong brand communities. It also reveals that target firms with brand communities containing more extended duration members are more appealing targets, while those with shorter duration members are riskier. In addition, the results provide acquiring firms with guidance on managing discussions in a brand community in the months following an acquisition of a target firm to minimize member exit and preserve the value of the acquired community.

References are available upon request.

"Post or Not Post" Firm's Social Media Usage and Mitigation of Recall Related Safety Hazard

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Keywords: Recall Completion rate, social media usage, stewardship behavior

Description: In this research, we examine the factors that influence a firm's decision to post about its recall on social media, and examine whether posting on social media about an adverse event such as a recall improves recall completion rates.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Despite the significant negative repercussions of poor recall completion rates and the deemed effectiveness of social media in reaching customers, we find that managers sparingly use social media to discuss product recalls. Out of the 2209 automobile recalls that we examined for this study across 9 years, we see use of firm social media accounts in only 15% of the recalls. Further, the recalling firms that used social media posted about their recalls on an average one time on their social media accounts. On one hand, this low number is surprising because using social media is a cost-effective means for a recalling firm to create customer awareness about vehicle recall. On the other hand, multiple studies have observed widespread negative brand sentiment on social media upon a vehicle recall, and corresponding loss of economic value (e.g., Borah and Tellis 2016; Hsu and Lawrence 2016). Consequently using owned social media accounts to promote conversation about a negative event such as their own recall might entail high risks of intensifying negative brand sentiment and corresponding value

destruction. Thus, for a recalling firm to use its own social media accounts for recall information invariably involves a clash between the goals of mitigating public safety hazard and controlling negative brand sentiment. The complicated nature of the decision (i.e., recall communication via social media accounts as recommended by NHTSA) motivates three important research questions: (1) What drives firms to communicate about their product recall on their own social media accounts?[1] (2) What contingent factors influence a firm's decision to post about a recall on social media? (3) What is the effect of posting about a recall on social media on recall completion rate and associated financial performance?

Method and Data

Our theoretical framework relies on the stewardship perspective. Specifically, we argue that use of social media for recall information improves recall completion rates but might harm financial performance due to negative brand sentiment. This logic suggests that if recalling firms do use social media for recall information, due to lack of any anticipated economic benefit, such action signifies stewardship behavior of the recalling firm. Given our focus on stewardship, we divide our analysis into two parts. First, via a VAR model we analyze how use of social media for recall information affects recall completion rates, brand sentiments and stock returns. This analysis will help us understand if firms indeed do not gain anything economically by using social media and instead only improves collective welfare in the form of better recall completion rates. Thus, this analysis is intended to provide support for the stewardship perspective. Next, we apply a probit model to assess the drivers of stewardship behavior, i.e., drivers of the use of social media for recall information.

[1] Hereafter, we use the term 'social media' instead of "owned or own social media".

Summary of Findings

First, we identify recall severity to be the primary driver of stewardship because public safety hazards are directly correlated with the seriousness of injury possible from a recalled vehicle. We identify other recall- related factors as well that might magnify recalling firms' perceptions of public safety hazard already posed by recall severity, thereby increasing motivation for stewardship behavior. However, due to the non-ignorable fact that firms are economic agents striving for financial value, we consider several firm-related factors that might trigger excessive concerns for negative brand sentiment that might outweigh sense of responsibility for public safety hazards. Finally, we find that stewardship behavior shown during product recall should increase recall completion rates because social media conversations about the recall are shared by concerned customers to wider networks that not only increase recall awareness but the resultant conversations persuade affected customers to be proactive about remedying recalled vehicles. Also, with a VAR model we investigate the effect of using social media not only on recall completion rate but also on brand sentiment and financial performance. The results of the two models together provide support for our notion that using social media for recall information suggests stewardship on the recalling firm' part.

Statement of Key Contributions

The product recall literature in marketing has mostly examined firm responses, customer behavior, and the performance implications for the firm (e.g., Liu and Shankar 2015; Eilert et al. 2017). Sufficient attention has not been paid to the mitigation of negative safety consequences faced by the most important stakeholder during product recalls, 'the customer'. Even the limited recall remedy studies in marketing have focused predominantly

on types of remedial offerings (e.g. Liu et al. 2016) instead of methods of persuasion for improving recall completion rates, the latter being very critical as it focuses on long-term mitigation of physical harm. Other studies focus on campaigns by regulators such as the NHTSA (e.g., Pagiavlas et al. 2021) instead of firm-specific strategies of risk mitigation. Thus, identifying strategies for recalling firms to increase remedy to all customers will be valuable from a customer, managerial, as well as a public policy standpoint. We also observe that our proposition that firms can behave as stewards as well as our empirical demonstration of the same in the context of product recalls is novel. We say this because the limited studies on stewardship theory only assess front-line employees' willingness for stewardship behavior (e.g., Hernandez 2008, 2012; Davis et al. 1997; Schepers et al. 2012). Unlike the above studies that do not discuss or demonstrate firm-level stewardship, we show that in negative events such as product recalls where firms should be particularly concerned about financial performance, the entire firm can behave as a steward for customer welfare.

Title

The V.A.R.I.E.D. Uses of the Customer Assets Approach

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Keywords

Customer Assets, CLV, Customer Equity, Managerial Accounting, Financial Accounting

Description: Outlines a minimalist, incentive-compatible, communicable, auditable, and practical approach to the customer asset that can answer a key marketing accountability question: what do investments in customers achieve?

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

That customer relationships are valuable assets of the firm is a powerful idea. Yet significant confusion remains in both marketing and accounting as to what exactly this implies. Customer lifetime value (CLV) is often said to inform our views of the customer asset while customer equity is widely said to represent the sum of CLVs. Yet, the implications are unclear. Multiple contradictory definitions of CLV exist. Some definitions include sunk costs, others don't. Some definitions only include direct cash flows. Other definitions include indirect cash flows, e.g., social influence, but give little attention to the problem of double-counting, e.g., mutual social influence. Some definitions even seek to include factors beyond the financial without addressing the practical challenges. Furthermore, the term customer equity is problematic to describe an asset which may hinder acceptance by those trained in accounting.

We suggest that the idea of the customer asset is a powerful one but usage is currently limited by the lack of clarity. As such, we seek to understand what is meant by customer asset, and how CLV might aggregate to this. Ultimately, we seek to uncover an approach to customer assets that encourages valuation of customers and promotes marketing accountability.

Summary of Findings

We highlight confusion about CLV and the customer asset. We outline what it means to be a customer asset and ask what uses a customer asset might have. We identify six V.A.R.I.E.D. uses of the customer asset – company **V**aluation, customer **A**cquisition, customer **R**etention, **I**nternal and **E**xternal reporting, and customer **D**evelopment. Focusing on these uses allows for the creation of a theoretically sound, and practically achievable, approach to the customer asset.

To be valid for all six of the VARIED uses, CLV must be well-defined, contain only financial terms, and be forward-looking. Only current customers should form the customer asset which, to be useful for decision-making and communication, should consider only auditable direct cash flows. (We introduce the idea of customer indirect liabilities to capture customer-related costs not directly associated with any customer).

The approach we advocate for is minimalist, prioritizing conceptual strength and clarity of boundary over comprehensiveness. Our approach is also incentive-compatible – in the sense that we offer reasons for non-marketers, especially accountants, to embrace the approach.

The minimalist, incentive-compatible, communicable, auditable, and practical approach to the customer asset that we outline helps answer a key marketing accountability question: what do investments in customers achieve?

Statement of Key Contributions

The customer assets approach we outline can aid diverse groups, for example:

- Marketers evaluating customer investments and communicating customer value.
- Senior managers in understanding the return on investments in customers.
- Financial accountants in improving the information they share.
- Managerial accountants in evaluating the impact of customer strategy.
- IT professionals in developing record-keeping systems.
- Data analysts in modeling firm performance.

We are not the first to note that customer relationships can be seen as assets. Our contribution starts with outlining the V.A.R.I.E.D. uses of customer as assets. This allows for the creation of an approach that works for multiple users. For example, a past failure to acknowledge accounting ideas has left marketers advocating confusing terms and ideas of customer value that cannot be combined with firm performance measurement systems.

Our concept of the customer asset, and CLV underpinning it, provides the theoretical clarification needed to drive adoption of customer asset reporting and improve marketing accountability. A reason for optimism is that our customer assets approach solves problems for other disciplines. Marketers can recruit allies with the right product to sell. This product is a minimalist, incentive-compatible communicable, auditable, and practical approach to the customer asset.

Title

Unpacking the Net Promoter Score: New Insights Into How and When NPS Drives Firm Performance

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Keywords: Net Promoter Score, Intentions to Recommend, Satisfaction, Customer Loyalty

Description: This paper intends to better understand the Net Promoter Score metric and provide a diagnostic test of its effectiveness.

Marketing in Times of Uncertainty & Renewal

A NEW ERA IN ART CONSUMPTION: CONSUMERS' PERCEPTIONS OF TRUST, VALUE, AND PURCHASE INTENTION IN THE CONTEXT OF ONLINE ART INTERMEDIARIES

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Keywords: online art consumption, art intermediary reputation, consumers' trust, consumption value, online purchase intention

Description: This paper investigates the consumers' trust, value, and purchase intention in the context of online art intermediaries.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Questions

Within the strategic marketing domain, a managerial response to the negative economic consequences of COVID-19 in art galleries, is the online art intermediaries (Johnson, 2020; Feinstein, 2020; Artprice, 2020). The online art market has experienced exponential growth, increasing by 90% from 2013 to 2019 (Deloitte, 2019). This expansion encouraged art intermediaries (e.g., galleries) to a digital transition with the aim to stay competitive in a globalized world (De Aenlle, 2016; Wang and Lin, 2018). The arts marketing literature has investigated some boundaries of this industry studying the aesthetic experience in physical domains (e.g., Kotler and Kotler, 1998; Rentschler and Radbourne, 2008; Colbert, 2009; Lee and Lee, 2017, 2019) yet leaving unexplored key antecedents of online art purchasing and marketing's role in encouraging online consumption. In addressing this gap, this study follows

a strategic approach in identifying the factors that influence online art purchases and aims to answer the following research questions: What antecedents affect the trust of art intermediaries and the perceived value of art consumption? What factors affect the online purchase intention of art in turbulent times? How other personal motivations such as individual involvement and buyer's innovativeness affect the process of buying online art?

Method and Data

This study's research approach follows the positive doctrine which encourages the application of a quantitative methodology to the study of social phenomena. This choice has its roots in the intrinsic subjectivity of art, suggesting that art consumers share similar consumption motivations, aligned with extant literature (e.g., Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982; Boorsma, 2006; Kemp and Poole, 2016; McAndrew, 2020). A survey-based quantitative methodology is applied, coherently with other social studies in the literature (e.g., Zaichkowsky, 1985; Gulati, 1995; Parasuraman, 2000; Jones et al 2006; Arts et al 2011; Kemp and Poole, 2016). Non-probability purposive sampling is employed for this investigation. The rationale behind this, is to include both art enthusiasts and art buyers representing the twofold perspective of interest. The data were gathered through an online anonymous self-administered survey developed on Qualtrics. The total number of valid responses is 150. The questions in the survey are drawn from measurement scales identified from relevant previous peer reviewed studies. Before the launch of the questionnaire, a pilot test was conducted on 30 respondents in a non-contrived setting. The results from the validity and reliability test complied with the thresholds recommended by Hair et al (2016).

Summary of Findings

The data analysis performed was carried out through Smart-PLS3 for the measurement model and the structural models. The research instruments confirm psychometric properties for reliability and validity (Hair et al, 2016).

The findings suggest that the art intermediary's reputation is an important antecedent. The results suggests that a positive reputation can reduce the uncertainties in the art world, thus, increasing the value of the art consumption. The data show that a positive reputation considerably improves trust in online purchases, this finding is consistent with existing marketing literature (Yoon, 2002; Kim et al, 2008; Bianchi, 2015). This is explained by the fact that artworks are trust-intensive goods, and that the art market is characterized by a great lack of transparency.

The results also demonstrate that as the art intermediary's familiarity grows, the relationship between reputation and trust in online buying is strengthened. The data highlight that for increasing levels of trust, the intention to buy artworks online grows.

Contrary to expectations, the data show that individual involvement does not moderate the relationship between reputation and perceived value during the consumer experience. This analysis shows that the buyer's innovativeness does not moderate the relationship between perceived value and intention to purchase online.

Statement of Key Contributions

This study advances knowledge in the field of art marketing and consumer behavior by combining, for the first time, art purchases and online consumption. The new insights proposed on consumers perceived trust and art perceived value aim to investigate the changeover to digital platforms. This paper investigates key variables of the online art worlds as identified by the authors, that impact the collectors' (consumers) purchase intention. The reputation of the

online art intermediary's influence on collector's trust, the value assigned to the artwork and purchase intention, will guide practitioners on the development of targeted strategies and the selection of online partners. Hence, insights gained on what art-consumers dwell on when evaluating the online purchase of an artwork.

This research answers to the increased urgency to develop targeted marketing strategies to offer a distinctive value proposition (Boorsma, 2006; Wang and Lin, 2018). A comprehensive understanding of art consumption, the consumers' motivations towards purchasing art online and the enhancement of the consumption value are the key outcomes of this research. Particularly, findings suggest that managers need to enhance art intermediary's reputation in online transaction, to strategically partner with well-known business to consumer companies to design and improve the online art consumption experience.

References are available upon request.

A STUDY OF THE TIME-VARYING ASSOCIATION: CUSTOMER SATISFACTION, FUTURE CASH FLOW, AND SHAREHOLDER VALUE

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Keywords: Customer Satisfaction; Cash Flow; Shareholder Value; Time-varying Association.

Description: This study updates and extends prior research by Gruca and Rego (2005) on the impact of customer satisfaction on shareholder value through its influence on cash flow growth and variability, and further estimates how the impact of customer satisfaction varies over time.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

This study updates and extends prior research by Gruca and Rego (2005) on the impact of customer satisfaction on shareholder value through its influence on cash flow growth and variability. Cash flow is a key driver of the firm's value (Srivastava, Shervani, and Fahey 1998), and is considered as a more reliable assessment of financial performance in accounting literatures (e.g., Dechow, Kothari, and Watts 1998). Given the myriad changes in the business world over the past 17 years, it is useful to examine whether empirical generalizations derived under different economic circumstances still hold or need revision.

The research questions of this paper are: 1) What is the average relationship between customer satisfaction and shareholder value? Does the reported positive relationship still hold when the time period is more than doubled? 2) How does the relationship vary across firms and industries?

Is the relationship similar for new types of businesses not included in the original study, e.g., social media platforms? 3) How does the relationship change over very long periods of time? Is there anything to contribute to our understanding of the post-Covid19 world?

Method And Data

We extend the prior model of Gruca and Lopo (2005) in two crucial ways. First, we include firm-level financial controls to account for the effects of firm size, growth, financial leverage, and firm complexity on cash flows. Second, we model heterogeneity along an entirely different dimension – time. Overall, our model formulation allows the intercept and the impact of CS on cash flow metrics to vary across different time periods as well as by firm and industry. Using a three-level hierarchical Bayesian model with time-varying coefficients, we examine the effect of CS on cash flow growth and variability.

This study is based on 170 companies with ACSI measures from 1994 to 2019. Both the cash flow variables and control variables included in our models are computed with data items from COMPUSTAT. Overall, we have 4181 observations in the models.

Summary of Findings

Overall, our findings confirm those of Gruca and Rego (2005). Based on a quarter of a century of observations, we find that customer satisfaction is positively associated with firm value via its impact on future cash flow growth and cash flow variability (Srivastava, Shervani, and Fahey 1998).

Additionally, we find that the impact of CS varies over firms and industries. At the firm level, size and book-to-market ratio weakens, whereas the level of earnings strengthens, the

association between CS and cash flow growth. At the industry level, industry concentration enhances the association between CS and cash flow growth, while industry demand growth weakens the association between CS and variability.

Finally, we find that impact of CS on cash flow and variability changes over time. For both growth and variability, the impact is reduced dramatically after 2009. Specifically, there're more within-decade variations in the yearly CS effect on cash flow level: the effect was the strongest around 2005, then went back to the average level in 2007-2009, and further reduced in 2010-2014, then it increased to the intermediate level around the mid-2010s before it weakened again in the later years.

Statement of Key Contributions

The first contribution is the finding that CS still increases cash flow growth and reduces cash flow variability on a larger sample of companies that expanded from 80 to 170, and the timeframe spans 26 versus 8 years. This finding is particularly important, given the replication crisis and the dramatical changes in business and economic environment.

The second contribution are the findings of the firm and industry variations in the associations between CS and cash flow metrics. Furthermore, we find the favorable impact of CS holds for newer types of companies, e.g., internet retailing and social media. Top managers can use these findings to anticipate when investments in improving CS will pay off.

Our third contribution are the estimates of how the impacts of CS on cash flow metrics change over time. We examine whether CS can help grow and stabilize cash flows in an economic crisis. Our findings surrounding the 2008/9 financial crisis are concerning. The favorable impact of CS on cash flows weakened considerably after 2009. This study will be

extended to examine the impact of other economic indicators, e.g., inflation, unemployment rate, etc. These enhanced findings may contribute to our understanding of the post-COVID19 world.

CONNECTING WITH WORDS: A LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF ONLINE CONSUMER BRAND ENGAGEMENT DURING TIMES OF CRISIS

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Keywords: crises, consumer-brand engagement, linguistic analysis, victim crisis

Description: In this research, we focus on victim crisis which is the area that has received the least attention in the literature but is most relevant to recent current events and we analyzed ten companies' posts on Twitter during times of the covid-19 pandemic by examining linguistic style, specifically focusing on the use of personal pronouns and informative content.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Consumers need more support and care during times of crisis (Dore et al. 2020) and an effective messaging strategy that could enhance consumer-brand engagement would have many long-term benefits for the company (e.g., customer retention; stronger customer-brand relationship; Waldron and Wetherbe 2020) during these times. In this research, we examine consumer engagement with companies' posts on Twitter specifically focusing on the use of personal pronouns signaling connection and warmth (Pollach 2005), and the use of higher level of verbs signaling informative content (Munaro et al. 2021). We measure engagement on Twitter by analyzing the number of consumers' retweets and likes which are considered as proxies for customer engagements with brands (Barger et al. 2016; Chang, Yan, Kumar 2019). Also, we differentiate between for-profit vs. non-profit companies since previous research suggests that consumers' perceptions of brands affect their online engagement, and generally non-profit

brands (NFPs) are perceived to be warmer, more caring, and more credible than for-profit organizations (Aaker, Vohs and Mogilner 2010; Barger, Peltier, Schultz 2016).

Method and Data

Using text mining methods, we examine 4520 tweets in total posted during March of the 2020 coronavirus pandemic from five different profit (Amazon, Whole Foods, Walmart, Publix, Kroger) and non-profit companies (Feeding America, No Kid Hungry, Meals on Wheels, UNICEF, Heifer International). We focus on the food industry since recent research by Opinium found that consumers expect to hear more from brands that are considered as selling essential goods and the food industry was classified as an essential industry by consumers (Prati 2020). We used Python scripts and the Twitter API to scrape all English-language tweets (4520 tweets in total) posted during March of the 2020 coronavirus pandemic by five different profit (Amazon, Whole Foods, Walmart, Publix, Kroger) and non-profit companies (Feeding America, No Kid Hungry, Meals on Wheels, UNICEF, Heifer International). We used LIWC dictionary to calculate the use of personal plurals and levels of verbs within a tweet (Pennebaker et al. 2015) and analyzed our results by using negative binomial regression. In our analysis, we controlled for the date of posting since it has a significant influence on post popularity (Sabate et al. 2014).

Summary of Findings

Our results revealed that when a company uses first-person plural pronouns (“we”), this situation had a positive effect on consumer-brand engagement, and the companies’ posts had more retweets and likes, consistent with our hypothesis. However, in contrast to previous research, the use of first-person singular (“I”) and second-person pronouns (“you”) did not have any

significant effects on online consumer-brand engagement. Since consumers' needs for emotional connection and bonding are high during times of crisis (Berg 2020), contrary to the prior literature but consistent with our hypothesis, we found a negative effect of the use of informative content (higher levels of verbs) on consumer brand engagement during times of crisis. Specifically, our results showed that the companies' use of higher levels of verbs resulted in fewer retweets and likes which supports our hypothesis. Additionally, we found that company type matters in this context, and this strategy is more effective for NFPs in comparison to for-profits. Consumers are more likely to engage with NFPs (vs. for profits) that use more collectivist language signaling warmth and connection and less verbal (informative) language during times of crisis.

Key Contributions

Overall, our research makes important theoretical contributions. First, we contribute to the crisis management literature (e.g., Ki and Nekmat 2014) by focusing on victim crisis which is an understudied area in the literature. We identify factors that enhance consumer brand engagement on social media during times of victim crisis, and our findings contribute to the crisis management literature by highlighting the role of features that can enhance consumer brand engagement during these difficult times. Second, we contribute to the literature on brand engagement and word-of-mouth (e.g., Berger and Milkman 2012; McShane et al. 2021) by extending this literature to a different context where feelings of uncertainty are high and changes in behaviors are expected (Ratten 2020). Finally, our research contributes to the literature on company type (profit vs. non-profit) by differentiating between different types of companies and identifying factors that enhance consumer brand engagement based on company type.

* References are available upon request.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Ethical consumption amid the global pandemic: A moderated moderation model of consumers' fate belief across cultures

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Description: By comparatively analyzing a cross-cultural sample with responses from both American and Chinese consumers, we employ a moderated moderation model to investigate how consumers' perception of the pandemic severity impacts their ethical consumption intention, as well as the differential role of consumers' fate belief in moderating this impact across two societies.

Keywords: COVID-19, Terror management, Ethical consumption, Negotiable fate, Three-way interaction

Research Question

The fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic has hit the world tremendously in many aspects with its long-term societal consequences to be unfolded in the upcoming decade (The British Academy 2021). Disruption of previous consumption habits coincides with the transition to alternative consumption practices, such as purchasing green brands, buying fair-traded goods, and curtailing consumption across emerging and developed markets (Dermody et al. 2018;

Shaw and Newholm 2002). But as global consumers adjust their buying behaviors toward the new normal (Sheth 2020), responses to this health crisis have significant variances across countries (McKinsey & Company 2020).

We explored the following research questions in our study:

R1: Are consumers becoming more ethical during the pandemic?

R2: How consumers' fate belief interacts with their pandemic perception to shape their ethical consumption?

R3: How do the above effects vary across tight and loss cultures?

We examined consumer responses from the world's largest two economies, i.e., United States and China. The former is an overall loose culture and the latter a tight culture (Gelfand et al. 2011; Uz 2014).

Method and Data

We conducted online survey using Qualtrics in China and United States continuously from June 2020 to July 2021. We finally recorded a total of 597 valid responses (N_{American} = 295; N_{Chinese} = 302). Their average age was 30.50 and the male vs. female ratio was 47.00 percent. Tests of data reliability and validity showed acceptable results. Hierarchical multiple regressions were used to test the hypotheses.

Summary and Findings

Our results showed a highly significant impact of consumers' perceived pandemic severity and negotiable fate on ethical consumption. The moderating effect of negotiable fate was nonsignificant. The analysis of three-way interaction showed that cultural looseness (American vs. Chinese) significantly suppresses the negative moderating effect of negotiable

fate, which accounts for the non-significance of negotiable fate as a moderator in the overall sample.

Key Contributions

By investigating the role of negotiable fate in shaping the pandemic-driven ethical consumption across two countries, out study contributes to the relevant literature and policymaking in the following aspects. First, we extend and add new knowledge to TMT research on prosocial consumer behavior by emphasizing the symbolic meaning of ethical consumption during the global pandemic from a terror management perspective (Greenberg et al. 1986; Pyszczynski et al. 2021; White et al. 2020). Second, being among the first to introduce the emerging literature of negotiable fate into research on ethical consumption, we identify the role of negotiable fate both as a predictor and a moderator of the pandemic severity – ethical consumption link. Third, our findings on the cultural differences in how belief in negotiable fate attenuates the ethical response to collective threat highlights the need for a cultural psychological lens when ethical consumption is investigated as an important outcome of consumers' terror management process. Finally, policy makers are recommended to adapt their public policies related to social arrangement during collective crisis, such as the global pandemic, to encourage ethical consumer behaviors.

References are available upon request.

GENERATION COVID: AUGMENTED REALITY AND THE NEW DIGITAL CONSUMER

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Keywords: Augmented Reality, Spatial Presence, Perceived Personalization, Perceived Intrusiveness, SOR Model

Description: This conceptual paper extends the SOR framework by drawing a proposed relationship between augmented reality characteristics and consumers' responses in the presence through the mediation of flow experience.

ABSTRACT

After coronavirus spread, the world has change dramatically. In this era, Augmented Reality (AR) becomes unique concept that transforms digital consumers' experience. This study is shedding the light on the relationship of augmented reality (AR) characteristics and consumers' responses with the mediation role of flow experience by the conceptualization of SOR model.

INTRODUCTION

Social distance, home stay and lockdowns are the new phenomena that all the world lived few months ago (Pandey and Pal, 2020). After Covid-19 outbreak, all spheres of life were affected and everything people used to do in their normal daily life was changed to a new normal (Butu et al., 2020). The pandemic was a double-edged weapon for the global marketplace. Unfortunately, the stores with offline channels were painfully impacted. In addition, many brick-and-mortar stores shut down and firms started to focus on the automated services (Pandey and Pal, 2020). Accordingly, the online behavior patterns and online experience became the distinguishable keys to deal with the pandemic and social distance requirement (Chen, Tran-Thien-Y and Florence, 2021; McLean and Osei-Frimpong, 2019). Therefore, several challenges and questions started to take place in retailers' mind; how can they sell their products? Should they shift to the online retailing? Or should they close their doors (Hoekstra and Leeflang, 2020).

From the business' perspective, some firms struggled while other firms that characterized by internet-based activities such as online shopping and online delivery, found no difficulties in operations during the pandemic. On the bright side, the pandemic enabled companies to keep in touch with their target audience and activate their engagement. On the other side, consumers also

transformed their behavior patterns and became more familiar with the online shopping (Hoekstra and Leeflang, 2020; Pandey and Pal, 2020). Accordingly, they shifted from in-store purchase to e-retailer channels. Although the pandemic caused situational change, it resulted in 46% increase of the consumers who shopped online for the first time. In addition, 71% of the consumers revealed their tendency to continue buying online after the pandemic (Bhatti et al., 2020).

Consequently, the new technologies are introduced to shape the future; where the consumers will be willing to engage into a real world that is integrated with visual content. Accordingly, Augmented Reality (AR) technology became a fundamental element for marketing fields and consumers. Hence, steps are taken to combine AR technology into the marketing tactics to introduce the virtual and physical world to the consumers (Hilken et al., 2017; Poushneh and Vasquez-Parraga, 2017). In this sense, when consumers' try AR applications (apps) and compare them to the traditional apps; the AR experiences are perceived positively rather than the classical apps (Yim and Park, 2019). Based on the above-mentioned considerations, the primary aim of the current study is to conceptualize the relationship between the augmented reality characteristics and the willingness to buy as a consumers' response through flow experience.

LITERACTURE REVIEW

The following section will highlight an overview about the augmented reality followed by the SOR model. Further, the corresponding AR characteristics will be presented in addition to the conceptualization of flow experience. Lastly, the research propositions will be introduced.

Augmented Reality Overview

In fact, the life after the pandemic is not similar to the one before. That change is reflected in every aspect in the daily-life activities. Accordingly, marketplace pandemic recovery requires new technologies and advancements that fit with current situation. All the new innovations should consider the touchless interactions needed and be capable of providing multisensory experience. Therefore, AR becomes the e-commerce magical solution after Covid-19. It enriched the consumers with unique virtual experience where there is no need for physical interaction to keep the social distancing standards (Loureiro, Guerreiro and Ali,2020; Mohanty, Hassan and Ekis, 2020).

Imagine that there is a parallel world created by the mega brands such as Sephora, L'Oréal, Nike, Amazon, and IKEA (Porter and Heppelmann, 2017). To elaborate, IKEA AR app enables the consumers to place their chosen piece of furniture virtually onto their real environment. Relatedly, apparel AR apps such as Ray-ban and Sephora provide virtual magic mirror that enables the consumes to try their favorite product on their faces virtually (Kowalczuk, Siepmann and Adler, 2021).

Augmented Reality (AR) is described as an immersive experience provided through technological devices such as mobile phones or computers. It overlays virtual content personalized to each consumer such as 3D images or avatars into the real environment (Cranmer, tom Dieck and Fountoulaki, 2020). In the current study, AR was defined as "Augmented reality is a field in which 3D virtual objects are integrated into a 3-D real environment in real time" (Azuma, 1997, p.356). In the same vein, AR introduces virtual world that reshapes the retail nature, allows instant

sinteractions and improves the online customer experience (Barhorst et al., 2021). For brands, AR apps play a great role in presenting unique and rich experience through realistic touchless interaction with their products such as Nike and Amazon. Accordingly, it is proposed that AR-based apps will attract 1.9 billion users monthly in 2022 (Barhorst et al., 2021; Bleier, Harmeling and Palmatier, 2019; Kowalczuk, Siepmann and Adler, 2021).

SOR FRAMEWORK

The SOR framework or Mehrabian and Russell model was firstly introduced in 1974 in the field of environmental psychology (Mehrabian and Russell,1974; Yang, 2015). To illustrate, the SOR stands for Stimuli (S) which is the independent variable, Organism (O) is the mediator and Response (R) are the dependent variable respectively. In this sense, the framework is commonly used to investigate the surrounding factors affect the consumers in the physical store environment such as (color, music, lighting), and (site revisit, money and time spent) in the context of online shopping (Goi, Kalidas and Zeeshan, 2014; Mehrabian and Russell,1974; Peng and Kim, 2014).

As for the evolution of the online shopping, the SOR framework is widely used to explore how consumers interact while delving into the features of online retailing websites. It was discussed that the consumers can engage more in the online shopping behaviors when the quality of the e-retail website is good and high (Chen and Yao, 2018). Furthermore, it was supported that SOR model can predict consumer responses regarding different products, services, technologies and online stores (Morrison et al., 2011; Rajaguru, 2014). Besides, these responses can result into positive behaviors such as purchase intention, repurchase intention and positive word of mouth. On the other hand, these responses can reflect negative behaviors such as less or no intention to

purchase or involvement in negative word of mouth (Islam and Rahman, 2017). According to Liu et al (2016), the SOR model distinguishes how the environment stimuli affects the consumer behavior (i.e. Purchase intention) with the mediation of the virtual experience.

In the context of AR, SOR provides a framework of external environment representing AR characteristics that affects consumers' perceptions and generates certain behaviors such as purchase intentions. Therefore, AR and SOR Model contributed to the digital marketing field (Yang, 2021). For the current study, the stimuli will be measured by AR Persuasive characteristics namely spatial presence, perceived personalization and perceived intrusiveness (Smink et al., 2020), organism will be measured by the flow experience measured (Yang, 2021) while response will be measured by the willingness to buy (Poushneh and Vasquez-Parraga, 2017).

AUGMENTED REALITY CHARACTERISTICS

The following section will present an overview about spatial presence, perceived personalization and perceived intrusiveness that represent the stimuli (S) in SOR model.

Spatial Presence

Spatial presence is a wide concept that exists in the classical media such as books and television and in the computed-mediated environment such as AR and virtual reality (VR). Furthermore, it was described using diversified terms such as augmentation quality, local presence and perceived augmentation. All these terms reflect the extent of how the virtual objects seem realistic in the physical environment (Javornik, 2016; Rauschnabel, Felix and Hinsch, 2019; Smink et al., 2020). In the current study, spatial presence is defined as "the subjective experience of being in one place

or environment, even when one is physically situated in another" (Lee et al., 2019, p.2). To elaborate, it explains the nature of presence in the physical environment or the stimulated one.

According to Hilken et al. (2017), consumers experience higher level of realism when spatial presence takes place in AR apps. Furthermore, although the objects are virtual, consumers feel that they try real products, makeup, clothes or even furniture. Therefore, it plays a great role in deriving positive consumes' evaluations (Wang, Ko and Wang, 2021). Adding to that, the extent of presence can be measured by how many senses are participating in the virtual experience. Also, it is affected by the extent of control that consumers feel when they modify, interact and try objects in the virtual environments (Ahn, Sah and Lee, 2016; Scholz and Smith, 2016). Accordingly, consumes can enjoy the feeling that they become a part of the simulated environment (Javornik, 2016; Smink et al., 2020).

Perceived Personalization

Nowadays, firms are tailoring their offerings to the consumers and enhancing their online shopping experience. Consequently, the recommendation system becomes the new golden key that any firm can use to meet the customers' demands (Zhang, Lu and Jin, 2021). In the current study, perceived personalization is defined as "consumers' recognition that information is personalized and tailored for that specific consumer" (Smink et al., 2020; p. 478).

Surprisingly, personalization helps in profiling the consumers based on their names, pictures, gender and prior online activities such as watching movies and website visits (Pfiffelmann, Dens and Soulez, 2020). According to the finance online website, it was supported that 80% of the firms

that provide personalized experiences can capture the attention of the consumers (Monem and Nagy, 2021). Consequently, multiple mega firms started to incorporate the personalized content into their online activities such as Google, Facebook and Netflix using targeted ads and recommendation systems (Shah et al., 2020; Wei et al., 2020).

In this sense, personalization can be extended to the consumers' experience. Relatedly, AR allows consumers to choose their own virtual product and try it on and place it in their personal surroundings wherever they are. Additionally, AR-enabled personalization can be presented by virtual avatars where the consumers' can try the outfits on them. Also, it can be delivered through virtual clothes, makeup and accessories that consumers can try it on their bodies and faces using virtual fitting rooms apps. Besides, AR provides these tailored virtual objects in the consumers' personal physical environment (Baek, Yoo and Yoon, 2018; Hilken et al., 2017; Lee and Xu, 2020; Smink et al., 2020).

Perceived Intrusiveness

One of the main requirements of any AR app is to have access to the camera, other apps can ask for location or some personal data like the e-mail address. However, this kind of information accessibility is not welcomed by all the consumers. In addition, AR still a new innovative technology and the consumers are unknowledgeable enough about its beneficial outcomes in the online shopping. Therefore, consumers have threats about the place where this data can be used or with whom can be shared. As a result, these unfavorable emotions can lead to intrusiveness (Dacko, 2017; Poushneh, 2018). According to Smink et al. (2019), Intrusiveness is explained in terms of the amount of personal data collected by the application or media at hand. In the current

study, perceived intrusiveness is described as "cognitive reaction towards media or advertising that evokes feelings of annoyance or irritation" (Smink et al., 2020, p.478).

Importantly, perceived intrusiveness is highly related to personalization. When the consumer found that the ad or the app asks for too personal information, it raises the sense of intrusiveness that derived from unpleasant feelings. Relatedly, these unfavorable emotions can be translated into less desirable consumers' behaviors, evaluations and attitudes. In addition, it can painfully affect consumers' responses toward the app and the brand. Further, it can be a barrier for persuasion when the consumers are highly irritated and annoyed (Hopp and Gangadharbatla, 2016; Ozcelik and Varnali, 2019; Poushneh, 2018). Moreover, these negative effects do not harm the technology only, but it can be transferred to the brand using the technology and affect consumers' purchase intention. Therefore, consumers tend to decrease the level of intrusiveness in the online shopping by not sharing their personal data or photos by using virtual models to try the product on them instead (Gazley, Hunt and McLaren, 2015; Wottrich, van Reijmersdal and Smit, 2018).

FLOW EXPERIENCE

In the current study flow experience represents organism (O) of SOR framework. Flow is an essential part of any online shopping experience. It provides better understanding of how consumer behave while they shop online (Mahfouz, Joonas and Opara, 2020). Notably, Flow theory was introduced by Csikzentimihalyi (1975). It was developed to discover the rationale behind consumers' engagement in certain activities and behaviors by their own. Furthermore, it explains how the consumers feel happy and pleasant while doing activities without seeking any incentive in return (Csikzentimihalyi, 1975; Kazancoglu and Demir, 2021; Wang, Ko and Wang, 2021).

In order to understand the concept of flow experience, the flow meaning should be highlighted. Therefore, Flow is defined as "a psychological state that blends actions and awareness with intense concentration that fully engages an individual with his or her interaction with a computer" (Krey et al., 2020, p.5). Consequently, it can illustrate the consumers' online behaviors by introducing new rationale in the mediated environments. In the current study, flow experience is expressed as "the holistic sensation that people feel when they act with total involvement" (Ozkara, Ozmen and Kim, 2017, p.119). Although flow experience became a part of the online shopping process, gaps in its literature are not filled yet. Furthermore, the predecessors that generate consumers' online purchases are yet not clearly studied (Ozkara, Ozmen and Kim, 2017).

Notably, flow experience plays an impactful role in increasing customer engagement and the volume of their purchases while they shop online (Kim, Yoo and Yang, 2020). In fashion sector, flow experience triggers the consumers' tendency in online shopping and online purchases continuation (Watson, Alexander and Salavati, 2018). In comparison to the context of AR, it was found that the virtual experience can anticipate the consumers to purchase certain product or at least increase their willingness to buy it (Liu et al., 2016). Subsequently, willingness to buy represents the response (R) of SOR model in the current study. Further, willingness to buy was explained as "consumers' tendency to purchase targeted products in the future and may predict actual purchase behavior" (Poushneh and Vasquez-Parraga, 2017, p.232).

RESEARCH PROPOSITIONS

AR studies are limited to the scope of studying AR acceptance disregarding the online consumers' needs (Rese et al., 2017). In addition, there is a shortage in providing clear insights for the

companies regarding the AR technology and the related consumers' responses. Thus, a call for future researches is questioned to explain the how AR technology can add value to transform the online shopping experience (Hilken et al., 2017). Furthermore, Grewal et al. (2020) argued that AR is very important phenomenon in the retail future. Accordingly, the gap of exploring its impact on consumer behavior should be filled (Poushneh and Vasquez-Parraga, 2017; Rese et al., 2017).

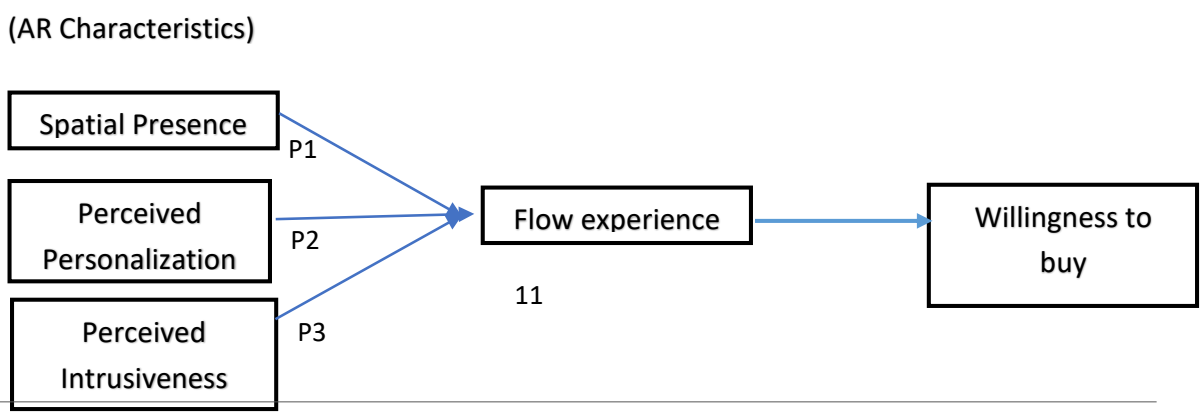
Furthermore, although AR systems commonly combined with the customer experience construct, yet there is a lack in its measuring methods (Javornik, 2016; Sundar et al., 2015). Relatedly, how the AR experience can impact the consumers' responses in the context of retailing should be further examined (Javornik, 2016). As multiple studies focused on how AR features affect the behavioral response only (Huang and Liao, 2017). Therefore, the following research questions, propositions and the conceptual framework are proposed:

RQ: Does flow experience mediate augmented reality characteristics and consumers' response?

P1: Flow experience mediates the positive relationship between spatial presence and willingness to buy

P2: Flow experience mediates the positive relationship between perceived personalization and willingness to buy

P3: Flow experience mediates the negative relationship between perceived intrusiveness and willingness to buy



CONCLUSION

The main aim of this study is to conceptualize the relationship between augmented reality and willingness to buy through the flow experience. Furthermore, this study shed the light on the positive and negative effects of AR characteristics on consumers' responses. Theoretically, the main contribution of the current study is adding to the literature a theoretical foundation to understand the relationship between the consumers and one of the interactive technologies (AR). Also, this study widened the scope of SOR framework in the context of online shopping as it helps in predicting consumers' future behaviors. The study proposed positive and negative response that can be derived from the new technologies in particular AR. Practically, the study shed the light on the importance of integrating AR technology into the marketing practices in Covid-19 era. Moreover, it is suggested that AR technology can add great value by personalizing the online offerings in order to enhance consumers' experience. Lastly, 'try before you buy' is the new unique term and experience introduced exclusively by AR and capable of generating various positive consumers' response.

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INTEGRATING DIGITAL PLATFORM DYNAMICS INTO THE NEXT WAVE OF CUSTOMER ORIENTATION RESEARCH

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Keywords: customer orientation, market orientation, digitalization, digital platform

Description: The paper provides a temporal review of the literature on customer orientation and an agenda for future research on how scholars can address the challenges firms face in delivering superior customer value in the light of digital and platform dynamics.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

How has customer orientation research evolved over the last 30 years and how do digital and platform dynamics challenge the predominant view?

Method and Data

We systematically reviewed and analyzed a comprehensive account of 74 conceptual and empirical articles published between 1990 and 2021. We obtained a list of scholarly publications from the Web of Science (WoS), using a combination of keywords in three blocks: 1) “customer orient*’ (1,493 articles) OR 2) “market orient*”/“marketing orient*” AND 3) “customer*”/“consumer*” (1,688 articles). Using an inductive and iterative approach, we systematically coded all articles in terms of their methodological and content-related aspects. Based on the methodological and content-related analysis, we identified

clusters of papers that correspond to the time of their publication and used this temporal axis as primary structure to carve out the methodological and content-related differences and similarities across waves of research.

Summary of Findings

Customer orientation has been subject to a great deal of attention from multiple research domains, including marketing and management, leading to the emergence of a large, differentiated, and valuable body of academic work. However, more recently, the value of this work has been difficult to fully leverage owing to its foundation in non-digital, linear firm or value-creation contexts. Digitalization of value chains, or systems, and today's complex platform ecosystems require us to rethink the roots and implications of customer orientation research. In particular, the authors claim that four major changes challenge the predominant view and provide fruitful avenues for future research: (1) from single to multiple customer groups, (2) from monetary to non-monetary customer value contribution, (3) from internal value creation to value orchestration, and (4) from on-demand historical data to large amounts of unstructured real-time data.

Key Contributions

In this paper, we aim to provide a foundation for reflecting on and reconceptualizing customer orientation – the concept and its emergence, the underlying mechanisms, and its outcomes – through a systematic literature review.

This review contributes to marketing and management disciplines in three ways. First, it presents a synthesis of the customer orientation literature and its evolution over the last thirty years across three distinct waves. Second, it highlights shortcomings in customer orientation research triggered by digitalization and the evolution of platforms. Third, the review provides an agenda for the next wave of research to address four fundamental changes due to digitalization that challenge the predominant view on customer orientation.

TITLE

THE EFFECTS OF RACIALLY-THEMED CONTROVERSIAL STORYTELLING ADVERTISING ON BRANDING OUTCOMES?: A NARRATIVE TRANSPORTATION PERSPECTIVE

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Keywords: Attitudes toward the Ad, Brand Experience, Brand Love, Brand Loyalty, Narrative Transportation

Description: Our study contributes to the understanding of the ad-induced brand experience and its effects on creating brand love and brand loyalty to foster substantial brand equity, even with an unintentionally controversial racially-themed campaign.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Hypothesis

RH1: The level of narrative transportation as evoked by exposure to a storytelling advertising campaign will be correlated with favorable consumer attitudes toward the (Pepsi) ad.

RH2: Attitudes toward the (Pepsi) ad positively predict brand intellectual experience.

RH3: Attitudes toward the (Pepsi) ad positively predict self-brand connection.

RH4: Brand intellectual experience negatively predicts brand love.

RH5: Self-brand connections positively predict brand love.

RH6: Brand love positively predicts brand loyalty.

Method and Data

To provide empirical data for our research hypotheses to explore the relationships among ad-evoked narrative transportation and branding outcomes, we employed a one-shot case study, one of the three pre-experiment designs, commonly used to test television commercials because it is "relatively simple and inexpensive" (Volchok 2015, n.p.). We also used composite scores of each study variable in the confirmatory factor analysis and path analysis using Amos 26. Composite reliability (C.R.) and average variance extracted (AVE) of these variables were computed to assess their reliability and convergent validity. Most C.R. statistics range from .825 to .975 and generally exceed the cut-off

criteria of .70 to ensure acceptable reliability (Fornell and Lacker 1981; Nunnally 1978). Furthermore, we also used the maximum likelihood factor analysis procedure for confirmation factor analysis. Overall, the AVE statistics of our study variables (from .523 to .820) are generally higher than the recommended cut-off of .50 (Fornell and Lacker 1981), indicating a good convergent validity for these variables in the model.

Summary of Findings

Overall, ad-evoked narrative transportation explains 84.8% of the variance in attitudes toward the (Pepsi) ad (RH1). Attitudes toward the (Pepsi) ad also explains 76.6% of the variance in brand intellectual experience (RH2), 92.7% of the variance in SBC (RH3). SBC explains 79.4% variance in brand love (RH5), while brand intellectual experience does not account for brand love (RH4, rejected). Finally, brand love accounts for 107.5% of the variance in brand loyalty. Positive standardized regression weight estimates (or β coefficients) suggest an excellent predictive power and positive effect of ad-evoked narrative transportation on consumers' attitudes toward the (Pepsi) ad on (β=.848, S.E.=.034, p<.001) (RH1). At the same time, consumers' attitudes toward the (Pepsi) ad also account for changes in brand intellectual experience (β=.766, S.E.=.094, p<.001) (RH2) and SBC (β=.927, S.E.=.079, p<.001) (RH3). The empirical findings provide support for RH1, RH2, and RH3. Unexpectedly, brand intellectual experience does not

negatively predict consumers; love for Pepsi (β=.035, S.E.=.047, p>.05) (RH4). On the other hand, as expectedly, SBC positively predicts their brand love (β=.794, S.E.=.054, p<.001) (RH5). Concurred with Huang (2017), brand love accounts for changes in consumer brand loyalty (β=1.075, S.E.=.064, p<.001) (RH6).

Key Contributions

Many studies on narrative transportation have often focused on the emotional benefits but often ignored that narrative transportation may also contribute to the branding outcome after consumers are exposed to controversial branded content. However, contrary to what existing literature may expect, a controversial advertising campaign may similarly transport consumers into the fictional BLM protest depicted in Pepsi's campaign, yet such transportation may end up generating more counter-arguments. Our theoretical contribution lies in our digression from existing narrative advertising literature (Chang 2009, 2013; Chiu et al. 2012) by introducing video storytelling as a platform (Lares et al. 2014) and professionally-produced controversial branded narratives as an intervention. Marketing professionals can also benefit from learning that, contrary to the myth, exposure to a video storytelling ad will enable consumers to learn "consistent and compelling content" of a brand communicated by marketers (Bacon 2013, n.p.). Based on these empirical findings, brand managers might not feel too concerned about the negative

impacts of some controversies an advertising campaign may cause in the age of Woke/Cancel culture. A controversial campaign might cause consumers to think about the brand message, transport them into the fictitious advertising scene, and generate favorable branding outcomes.

References are available upon request.

The Impact of IT- and Lifestyle-related Influences on Customers' Intention to Provide Digitally Transferred Access Permission in Last Mile Delivery

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Keywords: Last Mile Delivery, Digital Access Permission, Privacy Calculus, Work-Life-Flexibility, Sustainability

Description: This paper focuses on customers' perception of IT- and Lifestyle-related influences on the intention to provide digitally transferred access permission in last mile delivery.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question. The number of deliveries and parcels is constantly increasing and postal service providers are trying to find ways to optimize deliveries. This is rising the question of more efficient and effective home delivery is becoming increasingly important. As the importance of secure, efficient, sustainable and contactless "last-mile" delivery processes grow, interest in the integration of information technology into this process is increasing among researchers and suppliers. At the center of interest lie users' perceptions of courier, express, and parcel (CEP) service providers, particularly deliveries made using smart-lock systems, including digitally transferred access permissions. Literature emphasizes that not just entire business processes, but also service alternatives and the way of (contactless) technology-infusion in services seem already to adjust. The appropriate integration of innovative technologies might help fulfill the needs of users, logistics firms and retailers. In this relation, the integration of innovative services offers several opportunities. The corresponding research question is: How does IT-related or lifestyle-related influences have an impact on users' intention to provide digitally transferred access permission and to what extent does users' overall privacy concerns moderate these relations?

Method and Data. Using an online survey (N=183), we employ the privacy calculus theory in order to evaluate the effect of IT- and lifestyle-related influences on users' intention to provide such an access digitally.

Summary of Findings. We could show the relevance of users' privacy concerns as a moderator, as particularly those users carrying a low amount of privacy concerns are increasingly willing to provide such an access permission, when a specific level of environmental sustainability in perceived in this relation. Findings lead to meaningful practical applications and fruitful directions for future research, focusing on the increasing influence of user perceptions of environmental sustainability and work–life flexibility. Hereby it was possible to support theory by emphasizing the relevance of lifestyle- as well as IT-related variables and point out a new avenue on potential research to deepen the impact of both aspects in context of customers' inner processing. In addition to the implications for future research, this research also derived implications for practice. Findings give reason to believe that customers' desires

for work–life flexibility as well as their perceptions of the environmental sustainability of the home delivery service might be an important leverage for marketer in order to promote such a service, but also in order to lower users' concerns to provide digitally transferred access permission.

Statement of Key Contributions. We were able to point out the relevance of IT-related as well as lifestyle-related influences. However, besides the importance of customers' trust in the IT-infrastructure and perceptions of the risk of attacks and errors on providing digitally access permission to the private living area, our study particularly emphasizes the importance for long-term business success of customers' perceptions of sustainability and customers' work–life flexibility. Consequently, we argue for a stronger focus in communications strategies on the environmental sustainability of unattended home delivery services. At this stage, improvements might be mutually reinforcing, meaning that a more appropriate approach to customers in both cases could result in a higher intention to provide the access permission digitally, which again could be used to improve the process. However, CEP-providers seem to have a powerful tool here; recognizing these possibilities too late might lead to competitive disadvantages that could be difficult to overcome if the necessary customer databases were absent. CEP-providers should be in the position to use customers' attitudes to sustainability, in particular, as this topic will inevitably receive increased attention.

Retailing & Service Interactions

AN EXPERIMENTAL INVESTIGATION OF THE USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE CONTEXT OF COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT

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Keywords: Chatbots, Conversational Commerce, Human-Computer Interaction, Complaint Management

Description: This study investigates how a chatbot avatar in complaint management must be designed (its appearance as well as its interaction) so that the customer stays with the online retailer despite the complaint.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Questions

(1) To what extent does the choice of an avatar (robot or human) affect the customer's behavioral intention?

(2) To what extent does the emphatic or non-emphatic behavior of an avatar influence the behavioral intention?

(3) What effect does the additional provision of compensation have on the behavioral intention?

(4) To what extent do human characteristics generally play a relevant role?

Method and Data

To answer the research question, we conducted an experimental study with a 2 (human vs. robot) x2 (empathetic vs. non-empathetic) x2 (10€ voucher vs. no voucher) between-subject design using an online survey. The subjects were recruited randomly via social-media-channels and online forums. A total of 389 participants participated in the study (n> 30 in each condition, $M_{age} = 29.00$, SD = 12.49, 57,1% women). We conducted several ANOVAs using SPSS.

Summary of Findings

The results show that the choice of the avatar, the reaction, as well as the compensation, play a decisive role in influencing consumer behavior and, thus, increase the probability that the customer, despite a complaint, returns and buys again from the retailer. Further, the behavioral intention can be explained by the mediating influences of anthropomorphism and the evaluation of redress.

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Key Contributions

While we can observe that the behavioral intention can be increased by consumers' perceived evaluation of redress when there is an empathic reaction or a compensation offered, choosing an avatar that is perceived as alive and vivid, independent whether it is shown as a human or a robot, is decisive for forming the behavioral intention. For companies this is a first hind, how to create a chatbot to offer their customers a good after sales service. We can confirm that a successful complaint management with a chatbot leads to a higher behavioral intention and thus, a positive effect on the relationship between customer and company. As past research has shown that empathy is a decisive factor in service marketing especially also in the online environment, our findings show, additionally, the importance of the creation of a humanlike chatbot. Conceptually, friendly complaints reflect customers' concerns for the positive relationship with the company, while neglect and redress seeking complaints reflect the lack of it. Partly, this contradicts our results, where the evaluation of redress plays an essential role for the behavioral intention. So, it is important to create an empathetic avatar but also to offer a kind of compensation. Since literature shows that an economic incentive is one essential reason for consumers to rebuy from a retailer after a complaint, we can confirm these results. The influence of the perception of the chatbot and the expectation can also have an influence of the service quality.

AN INTEGRATED MODEL OF RETAIL BRAND EQUITY

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Keywords: Retail brand equity, integrated model, consumer shopping experience, shopping value

Description: This paper proposes an integrated retail brand equity model incorporating both consumer shopping experience and shopping value.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Retailers need to manage retail brand equity more systematically to improve its marketing effectiveness by examining both experiential (i.e., consumer shopping experience) and functional (i.e., shopping value) associations of retail brands. Even though previous studies have provided many valuable insights on the antecedents of retail brand equity, it remains unclear how experiential and functional associations of the brands concurrently influence the dimensionality of retail brands. To address such limitations, we propose an integrated retail brand equity model incorporating both consumer shopping experience and shopping value to broaden our understanding of the formation of consumers' retail-brand perception and its influence on retail brand equity.

Specifically, we aim to answer three main research questions:

1). What are the main antecedents of retail brand equity?

2). What are the main drivers of shopping value and consumer shopping experience in a retail setting?

3). How do shopping value and consumer shopping experience influence retail brand equity?

Method And Data

Data was collected from 254 respondents who filled out our survey on Amazon Mechanical Turk. The average age was 37, with 51% of the respondents being female and 49% being male. Participants were prompted to list five grocery stores at which they have previously shopped. The system then randomly selected one of them for the respondents to evaluate. In this way, we counteract the tendency for respondents to provide and evaluate only their favorite store, which would result in limited variance for the constructs in our model.

Key measures were adapted from established studies and the measures show strong reliability and validity in the measurement property test via confirmatory factor analysis and reliability analysis. To maintain adequate sample size-to-parameter ratios, we divided our research model into three sub-models.

Using seemingly unrelated regression (SUR) to estimate all regressions simultaneously can alleviate the concerns of endogeneity and correlated error. SUR can produce better estimates when the error terms of different regressions are correlated. The system is suitable when several variables in the model are both independent and dependent variables of different regressions. SUR was selected as the appropriate method to test our model.

Summary of Findings

In this study, primary antecedents of retail brand equity are examined using both

functional and experiential dimensions of retail brand association. Our findings suggest that retailers are worth more than just the products they sell. Carrying high-quality brands is neither a necessary nor a sufficient way to enhance retail brand equity since the same product brands can be carried by multiple retailers. For a retailer, rather than relying on the equity of the brands it carries, managing the depth and width of product assortment and communicating the value and quality of products are more crucial to building a favorable retail brand image and equity. As the old saying goes, people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel. Retailers should evaluate their store performance constantly based not only on visible metrics (e.g., sales), but also on how they make their customers feel. Consumers have in-store shopping experiences that exert great influence on their brand evaluations and patronage behaviors. Effectively monitoring, managing and leveraging consumer experiences will boost brand equity and should be a strategic priority.

Statement of Key Contributions

From a theoretical standpoint, this study addresses an important gap in knowledge regarding current retail equity measurement by clarifying the nature and dimensionality of retail brands. Through systematically demonstrating both experiential (i.e., consumer shopping experience) and functional (i.e., shopping value) associations of retail brands, our findings reveal the key antecedents of consumer-based retail brand equity. In addition, our findings provide empirical evidence to support Ailawadi and Keller's (2004) proposition that low price-positioning retailers can also build retail brand equity. 'Value-based' retailers, who carry fewer but higher-value brands, can also build good retail brand equity. Low margin mass merchants (e.g., Walmart and Dollar Tree) can cultivate their brand equity by providing exclusive shopping value through a combination of good value, efficiency and convenience.

From a practical standpoint, our empirical model and measurement scales provide practitioners with a diagnostic tool and a roadmap for them to continue examining, monitoring and improving their brand performances in a retail setting. It is vital that retailers find a creative way to integrate different shopping environments to create consistent and positive shopping experiences.

References are available upon request.

AUGMENTED REALITY GENERALIZATIONS: A META-ANALYTICAL REVIEW ON CONSUMER-RELATED OUTCOMES AND THE MEDIATING ROLE OF HEDONIC AND UTILITARIAN VALUES

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Keywords: AR; aesthetic; informativeness; perceived usefulness; enjoyment.

Description: Drawing on Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology, the authors develop a framework based on AR as antecedent, hedonic and utilitarian shopping values as first mediators, attitude and satisfaction as second mediators, and behavioral intentions as a consequence.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Firms are using different Augmented Reality (AR, hereafter) strategies for creating customer value perceptions, improving consumers' responses, and generating more meaningful consumer-brand relationships. AR aims to develop a better service experience for online shoppers "that aligns with the ways customers naturally process information" (Hilken et al., 2017, p.885). Despite the augmented reality (AR) phenomenon's growth, a fragmented body of scholarly research has yielded limited and conflicting evidence of this technology's direct and indirect impact on consumers' response as a consequence. Consumers' response refers to consumers' different assessments and outcomes when using AR technology. AR's effects on consumers' responses have been evoking mixed results based on novelty, users' perception, retailer's viewpoint, and different platforms. In this paper, we aim to answer the

following questions RQ1: What is AR's overall and generalized main effect on consumers' response variables? RQ2: What are the indirect effect of AR on consumers' responses through hedonic and utilitarian values (mediating mechanisms) and attitude and satisfaction (attitudinal mechanisms)? RQ3: What are the moderating roles of different AR conditions (i.e., AR-application design, AR-characterization, AR-access specificity, AR-QR code utilization, AR-display medium, and AR-offer type) in influencing consumers' response?

Method and Data

Our search procedure initially presented 746 manuscripts that used the search terms (Web of Science = 501, Scopus = 182, Ebsco = 50, Proquest = 5 and Hilken's codification = 8). Then, we did a manual download and reviewed the 746 manuscripts, excluding qualitative, interpretative, theoretical, and other papers that did not present a statistic for transforming into an effect size. Two authors were involved in coding the papers as raters. When the authors have doubts about discussing a coding procedure, they discuss and find an agreement. After excluding many documents, our final sample was 58 manuscripts published from 2012 to 2020 (M = 2018, SD = 2.06), generating 1,275 observations of Pearson correlation from 37 journals. These 58 manuscripts had 505,644 individuals accumulated (M = 397).

Summary of Findings

AR had a positive impact not only on emotion (ES = .52 p<.001, k = 12), but also on cognitive challenge (ES =.44 p<.01, k =13), showing that this technology increases consumer's feelings and rationality in similar magnitude. Moreover, although AR reduced the discomfort in experiencing the product or service (ES = -.11 p<.05, k = 8),

it increased the time distortion (*ES* = .57 *p*<.001, *k* = 3) and nostalgia (*ES* = .25 *p*<.04, *k* = 3). The first (*vs*. second) model has (*vs*. has not) the direct effect of AR on behavioral intention. In the first model, AR had positive association with hedonic and utilitarian (β= .58; *p*<.001, H_{1a} and β= .52; *p*<.001 H_{1b}). The explained variance was 33% for hedonic and 27% for utilitarian (both mediators). Hedonic and utilitarian shopping values respectively increased attitude (β= .60; *p*<.001 and β= .11; *p*<.001), and satisfaction (β= .58; *p*<.001 and β= .15; *p*<.001). The explained variance was 45% for attitude and 47% for satisfaction (both mediators). In the second model, AR had positive and small main effect on behavioral intention (β= .05; *p*<.01).

Statement of Contributions

This meta-analytic study integrated the AR literature findings and to converge scholarly advances in this area. Our first theoretical contribution is that study findings generalize the AR impact on consumers' responses. There has been conflicting views on AR's relationship with consumers' responses with researcher highlighting a positive aspect as well as a negative aspect. Drawing on UTAUT model, our results showed that AR explains different consumer's outcomes, such as attitude (e.g., behavioral intention, satisfaction, etc.), innovation (e.g., innovativeness, interactive, etc.), cognition (e.g., emotion and cognitive challenge), and other social aspects (e.g., social value, discomfort, nostalgia, etc.). As a second research contribution, this study theorizes and tests AR's indirect influence on consumers' response through hedonic and utilitarian values (shopping orientation) and attitude and satisfaction (attitudinal assessment)? Findings extend the contemporary scholarly conversations involving technology through AR applications and hedonic and utilitarian shopping values. The findings corroborate the existence of the relationships between AR and the nature of its use, that is, hedonic use or utilitarian use.

Note “References are available upon request.”

COPING WITH THREATS DURING HEALTH SERVICE VALUE CO-CREATION

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Keywords: health service, consumer coping, psychological threat, co-creation
Description: We examine how patients cope with stress engendered by care co-creation processes in the healthcare sector.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Prior research on co-creation assumes that consumers voluntarily accept to use resources toward the co-creation process, as this leads to satisfaction and well-being. Whilst such assumption is relevant from a company's perspective, it does not account for consumer perspective. Research on effects of co-creation processes on consumers, and the extent to which such processes are perceived as threats, is sparse. Combining the perspective from psychological research with co-creation of value in services, we contend that patients are active players in co-producing health services. We argue that the co-creation process can, however, impose restrictions on patients which leads to their self-determination needs being threatened, and illness is faced. Co-creation in health services, therefore, garners support for *double coping* mechanisms, whereby patients cope with the illness as well as constrained autonomy inherent in the co-creation process. Based on above, our study objectives are following: (1) understand the types of threats patients typically experience in co-creation processes in health services, (2) investigate the coping strategies that patients and their network rely upon following threats imposed by co-creation processes, and (3) elucidate the role played by individual motivations in shaping the occurrence of coping responses.

Method And Data

We conducted two studies to address our research objectives. Study 1 involved four focus groups with adults (n=20) who had used at least one health service within the last six months. Participants ranged in age from 21-59 years, split equally based on gender. The focus groups, each lasting between 45 minutes and one-hour, asked respondents to describe a personally experienced health service, providing details of any threatening features and motivations for coping. Using both inductive and deductive approaches to categorization, Study 1 identified themes in the data. Study 2 involved a field study run in collaboration with a major, publicly funded hospital trust in England (UK). Ethical approval by the Health Research Authority (HRA) in the UK was obtained. Our sample included patients (N=257) and their companion (N=229) attending the hospital during the time of our research. Participants were recruited by a trained researcher once they checked into the hospital and were waiting to be seen by a clinician. The survey questions pertained to the constructs namely perceived threat, severity of the illness, emotion- and problem-focused coping, approach and avoidance motivations,

mental and physical wellbeing. The final sample included 56% female, with mean age 44 years.

Summary of Findings

Our Study 1 findings show that co-creation in health care leads to a number of threats identified in prior literature, including intelligence, personal control, power and social rejection. Research in psychology has often utilized threats in experimental manipulations, thereby clearly differentiating among threat types. Interestingly, some individual patient experiences of co-creation involved multiple threats. This suggests that co-creation in health care can trigger threats along multiple dimensions. Further, the data indicates that the severity of the illness, and the patient's network influence patients' coping with co-creation. For our Study 2, two structural models were performed using 5,000 bootstrap samples – Model A without moderators, and Model B with approach and avoidance motivations included as moderators. There is a significant negative relationship between control threat and problem-focused coping. Problem-focused coping following control threats appears to be driven by one's approach orientation as evidenced by the moderating effect. A positive relationship is instead found between social rejection threat and emotion-focused coping. Emotion-focused coping following social rejection threats appears to be driven by one's avoidance orientation as evidenced by the moderating effect. Emotion-focused coping is however seen as a barrier to both mental and physical wellbeing.

Statement of Key Contributions

Our study advances knowledge to several literature streams. First, it contributes to co-creation research by advancing empirical evidence on the effects of co-creation in health services on patients. Second, the study contributes to the literature on coping by demonstrating that threat appraisals differentially enact coping processes. Further, approach and avoidance orientations are detected as relevant psychological processes determining the occurrence of one or the other coping strategy. The implications for healthcare service providers are that service providers should be aware of the likely perceptions of threat experienced by patients involved in co-creation in healthcare. Threats can arise from the behavior of staff, as well as from inadequate or dysfunctional service processes and systems. Second, for healthcare professionals seeking to encourage patients' problem-solving attitude, control threats need to be pre-empted. Social rejection threats on the other hand enhance emotion-focused coping, which typically happens in the form of emotion venting and seeking social support. As patients tend to rely on venting emotions with their social circle in order to overcome threats, such coping response potentially bears little disruption to healthcare professionals. Yet, emotion-focused coping can have indirect consequences on healthcare service providers, given the effect shown on physical and mental wellbeing.

DUMB SMILES: HOW POSITIVE EMOTIONS NEGATIVELY INFLUENCE PURCHASE INTENTIONS IN LIVE SHOPPING

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Keywords: Smiles, Live Stream, Perceived Expertise, Purchase Intention

Description: This paper provides evidence that displaying positive emotions in live shopping contexts leads to lower purchase intentions for hedonic products.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Consumers increasingly use social media channels and live streams to purchase products or get inspired. Recently, numerous major online retailers such as Amazon or Taobao have introduced live shopping channels on their websites. Even Facebook, the leading global social media company, has included a live shopping feature in 2021. Trained salespeople, hosts, manufacturers, farmers, or affiliated influencers showcase products live to their audience on these live shopping channels. Despite the increasing financial relevance of live shopping as a sales channel, it has not yet received much attention in the marketing, service or management literature. The present study addresses the emerging phenomenon from a marketing perspective and highlights the salesperson's role in this novel shopping medium. Specifically, we shed light on the salesperson's effect of displaying different levels of positive emotions on purchase intentions.

Method And Data

We used a 2 (emotional vs. unemotional salesperson) × 2 (hedonic vs. utilitarian product) between-subjects experiment to address our research question. 120 U.K. participants (68% female, median age = 37.5) were recruited on Prolific (www.prolific.co) for a computer-based experiment about online shopping. All participants read a short introduction about a fictitious online shop, 'eshoppers.com'. We told them that they were looking for a gift for a friend within their budget of £15. Then, participants saw 42-45 seconds sales pitches selling products. We used real-life pitches from Amazon's live shopping platform 'Amazon Live' (www.amazon.com/live). We introduced a two-step process to select the final set of video stimuli. We pre-selected sales pitches fulfilling a set of requirements. We then analyzed those with iMotion's Affective Affdex algorithm (www.imotions.com) to objectively select four stimuli differing in their strength of emotional display.

A total of 5'227 video frames were entered into the facial expression analysis. We considered only video frames where a salesperson expressed either joy or smiles with a detection certainty of at least 95%. Across both sales pitches, salesperson A expressed significantly more positive emotions than salesperson B (*Fisher's exact test*$_{Joy}$: $p < .001$; *Fisher's exact test*$_{Smile}$: $p = .002$).

Summary of Findings

We used two regression models to test our hypothesized moderated mediation model. The first model ($F(3,116) = 7.205$, $R^2 = 15.7\%$, $p < .001$) was a moderation model that examined the effects of positive emotions (coded: 0 = low, 1 = high), product type (coded: 0 = utilitarian, 1 = hedonic), and their interaction term on perceived expertise. The interaction was significant (b = -1.53, $p = .006$), indicating that the indirect effect of positive emotions mediated by perceived expertise varied depending on the product type. The second model

($F(2,117) = 15.436$, $R^2 = 20.9\%$, $p < .001$) was a mediation model that analyzed the effects of perceived expertise and positive emotions on purchase intentions. Whereas the perceived expertise significantly influenced purchase intentions (b = 0.484, $p < 0.001$), we found no direct effect of positive emotions on the dependent variable (b = -0.057, $p > 0.1$). The conditional direct effect was significant for hedonic products (b = -0.850, 95% CI = [-1.399, -0.392]) and not significant for utilitarian products (b = -0.110, 95% CI = [-0.505, 0.270]).

Statement of Key Contribution

Past research on emotional contagion and conventional wisdom suggest that displaying positive emotions (e.g., smiling) in service interactions leads to positive managerial outcomes. Other researchers claim that this positive effect is dependent on the authentic display of positive emotions. We show that positive emotions in the live shopping context lead to lower purchase intentions for a hedonic product. The expression of joy and smiling leads to lower perceived expertise of the salesperson. In addition, we show that this relationship does not hold in the context of utilitarian products.

Non-academic stakeholders find value in our article as it contradicts common business practices. Today, many businesses instruct their employees to smile as often as possible during a service interaction. Our findings suggest the opposite. Salespeople should avoid an excessive expression of joy to be perceived as more knowledgeable and increase customers' purchase intentions. Further, our method enables live shopping providers the possibility of monitoring salespeople's emotions in order to explain consumers' purchase decisions better.

HOW DOES VIRTUAL REALITY AFFECT CONSUMERS' WILLINGNESS TO PAY?

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Keywords: Virtual Reality, Product Demonstration, Hedonic and Utilitarian Product, Willingness to Pay

Description: The core goal of this paper is to examine empirically how product presentations in high-immersive VR influence consumers' willingness to pay for a product.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

A rising number of retailers is adopting virtual reality (VR) to improve product presentation and explanation in retail settings. This digital sales tool should essentially influence consumers' buying perceptions and decision making. Yet, the majority of marketing literature mainly has analyzed the impact of low-immersive (e.g., desktop screens) rather than high-immersive VR environments (e.g., head mounted displays). Considering this imbalance as a serious deficit in existing research, the goal of this study is to investigate how product presentations in high-immersive VR influence consumers' willingness to pay (WTP) for a product. To achieve this goal, we derive a conceptual model that reflects the logic of the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) framework (Mehrabian and Russell 1974).

Method and Data

First, we conducted a pre-study to test if our research design and materials are appropriate. Second, we tested our hypotheses in a high-immersive VR simulation experiment by using a 2 x 2 between subject design. That is, we manipulated the product type (utilitarian vs. hedonic product) and the reality type in which the product type was presented (reality vs. high-immersive VR environment). We randomly assigned 100 participants to one of the four conditions.

We used an Oculus Rift S to run the high-immersive VR environments. Using the Oculus Rift S is beneficial, as this HMD is one of the most advanced VR headsets (Oculus 2020; Techradar 2021) and gives users complete freedom in head, body, and arm movements (Chow 2010). Importantly, to avoid common limitations of VR research in terms of exclusively student-based samples (Loureiro et al. 2019), our sample includes several demographic groups.

Summary of Findings

H1 states that product presentations in high-immersive VR environments (vs. control condition) exhibits an interaction effect with product type on WTP, such that VR increase consumers' WTP for hedonic (vs. utilitarian) products. According to the results, the direct effects of reality type and product type are not significant. Yet, the results reveal a significant interaction effect of reality type and product type. The pattern of results is as follows: WTP is significantly higher in the VR condition presenting the hedonic (vs. utilitarian) product. Likewise, WTP is significantly higher in the hedonic product condition with the presentation in VR (vs. reality). Thus, the results provide support for H1. Moreover, H2 describes that presentations in high-immersive VR environments (vs. control condition) exhibits a positive indirect effect on WTP through consumers' enjoyment, if the product type is hedonic. Results indicate that the direct effect of reality type on enjoyment is significant. Furthermore, the interaction effect of enjoyment and product type significantly predicts WTP. Eventually, the indirect path through reality type → enjoyment → WTP is significant in the hedonic product condition, but not in the utilitarian product condition, supporting H2.

Key Contributions

First, most marketing studies have analyzed low-immersive VR (e.g., Pizzi et al. 2020; Yang and Xiong 2019). Yet, the effect of low- compared to high-immersive VR follows different psychological paths resulting in divergent consumer responses (Peukert et al. 2019). Therefore, we add to the marketing discipline by analyzing the effect of high-immersive VR on consumers' buying decision making. Our study also differs from 80% of previous VR studies in that the sample does not consist entirely of students, which improves the generalization of results (Loureiro et al. 2019). Second, our findings contribute to pricing literature. For example, Atasoy and Morewedge (2018) found that consumers are less willing to pay for products that they have

experienced virtually. However, our findings reveal that this effect should be contingent on the product type.

Eventually, our study offers managerial implications. Presentations in high-immersive VR environments raise consumers' WTP for hedonic products, even if the actual presentation is kept modest (as in our study) compared to presentations in retail stores and showrooms. Accordingly, retailers do not necessarily have to use the most sophisticated VR contents, since less sophisticated and hence supposedly less expensive contents could also generate a major impact on consumers' buying decision making.

(References are available upon request.)

Increasing Short- and Long-Term Blood Donations:

A Longitudinal Field Comparison of Public and Private Events

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Keywords: Blood donations, public versus private events, short-term versus long-term, longitudinal analyses, healthcare services

Description: Across three field studies, the authors establish longitudinal differences between public and private donation events and demonstrate that whereas private events are more effective at increasing blood donations in the short-term, public events are more effective at increasing blood donations in the long-term.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Blood donations are integral to global healthcare service industries, which suffer from insufficient short-term supply to meet long-term patient demands as companies struggle to convert short-term donors into long-term donors. In response, companies seek to encourage

long-term blood donations by altering the public nature of events, a practice with questionable efficacy. In addition, age differences also appear in donation behaviors. Thus, the healthcare service industry is struggling to capture short-term donors while simultaneously converting them into long-term, recurring donors. Consequently, is it possible that public (versus private) events are more effective at increasing blood donations? And, if so, is one type of event more effective at converting short-term donors into long-term donors? Finally, is it possible that these effects change — and potentially reverse — over time? Ultimately, we seek to understand how public (versus private) donation events may influence blood donations over time. Specifically, we aim to explore whether public (versus private) donation events influence (1) short-term and long-term blood donations; (2) Through which mechanism do public (versus private) donation events influence short- and long-term blood donations; and (3) Are there potential boundary conditions for these effects (e.g., age)?

Method and Data

To examine the effects of public (versus private) donation events on blood donations, we draw on attribution theory and adopt a mixed-methods approach that combines field, secondary, longitudinal, and behavioral data. Field data and field studies are critical tools to establish external validity when studying behaviors that are oftentimes influenced by social desirability biases. Specifically, a two-level hierarchical liner model shows that whereas private events are more effective in the short-term, public events are more effective in the long-term. Ultimately, we establish how public (versus private) events influence blood donations across three studies: Including a longitudinal secondary data analysis of 15,059 blood drives across two years (Study 1), a secondary data analysis of 101,462 individuals across two years (Study 2), and a field study matched with five years of archival (and five months of longitudinal) data (Study 3). All studies establish that there are real-world

longitudinal differences in the efficacy of public (versus private) events that alter short-term and long-term blood donation behaviors.

Summary of Findings

To examine the effects of public (versus private) donation events on blood donations, we draw on attribution theory and adopt a mixed-methods approach that combines field, secondary, longitudinal, and behavioral data. Accordingly, we establish how public (versus private) events influence blood donations across three studies: Including a longitudinal secondary data analysis of 15,059 blood drives across two years (Study 1), a secondary data analysis of 101,462 individuals across two years (Study 2), and a field study matched with five years of archival (and five months of longitudinal) data (Study 3). All studies establish that there are real-world longitudinal differences in the efficacy of public (versus private) events that alter short-term and long-term blood donation behaviors. In addition, we establish that the mechanism through which public (versus private) donation events influence short- and long-term blood donations is through a sense of community. Finally, we also explore age as a managerially-relevant boundary condition, and we find that the positive effects of public events on blood donations are stronger among younger individuals.

Statement of Key Contributions

For theory. We build upon attribution theory by extending it to healthcare service environments struggling to convert short-term donors to long-term donors. Specifically, concerning prosocial blood donation behaviors, we demonstrate that the mechanism through which public (versus private) events increase blood donations is through an external attribution of community, and that this effect reverses over time. Additionally, we explore the role of age on this relationship, and we demonstrate that the positive effects of public events on blood donations are stronger among younger individuals.

For Practice. From a managerial perspective, our research provides evidence revealing when public versus private events are more effective at converting short-term donors into long-term donors, ultimately demonstrating how to increase blood donations both in the short-term and in the long-term. Specifically, healthcare organizations should use private donation events to increase short-term blood donations, whereas they should use public donation events to increase long-term blood donations. In addition, service marketers and healthcare organizations should target younger individuals with public events, as the positive effects of public events on blood donations are stronger among younger individuals.

LESS IS SOMETIMES MORE – HOW EFFECTIVE CUSTOMER JOURNEY DESIGNS IMPACT WILLINGSNESS TO PAY A PRICE PREMIUM

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Keywords: customer experience; effective customer journey design; brand attitude; touchpoint frequency; willingness to pay a price premium.

Description: This study provides novel insights into how effective customer journey designs drive brand attitude and customers' willingness to pay a price premium by considering frequency of touchpoint exposure as important boundary condition.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Effective customer journey design (ECJD) is an important and indispensable source of customer value (Edelman and Singer 2015). Recent customer experience research shows that ECJD consists of three dimensions, that are, cohesion, consistency, and context-sensitivity of brand-owned touchpoints (Kuehnl, Jozic, and Homburg 2019). A customer journey is thus viewed as effective if its touchpoints share the same company theme, are perceived uniformly in their design, and fit with the situational context of the customer. ECJD is particularly relevant in a dynamic perspective on customer experience (Becker and Jaakkola 2020), which leads to the main objective of this research, that is, to investigate a fine-grained touchpoint design and examine subsequent effects on customers' behavioral intentions (Kuehnl et al. 2019). The paper makes three core contributions. First, we expand the nomological net of ECJD by studying the impact of its three dimensions on customers' retrospective brand attitudes and their behavioral intentions. Second, as customers are exposed to a multitude of brand-owned touchpoints these days, we investigate the frequency of touchpoint exposure as boundary condition. Lastly, we provide a sector-specific view on customer journeys in the service industry.

Method and Data

To test the proposed relationships, we conducted an online survey among customers in the U.S. service industry. First, we ran a pretest (N = 82, Mage = 37, 34.2 % female), in which we explained the concept of ECJD and asked participants in an open association task to think about

two brands they consider as either strong or weak in terms of their customer journey design for four selected industries (i.e., communication, retail, financial services, transportation). The two strong and two weak brands mentioned most often were selected for the main study to achieve a considerable amount of variance in the data. This procedure resulted in a total of 16 service brands across four service industries. For the main study (N = 424, M_{age} = 36, 45.2 % female), each participant was randomly assigned to one of these 16 service brands and asked to indicate his or her brand familiarity on a seven-point Likert scale (1 = "strongly disagree," 7 = "strongly agree") to ensure a proper knowledge of and experience with the brand. If the average mean of the familiarity score with the presented service brand was below four, the participant was redirected to another brand (Kuehnl et al. 2019).

Summary of Findings

Pursuing a dimension-specific view of ECJD, only context-sensitivity shows a significant, positive impact on customers' brand attitude (B = .70, t = 10.17, p < .001), whereas thematic cohesion (B = -.07, t = -.85, p > .05) and consistency (B = -.07, t = -.83, p > .05) do not reveal significant effects. Our analyses further show that customers' brand attitude significantly predicts their willingness to pay a price premium (WTPP) (B = .15, t = 2.72, p < .01). When inspecting the indirect mediation effect of the three ECJD dimensions (X), via brand attitude (M) on WTPP (Y), moderated by touchpoint frequency (W), a significant index of moderated mediation is obtained for context-sensitivity (B = -.05, SE = .017, p < .05, CI [95%] = -.0820, -.0150), but not for thematic cohesion or consistency. The conditional indirect effect further shows significant results only at low levels of touchpoint frequency (– 1 SD = 2.93; B = .16, SE = .05, CI [95%] = .0523, .2588), whereas moderate or high levels are insignificant. Since the direct effect of context-sensitivity on WTPP is significant as well (B = .31, SE = .08, p < .01), a complimentary moderated mediation results.

Key Contributions

This study provides novel insights into how ECJD and its dimensions drive customers' brand attitudes and their behavioral intentions. Whereas previous customer experience research has focused on customer journey design during the core-consumption stage and linked it to co-creation, channel choice, or value-in-use, studies investigating customers' retrospective brand attitude and their behavioral intentions are rare. In this research, we show that marketers can charge more for their experience if their brand-owned touchpoints fit with customers' current life situation or usage context. Touchpoint consistency and coherence, however, are found to play only subordinate roles, as they do not reveal significant, positive effects on our outcome variables in any of the four service industries. Our results thus confirm the need for a fine-grained view of ECJD. Moreover, we show that frequency of touchpoint exposure constitutes an important boundary condition managers can easily influence and adjust, as the moderated mediation effect of context-sensitivity via brand attitude on customers' willingness to pay a price premium is only significant at low levels of touchpoint exposure. A focus on fewer, but well-designed touchpoints tailored to the specific life situation of a customer will thus create the most positive behavioral intentions.

Selected References are available upon request.

MODERATING EFFECTS OF LIKELIHOOD TO USE INSTORE TECHNOLOGY IN GROCERY STORES: PERCEIVED VALUE OF POST-COVID-19 RETAILTAINMENT

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Keywords: Grocery stores; interactivity; instore technologies; retailtainment; S-O-R.

Description: A model to assess the effects of satisfaction across retailtainment dimensions and intention to shop in a physical grocery store and the moderating effects of high versus low likelihood to use instore technologies on the relationship between perceived retailtainment value and satisfaction with retailtainment.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Despite the logical link between preference for human interactivity and satisfaction with retailtainment, no study in the literature has assessed the effects of human interactivity-instore on satisfaction with retailtainment. Therefore, our study proposes a model and explores three research questions: 1) What factors influence preference for human interactivity-instore and perceived retailtainment value on satisfaction with retailtainment? 2) Does satisfaction with

retailtainment affect revisit intention to shop in a physical grocery store. 3) What is the nature of the effects of likelihood to use instore technologies on the relationship between perceived retailtainment value and satisfaction with retailtainment?

A questionnaire designed to test the model was created and administered to 312 undergraduate, graduate students at a MidWestern US university. Participation in the study was voluntary and no incentives for participation were provided. A majority of the study's respondents were single (92%), white (63%), and female (51%); the average age was 23 years old.

The constructs used in the study are adapted from prior research. The human interactivity-instore measures are from the work of Florenthal and Shoham (2010), and the perceived benefit value scale is adapted from Kim and Kankanhalli (2009). The enjoyment value and unique value scales are adapted from Ligas and Chaudhuri (2012). Satisfaction is adapted from the work of Hsu et al. (2006), and revisit intention and word-of-mouth scales are adapted from Lee et al.'s (2019) study on food shopping experience. The scale measuring likelihood to use instore technologies is adapted from Oyedele and Simpson's (2007) measure of usage frequency of self-service technologies. With the exception of demographic variables, all of the scale items are rated on a 1-5-point Likert type scale where '1' = Strongly Disagree and '5' = Strongly Agree. The third section of the questionnaire contained standard socio-demographic questions (e.g., age, gender, education, etc.).

Summary of Findings

We find that perceived benefit, enjoyment, and unique values of retailtainment were significant in explicating satisfaction with retailtainment in a physical grocery store context. This finding is consistent with previous studies on the role of perceived value in predicting satisfaction. For instance, Sand et al. (2015) found that functional and hedonic values are important predictors of

satisfaction with both education and entertainment focused retailtainment events. Previous studies show that benefits and unique value derived from instore product sampling campaigns (Bagdare and Jain, 2013) and instore information events (Franke and Schreier, 2008; Hu and Jasper, 2006) positively affect satisfaction with retailtainment.

We also find positive relationships between the independent variables (human interactivity-instore, benefits, and unique values) and the dependent variable (satisfaction with retailtaiment) are stronger for individuals with low, rather than high, likelihood to use instore technologies. We attribute this to the fact that current technologies in use in grocery stores are geared toward time and effort efficiencies rather than entertainment and experiential benefit value-oriented information. This also explains why, contrary to the hypothesized relationships, analyses revealed that the relationship between enjoyment value and satisfaction with retailtainment is stronger for individuals with high, rather than low, likelihood to use technologies.

Key Contributions

Consistent with the literature, we found that perceived benefit, enjoyment, and unique values of retailtainment were significant in explicating satisfaction with retailtainment in a grocery store context. Surprisingly, the relationship between human interactivity-instore and satisfaction with retailtainment was not significant, suggesting that consumers' ability to interact with store employees or others in the store does not necessarily lead to satisfaction with retailtainment. This contradictory finding suggests preferences for human interaction in-store positively affect loyalty behavior.

References are available upon request.

NARRATIVE ELICITATION FOR IMPROVED ADHERENCE TO HEALTHCARE ADVICE

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Keywords: customer experience, narratives, stories, sensemaking, health belief model

Description: Explores the elicitation of consumer's healthcare narratives via the constructs of the health belief model to form health communications and treatments that improve adherence.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Poor adherence to healthcare advice damages the wellbeing of consumers and causes large economic losses from absenteeism, lower productivity, and increased healthcare expenses. Further, the increase in pay-for-performance remuneration in healthcare has greatly increased the interest in gaining better adherence to advice. Pharmaceutical firms also realize that approximately half of all prescribed medicine is never taken, so even small increases in adherence could substantially improve their profits.

Researchers have noted the role of consumer's healthcare narratives in sensemaking. For instance, consumer's narratives have influenced individual choices during the COVID-19 pandemic. Also, the Health Belief Model may be the most widely employed framework for

adherence research in medicine, psychology, and other disciplines. The Stages of Change Model is less widely used but does promise shorter patient surveys.

Consequently, this research investigates the following 3 research questions:

RQ1) Can consumers' healthcare narratives be effectively elicited via the constructs of the Health Belief Model (HBM)?

RQ2) Can narratives so elicited be grouped and classified effectively for use by practitioners?

RQ3) How do these healthcare advice narratives relate to the Stages of Change Model (SoCM)?

Method and Data

In study 1, an 11 item qualitative survey asked for an overall story about a recent piece of healthcare advice received from a practitioner and about 6 items developed from the constructs of the health belief model: susceptibility, severity, benefits, barriers, cues-to-action, and self-efficacy. The last question asked where the consumer felt they were on 5 progressive stages of change in pursuing full adherence to advice. There were 78 participants. They were lower income and all but two were females. A narrative analysis of the data followed.

In study 2, the survey questions informed an interview guide used in 20 interviews and two focus groups with 14 participants for a total of 34 participants. They were middle income, with higher than average education, and about 75 percent female. Narrative analysis was employed again. All of the research occurred in the south-central United States.

Summary of Findings

Consumers proved able to narrate their health experiences and beliefs via the HBM constructs. The results indicated that the HBM can serve as a framework for story elicitation. Consumers found it difficult to state a complete narrative in response to the general story elicitation request

in question 1. The HBM provided a framework to elicit their thoughts while allowing considerable latitude in expression.

The researchers were able to classify the narratives from study 2 into the following general storylines about following the advice:

The impact on me will be…

The challenge is…

What I can do is…

I will be able to…

Further, both studies indicated that the SoCM was a poor predictor of any aspects of consumers' narratives; that is, a short SoCM survey may provide other useful information, but it did not reveal the nuances of the consumers' narratives.

Statement of Key Contributions

RQ1) Can consumers' healthcare narratives be effectively elicited via the constructs of the Health Belief Model?

Yes, consumers struggled to articulate narratives without prompts. The prompts from the HBM constructs proved valuable in eliciting narrative elements. These elements were typically deep and broad enough to reveal the central aspects of a consumer's overall healthcare narrative.

RQ2) Can narratives so elicited be grouped and classified effectively for use by practitioners?

Yes, the research illustrated that the resulting consumer narratives could be organized into a small enough set of classifications to prove useful. Providers may gain a sense of which areas are of most importance plus getting the nuances of those specific areas, be it risk aversion, health literacy, lack of personal assistance, a desire to be productive, or something else entirely.

This could then aid in decisions to treat in a manner most likely to gain full adherence. It could also facilitate well targeted supporting narratives and counter narratives to help consumers adjust their personal narratives.

RQ3) How do these healthcare advice narratives relate to the Stages of Change Model?

The stages of change responses did not seem particularly cohesive with the results produced by the HBM survey items. Thus, the SoCM does not appear to be a shortcut to understanding the complexities of consumers' narratives.

References are available upon request.

PREDICTING RETAIL MOBILITY DURING EARLY STAGES OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC USING LIMITED DATA

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Keywords: Retail activity, Risk perception, Mobility, COVID-19, Multicollinearity

Description: We present a novel methodology to integrate risk severity perception indicators (i.e., Google Trends data) and risk susceptibility (i.e., pandemic health impact metric) in predicting consumer mobility.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question:

It is clear that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the economy. Restrictions such as travel bans, closure of non-essential businesses, and "stay-at-home" orders to mitigate the virus's transmission have influenced consumers' mobility patterns and reduced shopper traffic. Thus it has become vital to study the drivers of consumer mobility in such environments since retailers of essential and non-essential goods face contrasting demand shifts due to changes in consumer mobility.

In addition to externally imposed restrictions, consumer mobility could be shaped by two important aspects. First, the specific value of pandemic health metrics that consumers observe in their local vicinity relative to the broader market could affect consumer mobility. Second, consumers' risk perception of disease transmission could influence their willingness to adopt preventative health behaviors, such as avoiding the extent to which they travel. In contrast to stated risk perception that surveys provide, one could use consumers' online search patterns of scarce pandemic-related paraphernalia to measure intrinsic risk perception.

Thus, our objective is to study the effect of pandemic health metric information and consumers' perceived risk due to the pandemic on consumers' mobility decisions in three distinct geographic locations.

Method and Data:

To conduct our analyses, we built predictive models elicited from a novel steepest ascent, steepest descent hill climbing algorithm that produced models containing only statistically significant coefficients with no multicollinearity.

Consumer behavior changes may vary based on the social and demographic characteristics of different communities and the rate and extent of transmission in the early stages of the pandemic. Thus, it is essential to study consumer mobility patterns in distinct geographical areas to understand commonalities as well as differences in the underlying drivers of consumer mobility, specifically retail mobility. Therefore, we decided to focus on three major cities in the US: New York City (NYC), Houston, and Omaha.

We collect data for the 12 week period from 3rd March, 2020 to 29th May, 2020 for our analysis. We use real-time data from Google Mobility, Google Trends, and Twitter to develop a novel prediction algorithm of consumers' mobility patterns.

We also analyze pandemic-associated online search behavior such as online searches for hand sanitizer, masks, and disinfectant, and subsequently utilize such factors to also examine the aforementioned mobility phenomenon. These items were chosen as they are common virus-preventative measures.

Summary of Findings:

Our findings suggest that there are a variety of unique factors that contribute to and drive consumer behavior in each location, as well as several factors that are common to all locations.

For example, in New York, local deaths, park mobility, and workplace mobility were all found to be indicative of increased retail mobility. This suggests that more external engagements, such as working or going to the park, also lead to more retail behavior for individuals in New York. The park mobility finding for New York is opposite that of Omaha, suggesting that individuals in Omaha visit parks as an alternative to shopping. We also can see that residential mobility, disinfectant searches, and hand sanitizer searches all contribute to decreasing retail mobility in the city of Houston. These findings suggest that individuals living in Houston temper their retail behavior downward following proactive engagement with COVID-19 preventive measures. These orthogonal findings again suggest that retail behavior is driven and affected by different factors in different locations.

Our methodology can also be used in predicting retail mobility and other mobility activities, using real-time data sources, during other disruptive events that may shake the global economy.

Key Contributions:

Several studies have focused on analyzing how consumer mobility drives disease transmission and pandemic spread. In contrast, we focus on the reverse problem - how pandemic health metrics drive consumers' risk perception and subsequently impact retail mobility. Our work contributes to and broadens the extant literature by focusing on how COVID-19 risk perceptions impact retail mobility through the development of a novel hill climbing heuristic that produces linear models containing no multicollinearity and strictly significant covariates, and by analyzing the factors that drive consumer mobility during the initial phase of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We present a methodology to integrate risk severity perception indicators (i.e., Google Trends data) and risk susceptibility (i.e., pandemic health impact metric) in predicting consumer mobility. This framework utilizes the mobility data, which provides near-real-time information about consumer trends in specific locations, can forecast demand for particular products. Then, these forecasts can more accurately and timely inform retail inventory allocation decisions across stores and ultimately help develop better mitigation strategies for the retail industry.

PSYCHOPATHY IN PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

"Successful psychopaths" are a phenomenon that has been widely discussed, although hardly any research can explain it. Especially in law and business careers, psychopathic individuals increasingly seem to thrive. In this paper, we address the literature gap as to what skills psychopaths need in order mitigate or compensate the detrimental effects of psychopathy. Drawing on the theoretical framework of a compensatory process, we suggest that psychopathy has a contingent effect on career success. We therefore test the effects of psychopathy on several career success proxies and analyze potentially moderating psychological resources as mitigating variables. In addition, we test whether psychopathic individuals might be more successful in certain professions and whether they thrive in some professions rather than others. We contribute to the body of literature by analyzing a compensatory process of psychopathy that counterbalances or overturns the detrimental effects of psychopathy, testing psychological capital (PsyCap) as a moderating, compensatory variable.

Method and Data

Given the lack of empirical evidence on psychopathy and service employees, we address this issue with a multi-study approach. We analyze three different professional contexts, in which psychopaths might be more or less likely to thrive. We gathered data from a population of 811 professional services and business executives across Western Europe. The sample includes

doctors (N=179), lawyers (N=208), corporate executives (N=212), and unemployed managers (N=212).

We operationalize success by five different subjective and objective career success variables, employing a four-study design. We measured psychological capital with four dimensions. Psychopathy was measured using the TOP measure developed by Schwarzinger and Schuler (2016).

To test the effects of psychopathy, psychological capital, as well as the interaction between the two variables on career success, we conducted a binary logistic regression as well as a moderated linear regression with different dependent variables, reflecting the different measurements of objective and subjective career success. In the models, we controlled for marital status and education. We estimate the likelihood that individuals with psychopathic traits choose different careers. To test this, we employed three different multinomial logistic regression analyses.

Summary of Findings

We find significant interaction effects of psychopathy and PsyCap for employment and the composite measure of career advancement. Hence, PsyCap buffers the negative association between psychopathy and these two success outcomes. We find no significant interaction terms of psychopathy and PsyCap on salary, life and career satisfaction. Psychopathy reduces perceptions of life satisfaction, which is not buffered by having PsyCap as a resource. PsyCap, as an independent predictor, is significant for both life and career satisfaction, playing an important role for subjective career success.

Our results indicate that psychopathic individuals tend to thrive in law careers and as

corporate executives. The results furthermore indicate that 'successful psychopaths' need to be defined carefully, as a compensatory process can be observed for only some of the career success variables. Specifically, we find that psychopathy predicts unemployment, however, if both psychopathy and the compensating resource are high, individuals tend to advance especially quickly in their careers.

Statement of Key Contributions

We find that psychopathy should not be seen as an entirely negative personality trait in employees or managers, but different professional contexts might have various tolerance thresholds for psychopathy, or at least attract people with stronger psychopathic tendencies select into certain professions (i.e., business and law), and that PsyCap can compensate certain drawbacks of psychopathy. Our research extends the marketing view on professional services to an OB perspective. Our study contributes to the service literature by investigating to what extent psychopathic individuals make a valuable contribution in certain professional services, drawing on a large professional sample of high-profile jobs, measuring success with various indicators.

Keywords: *Psychopathy, professional services, career success, career satisfaction, psychological capital.*

JEL Classification: L20, L84, M20, M51.

RECONCEIVING CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE: THE CASE OF AMAZON EXPLORE

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Keywords: Amazon, Explore, Tourism, Hospitality, Experience

Description: This exploratory qualitative study examines the ambivalent effects of Amazon Explore concurrently with the Covid-19 pandemic on the hospitality and tourism industries.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

The Covid-19 pandemic affected the DNA of hospitality as the pandemic emphasized on the necessity of using intelligent services in both the demand and supply frameworks of the industry (Hao *et al*., 2020). Building on the needs and the change in consumer behavior particularly in the tourism and travel industries during the Covid-19 pandemic, Amazon launched "Amazon Explore", an interactive livestreaming service that connects users with hosts from all over the world, enabling them to explore anything from lessons to landmarks while sitting at home.

This study examines the ambivalent effects of Amazon Explore concurrently with the Covid-19 pandemic on the hospitality and tourism industries. The paper argues that Amazon Explore can either compete or complement the hospitality industry, depending on the way it is used. To the best of the researchers' knowledge, no other study has yet tackled the mass-customized virtual experience provided by this innovative disruption. Accordingly, the aim of this study is to examine the effect of Covid-19 on both the hospitality and marketing industries, as well as the role of Amazon Explore in supporting or disrupting these industries during the pandemic that hit the world.

Method and Data

Taking the case of Amazon Explore, this study investigates how Covid-19 accelerated the growth in virtual touristic experiences. Accordingly, an exploratory qualitative approach was adopted,

using two different data sources: expert interviews and online reviews collected on Amazon Explore from the U.S. Web site of Amazon.com.

First, interviews were conducted with experts in two different fields: hospitality and travel and touring agencies. The interviews were based on open-ended questions stirring up the in-depth discussion with a total of 18 professionals. The interviewed experts had an average of 9 years of experience in their particular fields. The interviews that were conducted lasted around 45 minutes each. All interviews were audio-recorded upon interviewees' consent, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed using NVIVO 12 in order to extract emanating themes.

The second source of data was customers' reviews on Amazon Explore. Two hundred and ninety-two reviews related to Amazon Explore (since its launch in September 2020 till March 2021) were extracted from the American website Amazon.com. The collected reviews were thoroughly analyzed in order to extract common themes. In total, 9 different themes were extracted from the online reviews, of which 4 were in common with the themes of the experts' interviews. Both sources of data, whether collected from the in-depth interviews or the customer reviews, were analyzed through inductive thematic analysis.

Summary of Findings

Three major themes were extracted from the experts' interviews and the online reviews. The following themes revolve around the replication of real-life touristic experiences. The data also revealed that while some customers are experience-bound, others are more output-oriented. As such, the three major themes came as follows: (1) *replica of real-life touristic experiences*, (2) *experience-bound versus output-oriented customers*, (3) *post-virtual experience effect*.

While customers through their posted reviews revealed their appreciation of the high level of interaction and the sensory experience that they have been exposed to, professionals in the tourism industry (traditional/non-virtual) were skeptical about this new trend due to the potential drawbacks resulting from the lack of human interaction as well as the diminished sensory experience. The guided tours and the different types of experiences were all said to be based on an active engagement and two-way interaction between users and the expert guiding the experience.

The findings differentiated between two categories of customers who are interested in booking an Amazon Explore experience, namely experience-oriented or output-oriented customers. Experience-oriented customers are those who seek the experience itself and would want to explore and encounter the real experience. On the other hand, output-oriented customers have set objectives behind the experience they seek in as much as they care about being exposed to a certain culture and its history or acquiring a new skill such as baking bagels or making a Mexican cocktail.

According to the findings, Amazon Explore could be a great tool to promote different worldwide destinations. Indeed, virtual traveling allows people to discover landmarks and the nature of a country that they might have never visited. However, at the end of the virtual visit, most online reviews revealed customers' enthusiasm to visit the destination physically. Therefore, Amazon Explore could assist the hospitality industry in encouraging virtual tourists to visit the actual destination based on their favorable virtual experience.

Key contributions

The crisis that the tourism industry faced was the result of its inability to acknowledge and adapt to the new demands of the highly-conscious and experienced market of the twenty-first century.

Indeed, Covid-19 has caused a more significant transition in relation to shifting consumer preferences. As a result, the demand for customized tours and personalized experiences has been on the rise. The most relevant and proper way to serve the needs of customers is through an interactive customized and individualized approach. In addition, people are gradually becoming experience-driven travelers, searching for personalized and streamlined services.

This study highlighted the technological capabilities put into application in the design of Amazon Explore to provide synchronous customized and personalized experiences. This neo experience has being acclaimed mainly by customers as it provided them with a near-reality ‘trip’ from the comfort of their homes. Nonetheless, Amazon Explore gave rise to a polemic amongst industry professionals who perceived it as a substitute rather than a potential that could benefit their sector in the long-term. This study has shown how Explore is reinventing the tourism industry, and how such an Omni-customer experience could reap exceptional gains across the whole industry.

References are available upon request.

SMALL PRICE CHANGES OVER BUSINESS CYCLES

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Keywords: asymmetric pricing, small price changes, price rigidity, rational inattention, business cycle, dynamic pricing

Description: We investigate how business cycles affect a particular pricing behavior of retailers – asymmetric pricing in the small or APIS - where small price increases systematically outnumber (or are outnumbered by) small price decreases, and where such asymmetry disappears at the larger end of the price change spectrum.

Acknowledgment: The empirical results in this paper are the researchers' own analyses calculated (or derived) based in part on data from Nielsen Consumer LLC and marketing databases provided through the NielsenIQ Datasets at the Kilts Center for Marketing Data Center at The University of Chicago Booth School of Business. The conclusions drawn from the NielsenIQ data are those of the researcher(s) and do not reflect the views of Nielsen. Nielsen is not responsible for, had no role in, and was not involved in analyzing and preparing the results reported herein.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

In this paper, we investigate how business cycles affect a particular pricing behavior of retailers – asymmetric pricing in the small or APIS - where small price increases dominate small price decreases (and the corresponding reverse phenomenon APIS-R), with such asymmetry disappearing at the larger end of the price change spectrum. APIS and APIS-R practices have significant implications for retailers because they present opportunities for retailers to turn their dynamic pricing capabilities into profit. Although there are emerging explanations of these practices (see Chen et al. 2008 and Chakraborty et al. 2015), the literature explaining variation of APIS and APIS-R cross-sectionally and longitudinally is still in its early stages. While there is a literature on how business cycles impact customer attitudes and behavior, studies of their impact on retailers' pricing practices are scarce. On the other hand, the dynamic pricing literature on small price changes has largely ignored the impact of business cycles. This is an important gap in our understanding of how individual retail pricing decisions affect the economy. Thus, our research questions are: How does business cycles, measured by unemployment and recession, affect asymmetric pricing in the small, by retailers? Are these pricing patterns purely artifacts of inflation?

Method and Data

Our study uses part of the Kilts-Nielsen Retail Scanner (KNRS) dataset, a panel of weekly prices at the SKU level for around 35,000 US retail stores. The data covers a 19-month recession period, from December 2007 to June 2009, which allows us to

investigate the possible effects of business cycles. We use "asymmetry threshold" as a measurement of the magnitude of asymmetry. We define the asymmetry threshold as the magnitude of price change below which asymmetric pricing is statistically supported. We conduct both descriptive analyses and regression analyses to test the effects of business cycle on consumer attention reflected by APIS threshold. We first compare the extent of asymmetry during the recession and expansion periods descriptively, as we have clearly defined business cycle periods in our data. We then analyse the data by two sets of econometrics models: dynamic panel models and panel logit models, in order to isolate the effects of unemployment from other time varying factors (e.g., inflation) more robustly. All models are estimated with fixed-effect at both group-month level and retailer-month level to control for time-invariant group-wise or retailer-wise fixed effects that influence asymmetry patterns. Two separate samples are created accordingly at each level of measurement.

Summary of Findings

We find that APIS is stronger and more frequent during economic booms when unemployment rate is low, and APIS-R become stronger and more frequent during economic downturn when unemployment is high. We find strong support evidenced in the difference in average asymmetry thresholds across high unemployment and low unemployment periods, as well as in our dynamic panel and probit model estimations across both group and retailer level. A series of additional analyses support the robustness of the results. The Rational Inattention theory provides an explanation of these results - consumers rationally change their attention to prices over the business

cycle, providing profit seeking retailer incentives to adjust their pricing patterns. Our results hold even when we control for other possible explanations like inflation.

Key Contributions

First, to the best of our knowledge, our paper is the first to document the longitudinal variations of APIS and APIS-R patterns across the business cycle. Thus, our contributes to the asymmetric pricing literature. Second, our paper contributes to the small price change literature by relating consumer's rational inattention (RI) and the retailer's strategic obfuscation (SO) incentives, to the observed temporal variation in retail pricing, in predictable ways. It is the first study to empirically test whether RI and SO, apply to a much broader context with an economy wide dataset. In addition, it contributes to marketing strategy literature by revealing how marketers leverage small price changes in response to business cycles. Last but not least, it contributes to marketing practitioners by helping them make the most relevant pricing decisions, with considerations of external environment factors such as economic recession, unemployment, and inflation.

THE EFFECT OF NETWORK EXTERNALITY AND AUTONOMY ON EXPERIENCE QUALITY AND CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT THROUGH AUGMENTED REALITY ON INDIVIDUAL AND SHARED CONSUMPTION PURCHASES: THE MODERATING ROLE OF CO-CREATION INTENTIONS.

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Keywords: Augmented reality, autonomy, network externality, quality experiences, co-creation, customer engagement.

Description: This study investigates the impact of autonomous interactions through AR, and network externality on customer perceptions of experience quality and on the outcomes of customer engagement and co-creation.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Experience quality is an essential part of value co-creation in that they are the basis of value creation (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004) through their ability to assist customers in assigning subjective value towards objects, people, or events (Bjork & Sfandla, 2009). While much of the extant literature on experience quality have looked at this concept through a tourism lens (Chen & Chen, 2010; Cole & Scott, 2004), it is a priority to marketers to understand the role of experiences within the omnichannel customer journey and in the value creation process by exploring the role

of technology within customer experiences (Marketing Science Institute, 2018). Consequently, it is increasingly relevant to investigate the impact of customer engagement through on the co-creation process (Prentice et al., 2019).

The limited research drivers of co-creation (Pham et al., 2019) and more specifically, the role of autonomous technology interactions on the co-creation process has motivated this paper, which aims to answer the following question:

What is the impact of autonomous interactions generated through AR, and network externality on customer perceptions of experience quality, customer engagement and co-creation?

Method And Data

To test the model, an online survey was used to collect data. Participants were divided into two groups with one group downloading and using the 'IKEA PLACE' application, and the other group downloading and using the 'WannaKicks' application. The applications allow participants to view 3D models of the products (furniture for IKEA and footwear for Wannakicks), read customer reviews, check prices, and manipulate creations/colors and share creations with others. Following the trial, participants filled out a survey. Subsequently, PLS-SEM technique was employed to assess the measurement model and test the hypothesized relationships. The analyses were performed using a two-step approach. First, research hypotheses were tested on each sample separately. Second, a multi group analysis was conducted to test the difference in research model path coefficients between the two samples.

Summary of Findings

The findings reveal that autonomy and network externality both predict customer experience evaluation for both shared and individually consumed products. Moreover, customer experience

quality was found to predict customer engagement. Co-creation intentions was found to moderate the relationship between customer experience quality and customer engagement for the shared consumption but not for the individually consumed group.

Statement of Key Contributions

The findings of this study highlight the importance of network externality and autonomy for creating quality AR experiences and heightened customer engagement. The results provide a deeper understanding for the role of co-creation within different purchase goals and situations to advance our understanding of the impact of technology within the co-creation process. The findings of this study can provide managers of for-profit and non-for-profit firms with an understanding of the drivers of customer engagement through technology. More specifically, this research identifies autonomy and network externality as key drivers of customer experience evaluation and customer engagement. The findings of this research also provide recommendations for AR development firms on whether providing mechanisms and elements for co-creation is beneficial for enhancing customer engagement or not. For instance, we found that customer engagement is heightened through co-creation intentions when a product will be shared by more than one person, and we also found that customer engagement is not affected by co-creation when the product is purchased for individual use. These findings can benefit organizations considering the development or implementation of AR technology.

"References are available upon request."

THE IMPACT OF ONLINE SHOPPERS' GENDER AND SPATIAL NEEDS ON PURCHASE DECISIONS

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Description: This study examines whether consumers' gender influences their preference for using a large screen for online shopping and purchase intentions.

ABSTRACT

The results from three studies show that men (vs. women) have a stronger preference for a large screen, which leads to more positive product attitudes, resulting in higher purchase intentions when they shop on a PC, and the effect is stronger with hedonic motivations.

Keywords: gender, online shopping, purchase intention, screen size, spatial perception

INTRODUCTION

Online retail environments have diversified greatly owing to technological advances. One of the advances is the broad range of devices that are now offered for consumers to choose from, and consumers now use more than one device to review product information online, with preferences for particular device types. Gender is an interesting factor associated with this varying device usage pattern. Multiple research reports indicate that men prefer to use personal computers (PCs) rather than mobile phones to view or purchase products online. Men tend not to shop on smaller devices; for example, only 22% of men said they shop on mobile devices frequently, whereas 40% of women said they do (First

Insight 2016). About 70% of men use a PC to visit online stores, and only 60% of women typically use PCs (Szymkowiak and Garczarek-Bąk 2018). These data imply that compared with women, men may have a stronger preference for a larger screen space when performing an online task.

Gender has been known to influence shopping behavior (Joh, Arentze, and Timmermans 2006), perceived service value (Darley and Leuthge 2019), and consumers' daily activities (Han et al. 2019). Previous studies have also reported a connection between gender and space, such as gender effects on spatial abilities (Reilly, Neumann, and Andrews 2017), wayfinding skills (Lawton and Kallai 2002), spatial orientation (Coluccia and Louse 2004), driving skills (Loeb et al. 2019), spatial perception in a video game (Ogletree and Drake 2007), and sensitivity to high-density environments (Regoeczi 2008). The size of the space influences consumer behavior (O'Guinn, Tanner, and Maeng 2015), and the density of retail space increases the perception of crowdedness and limited personal space (Knoeferle, Paus, and Vassen 2017). In online retail environments, the size of the online space is often determined by the screen size of the shoppers' devices. The literature suggests that these differences in the size of the online retail space are likely to affect consumers' online shopping behavior (Eroglu, Macheit, and Davis 2001; Machleit, Eroglu, and Mantell 2001; Knoeferle, Paus, and Vossen 2017). Screen size, which often determines the size of users' visual space, is also likely to positively influence consumers' emotional responses online (Kim and Sundar 2016; Naylor and Sanchez 2018; Xie, Zhao, and Xie 2013), as well as offline (Lombard et al. 1997, 2000; Reeves et al. 1999). Therefore, when space in online stores is limited, it may pose a constraint for consumers and disrupt their shopping experiences. However, no study has investigated the potential connection between online shoppers' gender and preference for using a large screen, which may eventually influence their purchase decisions. In this study, we investigate whether the gender of online shoppers plays an important role in their preference for a large screen, attitudes toward products, and purchase intentions.

GENDER AND SPACE

Regarding spatial sensitivity, several studies suggest negative emotional responses among men if their spatial needs are not met. Compared to women, men are more likely to be aggressive, showing withdrawal behavior when their personal space is crowded (Booth and Cowell 1976; Booth and Edwards 1976). Men also prefer to have greater control of their surroundings (Regoeczi 2008) and more broadly process directional information on a digital map than women; thus, using larger displays reduces the gender gap on their task performance (Czerwinski, Tan, and Robertson 2002). Furthermore, a recent research report (First Insight 2016), as discussed earlier, indicates that a larger proportion of PC users tend to be men, indicating that men may prefer to use a device with a larger screen (e.g., a desktop or laptop computer; a tablet) when they need to perform an online task. Thus, we propose:

H1. Men (vs. women) are likely to display a stronger preference for using a larger screen for online shopping.

GENDER CONGRUENCY, PRODUCT ATTITUDES, AND PURCHASE INTENTIONS

Gender congruency and its effects on consumer responses have been broadly researched in a number of marketing studies (e.g., Darley and Luethge 2019; Iyer et al. 2020; Mann and Liu-Thompkins 2019; Sramova and Pavelka 2019). Consumers display more positive attitudes toward commercials if they correctly convey the gender-specific characteristics of male- and female-intended products using gender-targeted images (Casado-Aranda et al. 2018). Whether customers are willing to reuse a service depends on specific attributes such as its hours of operation, or friendliness, is likely to be more or less positive depending on how the service value dimensions are designed to fit the specific gender group's needs (Darley and Luethge 2019). Moreover, when displaying products, having more space between them creates perceptions of the products as being more aesthetically pleasing and the store as being more prestigious (Sevilla and Townsend 2016), suggesting the positive role of optimized space. Thus,

when shopping online, men may have more positive attitudes toward products they view because of their spatial needs (large screen preference) if they are allowed to use their preferred screen size, and there are no other spatial disruptions (e.g., cluttered web design).

Adding excessive cognitive load to an online shopping task (e.g., a product usage situation) beyond reading product information is particularly detrimental to male consumers, resulting in negative purchase-related decisions (Mann and Liu 2019). Large screens are generally easier to use and improve task performance (Chae and Kim 2004) because the display holds more information than a smaller display (Dillon, Richardson, and McKnight 1990). A few recent studies indicate that using devices with a larger screen (e.g., larger mobile devices or PCs vs. smartphones) positively enhances consumers' emotional responses, resulting in more positive online reviews (Zhou et al. 2020) and stronger satisfaction with their online shopping (Sohn, Seegebarth, and Moritz 2017). Therefore, using a larger screen for online shopping may eventually help consumers improve their emotional responses, such as attitudes toward products, which often positively influence their purchase intentions (Indriani, Rahayu, and Hadiwidjojo 2019; Kapoor and Munjal 2017). Thus, we expect the following serial mediation effect:

H2. The level of preference for a large screen and the attitudes toward products are likely to sequentially mediate the gender effects on purchase intentions.

SHOPPING MOTIVATIONS

Consumers' hedonic and utilitarian shopping motivations tend to have a strong influence on purchase intentions and actual purchases (Iyer et al. 2020). As for gender effects, however, the literature presents mixed findings. A few studies have shown that men tend to have stronger utilitarian motivations than women. Men are less likely to be involved in impulse buying and hedonic consumption than women (Tifferet and Herstein 2012), and utilitarian motivations tend to be more apparent among men than women (Sramova and Pavelka 2019). However, some studies suggest the opposite may be true

that men find shopping tasks to be more enjoyable; men tend to use the Internet for entertainment and consider online tasks to be more pleasant than women (Papastergiou and Solomonidou 2005); conversely, females tend to be more anxious when they use the Internet for shopping (Macharia and Nyakwende 2011).

As the results on gender differences in shopping motivations are mixed, we expect that gender and shopping motivations may not have direct connections. Instead, shopping motivations may have a moderating role in the proposed gender effects. In particular, because hedonic shopping motivations are more closely associated with emotional purchase-related decisions while utilitarian motivations are known to produce more rational decisions (Klein and Melnyk 2016; Petty and Cacioppo 1986; Shiv and Fedorikhin 1999), hedonic shopping motivations are likely to positively moderate the proposed serial mediation model (H2). Thus, we propose a moderated serial mediation effect:

H3. When shopping online, men (vs. women) tend to have a stronger preference for a larger screen, which will positively influence their product attitudes, resulting in higher purchase intentions, and this serial mediation effect will be stronger with hedonic (vs. utilitarian) shopping motivations.

In investigating the hypotheses, we conducted three experimental studies. The first study was designed to find the broad baseline effects of gender and the large screen preference on consumers' overall purchase intentions (H1), and the second and third studies measured the proposed specific effects, including the serial mediation effect of the large screen preference and attitudes (H2) and the moderated serial mediation effect of shopping motivations (H3).

STUDY 1. THE EFFECT OF GENDER ON LARGE SCREEN PREFERENCE

Method

A total of 94 individuals participated in the study at a university lab in the United States (men: 50%; age: 18–24: 85%; 25–34: 15%). The study involved a one-way between-subjects design (gender: men vs. women). Participants performed a brief unrelated task on a computer and completed a paper questionnaire that measured several measures including (1) their large screen preference ($\alpha = .91$; 1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree) through four statements regarding their preference for a large screen when they shop online, which was modified based on an related experiential value scale by Mathwick, Malhotra, and Rigdon (2001); and (2) their demographic information.

Results and Discussion

Fifty percent of participants indicated that they were men or women, suggesting an equal proportion of gender. As predicted, for online shopping, men ($M = 5.48$, $SD = 1.12$) displayed stronger preferences for a larger screen than women ($M = 4.80$, $SD = 1.44$; $F(1, 92) = 6.52$, $p = .012$, $\eta_p^2 = .07$), supporting H1.

STUDY 2. GENDER AND PURCHASE INTENTIONS

Method

We recruited 154 U.S. residents (men: 49%) through paid online panels (age 18–24: 8.4%; 25–34: 39%). They were asked to review a product webpage on a PC. According to the device data, the screen size of their PCs was controlled for approximately between 14 and 22 inches, and device identifier features in Qualtrics automatically screened participants on a smartphone. After the screening process, participants were asked to review a unisex tennis racket on a webpage and answer questions on the following measures: (1) product attitudes ($\alpha = .95$), measured by averaging participants' agreement

levels regarding whether the products were "appealing," whether they felt "favorable" toward the products, and "good" about the product options (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree) which were modified based on the existing product attitude scale (Burton, Netemeyer, and Judith 1998); (2) purchase intentions (α = .95; 1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree) measured by averaging responses to four statements that we modified based on Stafford's purchase intention scale (Stafford 1998; Stafford et al., 2002); (3) large-screen preference, measured by the four statements used in Study 1 (α = .95; 1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree); (4) product familiarity for a manipulation check, measured by asking if they had an experience of using the product (1 = yes, 0 = no) and how familiar they were with the product in terms of product knowledge (1 = very unfamiliar, 7 = very familiar); and (5) basic demographic information.

Results and Discussion

Manipulation check. The proportion of men and women was similar: about 49% of participants reported their gender as men, and the rest were women. The majority of them (63%) said they had used a tennis racket, and their usage experience did not significantly differ by gender (β = .46, Wald χ^2 = 1.89, p = .17). Their product familiarity was moderately familiar among men (M = 4.62, SD = 1.76) and women (M = 4.67, SD = 1.59) and did not significantly differ by gender ($F(1, 152)$ = .03, p = .86).

Large screen preferences. Gender had a significant main effect on large screen preference. Men had stronger preference for large screens than women ($F(1, 152)$ = 5.77, p = .017, η_p^2 = .04; M_{men} = 5.87, SD_{men} = .89; M_{women} = 5.37, SD_{women} = 1.59), supporting H1.

Serial mediation effect. We used Model 6 in Hayes' PROCESS macros (Hayes 2018) with 50,000 bootstrap samples to test the proposed serial mediation effect of large screen preference (M1) and product attitudes (M2) between gender (X: 1 = men, 0 = women) and purchase intentions (Y). The indirect effect of gender on purchase intentions was statistically significant through the sequential

mediation of large screen preference and product attitudes (b = .19, 95% CI [.04, .36]). Controlling for large screen preference and product attitudes, the direct effect of gender on purchase intentions was not statistically significant (b = .35, p = .10), supporting the significant indirect effect. A separate serial mediation analysis (Model 6 with 5,000 bootstrap samples) on a reverse order of the mediators (product attitudes (M1); large screen preference (M2)) showed that the indirect effect of gender on purchase intentions was not statistically significant (95% CI [-.04, .01]), confirming that the proposed serial mediation path is correct. Thus, H2 is supported.

The results suggest that men's large screen preference plays a positive role in their emotional responses toward products (product attitudes), which then eventually increases purchase intentions; thus, the indirect effect of gender on purchase intentions is confirmed.

STUDY 3. GENDER AND SHOPPING MOTIVATION

Method

We used the 2 (gender: men vs. women) x 2 (shopping motivation: hedonic vs. utilitarian) between-subjects design. A total of 242 U.S. residents (men: 47%) participated in the study through Qualtrics and Prolific panels (age: 18–24: .4%; 25–34: 30%). Participants were randomly assigned to a hedonic or utilitarian motivation group, in which they were asked to imagine a different shopping occasion (buying a decorative pillow for a new home vs. work) and reviewed a product website. After reviewing the product information, they answered the *same* questions used in Study 2 (except for the newly added measure on shopping task evaluation) regarding: 1) large screen preference (α = .95); 2) product attitudes (α = .94); 3) purchase intentions toward the product (α = .94;); 4) product familiarity; 5) perceptions of the assigned shopping task (α = .83) measured by averaging responses to two statements on how optimistic and excited they felt; and 6) basic demographic information.

Results and Discussion

Manipulation check. The proportion of gender groups was similar to that of Study 2; about 47% of participants reported their gender as men. About 58% of the participants indicated that they had previously used a decorative pillow, and this product usage proportion did not significantly differ by gender (β = -.26, Wald χ^2 = 1.01, p= .32). Product familiarity level also did not significantly differ between men (M = 5.10, SD = 1.55) and women (M = 4.79, SD = 1.39; $F(1, 240) = 2.70$, p = .10). The shopping motivation manipulation also performed successfully; participants in the hedonic group perceived the task to be felt more optimistic ($M_{hedonic}$ = 5.51, $SD_{hedonic}$= 1.27; $M_{utilitarian}$ = 5.15, $SD_{utilitarian}$ = 1.48; $F(1, 240) = 4.07$, p = .045) and felt more excited ($M_{hedonic}$ = 5.37, $SD_{hedonic}$= 1.36; $M_{utilitarian}$ = 4.83, $SD_{utilitarian}$ = 1.47; $F(1, 240) = 8.69$, p = .004).

Large screen preferences. As in Study 2, men showed stronger preferences for a large screen ($F(1, 238) = 7.68$, p = .006, η_p^2=.03; M_{men} = 5.94, SD_{men} = 1.08; M_{women} = 5.50, SD_{women} = 1.39), supporting H1. The interaction effect between gender and large screen preference was not statistically significant ($F(1, 238) = .33$, p = .56).

Moderated serial mediation. We employed the PROCESS Model 87 (50,000 bootstrap samples) to test the proposed moderated serial mediation effect. As in the previous study, the serial mediation effect of large screen preference (M1) and product attitudes (M2) between gender (X: 1 = men; 0 = women) and purchase intentions (Y) was significant with both shopping motivations (1 = hedonic; 0 = utilitarian; hedonic: b = .16, 95% CI [.03, .31]; utilitarian: b = .13 95% CI [.02, .25]). As proposed, the moderated serial mediation effect was also statistically significant (Index = .03, 95% CI [.002, .08]) and was stronger with hedonic shopping motivations. Controlling for the mediators M1 and M2, the direct effect of gender on purchase intentions was not significant (b = .19, p = .11), supporting the moderated serial mediation effect.

A separate moderated serial mediation analysis (Model 87 with 5,000 bootstrap samples) showed that as in Study 2, with the mediators in reverse order (M1: product attitudes; M2: large screen preference), the serial mediation of the two mediators was not statistically significant (hedonic: b = .003, 95% CI [-.02, .04]; utilitarian: b = .008, 95% CI [-.02, .04]), and the moderated serial mediation was also not significant (95% CI [-.04, .04]), suggesting that our proposed models are correct. Thus, H2 and H3 are supported.

The results support all three hypotheses. Similar to Studies 1 and 2, men were more likely to prefer a larger-screen device than were women, supporting H1. In other words, men (vs. women) are likely to have a stronger preference for a large screen, which heightens their product attitudes toward a product, resulting in higher purchase intentions, and this serial mediation effect becomes stronger with hedonic (vs. utilitarian) shopping motivations; thus, both H2 and H3 are supported.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Theoretical Contributions

The three studies provide several novel findings, demonstrating the importance of digital space in consumers' purchase-related intentions in online retail environments, particularly for male consumers. First, our findings suggest that gender has a significant effect on large screen preferences; for online shopping, men prefer to use a larger screen more than women, supporting H1. Although further exploration is necessary, the consistency of the effect introduces two implications: (1) a need for space (large screen preference) in a digital environment exists, and (2) the level of this spatial need may differ by gender (stronger among men). Second, we introduce a mechanism behind the gender effects, which may influence not only screen size preferences but also purchase intentions. In Studies 2 and 3, we found that men (vs. women) had a stronger preference for a larger screen to perform online shopping

tasks, and this stronger preference among PC users positively influenced their product attitudes, resulting in higher purchase intentions, supporting H2. Moreover, this serial mediation effect was stronger with hedonic shopping motivations, confirming H3. Finally, the findings also suggest that the literature on the connection between gender and varying spatial needs translates to digital space. Although further research is required to confirm the connection between large screen preferences and the need for space, our initial findings offer researchers potential implications and a foundation for further exploration.

Managerial Implications

The findings of this study identify the specific gender group (men) that is likely to be most affected by the given digital space when making purchase-related decisions. Between male and female consumers, men may be more sensitive to the size of the navigation space, which is often determined by the screen size of their device when they shop for products online. Online retailers and marketers can expect that their male customers' purchase intentions may decrease if they have to use a smaller device for online shopping; thus, when these businesses prepare their PC and mobile version websites and apps, they need to pay more attention to optimizing density or visual complexity of their interface design to minimize potential adverse effects of a smaller screen on male shoppers, particularly when designing a website that targets male consumers. For example, as consumers are not always able to use their most preferred device for online shopping, businesses who sell products, for which most customers are men (e.g., home DIY products or gadgets), should design their websites and apps to be more spacious and easier to navigate by maintaining a specific proportion of space between information items (e.g., images, product descriptions, and menus). In addition, as this adverse effect of a smaller space can be stronger if male customers have a hedonic shopping motivation, optimizing the digital density may be more important to businesses, who sell hedonic or leisure-related items (e.g., a new online game or golf gear).

Future Research and Limitations

Although the findings imply the possibility of varying needs for space in digital environments, our study is limited to the level of preference for a large screen size and does not directly measure the level of overall spatial needs; thus, further research is needed. Studying other demographic criteria, such as age, may provide deeper insights into the current findings. Additionally, because this study was tested on an optimized web space, further research may be necessary to test whether the effects found in this study would be consistent when the spatial constraint (e.g., cluttered website) varies. Testing the proposed models in VR or AR environments may also produce interesting additional insights about gender effects and large screen preferences.

In comparison to research on brick-and-mortar stores, the role of gender in digital spatial experiences has been understudied. Specifically, no study has examined consumers' preferred devices, which are their main *channel* for accessing a website and determine the size of the navigation space. In this study, we reported several meaningful findings, including the impact of gender on large screen preference, as well as the consistent serial mediation effects of large screen preference between gender and purchase intentions, which was moderated by shopping motivation. These findings serve as a foundation for the further exploration of related topics.

References are available upon request.

THE INFLUENCE OF AUGMENTED REALITY ACROSS THE CUSTOMER DECISION JOURNEY

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Keywords: Augmented reality, vividness theory, customer decision journey, clickstream data**,** Bayesian estimation

Description: We study the differential influence of augmented reality across the customer decision journey, using clickstream data collections from an international retailer with over 600 locations in the U.S.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Augmented reality (AR) is being used across the online decision journey to help customers visualize products in their environment. For example, Amazon and IKEA have implemented AR to help customers during the purchase stage of the decision journey by allowing them to visualize products within their homes without first purchasing the product (Lunden 2017; Nast 2021; Perez 2020). Alternatively, companies like Pepsi and Walgreens have integrated AR early in the decision journey, helping communicate product and brand information (Adams 2020; Saettler 2017).

Due to its versatility, AR has been treated as a panacea; however, some have described this approach to leveraging AR as "underwhelming" and "shallow," suggesting that brands must instead consider *when* customers benefit most from using AR (Kelly 2019; Porter and Heppelmann 2017). However, existing AR research has primarily focused on AR's influence at the point of purchase. Thus, we investigate the impact of AR use at various stages of the customer decision journey to better understand *when* customers stand to benefit most from AR use. Relatedly, we investigate whether AR use is more influential for customer shopping with a mobile versus fixed device.

Method and Data

The study leverages clickstream data collected from a flooring retailer with over 600 locations in the U.S. Over 9 million page click behaviors were collected from January 1st, 2020, to May 5th, 2020 (131 days). Each page click was encoded with a customer identification code, session identification code, timestamp, device code, and URL, allowing for a precise record of

each customer's online decision journey from start to finish. After data cleaning procedures, the final sample contained 159,100 customers with 187,110 sessions and 1,357,383 page views.

The sequence of page views was analyzed using a probit two-level random intercept model to account for session-level heterogeneity. Furthermore, a Bayesian estimation process was used for significance testing and to provide credibility intervals.

Summary of Findings

In general, customers who use AR while shopping online are more likely to purchase those who do not use AR. A Bayesian estimation process provides credibility intervals which suggest that customers who use AR when visiting an online retailer increase conversion likelihood during that visit by 81% on the low end and 126% on the high end. Interestingly, this effect diminishes as customers progress through their decision journey; with each page a customer views before using AR, the likelihood of making a purchase decreases by approximately 3%. These results were consistent across devices, suggesting that whether customers use AR on a mobile or a fixed device is not a factor of its influence on conversion. Overall, the results indicate that while AR use positively influences conversion likelihood, this positive effect is more substantial when used earlier in the decision journey.

Statement of Key Contributions

This research provides empirical evidence for the influence of AR use in an online environment, explicitly quantifying the potential gains that can be observed from AR use in a single session. Furthermore, although the effects are constant across devices, this research provides evidence that the influence of AR use is not consistent across the decision journey.

Customers are most influenced by AR when used early in their decision journey. This finding is significant for two reasons. First, much of the prior AR research has focused on AR's benefits later in the decision journey during the purchase stage; however, this study suggests that AR use later in the decision journey is less effective than early use. Second, this research is instructive for retailers trying to determine *when* to emphasize AR use. Because AR use is more influential for customers in the early stages of their decision journey, retailers should invest in AR technologies that afford customers a unique way to engage with more general brand or product information.

*Note: References are available upon request.

The Role of the Frontline Employee in Technology-Based Service Encounters

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Keywords: Technology-Based Service Encounters, Frontline Employee, Social Presence, Physical PoS

Description: This paper focuses on customers' perception of the frontline employee in technology-based service encounters.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question. In recent years, more and more AR and VR-oriented service offers have been integrated into the physical PoS. In the course of technology integration at the physical PoS, the role of sales staff is changing, which raises the question of how the inclusion of human advisors will look on an ever more digital sales floor and whether interaction with the human advisor is still necessary or desirable at all. In general, customers are becoming more and more routinized in their use of digital services. This is not only true for the online shopping environment, but also in dealing with technologies in physical retail. Although the impact of technology on retail services has been widely studied, there is a lack of studies on the customer's perception of the presence of a frontline staff employee in a technology-based retail service. In summary, this essay addresses the research question, to what extent it is advisable for the frontline employee that a customer at the point of sale (PoS) uses an innovative technology alone and when the frontline employee accepts or even wants it as a supporting element within this technology-based service is?

Method and Data. Using an online survey (N=124), we employ the social presence theory in order to evaluate the effect of a frontline employee in a technology-based service encounter at the physical PoS.

Summary of Findings. We identified the presence of a frontline employee decreasing the expected information quality within the service, however, as well customers´ privacy concerns related to retailers' data-handling practices. This leads to an ambivalent attitude, in which customers seem to prefer technology-solo service in terms of "seeking and receiving" of information, but appreciate the presence of a frontline employee regarding retailers' potential "gathering and handling" of information. Furthermore, results showed a mediation of discomfort regarding the service on the first and of customers' perceived social presence within the service on the second. Moreover, findings of this research deliver opportunities for future research and lead to management implications. In fact it seems,

that it is still the role of the frontline employee, including big opportunities to enhance/hinder a current (technology/infused) service encounter.

Statement of Key Contributions. Findings of this research deliver opportunities for future research and lead to important management implications. Even though, customers seem to perceive information as less qualitatively when being additionally supported by a frontline employee, suggesting rather a "leaving alone"-strategy, retailers' seem to have an "door-opener" with regard to reduce customers' privacy concerns related to retailers' data-handling practices. It is still the role of the frontline employee, including big opportunities to enhance/hinder a current (technology/infused) service encounter.
In detail, as results show an ambivalent behavior with regard to customers' perception and reaction when it comes either to customers' focus on "seeking and receiving" of information nor the retailers' potential on "gathering and handling" of information in technology-based services, the presence of a frontline employee seems to influence the entire service encounter strongly. In fact, the (social) presence of a frontline employee lowers customers' concerns, giving the frontline service the opportunity to show and prove its relevance and (re)builds an efficient form of customer relationship. It is necessary to hold customers' concerns on a decent level, as too many concerns on using the technology-based service might lead to a termination of this relation, nonetheless, too less concerns could cause or increase customers' intention to see no necessity of the frontline employee and thereby maybe of the entire physical service as a whole. The result would be a restructuring of brick-and-mortar services (best case) or an irreversible change of inner-city shopping possibilities (worst case). In consequence, the role of frontline needs to change, not in terms of totally "adaption" towards the technological changes, but with regard to be more sensitive on customers' feelings, desires and concerns within a physical service encounter. These competences need more focus in training of frontline employees from retailers' side in future.

THE ROLE OF THE HEDONIST, THE INFLUENCER AND THE LOCAL CHAMPION IN THE RESURRECTION OF THE REGIONAL MALL

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Keywords: professional service providers, brand trust, sustainability, corporate social responsibility

Description: The purpose of this study is to determine how trust in sustainable brands is built in the mind of unaffiliated professional service providers.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

The struggle of regional malls and the individual retailers that once occupied prime spaces in these shopping centers is well-documented. It is conjectured that the COVID-19 pandemic hastened the problems that already faced these retailers (Felsted, 2020). Nevertheless, traditional brick and mortar retail plays a critical role in local economies as 34.8 million jobs are directly supported by retail real estate. This article examines mall shoppers' propensity to engage in positive word-of-mouth (PWOM) about the mall and to increase their spending at the mall as a function of a disparate set of predictors including the enjoyment of the mall shopping experience, a belief in the importance of the mall to the local economy, and a willingness to pay more for

products sold at locally owned businesses. The assumptions are that a high level of hedonism, a sense of the economic importance of the local shopping center to the community, and a sense of local devotion will increase shopping center revenue and foster PWOM. A complementary focus of this article is to explore whether a customer's willingness to pay more for goods sold by local retailers will translate into an increased share of wallet for mall tenants.

Method and Data

A total of 410 shoppers were surveyed using a mall intercept technique. It was hypothesized that the perception of importance of the mall in the community (Mall_Importance) would have a positive impact on both the enjoyment experienced at the mall (H1: Hedonism) and the willingness to pay more to support local stores (H2: PayMore). To test these hypotheses, Mall_Importance was dichotomized. H1 was supported since respondents classified as Mall_Importance $_{High}$ displayed significantly higher levels of Hedonism (M = 3.10, SD = .90) than shoppers categorized as Mall_Importance $_{Low}$ (M = 2.64, SD = .78); t (406) = 5.44, p < .000. H2 was also supported as customers characterized as Mall_Importance $_{High}$ reported a significantly higher willingness to PayMore (M = 4.01, SD = .72) than Mall_Importance $_{Low}$ (M = 3.56, SD = .70); t (406) = 6.40, p < .000. H3 was supported since, customers categorized as Hedonism $_{High}$ spent a significantly higher share of their wallet than their counterparts described as Hedonism $_{Low}$ in all spending categories measured. Results further determined that a perception that stores are locally owned increased mall tenants' share of wallet and that the share of wallet/PWOM relationship was positively moderated for self-ascribed opinion leaders.

Summary of Findings

The findings of this study suggest that malls will be rewarded with increased business if they are able to provide an enjoyable shopping experience to key constituents. Critically, opinion

leaders must have a positive opinion about the mall or risk these influencers will direct their followers away from the mall. Therefore, malls must provide a shopping experience that compels opinion leaders to spread PWOM throughout their expansive networks of other potential customers. In crafting a marketing communications strategy, malls should seek to educate customers on the local ownership aspect of their shopping centers. The International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC, n.d.) reports that about 50% of all mall tenants are locally owned businesses and that particularly proactive malls are aggressively seeking local entrepreneurs to fill their spaces (Gustafson, 2018). If properly marketed, this strategy is poised to harness the power of customers' penchant to support small businesses in their communities and provide a much needed boost to regional malls. The goal is to create a PWOM surge that leverages opinion leaders, appeals to local champions, and creates a hedonic shopping experience that cannot be ignored.

Statement of Key Contributions

This research investigates three archetypes of customers (hedonist, local champion, and influencer) and explores ways those three shopper characteristics can help the regional mall enhance its presence in the local community. This study also seeks to determine whether the perception of the economic importance of a mall in the regional economy can promote a sense of enjoyment in the shopping experience. In addition, the study extends the understanding of the role of hedonism by examining the actual spending habits of customers of regional malls and advances the measurement precision from purchase intentions to real behavior.

Our findings have broad implications that suggest that a blend of individual and co-marketing efforts is necessary to bring customers back to the mall after the COVID-19 crisis ends. We contend that such an effort between the mall and its tenants is imperative. Mall

management should stress the importance of shopping locally and pride in local ownership. This stands to not only increase sales, but also to increase PWOM that is further intensified via opinion leaders. Individual stores should accentuate their unique atmosphere, services such as consulting *in situ*, local ownership, homegrown roots, and other excitement generating experiences for the shopper.

THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

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Keywords: Customer satisfaction, unemployment, employee wages, services marketing

Description: The unemployment rate has a positive effect on customer satisfaction (likely due to firms' abilities to hire better personnel when the unemployment rate climbs); this effect is negatively moderated by a firms' wage level.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

In many service industries, the skills and motivation of frontline employees are a key lever for customer satisfaction (Sousa et al., 2012). This notion points to a potentially severe issue in managing customer satisfaction that prior literature has entirely neglected: the labor market, which determines a firm's ability to hire skilled and motivated talent (Shi, Sridhar, Grewal, & Lilien, 2017). When labor markets are loose (high unemployment), replacing a leaving frontline employee is easy, which might help a firm safeguard customer satisfaction. Conversely, when labor markets are tight (low unemployment), firms may encounter difficulties while hiring the talent that is required for satisfying customers. In this case, it might be particularly important for a firm to be considered an attractive employer—for example by offering competitive wages. This might allow the firm to compete for the scarce labor resource more successfully.

We seek to better understand the unemployment rate–customer satisfaction relationship. To this end, we pose the following research questions: *(1) Does the unemployment rate affect the average customer satisfaction ratings at service firms?* And *(2) Can wages explain differences in customer satisfaction under conditions of low and high unemployment?*

Method and Data

We scraped customer satisfaction data in the fast-food industry from Yelp. We also collected publicly available data on unemployment rates from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). We use the most granular estimate of unemployment available, which is the metropolitan statistical area (MSA)-month level.

We operationalize wage in two ways. First, we scraped estimates of hourly wages from Glassdoor. Second, we use changes in minimum wage laws at the state level as an exogenous wage shock. Changes in minimum wage are likely to directly affect fast-food employees (Card & Krueger, 1994; Harasztosi & Lindner, 2019).

We estimate the effect of unemployment on customer satisfaction, moderated by (a) wage from Glassdoor; or (b) the exogenous change in minimum wage. For the latter, we use a difference-in-differences setup (Boichuk, Bommaraju, Ahearne, Kraus, & Steenburgh, 2019), capitalizing on the fact that several MSA-level labor markets span multiple states, each having distinct policies on the minimum wage. By analyzing MSAs which are split by a state border and experienced an increase of minimum wage on one side of the border but not on the other, we study the impact of minimum wage changes on the unemployment–customer satisfaction linkage at fast-food firms.

Summary of Findings

The share of unemployed workers has a positive effect on customer satisfaction. We attribute this finding to firms' abilities to hire better personnel when the unemployment rate climbs, which results in improved customer satisfaction and service. This effect is moderated by the hourly wage (Glassdoor data): in tight labor markets (low unemployment rate), we find that paying a higher wage relative to other firms in an MSA results in significantly higher customer satisfaction; however, this effect diminishes as the unemployment rate rises. We also find that an exogenous wage shock negatively interacts with the unemployment rate leading to lower customer satisfaction. In other words, at high rates of unemployment an increase in the minimum

wage decreases customer satisfaction. Conversely, at low rates of unemployment an increase in the minimum wage tends to increase customer satisfaction.

Statement of Key Contributions

Our first major contribution is establishing labor supply as a key antecedent of customer satisfaction. Prior literature focused on firm-related drivers (e.g., product quality; Aigbedo & Parameswaran, 2004) and customer-related drivers (e.g., expectations; Anderson, 1973). We find that economic conditions also play an important role in customer satisfaction formation through the labor supply available to a given firm. As unemployment rates rise, labor supply expands and thus firms can hire more talented employees from the market.

Second, we contribute to the literature on managing customer satisfaction by examining the moderating role of wage offered by employers. We demonstrate that wage acts as a crucial lever through its interaction with labor supply. Our empirical findings provide guidance to managers on how wages for new employees should be adjusted, in consideration of labor market conditions, so that desired customer satisfaction levels can be achieved.

References are available upon request.

THE VOICES WE HEAR – GENDER AND VOICE IN TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTANCE OF DIGITAL VOICE ASSISTANTS

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Keywords: Digital Voice Assistant, Gender, Technology Acceptance, Voice

Description: Based on a 2 x 2 experimental design and self-reported survey, the present study answers whether consumers perceive female- and male-voiced digital assistants differently for purpose of digital shopping.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Beyond daily tasks, digital voice assistants provide commercial services, such as product purchases. The impetus of this study is to study to which extent consumers are already willing to accept digital voice assistants for the shopping process. Specifically, this study focuses on the interdependence of consumer gender and the voice of such digital assistants on the acceptance of an online purchase. As previous research suggests that consumers' perceptions of vocal cues can lead to gender stereotyping, this study consequently analyzes whether consumers perceive female- and male-voiced digital assistants differently for purpose of digital shopping.

Method and Data

To answer the research question, the study employed a 2 x 2 experimental design. Based on the participants' self-selection of gender, the participants are randomly assigned to either the female- or male-voice group. Participants then listened to an audio file with the option to rerun the file on every page of the subsequent online questionnaire. Following a snowball principle, we retrieved a total sample of 235 usable questionnaires. Through the random assignment, 62 men are grouped in the female-voice scenario and 64 men in the male-voice scenario. In 55 cases, women listened to the female voice, whereas 54 women listened to the male voice.

Summary of Findings

Whereas the empirical results indicate no significant differences across the voice of the digital assistant, men and women perceive female and male voices of such systems differently. Specifically, in the male-voiced scenario, external variables, such as previous experience, are more important for women than for men. In the case of the female voice, perceived usefulness has a higher effect on the behavioral intention for men than for women, whereas women's attitude is more relevant than men's attitude on behavioral intention. Depending on their target groups, companies consequently need to establish the necessary support regarding digital voice assistants depending on consumers' gender.

Key Contribution

The present study answers the research call on the social experience of artificial intelligence, particularly related to gender relations. Framing consumers' gender and voice of digital assistants in the established technology acceptance model, this study contributes to the understanding from which side of the communication perceived differences arise and how these differences shape consumers' acceptance of and intention to use digital voice assistants for shopping purposes. Specifically, the empirical findings indicate that consumers' gender creates perceptional differences in this scenario. Thus, consumers attribute gender stereotypes in this scenario towards the voice of digital assistants. For example, female-voiced digital

assistants create a higher dependence of perceived usefulness for men, whereas women show a higher relevance of their attitude towards shopping via digital voice assistants. The findings are relevant for companies, both providing these systems and utilizing these systems as mediators for shopping purposes. Moreover, the results are relevant for governmental agencies and policymakers as consumers attribute gender stereotypes based on vocal cues, potentially strengthening unwanted perceptions. Not only do digital voice assistants impact these micro, meso, and macro levels directly through the intuitive verbal usage, these systems also shape markets and society of the future.

WHAT ABOUT RELATIONAL MODEL? THE EFFECT OF RELATIONAL MODEL APPEALS ON SHOWROOMING INTENTIONS.

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Keywords: Showrooming, relational model appeals, preventive strategies

Description: In this research, we provide evidence for the impact of consumers' relational models and of appeals which are based on these relational models on consumers' showrooming decisions with a series of experimental examinations.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Due to forgone profits, competitive showrooming of consumers (i.e., consumers purposefully switching from offline to online channels of competing retailers) is harmful for physical retailers. Consistent with current research, which identifies economic showrooming benefits (i.e., lower online prices) as the key determinant of showrooming, current preventive strategies focus mainly on a single cognitive model consumers consider in their showrooming decision (i.e., meeting lower online prices to offset the perceived economic benefits of showrooming). Such strategies are cost-intensive and detrimental to retailers' margins. Their applicability is further restricted due to various aspects (e.g., different cost structures of

retailers that make higher offline prices reasonable). Therefore, alternative, less cost-intensive strategies to prevent competitive showrooming are important for retailers operating an offline channel.

Consequently, we create novel insights to decrease the detrimental effect of higher prices in physical retail stores and thereby respond to recent research calls on this topic. We first develop a comprehensive understanding of which cognitive models consumers consider during their showrooming decision in retail interactions to derive respective preventive strategies (i.e., relational model appeals).

Method and Data

A considerable amount of empirical research on social interactions has confirmed and replicated the structural postulates of Fiske's (1992) Relational Models Theory. Though prior research shows that consumers use relational models in commercial situations, such as purchase setting decisions and Fiske specifically demonstrated the relevance of his framework to retailer–consumer interactions, marketing research has not yet studied its moderating role in the relationship between showrooming benefits and a consumer's showrooming decision. To address our research questions, we draw on Relational Models Theory, which posits that there are four relational models (i.e., market pricing, equality matching, communal sharing, authority ranking) governing social interactions. Fundamentally, the relational models are not merely cognitive capacities but are intrinsically motivating and represent alternative ways of understanding and coordinating social interactions. To achieve our research goals, we conduct a series of randomized between-subjects online experiments with non-student samples.

Summary of Findings

In various studies, this research provides evidence for the moderating role of which relational model consumers hold as well as of appeals which are based on these relational

models. In particular, in Study 1 we show that higher showrooming benefits increase consumers' showrooming intentions. Further, we show that higher scores on the equality matching, communal sharing, and authority ranking relational model attenuate the positive effect of showrooming benefits on consumers' showrooming intentions. In a second study, we replicated these first findings and draw stronger causal inferences by experimentally manipulating the relational models. In Study 3, we show that implementing strategies that are based on relational models (i.e., relational model appeals) can attenuate the effect of showrooming benefits on consumers' showrooming intentions. Specifically, we show that the impact of showrooming benefits on the showrooming decision is attenuated by retailers' relational model appeals. In several further studies, we show the robustness of these results and examine contextual factors that impact the effectiveness of the relational model appeals.

Statement of Key Contributions

Overall, for academic readers, this research contributes to retailing and showrooming literature by introducing consumers' inherent relational models as well as relational models appeals of physical retailers as novel boundary conditions of the economic showrooming benefit-showrooming intention relationship. Furthermore, this research also explicates contextual boundary conditions of the effectiveness of specific relational model appeals. For retailing practice, this study is relevant as it provides practitioners with actionable tactics to prevent consumers' competitive showrooming.

References are available upon request.

Sales Management and Personal Selling

A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR SALESPERSON SOCIALIZATION

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Keywords: salesperson socialization, organizational socialization tactics, salesperson proactivity, salesperson reciprocity, organizational insiders

Description: The paper proposes an integrated theoretical framework that indicates the contributing factors that may successfully drive the socialization of the salesperson.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question –

Employing organizational socialization theories and organizational behavior literature as the foundation, we develop an integrated theoretical framework that indicates the effect of various factors on salesperson socialization. Specifically, we define salesperson socialization, identify its components, and suggest the contributing factors that may successfully drive the socialization of the new salespeople.

Summary of Findings –

We propose that efficient newcomer salesperson socialization requires the combined contributions of different socializing. We define salesperson socialization as the process by which salespeople acquire the necessary social knowledge and skills to perform their role and

function effectively in their new social and organizational environment. After joining an organization, salespeople are faced with resolving the demands of their new roles, mastering the tasks assigned to them, and making social adjustments. Through socialization, salespersons adjust to the new or changing role within the organization. We suggest that role demand resolution, task mastery, and social adjustment reflect the socialization of the newcomer salesperson. We propose that organizational socialization tactics, salesperson characteristics, and organizational insiders affect the socialization of newcomer salespersons. Specifically, we argue that salesperson proactivity and salesperson reciprocity are crucial antecedents of salesperson socialization. We also suggest that organizational culture and overall justice climate moderates the relationship between organizational insiders' support and salesperson socialization. We also outline how organizations may mitigate challenges and improve performance by creating an environment that helps in the effective socialization and adaptation of new salespeople to the new organization.

Key Contributions –

Our paper makes contributions that are relevant to both academics and practitioners. We contribute theoretically by introducing a framework for salesperson socialization, which is rarely discussed in the existing marketing literature. Newcomer salesperson socialization requires the combined contributions of different socializing forces. Since the sales job is challenging and complex, we suggest that organizations focus on effective new sales personals socialization to improve their performance. In terms of practical relevance, we suggest that companies need to understand that salesperson socialization is not about a simple orientation program; instead, organizations should consider the holistic social integration of new salespeople during the socialization process. We believe that the sales manager and the sales team members can also

extend their supporting hands and help in the socialization process. Their support can help the new salesperson build informal network ties and acquire knowledge about the organization. Organizations can provide guidelines and resources to sales managers and team members to assist in new salesperson socialization. We also emphasize that newcomer salespeople put personal efforts to get socialized in the new company. Our study has implications for organizations by emphasizing that effective newcomer salesperson socialization can lead to better results in the future.

“References are available upon request.”

A LONGITUDINAL EXAMINATION OF SALESPERSON BURNOUT: UNDERSTANDING THE WITHIN-PERSON BURNOUT PROCESS AND HOW IT CAN BE MANAGED

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Keywords: Within-person; burnout; emotional exhaustion; depersonalization; diminished personal accomplishment

Description: This paper examines the within-person burnout process in salespeople and how factors can mitigate the process as it evolves

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

RESEARCH QUESTION

Burnout is a serious public health problem (Shanafelt, Dyrbye, and West 2017), and one of great interest to researchers, managers, and health policy-makers (Hildenbrand, Sacramento, and Binnewies 2018). Burnout is of particular interest to professions that deal with customers. These employees regularly deal with stressful customer interactions (Lee and Ashforth 1996) and overwhelming demands (Peasley et al. 2020). Consequently, customer-facing employees such as salespeople are at an increased risk of developing burnout symptoms (Rutherford, Hamwi, Friend, and Hartmann 2011).

The present study provides the first empirical evidence of the within-person burnout process in salespeople. We then extend burnout theory to incorporate an understanding of influencers of the burnout sequence at the different stages. Specifically, this research examines moderating mechanisms (in the form of coping style, locus of causality, and positive feedback) that sales managers can utilize at different stages of the burnout process to help mitigate future burnout symptoms. Our study is the first to provide within-person, actionable, implications regarding how to manage burnout across its development. Accordingly, the present study addresses 2 key research questions:

RQ1: What is the temporal order of the burnout process in salespeople

RQ2: How can the burnout process be mitigated as it evolves

METHOD AND DATA

Repeated-measures survey data was collected from B2B salespeople in the USA at 1-month intervals. Data was obtained from 171, 165, 117, and 81 salespeople at times 1, 2, 3, and 4,

respectively, representing attrition levels of 4%, 29%, and 31% wave to wave. In total, 47% of participants who started the study completed all questionnaires.

Self-report measures were obtained on all constructs using established scales from previous literature. Measures included emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, diminished personal accomplishment, positive feedback external locus of causality, avoidance coping style, role conflict, role ambiguity, and role overload. All scales demonstrated adequate reliabilities.

Data analysis was conducted in two phases. Firstly, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted, including establishing longitudinal measurement invariance for the burnout constructs examined over time. Then, the SPSS macro MLMED (Rockwood and Hayes 2017) was utilized for hypothesis testing. A lagged design was utilized, in that diminished personal accomplishment was observed against depersonalization 1-month later and emotional exhaustion 2-months later[1]. Longitudinal multilevel modeling using maximum likelihood estimation was conducted, with group-mean centering utilized.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The results provided mixed support for the hypotheses. For the direct relationships, no support was found. Specifically, the impact of increases of diminished personal accomplishment on emotional exhaustion 2-months later was non-significant. In addition, increases in diminished personal accomplishment are not significantly related to increases in depersonalization 1-month later. Finally, increases in depersonalization are unrelated to increases in emotional exhaustion 1-month later.

Regarding the moderation hypotheses, results show that the use of avoidance coping positively moderated the impact of increases in diminished personal accomplishment on

[1] All other potential burnout sequences were also tested, including the process discussed by Shepherd et al., (2011). No other temporal processes yielded sinificant results.

emotional exhaustion 2-months later. Individuals with greater externally-orientated locus of causality also experienced greater increases in depersonalization as a result of increases in diminished personal accomplishment 1-month previous. Finally, individuals who received more positive feedback from their supervisor demonstrated smaller increases in emotional exhaustion as a result of increases in depersonalization 1-month previous. Although the main effects are non-significant, these effects are inconsequential in the presence of significant interactions (Schielzeth 2010), and thus, despite the main effects being non-significant, this is not a concern. Accordingly, the results provide support for the proposed burnout process in salespeople. Specifically, diminished personal accomplishment is the beginning of the burnout process, followed by depersonalization, concluding with emotional exhaustions.

STATEMENT OF KEY CONTRIBUTIONS

The findings have several key theoretical contributions. Firstly, the study is the first to provide empirical evidence regarding the within-person burnout process in salespeople. Secondly, the study identifies key variables which can influence the burnout process at various stages, helping to understand how different variables can mitigate more advanced burnout symptoms.

The results provide two key practical implications. Firstly, by identifying diminished personal accomplishment as the first stage of the burnout process, salespeople demonstrating such symptoms can be identified as at risk of future burnout, and thus, organizations can look to prevent burnout from occurring at an early stage.

Secondly, the results provide actions that supervisors can take to mitigate future burnout symptoms. Specifically, by discussing their reduced personal accomplishment with their subordinates, supervisors can (1) help the subordinate to deal with the problem in an active way, preventing avoidance coping, and (2) help the subordinate to appraise the reasons for

the problem, and refocus them on understanding how they can improve their sense of personal accomplishment. Finally, when supervisors identify that their subordinate is beginning to depersonalize, they can provide them with positive feedback to buffer the reassure or inspire them, reducing increases in emotional exhaustion.

References available upon request

ANALYZING SALES PROPOSAL REJECTIONS VIA MACHINE LEARNING

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Keywords: Sales Proposal Rejections; Machine Learning; Unstructured Data; Topic Modeling; Part-of-Speech Tagging

Description: This research leverages machine learning to examine why customers say “no” to business-to-business sales proposals.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Sales organizations are responsible for implementing business and marketing directives, which account for a substantial proportion of a firm's bottom line expenditures and revenues. Accordingly, a broad field of research has been developed focusing on how and why sales organizations "get to yes" with prospects/customers. Despite the importance of studying sales wins, and the natural disposition for the field to hold a performance orientation, value also rests in understanding the oft understudied counterpoint of sales proposal rejections.

Relatedly, firms are amassing more data than ever before, with much of it in unstructured forms such as text, video, voice, and images. Such data are reshaping business and have enormous potential to unlock rich, embedded insights for firms. However, unstructured data also pose potential challenges for firms because they may create dependence on human labor to manage the time-consuming process of deriving insights. The emergence of machine learning (ML) provides a powerful means for examining such data at scale. Given that data on sales proposal rejections are largely unstructured (e.g., sales call transcripts), this study aims to show how ML can analyze unstructured text data on sales failure and provide exploratory insights into reasons for sales proposal rejections.

Method and Data

Data were collected from a large U.S.-based industrial supplier of clothing and cleaning services. The data consist of unstructured text of interviews from customer or prospective firms whose business the supplier firm failed to retain/acquire. The data comprise 1,537 pages of interview transcripts across 113 failed sales proposals. In addition to the interview verbatim text, the data

also contains information about the sales proposal, such as supplier incumbency status, annual contract price, and contract duration.

Next, unstructured text data was analyzed using the ML algorithms, part-of-speech (POS) tagging and topic modeling. POS tagging is an algorithm that categorizes each word in a sentence into its appropriate grammatical category (e.g., noun, adjective, verb). POS tagging was conducted to partition noun-words and compute most commonly mentioned features/attributes in the interview transcripts. Topic modeling is an algorithm that analyzes co-occurring words to uncover main themes that pervade a large unstructured collection of documents. Topic modeling was conducted to uncover the main topics discussed across all interview responses and quantify the representation of the topics across all and in each interview response. Finally, regression analysis was conducted to assess how topics varied as a function of sales proposal conditions.

Summary of Findings

Topic modeling analysis on sales proposal rejections uncover themes on organizational-, individual-, and interactional-levels. Specific uncovered themes include contract valuation, managerial and staff issues, past relationship, presentation, and proposal of ideas. Across all interview responses, the most salient topic was *contract valuation*, defined as comments related to the pricing and cost dynamics of the proposed contract. The least salient theme was *managerial and staff issues*, defined as comments related to interactions with problematic employees within the organization.

The researchers also analyzed the variance in topic salience—i.e., buyer focus on a few topics or a spread of dimensions. Findings show that topic focus/spread is contingent on supplier incumbency status. Specifically, buyers converge on a distributed (concentrated) range of sales proposal rejection topics for in- (out-) supplier proposals. Findings align with theories, such as

bounded rationality, that suggest buyers allocate limited cognitive resources when evaluating out versus in-suppliers. Given the asymmetry in buyer focus, the researchers show how text-based ML approach can highlight key areas of concern for firms, enabling them to effectively enact changes that will improve future outcomes. Collectively, this research contributes to bridging the chasm amongst theoretical, managerial, and technical aspects of ML in sales.

Statement of Key Contributions

This research makes three key contributions to the area of sales management. First, despite rejection being a common outcome, research holds a strong performance orientation. Theoretically, survivorship bias indicates that dedicated research is needed to inform insights beyond inversing success factors. This research examines sales proposal rejections and highlights thematic drivers of sales failure and patterns of failure cognition. Second, while extant literature on sales failure is oft internally focused, studying salesperson or firm practices, this research provides insights developed from the perspective of the buyer. Knowledge gaps exist regarding our understanding of sales failure through the eyes of the buyer. This research highlights reasons reported directly by organizational buyers that lead to failed sales proposals and how these reasons vary by sales proposal conditions. Third, the disconnect in ML between academic and practitioner practices creates a fault line in our ability to help firms unlock the potential of their data and ML tools. A need exists to illustrate the potency of ML and provide a process benchmark that enables others to apply ML techniques. This research combines theoretical and technical contributions to enable managers to understand how text-based ML approaches can highlight key areas of concerns and enact changes to improve outcomes.

BRIDGING AND BOLDING SOCIAL CAPITAL AND SALESPEOPLE'S PERFORMANCE GROWTH TRAJECTORIES: EXPLORATIONS OF THE AMBIDEXTROUS INTERNAL NETWORK (AIN)

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Key-words: network; sales; social identification; team; organizational identification

Description: The broad aim of this research is to therefore test the effects of social identification and incentives for reciprocity interactions on the salespersons' AIN and the effects of this network structure (combined and isolated) on resultant performance trajectories over time

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

The broad aim of this research is to therefore test the effects of social identification and incentives for reciprocity interactions on the salespersons' AIN and the effects of this network structure (combined and isolated) on resultant performance trajectories over time by examining three focal research questions: (1) *How* do multiple social identification foci (i.e., both team and organizational) interact – if at all – in either enhancing or reducing the formation of the salesperson's AIN? (2) *What* is the moderating role of incentives for reciprocity with social identification foci – if any – in attenuating any negative effect on the salesperson's AIN? (3) *When* might intrafirm network structures (i.e., bridging and bonding social capital, or both from an

ambidextrous viewpoint) prove beneficial for salespeople's performance growth trajectories over time?

Method and Data

We collected data from two different firms and industry contexts: (1) a dealership that sells expensive agricultural machinery (e.g. tractors, combine harvesters, balers, etc.) and cars (e.g., sedans, vans, SUV's, pickups, etc.). *Study and Sample 1* – We collected data from Study 1 in an agricultural machinery dealership operating in Brazil. At the time of data collection, this multinational company had 230 employees (87 salespeople) allocated in 11 dealerships across the state (per dealership, M = 20.9; SD = 6.4). Although there is a territorial-level division for each unit's operation, the multinational parent company encourages frequent contacts within and between dealerships (e.g., frequent training of sales teams; sharing of daily information about inventory, prices, parts/consumables; and scheduling service and support, among others). Study 1 and Sample 2 – This data was collected from a cooperating car dealership also operating in Brazil, which marketed and sold two well-known global auto brands. At T1 for this data collection, we again repeated the same procedures from Study 1 to collect data about organizational identification, team identification, incentives for reciprocity, and salesperson's intrafirm network. We deliberately collected this data in December, one month after the salespeople were trained on the upcoming year's new models (all salespeople participated). The research team again had this firm's management's support for this project; thus, we received completed, useable responses from 91 of 98 salespeople (92.8% response rate).

Summary of Findings

Overall, results indicate that across both studies/empirical contexts, organizational identification has a positive effect on the salesperson's AIN (β = .84, p < .01, for Study 1 (agricultural capital equipment sales); β = 1.15, p < .05, for Study 2 (auto dealership sales). H_1 is therefore supported across both examined empirical contexts. Next, and as hypothesized, team identification moderates the relationship between organizational identification and the AIN. The coefficients exhibited negative effects for team identification given the interplay with organizational identification in explaining the AIN (β = -.56, p < .05, for Study 1; and β = -1.43, p < .01, for Study 2). Thus, the empirical results support H_2 in both examined sales contexts. Next, we find a significant, and negative, three-way interaction of incentives for reciprocity, team identification, and organizational identification on the salesperson's AIN, given both studies/data contexts; this thereby supports H_3 (β = .63, p < .05, for Study 1; and β = .91, p< .05, for Study 2). Data highlights the performance effect differences between: (i) the covariates and main effects only models for each firm, versus (ii) the proposed two- and three-way interaction models. For the agricultural firm and its salespeople, R^2 with the two-way interaction model increases 23.5% over the base/covariate model (i.e., R^2 increase from .17 to .21), and 52.94% for the three-way interaction model (R^2 .17→.26).

Statement of Key Contribution

The primary aim of the research reported here was to extend empirical research on the salesperson's intraorganizational job functioning and social capital by exploring how social identification and incentives for reciprocity interact to impact the AIN. Previous research has shown that employees' social identification with both in- and out-groups guides their decisions and explains their workplace attitudes and behavior (Wieseke et al., 2012). We leveraged this literature to examine how two social identification

variables (organizational and team identification) might interact in shaping the salesperson's AIN. The data showed that organizational identification has significant incremental effects on the AIN. Salespeople who identified higher with their organization are more willing to cooperate with co-workers, thereby solidifying social affiliation (Cardador & Pratt, 2006). However, team identification was found to negatively moderate the positive effect of organizational identification on the AIN because high team identification tends to create functional silos and a "go-it-alone" perspective that likely inhibit in-group relationships and stifle communication and support across employees (Gupta et al., 2019). We further explored a possible attenuating mechanism for the detrimental effects of organizational and team identification on the salesperson's AIN, whereby we provided evidence that incentives for reciprocity mitigate the negative effect of team identification by encouraging generalized reciprocity amongst co-workers, per the conjecture and findings of Baker and Bulkley (2014). Incentives for reciprocity generate opportunities for gaining cooperation and gratitude in salesperson-IBT relationships, through reputation- and paying it forward-based incentives (Simpson et al., 2017).

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AT THE MARKETING-SALES INTERFACE

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Keywords: sales-marketing interface, conflict management, latent conflict, manifest conflict

Description: This qualitative research explores conflict management at the marketing-sales interface.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Marketing and sales units are often not aligned and have discordant relationships. Marketing literature explores various antecedents (i.e., communication, trust) and consequences (i.e., marketing-sales collaboration, firm performance) of conflict between two units. However, prior research dedicated limited attention to the coordination of these functions. We aim to investigate how firms can manage conflict between sales and marketing units and explore the role of senior management in this process.

Method And Data

We tested our moderated mediation model using survey data collected from sales and marketing managers. The sample includes large US companies and covers multiple industries.

Summary of Findings

There are different types of sales-marketing conflict: latent conflict (i.e., underlying sources of conflict) and manifest conflict (i.e., specific conflicting behaviors). A moderated mediation

analysis shows that the impact of latent conflict on firm performance is indirectly mediated by manifest conflict. In addition, this study reveals that various sub-elements of latent conflict have a different impact on manifest conflict. Finally, we confirm the moderating role of involvement of senior executives in the management of conflict between the units.

Key Contributions

We aim to make the following contributions. First, we distinguish the different types of conflict at the marketing-sales interface and empirically test the impact of latent conflict's sub-elements on manifest conflict. In addition, we examine the role of top management in sales-marketing conflict management, presenting an opportunity to optimize relationships between these functional units. These insights might be valuable for marketing academics and practitioners interested in the management of conflict between sales and marketing units.

References are available upon request.

DATA-DRIVEN SALES PROSPECTING FOR THE INTERNATIONALIZATION OF B2B COMPANIES

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Keywords: data-driven, sales prospecting, technology, internationalization, B2B

Description: This conceptual paper discusses the possibilities new sales technologies can provide for business-to-business (B2B) companies to facilitate and streamline their sales prospecting processes in general and, in particular, in the context of internationalization and international sales.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Prospecting is seen as one of the most difficult, yet essential tasks B2B salespeople do, based on academic (Moncrief and Marshall 2005) and practical literature (HubSpot 2021). Ohiomah, Benyoucef, and Andreev (2020) found sales technology usage and adoption as the most significant organizational determinant of sales success, while salesmanship skills, including prospecting, was the most significant salesperson determinant of sales success. However, coverage of prospecting from technology-usage perspective is limited in the literature (for examples, see Paschen, Wilson, and Ferreira 2020; Syam and Sharma 2018).

Moreover, there should be more research on data-driven B2B sales prospecting in the context of company internationalization. Internationalization can be facilitated by digital technologies, which provide new market information efficiently (Rialp-Criado and Rialp-Criado 2017) and enable easier market entries (Nambisan 2016). However, studies on how

modern sales technologies enable more successful prospecting processes in complex B2B internationalization are missing.

The overall research question in this conceptual paper is: *How can B2B companies internationalize better by utilizing sales prospecting technologies and their data?* The emerging literature on data-driven B2B sales, strong literature on internationalization, and evidence on the adoption of sales technologies provide with a promising academic background on which to build this discussion.

Method And Data

I opted for a conceptual research design since the further empirical investigations could benefit from more general theoretical and practical insight-driven discussion first before determining more in-depth research paths. Two prospecting tools and their public customer reference stories, which present use cases of using prospecting tools in internationalization, were introduced and analyzed in the paper. The chosen tools were Vainu with focus on company-level data and LinkedIn Sales Navigator with focus on person-level data. Vainu is a Finland-based software-as-a-service (SaaS) platform that collects, reads, and understands all the public data (e.g., company news online) and selected purchased data (e.g., detailed financial information) to provide salespeople with actionable sales triggers when opportunities arise. LinkedIn Sales Navigator is a US-based premium tool salespeople can buy to upgrade the use of professional social network LinkedIn. The tool allows salespeople to build prospect lists and monitor decision makers and companies on LinkedIn easily and with more advanced access than in the free version of LinkedIn. Two public customer reference stories from Vainu's website and one story from LinkedIn Sales Navigator's website were analyzed.

Summary of Findings – 200 words

The stories show that prospecting tools can help B2B companies understand and enter new international markets efficiently with up-to-date and dynamic information. The tools also push companies to conduct information gathering and utilization seamlessly and efficiently as a systematic process. For instance, GetAccept, a US-based provider of e-signature tool for facilitating sales closing, had experienced problems with obtaining proper market information to expand their business. Vainu helped GetAccept not only expand to Denmark and Norway with greater knowledge of local business landscape but also organize and automate sales process better. Technopolis, a Finnish provider of office space, wanted to detect different growth signals to provide customers available office space. The data from Vainu has helped Technopolis qualify prospects, react fast if an ideal prospect and related change trigger appears, and provide services with added value to that specific potential customer. This use has also helped Technopolis expand to Sweden, Denmark, and Norway. A-SAFE, a UK-based provider of safety barriers and guardrails, has used LinkedIn Sales Navigator to expand to the US. To convince potential customers about the new polymer technology A-SAFE uses, it needed a prospecting solution that enables salespeople to reach correct people and nurture relationships for closing deals.

Statement of Key Contributions – 200 words

This paper increases knowledge on data-driven sales prospecting and its productivity for B2B companies and their salespeople in the context of internationalization and international sales. In addition to providing general motivation to further study this topic, this paper contributes by (i) presenting a new concept, data-driven sales prospecting, to be used in academia, by (ii) presenting practical evidence from prospecting technology providers to understand how B2B

companies adopt and use prospecting tools for internationalization and international sales, and by (iii) providing avenues for future research, with key methods and contexts to consider.

As outlined in the paper, stakeholders at different levels, from individual to organizational levels, should find value in the paper. Especially salespeople and other sales-related people in B2B organizations see practical and research-related examples on data-driven sales prospecting processes and how prospecting tools are used for internationalization and international sales. Decision-makers of these organizations can understand how well-adopted prospecting tools in the beginning of the sales process reflect on the success of whole sales process and growth of the companies. Reading this paper should prompt B2B managers to evaluate whether their organizations are capitalizing on the competitive advantages prospecting tools can provide in the fierce global business environment.

TITLE

Does IoT Adoption Lead to Value Creation in B2B Relationships?

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

In this study, we observed that in dyadic relationships of six to 10 years, interpersonal trust and inter-organizational trust influence Internet of Things (IoT). Commitment has an indirect effect on IoT adoption on both sides of the dyad. The current study found that relationship-specific performance and value creation are significant through a moderated mediation of IoT adoption. This study, through mixed-method research, is extending the extant literature on relationship quality and IoT adoption. Further studies can derive from this study by understanding the other relationship quality factors which influence IoT adoption. In short, trust has a direct influence, while commitment has an indirect effect on IoT adoption, and value and performance are generated through IoT adoption.

KEY CONTRIBUTIONS TO ACADEMICS AND PRACTITIONERS

Theoretical Contributions

By addressing a vital research issue, data collected from managers and C-level executives in quantitative and qualitative methods with an adequate model testing methodology, our findings demonstrate that IoT technology adoption can be influenced by the quality of trust and commitment on both sides of the buyer-seller dyad. We explained the link between interpersonal and inter-organizational relationships and how buyers and suppliers perceived those two factors for IoT adoption through qualitative analysis. We have also demonstrated the value creation and relationship-specific performance that is resulted from trust and commitment when IoT is adopted.

Managerial Implications

Buyers

According to our findings, the education of senior management is crucial for the success of digital transformation. This education will help them understand the value of IoT adoption. While digital transformation is still new to most companies, and companies struggle to go through the necessary changes, buyers should rely on companies to assist them with their IoT expertise to mitigate the risks and concerns. IoT adoption in this business world is becoming vital to create a competitive edge. However, the cost of change is challenging, but not changing can be much more challenging and more expensive. Inaction is more costly than action. Therefore, buyers should build trust with their suppliers through building a personal relationship and showing commitment to the relationship.

Suppliers

According to our findings, suppliers should build trust through honesty and transparency and aim to create a personal relationship to enter a business relationship. As IoT security is crucial, suppliers should ensure their services are secure and continuously innovating. Safety and innovation enhance the trust and commitment the buyer will have on suppliers. Building a good case and communicating the value created clearly will improve the adoption of IoT technology. With IoT adoption, recurring revenue is possible, and through this, the buyer-seller relationship deepens through the constant innovation the supplier brings to the buyer's organization.

MANUSCRIPT

Introduction

Over the last ten years, IoT has been in a continual state of evolution, rapidly changing to meet the consumer's needs, market and industry. Considering Gartner, it is crucial to dig deeper into the managerial side of the value IoT can bring to organizations. As Matthyssens (2019) states, IoT offers many possibilities for new value creation, and they oblige traditional companies to re-think their businesses and industries. Opportunities for businesses to grow beyond their traditional market open innovative and lucrative revenue streams. Advantages can be seen in terms of Stronger Customer Relations, Predictive Maintenance, Optimized Products, Supply Chain Efficiencies, and Inventory Efficiency.

Due to its future potential, IoT has gained traction in the academic and the industrial world, with a much-needed body of research supported by an increasing number of applications and interests from the scientific, technological, and educational communities.

The current focus of research is on the Business and Industrial Market and the role of the Internet of Things. Following a review of academic articles on IoT across two resources, Science Direct and The Journal of Computer Networks and Communications, in three areas: (i) Consumer Market, (ii) Public Market, and (iii) Industrial Market, the current research found the industrial market has attracted the most attention to researchers (see Table 1).

Trust has been the common factor between Zaefarian et al. (2017) and Gao and Bai (2014). Gao & Bai (2014) highlighted that trust is essential in adopting IoT in the consumer market. Therefore, the consideration of trust in a business relationship regarding IoT adoption is worth exploring. It is also worth investigating the relationship-specific performance of the said adoption. Morgan & Hunt (1994) state that trust influences relationship commitment and argue it is an essential element indeed *"A firm will only commit to the relationship if the trust is here"* (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Likewise, Hrebiniak (1974) highlights that relationships marked by trust are so highly regarded that parties will want to commit themselves to such relationships. On this account, the current research will investigate the effect of trust and commitment on adopting the IoT and its consequential relationship-specific performance in a two-way relationship. For this study, Trust and Commitment will be used as a relationship quality construct following Morgan & Hunt (1994).

Literature Review

While the Internet of Things is the general concept about all nonstandard Internet connecting devices that transmit data, Industrial IoT (IIoT) is concerned with manufacturing and industrial processes. The premise behind the use of IIoT lies in the fact that sensors and actuators enable inefficient working practices to be picked up in a timelier manner. Reflecting its importance and potential for change in the way businesses and industries move forward with future practice, the IIoT paradigm is referred to as the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Indeed, in their seminal paper, titled 'The Four Industrial Revolutions,' Kagermann et al. (2013) define IIoT as incorporating IoT technologies into industrial production, which results in the digitalized connection of industrial value creation. The official definition, the IIoT, is constituted by the real-time capable, intelligent, horizontal, and vertical connection of people, machines, objects, and ICT systems to dynamically manage complex systems (Bauer et al., 2014).

Internet of Things adoption in the Industrial Market

Gilchrist (2016) states that adopting requires companies to commit to innovation and its continued growth, as well as thinking in the long term when it comes to returning to investment. However, most companies go first for predictive maintenance, giving the quickest return on investment. According to Wu et al. (2006), for IoT adoption, a company must consider several factors such as technology, standards, costs, patents, and infrastructure of the supply chain and return on investment. It is not a clear-cut decision and one that comes at a price in terms of finances, time, and commitment.

In conclusion, companies in the supply chain are hesitant to adopt IoT only if it is a client requirement. Like most moves in business, adopting IoT has got to be customer-led, and then there are a complex set of factors to be considered. Once committed, a company or business is unlikely to return to their decision as their whole infrastructure will need to accommodate. Even if the IoT paradigm is adopted, they look for the quickest return on investment. IoT adoption is a long-term commitment to collect data, and the analysis of these data in the long term gives the most significant return on investment.

Value Creation in Internet Of Things

Yoo et al. (2010) discussed that innovation with IoT combines physical and digital components to create new products and facilitate further business models. With the increasing efficiency of

power management, broadband communication, and advances in microprocessors, the possibility of digitalizing functions and critical capabilities of industrialized products (Yoo et al., 2010). Digitalization has transformed the interactions between suppliers and sellers and inherently changed the process of value creation in business relationships (Corsaro and Anzivino 2021).

Value capture is traditionally described as the profit made by the firm, which includes economic profit and interest (Bowman and Ambrosini, 2000). Hui 2014 describes it as setting the right price to maximize profits. With IoT adoption, value capture may be realized through means other than physical product sales such as value-added services, subscriptions, and apps that can easily surpass the original purchase price. With IoT adoption, recurring revenue is possible, which was not possible in the traditional product mindset. With data gained over time, customers can become "locked-in" as the company can provide personalization. As more products join the platform, the service becomes more valuable (network effects).

Hypotheses Building

The variables for the present study are Interpersonal Trust, Inter-organisational Trust, Commitment (Morgan & Hunt 1994), the moderating effect of Relationship Age, and the Relationship-specific Performance and Value Creation of IoT Adoption.

Trust

(Bahmanziari, Pearson, & Crosby, 2003) have studied the effect of trust on technology adoption, finding trust is an essential component of the technology adoption decision. As trust has a positive relationship with technology adoption, it is possible to extrapolate it to the Internet of Things and forward the hypotheses:

H1: Trust in a B2B relationship positively influences the Internet of Things adoption.

Interpersonal Trust

Taking into consideration the work of Bahmanziari et al. (2003), who demonstrated a positive relationship between trusting a software vendor and an individual's decision to adopt software technology, the current study generalizes these findings to The Internet of Things:

H2: Interpersonal Trust has a positive influence on the Internet of Things adoption

Likewise, Zaheer et al. (1998a) found a strong correlation between Interpersonal Trust and Inter-organisational trust, hence the following hypothesis:

H3: Interpersonal Trust has a positive influence on Inter-Organisational Trust

Inter-Organisational Trust

(Obal, 2013) Investigated the role of inter-organizational trust in the adoption of disruptive technology, and he found that inter-organizational trust is an essential factor. Obal's (2013) work focused on the buyer's perspective. Therefore the following hypothesis will focus on both sides of the dyad:

H4: Inter-organizational trust has a positive influence on the Internet of Things adoption

Commitment

When a business or a company has a strong working relationship with its partner, the business tends to be more supportive and collaborative with its partner based on mutual trust and commitment. (Uzzi,1997) Illustrates firms and companies in a strong business relationship are more inclined to pursue combined problem solving and information sharing, working in collaboration. Therefore, a firm will be more willing to adopt the Internet of Things when an established relationship commitment exists.

H5: Commitment has a positive influence on the Internet of Things adoption

Buyer's Commitment

According to field theory (Lewin 1943), the relationship between a buyer and a sales representative is closer than between a buyer and other units in a vendor organization. The buyer's expectation is in the salesperson's ability to perform well, solve problems that arise, and the performance of the goods and services. Because of this closeness and consistent interaction, interpersonal trust will substantially affect a buyer's commitment than organizational trust.

On this note, the following hypothesis would be the following:

H6: Interpersonal Trust between the salesperson and the buyer will have a positive effect on the Buyer's Commitment

As shown in several empirical studies, trust and commitment are not independent of each other in inter-organizational relationships. Trust of a relationship partner positively impacts relationship commitment (Ganesan, 1994; Geyskenset al., 1996; Moorman et al., 1992; Morgan and Hunt, 1994).

H7: Trust between buyer and seller will have a positive effect on commitment

Moderating effect Relationship age

Verhoef et al. (2002) and Richard, Thirkell, & Huff (2007) studied the moderating effect of relationship age with trust and commitment on customer referrals and the number of services purchased. Their study showed trust did not reduce the positive impact on either customer referrals or the number of services purchased. On the other hand, commitment has been shown to have a positive relationship with both customer referrals and the number of services purchased. Hausman & Stock (2003) found a positive relationship between trust and technological adoption in long-term relationships. However, commitment and technology adoption were not significant in their study.

Taking into account the two streams of research, the following hypothesis will be kept bidirectional to give more space for interpretation:

H8: With an increase in relationship age,

a) **The relationship between interpersonal trust and IoT adoption will be strengthened**
b) **The relationship between inter-organizational trust and IoT adoption will be strengthened**
c) **The relationship between commitment and IoT adoption will be strengthened**

Relationship-Specific Performance

Koellinger (2008) investigated the effect of technology innovation on a company's performance. He found that internet-based technologies are critical enablers of innovation and that innovation is positively associated with turnover and employment growth at the firm level.

He also found that product/service innovations are positively associated with profitability, but this was not the case for process innovations. He also stated that internet-enabled innovations are not inferior to other innovations. Therefore, the following hypothesis comprises the relationship-specific performance of both buyers and suppliers: **H9:: There is a relationship between IoT adoption and relationship-specific performance.**

Value Creation

Dijkman et al.'s (2015) research show value proposition is the most crucial building block in IoT business models. As value creation was one of the main priorities for the businesses interviewed and surveyed in the research of Dijkman et al. 2015, it is possible to conclude a positive relationship between IoT adoption and value creation. The following hypothesis comprises the value created for both sellers and suppliers: **H10: A positive relationship will exist between IoT adoption and Value Creation.**

Research Methodology

Participants and Sample Collection

Using the sample size formula, the sample size of 196 for each dyad has been calculated. The confidence level is 95%, with a confidence interval of 7%. The response distribution is set at 50%. The survey was created and collected online through Qualtrics. Each participant had to answer 20 questions using Likert scales and multiple-choice questions. One question was used to separate buyers from suppliers, and participants were directed to either the buyer's set of questions or the supplier's set of questions.

Participant Profile and Requirements

Participants with a minimum of 1-years professional experience who can either be sellers or buyers of IoT were eligible to participate in the study. This proposed study was published on the Internet across Facebook and LinkedIn IoT groups. Paid advertising on Linkedin was undertaken for one week to attract respondents. To increase the chances of responses, Linkedin connection requests were sent to participants. The keywords innovation, IoT, IIoT, and Internet of Things, were used in the people search bar to get a list of potential participants. There was no restriction in terms of geographical criteria. As only a Linkedin professional account was used and not the sale navigator of Linkedin, criteria could not be input. Therefore, the pool of

potential participants was large. Linkedin was the central social media platform used as the job position of the respondents is known, and they were more responsive during work hours.

Of the 3000-connection requests sent along with the group's exposure and advertising, overall, 329 surveys were completed, with only 196 completed fully. The general demographics were 19 females and 177 males with a mean age range of 45-54 (SD = 1.13). One hundred fifty-three participants were suppliers, and 43 participants were buyers.

The average level of expertise of the respondents on IoT is Master, indicating they have a good understanding of both the technical and business side of IoT.

Sample Shaping

Data set cleaning was undertaken based on whether the survey had been completed. If the progress were below 100%, the survey was deleted. As the survey allowed the participants to come back to fill in the survey, the number of minutes that the participants took to fill in the survey was not considered except for surveys completed in less than 5 minutes. These surveys were deleted. Two reverse questions were placed in both the buyer and seller set of questions, and for those who replied to the questions wrongly, their survey was also deleted. Before deleting this survey, the other questions' answers were examined to look at inconsistencies. If the completed survey did not meet the quality control put in place, these were also deleted. Overall, 133 surveys were deleted from the dataset due to incompletion.

Design

The design was aimed to explore the role of the buyer and supplier separately. Each participant was assigned to their role as either a buyer or a supplier in the realm of IoT. They were required to focus their answer on a relationship age. In other words, how long the relationship had been functioning. The dyad side and the business relationship age of the participants are the only variables used to categorize the data. The variables under investigation in the current study are interpersonal, inter-organizational trust, and commitment as the relationship quality variables. The supplier and buyer's benefits of the IoT adoption and value creation and relationship-specific are also variables.

Procedure

The current study and survey design were based on the survey of Dijkman et al. (2015). However, instead of the business model questions found in Dijkman et al. (2015), the current study replaced questions with relevant measures for this study. The format of the survey was designed to validate the respondents first.

Measures

Based on the work of Zaefarian, Thiesbrummel, Henneberg, & Naudé (2017b) in terms of Relationship Quality, the current study uses the same construct used in their research and adapts it to IoT Adoption.

The scales of Interpersonal Trust and Inter-Organisational Trust were adapted from (Zaheer et al., 1998b). These Trust scales have been used in many studies to test trust in a relationship and are therefore considered reliable. The recent questions have been adapted to reflect the aims of the research. Both scales are used on each side of the dyad.

Behavioral and affective commitment is the most widely mentioned in the research literature. Therefore the scales of commitment in the questionnaire are based on the work of Lee, Sirgy, Brown, & Bird (2004), MacMillan, Money, Money, & Downing (2005), and Sharma, Young, & Wilkinson (2006). Also, (Zaefarian et al., 2017b) used the same scales in their work. Affective and behavioral commitment scales are presented together to ensure the respondent cannot differentiate between Behavioural and Affective Commitment. One item within the commitment scale was reversed for validity check.

To measure the Adoption of IoT, the respondents' benefits gained from its adoption are asked. Each side of the dyad has a set of different items. In the case of the supplier, the scale of Ritter, Gemünden, & Walter (2001) was used to account for the fact that the construct addresses perceived supplier value. A scale of Perceived Benefits (Chwelos, Benbasat, & Dexter, 2001) was presented for the buyer. The scales were averaged to form the IoT Adoption variable in both cases. The outcome of IoT Adoption is Value Creation (Adapted from Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010) and Relationship-specific Performance. (Klein & Rai, 2017). Each side of the dyad received the same scales to measure IoT adoption outcomes.

Results

Reliability Test

Interpersonal Trust was measured using a 6 item, 7-point Likert scale. After determining the internal consistency (α=.90), item 4 was removed, and a mean of the five items was performed. (M = 4.86; SD= 0.93). Inter-organizational trust was measured using seven items 7-point Likert scale. After determining the Internal Consistency (α=.792), item 2 was removed, and a mean of the five items was performed. (M = 4.91; SD = 0.78). The interpersonal and inter-organizational trust scales were averaged after the Internal Consistency (α=.90) was determined. No item was removed. (M = 4.8; SD = .86). The commitment was measured using a 7 item 7-point Likert scale. The scale contained a reverse item that was recoded. After determining the internal consistency (α=.85), the recoded item was removed, and a Mean of the six items was performed. (M = 4.85; SD= 0.75). Relationship Performance was measured using a 6 item 7-point Likert scale. The scale contained a reverse item that was recoded. After determining the internal consistency (α=.89), the recoded item was removed, and a Mean of the five items was performed. (M = 4.79; SD = 0.86). Value Creation was measured using an 8 item 7-point Likert scale. After determining the internal consistency (α=.86), a Mean of the eight items was performed. (M = 4.89; SD = 0.72).

The IoT Adoption was measured through a multiple-choice question whereby the participant had to select a minimum of 4 out of 19 items. After determining the internal consistency (α=.74), a Mean of the 19 items was performed. (M = 0.23; SD = 0.16).

To explore the correlation between the variables, a Pearson Correlation analysis was performed on the variables. Interpersonal Trust and Inter-organisational Trust were found to be positively correlated. In a business relationship, those with a high level of inter-organizational trust in their seller's organization will generally have a high level of interpersonal trust in their IoT salesperson ($r= 0.749$; $p<0 .001$).

Conclusion

Value creation

The moderated mediation analysis will answer the research question about value creation. Both sides of the dyad were significant in value creation, with IoT adoption as a mediating factor

and relationship age between six and ten years as a moderating factor on relationship quality. The quality of being in a relationship between six and ten years has an indirect effect on value creation through IoT adoption.

Buyer's perspective

There is a positive moderated mediation from the quantitative side, which is enforced by the qualitative side. Buyers have noticed the operational efficiency and cost reduction with IoT adoption. Understanding how a business operates, the buyer can make decisions that are better suited to individual business needs. For example, decisions can be made with specific timings and costings in mind. The ability to create a new offering for their customers allows for value capture of the value created. Therefore, buyers can create a competitive advantage through IoT adoption. Wilson(1995) defines value creation as enhancing the competitive abilities of the partners in the relationship. This is precisely what our qualitative findings confirmed that competitive capabilities had been created with IoT adoption. Looking at the literature, Eggert et al. (2006) found out that a supplier's potential for value creation in customers' operations increases relative importance as the relationships move through the life cycle. As the measurement variable was not the same as this study, one can infer that a maturity stage could be 6 to 10 years. Therefore, as the buyer adopts IoT, its value creation increases.

It should be noted that value creation from IoT adoption has both short-term and long-term value. While the buyers may not see the RoI of IoT adoption in the short term, Gilchrist 2013 stated that IoT is a long-term commitment to innovation. Therefore, the ROI is in the long run.

Supplier's Perspective

Both quantitative and qualitative data validate value creation. The value created for suppliers is expertise in the industry, the ability to create a new product portfolio, and operational efficiency. The most significant value for suppliers is to capture value by having recurring revenue. With IoT adoption, recurring revenue is possible, which was not possible in the traditional product mindset. Beverland et al. (2004) stated that suppliers should anticipate customer value changes and adapt to them. Also, Eggert et al. (2006) noted that a supplier's service support and personal interaction are the strongest at the early stages of a relationship. This is confirmed by both the buyers' and suppliers' data findings. Therefore, suppliers should invest more at the beginning of the relationship while keeping innovating to ensure long-term value creation.

TABLES AND FIGURES

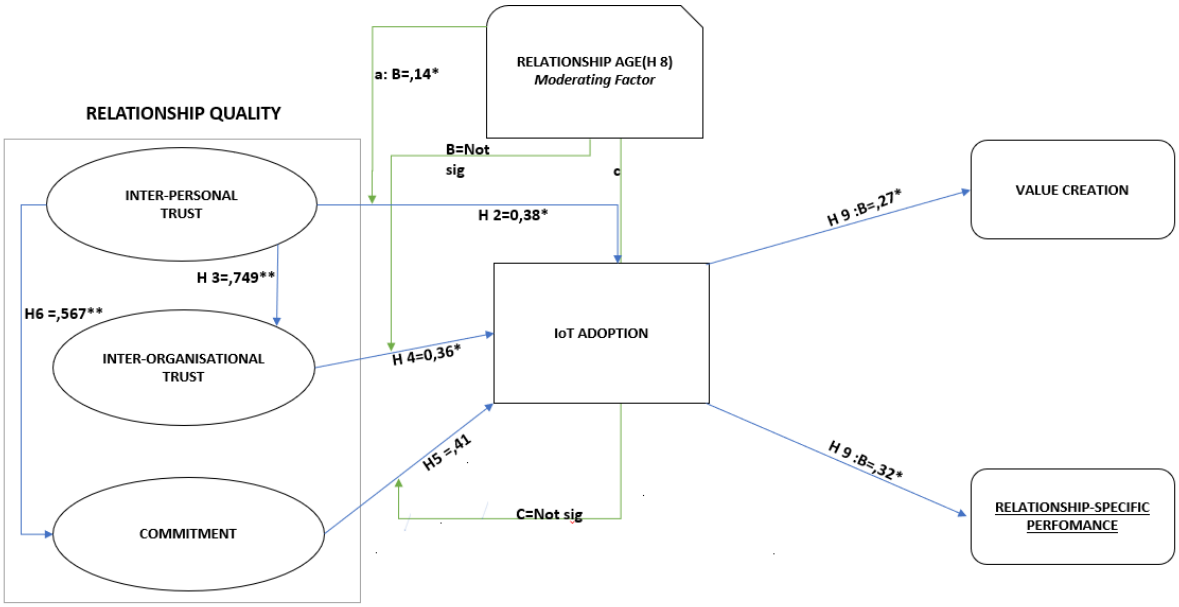
Table 1: Research and Publications Relating to the Internet of Things

	Keywords	Website	Number of articles/reviews
Consumer Market	IoT*/home/consumer	Science Direct	1214
Public Market	IoT*/government/public	Science Direct	1653
Industrial Market	IoT*/ business/ industrial	Science Direct	2235
		Journal of Computer Networks and Communications	169

Buyer's Pearson Correlation Analysis

	Interpersonal Trust	Inter- organisational Trust	Commitment	IoT adoption	Relationship-Specific Performance	Value Creation	Relationship Age	Trust
Interpersonal Trust	1							
Inter-organisational Trust	.749**	1						
Commitment	.567**	.662**	1					
IoT adoption	.151	-.074	.059	1				
Relationship-Specific performance	.518**	.544**	.607**	.233	1			
Value Creation	.347*	.309*	.486**	.355*	.655**	1		
Relationship age	.123	.032	.126	.032	.182	.114	1	
Trust	.948**	.915**	.668**	.054	.570**.	.356*	.084	1

Buyer's Framework



Supplier's Framework

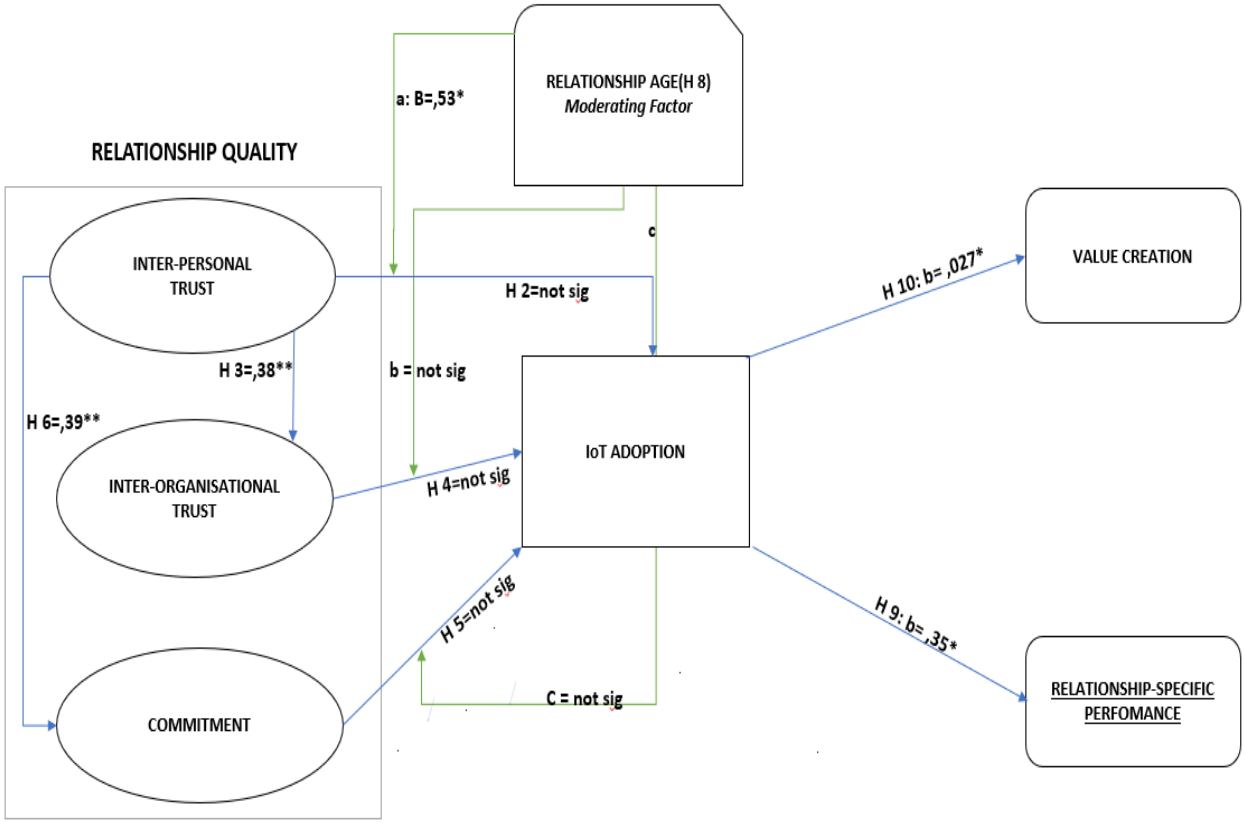


Table: Hypothesis Validation

H1: *Trust → IoT*	Reject	Reject
H2: Interpersonal Trust → IoT	Accept	Reject
H3: Interpersonal Trust → Inter organisational trust	Accept	Reject
H4: Inter-Organizational Trust → IoT	Accept	Accept
H5: Commitment → IoT	Reject	Reject
H6: Inter-Organizational Trust → Buyer's commitment	Accept	n/a
H7:Trust → Commitment	Accept	Reject
H8.a: Relationship Age → /Interpersonal trust on IoT	Accept	Accept
H8.b: Relationship Age → inter organisational trust on IoT	Reject	Reject
H8.c: Relationship age → commitment on IoT	Accept	Accept
H9: Relationship-Specific performance → IoT	Accept	Accept
H10: Value creation → IoT	Accept	Accept

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UNDERSTANDING THE CHANGES IN VALUE CREATION WITH THE ADOPTION OF REMOTE SELLING

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Keywords: digital transformation, value creation, Covid-19

Description: This paper investigates how increased emphasis on remote selling as a result of accelerated digital transformation and Covid-19 pandemic changed the value creation processes in sales organizations.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

While digital transformation is inherently on the rise, the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has enforced organizations to adopt remote selling and changed the ways sales activities are performed. This has created a need to reconsider the value creation activities of salespeople. Following Sullivan et al. (2012) value creation in this study is conceptualized as both competence and relational activity. Accordingly, customers perceive value in suppliers' competencies and relationship closeness between customer and supplier significantly contributes to this process. In this research, we systematically examine how recent technological shifts have affected the value creation activities of sales organizations. Specifically, the question we aim to address the following research question:

RQ1: How does increased emphasis on work from home/remote selling because of DT and current pandemic affect value creation?

Method and Data

To explore the change in value creation activities of sales organizations as a result of digital transformation and Covid-19 pandemic, we adopted a qualitative research design and conducted in-depth interviews with 23 sales managers. In the interviews, managers were asked to describe how digitalization has impacted the value function activities of their organizations before and through the COVID-19 period. The interviews were semi-structured in nature and each interview lasted approximately 35 to 75 minutes. The interviewers were recruited from various industries (e.g., logistics, telecommunications, IT solutions, travel and tourism, and financial services) in the UK and US and sent an interview guide before the interview. Interviews

were conducted in English as all participants were fluent in the language. Interviewees had a mean age of 47.43 years and 8.7% were female.

Summary of Findings

We performed qualitative content analysis (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2015) and used axial coding to generate emerging themes. The themes for the value creation drivers were extracted based on competence and relational perspectives. Concerning the competence-related themes, work efficiency is the first theme that highlights the improvement of the business efficiency due to online to-the-point meetings, smaller sale cycles, and decreased expenses. The second competence-related theme, the adoption of interactive technology, relates to the facilitation of the coordination between inside and outside sales teams as well as the removal of the boundaries in selling using online platforms. The last theme, increased touchpoints, concerns the increased responsiveness and the number of touchpoints through which a salesperson can create value for buyers.

In relation to the relational aspect of value creation, the human aspect is the first theme emphasizing the influence of digital transformation on establishing deeper relationships between salespeople and customers. Changing expectations is the second theme and it highlights that customers expect more from salespeople. They, for example, need them to be more trustworthy and honest than before. Finally, demand management is the final theme and it recognizes the critical role of personalization. With remote work adoption, customer-focused meetings are more desirable in times of digital transformation.

Key Contributions

This research explores the changes in sales value creation due to accelerated digital transformation and the current Covid-19 pandemic. Specifically, our research is novel in

outlining the effects of digitalization on salespeople’s value creation processes in sales organizations. We contribute to the value creation and sales management literature by exploring the changes in the value creation process in terms of competence and relationship perspectives. Focusing on the several identified themes in these two perspectives, sales organizations can establish more useful value creation points and therefore increase efficiency and effectiveness in remote selling.

GIVE ME YOUR GENES AND I TELL YOU YOUR SALES SUCCESS?

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Keywords: salespeople; SERT; personality; differential susceptibility theory; stress

Description: Relying on differential susceptibility and stress research, this paper theoretically and empirically shows how genes can help explain sales propensities, and explains why genes alone are not a sufficient base for business decisions.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question:

The beginning and the end of the sales cycle, canvassing and closing, represent key moments of asking for rejection, inclined to involve significant amounts of stress (DeCarlo and Lam 2016; Ingram et al. 2017). Both activities are prone to avoidance and procrastination (Bagozzi and Verbeke 2020), thereby constituting major challenges in sales practice.

Why do salespeople differ in how they approach situations of potential rejection like canvassing and closing? Evidence is mounting that sales behavior partly depends on genetic variation (e.g., Bagozzi and Verbeke 2020), while other scholars suggest that salespeople's

propensity towards canvassing and closing might boil down to deeply rooted psychological traits (e.g., DeCarlo and Lam 2016).

Against this backdrop, we build on differential susceptibility theory and stress research to shed light on how a variation of a particular candidate gene, i.e., the Serotonin Transporter Gene SERT S allele, affects salespeople's canvassing and closing depending on the salesperson's psychological traits. This study investigates which combinations of carrying SERT S and the psychological traits of sensation seeking and neuroticism are beneficial in sales contexts.

Method and Data

We collected data from two sources (a genetic analysis and a questionnaire) in cooperation with a private company specializing in personality and genetic analyses of business clients. Our final sample comprises more than 500 salespeople from a diverse industry background, which constitutes a relatively large sample size in comparison to previous research investigating genes or neurophysiological markers in the context of sales (e.g., Bagozzi and Verbeke 2020). Genetic information was extracted from saliva samples by means of PCR amplification. Scales for the dependent variables canvassing and closing, for the moderators sensation seeking and neuroticism, and for the control variables were adopted from the extant literature.

To test our conceptual model, we performed regression analyses. Tests for common method bias, endogeneity, and simultaneity showed that those issues are not a concern for this study.

Summary of Findings

Our data suggest that carrying SERT S relates to canvassing and closing, but that the direction of this relationships is contingent on the level of sensation seeking and neuroticism. First, sensation seeking positively moderates the relationships between SERT S and canvassing, i.e., the higher a salesperson is on sensation seeking while SERT S is present, the higher this individual scores on canvassing. In addition, sensation seeking positively moderates the relationship between SERT S and closing, meaning that the higher the salesperson is on sensation seeking while SERT S is present, the more the value for closing increases.

Second, neuroticism negatively moderates the relationship between SERT S and canvassing. Carriers of SERT S score worse for canvassing if they are more neurotic. In a similar fashion, neuroticism negatively moderates the relationship between SERT S and closing. The more neurotic a salesperson carrying SERT S, the lower is the person's score on closing.

Key Contributions

Our study provides three key contributions. First, we show that although carriers of SERT S are generally more sensitive towards negative social cues in canvassing and closing, the direction of the effect of this sensitivity is contingent on the appraisal of those social cues either in form of eustress or distress. In particular, we investigate sensation seeking and neuroticism as contingency factors influencing the way stressors are appraised, resulting in different effects of genetic variation in SERT.

Second, we propose a theoretical mechanism explaining why stressors are appraised in terms of eustress or distress. The theoretical interpretation results in positive or, respectively,

negative effects of carrying SERT S on canvassing and closing. Hence, we show that contextual factors like psychological traits play key moderating roles in this regard.

Third, we answer a call in prior literature to investigate the role of genes in canvassing and closing (Bagozzi and Verbeke 2020). In doing so, we provide sales managers and HR professionals confronted with their personnel's varying reactions to stressful moments in selling with valuable insights on key characteristics to consider in selecting the right people for the right tasks. Our study also calls for caution regarding making business decisions based on biological information.

References available upon request.

MANAGING SALESPERSON TURNOVER: THE ROLE OF SALESPERSON'S OCCUPATIONAL EMPLOYMENT LEVEL AND ORGANIZATIONAL JUSTICE PERCEPTIONS

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Keywords: Voluntary Salesperson Turnover, Job Satisfaction, Occupational Employment Level, Organizational Justice

Description: This research explores the moderating roles of salespeople's different levels of occupational employment and sales managers´ justice behaviors on the relationship between work and pay satisfaction and voluntary turnover decisions.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Voluntary salesperson turnover leads to immense direct and indirect costs for companies, so that identifying central antecedents of this behavioral tendency is critical for sales organizations across industries. Given the unique working circumstances in sales and the high importance of variable compensation, both satisfaction with the working conditions and pay as two distinct, yet interconnected sub-dimensions of job satisfaction, need to be regarded by sales managers to effectively reduce turnover intentions and behaviors. Even though, recent studies missed to point out that salespeople´s different levels of occupational employment (i.e., their regularity and amount of work) may likely influence the relative meaning of work and pay satisfaction in preventing turnover decisions. Additionally, due to the recent trends towards remote work and increased decentralization of work from companies´ headquarters, sales managers often rely on indirect supervisory techniques, such as initiating distributive and procedural frame conditions, when avoiding turnover behaviors

among their heterogenous sales staff. Therefore, this study investigates the interplay of salespeople's different levels of occupational employment (i.e., full- and part-time employment) and sales managers´ justice behaviors on the relationship between work and pay satisfaction and voluntary turnover decisions.

Method and Data

To assess our conceptual model, we received support of a major, globally operating household applications manufacturer. We conducted a survey of 752 salespeople and collected corresponding matched objective turnover data from company records. For measuring the full- and part-time employment levels, we apply a unique approach that takes both the objective regularity of work and self-reported average weekly working hours into account. To test our hypotheses, we applied hierarchical SEM techniques.

Summary of Findings

Our results contribute to an in-depth understanding of salespeople's turnover decisions. In line with our hypothesized relationships, the results reveal that, while pay satisfaction is of major importance for full-time salespeople, part-timers mainly build their turnover decisions based on work satisfaction. For full-time salespeople, sales managers´ distributive and procedural justice initiating behaviors can be effectively used to strengthen the influence of work satisfaction on turnover behaviors while lowering the relative importance of pay satisfaction. Contrarily, Part-timers´ propensity to leave can rather be decreased by improving their working conditions.

Key Contributions

Our study makes meaningful contributions to literature on voluntary salesperson turnover in two ways. First, by contextualizing our proposed direct effects by different

occupational employment levels as our key salesperson-related moderator, we further extend the understanding of the present heterogeneity in employment circumstances and how they affect voluntary turnover decisions in sales. Second, we further elaborate the role of sales managers in mitigating turnover decisions. Herewith, we specifically address boundary conditions, in which salespeople very irregularly interact with their supervisors and leadership means are strongly limited. Particularly, we identify employment conditions in which both distributive and procedural justice behaviors can be actively applied to reduce turnover cognitions among heterogenous sales forces.

The insights drawn from our study give sales managers clear advice on how they should lead their heterogenous salespeople to avoid voluntary turnover decisions. Specifically, our results show that sales managers need to consider their salespeople´s unique employment circumstances when attempting to avoid their turnover behavior. Accordingly, sales organizations need to make sure that crucial differences in work and payment expectations are regarded when designing compensation systems and work content. At the same time, our findings strongly imply that employment differences should be considered to infer adequate supervision behaviors.

POST-PANDEMIC SALES & MARKETING CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES

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Keywords: Post-Pandemic; Empathetic Marketing; E-Commerce; Artificial intelligence

Description: The objective of this paper is to identify major obstacles marketers and professional salespeople faced since the COVID-19 pandemic, and which methods can be identified as the "future of marketing" for the post-pandemic environment.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question:

The objective of this paper is to identify major obstacles marketers faced since the COVID-19 pandemic, and which methods can be identified as the "future of marketing" for the post-pandemic environment. An in-depth analysis of retail brands, insightful surveys, and consumer trends has been conducted. From this method, four major challenges have been identified. First, a change in overall safety guidelines that force companies to comply with new health and safety standards, including limiting in store capacities, was inevitable. Second, unforeseen shifts in demand left manufacturing companies struggling to keep up. Third, a change in general industry standards has caused brands to do away with conventional retail theory. Lastly, the threat of e-commerce giants makes it difficult for small businesses to compete.

Summary of Findings:

Four key marketing strategies have been identified in order to adapt to the post□pandemic environment as well. First, an improvement in a brand's omnichannel experience is necessary,

especially in the digital world. Second, an empathetic marketing approach allows brands to see eye to eye with consumers. Third, an array of payment and pickup options aids in matching the pristine standards that have been placed on retailers. Finally, innovative safety improvements allow consumers to feel comfortable again as they shop with a brand. After the detrimental impact the pandemic had on the retail industry, it is imperative for brands to remain agile and respond to consumer trends as they evolve.

Statement of Key Contributions:

This paper offers two key contributions to academia and practitioners in the retail marketing industry. The first contribution is an in-depth analysis of the challenges facing the retail industry both now during the COVID-19 pandemic and in the future post COVID-19 restrictions. This paper seeks to identify challenges to traditional retail which existed prior to the pandemic and were exacerbated by the pandemic. The paper also explores new and unforeseen challenges brought forth by COVID-19 dangers and the mitigation techniques used to minimize its impact on public safety. The second key contribution this paper aims to offer academia and retail marketing practitioners is real and achievable marketing initiatives to overcome these challenges. The paper seeks to identify solutions to the problems identified in the paper which threaten the very existence of conventional retail. The authors of this paper invite further investigation and thought into the challenges and ideas presented in this writing. Additional investigation is especially encouraged and recommended into Omni Channel innovation and retail hygiene innovations.

Reference:

References are available upon request.

SALES STRATEGIES FOR CREATING MULTILEVEL VALUE WITHIN KEY ACCOUNTS

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Keywords: Value Co-Creation; Strategic Account Management; Ecosystems; Service-Dominant Logic; Customer Retention Strategies; Case Study

Description: The focus of this study is on actors and their interactions within seller and customer ecosystems; with specific attention to how value trajectories emerge, evolve, and are managed within key accounts.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Questions

Key accounts provide economies of scale for sales organizations and referral value which generates new business. Managing key accounts, however, is a resource intensive process for sales organizations that is contingent on various elements of the relationship. To successfully navigate these complexities, targeted insights are needed to explain KAM practices across the various firm levels involved in customer value creation. The focus of this study is on actors and their interactions within seller and customer ecosystems; with specific attention to how value trajectories emerge, evolve, and are managed within key accounts. Specifically, this study investigates the following research questions: (1) What is the nature of expected value across hierarchical levels of a key account? (2) What orientations and practices emerge from these multilevel value expectations? and (3) What strategies can sales organizations use to moderate the value divergence that might influence relationship re-engagement?

Method and Data

Our research context is a key account relationship between an industrial service provider (e.g., foodservice, facility services) and a public education school district. The school district serves as a multi-unit customer organization, with hundreds of schools spread across a populated metropolitan area within the U.S. In our case setting, the customer ecosystem consists of individuals at two hierarchical levels (senior, on-site). The senior level is responsible for making strategic decisions (n=11). The on-site level is responsible for a spectrum of activities at individual schools (n=21). The seller ecosystem also consists of individuals at two hierarchical levels (senior, on-site). The senior level comprises a key account leadership team that played a

prominent role in acquiring the contract (n=6). The on-site level consists of regional support managers, as well as the field administrators and frontline personnel (n=16).

We organized our data using NVivo software, which allowed us to efficiently index, code, and search through our data. While we analyzed individual dimensions of every data point, we also paid attention to the contextual richness emerging through our constant comparative processes. We analyzed each interview following established qualitative practices and identified which ideas informants identified as critical to the phenomenon of interest.

Summary of Findings

We explicate how the commencement of the value creation cycle is characterized by divergent value expectations among customer ecosystem stakeholders, and how such expectations engender dissimilar orientations and value co-creation (VCC) practices on the part of senior-level and on-site customer personnel as the engagement cycle progresses. Our findings further elucidate how these divergent orientations and practices contribute to an emergent perception contour, with senior-level personnel having negative perceptions and their on-site counterparts having positive perceptions of the seller value creation endeavor. Given that the perception contour may jeopardize the seller's ability to re-engage with the customer, they must implement certain strategies during the VCC engagement cycle to mitigate the negative perceptions at the senior level and bridge the emergent perception contour. We conclude our findings by highlighting strategies that seller personnel may implement to address the perception contour.

Key Contributions

Extant key accounts management research lacks knowledge regarding simultaneous between-level integration (i.e., senior level and on-site personnel) and across-firm exchanges (i.e., customer-seller dyad). Relatedly, we identify non-monolithic value assessments that facilitate the

investigation of orientations and practices occurring at each level, as well as discrepancies within/between ecosystems that stem from mismatching perceptions. Results of the investigation therein contribute to a theory of VCC within a key account context. These two domains are closely interrelated, as the uniqueness of key accounts (e.g., large, long-term contract, episodic, vertical/lateral interactions between/within firms) creates an opportunity to expand the boundaries of VCC theory.

Managerially, while key accounts provide a strong context for the investigation of VCC given that they are resource-rich relationships which have the potential to provide a return on mutual relationship investments, it remains important for managers to carefully weigh the risks and benefits of providing co-created offerings and to ensure that the level of collaboration best fits their business model. Our research identifies ecosystem-directed sales strategies to harmonize negative senior-level perceptions, along with contingency factors with direct managerial relevance.

SALES TEAM REWARD DIVERSITY IN B2B SOLUTION SELLING: AMBIVALENT EFFECTS ON OPERATIONAL AND RELATIONAL TEAM SALES PERFORMANCE

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Keywords: sales management, sales teams, solution selling, reward diversity, sales team performance.

Description: This article examines how differences in the share of variable compensation within a sales team affect sales performance and interpersonal cohesion, while considering team characteristics as contingencies.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

The sales processes in business-to-business markets become increasingly complex due to the ubiquitous trends towards servitization and solution selling. Most companies rely on sales teams to account for this complexity. To ensure successful sales, companies face the challenging task to manage these teams. Given that companies frequently employ monetary incentives to motivate their salesforce and given that salespeople negotiate the structure of their compensation, certain rewards differences in sales teams may exist. We conceptualize

these differences as sales team reward diversity (STRD) which refers to differences in the variable compensation shares between team members.

Prior studies provide insights into how team rewards and team diversity affect performance and identify contingencies that moderate these effects (Friebel et al. 2017; Guzzo and Dickson 1996; Li, Lim, and Chen 2020; Milliken and Martins 1996; Williams and O'Reilly 1998). However, while scholars point to harmful effects of total pay disparities on team performance (Mathieu et al., 2008), "they are virtually silent about within-team incentive structure disparities" (Steinbach et al. 2017, p. 1714). Therefore, we explore how STRD affects the cohesion and the performance of a sales team and identify contingencies that enable companies to employ STRD to improve team sales performance.

Method And Data

We conducted our study in the business-to-business environment and collected data in a field setting. In cooperation with a globally leading manufacturer of products, systems and solutions for water supply and building services, we conducted an online survey and collected data from 167 salespeople with an average age of 42.7 years. 88% of the respondents were male. We matched the survey data with objective company data on salespeople's compensation from work contracts. Following an approach by Gupta et al. (2018), we consolidate salespeople's survey data at the team-level, which enabled us to assess team-related variables such as STRD.

We estimated the conceptual model using a path model in Stata 15. The model meets local and global fit criteria. We further confirm the robustness of our results with the inclusion of the gaussian copula method by Park and Gupta (2012) and provide supplemental analysis to ensure that our results are unaffected by endogeneity.

Summary of Findings

Following our conceptual model, we investigate the effect of STRD on team sales performance (operational path) and team identification (relational path). Moreover, we include team outcome interdependence, team's average variable compensation share, and team solution development ability as moderators of the relationships between STRD and both dependent variables in out model.

Starting with the operational path, we find that STRD exerts a positive effect on team sales performance. Increasing team's solution development ability moderates this effect and enhances team sales performance. On the relational path, we find no significant effect of STRD on salesperson team identification. However, contingencies strongly affect this relationship. Both team outcome interdependence and team's average variable compensation share have a significant, positive moderating effect on the relationship between STRD and salesperson team identification. In contrast, team solution development ability has a marginally significant, negative moderating influence.

Statement of Key Contribution

Our study contributes to marketing and sales research on team selling and incentive design. First, we address the call by Steinbach et al. (2017) and investigate within-team reward structure disparities. We find that team member's reward differences exert ambivalent effects on team sales performance and team identification and that these effects are highly contingent on team characteristics. Second, our study also contributes to general diversity research. Sales and marketing literature on sales team diversity primarily investigated diversity in terms of gender and ethnicity (Joshi, Liao, and Jackson 2006). In contrast, our study on STRD opens avenues for follow-up studies in the selling and diversity context. Third, our study addresses the lack of situational context in prior research (van Knippenberg, De Dreu, and Homan

2004). By this we contribute at the conceptual level by explaining the impact of STRD in different work contexts.

As STRD influences performance, it deserves managerial attention. Our results imply that managers should (1) compose teams with a rather high average variable compensation share, (2) strengthen outcome interdependence and (3) share knowledge within and between sales teams to enhance team's solution development ability.

References are available upon request.

SALESPERSON RESILIENCE IN CRISES

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Keywords: Resilience, Personal Selling, Sales Management, Crises, Loyalty

Description: This research offers guidance on how managers can cultivate resilience to improve salesperson effort in the face of adversity.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

How can we cultivate salesperson resilience and is it even cultivatable?

Method And Data

We gathered data from three separate sources, including a panel of sales representatives from a paid Qualtrics panel and two field studies. The data were analyzed using Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM) and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM).

Summary of Findings

We find that salesperson resilience is positively related to both effort and performance. Moreover, findings reveal variance in salesperson resilience over time. Hence, we explore drivers of resilience and find that company loyalty positively moderates the relationship between autonomy (that is, freedom on the job) and resilience. Moreover, a sense of belonging to co-workers and self-efficacy were positively related to salesperson resilience in all three studies. However, compensation motivation was not a significant driver of resilience in salespeople.

Statement of Key Contributions

As companies are struggling to keep salespeople during the “Great Resignation,” understanding what leads to salesperson resilience – the ability to bounce back from crises and emerge stronger than before – remains essential. The results of this study imply that resilience cannot be purchased, but it can be cultivated. We offer a better understanding of what levers are available to managers to create an environment that motivates resilience.

References are available upon request.

SHOULD SALESPEOPLE DISCLOSE THEIR SALES INCENTIVES? THE EFFECT OF INCENTIVE TRANSPARENCY ON SALES PERFORMANCE.

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Keywords: *voluntary disclosure, sales incentives, transparency, attribution, customer trust*

Description: This paper investigates whether voluntary disclosure of sales incentives can be an effective trust-building technique during sales encounters.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Customers' perception of salespeople is a major driver of customer loyalty and customers' purchase intention. Nevertheless, a considerable challenge for salespeople is that only 18% of the buyers conceive them as trusted advisors (Martin 2017). One explanation for such low trust levels may be related to salespeople's selling incentives and accompanying conflicts of interest between salespeople and customers. This situation clearly constitutes a dilemma for firms, because the incentives that they design to increase salespeople's efforts may simultaneously undermine the effectiveness of these efforts. The consequence is that many firms withhold such incentive information from customers (Weinhouse 2018). But is such secrecy a firm's best choice in times when customers feel an increased sense of entitlement for transparency?

This research examines whether voluntary disclosure of sales incentives can aid salespeople in increasing customer trust during sales encounters. We hypothesize that voluntary disclosure will actually increase customer trust, and the likelihood to follow a salesperson's recommendation because it will be perceived as a credible and kind gesture, as it may hurt the salesperson's interests, but at the same time benefits the customer. Drawing on attribution theories, we examine the consequences and contingencies of disclosure of sales incentives in a customer-salesperson interaction.

Method and Data

We have addressed our research question by using different types of data. First, we conducted telephone interviews with seventy-nine sales practitioners from different industries to get deeper insights from the sales managers and salespeople regarding their current practices and thoughts on the subject of incentive disclosure (Study 1). Second, we partnered

with a Swiss startup company in fashion industry, which recycles used cement bags from Cambodia to produce different products (e.g., backpacks, sneakers). Three research assistants (RA) worked as salespeople for the field experiment on three different Christmas markets in Switzerland. We randomize the conditions (disclosure vs. no-disclosure) within each shift for each of the Ras (Study 2).

Next, we conducted three online experiments in a used-car sales context, where the participants had to imagine that they had an interaction with a salesperson, who either or not discloses his sales incentives before his consultation. In the first online study (N=727), we tested the main effect of incentive disclosure on purchase intention and customer trust (Study 3). In the second study (N=1000), we tested our conceptual framework and the whole mediation process (Study 4). Finally, in our third study (N=1052), we tested for moderation effects (Study 5).

Summary of Findings

Findings of the practitioner's survey showed that approximately two in three respondents (67%, N=53/79) did not find it right for salespeople to voluntarily disclose their sales incentives to customers. Higher customers' perceived conflict of interest and lower customers' willingness to buy were the most mentioned reasons behind this belief. In order to analyze the data from the field experiment (N=177) we used a logistic regression model, which suggest that customers were more likely to purchase when they were exposed to incentive disclosure (N=74) than the customers who were in the control group (N=103) (β = 0.67, $p<.05$).

Similarly our first online experiment exhibited a significant positive main effect of incentive disclosure on purchase intention ($M_{\text{no disclosure}} = 3.78$; SD = 1.71 versus $M_{\text{disclosure}} = 4.08$; SD = 1.61; $t(725) = -2.16$, $p < .05$). Next, with a serial parallel mediation analysis we demonstrated that incentive disclosure evokes feelings of customer gratitude and attenuates

customers' perceived ulterior motives of the salesperson, both of which leads to higher customer trust and purchase intention. Finally, a moderated mediation analysis revealed that in order the incentive disclosure to be effective, it should be done proactively (i.e. salesperson's freewill) (vs. reactively, i.e. part of a company policy).

Key Contributions:

While the question how the customers react to salespeople's incentives is of utmost managerial importance, extant research does not provide any unequivocal guidance on the effect of voluntary incentive transparency. To our knowledge, our work is the first to examine consequences of salespeople's incentive disclosure on customer outcomes and sales performance. Our research contributes to a growing literature on information disclosure (e.g., costs) in sales contexts (Mohan, Buell and John 2020; Atefi et al. 2021) and extends it to financial incentives, by exploring customer's psychological mechanisms, underlying effects of disclosure on sales performance.

Our paper provides straightforward implications to managers and salespeople. In contrast to the current beliefs of sales practitioners, across a field study and three online experiments we showed that incentive disclosure actually helps salespeople build trust and in turn increase the customers' purchase intention, by increasing customers' gratitude and decreasing customers' perceived ulterior motives of the salesperson. The results further showed that the effects of incentive disclosure fundamentally depend on the level of the disclosed incentives and whether the disclosure is done proactively or reactively.

Social Media Adoption and B2B buying behavior: The mediating role of Knowledge capital and interfirm communication

Introduction

Globalization has allowed firms to extend their networks of interaction with customers and other firms. The technological advancements in communication and information technology have enabled firms to connect with their stakeholders (customers, suppliers, employees, shareholders and partners) in real time. Rivigo, a 21st century transport service firm, based in Gurugram, India, moved the traditional rudimentary trucking business in India to sophisticated technological platform, where the suppliers (truck drivers) and buyers (institutional customers) use technology to transact with each other (www.rivigo.com). Business to business (B2B) buying has also evolved from a routine activity of mere transaction of goods and finances than focus on building relationships and networks of buyer and seller firms (Steward et al., 2020).

Significant growth in B2B e-commerce transactions is evident from the recent reports published on Alizila (www.alizila.com), which reported gross merchandise volume (GMV) transactions to the tune of USD I trillion as on March 2020 on their e-commerce website Alibaba.com with a growth rate of 34% year on year. This clearly indicates the shift in B2B buying from a mere transaction to a networked approach using e-commerce portals. Internet has provided B2B firms a flexible information platform to connect and transact at reduced costs (Sharma, 2002). Opportunity to exchange information helps firms in building a social network which offers more impersonal, online and real-time communication overcoming geographic boundaries (Michaelidou, Theofania, & Christodoulides, 2011). Social media provide opportunity to B2B buyer and seller to interact with one another beyond geographical and temporal boundaries.

Social networking sites (SNS) under the ambit of social media provide opportunity for exchange of information through blogs, video/photo shares, podcasts and webinars. Indeed, social media is fast becoming an important part of firm's repertoire (Andzulis, Panagoupoulos, and Rapp,2012) and this adoption is helping sales force to build social capital that would "encourage customers to interact, engage and establish relationships with them" (Agnihotri, Kothandaraman, Kashyap and Singh,2012). As more and more buyer and seller firms transition

into the phases of digitalization and digital transformation, it would be interesting to uncover the layers of influence of social media on B2B buying and selling activities in general terms and specifically, it's impact on business customers buying decisions (Ancillai, Terho, Cardinali and Pascucci,2019). The literature has focused on impact of social media on buying decisions (Wang, Yu and Wei, 2012), the usage, perceived barriers and effectiveness metrics (Michaelidou, Theofania, & Christodoulides, 2011). To facilitate effectives communication between buyers and sellers, firms are adopting Social CRM approach that integrates social media technology tools and customer relationship management systems (Agnihotri, Trainor, Itani & Rodriguez,2017). In a recent paper, Agnihotri (2020) argues for exploration of sellers and customers behaviours at the intersection of social media and social capital in the context of business markets.

The present study draws from the social capital theory to understand the impact of social media adoption on various task and non-task elements during the buy-phase. The task elements are those which are directly related to the buying activity, like getting the lowest price, getting desired specifications, following organizational/legal/country specific policy for vendor selection etc., whereas non task elements are factors which are beyond buying activity such as achievement of personal needs and values through the buying process, informal off the task interactions, the method adopted for evaluation of seller and the effect of overall political climate (organizational/regional/national) (Webster and Wind, 1972). This study contributes to the existing theory on buying behaviour in the light of social media adoption by B2B firms. We specifically examine the mediating role of knowledge capital repository and inter-firm communication on the relationship between social media adoption by B2B seller firm to purchases intention of B2B buying centre.

Our present study contributes to the understanding the effects of social media adoption by seller firm on B2B buying, which has significant practical implications for marketing firms, as the results provide guidelines for managers to work on shifting focus from product promotion to creation of knowledge repository and increase inter-firm communication. This study also fills an important gap in the literature, which talks about the governance mechanism for social media adoption by seller to buying firm's purchase intentions. The theoretical framework extends our understanding on social media influence on b2b buying behaviour. In addition to that, in recent call for papers in top academic journals, scholars have suggested further research to identify the factors that drive B2B organizations to integrate social media in their operations, (Ancillai et al., 2019; Steward et al., 2019; Siamagka et al., 2015). The next

section reviews studies on B2B buying behaviour, social media in B2B and social capital in B2B buying. The subsequent section explains the method followed by discussion on the analysis, results and discussion. We conclude the article with section on few implications for managers, and limitations of our study.

Literature

B2B buying literature

Organizational buying processes are complex in nature and involve interactions in step wise processes involving several people across multiple departments with varied objectives (Johnston and Lewin, 1996). The traditional view of organizational buying comprises of 'task' and 'non task' elements in a buying centre, where the 'task' element is akin to the objective of getting minimum price, meeting the set specifications, meeting the policy objectives regarding supplier preference and anticipation of price fluctuation based on environmental factors (Webster & Wind, 1972). The 'non task' elements include factors like personal values and needs for reducing perceived risk. The buying behaviour model proposed by Webster and Wind (1972) describes organizational buying behaviour as interplay of individual, social, organizational and environmental factors. Johnston and Lewin (1996) further integrated the available studies on buying behaviour model and presented the integrated framework with nine constructs - environmental characteristics, organizational characteristics, purchase characteristics, seller characteristics, group characteristics, informational characteristics, participant's characteristics, conflict/negotiation characteristics and process characteristics. However traditional buying behaviour models are static in nature and contextualized in developed economies, so there is a need for conceptualizing models which are global, dynamic and also take into account the evolving technological advances (Lilien, 2016). Ninjacart, a B2B logistics company based in India, uses machine learning, data analytics and artificial intelligence driven decision making to manage the supply chain of dynamic farm produce and ship 1400 tonnes of perishable products within 12 hours to B2B customers (https://ninjacart.in/). In order to evaluate such service providers, organizations are going beyond the considerations of price and specifications.

B2B buying process is influenced by various factors, which include social, environmental, political and individual dimensions (Kaufmann et al., 2017; Lewin and Johnston, 1996; Makkonen et al., 2012; Juha and Pentti, 2008; Möller, 1985; Sheth, 1973; Webster and Wind, 1972). The interdependencies among buyer and seller also have and impact of the overall buying process. Wind & Thomas, (1980) listed five factor which give rise to this increasing

interdependency among organizations as: 1- Accelerating globalization; 2- Flattening network of organization; 3- Disrupting value chains; 4- Intensifying government involvement; 5- Continuously fragmenting customer needs. The impact of social media on B2B buying is evident from the fact that around 83% purchase executives reported using social media to get information about seller and around 92% of them acknowledged that it affected their decision-making process towards the purchase (Forbes, 2018). Over last few years, B2B buying process has progressed from a "transactional activity" to "tracking the buying journey activity" (Steward et al., 2019). The theoretical underpinning in understanding the buying process is also evolved from pure economic exchange to impact of technology in buying. Steward et al., 2019 have captured this evolution in B2B buying decision through top 30 theoretical models published from 1956 to 2018 (Refer Figure 1) and has strongly asserted that technological interventions like social media has affected the B2B buying process, predominantly by providing information and generating knowledge capital for buyers. The consumerization of B2B buying calls for relooking the entire purchase process from a fresh perspective which includes impact of technology, network and customer journey theory.

The linear process of need identification followed by purchase decision in B2B buying has now migrated to a non-systematic dynamic process (Barclay and Bunn, 2006; Lewin and Johnston,1996; Makkonen et al., 2012; Sheth,1973). Organizational buying is the process of purchasing for an organization by a group of people who assume different roles in the entire buying process, the combined buying behaviour is termed as organizational buying behaviour (Hill and Hillier, 1977; Sheth, 1973, 1996). However, the traditional frameworks relating to organizational buying behaviour (OBB) (see Robinson et al., 1967; Sheth, 1973; Webster and Wind, 1972) are still applied in twenty-first century studies (e.g., Barclay and Bunn, 2006; Lichtenthal and Shani, 2000; Moon and Tikoo, 2002; Verville and Halingten, 2003). The challenge facing modern research on OBB is to balance the views of buying as an intrafirm-oriented process and as an event embedded in the context of relationships and networks (Aarikka, Stenroos and Makkonen, 2014). Research on OBB has recognized the influence of the environment, organization, and of individual characteristics since its inception (see Lewin and Johnston, 1996; Robinson et al., 1967; Sheth, 1996; Webster and Wind, 1972). However, earlier studies primarily focused on the phases or stages of the buying process (e.g., Eriksson, 2008; Robinson et al., 1967), and the multilevel nature of the phenomenon was not exposed until the appearance of later OBB studies (e.g., Makkonen et al., 2012). Makkonen et al.(2012)

found that structural elements and situational events influence a buying process, but so too do the individuals in charge of organizational buying. However, Makkonen et al. (2012) were not able to capture the interplay and influential relationships between different levels and activities on those levels, because their research focused more on how those different levels affected the buying process itself. Moreover, the study in question was based on a small company, and therefore the findings are perhaps not applicable to large companies in traditional manufacturing industries. As prior B2B buying research recognizes it as a complex and multi-level process. However, previous research has not been able to capture how the interplay between activities on different levels forms OBB. OBB is accordingly defined here as a process that includes interrelated activities and interaction on multiple levels embedded in various enduring structures and situational events. Barclay and Bunn, (p 187, 2006) stated that buying activities refer to "the explicit actions carried out in the course of the decision process." However, several prior OBB studies (e.g., Barclay and Bunn, 2006; Moonand Tikoo,2002) limit buying activities to the four listed in Bunn's (1993) taxonomic framework: information searching, use of analysis techniques, proactive focus, and procedural control. Further, Makkonen et al. (2012) conceptualized the buying process as a set of intertwining activities and goals, but they refer to means or techniques when discussing activities. Buying activities also include means and refer to explicit actions taken during the buying process and the buying process is dynamic and non-systematic.

--Insert Table 1 here—

[The discussion in this section could have been structured based on the headings in the Table 1]

Impact of Social media in B2B Buying Behaviors

The rapid growth of information-related technologies has had a huge impact on how, when and where B2B marketers interact and do business with their customers (Schultz et al., 2012). Here, social media is seen as a great opportunity as it can provide two-way communication effectively, increase customer traffic to product information pages and provide insights from the marketplace (Agnihotri et al., 2016). Product specific content generation on social media for B2B markets is found to motivate existing customer to write favourable reviews and thus enhancing the credibility of the content (Huotari, Ulkuniemi, Saraniemi & Mäläskä, 2015). Therefore, social media should serve as a medium of social interaction and connectedness and

help the marketers in achieving enhanced customer engagement(Li, Larimo, & Leonidou,2021).

But do B2B customers actually value the efforts of marketers and use the social media for business purposes? Several theories have been used to explain the behaviour of the customers in general and the same applies to the B2B context (for various literature streams see, e.g., Sheth, 1996). Adoption of e-business practices by individuals and/or companies has been studied by using theory of planned behaviour, technology acceptance model (TAM), diffusion of adaption theory or task-technology fit model, for example (Bordonaba-Juste et al., 2012; Chong et al., 2009; Norzaidi et al., 2008; Pikkarainen et al., 2004). Based on the review of the existing literature, there are several different factors which affect customer behavior in B2B context. These include marketing mix-based factors such as product, price and used distribution channel, as well as all kinds of other elements such as economic, political and cultural elements and customer characteristics (cf. e.g. Hawkins et al., 2003). Despite recent advances in social media research in the B2B context that report customer satisfaction as an outcome (see Agnihotri, Dingus, Hu & Krush,2016), the extant literature fails to capture its impact on customer engagement. This is surprising as in the B2C context this remains a top priority research item (Vieira, Almeida, Agnihotri, Silva & Arunachalam,2019). In the context of social media, customer engagement can be defined "as the extent to which the organization's important customers are active in using social media tools (Guesalaga,2016, p.75). In this study, we study several factors which affect B2B customers' use of social media for procurement purposes. Our inquiry incorporates factors both from the personal and organizational level, i.e. social media private and personal characteristics such as age and gender as well as organizational culture and the behavior of peers in the team.

Social Capital in B2B buying

Social media is defined as "the goodwill available to individuals or groups. Its source lies in the structure and content of the actor's social relations" (Adler & Kwon, 2002).

Social capital has been defined as resources inherent in social relations, which facilitate collective action (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998; Tsai & Ghoshal, 1998). The resources include trust, norms and networks of association representing any group which gathers consistently for a common purpose. The core tenet of social capital theory is the fact that social relationships / ties are productive resources (Chiu, Hsu, & Wang, 2006).

The advent of internet provides the necessary infrastructure and encouragement for generation of social capital. However, the aspect of de-individualizing effect relaxes social norms. Since norms are the critical resources for generation of social capital, the de-individualizing effect may erode social capital. Social capital factors, which include social interaction ties, trust, norm of reciprocity, identification, shared language, and shared vision, lead to both in terms of higher quality, quantity of knowledge sharing (Putnam, 2001).

In a recent study, Wang, Pauleen, & Zhang, (2016) have identified the effect of Social Media Applications (SMA) on B2B business performance and found them to enhance firms marketing, innovation and collaboration. Social media extends social support and affiliation and thus contribute to social capital (Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2012; Hampton, Lee & Her, 2011).

Method

We have adopted a qualitative approach for exploring the various components which capture the effect of social networking sites (SNS) on B2B buying. A qualitative approach, has been suggested as the appropriate method for investigation of complex issues in marketing, where a definitive theory is missing in literature (Flint et al. 2012; Ulaga and Eggert 2006). Grounded theory approach involves defining a theory for a phenomenon where theories are either unavailable or lack sufficient details for explanation. It allows the researcher to explain a phenomenon and propose a theory based on the narratives of the participants involved in that phenomenon (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). In response to the call for further research in the area of social media integration into B2B (Siamagka et al., 2015: Call for Paper IMM 2021), grounded theory allows to capture the perspective of the various stakeholders involved and helps in understanding the effect of SNS on B2B buying.

Sample and Data Collection

In line with the approach adopted for grounded theory development, for this study we conducted interviews with B2B purchase managers, influencers in buying centre, sales managers and commercial managers. We selected our sample by utilizing a theoretical sampling plan. Theoretical sampling is useful in qualitative examinations as it involves selecting informants with intimate and extensive knowledge pertinent to the research questions (Strauss and Corbin 1998), and it has been established as an effective practice in many marketing contexts (Kohli and Jaworski 1990; Malshe and Sohi 2009; Tuli et al. 2007). All the subjected were at various levels in the organization to capture a more general opining. We selected informants (buyer-seller) from industries and companies involved in significant

exchange volumes in a typical B2B buying and selling situations. Organizations were selected from different sectors for generalizability of results. Following B2B buying context were selected for our study: Education, IT and ITES, large public sector manufacturing units, light industrial operations, purchasing for consumer durable manufacturing. We selected the respondents through solicitations of professional contacts and built upon this initial sample using a snowball technique to gather further data from referred participants who are involved in buying or selling activities in a B2B context. We received confirmation for 25 interviews. However, while conducting we reached theoretical saturation reached after 19 interviews, as we were getting similar responses. To address our research questions, we needed to interview B2B marketing and sales managers and executives involved in the buying or selling activity.

Respondents were further encouraged to discuss the topic in as much detail as possible and the interviewer inquired with follow-up questions in an iterative manner to expand insight on points raised (Tuli et al. 2007). This process allowed for participants to shape the discovery process and emergent theory. The interviews were all conducted by the researcher in person. They were recorded and transcribed verbatim.

We have conducted the analysis based on the 19 representative interviews (refer Table). As per Creswell et al., 2007, (p. 126), the optimum requirement is “20 to 30 individuals to develop a well saturated theory”. The interviews were conducted over a period of 10 months by one of the authors in order maintain the consistency. All the interviews were conducted in-person face to face interactions and were recorded. The interviews lasted between 35 minutes to 50 minutes. The interviewee was asked about their opinion on the impact of social media on B2B buying behaviour and their recommendations on how organization can make use of social media in making buying decision.

All our respondents were representing significantly large organizations (more than 1000 employees, turnover more than INR 500 Cr.) in India. Consistent with theoretical sampling, we also interviewed participants from additional industries in both the manufacturing and service sectors to facilitate greater confidence in the robustness of the data (Creswell et al., 2007).

Further, we interviewed participants at multiple levels within the organization. This allowed us to explore this topic using perspectives from participants with varying levels of seniority and experience. A key inclusion criterion, however, was that regardless of their hierarchical position, informants had to have been the point person in their organization addressing the

breach. This was to ensure the informants' knowledgeability and involvement with the phenomena being investigated.

All the interviews were conducted in person one of the author, author notes were supplemented with the recorded data.

--*Insert Table 2—*

Propositions

Social Media Adoption and Knowledge Capital Repository

As per the theory of organizational level knowledge, B2B buying unit knowledge is defined as "an upward spiral process, starting at the individual level moving upto the collecting level and then to organizational level" (Nonaka, 1994, p.20). Buying unit knowledge assimilation occurs via different media including social media and an individual in the buying centre exchanges information with others in order to create an enhanced understanding of the market for the collective group (Gustafson et al., 2019). This knowledge is crucial for buying centre members to evaluate an offering and take decisions accordingly. Typically, buyer organizations keep a diverse group in the buying centre to cater the requirements of all business functions. Cross departmental team pose their specific requirements which if fulfilled is beneficial to the entire organization. Each member picks up information relevant to their domain and then looks for its fulfilment in the seller's offering. Therefore, seller needs to provide information keeping in mind the interests of different departments involved in the buying centre.

--- *Insert Table 3*----

---*Insert Figure 2*---

In intra-firm relationships, knowledge exchange is often avoided due to the fear of knowledge leakage (Nielsen & Nielsen, 2009). Therefore, knowledge protection is one of the barriers in knowledge sharing. On the other hand, literature also suggests that knowledge exchange and knowledge protection are not complimentary, rather they can be implemented simultaneously (Yang, Fang, Fang, & Chou, 2014). Social media provides firms an opportunity to make their presence felt through their contents on various social networking sites. Owing to the inference of internet as a technology, the perceived usefulness is an important factor in driving social media adoption (Siamagka et al., 2015). As described by Davis (1989), the perceived usefulness is the degree of believability about the usefulness of technology in

enhancing the performance. The same transpires to the perceived usefulness of the internet based social media which attracts the users to adopt it due to its perceived usefulness. In addition to that, social media adoption is also driven by the need of image enhancement (Siamagka et al., 2015), which ensures that relevant and appropriate content is shared by contributors of the knowledge. Social media information with higher engagement provides rich information to buyer which eventually help them develop their purchasing expertise (Gustafson et al., 2020).

Therefore, social media provides a shared knowledge resource, which can be used by potential buyers and sellers. In the context of suppler-vendor relationship, one of the respondents, a purchase manager of a large Indian furniture company echoed the same and quoted:

> We have given them (industry peers) access to our web portals, where we give them industry updates like updates on commodity, some information, to show how the economy is going to move, so some updates are useful to the suppliers as well…

Knowledge shared on virtual communities have been found to be useful for community related outcomes. Chiu et al., (2006) found community related outcome expectation to be positively related to both quality and quantity of the knowledge shared. So, when the outcomes are for the larger interest of a group, the fear of knowledge leakage is often care of which ultimately resulting into quality knowledge sharing in virtual communities. While our discussion with the sales manager of a firm engaged in B2B selling of industrial furniture, we came across following comment that actually sums up above narrative quite aptly:

> For the recent product launch, I will put information on Facebook and LinkedIn for people who could not attend the event, and for dealers and customer so that they get to see photographs of the new product…

Above elaboration points to the fact that social media adoption enables firms to upload and share relevant business information for various stakeholders on different social media platforms. Such information acts as a knowledge repository for stakeholders. Based on the discussion, we propose that:

P1: Social media adoption by buyers and sellers in B2B firms facilitates the creation of knowledge capital repository.

Social Media adoption to Inter-firm communication

Literature has investigated the role of communication in buyer-seller relationship performance and found it to be a construct of critical importance (Chong, Shafaghi, Woollaston, & Lui, 2010; Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Wang et al., 2016). Social media presents a platform for real-time, two-way communication (Agnihotri, Dingus, Hu, & Krush, 2016) between buyer and sellers. Social media sites have been found to facilitate identification of business partners (Michaelidou et al., 2011b). The content posted by firms on social media allows potential buyer and supplier to access them make targeted sales pitch. The real-time, two way communication platform allows buyers and sellers interact effectively and understand each other's expectations in a better way. This further reduces the selling / buying cycle time and enhances sales/purchase efficiency.

This fact establishes that social media adoption by organizations would not attract the fear of knowledge leakage, in-fact where the outcome expectation of a group (buying centre) or community is concerned, targeted adoption would foster inter-firm communication. The same is evident form the statement by one of the purchase manager of a large Indian conglomerate,

> *R3- We create group for communication, for vendor cluster and business excellence we create groups which is for notifications, meetings, and competitions. We use WhatsApp extensively for such purposes.*

As stated by Yang et al., (2014), interactive learning and shared interpretation facilitates knowledge exchange, which further affirms the role of social media adoption in increasing inter-firm communication. Social media provides avenues for interactive learning through various social media applications (SMA) like WhatsApp and WeChat. This fact has been echoed by one of the purchase manager dealing exclusively with international vendors.

> *R2- .....almost 80% products are imported from China, around 50-60% of our communication with them is on WeChat or WhatsApp. The exchange of e-mail has reduced and WhatsApp and WeChat has taken over. Communication has become faster….*

So social media adoption allows firms to engage in a two-way, interactive communication, which provides avenues for joint learning. The content posted by one firm also helps the other firm in understanding their expectations and approach them.

---*Insert Table 4*---

---*Insert Figure 3*---

Therefore, our second proposition is

P2: Social Media adoption would facilitate inter-firm communication

Social Media adoption to Purchase intention of B2B buying centre

Organizational buying is a complex process involving numerous members within the organization (Johnston & Lewin, 1996; Webster & Wind, 1972). The buying centre comprises of individuals representing different departments and these individuals assumes different roles within the buying centre. The collective buying behaviour is an amalgamation of their individual opinions. The intentions of a buying centre depend on certain task and non-task elements, which directly or indirectly affect the buying decisions. Literature has identified various factors affecting B2B buying behaviour, which include individual, social and environmental factors in addition to the core organizational factors (Bonoma & Johnston, 1978; Johnston & Lewin, 1996; Lewin & Donthu, 2005; Webster & Wind, 1972). It can be safely deduced that purchase intentions of the buying group are aggregate summation of individual's intentions. Usage of social media for private purpose has its effect on business use also (Keinänen & Kuivalainen, 2015), which substantiates the fact that adoption of Social media usage has effect of on various business activities including organizational buying and selling. This is evident from the statement of the B2B Sales Manager of an Indian furniture company,

R 13-…suppose somebody is a manager say in NTPC and suppose there is this purchase manager xyz.....he is purchasing for his personal usage but after using and having good experience of home item or kitchen furniture or any product, he can recommend the same to the purchase officer NTPC because the people are the same….

As per an estimate around 2/3rd of the world population uses one or the other form of social media on internet (https://blog.sysomos.com/2016/04/21/how-many-people-use-social-media). The majority of social media users are youth less than 40 years of age. In interfirm relationships, the buyers and sellers are becoming younger, which results in increased usage of social media usage in business transactions also (Marshall, Moncrief, Rudd, & Lee, 2012). Also as stated earlier, in case of collective outcomes, more quality knowledge is shared in virtual communities (Chiu et al., 2006). Social media adoption also facilitates building opinion about a firm and positively influences brand performance (Rapp, Beitelspacher, Grewal, & Hughes, 2013), which ultimately leads to positive purchase intentions.

This is also evident from the statement of the senior B2B Sales Manager interviewed,

R-13….for well-established brand Social networking sites may not be that useful but for smaller and unknown brands, it may increase the reach. It may increase their brand value.…

Buyers reduce their risk by purchasing from vendors with a strong brand image and since social media adoption of seller firm helps in establishing a brand.

Therefor our third proposition is,

P3: Social Media adoption would facilitate building the purchase intention of the B2B buying centre.

Moderating effect of stage of relationship on Social Media adoption to Purchase intention of B2B buying centre

Relationship stage in buyer-seller relationship is of critical importance, as the different exchange strategies rule during different stages of the relationship (Dwyer, Schurr, & Oh, 1987). Literature has various conceptualization of the relationship phases (Dwyer et al., 1987; S. D. Jap & Ganesan, 2000; Palmatier, Houston, Dant, & Grewal, 2013; Ring & Ven, 1994; Zhang, Watson, Palmatier, & Dant, 2016) , for this paper we have regrouped the stages into two broad categories as – Early stage (including exploration buildup and similar stages) and Mellowed stage (Maturity, decline and similar stages). During early stages of the buyer-seller relationships, the communication between the firms remains very formal (Harmeling, Palmatier, Houston, Arnold, & Samaha, 2015), whereas during later stages when the relationship is more matured and relational norms are developed, the firms interact more formally as well as informally on business issues and otherwise (Jap & Ganesan, 2000).

It has also been established that communication is one of the most effective strategies for firms to move from transactional phase to transitional phase (Zhang et al., 2016). The adoption of social media during early stages would not affect the purchase intentions significantly, which is evident from the quality control manager of a large automobile multinational.

R 8- …look i don't think it has much influence on buying in this regard because like in our department, where we work there is a very structured process, at the time of initiating the buying process and everything, social media does not have much influence..

Whereas for established suppliers, social media adoption enable more bilateral communication and develop relational norm over contractual agreement among the firms. Relational norms have been found to be associated positively to lower bargaining costs in exchange relationships (Artz & Brush, 2000). Lower bargaining cost would definitely lead to higher purchase intentions, as firms always lookout to minimize the auxiliary costs associated an order. Literature suggests that buyer-seller relationship are dynamic in nature and they move across a lifecycle from early stages to matured stages and ultimately to decline and dissolution stage (S. Jap & Anderson, 2007; S. D. Jap & Ganesan, 2000; Palmatier, Dant, & Grewal, 2007; Ring & Ven, 1994; Robert, Paul H., & Sejo, 1987; Terawatanavong, Whitwell, & Widing, 2007). The governance structure also varies between buyer and seller during the lifecycle and it ranges from contractual governance during the early stages to relational and collaborative governance in the later stages of relationship (Huang & Chiu, 2017).

---*Insert Table 5*---

---*Insert Figure 4*---

This was also emphasized by one of the purchase managers during the interview as,

R 2-… Regular suppliers even sometimes use whatsapp to communicate official information to speed-up the process, which they later regularize through e-mail, but with newer suppliers, we avoid exchanging such information on whatsapp, they use e-mail to communicate.

This leads to our proposition that,

P4: Stage of relationship between firms would moderate the relationship between social media adoption and purchase intentions such that social media adoption reduces purchase intentions when relationship is in early stages, and it enhances intention when relationship is in mellowed stages.

Purchase intention to Purchase behaviour due to social media adoption

One of the prominent feature of Web 2.0 is collaborative and 2 way communication. Social media is one of important manifestation of web 2.0, where two parties can interact and

collaborate. Rapp et al., (2013) found that social media usage has a contagion effect on buyers and sellers, which grows with mutual adoption. This fact establishes that adoption ultimately converts into behaviour due to the contagion effect. One of the purchase manager of a large furniture company also reiterated the same notion during the interview,

> *.....If everybody in the organization has accepted WhatsApp as a communication medium then it is ok…see, if your one vendor uses it effectively, others also follow…..*

The exchange environment is governed by the type of technologies firms use. Buyers' and sellers' propensity to adopt social media depends on the usefulness, usability, utility, learnability and memorability perceptions of the social media sites (Lacka & Chong, 2016). This establishes that social media adoption within exchange partners is contagious and depends on their usability, which means that this is also one of the factors influencing purchase intentions. In manufacturer and intermediary exchange context the effect of web presence has been found to have a positive effect on manufacturers' reliance on the intermediary (Chung, Chatterjee, & Sengupta, 2012). This was echoed by one of the B2B Sales manager also during the interview,

> *……there is a use of social media because ….we have B2B dealers, B2C kitchen galleries, so these kind of people what they do to expand their network….. whether it is corporate or home/ retail customer, people open their own page ..like one of our dealer has opened a page on Facebook,*

This drives to the fact that social media adoption depends on the usability aspects of the information, which ultimately drives purchase intentions. The above argument leads to our next proposition –

P5: Social media adoption leads to positive purchase intention which ultimately results into purchase behaviour.

Moderating effect of authenticity of knowledge capital on purchase intention due to social media adoption to Purchase behaviour

Content shared on social media can be either user (consumer) generated content (UGC) or firm generated content (FGC). Literature has identified Word of mouth (WOM) (Godes 2011), product quality (Tirunillai and Tellis 2014), presence and reputation (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, & Silvestre, 2011) as some of the most important antecedents of UGC's. On the other hand, FGC are in the form of content posted by firms on their webpages, portals or on

public social media sties. FGCs provide information to customer about product offerings, product promotions, provide a platform for bilateral communication and enhance brand image. For experienced, networked and technology savvy customers, the content posted by firms on social media has been found to be positively associated with profitable purchases (Kumar, Bezawada, Rishika, Janakiraman, & Kannan, 2016). This was also evident from the statement of the purchase manager,

....kind of channel partners we have, be it B2B dealers or B2C kitchen galleries, they have their own page on social networking sites, say Facebook or LinkedIn and upload information about product, their completed projects….. they get feedbacks directly from the customer on those pages…

The arguments on the similar analogy can be also given for B2B customers, where more experience, networked and technologically competent firms must also gain through social media adoption. However, authenticity of the information is barrier in conversion from decision making to actual buying. As stated by one of the respondents,

...so, where the risk is high, they want to touch the material, feel the material… then only they will go for further decision otherwise. Till date most of the people fear to buy electronic items from online

---Insert Table 6---

---Insert Figure 5---

A similar statement given by one of the B2B sales manager about the authenticity of information was,

Customer search products on internet, take help from friends etc. but they don't look into LinkedIn, Facebook etc. Customers don't trust information posted on social media.

So, the authenticity of information enhances the relationship between purchase and purchase behaviour, the more authentic the information, the more likely chance of conversion of intention to actual purchase behaviour. This led to the proposition,

P6: Authenticity of knowledge capital would moderate the relationship between Purchase behaviour and purchase intentions. The more the authenticity of the content, the stronger would be the relationship between intentions and behaviour.

Moderating effect of level of familiarity with social media on purchase intention due to social media adoption to Purchase behaviour

To promote their products and services on social media, firms are increasingly using "Social CRM" for managing their relationships with customers (Malthouse, Edward, Haenlein, Skiera, Wege, and Zhang, 2013). The effectiveness such relationship management of depends on how well the customer uses the information posted by firms through firms generated contents (FGC) (Kumar et al., 2016). Usage of such an information by firms requires certain degree of familiarity with the structure of social networking sites (SNS). This implies that a knowledgeable customer would be able to reap the benefits of FGC more effectively. This was also evident by the following statement given by a quality control manager who acts as an influencer in buying centre,

> *……Earlier we use to send various reports in hard copy, now we send it on a given format and the report is automatically generated. But for doing that people should know how to use it. In some remote branches, most of the people do not know how to use it and hence they find it less useful, similarly if people do not know how to use social media for official work, it would be just a waste of time….*

This clearly states that familiarity with social media is critical in promoting its usage. Also from the contagion theory's perspective, the usage would ultimately lead to more usage, and intentions would convert into behaviours. So, the level of familiarity is one deciding factor which would aggravate or alleviate the relationship between purchase intentions and purchase behaviour.

---Insert Table 7---

---Insert Figure 6---

This leads to our next proposition-

P7: ***Level of familiarity with social media would moderate the relationship between Purchase behaviour and purchase intentions. The higher the familiarity with social media, the stronger would be the relationship between intentions and behaviour.***

Conceptual Framework

---Insert Figure 1---

Discussion

Grewal et al., 2015 has asserted in their recent work that in comparison to the sequential 'buyphase' model, the modern buying processes comprise of four ongoing simultaneous processes – implementation, evaluation, reassessment and confirmation. Social media enables the processes to be processed contemporaneously. Moreover, the dyadic transactions in B2B buying are dependent on the networks of both buyers and sellers and hence the interdependency must be considered in the buying models. Social media facilitates to understand such interdependencies through its impact on various elements of the buying model. Social media provides the critical information to assist buying centre and facilitate the buying process by providing intangible and tangible benefits (Gustafson et al., 2019). However, there is a scarcity of research investigating the role of social media from the perspective of B2B buying centre. We propose a conceptual model with identifies enablers which assists the buying process. The enablers identified in this study can be grouped into the verticals of *Knowledge* (Knowledge repository capital and authenticity of knowledge capital) and *communication* (Inter-firm communication and level of familiarity), where social media has influence on both the verticals.

Availability of information on demand helps buyers evaluate offerings from multiple sellers. Social media posts on networking sites about organizations product and process innovations help buyer select products and services which fulfil their demands. Increasingly demanding customers are driving firms to be more competitive and customer centric. Innovative offerings are among the most prominent ways to create competitive advantage in the market.

Business buying is a complex activity and the buying unit members search for information in order to select a product which is best suited for their requirement at a reasonable cost. During organizational buying, each member of the buying unit strives add to the value stream and reduce risk associated with their specific roles. In order to do that, buying centre members seek information about the seller through multiple mediums (Shipley and Howard, 1993). Social media acts as an important source of information, be it through the Linkedin, Facebook pages or Youtube videos. The nature of information available on social media helps buying centre members to take a decision. Research conducted by Elevation Marketing, a pioneering B2B marketing agency, claims that around 72% times, institutional buyers use social media to look for products and solutions which might fulfil their needs. Developments in selling approach advocates the benefits of social selling, which includes leveraging digital social platforms for promoting products, putting information related to product and connecting with customers (Holliman and Rowley, 2014). Information provided by selling firms are useful for the buyers

in the purchase process. Our study further strengthens this argument that social media facilitates B2B buyers and sellers in creating a knowledge capital repository, which is beneficial to both of them. Firms are increasingly using digital mediums for communication with their customers, partner firms, vendors and other significant stakeholders (Wang et al, 2016). Social media provides real-time, two-way communication platform to potential B2B buyers and sellers and hence facilitate the purchase process. The availability of instant information and ease of communication makes social media an important platform for sellers and buyers in the purchase process. Convenience provided by social media to B2B buyers in terms of information, communication, selection of alternatives, evaluation of vendor reputation and to get an idea of the extended network of supplier firms affects their purchase intentions, which is one of the major findings of our study as well. Our study also uncovered the fact that the effect of social media adoption on the purchase intentions as the firms progress in their relationship. From a relationship life cycle perspective, firms in the beginning of a relationship maintain contractual working structure and adopt formal mode of communication (Dwyer et al, 1987; Jap and Gansean, 2000). As firms find success in the early stages, they progress in the relationship and move to a more relational and informal working structure, which is governed by relational norms over and above the contractual norms (Jap and Anderson 2007; Huang, Chiu & Chen 2015). On the similar lines, we also found that the relationship between social media adoption and purchase intention varies as per the stage of relationship, for early stages it remains predictably low, whereas for matured stages we predict the effect to be higher. Lastly our study discusses the effect of authenticity of knowledge capital and level of familiarity on seller firms' decision to adopt social media and buyer firms purchase intentions. Credibility and authenticity of information available on social media has emerged out as a grave concern. Buying firm places higher value to communications on trusted and reputed social media platforms. Role of influencers, followers and the sponsored content made available on social media platform by the supplier firm plays a major role in making a purchase choice for the buyer. In a recent study, it was found that around 91% buyers were of the opinion of awarding the seller brand for its authenticity by purchasing their products, making in investment in their firm and endorsing their brand (Scott, 2020). Our study also corroborates to similar findings and finds that authenticity moderates the relationship between purchase intention (generated due to social media adoption of seller) and actual purchase behaviour. The second moderator proposed for this relationship was level of familiarity of buying centre members with social media. Since B2B buying involves a formal process of each buying centre member evaluating the supplier's proposal as per their departmental needs and requirement,

members of decision making unit tend to rely on authentic and documented facts during supplier evaluation. The entry of millennials in the buying centre allows them to use social media to evaluate the supplier firms, whereas the "veterans" of buying centre still finds it difficult to rely on social media. We found this happening due to two reasons. First, individuals who are not familiar with social media tend to either accept all the claims made on social media or completely reject it. The inability to filter out relevant information and make a distinction between a genuine and sponsored content drives some buying centre members to avoid social media. Second, in anticipation of the monetary consequences of a bad purchase decision, they tend to become over cautious while using information provided on social media.

Implication for theory and practice

Our qualitative study investigates the adoption of social media on buying behavior of organizations, and the mediating impact of knowledge capital and interfirm communication. We have also investigated the moderating impact of authentication of knowledge capital and familiarity of buying centre members with social media. The study has several important managerial implications. As more and more business marketers adopt social media in their buying-related activities and tasks, the impact of social media as a source of information and influence in decision making process cannot be over-emphasized. Adoption is the first step which has been completed by most firms, but realizing its benefits would require managers to move to the next level as our framework suggests. Social media thus helps reduce not just the related transactional costs in the buying process, but enables higher effectiveness in several aspects of the buying cycle. From the perspective of Webster and Wind (1972) model of buying centre, the task elements of price discovery, setting of specifications, supplier search, and information on other aspects of environmental factors is enhanced with better use of social media platforms including e-commerce sites. Social media as well as e-commerce has helped managers to reduce their costs of supplier search, as well as information search costs. Several large Indian B2B firms such as Tata Steel have collaborated with other peer organizations to use social media platforms for consolidated buying to realise huge benefits in terms of turnaround times and cost efficiencies. Our mediated model of impact of social media platforms on organizational buying highlights the importance of creating and leveraging knowledge capital in the organizations. Knowledge exists in various disparate information pieces and collating and consolidation of information pieces into useful and determinable knowledge can help organizations to create, develop and leverage knowledge

capital to make their organizational buying more effective as well as efficient. More often the organizational divisions (or departments) as well as units in buying centres are fragmented and operate as disparate siloed units. Social media adoption can help integrate knowledge across these siloed functional approaches of decision making to enhance knowledge creation and sharing across all decision-making managers in the buying centre, including the top management. Top management can create collaborative culture, tools and incentives to facilitate knowledge-based content creation, based on collective action and feedback loops.

Just as intra-organizational knowledge repository helps to foster collaborative creativity and development and use of knowledge capital, much in the same way, inter-organizational communication can help organizations to bridge knowledge and information gaps with their suppliers, and partners, through more effective information exchange to reduce information asymmetries, which not only enables reduction of transaction costs, but also helps foster greater trust with partners, suppliers and other collaborators in the organizational buying cycle. Thus, higher social media adoption leads to stronger buying intentions, especially in the later stages of organizational lifecycle. Thus, large established firms in the market tend to gain more from social media adoption than the less established and new firms. Managers of these established firms thus can expend efforts and time to build in their organization the culture and strategy of creating and leveraging the knowledge capital repository and enable inter-firm communication with help of their partner firms to engender better outcomes in the buying process.

However, any use of technology, including the social media platforms and sites must be balanced with managerial discretion. Our study argues and thereby implies that managers must use their discretion in terms of authenticating the knowledge capital that is used for buying decisions. If existent knowledge capital is authenticated before its use, then it leads to higher purchase benefits for the buying firms. Much in the same way, its important that managers involved in taking decisions in the buying centre must be familiar with social media use to leverage greater benefits. Higher familiarity of managers and other decision makers with social media use would help the firms to extract greater firm value, in terms of cost savings, lower information search costs, more effective supplier search, among other benefits.

Our study also has several theoretical implications. Our study shows qualitative insights to support the suggested framework that extends the knowledge frontiers on buying centre in

B2B firms. As our understanding of OBB expands from Webster and Wind model to Johnston and Lewis model, we must also incorporate the adoption and leverage of social media platforms in organizational buying. We contribute to theory in terms of drawing on social capital theory to conceptualize the impact of social media adoption and use on various tasks and non-task elements of buying cycle. Probably for the first time in business market literature, we have theorised the mediating impact of knowledge capital repository and inter-firm communication on the relationship between social media adoption by b2b firms to purchases intention of b2b buying centre. We also theorise the moderating impact of social media familiarity and authenticity of knowledge capital within the firm which has been scantily studied in literature.

Limitations and future research directions

Similar to all other studies, our study too has several limitations. First, our study is qualitative in nature which also makes the posited propositions more of qualitative nature. Given the exploratory nature of qualitative studies, we cannot claim any form of empirical generalization. This must be tested in future studies. However, our framework although useful contribution in terms of managerial and theoretical lens, must also be empirically tested for more robust results. Second, our study has been conducted with only 19 managers in limited number of large organizations in India. Our results must be corroborated with firms in other countries (with possibly larger sample of managers and other key respondents), especially those which are in different stages of organizational lifecycle, and of different firm size. We also implore researchers to use multiple respondents in each firm in all qualitative studies so that theoretical triangulation and validation becomes stronger. We therefore suggest that future B2B research should empirically validate our propositions. Future research can also explore other possible moderating impacts on the proposed framework. Our general appeal to all B2B researchers is to promote more qualitative research on buying centre in organizations of all sizes and across different organizational life stages so that our extant knowledge frontier on buying centre is pushed ahead faster. The history of knowledge development on buying centre, although well developed, yet is quite checkered, and thus needs much greater attention from B2B researchers in future, especially in the light of the speed of technological adoption such social media platforms and e-commerce sites. B2B literature needs to move faster to catch up with technological innovation in the organizational buying domain to make our knowledge useful as well as contemporary for B2B managers across the world. In this aspect, IMM should continue to show the thought leadership in B2B knowledge creation.

Tables and Figures

Table 1: Dominant Theoretical Perspectives, adapted from Steward et al., 2019

Theme	Significant works
Transaction and exchange based	Alderson, 1976; Cyert et al 1956; Webster Jr. 1965
Situation based	Robinson et al., 1967; McVey, 1963; Leigh and Rrthans 1984; Anderson, Chu and Weitz, 1987; Bunn, 1993
Influence based	Webster and Wind, 1972; Hill, 1972; Sheth, 1973; Samli, Grewal and Mathur, 1988
Response based	Choffray and Lilien, 1978; Cardozo, 1983
Relationship based	Hakansson, 1982; Dwyer, Schurr and Oh, 1987; Johnston and Lewis, 1996
Network based	Axelsson and Easton, 1992; Hakansson and Snehota, 1995
Customer journey based	Shapiro, Rangan and Sviokla, 1997; MacMillan and McGrath, 1997; Richardson, 2010; Edelman and Singer, 2015

Table 2: Interviewee details

Sr. No.	Industry	Designation	Role	Experience of respondent (in years)
R1	Education	Purchase Manager	Buyer	20
R2	Consumer durables	Purchase Manager	Buyer	10
R3	Consumer durables	Purchase Manager	Buyer	5
R4	Consumer durables	Purchase Manager	Buyer	3
R5	Consumer durables	Commercial Manager	Buyer	25
R6	Defence	Purchase Manager	Buyer	12
R7	Defence	Purchase Manager	Buyer	12
R8	Automobile	Vendor Development Manager	Buyer	12
R9	Automobile	Quality Manager-Outsourcing	Influencer	12
R10	Energy	Manager	Influencer	10
R11	Energy	Manager	Influencer	12
R12	Consumer durables	Service Manager	Influencer	8
R13	Industrial Products	Key Account Manager	Seller / Influencer	4
R14	Industrial Products	Channel Manager	Seller / Influencer	12
R15	Industrial Products	Channel Manager	Seller / Influencer	18
R16	Industrial Products	Regional Manager	Seller	12

R17	Information technology	National Manager	Seller	12
R18	Office Furniture	Key Account Manager	Seller	10
R19	Office Equipment	Channel Manager	Seller	10

Table 3: Social Media Adoption and Knowledge Capital Repository

• *Aggregate theoretical dimension*: **Knowledge Capital Repository**	• *Second order theme*: Content generation
• *First order category:*	**Representative data**
A. Industry Information	**A1. I am following a few company pages on LinkedIn but that's just to get information** **A2. We do check the profile of company and people sometime on SNS for information** **A3. Now a days there is some effect of social media as buyers are aware about competition's products and reviews through various sites, LinkedIn, Facebook etc**
B. Collaboration for collective benefit	**B1. On our vendor page, we upload our newsletter, some updates on the commodity fluctuations and future projection about the industry and economy as a whole.** **B2. I mean to say, they can put about their product and services on social media, any article or news related to their product or industry can be shared on LinkedIn. This will bring visibility and if any customer browses that you will get noticed. So social media gives a platform for mutual benefit, which gives you an edge over the competition.**
C. Feedback through bilateral communication	**C1. During the feedback one gets to know what really matters to consumers. That may be related to product, marketing strategy of company philosophy.** **C2. We have given them login ids so we have given them access to the portal and feedback facility is there so they can write for example some payment related issues,**

Table 4: Social Media Adoption and Inter-firm Communication

• *Aggregate theoretical dimension*: **Inter-firm communication**	• *Second order theme*: Information exchange
• *First order category:*	**Representative data**

D. Communication platform	**A1. It is (WhatsApp) very useful for communication with our suppliers, as at times there are delays or gaps in communicating the demand.** **A2. A strong communication is required in today's world where there is lot of competition, and there social media can help.**
E. Real time communication	**B1. Yes sharing knowledge has improved due to social media adoption. The details on schemes, products etc. since turnover time has reduced in selling, so for fast and convenient information sharing social media is helpful.** **B2. Almost 80% products are imported from China, around 50-60% of our communication with them is on WeChat or WhatsApp. The exchange of e-mail has reduced and WhatsApp and WeChat has taken over. Communication has become faster.**

Table 5: Stage of relationship between buyer and seller in B2B

• *Aggregate theoretical dimension*: **Stage of relationship between buyer and seller in B2B**	• *Second order theme*: Relationship lifecycle stage
• *First order category:*	**Representative data**
F. Governance Structure between buyer and seller	**A1. For our regular customer's we share some informal information about market and business in general, which we avoid for newer customer as the relationship is very formal and official during the initial period of association.** **A2. Regular suppliers even sometimes use whatsapp to communicate official information to speed-up the process, which they later regularize through e-mail, but with newer suppliers, we avoid exchanging such information on whatsapp, they use e-mail to communicate.**
G. Norms of relationship, transactional vs relational	**B1. We go by contract, but at times for regular and old customers we sometime go out of the way also.** **B2. We have built personal relations with our regular customers and we have added them on facebook, linkedin also. But this is restricted to very few customer representatives with whom we are doing business from a long time.**

Table 6: Authenticity of Knowledge Capital

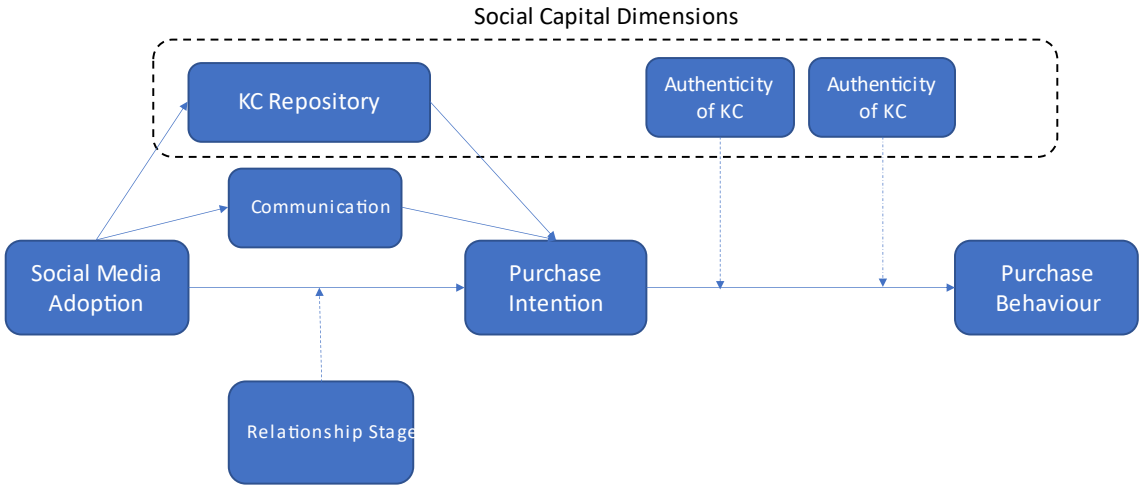
• *Aggregate theoretical dimension*: **Authenticity of knowledge capital**	• *Second order theme*: Reliability
• *First order category:*	**Representative data**

H. Trust	**A1. We don't trust on social media posts by suppliers for buying** **A2. We never assess a supplier based on their social media presence** **A3. They (B2B Customers) take decision with the advice from friends in other organizations and colleague in different departments. More referrals. They don't trust on social media post by people for buying.**
I. Security	**B1. Because we can't believe completely on the content that is on their site, we have to visit their factories along with our quality teams to inspect their quality status and process.** **B2. But in B2B people still do not believe social media completely. They need additional evidences, like specification report, previous completion certificates form customer for verifying your claims. They also like to visit the facility in case they are going for a bulk order. So yes, social media is good but for B2B buying people still like to go for traditional methods.**

Table 7: Level of Familiarity of Buying Centre Members with Social Media as Moderator

• *Aggregate theoretical dimension*: **Level of familiarity of buying centre members with social media**	• *Second order theme*: Social media usage knowledge
• *First order category:*	**Representative data**
J. Usage knowledge	**A1. Earlier we use to send progress report separately, now we send it on a given format and the report is automatically generated. But for doing that people should know how to use it. In some remote branches, most of the people do not know how to use it and hence they find it less useful.** **A2. They can upload some feedback sent by their customers, so this is how they can do marketing so as to get the calls from the customers. These are the ways but they should know where to upload and where to check.**
K. Technology acceptance	**B1. We have a very structured process to follow….not bringing personal thing into the professional thing and since we follow a structured process that's why these things won't affect ,this social media and all...if we have to find a new vendor also we first look for our database globally, vendor search is a very structured process and social media cannot interfere in our sourcing process anyway …I mean...these things are immaterial ...I mean we never seek for a suppliers based on their social media presence or even their name** **B2. Technology has helped a lot in buying process but vendor development is still as per the old process.**

Figure 1: Conceptual Model



*KC- Knowledge Capital

Figure 2: Knowledge Capital Repository as an Enabler

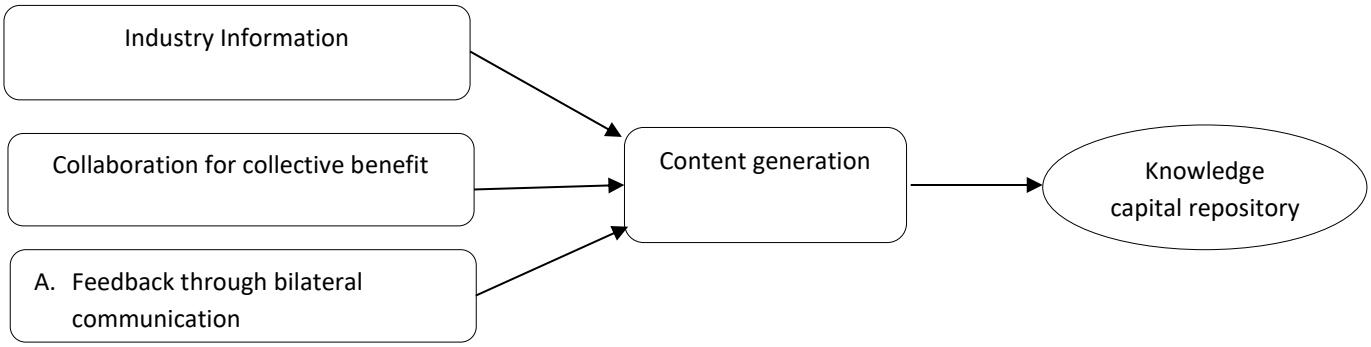


Figure 3: Inter-firm Communication as an Enabler

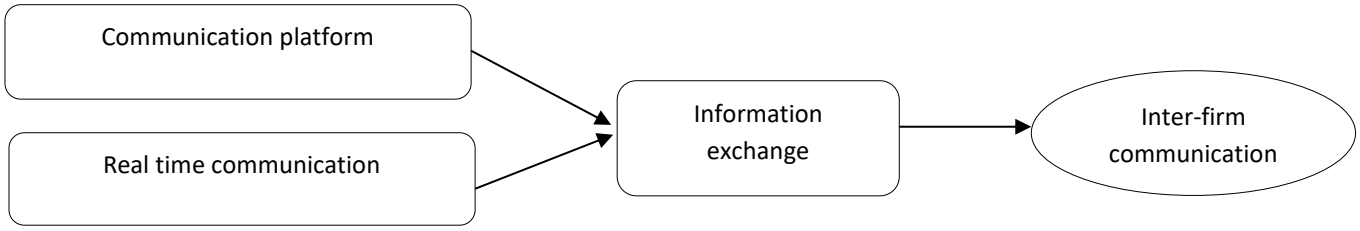


Figure 4: Stage of Relationship as Moderator

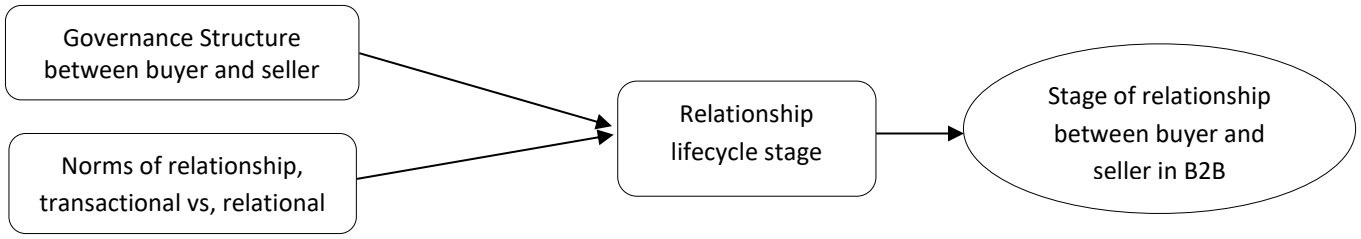


Figure 5: Authenticity of Knowledge Capital as Moderator

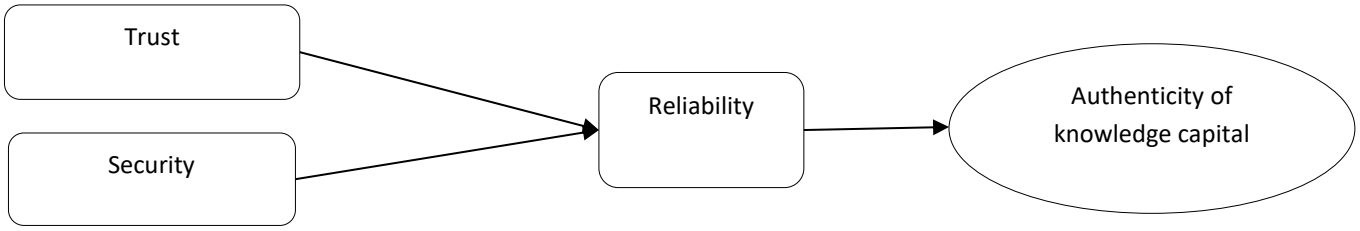
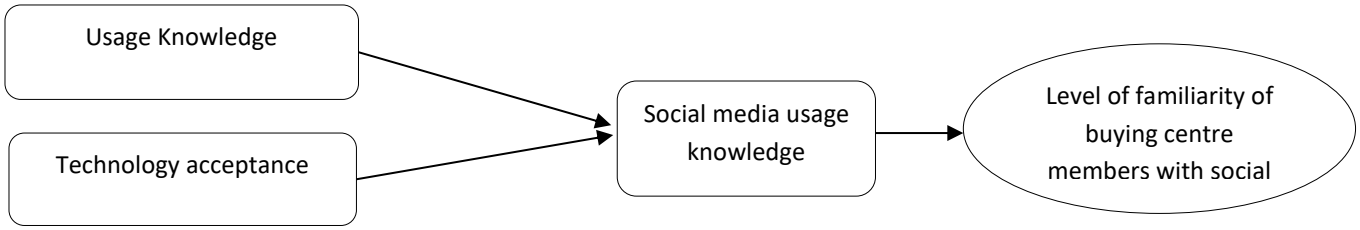


Figure 6: Level of Familiarity of Buying Centre Members with Social-Media



TRUST REPAIR AFTER A SALES MANAGER ERROR

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Keywords: trust repair, behavioral integrity, compensation, promise

Description: A strategy for repairing trust through demonstrating behavioral integrity after a sales manager error.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Building trust with salespeople is a key obligation of the sales manager (Chaker et al. 2019; Powers et al. 2014). Trust in the sales manager positively impacts the salesperson's job satisfaction, organizational commitment, loyalty to the firm, and ethical behavior (Agnihotri and Krush 2015; Mulki, Jaramillo, and Locander 2006). Unfortunately, destroying or damaging trust is an everyday occurrence within organizational relationships (Yu, Yang, and Jing 2017). Even the best sales managers make mistakes such as bonus/commission errors, poor forecasting decisions, and implementing suboptimal sales team strategies. These kinds of mistakes can damage trust.

Current research in this domain suffers from a major drawback. Previous trust repair studies primarily focus on the size of the financial compensation (e.g., Desmet, De Cremer, and Van Dijk 2010; Desmet, De Cremer, and Van Dijk 2011; and Haesevoets, Folmer and Van Hiel 2015), but do not consider the accompanying verbal response, provided by the transgressor. Yet,

a verbal response can substantially impact the restoration of trust (Ferrin et al. 2007; Kim et al. 2009, Tomlinson et al. 2004; Tomlinson and Mayer 2009; Tomlinson 2012). Against this backdrop, we question: Can financial compensation be enhanced if it includes a verbal response? Does the verbal response operate through distributive justice or another mechanism?

Method And Data

We conducted a scenario-based experiment where 141 professional salespeople were randomly assigned to one of two between-subjects treatment conditions: dual compensation (promise with compensation vs. control (acknowledgement of fault with compensation). We performed a CFA of the latent variables in our conceptual model, which suggested a good fit (χ^2 = 252.97; *df* = 113; RMSEA = .09, CFI = .95; SRMR = .03). Convergent and discriminant validity were demonstrated using accepted practices (Fornell and Larker 1981; Hair et al. 2006). We estimated and controlled for common method variance using the correlational marker technique (Lindell and Whitney 2001; Malhotra et al. 2006). Non-response bias was not an issue in our studies. A parallel multiple mediation model was analyzed using Hayes's (2013) PROCESS Model 4 with 10,000 boot-strapped samples and a 95% bias-corrected confidence interval. The purpose of this analysis was to examine the effect of dual compensation (combining a promise with financial compensation) as compared to standard compensation (combining an acknowledgement with financial compensation) on trust as mediated by behavioral integrity.

Summary of Findings

Sales managers make mistakes and sometimes these mistakes can damage the trust of their salespeople. When this error causes financial harm to the salesperson, the prevailing wisdom is to acknowledge the mistake and provide financial compensation. While this strategy may be effective, our study suggests there is a better solution. We find that making promises to

resolve the error and stating a desire to permanently fix the error before providing financial compensation is a more effective strategy. Making a promise and following through on that promise demonstrates behavioral integrity. As behavioral integrity is a reliable signal that the sales manager should be trusted in the future, this strategy enhances trust repair.

Statement of Key Contributions

This contributes to the trust repair literature through uncovering a verbal strategy that enhances the effectiveness of a compensation and by identifying behavioral integrity as mediating mechanism through which it operates. This is managerially relevant as maintaining the trust of the salesforce may be the most important priority of the sales manager (Powers et al. 2014). When a sales manager makes an error that damages the trust of a salesperson, it is important to take action to resolve that error. When that error causes financial harm to the salesperson, it is important for that action to include financial compensation. Often the sales manager does not give considerable thought to the message that accompanies the compensation, and simply acknowledges fault. A better strategy is for the sales manager to promise to make things right with the salesperson before providing the financial compensation. This change in verbal response has no tangible costs, yet it makes a substantive impact on trust recovery through demonstrating behavioral integrity. This is important because trust in the sales manager has important ramifications to job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

USING SALESPEOPLE TO TRANSITION B2B CUSTOMERS TO ONLINE CHANNELS: THEORY AND FIELD EVIDENCE

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Keywords: Online sales push, hybrid sales structures, multichannel, e-commerce, sales force management

Description: When B2B firms conduct online sales pushes (i.e., encourage salespeople to nudge their existing customers to purchase online), many salespeople comply—but the success is not guaranteed since it is influenced by customer-, seller-, and salesperson-related factors.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Business-to-business (B2B) firms are increasingly transitioning to hybrid sales structures that enable buyers to conduct transactions through a direct online channel in addition to the traditional field sales force. Despite the proliferation of such online channels, however, many B2B sellers struggle to increase customer adoption of online channels. This cold-start problem manifests because when a seller launches a direct online channel, existing customers typically are unaware of it, unacquainted with its features and functionality, or not convinced of its ability to deliver the same level of service as the field salespeople.

Firms increasingly attempt to overcome this cold-start problem by using a novel strategy, which we refer to as online sales pushes. In an online sales push, salespeople are encouraged to educate their existing customers about the seller's direct online channel and motivate them to adopt it for their buying needs. To better understand the implications of an online sales push, we pose two questions in this research: (1) How does an online sales push impact salesperson effort allocation and performance? (2) What strategic levers can a firm deploy to improve salesperson effort allocation and performance during an online sales push?

Method and Data

We conducted a multi-method study to answer these questions. First, given the lack of academic research on online sales pushes, to obtain the salesperson's perspective of the phenomenon we adopted a qualitative theories-in-use approach involving in-depth interviews with twenty-seven sales employees in B2B firms that use online sales pushes (Zeithaml et al. 2020; Corbin and

Strauss 2015). Second, we expanded our qualitative findings through a quantitative econometric analysis that relied on a rich data set comprising 55,000 customer–month observations from a B2B firm that also had recently deployed an online sales push.

Summary of Findings

The results from these studies offer preliminary insights into the consequences and contingencies associated with online sales pushes. We found that, even though an online sales push runs the risk of disrupting existing salesperson–customer relationships, salespeople generally tend to comply with the firm's objective of educating the customers about its direct online channel and motivate them to adopt it. One reason for their compliance is that reduced in-person customer contact following the customer's transition to the online channel gives salespeople additional time to pursue new selling opportunities that may increase their future compensation potential. Interestingly, we found that for this reason, salespeople adjust their communication activities following an online sales push in order to increase online sales and sales from complex selling activities. We also found that the impact of an online sales push on salesperson behavior and firm performance hinges heavily on a range of buyer-, salesperson-, and seller-related factors.

Statement of Key Contributions

Our study adds to the burgeoning marketing literature on hybrid sales structures by exploring the effectiveness of online sales pushes in overcoming the cold-start problem in the deployment of hybrid sales structures. Our findings also contribute to our understanding of how B2B sales organizations can successfully deploy online sales channels without creating a rift between their online channels and offline sales forces. We also make a valuable contribution to the literature on

salespeople's behavioral adaptations to digital technologies (Singh et al. 2019) as well as consultative and relational selling (Terho et al. 2017).

For B2B organizations, we reveal under which conditions online sales pushes are effective, particularly in relation to the perceptions of salespeople. We thereby equip sales managers with nuanced recommendations for tailoring online sales pushes to various customer-, seller- and salesperson-related factors, and predicting the behavioral changes one might expect from salespeople following an online sales push. Lastly, we demonstrate how firms can leverage online sales pushes to encourage salespeople to engage in a more relational and consultative type of selling behavior—an aspirational goal for many B2B firms.

References are available upon request.

VALUE IN SALES INTERACTIONS – A STUDY FROM THE BUYER'S PERSPECTIVE

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Keywords: Buyer behavior,

Description: This qualitative study explores which characteristics B2B buyers value in their interactions with salespeople so that salespeople can approach buyers with the most profitable manner.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question: Most B2B buying organizations purchase from a network of suppliers to precure the range of products and services to support their operation, but they do not always require the same type of sales interaction with each selling organization. Based in sales relationship and key account management literature, this qualitative study considers what B2B customers are really looking for in their various sales interactions. Many customers' buyers are happy to negotiate transactionally for lower value, one off purchases, but the ability to buy complex solutions and repeatedly requires a higher level of engagement, rapport, and intimacy

from both parties. We discuss four types of selling situation, Transactional, Relational, Collaborative, and Integrated. These sales situations are based on the level of intimacy required during negotiation and the interaction's longevity (short term vs long term/frequency of interaction) and we ask the following research questions:

1. How can salespeople gain the maximum utility from their B2B interactions by emphasizing the sales attributes or features that align with the buying organizations' preferences?
2. Which sales attributes or features align with the buying organizations' preferences to provide the greatest value for both parties in each type of sales interaction?

Method and Data: We followed an inductive, qualitative structure by carrying out 87 semi-structured interviews with senior procurement officers from a range of industries. To enable sales organizations to understand what is required in different selling situations we identify four selling categories based on the required level of intimacy and longevity of the relationships: Transactional, Relational, Collaborative, and Integrated. Each respondent was provided with definitions and a description of these types of interaction. The discussion revolved around the features that the buyer would value in each of these selling situations. The analysis of keywords identified several key attributes that were 'important' to the respondents in each type of sales interaction. We constantly revisited the data to identify emerging topics and themes to provide a theoretical understanding of the situation and offer explanations for what buyers' value from their interactions with suppliers. The iterative process made it possible to construct a deeper understanding of the data.

Summary of Findings: In **Transactional** interactions four selling attributes were highlighted. The ability to negotiate a keen *Price* supported by *Performance,* was followed by *Ease of*

doing business and meeting *Contractual obligations*. In transactional relationships, salespeople could waste a lot of effort focusing on attributes that the buyer did not consider relevant. In longer-term **Relational** interactions, the number of selling attributes increases to six. Frequent *Communications* and *Performance* top the list, with *Trust, Reputation* and *Co-creation of value* also being added. In short-term, complex, and intimate, **Collaborative** interactions, eight attributes were listed led by *Trust, Communications, Price,* and the *X-factor* (which was found to encompass a range of concepts, including the ability to develop strong linkages between the two parties, core competences that could add value, and some intangible benefits or kudos of doing business with that supplier). The new attributes of *Information sharing,* and *Risk/Reward sharing* were also added. In an **Integrated** (key account type) interaction there is a need for a high level of intimacy developed through long-term, repeated interactions. Thirteen distinct attributes were identified led by *Trust, Communication, Performance,* and *Co-creation of value,* and new elements of *Cultural fit* and *Flexibility* were added.

Key Contributions: We identified that buyers did not feel that salespeople always understood their purchasing needs. We found that it is important for salespeople to identify what type of interaction is required by buyers, so they can respond and leverage the appropriate sales attributes. Some buyers were only interested in a transactional relationship with the seller. Negotiating on price dominates these interactions, but they need to be supported by efficient processes and high performance. Longer-term, relational interactions required stronger communications and greater trust in the salesperson so that value could be co-created through the interaction. Short-term, complex sales interactions require a high level of intimacy and collaboration to provide the most beneficial solutions, but as the interaction was new, trust in the sellers' reputation and the X-factor were key attributes to a successful conclusion. In the more complex, extended relationships where high intimacy is required the dominant features of

the interactions are trust, communications, performance, and value co-creation. Sales leaders can provide training that empowers salespeople to identify which type of sales interaction their customers require, so that they can leverage the attributes that align with the requirements of each customer and use their resources effectively to create value and sales.

References are available upon request

WHEN DO SALES REPRESENTATIVES TRULY RESIGN? UNVEILING AND UNDERSTANDING PERFORMANCE DIPS BEFORE DEPARTURE

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Keywords: Voluntary Salesperson Turnover, Turnover Models, Pre-Quitting Behavior, Latent Growth Curve Modeling

Description: The paper examines when and to which extent sales representatives' turnover cognitions manifest themselves in observable and accentuated performance dips prior to departure, dependent on key characteristics of the sales rep.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

In order to mitigate the high costs of losing particularly high-performing sales representatives (reps), sales managers are beginning to acknowledge the importance of understanding how and when sales reps develop their decisions to voluntarily leave the organization. Conspicuous performance patterns and significant downward dips may serve as warning signals and may enable a timely detection of sales reps' emerging turnover cognitions. However, extant empirical research on sales rep turnover reveals little about when turnover decisions are made and how typical changes in performance patterns may "leak" these cognitions prior to sales reps' departure. Therefore, the authors investigate two key questions:

(1) When and to which extent do sales reps' turnover cognitions become visible through performance dips prior to their departure?

(2) How do these performance dips depend on key characteristics of the sales rep, such as his or her performance class, job tenure, or acquisition activity?

Method and Data

To investigate the research questions, the authors gathered longitudinal performance records over a four-year period, demographic data and employee survey data for 752 salespeople from a major household appliances manufacturer. They apply a multi-group, piecewise latent growth model to investigate potential performance dips prior to sales reps departure. To isolate the impact of sales reps' turnover cognition on the performance of departing sales reps, the authors incorporate a random group of non-departing sales reps into the analysis and estimate the difference in performance trajectories of departing vs. non-departing sales reps during the four quarters before departure. The authors further investigate how key sales rep characteristics, such as sales rep's performance class, job tenure, and acquisition activity may alter the performance dips and changes prior to disruption. Finally, the authors show that their findings are robust by repeating the analysis on a sample where non-departing and departing sales reps are matched with regard to key characteristics using propensity score matching.

Summary of Findings

Results of the multi-group, piecewise latent growth model reveal significant performance dips for departing sales reps between the 7^{th}-to-9^{th} month, and between the 1^{st}-to-3^{rd} month before sales reps' departure. Notably, these performance dips highly depend on characteristics of the departing sales rep. High-performing sales reps show a steep performance dip already several months before departure, then partially recover their performance in the following quarter, and finally exhibit a steep performance dip just before departure. Further, sales reps with short job tenure show a particular performance dip just

before departure, and sales reps focusing on building a new customer base (long-term orientation) exhibit a strong performance dip long before departure.

Key Contributions

Results of this study contribute to the literature on longitudinal salesperson turnover in two ways. First, the authors uncover that the decision to leave a company develops over time and turnover cognitions can manifest themselves in observable and accentuated performance dips prior to departure. In doing so, the authors are among the first to empirically investigate pre-quitting behaviors in a sales context longitudinally. Second, the study provides first evidence that these behavioral adaptions prior to sales reps' turnover are highly contingent on key sales rep characteristics (i.e., sales reps' performance class, job tenure, and acquisition activity). This contingency perspective provides a nuanced view on why and when performance dips before departure are to be expected.

For managers, the findings give advice on how emerging turnover cognitions can be effectively monitored. That is, sales managers should be alerted to conspicuous performance patterns and significant downward dips in their sales reps' performance in order to timely detect early turnover cognitions. Detecting these dips could enable managers to take quick actions for departure avoidance and mitigate the potential high costs of turnover. Furthermore, sales managers should consider sales reps' characteristics, as it increases the probability to timely detect turnover cognitions before they leave.

WHEN HUMOR USAGE IN THE SELLING PROCESS BACKFIRES: ASSESSING THE EFFECTS OF HUMOR ON INFERENCES OF MANIPULATIVE INTENT AND RELATIONAL OUTCOMES

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Keywords: Humor usage, sales, manipulation, relationship quality.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Salespersons suffer from negative stereotypes (Babin, Boles and Darden 1995; Lee, Sandfield, and Dhaliwal 2007). Such stereotypes derive from the performance goals that salespersons have to achieve, which lead them to influence buyer purchase decision and reach their objectives by using different techniques, like rational persuasion, recommendations, or promises (Plouffe, Bolander, and Cote 2014; Plouffe et al. 2016). Hence, the question arises as to what communication technique could help salespersons influence buyer purchase decision, and reach their sales performance goals, without them being perceived as manipulative. might be humor usage. One such technique could be humor usage, a tool that enhances important relational outcomes (Bergeron and Vachon 2008; Lussier, Gregoire and Vachon 2017). Although humor has been identified as an effective technique for salespersons (Bompar, Lunardo and Saintives 2018; Lussier et al. 2017), the way buyers perceive the use of humor as an influence technique yet remains unexplored. Therefore, this research examines how manipulative sellers who use humor are perceived by buyers, and how such perceptions influence relational outcomes.

Method and Data

This research question is examined through 2 studies. The first uses a sample of 138 buyers, the second a sample of 175. All buyers were known from the previous professional experience of one of the authors, working in distinct business domains, including retail, services, manufacturing, construction, financial institutions, and sports apparel. All respondents received an e-mail with (1) a cover letter that introduced the study and (2) a link to an online questionnaire. The cover letter instructed respondents to select a specific professional seller

they had been an interview with in the last 3 months, and to remember about the last interview they had with that particular seller. Regarding the measures, willingness-to-switch (WTS, hereafter), relationship quality, IMIs, and the four types of humor were assessed using measures drawn from prior research.

Summary of Findings

The hypotheses were tested using serial mediation analyses (Process, Model 6, 5,000 bootstraps). Three distinct serial mediation analyses were performed, each with a particular type of humor (constructive, aggressive, or self-defeating) serving as the independent variable. IMIs and relationship quality served as the mediating variables, and buyers' WTS as the dependent variable. In both studies 1 and 2, results yielded a positive impact of aggressive humor on IMIs and a negative impact of IMIs on relationship quality. Results further revealed a negative effect of IMIs on WTS. Therefore, a positive serial indirect effect of such aggressive humor on WTS through IMIs and relationship quality was observed. Even though such humor is conceptually distinct from aggressive humor, results yielded a similar pattern, with a positive serial indirect effect of self-defeating humor on WTS. Finally, and as opposed to what was observed with offensive humor, it is a negative serial indirect effect of constructive humor on WTS that was observed, supporting the notion that constructive humor by a salesperson indirectly reduces buyers' WTS by decreasing IMIs and increasing relationship quality.

Key Contributions

The current research adds to the academic marketing discipline's existing knowledge on the topic by investigating and identifying humor as a reason for why salespersons are often associated with the negative stereotype of being manipulative. Specifically, we here examine

inferences of manipulative intent (IMIs hereafter) as a novel effect of humor usage be salespersons. Such IMIs are shown to derive from offensive humor and to act as the underlying mechanism of the effect of such humor on relationship quality and subsequent buyer's willingness-to-switch to another salesperson. Importantly, this research shows that all types of humor do not work similarly, with constructive humor having opposite effects, and decreasing IMIs and its negative effects.

For non-academic stakeholders, and especially for salespersons or managers operating in the business-to-business industry, the current research can reveal of interest by providing a detailed examination of the effects of humor on IMIs and explaining what type of humor should be used (i.e., constructive humor) or avoided (i.e., offensive humor) to prevent IMIs from occurring and to favor positive relational outcomes.

References are available upon request.

WINNING THE WAR FOR SALES TALENT: HOW TO DISPEL LAY BELIEFS, FIGHT THE STIGMA, AND CREATE A PROFESSION OF CHOICE

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Keywords: business-to-business sales, sales management, sales education, sales diversity

Description: We investigate reasons for and measures against university graduates' low interest in B2B sales careers and develop actionable guidelines to various stakeholders on aligning communication, job structures, and university curricula with graduates' needs to promote B2B sales as a profession of choice.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

In a *War for Sales Talent*, attracting highly-qualified university graduates is a critical competitive advantage for B2B sales departments. However, the reasons underlying graduates' reluctance to choose B2B sales careers are not well understood. As such, scholarly guidance on promoting B2B sales as a profession of choice remains scarce. Our research fills this void by answering three critical research questions:

Overall RQ. *What measures do stakeholders need to take to promote B2B sales as a profession of choice for university graduates?*

RQ1. *What beliefs deter graduates from choosing B2B sales careers (prestudy/Study 1), and with regard to which beliefs do other potential careers outrank B2B sales (Study 2)?*

RQ2. *Where do graduates' perceptions of B2B sales build on lay beliefs of what working in B2B sales is actually like, and how can these lay beliefs be dispelled (Study 3)?*

RQ3. *How does current labor market communication (Study 4) need to change to better align with graduates' career choice drivers (Study 5)?*

Method and Data

To answer these RQs, we use a mixed-methods approach comprising qualitative, quantitative, text-analytical, and conjoint-analytical data. Study 1 relies on cross-country survey data from 398 soon-to-graduate students to develop a conceptual model (structural equation modeling) explaining students' low interest in B2B sales and identify the *specific* beliefs deterring students from choosing B2B sales careers. Study 2, an experimental survey, benchmarked students' beliefs about B2B sales with their beliefs about four alternative career paths to B2B sales for business students, to which 940 students were randomly assigned. To identify *lay beliefs* students might hold about B2B sales (Study 3), we drew on two samples: one with B2B salespeople (n = 372) and one with soon-to-graduate students (n = 583). Study 4 draws on real-world labor market communication data (n = 11,624 B2B sales job descriptions), which we web-scraped from a leading career portal. Study 5 relies on a choice-based conjoint survey (n= 624 students) to gain further insights into students' job application drivers.

Summary of Findings

Sales is not a preferred career option among students. Apart from negative attitudes towards expected job characteristics, the reason for this is the low social prestige (especially in Germany) and the perceived lack of sales skills (especially among women). Benchmark analysis shows that other careers outperform B2B sales, especially in terms of perceived social prestige and opportunities to work in a team-oriented, creative and independent way, contributing to society and developing personally. Benchmarking with B2B salespeople reveals that the beliefs that most discourage students from entering B2B sales (e.g., low independence) build on lay beliefs about actual job characteristics. Against this background, we identify personal, vicarious, and educational sales exposure as addressable antecedents to dispel lay beliefs. However, combining educational exposure with personal experiences is critical to avoid inflated expectations of B2B sales. Large-scale text analysis of real-life labor

market communications combined with conjoint analysis further reveals a misalignment between current labor market communication's focus (e.g., salary, company car) and the key drivers of students' career choice (e.g., independence, teamwork). This discrepancy is stronger for women and indicates a *gender hiring bias*, in such a way that communication aligns with female students' needs to a lesser extent.

Key Contributions

Our research adds to current knowledge by providing a holistic understanding of the specific beliefs discouraging students from choosing B2B sales careers, which are barely understood. With four subsequent studies, we further provide nuanced insights into the aspects in which (1) B2B sales loses out compared to alternative careers, (2) suffers from students holding lay beliefs about actual job characteristics, and (3) (mis-)alignments exist between labor market communication and students' career choice drivers. As such, we add to the scarce research on both talent and diversity management in sales and provide fruitful avenues for further research From a managerial perspective, we provide actionable guidelines to various stakeholders on how to increase students' interest in B2B sales. For example, we provide recruiters and employer branding experts with best practices to tailor communication to diverse talent groups' needs (e.g., by focusing on teamwork to attract female talent) and encourage sales managers to adapt job structures accordingly (e.g., by integrating team-based incentives). Moreover, we inform educators about the type and level of education required to convey *realistic* perceptions of B2B sales and raise (female) students' selling confidence (e.g., by integrating practice-oriented content).

References are available upon request.

Social Responsibility, Sustainability & Well-Being

A TEMPORAL PERSPECTIVE OF FOOD WASTE REDUCTION BEHAVIOR

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Keywords: Food Waste; Prefactual Thinking; Counterfactual Thinking; Time Orientation; MOA

Description: The research studies food waste in households from a temporal perspective by looking at the role of hypothetical thinking (counterfactual and prefactual thinking) in food waste behavior.

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Food waste, an endemic threat on the global level, is a time-sensitive ordeal with social, economic, ethical, and environmental implications. Food waste is also an issue laden with sometimes cumulative and many times conflicting social, cultural, and psychological motives. At the time when food waste occurs, a conceptual disconnect exists between food waste actions and outcomes given that other matters are salient in the consumer's mind during waste generation, such as meal preparation, nutrition issues and family daily practices (Van Geffen, Van Herpen and Van Trijp 2020). Similarly, a temporal divide is at play; as Quested et *al.* (2013, p. 46) explains, "by the time an item of food is thrown away, the opportunity to prevent that food from becoming waste has usually passed, i.e. the action (or actions) leading to the waste may have been some time, often many days, in the past". However, time with its numerous relevant dimensions has not been investigated in-depth in the food waste literature; yet, its presence relative to food's disintegration onto waste is lightly acknowledged in some studies, a stepping-stone in supporting its value. Accordingly, the study adapts a conceptual modelling of food waste behavior based on elements of the Motivation-Opportunity-Abilities (MOA) Model (Ölander & Thøgersen 1995) and Triandis' (1977) theory of consumer action, while investigating the role of time through the lens of hypothetical thinking and time orientation. It posits that consumer mental simulation of food waste through hypothetical thinking, which can occur pre-factually and/or counterfactually, may affect food waste reduction action directly and as a predictor in modelling consumer food waste behavior.

Methods and Data

Using an online survey to collect data from a sample of US consumer households, the research proposes a conceptual framework that tests hypotheses within a proposed time-integrated model of food waste behavior. The aim is to offer a better understanding of predictors of consumer waste reduction actions and thus recommend effective, tailored enablers of ethical and sustainable food waste management behavior.

Convenience sampling is used first followed by snowballing as the sample frame is US households of different sizes, age groups, with/without children and at differing levels of education and income levels. This constitutes a variation in habits, motivations, temporal thinking, and domestic dynamics which serves in investigating the study's key variables and their interactivity within the research framework. 350 completed questionnaires were retrieved, with 319 fully completed and usable. Despite the overt attitude reported in literature regarding discussing food waste, it seems that an online survey piqued the interest of many in the absence of any other incentive to complete it. The rationale might be that it is easier to answer questions and reflect on sensitive topics behind a screen when responses are anonymous, making the online survey a suitable method for data collection compared to other in-person methods.

Summary of Findings

Findings for the impact of prefactual thinking on food waste behaviour highlight a significant association indicating that the higher the likelihood of the consumer considering food waste prefactually, the less food waste generated. Counterfactual thinking also has a significant relationship with food waste behaviour. Although results advance the influence of both hypothetical thinking modes, the analysis results show that prefactual thinking has more strength in powerfully impacting food waste reduction versus counterfactual food waste consideration.

Examining the relationship between time orientation and attitude towards food wasting shows a significant association. Findings highlight that future-oriented consumers are more bothered/have more negative attitudes by food wasting than present-oriented consumers. The results also indicate a significant association between time orientation and prefactual thinking indicating that future-oriented consumers are more likely to engage in pre-factual thinking compared to present-oriented consumers. Further analysis shows no significant association between time orientation and counterfactual thinking; thus, future-oriented consumers are more likely to consider food waste actions prefactually than counterfactually.

Key Contributions:

With households being responsible for almost half of the food wasted in the food supply chain, it is critical to understand what can be done to minimise squandering. Many studies have looked at food waste from different dimensions, including psychosocial factors, food related routines, household perceived capabilities, and socio-demographic variables. This study is the one of the few to investigate the influence of time as a stimulus in food waste action given that food waste is embedded in time via its antecedence, occurrence and considerations in preventing/reducing it. From a theoretical perspective, the study advances recent research that tackle food waste behaviour based on individual's everyday practices while combining some of the classic psychosocial factors related to existing pro-environmental models. Findings broaden existing knowledge of food waste via integrating unexplored variables and illuminating a temporal dimension in a model that predicts a discerning variance in the examined food waste behaviour. It responds to Schanes, Dobernig & Gözet's (2018, p. 978) assertion of food waste "as a complex and multi-faceted issue that cannot be attributed to single variables; this also calls for a stronger integration of different disciplinary perspectives. Mapping the determinants of waste generation

deepens the understanding of household practices and helps design food waste prevention strategies". Overall, the results provide important insights for managers and policy makers interested in designing initiatives aimed at reducing household food waste.

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Available upon request

CLOSING THE ATTITUDE-BEHAVIOR GAP: A NOVEL MEASURE TO PREDICT ETHICAL CONSUMPTION

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Keywords: ethical consumption, attitude-behavior gap, implicit measure, psychometrics

Description: This research develops and validates a novel, implicit measure of ethical consumerism that helps address the attitude-behavior gap in ethical consumption.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Consuming ethically is socially desirable and reporting favorable attitudes does not incur any personal cost. Thus, consumers have incentives to explicitly state their favorable attitudes and intentions toward ethical products despite a host of barriers to actual purchase. This attitude-behavior gap in ethical consumption presents a pervasive challenge to the theory and practice of socially responsible marketing. A litany of theoretical explanations for this gap in ethical consumption has been offered. This research seeks to draw from these existing explanations and—based on extant research in psychometrics and the psychology of attitudes—develop a novel measurement tool based on the Affect Misattribution Procedure (AMP). We aim to capture consumers' *implicit* ethical product attitudes which have otherwise evaded marketing practitioners and scholars. Further, the current research examines the predictive power of this measurement tool in predicting consequential ethical consumption choices.

Method and Data

A pretest recruited 98 Prolific participants to rate 20 ethical labels in terms of ethicality and familiarity (1=*Not at all ethical/familiar*, 9=*Highly ethical/familiar*). We summed these ratings for each label into an index and retained the five top-rated labels: *Rainforest Alliance Certified*, *Free Range*, *Fair Trade*, *Cruelty Free*, and *Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Certified*. The main study (N=366) presented a modified AMP including these ethical labels and five common non-ethical product labels for control. Each label was displayed for 1 second, followed by a randomly selected Chinese pictograph, followed by a gray square with a single item below asking participants to rate the visual pleasantness of the Chinese pictograph (1=*Very unpleasant*, 6=*Very pleasant*). Participants' average ratings following the five ethical labels should represent an implicit measure of ethical consumerism. Participants also responded to measures of explicit ethical consumerism and socially desirable responding. Lastly, participants engaged in a shopping task where they used a Prolific bonus to choose between ethical and non-ethical versions of four product. Each ethical (non-ethical) choice was scored as 1 (0), creating an index of ethical purchase (range: 0–4). Participants were informed that they would be entered into a drawing to receive the products they chose.

Summary of Findings

The main analysis employed hierarchical linear regression, treating the ethical purchase index as the dependent variable. At step 1, only implicit ethical consumerism was entered as a predictor, and results showed a positive significant effect (β=.23, p<.001). At step 2, we entered the average implicit scores associated with the non-ethical labels as a predictor (β=.11, p=.08), and implicit ethical consumerism remained significant (β=.18, p=.003). At step 3, we added the two method factors pertaining to the randomization of Chinese pictographs (both ps>.15) and social desirability (p=.79), and implicit ethical consumerism's effect remained (β=.17, p=.004).

Lastly, at step 4, we added the explicit ethical consumerism item (β=.41, p<.001), and the effect of our implicit measure remained significant (β=.14, p=.01). Overall, these results suggest that our implicit measure predicts consequential choices in an ethical (vs. non-ethical) product purchase task over and above the effect of an explicit measure. Moreover, our study suggests that the implicit measure's effect is robust to method factors and socially desirable responding.

Key Contributions

Consumers report greater interest in ethical products than ever before. However, the marketing literature has noted a perplexing attitude-behavior gap in the consumption of ethical products where consumers' self-reported favorable attitudes toward these products seldom translate into purchase behavior. We contribute to the marketing literature by developing a novel implicit measure of ethical consumerism that is based on the AMP, an alternative paradigm to the Implicit Association Test (IAT). Despite the popularity, validity, and reliability of the IAT, it may be difficult to implement because it requires specialized software, demands that participants undergo several stages with complex instructions, and the analysis and interpretation of results from analyzing reaction time data is not always straightforward. The AMP procedure, in contrast, may be easily implemented through standard survey software. Our findings show that our implicit measure of ethical consumerism predicts consequential choices in an ethical (vs. non-ethical) product purchase task, and that this effect is robust to method factors and socially desirable responding. Moreover, although the explicit measure was also a significant predictor, our implicit measure was able to explain additional variance in consumer choice, suggesting that it captures a unique, implicit component of ethical consumerism.

***References are available upon request.**

Conspicuous Self-Control: Why Status Motives Lead Consumers to Virtue Signal

CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

This research makes an important contribution to extant literature by uncovering an unconsidered outcome of status-signaling motivations—conspicuous self-control. This effect—that status motives lead to displays of self-control—is counter to literature that shows status-signaling motivations enhance conspicuous indulgence (e.g., spending to signal wealth). By contrasting and reconciling with those findings, our work makes several novel contributions. We show that when consumers are presented with products similar in price, and therefore are unable to signal wealth, status-signaling motives increase virtue signaling (e.g., choices of healthier foods and self-control enhancing technologies instead of indulgent foods and entertainment technologies). This preference arises because virtuous choices allow consumers to engage in conspicuous self-control, and people associate high status with being restrained and having self-control. Consumers only respond to status-signaling motivations through indulgence when they are presented with vice products that are more expensive than virtuous products, which is consistent with prior research. Even then, a reminder that saving money is a signal of self-control leads consumers with status-signaling motives away from wealth-signaling and back to conspicuously signaling virtue by saving their money. This research thus links two streams of literature on status-signaling and self-control, making important theoretical advancements to both.

We also demonstrate the practical implications for consumers and marketers. By highlighting this novel impetus toward self-control and virtuous choices, we offer that consumers may use their status motive as a tool to motivate themselves to make healthier, restrained, and financially responsible decisions. We also help marketers understand the nuance in using status-signaling appeals to sell non-luxury products.

ABSTRACT

High status is associated with wealth, which leads consumers with a status motive to signal wealth through conspicuous indulgence by selecting expensive luxury (vs. less expensive non-luxury) products. The current research presents six studies that show that consumers also associate high status with self-control. This association instead leads them to signal virtue through conspicuous self-control by boosting choice of virtuous (i.e., low indulgence) products. This effect arises when products are similar in price and consumers are therefore unable to convey wealth by spending on a vice. Considering that many choices consumers make are among similarly priced products (i.e., when wealth signaling is not possible), this finding is especially important for marketers designing non-luxury appeals. Notably, even when wealth-signaling is possible, we find that status motives can lead consumers to conspicuously save rather than spend when they are reminded that saving behavior reflects self-control. Such a reminder prompts them to consider how virtue signaling is possible, which subsequently overrides wealth signaling. We discuss important consumer welfare and marketing implications.

The desire for status is a fundamental human motivation (Durante and Griskevicius 2016). When consumers desire status, they engage in conspicuous indulgence through the purchase of expensive and luxurious products to convey wealth to others (Han, Nunes, and Drèze 2010; Mazzocco et al. 2012; Veblen 1899). Purchasing these products over less expensive options allows a consumer to signal to others that they have wealth and are therefore deserving of respect (Nelissen and Meijers 2011). Flaunting expensive, luxurious products to garner respect from others offers tangible benefits (Doob and Gross 1968; Nelissen and Meijers 2011). However, although the luxury market is a sizable industry, it is a small portion of the overall market (Fflur 2020). Thus, most consumer choices are likely made between non-wealth signaling products (i.e., outside of wealth-signaling contexts, often similarly priced products). Consequently, this manuscript focuses on how consumers respond to status-signaling motivations outside of wealth signaling contexts. Specifically, although consumers seeking status often convey indulgence through conspicuous wealth-signaling, the current research proposes that outside of wealth-signaling contexts, consumers instead engage in virtue signaling through conspicuous self-control.

This idea that status motives can increase self-control and subsequently virtuous behavior is both theoretically novel and practically important. Theoretically, past research has primarily focused on how status motives shift consumers' preference to wealth-signaling products (Mazzocco et al. 2012; Sundie et al. 2011; Veblen 1899), products that can be considered indulgences. A handful of studies have found that status motives can increase virtuous behaviors that may require self-control, but these investigations are limited to environmentally-consciousness prosocial behaviors (Griskevicius, Tybur, and Van den Bergh 2010). Notably, these environmental behaviors are typically also more expensive to execute and a means to flaunt

wealth (Barbarossa and Pastore 2015; Griskevicius et al. 2010; Kapelianis and Strachan 1996). They thus afford consumers an opportunity to simultaneously signal wealth and virtue, and it remains unclear whether virtuous behaviors beyond environmental consciousness can signal status through self-control. From a practical standpoint, although status motivations are typically induced to sell luxurious, expensive products, this work suggests that marketers may also strategically motivate status desires to sell virtuous products. Furthermore, consumers may be encouraged to respond to status signaling motivations through self-control instead of wealth-signaling, thereby simultaneously advancing their other long-term goals.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

Status refers to a person's relative standing in society, in which a higher position garners one more respect than lower-status positions (Dubois and Ordabayeva 2015). Possessing and signaling high status is advantageous because it can enhance how people are treated by others (Scott, Mende, and Bolton 2013; Wilcox, Kim, and Sen 2009). For instance, high-status people are given priority access to scarce resources, aiding their survival (e.g., shelter; Fowler 2018). They are also judged more leniently for societal transgressions, such as engaging in crime, than low-status people (Reiman and Leighton 2015).

Consumers often convey status by conspicuously purchasing expensive, luxurious products (Charles, Hurst, and Roussanov 2009; Rucker and Galinsky 2008). These products are associated with status because such products are costly to obtain and therefore scarce, which leads others to respect consumers possessing these scarce resources. Notably, whereas status motives reliably increase conspicuous indulgence through spending on luxurious products

(Mazzocco et al. 2012; Ordabayeva and Chandon 2011; Otterbring et al. 2018), less is known about how consumers signal status when they are unable to convey wealth.

Importantly, status can arise from sources other than wealth alone, and it is possible consumers may also believe that signaling self-control (vs. engaging in indulgence) garners respect from others, and thus signals high status. Self-control refers to a consumer's ability to regulate their immediate, affectively positive responses toward hedonic options in favor of options that afford long-term benefits (Fujita et al. 2006). Self-control is often required to persist and achieve successful outcomes in life (Duckworth 2011; Moffitt et al. 2011). For this reason, consumers may see self-control as a signal of higher status. This may, under certain situations, lead status-motivated consumers to engage in conspicuous self-control (vs. indulgence), by purchasing virtuous products. Consistent with extant research that "conceptualizes virtues as items that are consistent with long-term self-control goals" (p. 762, Chernev 2011), we define *virtuous products* as products that involve self-control and *virtue signaling* as behaviors that convey self-control to others.

Most everyday choices do not allow for wealth signaling, as most products within a given product category of the marketplace are non-luxury and relatively homogenous in price (Fflur 2020). For such everyday, non-luxury choices when wealth signaling is not possible, we posit that status motives will increase the preference for virtuous over vice products. For instance, given a choice to publicly consume a packet of M&Ms or a banana, both costing $0.50, a status motive (vs. control) will increase the relative preference for the banana.

H1: Controlling for price, a status motive (vs. control) will increase the (a) choice of and (b) flaunting of virtuous products.

H2: Controlling for price, a status motive (vs. control) will increase the need to display self-control, which will underlie the increased choice of virtuous products.

Importantly, when wealth-signaling *is* possible (i.e., the choice involves a more expensive vice product versus a less expensive virtue product), the more expensive product may spontaneously draw more consumer attention and increase consumer elaboration about it. For instance, Audrin et al. (2018) and Motoki et al. (2019) found that expensive and hedonic products spontaneously draw consumer attention. Thus, when product options differ in price and wealth-signaling is possible, a status motive may be likely to lead consumers to spontaneously focus on the relatively more expensive, luxurious, vice product and how the product can help them achieve their status goal. Ultimately, this increased focus on the expensive vice option could increase the preference for wealth-signaling at the expense of conveying self-control. Hence, when a vice is more expensive than a virtue product, a status motive will no longer increase the choice of the virtuous product over the vice.

H3: A status motive (vs. control) will increase the preference for vice products when such products are more expensive than virtue products, and thus offer a wealth-signaling opportunity.

Notably, in such situations, a reminder that spending violates self-control may prompt consumers who desire high status to refocus their attention on the virtuous choice and favor conspicuous self-control over wealth signaling. That is, the reminder would elicit thoughts of

how engaging in self-control may help them convey status, ultimately reinstating preference for the virtuous product.

H4: A desire for high status (vs. control) will increase preferences for a cheap virtue over an expensive vice when consumers are reminded that spending violates self-control.

We present six studies supporting these hypotheses. Note that across all studies, the dependent variable items were verified through pretests or posttests to not differ in perceived ability to convey prosocial behavior, wealth, or busyness, which may provide alternative explanations for these results (Bellezza, Paharia, and Keinan 2017; Griskevicius et al. 2010; Rucker and Galinsky 2008). Furthermore, manipulation checks verified that the intended virtuous product was seen as relatively more virtuous than the vice product used throughout the studies for the dependent measures. Finally, manipulation checks were used across all studies except the field study (manipulation supported via a pretest) to verify that those in the status motive condition had a stronger desire to convey status than did those in the control condition.

STUDY 1

In Study 1, we examined H1a through a field study. An experimenter approached individuals in a public setting of a metropolitan city, randomly providing them with one of two flyers. Specifically, the experimenter conveyed that the study was a part of a university program, and gave those in the status-motive condition a flyer stating, “Wanting high status? Craving respect? Desiring to be more admired than peers? Get started with a snack!” He gave those in the control condition a flyer that said, “It’s just another day. Get started with a snack!”

Afterward, participants were offered a choice between a healthy banana or an indulgent M&Ms packet in exchange for answering demographic questions. They were told that each item retailed for $0.50 and offered 100 calories. Participants selected their snacks, provided demographic details, and were dismissed. As this study took place in a public environment where others can observe one's status signals, we predicted that those who received a flyer increasing status motives (vs. control) would engage in conspicuous self-control and select the banana. Indeed, flyer condition predicted snack choice (B = .44, SE = .22, $Wald$ = 4.16, p = .04). Participants in the desire to signal status condition were more likely to select the banana than were those in the control condition (M = 52% vs. 31%). Thus, a subtle, ecologically valid reminder of status increased preference for the virtuous product (H1a).

STUDY 2

In Study 2, we aimed to replicate the results from Study 1 in a controlled setting with a different population (preregistered at www.osf.io/cyhmr). Furthermore, Study 2 aimed to investigate whether a status motive *increases* the desire for virtuous products or *decreases* the desire for vice products.

Four hundred participants completed the study. The study employed a 2 (status motive: yes vs. control) × 2 (meal type: healthy, virtue; vs. unhealthy, vice) between-subjects design in which the number of scoops chosen of the snack was our dependent variable. Those in the status motive condition completed a short writing task about an event in their life in which they felt low status. Those in the control condition wrote a response to everyday events in their lives. We adopted this manipulation from research on compensatory consumption that shows such situational prompts can lower peoples' status and stimulate a stronger desire to compensate for

this deficiency by signaling high status (Dubois and Ordabayeva 2015; Mazzocco et al. 2012). Thus, we expected that writing about feeling low status would increase the motive to convey high status.

In the dependent variable task, participants read that they were at a social gathering. They could scoop a snack into a clear bowl to eat as they mingled with these new individuals. The bowl could hold up to 20 scoops. Those in the vice condition were told that the snack was M&M's, while those in the virtuous condition were told that the snack was sunflower seeds. They were told that the snack was free, but retailed for $0.25 per scoop, and reported the number of scoops they would select.

The 2 × 2 design on number of scoops selected revealed only a significant interaction ($F(1, 396) = 6.07$, $p = .01$). Participants in the status motive condition selected more scoops than did controls when they were choosing the virtuous snack ($M = 6.19$ vs. 4.72; $t(396) = 2.27$, $p = .02$). This effect was not present when participants were choosing the vice snack ($p > .23$). This study demonstrated that consumers are more likely to select more of a virtuous snack when they have a motivation to convey high social status (H1a). Notably, they did not *avoid* the vice option, but rather *approached* the virtue option when status signaling motivations were salient. This finding suggests that, when price is held constant, consumers perceive that vice products don't signal a lack of status, but that virtuous products convey status.

STUDY 3

Study 3 aimed to provide further support for virtue signaling by those with status motives and offer marketing implications for product packaging. If status motives underlie the choice of virtuous products, then people who make such choices to signal status should prefer to make these choices observable to others (Berger and Ward 2010; Griskevicius et al. 2007, 2010; Sundie et al. 2011). Here, we tested H1b, the willingness to make visible a virtuous (vs. vice) choice.

Two hundred and forty-two undergraduate students began the study by completing a descriptive writing task. Like Study 2, participants ($N = 442$) began the study by completing either a writing task priming a desire for status or a control writing task. After this task, we randomly assigned participants to a healthy meal or an unhealthy meal condition. All participants imagined they were getting lunch with a few people whom they had just met, and we varied the meal that they had decided to purchase. Those in the healthy meal condition imagined they purchased a $15 healthy meal from a local restaurant. Those in the unhealthy meal condition imagined they purchased a $15 unhealthy meal from a local restaurant. All participants then described what meal they might select that met these qualities and reported the meal that they visualized. Afterward, we showed them images of two containers, both square and of similar depth. One of the containers was transparent while the other was opaque. We asked participants which of the two containers they would use to carry and eat their meal while with these new acquaintances (1 = opaque container; 9 = clear container).

The 2 (status motive) × 2 (meal type) between-subjects ANOVA on container preference revealed only a significant interaction ($F(1, 238) = 4.35$, $p = .04$; main effects: ps > .12). Those

in the status motive condition preferred the transparent container more than did controls for a healthy meal (M = 5.09 vs. 3.67; $t(238) = 2.48$, $p = .01$). This effect was not present when participants chose a container for an unhealthy meal ($p > .63$).

STUDY 4

Study 4 provides mediation evidence for our proposed process. Furthermore, if the effect is driven by a desire to convey self-control, it should replicate with non-food product choices. Thus, this study involves non-food dependent measures (preregistered at https://osf.io/ebc9t).

Two hundred participants from Amazon's Mechanical Turk (i.e., MTurk) participated in this study's 2-cell (desire for status: high vs. control) design, whereby choice of a virtuous vs. vice video served as the key dependent variable of interest. The independent variable prime was adapted from Griskevicius et al. (2010), in that we elicited status motives through a scenario. Those in the status motive condition visualized a context in which they were in the company of two people in their lives whom they wished to appear as a high-status person. Those in the control condition visualized a context in which they were in the company of two ordinary people in their lives.

After visualizing this context, participants considered and chose one of two videos to share with these two people. The virtuous video was described as a video with cognitive tricks to facilitate concentration and attention. The vice video was described as offering a short, enjoyable, chilled-out task to reduce work stress. Participants chose which video to share based on these descriptions, using a 6-point scale (1 = stress reduction video; 6 = cognitive tricks video). If the participant reported 1 to 3 on the scale, they received the stress reduction video; if

they reported 4 to 6, they received the cognitive tricks video to share. Thus, this study was incentive compatible as they subsequently could share these videos with those they had visualized. Participants then reported their need to signal self-control using a 7-point scale (1 = low desire to convey self-control; 7 = high desire to convey self-control).

A one-way ANOVA revealed participants in the status motive condition preferred the virtuous video compared to control participants (M = 3.39 vs. 2.51; $F(1, 198) = 12.72$, $p < .001$). An ANOVA also revealed those in the status-motive condition had a stronger need to demonstrate having high self-control compared to the control condition (M = 5.63 vs. 5.15; $F(1, 198) = 6.30$, $p = .01$). The effect of status motive on video choice was statistically mediated by the need to signal self-control (IE = .07, SE = .03, 95% CI = .01, .15).

STUDY 5

Study 5 examined H3. Four hundred and twenty-six participants from Amazon's MTurk completed the study. The study followed a 2 (status motive: yes vs. control) × 2 (price of products: similar vs. different) between-subjects design in which the product choice served as the key dependent variable. To prime status motives, participants were randomly assigned to visualize a status-motive context or a control context similar to that used in Study 4. They then imagined that they planned to purchase a new tablet when shopping in a public context and that the choice was between two options: a product called the "Londi" that was described as helping maintain self-control (i.e., virtuous product), and a product called the "Monics" that was described as entertaining (i.e., vice product). Approximately half of the participants saw the two tablet options with a similar price ($150 each). The other half saw the two tablet options with a

dissimilar price, whereby the Londi (virtuous option) was $150, and the Monics (vice option) was $350. Participants reported their preferred product using a 6-point scale (1 = Definitely Monics; 6 = Definitely Londi), with the understanding that some people would be selected at random to receive a voucher for the tablet they preferred.

A 2-way ANOVA revealed only the expected interaction ($F(1, 422) = 17.69$, $p < .001$; other ps > .79). When the products were equal in price and wealth signaling was not possible, those in the status motive condition (vs. control participants) had an increased relative preference for the virtuous product (i.e., the Londi; $M = 4.34$ vs. *3*.60; $F(1, 422) = 9.89$, $p = .002$). However, when the products differed in price and wealth-signaling by choosing the more expensive vice was possible, those in the status motive condition (vs. control participants) increased relative preference for the vice product (i.e., the Monics; $M = 3.68$ vs. 4.35; $F(1, 422) = 7.87$, $p = .005$).

STUDY 6

Study 6 examined H4. Three hundred and twenty-two participants from Amazon's MTurk completed the study. The study followed a 2 (desire to signal status: high vs. control) × 2 (reminder: self-control vs. wealth) between-subjects design in which the cell phone preferred was the key dependent variable of interest. We created two video commercials for a fictitious brand, Gabra. We designed one video to evoke a status motive and the other to be status neutral (control). Both commercials featured scenes from Seattle and varied only in the text overlaid on the screen. The status video had text priming a status motive (e.g. "*If only you were more respected. More valued, celebrated, and accomplished…).* The control video had descriptive texts *(e.g.,* "*Picture it. Your neighborhood. A stroll down the street. The center of town...*").

Participants began the study by watching one of the two videos. After viewing the video, participants proceeded to the reminder manipulation. Half of the participants completed a task on self-control signaling (i.e., self-control reminder condition), whereas the other half of the participants completed a different reminder task on wealth signaling (i.e., wealth signaling reminder condition). The reminders were such that all participants saw two hats: one that was $20 and the other that was $150. Those in the self-control reminder condition reported which hat a self-controlled person would choose. Most participants (89%) selected the less expensive hat, and in doing so, were reminded how saving behavior can signal self-control. Those in the spending reminder condition, on the other hand, reported which hat a wealthy person would choose. Most participants (72%) selected the more expensive hat, and in doing so, were reminded how spending behavior can signal wealth.

In the final part of the study, participants imagined that they were upgrading their phones at a store with two people whom they knew. Participants then read that they had narrowed their choices to two phones: the Londi and the Monics. The Londi, which was $680, and had a high dollar-return value for battery life, the camera lens, and storage. The relatively more stylish Monics, which was $880, and had a lower dollar-return value for the attributes. Hence, the choice between these two options allowed participants to demonstrate self-control by selecting the less expensive, higher-value product (Londi) over the more stylish yet lower-value product (Monics). Participants reported their preference using a dichotomous scale (-1 = Monics; 1 = Londi). This choice was incentive compatible in that we told participants some of them would be selected to receive money toward a phone like the product they selected. Indeed, one participant received money toward a phone like the one that they selected.

A binary logistic regression with status motive condition, reminder, and their interaction predicting choice of phone revealed only a significant interaction (B = 1.16, SE = .46, $Wald$ = 6.51, p = .01; other ps > .11). In the status motive condition, participants chose the less expensive phone more often when reminded of how spending can signal self-control versus how spending can signal wealth, in line with virtue signaling (M = 61% vs. 37%, b = .50, SE = .16, z = 3.09, p = .002). This difference was not found for participants in the control condition (p > .61). Moreover, within the self-control reminder condition, those with a status motive chose the less expensive phone to a greater extent than those in the control condition (b = .32, SE = .16, z = 2.02, p = .04). When reminded that product choice can signal wealth, there was a non-significant trend toward those with a status motive preferring the expensive phone compared to those in the control condition (p = .11).

This research tested the prediction that status motives can lead to virtue signaling through conspicuous self-control. We support this hypothesis across six studies, and in doing so, offer notable implications for marketers and consumers (implications are outlined in the introduction and contribution statement).

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CONSUMER PERSPECTIVE FOR THE DYNAMIC PROCESS MODEL OF LONG-TERM CORPORATE SURVIVAL: FROM PERCEIVED ETHICALITY TO BRANDS THAT CONSUMERS TRUST AND IDENTIFY WITH

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Keywords: consumer perceived ethicality, brand moral legitimacy, consumer-brand relationships, environmental self-identity

Description: This research investigates how consumer perceptions of a brand's ethicality promote the brand moral legitimacy, which in turn strengthens consumer purchase intentions through brand trust and consumer-brand identification.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

As consumers increasingly demand higher ethical standards of conduct from brands, there is a growing need to study how this affects the long-term survival of brands. This study aims to contribute to existing knowledge in this area. It examines how consumers' environmental self-identity moderates the relationship between their perceptions of brand ethicality and moral legitimacy, leading to higher brand trust and/or identification and hence purchase

intentions. We draw on the dynamic process model of long-term corporate survival and adapt it to the consumer perspective.

Method and Data

We tested the model on a nationally representative sample of consumers from Slovenia (N = 1681) who evaluated one of 39 real-world corporate brands from different industries such as retail, telecommunications, banking, insurance, home appliances, fast-moving consumer goods, and food industry. We used established scales from the literature to operationalize all constructs. All measurements were reliable and valid. We tested the model using structural equation modelling and applied the residual-centering approach to create the interaction terms between environmental self-identity and consumer perceived ethicality.

Summary of Findings

The results show that consumer perceived ethicality has a significant positive effect on moral legitimacy and that this relationship is negatively moderated by consumers' environmental self-identity, implying that brand ethicality has a weaker effect on moral legitimacy for consumers with a stronger environmental self-identity. However, we find that perceived ethicality also has a significant positive indirect effect on purchase intentions through moral legitimacy, brand trust, and consumer-brand identification.

Statement of Key Contributions

This study proposes and operationalizes a much-needed consumer perspective for the dynamic process model of long-term corporate survival. Consumer perceived ethicality, moral legitimacy, brand trust and consumer-brand identification were used to assess the consumer side of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and to illustrate the relationship between perceived ethicality and behavioral intentions. Next, we examine how consumers who identify with environmental behaviors, perceive honesty, responsibility, and moral legitimacy of brands relative to other consumers and argue for a negative moderation of

consumer environmental self-identity. We also show that consumer perceptions of brands as ethical are related to perceptions that their actions are appropriate within the socially constructed system of norms and values, across a wide range of industries and corporate brands in a large representative sample of consumers. Finally, this research has shown that perceived moral legitimacy promotes consumer trust in and identification with the brand. Interestingly, the indirect effect of perceived ethicality on purchase intention via brand identification is stronger than the indirect effect via brand trust. This suggests that the overlap between self-identification and corporate identity is indeed a stronger link that leads to higher purchase intentions for brands perceived as honest and responsible.

CORPORATE DIGITAL RESPONSIBILITY –

A QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT OF ANTECEDENTS AND EFFECTS

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Keywords: Corporate Digital Responsibility; Digital Technologies; Data Ethics; Digital Age; Corporate Responsibility

Description: This study examines the role of corporate digital responsibility in organizations and explores antecedents and effects of corporate digital responsibility.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

The contemporary management approach of corporate responsibility is widely known. It focuses on the triple bottom line functioning of firms and argues that firms have equal responsibilities to society, the planet, and the economic status of the firm (Elkington 1997). Digitization is creating a new focus of responsibility, resulting in the need to increasingly focus on moral and ethical considerations as well as legal requirements and standards when designing and using digital technologies and data (Herden et al. 2021; Lobschat et al. 2021). In research and practice, this focus has been coined *Corporate Digital Responsibility* (CDR). CDR relates to "(...) a set of values and specific norms that govern an organization's judgement and choices in matters that relate specifically to digital issues." (Lobschat et al. 2021 p. 876). Up until now, extant academic research (i.e., Lobschat et al. 2021; Herden et al. 2021) has focused on the conceptualization of CDR and its differentiation from CSR, relevant stakeholders, and implementation proposals for CDR. The goal of this research is to investigate the role of CDR in organizations as well as the antecedents to CDR and the effects thereof.

Method And Data

We chose an exploratory approach based on grounded theory (Goulding 2005), which allows for further quantitative research in this context. Semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted. The used questionnaire was divided into three main areas: 1) questions on the role of corporate digital responsibility in the organization; 2) questions on antecedents for the digital responsibility of companies; and 3) questions on the effects of corporate digital responsibility.

The sampling procedure for this study was purposive, and participants were selected based on their ability to answer the study questions (Goulding 2005). We conducted interviews with 12 managers and three CEOs of large companies in seven industries. Interviews lasted up to 60 minutes. The interviews allowed us to identify patterns and achieve theoretical saturation for the questions of interest (Strauss and Corbin 1998).

Summary of Findings

We conclude that CDR extends conventional knowledge on corporate responsibility. As such, in line with extant research we suggest that CDR should be considered alongside corporate social responsibility due to the particularities of digital technologies which involve new and specific challenges for an organization's responsible behavior that go beyond traditional corporate social behavior.

Further, we found that the organizational culture and values, the general situation of the organization as well as internal stakeholders are the most important internal antecedents of CDR. From an external standpoint, the experts agreed, that one of the most important influencing factors is the public (such as the media and consumer associations) as well as political laws and regulations.

Regarding the effects, the experts agreed that the implementation of CDR initiatives can increase employee satisfaction, trust, and the feeling of security toward the company. One expert even called CDR a motivator as it increases digital well-being. However, the experts also mentioned that CDR doesn't only have positive effects. CDR may initially unsettle employees, as it entails changes to established processes, routines, and the organizational culture. Based on the interviews, we further identified that CDR can increase organizations' reputation, attractiveness, and competitive advantage.

Statement of Key Contributions

Our research provides several contributions to marketing theory and practice. From a theoretical perspective, it answers the call for additional research on CDR. More specifically, we provide a cornerstone for understanding the role and relevance of CDR in organizations as well as the antecedents and effects of CDR implementation. Therefore, we add to the current discussion around the concept of CDR. We find that there are a multitude of antecedents and effects. As such, our research does not claim to be comprehensive or definitive. Rather, we aim to provide a base for the further investigation of antecedents and outcomes of CDR.

From a managerial perspective, our research provides managers with guidelines on how CDR can be implemented, and which factors have an influence on the implementation. As shown by the interviews, employees and managers are currently the biggest internal driver of CDR. Through our research, it further becomes clear that CDR helps to master the opportunities and challenges of digitization and that CDR can be a valuable driver of organizational performance. Specifically, our research shows managers that credible CDR can increase customer trust and satisfaction as well as the company's reputation among all stakeholders.

References are available upon request.

CROSSING THE DIFFUSION CHASM: THE ADOPTION OF ONLINE FOOD BENEFIT ORDERING AMONG THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE SPECIAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR WOMEN, INFANTS, AND CHILDREN

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Keywords: diffusion chasm, low-income consumer, online grocery shopping, food well-being, COVID-19 pandemic

Description: This study examines the adoption of online food benefit ordering among WIC participants, and explores the underlying reasons for the diffusion chasm occurred in the diffusion process.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

This study sets to understand how the participants of the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), one of the largest federally-funded nutrition assistance programs, react to the option of online food benefit ordering and explore what caused the chasm in the diffusion of online food benefit ordering among WIC participants. The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 has allocated $390 million for WIC modernization, which included online food benefit redemption as one of the major policy targets. However, benefit redemption behaviors have been rarely examined in marketing literature and little is known about the dissemination and adoption of innovations among low-income consumers.

Method and Data

This study employed a mixed methods design. In study 1, by linking the online ordering data from a grocery store chain in Oklahoma and the WIC administration data from the Oklahoma WIC state agency, we tracked WIC participants' adoption of online food benefit ordering for about six months since the grocery store chain fully launched online ordering service in July 2020. We estimated the diffusion of online food benefit ordering among WIC participants by using a Generalized Bass Model. We also merged online ordering data with the COVID-19 data and examined examines the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic on the diffusion process. In study 2, a qualitative research design was employed, in which 24 WIC participants and 11 grocery store employees were interviewed. The interview data were then transcribed, coded, and analyzed Following the procedure as outlined by Hsieh and Shannon (2005) and Strauss and Corbin (1990).

Summary of Findings

In Study 1, the empirical data demonstrate the diffusion curve of online food benefit ordering among WIC participants and the existence of a diffusion chasm. In the GBM estimation, the innovation effect worked while the imitation effect was not significant. Moreover, the number of COVID infection cases was negatively related with the diffusion of online ordering. The qualitative study conducted in Study 2 uncovered several underlying reasons for the diffusion chasm, including lack of awareness and knowledge on the online ordering option, low technology readiness, preference for picking up own produce in store, inability to access the benefit information, and lack of interpersonal influence. Some interviewees believe that reducing the exposure to the COVID virus is the reason for adopting online ordering, while the other believe otherwise.

Statement of Key Contributions

This study contributes to the innovation diffusion literature by providing new insights into the innovation adoption among low-income consumers. Our results show that the innovation diffusion among low-income consumers has a different pattern from that among higher-income consumers. For example, a diffusion chasm could occur much earlier. Moreover, this study extends innovation diffusion research by including the influence of the global pandemic into the Bass Model estimation. Contradictory to prior studies that suggest that the COVID-19 pandemic is boosting the penetration of online grocery shopping among the majority of consumers, our analyses found that the pandemic slowed down the diffusion among WIC participants. This study also shed new lights on diffusion chasm by uncovering the underlying reasons for the diffusion chasm.

References are available upon request.

DYING TO COMMUNICATE: HOW ALTRUISM INFLUENCES JOINT PURCHASE DECISIONS

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Keywords: altruism, preference-outcome selection failures, stigmatized consumption, deathcare.

Description: We develop a theoretical model showing the (mis-)alignment of decision outcomes that arise from altruistic consumers' (dis-)inclination to communicate purchase preferences for *traditional* versus *environmental* death care services.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

The COVID-19 pandemic has heightened death salience. Images and daily reminders of death have become a part of mainstream media and people engage in daily activities to avoid death from the virus. Notwithstanding, research shows that despite belief in its importance, very few people discuss their wishes with loved ones. The disinclination to discuss death care preferences is often attributed to the psychological cost of initiating the dialogue. If we specifically consider corpse dispositions, these can be classified as either traditional (e.g., embalming burials or cremations) or environmental (e.g., green burials or sustainable mineralization techniques). The rise in environmental corpse disposition innovations broadens

consumer choice, but heterogeneity exasperates the joint decision context. Despite an espoused preference for environmental services by the majority of North Americans, traditional corpse dispositions dominate the market. How can this preference-outcome gap be explained?

Method

We consider a two-period sequential game, where a decedent (indexed as i) and a survivor (indexed as j) select a death care solution for the decedent. In period 1, the decedent is alive and decides whether to 'discuss' their disposition preferences with the survivor. The survivor's preference is unknown, but the decedent knows the population preference distribution and anticipates that a discussion will alter the chance for the survivor to select the environmental service. A psychological cost d incurs if the decedent discusses with the survivor. In period 2, the decedent dies, and the survivor decides between a 'traditional' or 'environmental' service. While each player has their own valuations, they are willing to act altruistically towards the other. We solve the game using backwards induction.

Summary of Findings

We show how, even when the psychological cost of initiating the dialogue is reduced to zero, an immoderate degree of altruism can exacerbate reticent communication, increase selection failures, and inhibit the optimization of joint purchase outcomes. The model helps to explain the gap between espoused preferences for environmental services and traditional purchase outcomes. While we limit the scope of our inquiry to deathcare decisions, this model could be applied to other taboo joint purchase contexts where consumers are (dis-)inclined to discuss preferences (i.e., sex and reproductive goods and services, organ donation/trade, vaccination, etc.). It could be further extended to markets where the exchange of information is not convenient (i.e., gift-giving, business procurement by multiple members, etc.).

Key Contributions

Our research advances the existent body of research on stigmatized markets and answers calls for marketing research related to death and dying – specifically how environmental considerations influence deathcare purchase decisions. We show how social norm abidance can lead to undesired outcomes, thus answering the call for research that aims to understand norm emergence and its determinants. Beyond optimizing the joint decision context, or maximizing industry profits, understanding barriers to communication might help to promote sustainability in the deathcare industry. Rising population projections and life expectancy mean that traditional corpse dispositions are unsustainable. Embalming uses carcinogenic chemicals to prolong putrefaction at the expense of the living. Burials allow the dead to perpetually own land tax-free while the living lack adequate housing. Cremation has come ‘under fire’ for excessive carbon emission and air pollution. Therefore, we implore marketing scholars to engage in future research that aims to reduce communication barriers that inhibit the market diffusion of sustainable deathcare innovations.

ETHICAL OR UTILITARIAN? THE ANTECEDENTS OF ATTITUDE AMBIVALENCE REGARDING ONLINE MEAL DELIVERY SERVICE DURING A PANDEMIC

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KEY WORDS: attitude ambivalence, information-processing mindset, environmental ethics, attitude toward social distancing

DESCRIPTION

This paper seeks to conceptualize and investigate a framework to identify how approach-avoidance conflicts (utilitarian benefits vs. environmental ethics concern) impact consumers' attitude ambivalence toward OMDS during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our study has important managerial implications for retailer and offers critical insights into customers' ambivalent attitude in the food delivery industry.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

The COVID-19 pandemic has fueled the growth of online meal delivery services (OMDS). Convenience is one of the main utilitarian benefits of ordering meals online (Yang, 2013; Lee et al., 2017). One may consider OMDS to be easy to use and useful but environmentally unfriendly. This implies that the level of ambivalence of the consumer's attitude may differ based on their message-processing mindset regarding OMDS. This paper develops and examines a framework to identify how approach-avoidance conflict (utilitarian benefits vs. environmental ethics concern) impact consumers' attitude ambivalence toward OMDS during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We further infers that the individual consumer's attitude toward social distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic can be interpreted as that consumer's coping appraisal in response to the coronavirus outbreak. Two interesting questions are addressed: (1) whether the consumer's ambivalent attitude toward OMDS is eliminated when mandated social distancing practices are taken into consideration, even if the consumer is highly concerned about eco-conscious consumption; and (2) whether the utilitarian benefits of OMDS will be given increasing weight for consumers who have a more positive (vs. less positive) attitude toward social

distancing. We further demonstrate how gender moderates the effect of the information-processing mindset on attitude ambivalence regarding OMDS.

Method and Data

The replicated study was conducted using the questionnaire with 39 items from the Kakar (2020) study and 4 items from an existing Online Shopping Intention construct. To ensure valid responses, participants were required to have had at least some OMDS consumption experience, thus, prior purchasing experience was assessed. Data was collected in January, 2021. Two trained MBA students were recruited as interviewers to capture a broad representation of the population via the survey questionnaire technique at various public locations, and 410 usable questionnaires were returned over a two-week period, with 94.7% usability rate. (55.9% males) (age: M=26.27, SD=9.67) in Taiwan were recruited. The proposed model was empirically tested using structural equation modeling.

Summary of Findings

The results show that the attitude ambivalence is driven more by environmental ethics concern than by utilitarian benefits, and consumers who have a more positive (vs. less positive) attitude toward social distancing will experience a reduction in feeling guilty and ambivalence regarding OMDS, but this factor does not significantly enhance the perceptions of utilitarian benefits and reduce attitude ambivalence during

the COVID-19 pandemic. Males are found to be more likely to care about utilitarian benefits, while females are more likely to place a higher value on ethical consumption and also more likely to experience feeling guilty and to have an ambivalent attitude toward OMDS than are males.

Key Contributions

This study sheds further light on environmental ethics in consumer ambivalence to demonstrate the impact of the coronavirus crisis on ethical consumption, which complements the general concept of past research on related rational processes based on the TAM and identifies a better understanding of OMDS adoption.

References are available upon request

FIRM AGE: DOES IT MATTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY PERFORMANCE?

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Keywords: firm age, social responsibility, environmental responsibility, emission reduction, resource use.

Description: This research examines how the impact of corporate social responsibility (CSR) three pillars (environment, social, governance) and environmental subcategories (emission reduction, environmental innovation, resource use) on corporate financial performance (CFP) changes as firms age.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Do corporate social performance and environmental performance have different effects on CFP in older and younger firms? And does the impact of environmental subcategories' performance on CFP change with firm age? Which CSR pillars and subcategories affect financial performance more positively as firms age?

Method and Data

To find insights for our research questions, we obtain CSR performance panel data from Thomson Reuters ASSET4 for 179 US-listed firms during the period from 2010 to 2018. Thomson Reuters ASSET4 evaluates a firm's environmental, social and governance performance and their subcategories' performance. Among subcategories, the performance of three subcategories of the environment:

emission reduction, environmental innovation and resource use is used to validate our hypotheses. And the financial indices for calculating Tobin's q, the financial performance, are obtained from Thomson Reuters DataStream. The ages of 179 firms are calculated in years from the date of their establishment, which is collected on each firm's official website. We include firm and year fixed effects in our panel linear model specification.

Summary of Findings

We find that both environmental and social performance have a positive effect on CFP, but firm age negatively moderates the positive relationship between environmental performance and CFP, while strengthens the positive relationship between social performance and CFP. Our results also demonstrate that subcategories within the environmental pillar have different effects on CFP, where resource use has a positive impact, while emission reduction has a negative impact. But firm age negatively impacts on the relationship between CFP and both emission reduction and environmental innovation. We explain these results based on the context of easiness of value transmission and changing value expectations over time.

Key Contributions

We provide empirical evidence linking firm age to the relationships not only between CSR three pillars and CFP, but also between the environmental subcategories and CFP. This demonstrates that the impact of firm age is different depending on CSR characteristics. We propose a conceptual framework that the more experience and information stakeholders have, the greater the adaptation to CSR value, which gradually reduces the impact of CSR value over time. Because experience and information conveyed by social and environmental responsibility are different, the decrease of these impacts is not the same over time. By empirically demonstrating that the effects of subcategories on CFP within the same pillar are not the same, it is suggested that subcategories should be carefully considered in the study of the relationship between ESG (environmental, social, governance) and financial performance in order to provide precise implications.

References are available upon request.

GREEN, COMPETITIVE AND RESILIENT IN TIMES OF UNCERTAINTY.

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Keywords: green marketing strategy; corporate sustainability; uncertainty; competitive advantage; resilience

Description: An empirical study examining the interplay of green marketing strategy and the investment in green marketing resources on competitiveness and resilience in times of uncertainty.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Economic crises exert significant pressures on firm's marketing resources and often trigger substantial cuts in sustainability budgets and green marketing activities. However, it is still unclear whether such measures originally intended to help firms survive a crisis may end up hurting the firm's competitive position (Deleersnyder et al. 2009). Meanwhile, past research on sustainability marketing mostly focuses on environmental/green marketing strategy and its relationship with firm performance outcomes other than firm's resilience (e.g. Papadas et al. 2019). A few studies have examined the link between environmental/green strategy and competitive advantage, but without sufficiently capturing the role of green marketing strategy (e.g. Leonidou et al. 2015). Despite the topic's importance, the nature of a firm's response to a recession has not been looked in the past, particularly with respect to green marketing, or the

implications of a green marketing response on firm performance in a natural context of uncertainty. In light of this, our research investigates the impact of green marketing strategy and the firm's decision to invest in or divest from green marketing activities on competitiveness and resilience in times of deep economic uncertainty.

Method and Data

The case of Greece in 2015 provides fertile ground for studying the GMS in a time of uncertainty for several reasons: (1) Greece experienced the deepest recession in its modern history during 2010-2014, with an average GDP decline of 4.2% and an average unemployment rate of 21.1% (Financial Times 2015); (2) an increasing number of green marketing policies emerged in 2010s as the country had one of the worst records on CO_2 emissions (Nantsou et al. 2015); (3) the commitment of the Greek government to implement specific OECD environmental recommendations as part of the macroeconomic adjustment programs led to firms experiencing high regulatory pressures (OECD 2017); (4) many domestic and multinational firms based in Greece were increasingly adopting environmental management/marketing practices (Ernst and Young 2017). We focused on five different industry groupings for generalizability purposes. Based on a systematic literature review, we drafted a questionnaire that was refined with personal interviews undertaken with professionals and researchers in the sustainability/green marketing field. Then, we pretested the questionnaire with a survey circulated to 62 marketing professionals. Finally, we undertook a large survey to managers of 245 Greek firms. Multi-item, well-established measures with a 7-point Likert scale were used to assess all constructs.

Summary of Findings

Individual path estimates lend support to our hypotheses about the drivers of Green Marketing

Strategy (GMS). More specifically, Corporate Sustainability (CS) has a strong positive effect on GMS and Stakeholders' Sustainability Pressures (SSP) has a positive impact on GMS. Our findings also show that Competitive Advantage (CA) has a positive effect on both Operational Resilience (OR) and Financial Resilience (FR). Focusing on the main construct of the study, GMS has a significant effect on CA as well as an indirect positive effect on OR through CA and FR through CA. GMS has also a direct positive effect on OR suggesting that CA partially mediates the impact of GMS on OR. In addition, given that the direct effect of GMS on FR is non-significant, we can infer that CA mediates a substantial part of the impact of GMS on FR. Besides these (expected) positive influences of GMS, the results also support the moderating hypothesis by generating significant estimates with regards to the interplay between GMS and Green Marketing Resources (GMR) on CA. More specifically, GMR intensifies the positive effect of GMS on CA.

Statement of Key Contributions

Our study contributes to an emerging stream of research about the implications of an enhanced marketing strategy in periods of uncertainty. In particular, our findings build on current knowledge concerning the performance outcomes of GMS by revisiting this relationship in the context of an economic crisis. In addition, we contribute to the research on the availability of slack resources for green marketing as well as previous studies that examined implications of investing in sustainability programs during recessions. We take a step further by specifying the type of the available resources (i.e., green marketing resources) in a new context (i.e., uncertainty). Besides, our study also offers nuanced insights for marketing managers by presenting GMS as an exemplar strategy for balancing purpose with profit as it creates competitive advantage and improves resilience during a recession in a responsible manner. Moreover, our findings inform managers that sustainability remains an important asset for

companies when experiencing a period of uncertainty, however, its effect on firm's competitiveness and resilience is further supported by a GMS. Finally, our study shows that firms which sustained or increased their investment in green marketing resources during a period of uncertainty performed better in the long run.

References are available upon request.

GUILT AND SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION: THE CHICKEN-OR-EGG CAUSALITY DILEMMA

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Keywords: Guilt, Sustainable consumption, simultaneous equations model.

The current article investigates the nature of the relationship (e.g., direction, and strength) between guilt and sustainable consumption by using non-recursive modelling.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Government agencies and non-profit organizations have long engaged in campaigns aiming at encouraging sustainable consumption. In developed countries, these campaigns include efforts to discourage people from smoking or consuming junk food (Seiders and Petty 2004). Featuring guilt, these campaigns are designed based on the assumption that guilt has the potential to encourage sustainable consumption (e.g., Agrawal and Duhachek 2010; Duhachek et al. 2012). Yet, research shows that consumer support for product with sustainable attributes is not uniformly positive (Luchs et al. 2010; Peloza et al. 2013; White et al. 2012). What is the nature of the relationship between guilt and sustainable consumption?

Over the last decades, research has attempted to provide a clear answer to this key question for policy makers, academics, and practitioners. Although there is some agreement that guilt positively influences sustainable consumption, prior findings are mixed regarding the causal nature of this relationship (e.g., Antonetti and Maklan 2014; Chen and Moosmayer 2020; Kim and Johnson 2013; Mallett 2012). Some studies find that guilt has a moderated direct effect on sustainable consumption (e.g., Chen and Moosmayer 2020); other works argue that guilt mediates the relationship between personal norms and sustainable consumption (e.g., Bamberg and Möser 2007; Onwezen et al. 2013); or influences sustainable consumption via customer perceived effectiveness (e.g., Antonetti and Maklan 2014). This article develops and tests a conceptual model in which the guilt-sustainable consumption relationship is non-recursive.

Method and Data

The sample[1] includes 630 participants (55.24 % female). The average age of participants is 27 and ranges from 18 to 66. Around fifty eight percent of participants have a university

[1] A special acknowledgement to Mr. Fabian Wagner for his contribution to the data collection.

degree. The current paper adopted the experimental designed by Antonetti and Maklan (2014). Text-based scenarios were shown to participants in an online survey and afterwards answers were collected via a questionnaire.

Summary of the Findings

The results showed that consumers who experiences guilt are more likely to engage in sustainable consumption (b=.12, S.E.=.02, $p < .001$). To test for endogeneity, pride was considered as an instrumental variable. Two criteria were used to select pride as an appropriate instrument (Young 2009). First, pride negatively correlates with guilt. Second, the instrumental variable does not directly relate to the dependent variable—purchase intention of sustainable product. To verify these relationships, linear OLS regression analyses were performed in each case. The results indicated a significant negative association between pride and guilt (b=-.27, S.E.=.04, $p<.001$) and a nonsignificant effect of pride on sustainable consumption (b=.002, S.E.=.02, $p=.89$). Now that pride is established as a suitable instrumental variable, the current research used 2-stage least squares and the Wu-Hausman test to investigate the model for endogeneity. The Wu-Hausman test indicated that the null hypothesis that guilt is exogenous can be rejected—F(1, 627)=4.08 ($p<.05$). Therefore, the relationship between guilt and sustainable consumption is characterized by endogeneity. Finally, to probe the feedback loop Stata 17 was used to estimate the structural path. The model fit was assessed using maximum likelihood techniques with robust standard errors. Before interpretating the results, a stability analysis of the simultaneous equations model was conducted. The results showed that all eigenvalues lie inside the unit circle, which indicates that a structural equation model estimated with maximum likelihood satisfies stability conditions. The findings showed that guilt has a positive effect on sustainable consumption (b=.08, Robust S.E.=.01, $p<.001$) and that consumers who engage in sustainable consumption are more prone to experiencing guilt (b=.29, Robust S.E.=.04, $p<.001$).

Key Contributions

This article contributes to the sustainability literature by demonstrating that the feeling of guilt experienced by consumers is endogenous. This study is the first in the sustainability literature to address this issue. From a theoretical perspective, the findings demonstrate that the behavioral intention to engage in sustainable consumption makes consumers more prone to experience guilt. From a practical standpoint, these findings are valuable because they spot the limitations of the guilt-driven campaigns sponsored by government agencies and non-profit organizations in efforts to encourage sustainable consumption. These campaigns will be more likely effective among consumers who have already engaged in sustainable consumption. Consumers who show little support for sustainable consumption are less likely to experience consumption-related guilt. The results imply that they may be in a perpetual cycle of unsustainable consumption and guilt-free.

References are available upon request.

HARDER, BETTER, FASTER, STRONGER: THE ADOPTION AND USE OF AI-BASED M-HEALTH APPLICATIONS

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Keywords: Well-Being, Personalization, Quantified-self, Artificial Intelligence, Assemblage Theory

Description: We bring out through topic modeling the antecedents of mHealth app adoption and we study their impact on well-being, intention to use and real use, within the framework of assemblage theory, across three mixed-method studies.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

mHealth apps aim to use internet of things (IOT) and artificial intelligence (AI) to improve our well-being (WB). IoT-connected devices and apps allow more advanced, personalized tracking by automatically exploiting users' data. The AI service operates by self-understanding users' behaviors to analyze and manage their real-time data to give feedback analysis and so to optimize or automate their decision-making, health behaviors, and thus WB. We aim to explore what concepts consumers have in mind when using this kind of service. We also wish to study the impact of this concepts on usage, by focusing in the central role of well-being.

Method and Data

We use an exploratory mixed-method approach, simultaneously using text mining and structural equation modeling through two studies. A first one ($n_{Adoption}$ = 145) on the intention to adopt an Artificial Intelligence generating health's recommendations, and a second one (n_{Use} = 3,496) on the score obtained by mHealth apps on Google and Apple app stores from a database of nearly 200,000 comments that we scrapped. A third confirmatory study (n*Assemblage* = 405) allows us to validate our previous results by using an experimental design and structural equation modeling, with Qualtrics' panel.

Summary of Findings

Our first two studies highlight the key roles of personalization and quantified-self in both adoption and real use. The first study demonstrates that during adoption, consumers perceive personalization and self-quantification as antecedents to adoption. These two antecedents then have a significant impact on well-being, which in turn significantly impacts intention to use. The second study allowed us to demonstrate the importance of these two concepts in the context of real and long-term use. Finally, the third study allows us to confirm again our results, this time by integrating the framework defined by Hoffman and Novak's assemblage theory.

Key Contributions

This paper contributes to the emerging literature studying the impact of AI on consumer behavior and to the one on well-being, using an innovative methodological approach.
First, we demonstrate the important role of well-being in the adoption and use of a mHealth app. We thus propose a major explicative concept of the intention to use, which is still understudied in the literature. We also show the impact of adoption antecedents on well-being, which reinforces its central role. We then identify two main concepts and their impact on well-being, intention to use and actual use. Our results highlight two main topics that impact the intention to use, real use, and thus the consumer experience of AI-based mHealth apps: personalization and quantified-self. Finally, we propose an empirical demonstration of the assemblage theory by Hoffman et Novak, tailored to our research field, which to our knowledge has not yet been done in the literature.

How Can Marketers Use Sustainability and Craftsmanship to Improve Consumer Well-Being: An Examination of Perceived Brand Authenticity in Luxury Goods

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Keywords: Sustainability, Craftsmanship, Brand Authenticity, Appraisals, Self-Esteem, Well-Being

Description: This paper demonstrates that perceived sustainability and craftsmanship in luxury goods can positively influence perceived brand authenticity impacting well-being through appraisals and self-esteem, providing implications for marketers in this sustainability and consumer well-being-centered era.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

In today's hyperconnected and information-loaded world, having quality products is necessary but not enough for brands; consumers desire a genuine, authentic, credible, and trustworthy experience. This research examines the impact of perceived sustainability and craftsmanship on brand authenticity and consumers' cognitive and affective behaviors. Traditionally, craftsmanship has been an essential part of the luxury industry because craftsmanship embodies quality and upholds the legacy and value of luxury brands. Concurrently, the rising awareness of sustainability positively influences innovative product offerings. However, maintaining a balance between upholding traditional craftsmanship and incorporating sustainability is challenging for marketers. Therefore, we investigate how luxury marketers can use sustainability and craftsmanship to positively influence consumer well-being. With the lack of research on the relationship between these constructs, we explore how marketers can use sustainability and craftsmanship to influence consumers' perceptions of brand authenticity. Further, we explore how authenticity influences consumers' appraisal process, self-esteem, and overall well-being. Our research questions are as *follows*:

(1) What is the role of sustainability on brand authenticity in luxury goods?

(2) What is the role of craftsmanship on brand authenticity in luxury goods?

(3) How does the consumption of authentic luxury goods influence appraisals, self-esteem, and well-being?

Method and Data

We conducted a study on luxury goods to examine if perceived sustainability and craftsmanship engender perceived brand authenticity; and if brand authenticity leads to appraisals, self-esteem, and well-being. Thus, we employed a survey and analyzed the model with PLS-SEM. A survey was administered at a Southwest University, with 279 usable responses were collected. We selected a Cartier watch that is environmentally sustainable as the stimuli material in this study. First, participants were required to read descriptions of brand information, sustainability, craftsmanship features, and a retail price and watch a video reinforcing the manipulation effects. Next, we asked participants to imagine they treated themselves to this Cartier watch after the first job promotion and picture wearing this watch. Next, respondents answered questions about their perceptions of Cartier's craftsmanship, sustainability, brand authenticity, appraisals, self-esteem, and well-being with established measures. To analyze our data and test the structural relationship of our proposed model, we employed a PLS-SEM model, assessing internal consistency (all > .7), composite reliability (between .6 and .9), discriminant validity, and the structural model. Further statistical results are demonstrated in the following section.

Summary of Findings

Our study suggests that sustainability and craftsmanship positioning strategies enhance consumer well-being through increased perceived brand authenticity and explains the nuanced constructs linking them. Specifically, brand authenticity produces reflected and self-appraisals engendering consumer well-being through self-esteem. The PLS-SEM model supported all the hypothesized paths within our proposed model. Perceived sustainability ($\beta = .287$, $t = 4.91$, $p < .001$) and craftmanship ($\beta = .289$, $t = 4.95$, $p < .001$) were positively and significantly related to brand authenticity. Additionally, brand authenticity impacted consumers' self-appraisal ($\beta = .476$, $t =$

10.82, p <.001) and reflected appraisal (β = .409, t = 7.72, p <.001). Furthermore, consumers' self-appraisal (β = .228, t = 2.98, p <.01) and reflected appraisal (β = .207, t = 3.07, p <.01) were positively and significantly related to the self-esteem providing. Finally, self-esteem had a positive and significant relationship with consumers' well-being (β = .719, t = 20.18, p < .001). Hence, the results demonstrate that perceived sustainability and craftsmanship can positively influence perceived brand authenticity impacting well-being through appraisals and self-esteem. By incorporating sustainability and upholding traditional craftsmanship into market offerings, marketers can positively influence consumers and, in turn, society.

Statement of Key Contributions

This research extends previous work by looking at sustainable luxury to understand how sustainability and craftsmanship combine to have a market- and societal-level impact. Our study demonstrates that sustainability and craftsmanship positioning are effective marketing strategies in building brand authenticity and enhancing consumer well-being. Thus, this study fills the lack of literature on the relationship between craftsmanship, sustainability, and brand authenticity in luxury goods. Our findings encourage luxury marketers to balance traditional craftsmanship and innovative sustainability to uphold their brand authenticity and keep relevancy in the market over time. Specifically, luxury brands should guard their artisanal craftsmanship value as craftsmanship embodies the spirit of luxury brands. Besides, luxury marketers should provide sustainable solutions adding value to their market offerings. Moreover, we also offer suggestions to prepare the luxury industry for a sustainable luxury era because society is transforming from consumerism to sustainable consumption. Therefore, the momentum of sustainable luxury cannot rely on the few current sustainable luxury marketers; instead, the whole luxury industry should devote efforts to incorporate sustainability into its value delivery process. Likewise, the more

consumers espouse sustainable luxury, the stronger the dissemination of consumer well-being, and the greater the sense of consumer well-being in society.

HOW CONSUMERS AND INVESTORS REACT TO NEGATIVE SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL INCIDENTS?

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Key-words: negative sustainability incidents, sustainable consumption, sustainable investment.

Description: This article explores how consumers and investors react to negative sustainability incidents involving firms.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Although society has become increasingly prone to sustainability issues, firms have little insight into how negative social and environmental incidents affect performance. Firms are exposed to consumers and investors retaliation given their level of brand visibility, engagement with sustainability, and sustainability transparency. This article explores how they react to such incidents involving firms. The authors hypothesize that consumers highly retaliate firms with high brand visibility, strong engagement with

sustainability and low sustainability transparency, while investors moderately retaliate firms with high engagement with sustainability.

Method And Data

The authors conduct an event study of 352 lawsuits regarding environmental or social negative incidents in recent years for 265 firms operating in the United States. We collected those incidents from the watchdog Violation Tracker, that is the first wide-ranging database on corporate misconduct. We chose incidents on the offense groups "environment-related offenses" and "employment-related offenses". We estimated random effects panel models using the software R.

Summary of Findings

The authors unveil how firms with higher engagement with sustainability have lower sales revenue and less negative impact on stock prices after receiving a penalty decision in the lawsuit for a sustainability incident. Consumers feel betrayed by the firm after such incidents, while investors are influenced by the insurance-like effect that engagement with sustainability has for future value. Also, firms with higher sustainability transparency have less negative impact on sales revenue, since consumers have greater trust on firms that are transparent about sustainability.

Statement of Key Contributions

Our study contributes to marketing strategy literature in two ways. First, by assessing the reactions of consumers to sustainability incidents, as well as by analyzing the impacts of brand visibility, engagement to sustainability and sustainability transparency

in this process. Second, by enhancing the understanding of the reaction of investors to negative sustainability incidents and studying the role of engagement to sustainability.

IMPACT OF GLOBAL BRAND CMOS' CSR AND SOCIO-POLITICAL ACTIVISM COMMUNICATION ON TWITTER

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Keywords: Corporate social responsibility, socio-political activism, CMO, social media, global brands

Description: This research (N_{tweets} = 17,468) finds that Chief Marketing Officers (CMOs) rarely publish CSR or socio-political activism tweets yet when they do, this leads to a positive impact of CSR tweets while a negative impact of socio-political activism tweets on re-tweets, with non-US headquarters and CMO nationality improving these effects.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn offer brands and top managers an opportunity to engage various stakeholders around societal topics with an intention to create digital impact – as captured by engagement and eWOM indicators (e.g., shares) – within their networks and potentially for their brands (Babić Rosario, Sotgiu, De Valck, and Bijmolt 2016; Okazaki, Plangger, West, and Menéndez 2020). The effect of CMO communications in the social media space is worthwhile to investigate. Theoretically, the impact of such engagement deserves to be tested according to Upper Echelon literature in marketing (cf. Whitler, Lee, Krause, and Morgan 2021) since such involvement may determine the marketing organization's ability to

attract and retain customers, employees, and partners (Moorman 2020). The topic is also important practically since CMOs prioritize being on social media and dedicate considerable work time in networking activities while being busy running their marketing organizations (Engelen, Lackhoff, and Schmidt 2013; Heavey, Simsek, and Kyprianou 2020). Given this background, we ask the following research questions: (1) Does CMOs' communication about CSR or socio-political activism have digital impact (i.e., re-tweets)? And (2) how brand origin i.e., the geographical location of its HQ and CMO nationality influence the CSR or socio-political activism digital communication impact?

Method and Data

The study is based on an examination of Twitter data (N_{tweets} = 17,468 by CMOs of the top global brands). Data were extracted from publicly available Twitter feeds of CMOs leading the marketing function among the top global brands ranking in Interbrand's 2016 Global 100 and Brand Finance's Global 500 lists. The final dataset involved 214 global brands whose senior marketing executives are more readily identifiable in the Internet (via corporate web pages, LinkedIn profiles, etc.) and actively tweeted at least once during the data collection span, making it possible to source communications of a sub-sample (N=81). The Twitter activity was tracked for a period of two years between 2015 and 2017. The focal dependent variable was total re-tweets (M= 5.74), log-transformed to overcome skewness. Regarding our focal independent variables, a tweet was coded as a CSR communication (CSR dummy = 1, M=5.3%) or a socio-political activism communication (activism dummy = 1, M=3.2%) if it contained terms from a designated list. A research assistant checked firms' and CMOs' websites and LinkedIn profiles to identify our moderating variables: brand origin and CMO's country of origin. We controlled for various other factors including valence, brand relatedness of a tweet.

Summary of Findings

Our key finding is that when CMOs communicate in the digital space, compared to regular content, they achieve higher re-tweets if the content is based on CSR, yet lower re-tweets if the content is based on socio-political activism. Re-tweets are viewed as a strong indication of eWOM (Guerra et al. 2017; Vargo 2016) and this finding implicitly demonstrates the external legitimacy value i.e., higher acceptance and fit in one's network from CSR-related communication practices and risks of socio-political activism practices since these are associated with controversy and polarization in one's network. The moderation analysis suggests that the effectiveness is *more positive* for CSR content when the brand is international (non-U.S.) and becoming *less negative* for socio-political activism content when the CMO is international (non-U.S.). Per CSR – it is likely to be viewed as less authentic in the U.S. compared to other locations in which this practice is newer. Per socio-political activism, it is likely that when CMO is from the US, more people will feel more uncomfortable to voice their opinion and more at risk to discuss the U.S.-based controversial topics, overall suggesting message content in relation with the CMO's nationality and brand origin are important elements to consider in CMO communications.

Key Contributions

The study findings are an evidence for the critical role of marketers for identifying and leading trends in the global environment. While practice holds the view that CMOs connect with the brand they work for and represent them in their daily communication, there has been no systematic research that sheds light on the degree to which CMOs, specifically those in charge of global brands, apply CSR- and socio-political activism-related communication on social media. Our attempt to fill this void is critical for marketing theory and practice since both global brands and social media operate across the globe and cater to consumers across many countries. Since social and sustainable issues are central in shaping people's decision making and priorities,

marketers should pay close attention to better using social media and word-of-mouth in forming impact in the digital era, for their personal brands, and as well the brands they work for. In the midst of a global digital transformation due to the COVID-19 pandemic, managers' direct communications with customers will accelerate further, hence underlying the importance of our results on digital communication channels using text analysis tool in global branding research and practice.

References are available upon request.

IMPROVING ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION: ONE IMAGINED TOUCH AT A TIME

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Keywords: haptic imagery, imagined touch, environmental protection, social marketing, sensory marketing

Description: We demonstrate that emotional attachment to fauna induced via imagined touch enhances individual's willingness to share Facebook posts and increases the number of individuals who sign up for a conservation mailing list.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Research has shown that consumers who engage and interact with fauna care more for the natural environment (Hinds and Sparks 2008); however, wildlife officials are concerned that interaction between humans and wildlife is harmful as it disrupts the wildlife's natural behavior and habitat. The tension between encouraging interaction for increased engagement with nature and the potential harm of such an interaction is best illustrated at the Crystal River National Wildlife Refuge, a protected area in Florida designated for conserving wild manatees. Wildlife

officials are worried that human touch impairs manatee behavioral patterns such as breeding, feeding, and sheltering and have imposed fines to discourage touching. However, managers at the refuge believe this interaction improves environmental protection efforts.

Our research helps wildlife officials and researchers achieve their mutual goal of protecting wildlife from human touch while encouraging environmental protection. We draw from research in haptics (Peck, Barger, and Webb 2013; Shu and Peck 2011) to investigate the effect that imagined touch has on generating haptic imagery, which increases consumer emotional attachment towards fauna and subsequent environmental protection efforts.

Method And Data

Study 1 is a one-factor between-subject experiment with one manipulated condition (imagined touch: imagined touch, no imagined touch, control). The purpose of Study 1 is to show the impact of imagined touch on environmental protection efforts with fauna and explore the role that emotional attachment plays in driving this engagement. We collected data for Study 1 online using Mturk. One hundred and seventy participants (55% female) completed the study. In each condition, the participants viewed an image of an American Bison for thirty seconds.

Study 2 is a single factor (imagined touch: imagined touch, control) between-subjects experiment. The purpose of Study 2 is to explore the effect of imagined touch on real environmental protection efforts. We collected data for Study 2 online using Mturk. Two hundred and one participants (37% female) completed the study. In Study 2, we created two Facebook news feed Ads to test the effect of imagined touch on signing a petition to help a pair of Gibbons on Change.org and/or joining the mailing list of the Gibbon Conservation Center.

Summary of Findings

For Study 1 we ran a one-way ANOVA on Facebook engagement against the three imagined touch conditions: imagined touch, no imagined touch, control. The overall F-test is significant ($M_{imagined_touch}=3.5$, $M_{no_imagined_touch}=2.9$, $M_{control}=2.8$, $p<.05$). Dunnett's multiple comparisons to compare means against a control group reveals a significant difference between the imagined touch and control condition ($t=2.33$, 95% CI = [0.028, 1.371]), but no significant difference between the no imagined touch and control condition ($t=0.13$, 95% CI = [-0.632, 0.710]). To evaluate mediation, we used bootstrap mediation analyses (PROCESS Model 4, Hayes 2017) on the imagined touch and control condition and found an indirect imagined touch effect through haptic imagery to emotional attachment ($\beta = .29$, SE = .13, 95% CI = [.0653, .5739]), suggesting that imagined touch, compared to a control condition, promotes greater emotional attachment through increased haptic imagery. A nonsignificant direct effect ($p=.54$) suggests full mediation.

Study 2 provide evidence that, for females, using imagined touch on a Facebook news feed ad can be used to encourage greater environmental protection efforts ($p<.05$) such as joining the mailing list for the Gibbon Conservation Center.

Statement of Key Contributions

Our paper adds to the knowledge of haptics in the marketing discipline by considering the impact of haptic imagery on consumers' emotional attachment to living fauna. We show that haptic imagery enhances emotional attachment to fauna. We then provide evidence that haptic imagery

improves consumers' environmental protection efforts, with emotional attachment mediating this relationship. Overall, our research suggests that by encouraging consumers to imagine touching fauna, marketers and wildlife officials can physically protect fauna while fostering emotional attachment and commitment to environmental protection efforts. Our studies show that imagined touch has a positive effect on both affective response and emotional attachment for living fauna.

References are available upon request.

Income Effect of Food Subsidy in Improving Food Well-being

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Key words

Food wellbeing, food subsidy, nutrition, marketing and public policy, In-kind subsidy, food diversity

Description

We study whether the in-kind food subsidies, which are typically restricted to staple cereals, are effective in improving the overall nutritional well-being of the consumers using a quasi-experimental setup.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

World over, policymakers provide subsidies to consumers below the poverty line (BPL) to facilitate consumption of healthy foods that improve their health and well-being. While the effect of voucher based non-cash subsidy on consumer's choices and food well-being has been studied by extant literature using programs such as SNAP and WIC in US, the effect of in-kind subsidy has received little attention. In this research, we examine whether in-kind subsidy, in the form of stable cereal, can improve the overall food well-being, even though it provides only necessities. We posit that the in-kind subsidy program may perform the twin role of directly offering certain necessities (staple food grains) to the consumers at a subsidized rate and indirectly creating income effect through the amount saved on necessities. We study this in the context of India, where diet is predominated by cereals which is high in calories but lacks nutrient diversity, especially protein (Sharma et al. 2020). Hence, we focus on the protein consumption of consumers, compute a well-defined protein score (PS) based on protein consumption practices, and use that as the outcome variable of interest. Besides, we also examine the effect of subsidy on consumption of diverse food, measured as food diversity score (FDS).

Method and Data

We study the above research question in the context of the Indian Public Distribution System (PDS) that delivers grains at a subsidized rate to consumers at different wealth/ income levels. It is the largest in the world and provides staple food to sixty five million poor consumers. Using a unique dataset from a state-wide survey on detailed food consumption, we examine the food uptake behavior of distinct consumer groups and their nutritional

profiles. We use a quasi-experimental setup by matching consumers who use subsidies against those who do not, based on observables and PSM technique.

Summary of Findings

We find that consumers who have access to subsidy have higher PS relative to the matched consumers who have no access to subsidy. In addition, those who access PDS also have greater FDS compared to those who do not. Probing further, we evaluate whether access to market, cultural food norms defined by religion, education, and household size impact the nutritional availability and intake by matching the specific segments with access to PDS against those segments without access to PDS. This segment level analysis reveals very interesting findings. We find that consumers in the poorest quintile, in rural areas, who are educated, and belong to larger families benefit more compared to their counterparts. This heartening finding supports the argument for in-kind subsidy aimed at provisioning food to those who need it the most.

Statement of Key Contributions

Our finding has important implications for policymakers debating the role of in-kind subsidy to ensure the food security of the consumers. We causally establish that even though the subsidy may cover only the basic caloric requirements of the consumers, the income effect generated from the subsidy helps consumers attain a better nutrition profile. Specifically, the finding that even the food subsidy that covers only staples helps the poorest households in accessing protein through an income effect highlights the indirect effect of such subsidy in BPL household's food well-being. These results are important for policymakers to design effective food security programs and marketers to cater to the supplemental nutritional requirements of the lower-income quantiles.

References

References are available upon request.

INFLUENCE OF ALTERNATIVE CONSUMER NETWORKS ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Keywords: alternative consumer networks, alternative food networks, sustainability, systematic review, impact logic model

Description: We conducted a systematic literature review on which criteria exist to measure the influence of consumer networks on sustainable development and systematically summarized the identified indicators in terms of an impact logic model.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Alternative food and other consumption networks have become increasingly important as ways of sustainable consumption. However, there is no consensus on how the impact of alternative consumer networks (ACNs) on sustainable development can and should be measured. Most of the existing frameworks and approaches only consider a small part of outcomes, are often complex and require a lot of expertise and knowledge to apply, which is a burden especially for not-for-profit organizations such as ACNs. To decide on the use of indicators, a comprehensive research of existing indicators is needed first. Therefore, we conducted a systematic review answering the following research questions:

Which criteria are used in the literature to measure the influence of ACNs on sustainable development? Which criteria are used most frequently?

Furthermore, we aimed to systematically summarize the identified indicators by means of an impact logic model. Not only are social interventions embedded in an environment that is too complex and dynamic to determine cause-and-effect relationships, but in a complex, natural environment, issues of impact are much more important (Cohen and Kibel 1993). An impact logic model can give a framework for the evaluation of complex open systems (Kumpfer et al. 1993).

Method and Data

We conducted a systematic literature review. We defined ACN as project, scheme, initiative or cooperation that involve economic relations which transcend the boundaries of profitability, continuous social interaction, and the sharing of risks and responsibilities among consumers or consumers and producers. Original research in peer-reviewed journals and conference abstracts was included. Two independent reviewers screened 20% of abstract and full text articles. One person at a time evaluated the eligibility for inclusion for the remaining references.

We used the extracted data to identify outcome domains with an inductive qualitative content analysis (Vaismoradi et al. 2016; Vaismoradi et al. 2013). We presented the outcome domains systematized in a logic model and merged and synthesized the categories as much as possible without losing important information for better readability.

After the initial open coding and inductive process, we used the basic needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness from self-determination theory from Deci and Ryan to explain behavioral changes. We grouped indicators at impact level into the three common pillars of sustainability: social, ecological, and economic impact. Beside a written description, we

created a graphical presentation to enable the simplest possible assessment of a complex topic.

Summary of Findings

Our systematic review identified 138 peer-reviewed references dealing with the influence of ACNs on sustainable development which reported a huge number of different outcomes. Our review showed that effects of ACNs on sustainable development are mentioned on different levels starting from determinants for motivation and changes in conditions through behavioral changes to social, ecological and economic impact.

To explain behavioral changes in our impact logic model, we used the basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness according to the self-determination theory from Deci and Ryan. Outcomes that can be assigned to relatedness were reported most often in the identified literature (overall 131 entries). Outcomes that could be assigned to competence were mentioned 91 times and outcomes that could be assigned to autonomy were mentioned 77 times. Changes in conditions were reported 58 times, whereas most of them were about food security and affordability. Changes in behavior were reported 132 times (42 relate to consumer behavior, 90 relate to other behavioral changes). Reported outcomes at the macro level mostly concerned economic impact (131 entries). Outcomes that could be assigned to social impact were reported 84 times and outcomes that could be assigned to ecological impact were reported 105 times.

Key Contributions

To our knowledge, this is the first comprehensive review summarizing existing indicators for measuring sustainability in alternative consumer networks and systematizing them in an impact logic model.

Although other sustainability impact frameworks exist, most of them consider only a small part of outcomes from the whole process logic and are hard to evaluate, especially for not-for-profit organizations such as consumer networks. Our impact logic model can be used to evaluate consumer networks more systematically. This would provide an opportunity to standardize the assessment and reporting of sustainability in consumer networks in further research and thus provide comparability.

Linking bottom-up initiatives and top-down structures and governance in regions is seen as crucial for social-ecological regional development (Castro-Arce and Vanclay 2020). Therefore, governmental agencies and policy makers can find value in our manuscript. Furthermore, consumer networks and their marketers can use the results of our review to find out why people join the network and what benefits they actually derive from it. Networks could therefore work on their communication with potential members and aim to achieve the effects cited as reasons for joining in order to be able to retain members in the long term.

References are available upon request.

NEGATIVE MORAL STEREOTYPES OF MANAGERS: ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENCES

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Keywords: negative moral stereotypes of managers, immoral company behavior, trust in economic system, induction, proxy logic

Description: The core goal of this paper is to empirically investigate whether immoral company behavior increases negative moral stereotypes of managers and whether theses stereotypes destabilize public trust in the economic system.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Society is frequently confronted with examples of companies that do not play by the rules but engage in embezzlement, fraudulent misrepresentations, manipulation, or exploitation of labor. Although such examples provide evidence of immoral behavior of individual companies, there seems to be a trend within society to overgeneralize and ascribe these company behaviors to managers. Consequently, the group of managers becomes increasingly stigmatized and is often riddled with negative moral stereotypes. Yet, so far, only very few researchers have examined the antecedents and effects of negative moral stereotypes (SOM) of managers more closely (Zaidman 2000; Homburg et al. 2011). This is surprising seeing the possible consequences of these stereotypes such as the loss of trust in the economic system as a result of the growing mistrust in the moral competence of the leaders of the economic system. To address this research void, we raise the research questions (1) what antecedent influences the emergence of negative moral SOM, (2) what boundary condition renders this antecedent more or less important, and (3) how do negative moral SOM affect people's trust in the economic system.

Method and Data

We analyzed data from a longitudinal panel dataset with five measurement points over a total period of one year and initially 303 participants. We recruited respondents using the online market research company Prolific. To test our conceptual framework, we used three different lag models: (1) Pooled OLS Estimation, (2) Fixed Effects Panel Regression, (3) Random Effects Panel Regression.

In examining the antecedents of negative moral SOM, we focus on perceived immoral company behavior. As a boundary condition, we focus on perceived degree of generalization of

managers. To conceptualize negative moral SOM, we focus on the degree to which managers are perceived as moral vs. immoral actors. While previous stereotype research has predominantly considered warmth or sociability and competence (Fiske 2018), morality also plays a dominant role in social perception (Schwartz and Bardi 2001) and is crucial in determining individual perceptions (Ramos and Moriconi 2017). Moral traits are even more important than sociability and competence in positive in-group evaluations (Leach et al. 2007) and for out-group impression formation (Brambilla et al. 2011l; Ramos and Moriconi 2017).

Summary of Findings

Our results, showing a high robustness, reveal that people move from specific individual perceptions of immoral company behavior to a generalization about the managers' morality in form of negative moral SOM because they blame the company's behavior, which is perceived as immoral, on the managers. The results further show that the perceived degree of generalization of managers positively moderates the direct effect of perceived immoral company behavior on the emergence of negative moral SOM. Lastly, negative moral SOM cause a decline in people's trust in the economic system.

Key Contributions

Our research contributes to the existing marketing and ethics research on the antecedents and consequences of stereotypes of managers and provides meaningful implications for policymakers.

First, in contrast to previous research, we examine the impact of manager stereotyping on people's trust in the economic system given the key function that managers perform within the economic system (e.g., Augier and Teece 2008; Chaves and Sajardo-Moreno 2004).

Second, the findings show that the perception of immoral company behavior leads to an increase of negative moral SOM which again leads to a loss of people’s trust in the economic system. This offers policymakers cues as to which behavioral patterns should be changed to reduce negative moral SOM. In this way, the loss of people's trust in the economic system can be prevented from posing a significant threat to the functioning of society.

Third, our results show that a low perceived generalization of managers attenuates the positive effect of immoral company behavior on negative moral SOM. Hence, we show within our study that the individuation mechanism as a mean to reduce stereotypical judgement (Brewer and Miller 1984; Fiske and Neuberg 1990) can be extended to stereotypes of managers.

References are available upon request.

NONCONFORMITY BEHAVIOURS OF CEOS OF EMERGING MARKET FIRMS IN CORPORATE PHILANTHROPY

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Keywords: CEO; non-conformity; corporate political activity; corporate social responsibility

Description: Non-conformity behaviour of CEOs in philanthropy has been studied.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

It is widely acknowledged that philanthropic behaviours of firms are socially determined as CEOs respond and conform to the increasing institutional or social pressure to cultivate goodwill (Galaskiewicz, 1997). While CEO conformity has been widely studied, the non-conformity behaviour for CEOs in philanthropy has been less understood. And yet, a better understanding on the non-conformity behaviours of CEOs is important, since CEOs need to differentiate to stand out in competitions. Therefore, in this study, we build on the upper echelon marketing strategy literature and propose a model of CEOs' non-conformity behaviours in corporate philanthropy driven by their political connections. We further consider how the non-conformity effect of political ties are differentially affected by interfirm

business ties developed by CEOs, firms' characteristics such as firms' ownership, and individual characteristics of CEOs such as their background in marketing.

Method and Data

China is an excellent context to examine the effects of CEOs' interfirm ties in general and political ties in particular on CSR, since the government is an important stakeholder and audience of corporate charitable donations (Wang and Qian 2011). Corporate donations comprise a high proportion of total social giving in China. Our sample consists of all listed firms from 2008 for a period of seven years. Our data set was drawn from several data sources including company annual reports, and company websites.

It is widely known that endogeneity can lead to biased coefficient estimates (Germann, Ebbes, and Grewal 2015; Papies, Ebbes, and Van Heerde 2017). To address the potential issues of causality and missing variables, we followed the standard approach in estimation (e.g., Germann, Ebbes, and Grewal, 2015).

Summary of Findings

We find that CEOs well connected with upper echelons through political ties donate less. In addition, this main effect between CEO political network centrality-goodwill cultivation is enhanced by CEOs well connected in inter-firm business ties. While state-ownership of a firm, and the higher level of supervisory board monitoring enhances the negative relationship between CEO political network centrality-goodwill cultivation, firm age weakens this negative relationship. At the level of individual CEO characteristics and experiences, CEO with marketing background, and CEO with overseas background strengthens the negative relationship between CEO political network centrality-goodwill

cultivation. In comparison, CEO with non-for-profit background weakens this negative relationship.

Key Contributions

First, we explore the UE impact on strategic inconformity. In this study, we have found evidence that a CEO matters in their impact on strategic inconformity in corporate philanthropy.

Second, this study contributes to the understanding of corporate philanthropic practices as a particular type of CSR. While extant study suggest that CSR actions focused on philanthropy in cultivating goodwill can hurt sales, our study complements this finding by suggesting that CEO marketing background strengthens the negative relationship between CEO political network centrality-goodwill cultivation.

Third, we contribute to the ongoing discussion on the relationship (and potential integration) between two important firm strategies, namely corporate political activity and corporate social responsibility (Sun et al. 2012). Importantly, we show that, for emerging market firms, corporate political activity can have a substituting effect on corporate social responsibility, as demonstrated by the philanthropic behaviours of firms.

References are available upon request.

PRICING IN THE GIG ECONOMY: INVESTIGATING PRICING STRATEGIES FOR MALE AND FEMALE GIG WORKERS

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Keywords: gig economy, sharing economy, price, earnings gap, service provider

Description: The gig economy, consisting of workers that perform freelance labor or short-term jobs without having a permanent employer, is thought to be able to help reduce the earnings gap; however, based on data from over 8,000 Airbnb hosts, discrepancies in earnings between male and female service providers remain.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Given the continuous discourse on the earnings gap between genders, often revealing that women earn less than men (Blau and Kahn 2017; BLS 2019), the present research examines the differences in pricing strategies between male and female service providers in the gig economy. Specifically, the gig economy presents an opportunity to reduce such earnings differences since many platforms allow workers to set their own prices. Even Uber, which currently pays drivers based on an algorithm, has been experimenting with allowing drivers to set their own rates (Rana 2020). As researchers seek to better understand the pricing strategies implemented by male and female service providers, the gig economy provides a unique context by which to examine the phenomena (Lin et al. 2019). Thus, the research seeks to determine if pricing strategies for male and female hosts on Airbnb vary and to better understand the pricing strategies implemented on Airbnb by hosts.

Method And Data

Study 1 examines data extracted from the Airbnb platform. To be included in the analyses, each host could only have one property listing and could not be partnered with anyone

else (e.g., business partner, significant other) to isolate the impact of gender on price. Only hosts with a single listing were considered for analysis to avoid confounding the results with hosts who set prices for multiple properties. Also, listings that were managed by actual businesses (e.g., registered hostels, management companies) were omitted as it was not possible to obtain information about the owner's gender. A total of 8,610 independent listings were obtained. Females accounted for 57.8% of all hosts and this proportion relatively remained regardless of whether they were renting entire homes or private rooms.

Study 2 provides an experiment utilizing a sample of service providers with experience as freelance drivers who may have interest in becoming 'Task Drivers' on TaskRabbit. Participants will be randomly allocated to either a *no-intervention* (i.e., without exposure to marketplace prices) or *intervention* (exposure to marketplace prices) condition. Thus, we conduct a 2 (gender: male vs. female) x 2 (price condition: *no-intervention* vs. *intervention*) between-subjects experimental design.

Summary of Findings

Study 1 - The average listing price is nearly $30 lower for female ($154.21) compared to male hosts ($183.41) ($t_{8608}$ = -6.21, $p < .001$). Additionally, female hosts earn slightly higher ratings ($M_{females}$ = 4.83, M_{males} = 4.81; t_{8608} = 2.68, $p < .01$), accommodate fewer guests ($M_{females}$ = 3.82, M_{males} = 4.06; t_{8608} = -4.81, $p < .001$), generate more reviews ($M_{females}$ = 28.9, M_{males} = 26.2; t_{8608} =2.74, $p < .01$), and their listings are located in neighborhoods with higher median home values ($M_{females}$ = $408,646, M_{males} = $399,550; t_{8608} = 2.58, $p = .01$).

Study 2

Similar to the finding of the previous study, the *no-intervention* rates for females are significantly lower than males ($M_{females}$ = 16.29, SD = 8.80; M_{males} = 22.35, SD = 17.49; t_{152} = -

2.76, $p < .02$). However, the *intervention* rates reveal no significant difference between females and males ($M_{females} = 20.22$, SD = 7.34; $M_{males} = 22.19$, SD = 12.31; $t_{148} = -1.23$, p = ns).

Statement of Key Contributions

Previous research in this domain has typically centered on issues of consumer participation across various platforms and has largely been concerned with managerial implications on topics such as socialization, sustainability, and efficiency (Habibi, Davidson, and Laroche 2017; Lamberton and Rose 2012). The current research addresses the important, and perhaps overlooked, responsibility of platforms to help their workers in setting prices through intervening at important stages in the marketing process of their services.

Our research suggests that certain segments of workers may be more responsive to interventions informing them of marketplace prices. Female workers may benefit from the inclusion of these interventions, which can potentially increase their earnings, thereby positively impacting platforms' revenues as well. Given that platforms take a percent of the earnings for a worker, it is advantageous for platforms such as Airbnb, Turo and TaskRabbit to ensure that service providers are maximizing their earnings. In particular, if females are able to increase the rates they charge, and maintain the volume of work, it should benefit all parties involved.

References are available upon request.

RESOLVING THE CLIMATE CHANGE SOCIAL DILEMMA AND BRAND VALUE: CONCEPTUALIZING A FRAMEWORK INVOLVING SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY PRACTICES AND PUBLIC POLICY

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Keywords: Climate change social dilemma, corporate social responsibility, public policy, brand value.

Description: This research argues that firms, by employing eco-friendly strategies and curbing climate change and its deteriorating effects on society, can also boost the value of their brands.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Climate change is a formidable societal challenge that requires urgent attention. In this regard, this research argues that tackling ecological problems needs a broad perspective in which the collective, behavioral response of all entities (firms, policymakers and social groups) to environmental issues is critical. Accordingly, this research argues that different marketing stakeholders (e.g., firms, policymakers) can play a significant role in contributing solutions to the climate change challenge and enhancing firms' profitability. Therefore, the aim of this research is to explore how (i) climate change can become an integral part of any organization's social

responsibility initiatives, and (ii) public policy (i.e., environmental policy instruments) can moderate the relationship between sustainability practices and corporate social performance (CSP). Overall, the purpose of this research is to argue for the impact of sustainability practices employed by a firm on promoting strategic corporate social responsibility (CSR) and, consequently, the impact of CSR on the firm's brand value. Toward accomplishing this purpose, two questions frame our research: (i) can organizations emerge out of the climate change social dilemma by employing sustainability practices? and (ii) can regulation through public policy facilitate the process of resolving the climate change social dilemma?

Summary of Findings

Based on the premise that strategic social responsibility initiatives and public policy regulations are potential remedies for resolving the climate change social dilemma, this research develops a framework toward resolving the climate change social dilemma for brand value, that includes the role of social responsibility practices and public policy. Toward accomplishing this objective, this research first develops a specific conceptualization for the climate change social dilemma. Second, reviewing and analyzing the corporate social responsibility research, the current research demonstrates that firms can become part of the solution to the climate change social dilemma by pursuing and employing strategic sustainability initiatives and practices. Third, this research identifies and elaborates on the efficacy of different types of public policy environmental regulations (e.g., command-and-control regulations, market-based environmental policies, and information-based instruments) on firms' pro-environmental strategies. Fourth, this research shows that, by elevating pro-environmental CSP through sustainability practices that benefit society, firms can also boost their brand value and, thereby, superior financial performance in the long-run.

Key Contributions

The current research makes four major contributions. First, on the foundations of research on social dilemmas, this research conceptualizes climate change as a social dilemma. Second, reviewing and analyzing the CSR research, the current research suggests that firms can become part of the solution to the climate change challenge by pursuing and employing strategic sustainability initiatives and practices and elevating CSP. Third, this research contends that by regulating appropriate environmental policies, policymakers should incentivize firms to promote their CSR to ensure environmental protection. Further, this research argues that framing climate change as a social dilemma allows marketers to enhance their understanding of stakeholder behaviors and concerns (e.g., social movements, employees, environmental legislation and political pressure) and, subsequently, their ability to effectively and efficiently manage stakeholder demands. In addition, by viewing climate change as a social dilemma, firms can engage in the production of green and sustainable products, and marketers can play a significant role in alleviating global warming. Fourth, through trialing of sustainability practices and elevating pro-environmental CSP, firms can boost their brand value and, thereby, financial performance in the long run.

EVALUATING OUTCOMES OF INCLUSIONARY ZONING POLICIES ON HOMELESSNESS IN THE U.S. BY CONTINUUM OF CARE

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Keywords: inclusionary zoning; private-public partnerships; continuum of care; incentives theory.
Description: Our study shows that inclusionary zoning policies decrease homelessness.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

There is a necessity to provide resources and create well-established methods through which to evaluate the impact of state policies and legislation on homelessness in regional communities in the field of human services. As such, it is increasingly important to find and create strategies to measure the outcomes of policies and legislation combating homelessness in communities across the US. In addition to an investigation of policy efficacy, this paper is interested in contextualizing policy outcomes using the notion of privatization and incentive structures. We do so by comparing measurements of the overall homeless populations in regions with affordable housing policies against regions without them; this analysis will be conducted using data from the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) annual Point-in-Time (PIT) count in comparison with treatment data extracted from the Inclusionary Zoning Database.

Method And Data

To approach the research question of this project, we sought to measure the effect of voluntary and mandatory inclusionary zoning policies on homeless populations across the US using data measuring the years 2007 to 2019. Data from 2020 will be incorporated into the study going forward, while data from 2021 is not yet available for analysis purposes. Utilizing data from HUD's PIT counts and Grounded Solutions Network's Inclusionary Zoning Database, we first downloaded HUD's PIT counts for each year from 2007 to 2019 by CoC. Next, we merged the individual datasets together, and grouped the data together by CoC and year. Using the merged panel dataset of homeless counts and zoning policies, we conducted several difference in differences analyses on each variable to determine whether there was a statistically significant decrease or increase in homelessness in the time period of interest as a result of an inclusionary zoning policy implemented in each of the 39 observations that experienced inclusionary zoning policies, in comparison to the 5,069 observations that had not. We then performed a regression analysis on the new binary variables to determine how long the treatment has been in effect against the dummy variables for CoCs and homelessness.

Summary of Findings
Difference in differences was the statistical test deemed most relevant for the purposes of this paper. As such, we conducted several difference in differences tests to measure the relative effect of different inclusionary zoning policies on homelessness in CoCs nationwide. The first test we ran measured overall homelessness against any type of inclusionary zoning policy. This test showed an increase in overall homelessness in response to inclusionary zoning policies relative to our set of controls. We then ran two additional difference in differences tests to measure the relative effects of voluntary versus mandatory inclusionary zoning policies on homelessness. Testing voluntary inclusionary zoning policies against homelessness showed a relatively insignificant increase in homelessness, while testing mandatory inclusionary zoning policies showed a significant increase in homelessness. These results indicate that while any generic type of inclusionary zoning policy will have an effect on overall homelessness; specifically, mandatory inclusionary zoning policies, unlike voluntary policies, will produce a significant change in overall homelessness in CoCs across the U.S.

Statement of Key Contributions
The results of our analyses indicate that inclusionary zoning policies have an immediate downward effect on overall homelessness in treated groups relative to corresponding changes in the controls, that intensifies each year following policy implementation. This finding satisfies the "Parallel Trends Assumption" as well as provides clarifying insight into the effect of inclusionary zoning policies on homelessness across CoCs in the US. We used thirteen years of available data, and as such, our time period of interest in considering relevant changes in the amount of overall homeless was divided between the years before policy implementation and the years following policy implementation in our observation period of thirteen years. We intend for our findings to induce local policy makers to consider the utility and value of affordable housing policies, in particular inclusionary zoning policies, as a possible solution to the problem of chronic, ongoing homelessness in cities in the US. The results of this study should also influence private developers and institutions to prioritize public-private partnerships and programs as a method by which to engage in meaningful urban development.

References are available upon request.

SURPRISE GIFT-GIVING SERVICES: UNDERSTANDING INFLUENCES ON WELLBEING OF BOTH SENDERS AND RECEIVERS

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Keywords: *gift-giving; surprise; wellbeing; transformative consumer research*

Description: This study aims to understand the impact of surprise gift-giving on the wellbeing of both senders and recipients.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Whilst consumer wellbeing has been much researched within the transformative consumer research literature, the concept of wellbeing has been neglected within the domain of gift-giving. Furthermore, those studies concerned with wellbeing tend to focus solely on the recipient. Gift-giving behaviours have changed in recent years, with an increase in surprise gift-giving services available to consumers, where the service provider chooses the gift and sends it to the recipient on the senders' behalf. In this study, we seek to explore this relatively new phenomenon and extend the scope of extant research to also consider wellbeing amongst senders. As such, we propose the following research question: *How can surprise gift-giving services contribute to sender and recipient wellbeing?*

Method and Data

Using conventional sampling in the United Kingdom, we recruited two sample groups: "senders" (N=257) and "recipients" (N=257), who then completed an online survey. Participants in the sender's condition were asked to imagine they wanted to send a gift to someone they knew and those in the recipient's condition that they had just received a gift from someone they knew. Participants were then exposed to the actual gift (from the surprise gift service) and asked to complete several survey questions. Both senders and recipients were informed of the nature of the gift-giving service and that the gift was chosen by the service provider. This gift was held constant across groups to ensure the scenario was as realistic as possible, as the gift was considered more hedonic in nature and with a relatively low perceived value. Using structural equation modelling in Mplus, we first developed separate models highlighting the different responses between senders and recipients to a surprise gift-giving service. A multigroup analysis was then performed, incorporating both senders and recipients into one model.

Summary of Findings

Our findings indicate differing responses amongst senders and recipients to surprise gift-giving services and these emotional responses can either contribute to or hinder their wellbeing. Whilst sending a gift via a surprise gift-giving service results in happiness for the sender, it can result in disappointment for the receiver. Dunn et al's (2008) finding that individuals often report increased happiness when spending money on others rather than themselves may explain the sender's response to the surprise gift. On the other hand, the more negative emotional response of the recipient may be explained by the information they received regarding who had chosen the gift, perhaps perceiving a lack of care and effort on the part of the sender (Liu et al. 2019).

Summary of Key Contributions

Our study makes two novel contributions to the TCR and gift-giving literatures. First, we explore the relatively new concept of surprise gift-giving services and the impact they may have on the wellbeing of both the sender and the recipient. Early gift-giving research discusses the role of both parties, but more recent research has tended to focus solely on the recipient. As such, our study extends current research on gift-giving and adopts a transformative consumer research perspective by integrating the concept of wellbeing into the study. Secondly, we investigate the mechanism by which surprise impacts wellbeing via positive and negative emotions. We also consider the impact of the surprise gift on the sender-recipient relationship as a result of the emotional response, thus contributing to literature on surprise, gift-giving and wellbeing.

References are available upon request.

SUSTAINABILITY ORIENTATION: A BIBLIOGRAPHIC COUPLING ANALYSIS

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Keywords: Sustainability, orientation, bibliometrics, literature review.

Description: This study maps the research field of sustainability orientation over a 15-year period through a bibliographic coupling analysis.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Under pressure from various stakeholders, companies increasingly take into consideration changes in their organizational structures to pursue ecological and societal goals, combined with their economic objectives (Pellegrini et al., 2018; Roome, 1994). Within the organizational context, sustainability is key as it can profoundly affect the competitiveness of companies and even their survival (Lubin & Esty, 2010). Despite the proliferation of interest regarding research in Sustainability Orientation (SO) from several academic disciplines, there is still a lack of research synthesizing the state of the art in the area. The complex and multidisciplinary essence of SO ought to come together into establishing the research streams and areas for future contributions in the field. Thus, the

aim of this paper is to answer the following research question: What are the research stream and promising area for future contribution in the field of sustainability orientation?

Method And Data

We conduct a systematic review of the literature to establish the scope of existing research in SO supported by recent advances in bibliometrics analyses. The review used the Web of Science (WoS) database. WoS is considered a relevant catalogue for bibliometric analysis as it ensures the inclusion of most important journals. The term "sustainability orientation" entailed the keyword for the search. The term was searched in the title, abstract, and keyword fields, and produced a total of 111 documents. The search occurred in November 2020. The following stage consisted in filtering the initial sample of 111 documents. Only articles finalized and published in peer-reviewed journals, remained in the final sample. This initial filtering resulted in 93 articles considered for in-depth reading. Another filtering followed to focus on papers related to the business and management area. This procedure resulted in the removal of 41 papers as they were not related to the area of interest. The final sample consisted of 52 articles published in 40 different journals, covering the years 2006 to 2020. Bibliographic coupling allowed us to map the field of research by generating clusters of articles considering the number of references they have in common.

Summary of Findings

The bibliographic coupling analysis generated four groups (clusters) of topics. Cluster 1 includes articles researching the relationship between entrepreneurship and sustainability. Cluster 2 covers articles investigating aspects related to management and sustainable innovation. Cluster 3 includes articles searching for the association between SO and

company performance. Finally, the articles from Cluster 4 investigate the crowdfunding of sustainable projects. The four clusters connect with each other, confirming that SO is a comprehensive body of knowledge. The theoretical basis of the articles revolves around four main theories and respective sub-theories: Entrepreneurship theory, resource-based view (RBV), Upper-Echelons theory, and institutional theory. Regarding the country where the fieldwork took place, the sample entails a diversity of countries in Europe, Asia, Africa, and North America. Yet, none of the studies occurred in Central and South America. The articles studied the following nine units of analysis: firms in general; small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs); start-ups; crowdfunding projects; students; entrepreneurs; managers; employees; and consumers. Few studies compared the different units of analysis. Regarding the research methods, most of the studies collected data through surveys and used structural equations modeling in the analysis.

Statement of Key Contributions

This paper contributes to the sustainability literature, and the specific field of SO, by mapping SO and its intellectual foundations. When surveying and mapping the research field, the study draws the multidisciplinary boundaries of SO. Additionally, we use bibliographic coupling to identify the underlying SO research. We complement quantitative analyses with a qualitative interpretation of the groupings and their respective articles. Hence, the paper constitutes a reference for future research, facilitating the selection of relevant studies within the theme. The study further establishes practical implications. Practitioners may benefit from this study by gaining a better understanding of the underlying principles and interrelations within the SO field. Managers can also use the theoretical foundations of the field by considering the relevant concepts in their organizations' values and presentations. A comprehension of the distinct clusters and

their interconnection can assist managers in understanding the central concepts that influenced the academic SO literature. Given that most of the SO literature reports the effects of SO orientation for firms and entrepreneurs, this review can provide managers with guidelines for assessing their strategy and bringing the core ideas of SO into their business contexts.

References are available upon request.

SUSTAINABLE DESIGN TOWARD CONSUMER WELL-BEING

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Keywords: sustainable design, consumer well-being, food socialization, food literacy, food policy,

Description: In the empirical study, the influences of perceived sustainable design for food well-being to consumer well-being are analyzed and summarized for business practice, public policy, and researches.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question – The core research question of this study is as follows: does perceived sustainable design for food well-being positively influence consumer well-being? The consumer perceived sustainable design for food well-being in this study focuses on portion-controlled design, nutrition information on packaging, and labeling schemes.

Method and Data - This research is based on an empirical study involving 382 respondents from an online survey. The research background and a short instruction were given to the participants to ensure understanding and answering properly. It uses partial least squares structural equation modeling to examine relevant hypotheses derived from research questions.

Summary of Findings – It shows that the perceived sustainable design for food well-being has a strong impact on consumer well-being. In particular, food literacy and food policy have positive effects on the perceived sustainable design for food well-being that further leads to consumer well-being. Food literacy involves knowledge, skills, and application. Food policy relates nutrition, carbon footprint, and genetically modified food labeling.

Key Contributions - This study provides a new model for perceived sustainable design toward consumer well-being to account for the complex relationships among consumers' perception, product/service design, policy design for sustainability, and food industry practice. It implicates the food industry can meet consumer satisfaction by improving their sustainable design practices for food well-being, especially in portion-controlled design, clear nutrition information on packaging, and appropriate labeling schemes.

Theorizing Social Resilience in Service Communities - A Molecular Biology Perspective

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Keywords:

Social resilience, service communities, transformative service research, social support, consumer engagement, wellbeing, COVID-19 pandemic

Research Question

This research examines the process and outcome of social resilience in a service community, and it derives implications for how service providers can facilitate consumers' social resilience to promote both their collective wellbeing and engagement with service providers. We ask two questions:

1. *What is the nature of social resilience and its underlying processes in service contexts?*
2. *What are the drivers and outcomes of social resilience in service communities?*

Method And Data

We draw upon two resources: (1) the field of molecular biology where well-established literature investigates how individual cells can enhance cellular resilience by clustering together in a hostile environment, and (2) elaboration and grounding of cellular concepts with case data collected with a nonprofit service.

Summary of Findings

We develop a nomological framework that distinguishes social resilience from individual resilience in the service setting and compares the emergent processes and outcomes. Fresh insights from cellular resilience in molecular biology are validated with case data from a nonprofit service. The findings shed light on the role of social resilience within services that leverage group-level interactions, as well as subsequent consumer and service outcomes.

Statement of Key Contributions

The recent pandemic highlights the acute needs for a deeper understanding of social resilience for societal wellbeing, but resilience-related research in marketing primarily focuses on individual-level coping. We differentiate social resilience from individual resilience and place it in a nomological network in the domain of services marketing. Using a transdisciplinary approach that leverages over 150 years of research on cellular resilience and case data from a nonprofit service organization, this research provides deeper understanding of the drivers and outcomes of social resilience in service communities.

TROJAN HORSE OR USEFUL HELPER? A RELATIONSHIP PERSPECTIVE ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE ASSISTANTS WITH HUMANLIKE FEATURES

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Keywords: Artificial Intelligence Assistants; Anthropomorphism; Privacy of Personal Data; Social Exchange; Smart Personal Assistants; Empowerment; Consumer Well-being; Alexa.

Description: In this study, we investigate the beneficial and harmful effects of AIA (Artificial Intelligence Assistants) anthropomorphism by adopting a relationship perspective and propose three empowering interventions to attenuate the harmful effects of AIA anthropomorphism in relationships with consumers.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Artificial intelligence assistants (AIAs) such as Alexa are prevalent in consumers' home. Due to their powerful artificial intelligence, consumers may perceive that AIAs have a mind of their own, that is, they are anthropomorphizing them. Past marketing research points to beneficial effects of AIA anthropomorphism for consumers and companies, while potential harmful effects have not been explored. To examine both beneficial and costly effects, the paper adopts a relationship perspective. Indeed, consumers spend large amounts of time with their AIA, potentially developing a relationship over time that builds on an exchange of benefits and (psychological) costs. In a field study and a field experiment with AIA users, we explore the effects of AIA anthropomorphism on users' human identity, their empowerment and concerns related to the privacy of their data and ultimately their well-being. In addition,

we investigate the role of relationship characteristics (e.g., relationship length and closeness) in the emerging of psychological costs that may be elicited by AIA anthropomorphism. In a field experiment we test three interventions to empower consumer in relation to their data.

Method and Data

In Study 1, we conducted an online consumer survey with AIA users who own a smart speaker in their homes. In a structural equation model: we linked AIA anthropomorphism to trust and identity threat, then these two variables to consumer privacy concerns, consumer satisfaction and consumer well-being (N=238). Study 2 investigated whether identity threat reduces consumer AI empowerment and tested three intervention strategies to enhance consumers' empowerment in their relationship with AIAs (N=601). For this purpose, we designed a randomized field experiment with measures before and after the interventions (a control and three intervention conditions). The control group completed a survey at both times. Intervention group (IG) 1 received information about two Alexa features related to data use and storage describing the features and potentially problematic aspects of them. IG 2 received the same information, and additionally, received a step-by-step illustration of how they can change their preferences related to these features. In addition to receiving the same information, IG 3 was explicitly asked to change their settings for these two features and keep using their device with the new settings for a week. After one week, all participants received an invitation for a second measurement.

Summary of Findings

Two empirical studies provide systematic and convergent evidence expressing the robust effects of AIA anthropomorphism-induced identity threat on consumer empowerment and subsequently on consumer well-being. In Study 1, we found that while a beneficial path emerges from the anthropomorphism of AIA, there is also a significant harmful path that emerges from AIAs' anthropomorphism. In this study we demonstrated this harmful effect

and its downstream effects on consumer well-being and privacy concerns, as well as the moderating effects of relationship closeness and length. Building on Study 1, in Study 2 we uncovered that the identity threat emerging from AIA anthropomorphism reduces consumer AI empowerment and tested three strategies to alleviate this harmful effect. The results of Study 2 confirmed the efficacy of our interventions that aimed to increase the knowledge of the consumers about ways to protect their privacy in their relationship with the AIAs.

Key Contributions

We contribute to the literature on human-AI relationships by investigating, to our knowledge for the first time, the interactions with AIAs through a relationship lens. While past research has used a stimulus-response approach, we suggest that a relationship perspective is necessary to investigate AIAs. Second, we contribute to past literature by providing a more balanced account of benefits and psychological costs of AI for consumers. While the benefits are well documented, a closer look at this phenomenon shows that there are psychological costs experienced by the consumers in the relationship over time. Our findings suggest that AI anthropomorphism is a promising strategy, but a haphazard use may undermine the potential of cutting-edge new AI technologies for both consumers and firms. Third, in an attempt to minimize the harmful effects of AIA anthropomorphism, managers should try to empower consumers regarding the protection of their personal data. We present three concrete and practical ways to empower users in relation to their data. Alleviating privacy concerns and improving well-being of the consumer could reinforce better consumer relationships and increase purchase through this unique purchase channel. Managing consumer privacy effectively can be a competitive advantage for the firms, rather than an undesirable extra cost.

Special Session Proposal

2022 AMA Winter Academic Conference

Understanding Financial Decision-making and Financial Services

Session Chair

Valentina Ubal, Florida State University, vou20@my.fsu.edu

Paper 1: The Friday Payday Effect: The Impact of Intraweek Payday Timing on Spending

Wendy J. De La Rosa, University of Pennsylvania
Broderick L. Turner, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Jennifer Aaker, Stanford University
Prashant Mishra, SVKM's Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies

Paper 2: Survival and Surplus Mindsets: A Framework for How Early Life Socioeconomic Conditions Influence Adult Financial Decisions

Tito Grillo, The University of Texas at Austin
Ty Henderson, The University of Texas at Austin
Adrian F. Ward, The University of Texas at Austin

Paper 3: The Impact of Economic Mobility on Financial Decision-Making: An Investigation of Potential Moderators

Valentina Ubal, Florida State University
Martin Mende, Florida State University
Maura L. Scott, Florida State University

Paper 4: Mitigating the Effects of Racial Bias in Financial Services

Maura L. Scott, Florida State University
Sterling A. Bone, Utah State University
Glenn L. Christensen, Brigham Young University
Anneliese Lederer, National Community Reinvestment Coalition
Martin Mende, Florida State University
Brandon Christensen, University of Colorado

Paper 5: Construed by an Image: How Role-Models and Construal Level Message Framing Affects Persuasion

Patricia Torres, University of Detroit Mercy

Session Overview/Objectives

Research on financial decision-making has grown considerably in consumer research. Financial decisions present in everyday routines can have fundamental effects on consumers' lives (Greenberg and Hershfield 2019). Even relatively simple financial decisions can influence consumers' overall financial situation and financial well-being (Lynch 2011). This session explores the impact of income, socioeconomic condition, even at early stage of life, and economic/income mobility and uncertainty on a variety of financial behaviors, such as spending and saving.

Time Allocation

Presentation will have 12 minutes each; the remaining 15 minutes are for discussion.

Session Audience

The primary audience is researchers interested on financial decision-making, financial services, and public policy.

Topics to be Covered

- Income, socioeconomic condition, mobility, uncertainty and risk
- Financial decision-making
- Financial services

Contribution to the Discipline

This session will discuss the impact of income, socioeconomic condition and mobility on financial decision-making and financial services provision. The research in this session will enhance scholarly understanding, and offer recommendations to policy makers and managers to promote improved consumer financial decisions.

The Friday Payday Effect: The Impact of Intraweek Payday Timing on Spending

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More than half of all American workers receive their paychecks on Friday (Harris 2020). Nevertheless, despite the prevalence of a Friday paycheck, it is unknown if being paid on Friday impacts consumers' spending. This question is especially relevant as advances in payroll technology have given employers greater flexibility to determine how and when to pay their employees (Pulfrey and Trimarchi 2018). The current research aims to close this gap by honing in on two crucial questions: does intraweek payday timing impact consumers' spending, and if so, why?

We conducted three pre-registered studies to address these questions, including a large-scale field study that manipulated workers' actual payday timing to explore if a Friday (vs. Monday) payday increases spending. We argue that Friday is a unique temporal landmark marking both the end of the workweek and the beginning of the weekend. A Friday payday (vs. a non-Friday payday) increases consumers' deserving justifications (i.e., beliefs that they are entitled to a reward), increasing their spending.

In Study 1, we conducted a real-world field study among 178 workers in India and varied the timing of their actual weekly wages. Participants were manual laborers who earn 3,800 INR a

week (roughly $53 USD). The laborers were randomly assigned to one of two conditions: a Friday payday condition or a Monday payday condition. Participants then reported their spending across a seven-day period. In line with our hypothesis, those who received their weekly wages on Friday spent more throughout the week than those who received their weekly wages on Monday (M_{Friday} = 5912.28 INR, SD = 3082.53 INR vs. M_{Monday} = 4925.19 INR, SD = 1732.16 INR), $t(176) = 2.63$, $p = .009$, Cohen's $d = .40$.

We also explored whether the workers' workweek moderated the effect of intraweek payday timing on spending. The effect of a Friday payday should be stronger for those whose workweek ended on Fridays since Fridays would mark a unique temporal landmark (i.e., the end of the workweek and the beginning of the weekend). These results revealed an interaction between consumers' intraweek payday timing and workweek schedule on their overall spending ($b = 346.64$, $t(174) = 1.91$, $p = .057$). Specifically, when consumers' workweek ended on a Friday, a Friday payday (vs. a Monday payday) significantly increased spending ($b = 1630.8$, $t(174) = 3.20$, $p = .002$). However, when consumers' workweek did not end on a Friday, intraweek payday timing did not impact spending ($b = 244.30$, $t(174) = .47$, $p = .636$).

In Study 2, we replicate these findings in the lab, while isolating the intraweek payday effect from any spend day effects ($N = 770$). Participants read a scenario in which they received their weekly $1,000 income either on Fridays or on Mondays and noted how much they would be willing to spend during an upcoming shopping trip. Notably, participants read that the shopping trip would occur on the upcoming Monday. Thus, participants' spend day was held constant across conditions. Results revealed a significant effect of intraweek payday timing. Participants in the Friday payday condition reported higher spending than participants in the Monday payday condition ($M_{Friday\ payday}$ = $201.11, SD = $148.90, vs. $M_{Monday\ payday}$ = $176.43,

SD = $122.73), $t(768)= 2.51$, $p = .012$, Cohens' $d = .18$. Results also revealed a significant serial mediation in which intraweek payday timing impacts consumers' temporal beliefs, which impact deserving justifications, and consequently spending (*indirect effect* = 21.38, 95% CI [14.10, 29.97]).

Study 3 ($N = 684$) demonstrates that deserving justifications drive the effect of payday timing on spending by delving into the moderating role of expenditure type. Prior literature has demonstrated that deserving justifications drive hedonic (vs. utilitarian) spending (Kivetz and Zheng 2006). Thus, aside from manipulating intraweek payday timing (Monday vs. Friday payday), we also manipulated the spending type (hedonic vs. utilitarian). We analyzed the impact of payday, spending type, and their potential interaction on participants' spending. The results revealed an interaction between payday and spending type ($b = 7.30$, $t(680) = 1.81$, $p = .071$). Compared to Monday pay, Friday pay increased spending when consumers considered hedonic spending ($b = 33.36$, $t(680) = 2.91$, $p = .004$), but not when they considered utilitarian spending ($b = 4.17$, $t(680) = .37$, $p = .713$).

These results demonstrate that intraweek payday timing is an important driver of consumer spending. In particular, the data reveal that Friday paydays increase consumer spending throughout a period. These findings have important implications for any manager, policymaker, or researcher interested in impacting consumer spending.

Survival and Surplus Mindsets: A Framework for How Early Life Socioeconomic Conditions Influence Adult Financial Decisions

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Early life experiences profoundly influence how consumers view the world and their place in it. The current research examines how one broadly impactful and societally relevant factor—early-life resource availability—shapes financial decision-making across the lifespan. This research contributes to the nascent literature on long-term effects of early-life socioeconomic status (e.g., Hamilton, et al., 2019; Goldsmith, et al., 2020) and provides a conceptual framework to reconcile seemingly conflicting findings in prior work (e.g., Griskevicius et al., 2013; Amir et al., 2018).

Our framework argues that differences in resource availability during childhood produce different "mindsets" that guide thoughts and behaviors regarding financial decision-making. Consumers raised in scarcity grow up in an environment where simply affording basic needs is of utmost importance (Shah et al., 2012) and any loss can lead to situations of deficit—i.e., inability to meet these needs. We posit that an early life marked by resources constraint forges a "survival mindset," characterized by the heuristic that "I can't afford any losses." In contrast, wealthier early-life conditions, forge a "surplus mindset": because basic needs are safeguarded and extra resources are available to buffer individuals against losses, consumers internalize the heuristic that "I can afford some losses."

We test this framework across three expressions of survival and surplus mindsets: (1) resource management confidence, (2) future orientation, and (3) risk-tolerance. First, we suggest that higher sensitivity to losses leads consumers with a survival mindset to associate potential resource management mistakes with falling into deficit, whereas those with a surplus mindset perceive the same mistakes to have milder consequences. Thus, consumers from wealthier backgrounds should be more confident in their own ability to manage their finances, even after controlling for current resources and financial knowledge. Second, consumers with a survival mindset perceive reserving resources for the future as unviable, because these resources will become unavailable for meeting pressing needs; consumers with a surplus mindset, however, have a higher self-perceived capacity to reserve resources for long-term purposes. Consumers from wealthier backgrounds should, therefore, be more future-oriented—e.g., they should have longer planning horizons. Third and finally, we propose that sensitivity to losses should guide behaviors even when losses are uncertain (i.e., when decisions involve downside risk). Thus, consumers from wealthier backgrounds should be more risk-tolerant—again, even after controlling for current financial markers.

Nine studies, using both primary and secondary data from the US, the UK, and Brazil, support these theoretical predictions. Results are robust across a range of measures of early-life resources, including self-reports (e.g., Mittal, Griskevicius, & Haws, 2020) and objective proxies (e.g., whether or not participants had their own savings account as children). Further, we observe effects of early-life resource availability on a wide range of behavioral and self-report indicators of confidence, future orientation, and risk-taking tendencies. Critically, all studies control for current resources and financial literacy.

Reflecting the influence of early-life resources on confidence, we consistently find that consumers from wealthier backgrounds are more confident in their own financial skills and have lower financial anxiety. Consistent with these differential levels of confidence, data from the National Financial Well-Being Survey (NFWBS) reveal that these consumers tend to centralize responsibility for household financial matters, whereas consumers from poorer backgrounds tend to offload this responsibility to others.

Reflecting the influence of early-life resources on future orientation, we consistently find that consumers from wealthier backgrounds are more likely to have long-term financial goals. Analyses of the NFWBS and the Understanding America Survey (UAS) reveal that these consumers have longer financial planning horizons (5+ years into the future) compared to consumers from poorer backgrounds (who tend to plan for the "next few months"). These results hold while controlling for current resources, financial literacy, and parental financial guidance received during childhood.

We explore risk-taking tendencies in behaviors that, while not financial decisions themselves, may have downstream financial costs (e.g., medical expenses)—specifically, behaviors associated with increased risk of getting COVID-19 during the pandemic (e.g., dining in indoor restaurants, desire for in-person classes). Data from participants recruited in an American university, Prolific, a subject pool from Brazil, and a nationally representative sample of the United States (specifically, the UAS dataset) all reveal a positive relationship between early-life resources and behaviors involving coronavirus-related risks.

Together, our studies show rich evidence for positive relationships between early-life socioeconomic conditions and adults' financial confidence, future orientation, and risk-taking tendencies. We propose that these relationships stem from underlying survival and surplus

mindsets shaped during childhood. Thus, while to a marketer or policy-maker, two consumers may look the same based on their current demographics, their early-life experiences may cause them to approach their personal finances in very different ways.

The Impact of Economic Mobility on Financial Decision-Making: An Investigation of Potential Moderators

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Considering only the impact of a person' current social class appears to adopt a static perspective that ignores the dynamic aspects linked to the notion of mobility, and the variety of mechanisms that explain its effects (Loignon and Woehr 2018). Investigating mobility provides an opportunity to study the dynamics of behavior transformation by consumers, who may face and be influenced by new patterns of consumption previously unfamiliar to them (Ponte and Campos 2018). Even though upward mobility is not impossible, it is becoming harder (Katz and Krueger 2017; Lu 2020), and the Covid-19 pandemic further raises concerns in terms of inter- and intragenerational mobility (Major and Machin 2020; Song 2020). Mobility impacts the perception of life satisfaction and well-being (Dolan and Lordan 2013; Nikolaev and Burns 2014; Schuck and Steiber 2018; Vaquera and Aranda 2017; World Economic Forum 2020; Zhao et al. 2017), and it is so relevant that making upward mobility achievable for everyone is considered a principle by which public and private organizations should be evaluated (National Community Reinvestment Coalision 2021).

This research examines the impact of economic mobility (i.e., income change) on financial decision-making (e.g., spending on necessities and non-necessities). An initial experiment reveals that mobility security moderates the impact of downward and upward

economic mobility on spending, while a second experiment confirms a three-way interaction when adding self-control.

Study 1 employed a 2 (mobility direction: downward, upward) × 2 (mobility security: insecure, secure) × 2 (magnitude replicate: large, small) between-subjects design. This study provides initial evidence of the relationship between economic mobility direction (upward, downward) and security (secure, insecure) on spending behavior. *Downward* economic mobility, both secure and insecure, resulted in significant difference in spending intentions. However, in the *upward* manipulation, whether the mobility was secure or insecure generated a marginally significant difference in spending intentions.

Study 2 employed a 2 (mobility direction: downward, upward) × 2 (mobility security: insecure, secure) between-subjects × (self-control: measured) design. For *high self-control*, in the *downward* scenario spending on non-necessities was significantly higher in the *secure* versus *insecure* mobility (no difference in the *upward*). For *low self-control*, in the *upward* scenario (but not in the *downward*) there was a significant difference on spending on necessities (higher for *insecure*) and non-necessities (higher for *secure*).

This research offers theoretical and practical contributions as it confirms that the perceived (in-)security of the economic mobility moderates the impact of the mobility direction (downward vs. upward) on consumer spending on necessities and non-necessities; and also corroborates a novel three-way interaction between consumer self-control, and the direction (downward vs. upward) and security (insecure vs. insecure) of the economic mobility.

Mitigating the Effects of Racial Bias in Financial Services

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The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals promote decent work and economic growth (Goal #8) as well as reduced inequality (Goal #10) (United Nations 2019). These complementary goals are more important than ever in the marketing discipline, as it seeks to attract, include, and retain customers from populations that have been traditionally underrepresented (Mende and Scott 2021). Firms are interested in finding inclusive approaches to doing business, for example, Citibank announced $1 billion in strategic initiatives to help close the racial wealth gap by providing greater access to banking and credit in communities of color, increasing investment in Black-owned businesses and advancing anti-racist practices in the financial services industry (Citigroup, 2020). While less than half of minority owned business report having sufficient financing in place (Federal Reserve, 2019), a sense of discouragement keeps the majority of minority owned businesses from seeking financing for their entrepreneurial ventures. For example, 58.5% of Black owned business reported not seeking financing, despite

pressing need, because they thought their application would not be approved by a lender (Robb and Morelix, 2016). This is consistent with the lived experiences of minority entrepreneurs who seek financing for their small business, the journey is more difficult than their equally situated White counterparts (Bone, Christensen, and Williams, 2014; Bone et al. 2019) and the outcomes are less favorable. This points to the fact that minority financial services consumers have distinct needs (Mende et al. 2020). Minority owned firms are rejected at higher rates and pay higher interest than non-minority owned firms (Department of Commerce, 2010).

This research examines factors that can potentially reduce racial bias in financial services. With two field studies (with banks in the United States), this research uncovers the effects of socio-economic status and business structure on the customer experience (e.g., perceived quality of the service experience and actual approval of a loan). Consistent with prior literature, this research demonstrates a negative racial bias among financial service providers toward Black (vs. White) banking customers. It also introduces important moderators.

Field Study 1 involves small business owners seeking bank loans and employed a 2(customer race: Black, White) × 2(customer SES: low, high) between subjects design. Results show that lenders' negative bias toward Black (vs. White) customers is attenuated with higher levels of SES. Lower (vs. higher) SES Black customers are treated unfavorably; and lower SES Black (vs. White) customers are treated more poorly. The model demonstrated that the seller's warmth and competence behaviors mediate the relationship between race and customer's perceptions of the service experience. The path was significant for Black customers, but not for White customers.

Field Study 2 shows that financial service providers negative bias toward Black (vs. White) customers is moderated by the customer's business structure. When the customer has a

less sophisticated business structures (e.g., proprietorships), Black (vs. White) customers are less likely to be approved for a loan. However, there is no difference between Black (vs. White) business owners with sophisticated business structures (e.g., corporations).

These findings demonstrate factors that reduce discriminatory practices among financial services providers (i.e., customers with higher SES, or a more complex business structure). These mitigating factors appear to place the burden of overcoming discrimination on the victim of the discrimination (e.g., Black business owners can signal higher SES, select a complex business structure). However, we discuss ways these insights can inform strategic and procedural practices by the financial services firm to reduce bias among its employees.

Construed by an Image: How Role-Models and Construal Level Message Framing Affects Persuasion

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The effectiveness of social marketing interventions has been a matter of research (Gordon et al. 2006; Stead et al. 2007). However, most of the campaigns are aimed at health-related contexts (diet, physical activity, and substance misuse). Nevertheless, personal finances are a significant concern among Americans. Given that the personal debt level is at an all-time high (Federal Reserve 2020) and one-third of Americans report less than $5,000 in savings (Northwestern Mutual 2018), social marketing efforts regarding financially responsible behaviors are necessary. The goal of this research is to integrate construal-level theory (Trope and Liberman 2003) with role-models to develop a framework predicting that advertisement containing a fit between a positive (vs. negative) role-model, and message framed at high (vs. low) construal-level are more persuasive than advertisement lacking such fit.

H1: Exposure to positive role-models will activate a high-construal level mental processing, whereas exposure to negative role-models will activate a low-construal level of mental processing.

H2: Advertisement containing a fit among role-model and construal-level message framing will be more persuasive than advertisement lacking such fit.

To test these hypotheses, we conducted two studies. In study 1, a one-factor (role-model: positive vs. negative) between-subject design, participants saw a description of either a

positive[1]or a negative[2] role-model. They then completed a modified version of the behavioral identification form (BIF Sinha and Lu 2019). Convergent with H1, those in the positive role-model condition ($M_{_Pos_role\text{-}model}$ = 5.68) presented a significantly higher construal-level compared to those in the negative role-model condition ($M_{_Neg_role\text{-}model}$ = 4.43; F (2,178) = 8.47, p <.05).

In study 2, a 2 (role-model: positive vs. negative) × 2 (construal-level message framing CLMF: high vs. low) between-subject design, participants were randomly assigned to one of the four advertisement conditions: Positive role-model X high-construal message (fit), negative role-model X low-construal message (fit), positive role-model X low-construal message (no fit), and negative role-model X high-construal message (no fit). After seeing the advertisement (fit X no-fit conditions), they answered a savings intentions dependent variable[3]. A TWO-WAY ANOVA revealed a significant interaction effect of role-model valence and message framing on savings intentions (F (1,232) = 4.38, p < .05). Simple effects tests suggests those in the fit ad condition presented higher savings intentions ($M_{_pos_RM_High_CLMF}$ = 779.50, SD =34.02, $M_{_Neg_RM_Low_CLMF}$ = 765.29, SD = 33.24), compared to those in the no-fit ad condition ($M_{_Pos_RM_Low_CLMF}$ = 644.64, SD = 33.17, $M_{_Neg_RM_High_CLMF}$ = 589.26, SD = 32.59; Positive role-model: F (1,232) = 3.53 p <.05; negative role-model: F (1,232) = 14.34 p <.05), providing support to H2. In another words, participants seeing the advertisement containing the fit presented higher intentions of pursuing responsible financial behaviors than those exposed to the advertisement lacking the fit.

[1] Someone who chooses to exercise frugality, e.g.: cook dinner instead of ordering take out
[2] Someone who yields to temptation despite its clear need to save money, e.g.: going out for drinks with friends when one has no discretionary income left
[3] "*Imagine you have just won $1,000.00. Please indicate how much of this unexpected money would you put on your savings account"* (Adapted from Garbinsky et al., 2014).

References are available upon request.

Competitive Paper

TITLE

When would people be willing to speak out online? The roles of incivility, direct reply, and online flow.

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Keywords: Uncivil Online Comments, Direct Reply, Deindividuation Theory, Corrective Action, Online Flow.

Description: This research shows when and why uncivil online comments can promote people's willingness to speak out in an online discussion by identifying the moderating role of the presence of direct reply.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Uncivil online comment has become one of the most worrisome issues in the digital era. Our study aims to resolve the mixed results in the literature by investigating when and why uncivil online comments can promote people's willingness to speak out in an online discussion. Based on corrective action and flow theories, we posit that people who are willing to speak out against uncivil comments will be likely to experience online flow. Further, this research provides an alternate method to control the negative influence of online incivility by focusing on the moderating role of the social media direct reply and tagging functions. Based on the deindividuation theory (Zimbardo 1969), we predict that people would stand up and express their feelings in a relatively uncivil environment if they do not expect to be singled out due to others' direct reply or tagging; otherwise, they would hesitate to do so.

Method And Data

Ninety-one college students participated in 2 (uncivil comment: no vs yes) x 2 (direct reply: no vs yes) between-subject design study. First, participants were required to read a Facebook post regarding controversial news of Costco's return policy and five comments under the post. The civility of the comment was created following the Coe, Kenski, and Rains's (2014) definition of incivility, such as insulting wordings and harsh tones. In the direct reply condition, the second comment was shown to directly reply to the first comment and the third, fourth and fifth comment were directly replied to the second comment. In the

condition without direct replies, the five comments only replied to the post but not toward other comments.

Next participants assessed how likely they were to write a comment toward the post (no direct reply condition) or toward one of the five comments (direct reply condition) on a 7-point scale and were required to write a comment. After writing the comments, they answered 7-item flow scale (adapted from Brailovskaia et al. 2018) and 4-item climate safety scale (adapted from Beersma and De Dreu 2002) for manipulation check. Finally, they answered 6-item fear of isolation scale, age, and gender as control variables.

Summary of Findings

We estimated the full structural equation model using Mplus 8 with a bootstrapping analysis (5000 resamples). We conducted a path analysis with uncivil comment as the independent variable, willingness to comment as the mediator, the presence of direct reply as the moderator, flow as the dependent variable, and fear of isolation, age, and gender as control variables. The resulting overall fit measures indicates that our model is a plausible representation of the structures underlying the data: $\chi 2(73) = 106.719$, p =. 006; CFI = .924; TLI = 0.901; RMSEA = .071; and SRMR = .071.

The path analysis showed that willingness to comment was significantly influenced by incivility ($a1$= .826, p =.01). Besides, both incivility ($a2$= 0.691, p =.034) and willingness to comment (c= .343, p =.000) were significant predictors of flow. The presence of direct reply

had a significant negative effect on willingness to comment (coefficient=-.197, p=.037). The interaction effect of incivility and the presence of direct reply on willingness to comment (b2= -.788, p =.009) and flow (b2=-0.960, p =.004) were significant.

Statement of Key Contributions

This research is one of the scant studies that investigate the online incivility issue from the marketing perspective. For theoretical development, this research contributes the incivility literature by resolving the mixed results of effects of online incivility. Based on deindividuation theory, our study confirms the moderation effect of direct reply on the relationship between online incivility and user experience and engagement.

Our initial finding can help to manage the negative effect of incivility on user experience and participation willingness in online forums. This finding is encouraging because the existing literature has proved that online incivility could hurt the user engagement without appropriate social media management (Bacile et al. 2018; Ordoñez and Nekmat 2019), but the suggested efficient methods for managing online discussions are lacking. There are only few extant methods (e.g., manual comment moderation and platform engagement guideline establishment, Riedl, Masullo, and Whipple 2020), but most of them involving high labor or coordination cost. Our research offers an alternative way to control the negative influence of online incivility.

SIG Programming

#SOCIALMEDIAWELLNESS: EXPLORING A RESEARCH AGENDA FOR HEALTHY SOCIAL MEDIA CONSUMPTION

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Keywords: Consumer well-being, social media, social media wellness, LDA, covid-19

Description: This paper aims to shed light on the need for social media wellness by, 1) highlighting issues related to social media consumption, 2) introducing a conceptual definition of social media wellness, 3) exploring consumer's perceptions and experiences of social media usage through topic analysis, and 4) providing a research agenda for scholars to pursue.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

At the crossroads of scholars' and consumers' concerns related to healthy social media usage, this study extends the burgeoning literature of consumer well-being in the digital area by exploring the topic of social media wellness made more salient during the pandemic era. We introduce the concept of social media wellness, defined as the optimum state of well-being a consumer pursues while intentionally managing social media consumption accessible on mobile devices and other digital technology through the awareness of how such consumption affects one's mental health, and priorities. Consumers are spending increasing amounts of time on social media despite experiencing numerous negative repercussions. Various disciplines have contributed to the examination of this topic, however, scant research has been conducted within the marketing discipline. As such, we pose the following research questions: 1) what does social

media wellness mean to consumers, 2) what is driving consumers toward the desire to achieve social media wellness, and 3) how has the pandemic impacted this discussion?

Method And Data

To study social media wellness, we investigate this phenomenon on the social media platform of Twitter at a time when the discussion on social media was heightened. Data collection consisted of collecting tweets that use common hashtags related to the concept of interest. Following a qualitative observation of common topics surrounding social wellness, the authors isolated specific hashtags. Various hashtags related to social media and digital wellbeing were assessed: #socialmediawellness, #socialmediawellbeing, #socialmediahealth, #nosocialmedia, #socialmediadetox, #socialmediabreak, #socialdetox, #digitaldetox, #screendetox, #digitaladdiction, #loggingoff, #digitalhealth, #digitalwellness, #digitalwellbeing, and #digitalboundaries. The tweets were cleaned by removing stopwords, whitespaces, stemming, abbreviations, website links, and the searched hashtag keywords. A total of 15,796 tweets were captured from September 12, 2019, to September 9th, 2020, with the final selected hashtags. For analysis purposes, we compared 182 days before and 182 days following a split day of March 12th, 2020, marking the height of the global pandemic (Wamsley, 2021). The pre-pandemic era comprised 4,671 total tweets, with 1.94 tweets per unique individual while the pandemic era increased to 11,125 total tweets; however, there was no discernible difference of tweets per unique individual (2.04).

Summary of Findings

Following the LDA analysis, the researchers engaged in a qualitative review of the categories to better identify the themes and underlying drivers for consumers that turn to the

Twitter community to seek out social media wellness. The LDA categorizations revealed three themes that communicate how consumers were seeking to manage their social media wellness when utilizing Twitter.

Tweets related to the *Desire for Ideal Priorities* encompassed consumers' desire to shut off the phone and social media to help manage their desired lifestyle and priorities. Consumers' tweets that fell into the *Spread Education for the Impressional Youth* theme leverage Twitter as an outlet to foster the teaching of social media wellness. The last theme identified in the analysis is consumers' communication to *Reject for Mental Health and Mindfulness*. Tweets in this category indicate that consumers push against social norms of social media, often accessed by smartphones, as they desire mental clarity, and more specifically, mindfulness. Ironically, despite the cognitive dissonance felt by many consumers when coming to terms with their needed social media wellness, they turn to social media for help.

Statement of Key Contributions

The topic of social media wellness holds important implications for consumer behavior theory and practice. Importantly, as social isolation during the pandemic has motivated growth in social media usage, interest in this topic gained significant interest by consumers, and we align with calls for more interest in scholarly work as well. Specifically, scholars are now calling for exploration of consumer well-being in the digital area and researchers are encouraging future studies to consider the impact of consumers interacting with social media on their social, emotional, psychological, and cognitive well-being. In line with the aforementioned callings, our study aimed to contribute to this stream of literature by shedding light on the repercussions of social media consumption, establishing a definition of social media wellness, analyzing consumer's perception and experiences of social media usage through topic analysis, and

extending a research agenda for future studies. We further this discussion and call for additional research related specifically to social media wellness. The results from this study serve as a foundation for work aiming to further explore the topic of social media wellness, which is anticipated to grow in relevance as the amount of time consumers spend on social media platforms continues to rise.

A CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF GENDER IDENTITY IN CONSUMER BEHAVIOR: A SELF-CATEGORIZATION AND IDENTITY SIGNALING APPROACH

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Keywords: gender identity, consumer behavior, digital behavior, trans consumers

Description: This conceptual work explores the role of gender identity in identity-signaling consumer behaviors, including digital behaviors, and is inclusive of trans consumers' experiences.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

When investigating gendered consumption, researchers have mostly focused on the personality traits approach to gender identity, which is based on a person's agentic and communal attributes, as well as consumers' binary gender categories. This research shows some inconsistent findings and largely excludes the experiences of trans consumers. This conceptual work thus strives to answer the following research question: how else can gendered consumption (along with digital gender-related consumer behaviors) be explained so that it is inclusive of a diverse set of consumers? We view gendered consumer behaviors as a form of identity signaling and discuss them through the lens of the self-categorization approach to gender identity, which includes gender identity strength and self-categorized gender. We develop a conceptual model of gender identity in consumer behavior that explains why some consumers are more likely than others to signal their gender in the marketplace, and how exactly they decide to do it. Our conceptual

model advances knowledge on the role of gender identity in consumer research that is inclusive of cisgender and transgender consumers, highlights the uniqueness of gender as a social identity, and provides useful insights that reflect the evolution of the meaning of gender in society.

Summary of Findings

We propose that to fully understand identity-signaling consumer behaviors related to gender, it is important to take into account consumers' gender identity strength, gender role beliefs, and self-categorized gender. Consumers can signal their gender identities through consumption, i.e., choosing identity-congruent (avoiding identity-incongruent) brands, and through online engagement, i.e., actively endorsing (or criticizing) gender-relevant brands online. Consumers with stronger gender identities, whether it is a woman, a trans man, or a non-binary person, have the increased desire to signal their gender through the aforementioned consumer behaviors. This desire, in turn, can be amplified by self-directed gender identity threat (i.e., when a person is faced with the risk of being excluded as a member of a gender group they identify with), to which consumers with stronger gender identities are more susceptive. Consumers' gender role beliefs further shed light on the meaning of their gender identities and, thus, which brands they consume and support online – more traditional and gender-stereotypical ones, or more progressive ones. When focusing on non-binary consumers, we see gender sub-categories within the non-binary, rather than gender role beliefs, as more potent in explaining the content of their gender identity signaling behaviors.

Key Contributions

This conceptual work contributes to theory in several ways. First, we extend knowledge on the overall topic of gender identity in psychology and consumer behavior. We provide a new conceptualization of gender identity based on self-categorization and argue that it can better

predict identity signaling behaviors in the marketplace. Second, we contribute to a more nuanced and diverse understanding of gendered consumption. We propose a novel way to investigate this topic through the lens of identity-signaling behavior, the strength of gender identity, and gender role beliefs, and not just through consumers' binary gender affiliation or their agentic/communal traits. We thus address gaps and inconsistent findings from extant research. We further add to that by investigating a rather novel form of identity signaling, digital content generation, from the perspective of gender. Finally, we discuss how our model can help understand the gender-related consumer behavior of not just cis consumers but also of trans consumers, whose consumption choices and motivations have been largely overlooked in consumer research.

ANXIOUS OR FREE: AMBIVALENCE TOWARDS DIGITAL DISCONNECTION IN CONSUMPTION SETTINGS

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Keywords: Digital Marketing; Digital Disconnection; Digital Connection; Ambivalence

Description: This paper explores why consumers have an ambivalent attitude towards digital disconnection and how this ambivalence comes into being.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Despite the increasing popularity and significance of digital disconnection, the understanding of this phenomenon in the marketing literature is insufficient. Furthermore, consumers may feel relaxed and free when they are digitally disconnected from their day-to-day social settings (Cai et al., 2020); however, anxiety and worry might be aroused when familiar tech-inputs and familiar online-worlds are absent (Thomas et al., 2016; Ytre-Arne et al., 2020). Hence, this research aims to advance marketing literature on digital disconnection by clarifying contradictory findings of previous studies. Specifically, adopting an interpretive paradigm, this research sets out to explore this ambivalence towards digital disconnection in consumption settings by answering two research questions: (i) How does the ambivalence towards digital disconnection come into being? (ii) Why are consumers ambivalent about digital disconnection?

Method And Data

An exploratory qualitative approach was adopted to collect the data through semi-structured in-depth interviews. A total of 19 interviews were conducted. Interview 18 and Interview 19 were conducted to check theoretical saturation, which makes sure that the information gathered had reached the point of theoretical saturation, and no new themes or patterns emerged from the dataset. Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2012) was used to explore digital disconnection in consumption settings.

Summary of Findings

Three research findings finally answered research questions. First, the ambivalence towards digital disconnection in consumption settings is formed and influenced by digital (dis)connection in daily life. Second, consumers are ambivalent about digital disconnection in consumption settings because there are two types of consumers: emotional-connected consumers and functional-connected consumers; each of them holds a different attitude towards digital disconnection in consumption settings, either important or unnecessary. Third, two types of digital disconnection; one is “don’t want to connect” (prevention-focused), the other is “want to disconnect” (promotion-focused). These two types of digital disconnection are so different that bring about different attitudes towards digital disconnection (important or unnecessary), though they were thought to be identical.

Statement of Key Contributions

This research contributed to the digital (dis)connection studies by providing more nuanced understandings of digital disconnection. First, this study explained the formation of ambivalence towards digital disconnection in consumption settings. Existing literature shows

that consumers have ambivalent attitudes towards digital disconnection but how this ambivalence comes into being is still under-explored. This study filled in this paucity by bridging digital (dis)connection in daily life and digital disconnection in consumption settings.

Second, this study explained why consumers have this ambivalence towards digital disconnection by (i) categorizing consumers into emotional-connected consumers and functional-connected consumers and (ii) deconstructing ambivalence into both importance and unnecessity. This ambivalence is that, emotional-connected consumers think digital disconnection is essential, whereas functional-connected consumers think digital disconnection is unnecessary.

Third, this research differentiated two types of digital disconnection: “don’t want to connect” and “want to disconnect”, which progressed the typology of digital disconnection by providing a psychological-based category of digital disconnection. Previous studies categorized digital disconnection based on the behavior of digital disconnection and from the behavioral perspective (e.g., Baumer et al., 2013; Wyatt et al., 2002). The current research classifies digital disconnection based on consumer desire and from the psychological perspective.

References are available upon request.

BRAND RESURRECTION: THE ROLE OF CONSUMERS' PSYCHOLOGICAL REACTANCE IN SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVISM

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Keywords: Brand love, Brand nostalgia, Brand deletion and resurrection, Psychological reactance, Social media activism

Description: This research explicates the role of consumers' psychological reactance in social media activism in the context of brand deletion and resurrection.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Firms delete brands to augment the value of their brand portfolios and boost profits (Kumar, 2003; Shah et al., 2017; Varadarajan et al., 2006a). However, if the brand deletion strategy is not executed well and if the deleted brand has a loyal fan base, it has the potential to generate consumer retaliation (Shah, 2017a; Shah 2021) because consumers experience psychological reactance when their beloved brand is taken away from them limiting their freedom of choice to buy and consume their favorite brand (J. W. Brehm, 1966; Shah, 2020). With the advent and advancement of internet technologies, consumers can now mobilize an activism movement with relative ease and fewer resources (time, effort, money) using various internet platforms (Hollenbeck & Zinkhan, 2006; Kähr et al., 2016; Labrecque et al., 2013). If the brand deletion strategy is implemented considering what drives such consumer activism, consumer backlash can be mitigated, and the brand deletion process could become smooth-sailing and successful for the firm. Therefore, in this research, we aim to investigate the drivers of social media activism in the context of brand resurrection through survey data collection from loyal Surge fans who compelled Coca-Cola to resurrect Surge through their online activism efforts.

Method and Data

Based on the purpose of this research, it is ideal to collect data from consumers who have actually participated in a social media activism movement to bring a dead brand back to life. Thus, after designing a survey questionnaire in Qualtrics, using established measurement scales (Bagozzi et al., 2017; Davari et al., 2017; Dillard & Shen, 2007; Massi Lindsey, 2005; Pascal et

al., 2012; Yankah et al., 2017), the organizers of the Surge Movement were contacted in order to access their member base of Surge loyal fans who participated and succeeded in their social media activism efforts to compel Coca-Cola to resurrect Surge. The Surge Movement is a Facebook community of over 350,000 Surge fans, whose mission is the return of Surge Soda and making it a sustainable brand. The questionnaire link will be posted on the Surge Movement Facebook page in Spring 2022.

Once survey data is collected, measurement properties of the constructs will be investigated using confirmatory factor analysis using AMOS. Thereafter, structural equation modeling (SEM) with maximum likelihood estimation method will be used to test the hypotheses. A post-hoc mediation analysis will also be conducted.

Summary of Findings

Based on past literature, a conceptual framework of consumer motivation to engage in social media activism is postulated. Upon analysis of the survey data, we expect to find that when a brand is deleted, consumers who believe that brand to be superior than any other brand, who possess emotions of "love" for that brand(Batra et al., 2012), and who feel nostalgic about it (Holak & Havlena, 1998; Holbrook & Schindler, 2003a), experience psychological reactance (Clee & Wicklund, 1980a). They experience a threat to their freedom to buy and consume their favorite brand (Davari et al., 2017; Keller, 2001). These consumers who experience psychological reactance are then motivated to engage in social media activism to voice out and oppose the company's decision to delete their favorite brand. Thus, psychological reactance is expected to mediate the relationships between brand love, brand nostalgia, brand superiority, and social media activism.

Key Contributions

Theoretical Contributions: This research fills a gap in the literature by examining the influence of brand love, brand nostalgia, brand superiority, and psychological reactance on social media activism. In addition, the sample of this survey comprises members of an actual social media activism movement that successfully compelled a company to bring back a dead brand. Past research focused mainly on brand resurrection from companies' perspective, however, this study focuses on consumers' psychological reactance and its role in social media activism.

Practical Implications: The findings will guide brand managers' brand resurrection decisions by aiding the evaluation of the relaunch strategy, and its feasibility and success. Furthermore, if consumers perceive the deleted brand to be superior relative to other brands in that category, brand managers should not tweak it while relaunching it. Finally, understanding consumer-centric variables will help brand managers in making an informed decision about resurrecting dead brands and bringing them back to life (for a limited time or for the long term) such that it not only brings back the lost consumer base and fan following but also a higher probability of a positive revenue and profit stream that the brand will generate.

Note: References are available upon request.

A longitudinal study to identify the Psychological Needs profile of users of Social Media in pre-COVID and post-COVID eras

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Abstract

Social media has had a huge impact on how we live and interact as a society. Yet, research literature is sparse on the psychology of users who participate enthusiastically in the social media. In this exploratory study with 222 student users, we apply the theory of fundamental human needs to predict and assess the psychological profile of users who actively engage in social media. Overall, the finding of the study support our hypothesis but with a few unexpected findings. Need of relationship, self-esteem and popularity-influence were found to positively impact the behavioral intention, frequency and time users spent on social media. The findings have useful practical implications for product/ project managers in understanding what motivates users to engage in social media and how social media can be designed to further enhance user participation.

Keywords

Behavioral Intention, Need for relatedness, Need for popularity-influence, Need for self-esteem

Statement of Contribution

The findings of the study have practical implications. Increasing the frequency of user participation and the number of participants is important for success of social media. Knowing the user profile and addressing their needs more effectively can not only be helpful to social media websites in retaining their existing users but in attracting new users as well. The theory of network externalities states that augmented benefits are realized by users when the participation reaches a critical mass which in turn has the effect of further accelerating the participation (Lin and Bhattacherjee, 2008). This is not only important for increasing social media participants but also for business. It is estimated that nearly one third of all consumer spending is influenced by social commerce on social media (Lu et al., 2016). Thus, increased user and usage at social medial websites is not only important for social communications but for consumer markets in general. The advent of social media has changed the way people get and disseminate information about civic lie, health, dating and entertainment Perrin, 2015). It has influenced almost all aspects of social life including work, politics and ecommerce. The advent of Covid-19 has further accelerated this trend.

Product/ project managers of social media websites can use their innovative abilities to provide features on their social media websites that meet the identified psychological needs of participants to retain increase their user base. For example, to fulfill the salient relatedness, self-esteem and popularity-influence needs, social commerce websites can enable real-time interactions between users. Further, technological and informational features can be introduced that provide a socially supportive environment on the website by recognizing user contributions and encouraging mutual help. Additionally, personalized information, ratings on the quality of content and statistics on followers can help social media users to track and enhance their social presence. Security and Pleasure-Stimulation can be enhanced by providing socially rich text, multimedia contents, physically embodied agents, text-to-voice features can convey a feeling of social engagement and personal touch to the interactions. With VR (Virtual Reality), AR (Augmented Reality) and AI (Artificial Intelligence) technologies the possibilities are endless for making user interactions on social media a secure and pleasureful experience for users.

Introduction

Software development organizations are facing more competition than ever before and are constantly searching for new ways to enhance adoption and usage of their software. The underlying assumption in technology adoption research is that users are a homogeneous category. However, in our study with users of computer games (Kakar, 2021) we found that users high in the psychological need for autonomy, self-esteem and pleasure-stimulation were the most avid users in terms of their behavioral intention, time and frequency of playing games.

These findings showed that not only users' need profile vary but they were salient in impacting software use. When we presented the findings to the subjects during exit interview they agreed with the findings Yet they but suggested that the psychological needs of users in other product categories might be different and were enthusiastic about participating in a new study to find out.

In this replication study with the same participants, we focus on getting answers to the same questions as in the earlier study but in a different context of the social media. Is psychological needs profile of users of social media different from other software users and if so, what is the difference? How does the psychological needs impact the behavioral intention and actual usage of social media? Did the usage of social media by the participants change over time? Does user's psychological needs profile vary with time? Answers to these questions will help product/ project manager of social media/ online websites to better understand their users and develop strategies to meet their specific needs, thereby increasing user participation.

Literature Review

Social media is defined in the Merriam-Webster dictionary as "forms of electronic communication (such as websites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (such as videos)". User participation in social media has grown exponentially over time. In 2005 there were only 5% of adults who used social media, today it is more than 65% (Perrin, Duggan, Rainie, Smith, Greenwood, Porteus, and Page, 2015). According to a recent Nielson report almost a quarter of user time in cyber space is spent on social media (https://www.nielsen.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2019/04/q3-2018-total-audience-report.pdf?cid=482). Participation in social media engrossing. It has changed "passive audience of the pre-social media era to become an active and engaging community." (Rauniar, Rawski, Yang and Johnson, 2014). Non-profit organizations, governments, business world and political parties scrounge online social media sites to identify volunteers, customers, suppliers and prospective employees.

Human Psychological Needs

We suggest that despite the huge impact of social media on the way we live as a society, the behavior of individual users on social media is primarily voluntary and therefore must be rioted in their personal needs. There is a vast body of past literature on fundamental human needs starting with Freud (1920), Murray (1938), Maslow (1954), Baumeister and Leary, (1995) and Reis, Sheldon, Gable, Roscoe and Ryan (2000). More recently, Sheldon, Elliot, Kim and Kasser (2001) came up with a list of 10 basic human psychological needs (see Appendix A) which are in line with past theories within the human motivation literature stream as elaborated below (Sheldon, Elliot, Kim and Kasser, 2001).

Maslow's theory of personality (1954) had earlier identified five fundamental human needs: physical health, security, love-belongingness, self- esteem, and self-actualization. The conceptualization of need for love or belongingness is similar to the need for relatedness identified by Deci and Ryan's (1985). Later in a similar vein Baumeister and Leary(1995) and Reis & Patrick (1996) discussed the need for people to feel a sense of relationship with others who are important in their life.

Further, Maslow's (1954) need for security is similar to Epstein's (1990) self-consistency need, Self-consistency need, brings a sense of stability to an individual according to Epstein, Epstein's cognitive-experiential self- theory (1990) had identified four needs that all individuals seek to satisfy namely the need for self-esteem, relatedness, pleasure (vs. pain), and self-concept consistency. The need for self-esteem was also noted by Maslow (1954). Thus, Epstein's model

added one more need to Malow's (1954) five needs i.e. the need for pleasurable stimulation.

Additionally, the "American dream" assumes that happiness in individuals results from popularity-influence and money- luxuries (Derber, 1979). Carnegie (1936) had popularly identified the ability to "win friends and influence people" as a route to a prosperous and thus happy life. Further, based on Whitney's (1959) concept of mastery, Aitken's (1964) concept of self-achievement motivation and more recently Bandura's (1997) concept of self-efficacy, Sheldon, Elliot, Kim and Kasser (2001) identified competence as another fundamental human need. Finally, Autonomy was identifies as their tenth human need based on CET (Cognitive Evaluation Theory) by Deci and Ryan (1985) and seminal personality theories of Murray's (1938), Erickson's (1963), and Roger's (1963).

Of these 10 needs, the needs for self-esteem, relatedness, autonomy and competence were found to be most salient followed by pleasure-stimulation, physical thriving, self-actualization, security, popularity influence and money-luxury (Sheldon, Elliot, Kim and Kasser, 2001). Further, there are individual differences in psychological needs (Deci and Ryan, 2000). For example, the individuals' need for competence and relatedness may vary. Studies by Richer, Blanchard, and Vallerand (2000) and Richer and Vallerand (2000) have found that individuals high in need of competence are low in need of relatedness. We use the 10 fundame4ntal psychological needs of users to identify the salient psychological needs of extensive social media users and their role in predicting the usage of social media.

Theory Development

Based on the fundamental psychological needs theory we suggest that the needs for competence, security and money-luxury on the other hand can be fulfilled by utilitarian software. Competence is related to accomplishing complex and difficult task and projects which in turn provides a means for extrinsic benefits such as job promotion, career progression, monetary benefits and security. Further, the user need for autonomy, self-actualization and pleasure-stimulation can be fulfilled by gaming software The user needs for self-esteem, relatedness and popularity-influence can be fulfilled by social media websites. They provide a way to engage with community and establish social standing and relationships as elaborated in the following paragraphs:

Social value is relevant to users (Kakar and Kakar, 2020bcde). Individuals often look for social interactions to overcome their loneliness (Tauber, 1972; Forman and Sriram 1991). However, these interactions are possible only to a limited extent in utilitarian and hedonic software such as computer games but are made possible through social media. People have a desire to be socially accepted and loved (Baumeister and Leary 1995; Leary, Kelly, and Schreindorfer, 2001). This desire has its roots in the in Malow's(1954) need to belong "a fundamental human motivation that is something all human beings possess ... to form and maintain at least a minimum quantity of lasting, positive, and significant interpersonal relationships" (Baumeister and Leary 1995, p. 497). Social media provides a platform for users to fulfill this need. People with a higher need for relationship will therefore have a higher BI, FRQ and TIME. Thus,

Hypothesis 1: Users who over-indulge in social media usage have a higher need for relatedness

Hypothesis 2: Users' need for relatedness will positively impact their behavioral intention to use social media and the time and frequency of their engagement on social media

Yet, overcoming loneliness and the need to belong and be loved are not the only objectives of social interactions. Its experiential meaning is more complex and can be understood from a symbolic interactionist perspective (Blumer, 2012). The symbolic value of social interactions is very different from the functional and hedonic value. Sheth et al. (1991) Social media provides a means for individuals to express and share their values online. Even people with social competence deficits and low self-esteem offline and can boost their self-image online without having to meet them (Wu, Huang, Chen, Davison and Hua, 2018). They can receive recognition, positive feedback and friendship based on their online participation, self-expression and disclosures (Shaw and Grant, 2002; King and Lee, 2011) and achieve the same level of social intimacy in virtual environment as they would have experienced in a real-life environment (Mathwick et al., 2008). Therefore, we suggest

Hypothesis 3: Users who over-indulge in social media usage have a higher need for self-esteem

Hypothesis 4: Users' need for self-esteem will positively impact their behavioral intention to

use social media and the time and frequency of their engagement on social media

The need for popularity-influence is the need to be "liked, respected, and have influence over others rather than feeling like a person whose advice or options nobody is interested in." (Zhu and Chen, 2015). The need for popularity-influence differs from the need to belong which is characterized by the desire to form "lasting, positive, and significant interpersonal relationships."(Baumeister and Leary 1995, p. 497). While a few intimate relationships can satisfy this need the need for popularity-influence can be satisfied only through a large number of (often superficial) relationships such as for example the relationship between a celebrity and her fans. People high in need for popularity-influence have impression management goals (Utz, Tanis and Vermeulen, 2012). Social media allows such individuals unique opportunities for self-presentation and provides reach. They can address a very large audience with just a few mouse clicks and gain popularity through communicating their unique insights and interesting experiences to a large number of people quickly. Thus,

Hypothesis 5: Users who over-indulge in social media usage have a higher need for popularity-influence

Hypothesis 6: Users' need for popularity-influence will positively impact their behavioral intention to use social media and the time and frequency of their engagement on social media

Method

Study Setting and Design

The longitudinal study was conducted in a public university in the south with student subjects. Each subject in the study answered a questionnaire-based survey that captured data on demographics and questions to determine the users' needs profile (see Appendix A). The actual usage of social media websites was captured using a tool developed for the purpose.

Participants

The participants were from a medium sized university located in a southern state. The college of business of this university encourages research exposure by awarding students extra credit for research participation. Only those students who agreed to provide data in both rounds of the study, at the end of the Fall semester, 2019 and at the end of Spring semester 2020 were recruited for the study. All 222 participants agreed to provide browsing data of the computing devices used by them and participate in both rounds of the study. The participants were 19-23 years old. 51.5% respondents were female, and 49.5 % respondents were male.

Measures Used

The 10 human psychological needs (see Appendix A for items) were each represented by the 3-item scale (Sheldon, Elliot, Kim and Kasser, 2001). For Behavioral intention (BI) we adapted the Venkatesh, Thong and Xu (2012) scale using following 3 items:

1. I often think about visiting social media websites
2.I would like to engage in social media activities in my spare time
3. I will continue to engage in social media activities frequently

All measures us ed a 9-point Likert scale with anchors of 9 (strongly agree) and 1 (strongly disagree). Some items were reverse coded. The construct value was computed by taking the average of user response to the items. For actual system usage we collected historical data in the first and second rounds on the average frequency of social media access (FRQ) and the average time spent per day (TIME) over the previous 4 months.

Procedure

A software tool was provided to the participants that automatically generated their actual usage information of social media. The software used the list of top 100 social media websites (https://www.practicalecommerce.com/105-leading-social-networks-worldwide) and was run by the participants themselves to provide the data. In case some social media websites accessed by the participants were not included in the statistics the participant had the choice to add them in the list (deletion from the list was not allowed) and run the software again to provide a more comprehensive historical data.

Participants also answered the survey questionnaire regarding demographics their psychological needs (Appendix A) and BI to engage in social media activities at the beginning of Fall 2019 semester. They also answered the questionnaire on their psychological needs and BI to engage in social media activities at the end of the semester Fall 2020 semester. Two groups of participants were created for analysis. The first group of participants (constituting Group A of 73 students) were those that participated in social media activities for one standard deviations

above the mean time for the group of all participants. The second group consisted of remaining subjects (constituting Group B of 149 students).

Method of Analyses

Factor analysis was performed on the data set obtained from the participants to establish validity and reliability of the measures used in the study. Additionally, the internal reliabilities and the correlation matrix and of the measures were also examined. A paired t-test was performed for within group analysis of data and multiple two sample t-tests were performed for across user group comparison of social media usage.

To test the hypothesis we adapted the widely accepted (Brandt, 1987; Anderson and Mittal, 2000; Brandt, 1988; Mittal, Ross and Baldasare, 1998) PRCA (Penalty Reward Contrast Analysis) technique for analyzing the data collected in both Round 1 as well as Round 2. By having two sets of dummy variables representing each group indicating high value (1 SD above mean) of social media usage representing group A and a low value of (1, 0) representing Group B, multiple regression analysis is conducted with social media usage and BI as independent variable. Using this statistical approach, we get two regression coefficients for each user need, one (high) representing the impact of high level of psychological need on computer usage and the other representing the impact of low level of psychological need on computer usage.

Results and Analyses

The results of the factor analysis using IBM© SPSS© Statistics Version 19 (see Appendix B) show that the factors extracted using Varimax rotation represented the scales used in the study: the autonomy scale represented by items A1 to A3, the competence scale represented by items C1 to C3, the relatedness scale represented by items R1 to R 3, the physical thriving scale represented by PT1 to PT3, the security scale represented by items SE1 to SE3, the self-esteem scale represented by items ST1 to ST3, the self-actualization scale represented by items SA1 to SA3, the pleasure-stimulation scale represented by items PL1 to PL3, the money-luxury scale represented by items ML1 to ML3, and the popularity-influence scale represented by items P1 to P3).

The loadings within factors was found to be (>.50) demonstrating convergent validity of items within scales, and there was no cross loadings (>.40) between factors demonstrating discriminant validity between scales. The internal reliabilities of all the scales used in the study were greater than .70 (see Table 1). Further none of the inter-correlations between the scales were greater than .65 (Table 2).

Name of the scale	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
Behavioral Intention (BI)	0.90	3
Autonomy (A)	0.81	3
Competence (C)	0.80	3
Relatedness (R)	0.79	3
Physical-thriving (PT)	0.78	3
Security (ST)	0.83	3
Self-Esteem (SE)	0.77	3
Self-Actualization (SA)	0.81	3
Pleasure Stimulation (PS)	0.84	3
Money luxury (ML)	0.81	3
Popularity Influence (PI)	0.84	3

Table 1. Internal Reliability of Scales

	A	C	R	PT	SE	ST	SA	PS	ML	PI	BI
A	1.00										
C	-.32*	1.00									
R	-.22	-.21	1.00								
PT	.40*	.31*	.21	1.00							
SE	.38*	.32*	.39*	.21	1.00						
ST	.33*	.37*	.20	.32*	.20	1.00					
SA	.39*	.41*	.16	.31*	.12	.32*	1.00				
PS	.31*	.10	.31*	.20	-.09	.21	.30*	1.00			
ML	.22	.31*	.21	.11	.21	.20	.21	.33*	1.00		
PI	-.18	.34*	.38*	.20	.41*	.21	.20	.32*	.35*	1.00	
BI	.41*	.17	.23	.21	-.18	.19	.32*	.48*	.16	.12	1.00

*** p < .05**

Table 2. Correlations

Psychological Need	R	C	A	PT	SA	ST	SE	PI	ML	PS
Round 1	7.6	6.4	6.8	6.1	6.0	6.5	5.8	7.4	6.5	7.6
Round 2	7.6	6.4	6.8	6.6	6.0	6.5	5.8	7.6	6.5	7.6
Difference (Round 2-Round	0	0	0	0.5*	0	0	0	0.2*	0	0

***p < .05**

Table 3. Users' Psychological Needs in Round 1 and Round 2

From Table 3 we can see that except for user need for Physical Thriving and the user need for Pleasure Stimulation the user needs in Round 1 and Round 2 were relatively stable.

Psychological Need	R	C	A	PT	SA	ST	SE	PI	ML	PS
Group B	7.2	6.9	7.1	6.4	6.6	6.6	5.7	6.9	6.6	7.2
Group A	7.8	6.1	6.7	6	5.7	6.4	6	7.7	6.4	7.8
Difference	0.6*	-.8*	-.4*	-.4*	-.9*	-0.2	.3*	0.8*	-0.2	0.6*

***p < .05**

Table 4. Users' Psychological Needs of Group A and Group B in Round 1

Psychological Need	R	C	A	PT	SA	ST	SE	PI	ML	PS
Group B	7.2	6.9	7.1	6.9	6.6	6.9	5.7	7.1	6.6	7.2
Group A	7.8	6	6.7	6.4	5.7	6.4	6	7.7	6.4	7.8
Difference	0.6*	-.9*	-.4*	-.5*	-0.9	-0.2	.3*	0.6*	-0.2	0.6*

***p < .05**

Table 5. Users' Psychological Needs of Group A and Group B in Round 2

From Table 4 and 5 we can see that except for user needs of security and money luxury, the psychological needs profile of users in Group A (heavy users of social media) and Group B (not so heavy users of social media) in Round 1 as well and Round 2 were significantly different.

Behavioral Intention (BI)				Frequency (FRQ)				Time of Usage (TIME)			
Round 1 overall	Round 2 overall	Round 1 group A	Round 2 group A	Round 1 overall	Round 2 overall	Round 1 group A	Round 2 group A	Round 1 overall	Round 2 overall	Round 1 group A	Round 2 group A
5.71	7.13	7.42	8.31	1.22	1.63	1.54	1.84	0.22	0.64	0.44	0.79

Table 6. Users' Psychological Needs of Group A and Group B in Round 2

From Table 6 we can see that the behavioral Intention to engage in social media activities and actual usage (FRQ and TIME) were higher for the Group A than for the overall group of subjects in both rounds 1 and round 2. BI, FRQ and TIME were higher in round 2 than in round 1 for both group A and the overall group.

Psychological Needs ->		R	C	A	PT	SA	ST	SE	PI	ML	PS
PRCA	Low	.02	.08	0.03	.18	.07	.04	.20	.06	.0.23	.05
	High	.63*	-0.5	-0.05	-.14	-.06	.04	.38*	.54*	0.18	.17

***p < .05**
Low= Regression Coefficient at low need
NI=Regression Coefficient at high need
PRCA= Penalty Reward Contrast Analysis

Table 7. Results of regressing high and low levels of user needs on BI Round 1

Psychological Needs ->		R	C	A	PT	SE	ST	SA	PI	ML	PS
PRCA	Low	0.17	0.15	0.13	0.22	0.20	0.13	0.29	0.18	0.31	0.11
	High	.72*	0.08	0.02	0.00	0.01	0.10	0.44*	0.63*	0.25	0.25

***p < .05**
Low= Regression Coefficient at low need
NI=Regression Coefficient at high need
PRCA= Penalty Reward Contrast Analysis

Table 8. Results of regressing high and low levels of user needs on BI Round 2

The results of Table 7 and 8 show that as hypothesized users with high need for Relationship, Popularity and Self-Esteem positively impacted BI. The impacts of other psychological needs on BI were not significant.

Psychological Needs ->		R	C	A	PT	SA	ST	SE	PI	ML	PS
PRCA	Low	0.16	0.13	0.15	0.37	0.16	0.14	0.30	0.21	0.30	0.12
	High	.68*	0.08	0.05	0.03	0.00	0.11	0.40*	0.59*	0.24	0.24

***p < .05**
Low= Regression Coefficient at low need
NI=Regression Coefficient at high need
PRCA= Penalty Reward Contrast Analysis

Table 9. Results of regressing high and low levels of user needs on FRQ Round 1

Psychological Needs ->		R	C	A	PT	SA	ST	SE	PI	ML	PS
PRCA	Low	0.11	0.09	0.17	0.39	0.13	0.09	0.26	0.24	0.30	0.09
	High	.73*	0.06	0.04	0.05	-0.02	0.31*	0.43*	0.64*	0.26	0.47*

***p < .05**
Low= Regression Coefficient at low need
NI=Regression Coefficient at high need
PRCA= Adapted Penalty Reward Contrast Analysis

Table 10. Results of regressing high and low levels of user needs on FRQ Round 2

Psychological Needs ->		R	C	A	PT	SA	ST	SE	PI	ML	PS
PRCA	Low	0.12	0.11	0.13	0.43	0.11	0.07	0.23	0.24	0.34	0.08
	High	.75*	0.10	0.04	0.03	-0.06	0.38*	0.36*	0.65*	0.26	0.40*

***p < .05**
Low= Regression Coefficient at low need
NI=Regression Coefficient at high need
PRCA= Adapted Penalty Reward Contrast Analysis

Table 11. Results of regressing high and low levels of user needs on TIME Round 1

Psychological Needs ->		R	C	A	PT	SA	ST	SE	PI	ML	PS
PRCA	Low	0.16	0.09	0.13	0.42	0.12	0.09	0.26	0.24	0.29	0.04
	High	.78*	0.05	-0.01	0.04	-0.11	0.35*	0.38*	0.72*	0.25	0.44*

***p < .05**
Low= Regression Coefficient at low need
NI=Regression Coefficient at high need
PRCA= Adapted Penalty Reward Contrast Analysis

Table 12. Results of regressing high and low levels of user needs on TIME Round 2

The results of Table 9, 10, 11 and 12 show that as hypothesized users with high need for Relationship, Popularity and Self-Esteem positively impacted BI and actual usage as measured by frequency of use (FRQ) and time of use (TIME). The impacts of other psychological needs on FRQ and TIME were not significant.

Discussion

Thus, all the six hypothesis were supported by the findings in the study. The user needs for Relationship, Popularity and Self-Esteem were higher for over-indulgent users of social media. The three needs not only impacted the BI of participants who engaged on social media but also their actual usage as measured by FRQ and TIME. The findings of the study also showed that overall the users' psychological needs were fairly stable and enduring over time. The significant increase in need for physical thriving and pleasure-stimulation in round 2 could possibly have been due to Covid-19 as the first round of the study was conducted in the pre-Covid-19 era while the second round was conducted in the post-Covid-19 era.

Although, there were a significant difference psychological profile of users between Groups A and B in 8 of the 10 psychological needs, the impact of only three psychological needs on BI, FRQ and TIME were significant – Relationship, Popularity and Self-Esteem in round 1. Further, as can be seen from the regression coefficients the impact of relationship on BI, FRQ and TIME was greater than the impact of popularity-influence on BI, FRQ and TIME which in turn had a greater impact than self-esteem on BI, FRQ and TIME. The greatest difference in psychological needs between participants in Groups A and B was in Self-Actualization and Competence followed by Popularity-Influence and Relationship. However, the impact of both Self Actualization and Competence on BI, FRQ and TIME was not found to be significant.

Perhaps, unlike user needs of Relationship, Popularity and Self-Esteem, the user need of competence and self-actualization can be fulfilled through the use of utilitarian software, for example. The social value derived by users through relatedness, self-esteem and popularity-influence will thus drive social media participation. Users can easily fulfill these needs through social media with a few computer clicks. The greater needs for competence and self-actualization of Group B than Group A only implies that the profile of shoppers who over-indulge in social media is different from those who do not even though the impact of high and low levels of user need for competence and self-actualization on BI, TIME and FRQ are not found significant.

Additionally, a noteworthy finding of the study is the increased BI, TIME and FRQ in round 2 which was conducted in the post-Covid-19 era over BI, TIME and FRQ in round 1 which was conducted in the pre-Covid-19 era (Table 6). It could be due to social distancing practiced by a

large number of people in the post-cCovid-19 period. With people spending more time indoors and with less outdoor shopping, the need of social interactions could be fulfilled online without the need for personal contact through social media. Further, perhaps for the same reason the impacts of relatedness, self-esteem and popularity influence on BI, TIME and FRQ was found to be consistently higher in round 2 compared to round 1 (Tables 7-12). With experts predicting that social distancing will remain with us for some time, we can expect social media to be more prevalent in the foreseeable future too. It is also likely that these developments will lead to more participation in social commerce providing benefits of greater information to both consumers and businesses and increased online consumer spending (Lu et al., 2016).

Another interesting finding is that in the post-Covid era the users need for Pleasure-stimulation and security also had a significant impact on BI, FRQ and TIME of users of social media. In hindsight this is understandable as users would like to derive pleasure socially and interact socially from the safety of their homes. With people getting used to spending more time indoors than in the pre-Covid era this finding portends well for popularity of social media in future.

Conclusion

The findings of the study answers all the three research questions posed in the study. Overall, the psychological needs of users remained fairly stable over time, yet the user profile of users who over-indulge in social media activities was found to be distinctly different from those who do not. The needs that significantly and positively impacted BI, TIME and FRQ were the need for relatedness, self-esteem and popularity influence. Users who over indulged in social media were found to be higher in all these three needs.

The findings of the study has practical implications. Increasing the frequency of user participation and the number of participants is important for success of social media. Knowing the user profile and addressing their needs more effectively can not only be helpful to social media websites in retaining their existing users but in attracting new users as well. The theory of network externalities states that augmented benefits are realized by users when the participation reaches a critical mass which in turn has the effect of further accelerating the participation (Lin and Bhattacherjee, 2008). This is not only important for increasing social media participants but also for business. It is estimated that nearly one third of all consumer spending is influenced by social commerce on social media (Lu et al., 2016). Thus, increased user and usage at social medial websites is not only important for social communications but for consumer markets in general. The advent of social media has changed the way people get and disseminate information about civic lie, health, dating and entertainment Perrin, 2015). It has influenced almost all aspects of social life including work, politics and ecommerce. The advent of Covid-19 has further accelerated this trend.

Product/ project managers of social media websites can use their innovative abilities to provide features on their social media websites that meet the identified psychological needs of participants to retain increase their user base. For example, to fulfill the salient relatedness, self-esteem and popularity-influence needs, social commerce websites can enable real-time interactions between users. Further, technological and informational features can be introduced that provide a socially supportive environment on the website by recognizing user contributions and encouraging mutual help. Additionally, personalized information, ratings on the quality of content and statistics on followers can help social media users to track and enhance their social presence. Security and Pleasure-Stimulation can be enhanced by providing socially rich text, multimedia contents, physically embodied agents, text-to-voice features can convey a feeling of social engagement and personal touch to the interactions. Using VR (Virtual Reality) and AI (Artificial Intelligence) technologies the possibilities are endless for making user interactions on social media a secure and pleasureful experience for users.

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APPENDIX A. Measure for Users' Psychological Needs used in the Study (Sheldon, Elliot, Kim and Kasser, 2001)

1. Autonomy
That my choices were based on my true interests and values.
Free to do things my own way.
That my choices expressed my "true self."
2. Competence
That I was successfully completing difficult tasks and projects.
That I was taking on and mastering hard challenges.
Very capable in what I did.
3. Relatedness
A sense of contact with people who care for me, and whom I care for.
Close and connected with other people who are important to me.
A strong sense of intimacy with the people I spent time with.
4. Self-actualization-meaning
That I was "becoming who I really am."
A sense of deeper purpose in life.
A deeper understanding of myself and my place in the universe.
5. Physical thriving
That I got enough exercise and was in excellent physical condition.
That my body was getting just what it needed.
A strong sense of physical well-being.
6. Pleasure-stimulation
That I was experiencing new sensations and activities.
Intense physical pleasure and enjoyment.
That I had found new sources and types of stimulation for myself.
7. Money-luxury
Able to buy most of the things I want.
That I had nice things and possessions.
That I got plenty of money.
8. Security
That my life was structured and predictable.
Glad that I have a comfortable set of routines and habits.
Safe from threats and uncertainties.
9. Self-esteem
That I had many positive qualities.
Quite satisfied with who I am.
A strong sense of self-respect.
10. Popularity-influence
That I was a person whose advice others seek out and follow.
That I strongly influenced others' beliefs and behavior.
That I had strong impact on what other people did.

APPENDIX B. Results of Factor Analyses for Users' Psychological Needs

Items	Factor									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
A1	0.933	-0.004	-0.028	-0.046	-0.039	0.019	0.022	0.010	0.065	-0.008
A2	0.913	0.036	-0.001	0.016	0.064	-0.001	-0.010	-0.051	-0.016	-0.004
A3	0.913	0.004	0.101	-0.059	-0.006	0.000	-0.004	0.025	0.099	-0.143
C1	0.157	0.811	0.091	0.024	0.096	-0.148	-0.140	0.004	-0.145	0.083
C2	0.224	0.849	0.046	0.011	-0.155	0.083	0.083	0.082	-0.040	-0.002
C3	0.239	0.837	0.018	0.075	-0.040	0.004	-0.007	0.010	0.061	-0.016
R1	0.112	0.158	0.863	0.014	0.062	-0.023	-0.011	0.009	0.066	0.012
R2	0.046	0.218	0.868	0.005	0.070	0.009	0.012	0.147	0.160	0.126
R3	0.021	0.239	0.827	0.142	0.170	0.127	0.126	0.219	-0.048	0.199
SA1	0.024	0.111	0.158	0.905	0.138	0.106	0.104	0.229	0.066	0.219
SA2	0.075	0.150	0.220	0.843	-0.001	0.230	0.226	0.133	0.136	0.104
SA3	0.007	0.066	0.228	0.871	0.095	0.077	0.079	0.132	0.000	0.233
PT1	-0.062	0.014	0.103	0.112	0.646	0.085	0.089	0.123	0.094	0.084
PT2	0.002	0.017	-0.084	0.157	0.889	0.172	0.162	0.046	0.257	0.084
PT3	0.069	0.002	0.046	0.218	0.888	0.054	0.051	0.121	0.036	0.161
PS1	-0.023	0.012	0.019	0.228	0.078	0.860	0.063	0.077	-0.002	0.059
PS2	0.010	0.122	-0.003	0.105	0.104	0.732	0.062	0.161	0.077	0.070
PS3	0.022	0.107	0.024	0.137	-0.006	0.862	0.011	0.055	0.107	0.056
ML1	-0.002	0.072	0.005	0.071	0.120	0.011	0.805	0.195	0.120	0.094
ML2	0.078	0.155	0.002	0.019	0.149	-0.080	0.860	-0.067	0.196	0.056
ML3	0.049	0.230	0.021	0.117	0.217	0.044	0.840	0.062	0.229	0.037
SE1	0.021	0.233	-0.085	0.151	0.233	0.029	0.009	0.790	0.371	0.014
SE2	-0.008	0.109	0.011	-0.002	0.105	-0.009	0.020	0.848	0.100	0.103
SE3	0.014	0.134	0.028	0.012	0.138	0.018	0.099	0.832	0.132	0.161
ST1	0.006	0.069	-0.005	0.006	0.074	0.155	-0.006	-0.046	0.873	0.281
ST2	-0.006	0.031	0.020	-0.009	0.026	0.223	0.014	0.031	0.860	0.029
ST3	0.792	0.022	0.044	0.212	-0.059	0.235	-0.079	0.045	0.825	-0.064
PI1	0.908	0.076	0.007	0.229	0.076	0.105	0.010	0.019	0.236	0.851
PI2	0.815	0.012	0.117	0.074	0.081	0.155	-0.006	0.127	0.070	0.843
PI3	0.104	0.001	0.050	0.029	0.073	0.222	0.012	0.051	0.026	0.826

Proposed SERVSIG Special Session

2022 AMA Winter Academic Conference

Digital Business Models from a Service Research Perspective

Session Co-Chairs & Discussion Leaders

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Papers/Authors

Paper 1	**A Typology of B2B Value Platforms** Anna Salonen, University of Turku Elina Jaakkola, University of Turku Christian Kowalkowski, Linköping University Julia Fehrer, University of Auckland
Paper 2	**Subscription Business Models in Business-to-Business Markets: A Typology and a Framework for Growth** Wolfgang Ulaga, INSEAD Business School Christian Kowalkowski, Linköping University
Paper 3	**User Retention on Digital Platforms: A Psychological Contract Perspective on Platform Service Relationship** Maren Purrmann, Paderborn University Nancy V. Wünderlich, TU Berlin Anja Iseke, Ostwestfalen-Lippe University of Applied Sciences and Arts
Paper 4	**Born free? How Service Providers' Prehistory influences their Customer Orientation and its Outcomes in free Digital Services** Sebastian Schubach, University of Passau Nicole J. Hess, Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich Jan H. Schumann, University of Passau Eva Anderl, University of Applied Sciences Munich Armin März, University of Passau
Paper 5	**On-Demand Features: Opportunities and Challenges of Fractional as-a-Service Business Models** Tobias Schaefers, Copenhagen Business School Marina Leban, Copenhagen Business School

Session Overview/Objectives

The provision of digital technology and the opportunity to collect vast amounts of data puts firms in the position to develop new and innovative service-based digital business models. Not only are some of the world's currently most valuable firms digital service providers but also many established product-manufacturers in B2B and B2C strive for profitable digital service business models. Developing and managing digital business models successfully is challenging though, particularly for firms from established industries. Presenting five papers, this proposed session highlights important challenges and questions that go along with such new business models. Moreover, it shows how service research can help managers (but also policy makers and customers) to tackle these challenges so that they can make better decisions.

The first paper directs attention to *types of platform-based business models in B2B markets*. As these business models are fundamentally different from B2C markets, Salonen, Jaakkola, Kowalkowksi and Fehrer propose a typology of value creating B2B platforms. Accordingly, the authors identify three different platform logics: the solution platform, the market intermediary platform and the ecosystem platform. For each of these logics, the authors identify key characteristics, determine their value creation potential and outline actionable implications for practice on how to manage these different types of platforms.

In the second paper, Ulaga and Kowalkowski look at the increasing importance of *subscription-based business models in B2B markets*, a business model which gained tremendous importance in the New Economy. The authors not only present a classification framework on different types of subscription-based business models. They also identify how subscriptions models help companies to accelerate monetization, drive innovation and improve overall customer

experience, thereby stressing the importance of jointly managing customers' *and* suppliers value creation.

The third paper looks *collaborative consumption platforms* such as AirBnB, where one party provides a service (e.g., hosts) and another party consumes the service (i.e., guests). Purrmann, Wünderlich and Iseke investigate how operators of these platforms can ignite active participation by both market sides. Based on a qualitative and large-scale quantitative study, the authors identify four different types of relationship constellations among collaborative consumption platforms, which mangers should leverage. Specifically, the authors demonstrate that operators should not only focus on their relationship with the service provider, but also on the relationship between the service provider and its customers.

The fourth paper concentrates on *free digital services*, a business model that some of the most valuable companies such as Google or Facebook employ. Its key characteristic: Whereas one party (i.e., users) can access the platform and its digital service for free, the other party (i.e., advertising companies) has to pay for using the platform. Schubach, Heß, Schumann, Anderl and März identify systems thinking as important capability in free digital services in order to be successful. Moreover, the authors demonstrate that whether a service provider is well-established or new to the market influences how well they develop this capability and are able to build on it.

The fifth paper focuses on the service provision of *on-demand features (ODFs) for hardware products* (e.g., cars) by manufacturers, a business model that has become increasingly relevant within the Internet of Things. Building on several empirical studies, Schaefers and Leban demonstrate that the effectiveness of such business models hinges on the nature of such features as well as the pricing model of such features, which gives managers guidance in how to promote and sell ODFs.

By focusing new and innovative service-based business models, this session will make a strong contribution to research on the influence of digitization on service marketing, which is of substantial interest to AMA conference attendees.

Time Allocation Plan

- In order to facilitate a lively interaction, each presentation will be restricted to twelve minutes. In the remaining time, presenters will work as a team to try to discuss the findings emerging from the presentations. Audience members will be asked to provide ideas and to ask questions that address the linkages between the papers.
- We propose to have two large pads of paper in the room in the front and back (to facilitate maximum involvement) and will encourage presenters and audience members to draw conceptual models of their connections between papers or to offer competing views.
- Given the diversity of our topics, we seek to make the session have a "working" style with a lot of interaction, controversy, and online conceptualization of ideas and models.

Audience Interest in Session

The primary audience is likely researchers interested in services, (digital) business models, two-sided markets, collaborative consumption and digital marketing. In addition, researchers working on marketing strategy, value, pricing, and customer orientation would be interested in this session.

Completeness of Research

At the time of the conference, data collection and analysis for all five papers will be complete or at least in a very advanced stage. Therefore, we anticipate a productive session. The abstracts for the five papers are enclosed below. References for the papers are not included in this proposal for brevity but they are available from the authors upon request.

How to create value through platforms in business markets?

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Companies able to design business models that improve their ability to leverage networks are among the fastest growing in the world (Fehrer et al., 2018). One effective way to do this is to build platforms that allow actors to engage with one another for value co-creation purposes (Breidbach et al., 2014; Breidbach & Maglio, 2016).

Most of the prior studies that address the topic of platforms draw from the B2C context where frequently cited examples include two-sided platforms such as Airb2b, Uber, Amazon that facilitate the buying and selling of goods or otherwise facilitate interactions, for instance, by

enabling users to create and share content (e.g. Facebook). As a business model, platforms imply a degree of openness in terms of users, providers, and the supporting infrastructure, allowing for adaptable and flexible coordination of resource exchange and integration (Fehrer et al., 2018; Ondrus et al., 2015).

The majority of prior platform research originates from economics, management and information systems with commonly addressed themes dealing with issues such as how to generate networks effects or how to deal with heterogeneity in platforms, complements and users (Rietveld & Schilling, 2020). Aspects central to marketing scholars such as platform-enabled creation are less understood. Furthermore, given that most prior studies tend focus on only one type of a platform an integrative view is missing that explains how actors can assume various roles across different types of platforms for the purpose of value co-creation.

To fill these gaps, the purpose of this study is to develop a typology that a) explains how value creation differs across platform types in B2B markets and b) how appropriate governance practices support these value creation efforts. Arguably, B2B represents a distinct application context where resource integration practices familiar from B2C markets need adjusting. For instance, in many B2C platforms the main resource contributed by consumers is data (Malthouse et al., 2019). However, B2B actors as legal organizations are more hesitant to share data and often utilize platforms to support business-critical activities involving complex processes (Hein et al., 2019). These particularities of B2B markets are also likely to influence how platform governance needs to be designed to support platform-enabled value co-creation across different types of platforms.

This paper is conceptual in nature and contributes to an emerging understanding of platforms as intentionally created architectures that facilitate value co-creation among actors in a business network (Perks et al., 2017). As an outcome of this study, we identify four ideal platform types in

B2B markets: product family; market intermediary; development; and business ecosystem platform. These platform types differ in terms of the underlying network structure (open/closed) and governance practices (centralized/decentralized), and give rise to distinct resource integration logics. For managers, we explain how various platform application contexts offer B2B companies multiple potential opportunities to participate in platform enabled value co-creation, either as a platform owner or participant.

Subscription Business Models in Business-to-Business Markets: A Typology and a Framework for Growth

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Subscription-based business models—where customers pay a periodically recurring fee for access to an offering or delivery of an outcome—have grown by over 400% in the last nine years and the $650bn market is expected to double by 2025. While focus to date has been on media, software, and product subscriptions in consumer markets, it is increasingly regarded as a strategic imperative also for business-to-business (B2B) firms traditionally competing with capital goods sales and field service provision. However, despite the high level of interest and investments, most B2B firms have low subscription maturity and struggle with successfully designing and implementing subscription-based recurring revenue models from a customer-centric perspective, and with the monetization and pricing of these recurring models. The new generation of subscription models fundamentally differ from similar service offering, such as renting, leasing, or even traditional subscriptions customers have known for decades (e.g., utility subscriptions, among others). Clearly, innovating the value proposition is not enough; one must recognize the true nature of "Subscriptions 2.0" in business markets and understand why and how the key characteristics of such next-generation offers impact how B2B companies go to market, engage with customers and transform their organizational structures and processes.

Against this backdrop, our research sheds light on what makes subscription offerings in B2B markets unique and different. In this study, we aim to (1) provide conceptual clarity by presenting a classification framework for B2B subscription models, and (2) discuss the different growth opportunities and identify their implications for B2B firms. To achieve these objectives, we (1) conduct case studies and depth interviews with executives in 13 manufacturing industries—ranging from marine and trucks to security and enterprise imaging—and (2) conduct an in-depth investigation of how a leading global subscription platform provider cooperates with B2B firms to grow their respective subscription-based recurring revenue models.

Our study makes several contributions. First, we show how subscription models can help companies accelerate monetization opportunities, test drive innovations, and improve the customer experience by moving from a linear, transactional model to a circular, dynamic relationship centered around the customer. A key ingredient in making it work is customer success management; that is, a joint management process that spans the customers' and the suppliers' value creation spheres, comprising all the firms' activities aiming at aligning their goal achievement. Second, we discuss the heterogeneity of B2B subscription models and show how they differ in terms of complexity and value creation potential. B2B models are generally more difficult to scale up and fully automate as they require active engagement and customized outcomes, such as offering customers tailored advise about how to run operations more profitably. Regardless of whether executives see subscription models as a game changer or primarily as a complement to existing product, service, and software businesses, B2B firms have different growth opportunities at hand. Considering the many types of subscription models, we develop a classification framework that distinguishes between six different business models. These range from models with low degrees of relationship engagement and a focus on volume (e.g., automatic refill or replenishment, software, hosted services) to mutual engagement with active customer role and system-level outcome focus (e.g., medical imaging solutions, robotics-as-a-service, cyber security).

From a managerial standpoint, this study highlights the need for fundamental changes in marketing, sales, and other functions when moving to subscription models. It recommends companies to start small, outside "business as usual," with clear customer focus and dedicated KPIs. Companies should start scaling up and reintegrating the subscription business only once they have successfully

iterated and optimized their model. Our study also reveals opportunities for innovative business models and new partnerships with intermediaries and other actors in the ecosystem.

User Retention on Digital Platforms: A Psychological Contract on Platform Service Relationships

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Recently, digital collaborative platforms such as Airbnb, Camptoo or TaskRabbit have emerged as extremely successful marketplaces. Distinctive for a collaborative platform's business model is that platform customers are the ones that provide services to other platform customers (Dellaert, 2019). The platform operator solely provides the digital marketplace to establish a network of equally positioned customers (Perren and Kozinets, 2018). The two-sided platform business model strongly depends on active participation on both customer sides – the ones that provide services, e.g. landlords, and the ones that consume services, e.g. tenants, – in order to gain network effects and maintain a critical mass of customers (Kumar *et al.*, 2018).

Therefore, it is key for the platform operator to attract and retain customers who provide services given that the service providers attract and retain customers who consume the service. However, such service providers on collaborative platforms are often considered independent entrepreneurs (Kuhn and Maleki, 2017) rather than employees or contractors acting on behalf of the platform operator (Eckhardt *et al.*, 2019). They act in the frame of the platform, but have only weak contractual or transactional obligations (Rousseau, 1990) towards the platform operator, limiting the platform operator's control and retention possibilities. With these unique characteristics, platform service relationships differ considerably from traditional provider-customer-relationships (Fehrer *et al.*, 2018), making service provider retention an essential, but complex endeavor.

Psychological contracts can provide structure and control in interactions and relationships between two parties (Guo *et al.*, 2017; Shore and Tetrick, 1994). They are often used to investigate and explain dyadic employment relationships (Robinson *et al.*, 1994; Rousseau and McLean Parks, 1993), business-to-business relationships (Kingshott, 2006) or customer-service provider relationships (Guo *et al.*, 2017). In this research, we build on psychological contract literature to investigate service provider relationships on digital collaborative platforms. We assume that service providers build distinct psychological contracts with two parties: the platform operator and the customer group. Insights into their psychological contracts will improve our understanding of service relationships on digital collaborative platforms and to ultimately support platform operators in retaining service providers.

We conducted a qualitative study with 40 service providers of multiple digital collaborative platforms and a quantitative study with 504 service providers of four different digital collaborative platforms. Overall, we identified perceived transactional and relational obligations

in the service provider's relationship with both parties. Based on a latent class analysis, we demonstrate the parallel nature of a service provider's psychological contracts that vary considerably regarding the respective party. We identify four types of relationship constellations depending on their contract's relational aspects towards the platform operator and the customers. Our results indicate that platform operators do not only need to focus on relational contracts with the service provider, but also between the service provider and its customer. This requires comprehensive management and governance activities of the platform operator. With this study, we contribute to literature on service delivery on digital collaborative platforms and provide insights which help platform operators to better manage their relationships with service providers.

Born free? How Service Providers' Prehistory influences their Customer Orientation and its Outcomes in free Digital Services

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Free digital services such as search engines, travel booking, or social networks are some of the most relevant markets in the New Economy. Accordingly, free digital service providers (FDSPs) rank among the most valuable companies worldwide. Most of these free digital services are

platform businesses and earn money by enabling the interaction between two market sides—end consumers and firms—with the help of digital resources. FDSPs offer a digital service *for free* to end users (e.g., searching for information within search engines) on one market side and another digital service to firms on the other side (e.g., placing ads on search engines). Yet, contrary to users, firms must pay for the service offering. As such, free digital services challenge current wisdom on customer orientation (CO), that is, the "(...) sufficient understanding of one's target buyers to be able to create superior value for them continuously" (Narver and Slater 1990, p. 21), and how its underlying capabilities help to satisfy customers, as existing research predominantly centered on traditional market settings with only *one market side* that is *paying* for a firm's offer. Yet, we lack knowledge about how CO unfolds in complex value exchanges such as free digital services, where FDSPs must satisfy *free* end users and *paying* firms simultaneously.

We address this gap by adopting a service ecosystems perspective on free digital services. This perspective suggests that to create value within service ecosystems, FDSPs need to develop *systems thinking,* i.e., the capability to identify all relevant actors of a value ecosystem and understand how these different actors are linked to each other. Systems thinking should allow FDSPs to design specific CO activities to one market side in such a way that it satisfies not only this, but also the other market side, yielding additional financial benefits. Following research on organizational capabilities, we thereby suspect that FDSPs that directly started to operate in the free digital services market (i.e., *de novo* FDSPs) develop higher degrees of systems thinking than FDSPs that operated in traditional market settings with only one paying market side before entering the free digital services market (i.e., *de alio* FDSPs). Consequently, CO activities of the novo FDSPs should be more effective and efficient than CO activities of de alio FDSPs.

Our results from a qualitative and a quantitative study confirm our assumptions. We demonstrate that de novo FDSPs are fully aware of free end users' and paying B2B firms' value for the platform and understand how the value exchanges between them and the two market sides are interrelated. De novo FDSPs are customer oriented to one side in a way that not only benefits this side, but also satisfies the other market side's interests. This simultaneous satisfaction creation ultimately results in an increase in FDSPs' financial performance. De alio FDSPs also understand that there are value interdependencies between free end users and paying B2B firms. However, they do not fully capture just how important free end users are to them because they have only limited knowledge about the exact monetary value of their free end users. Consequently, they tend to lose track of end users' needs in their CO activities to paying B2B firms. Thus, these CO activities toward paying B2B firms only benefit paying B2B firms, but not free end users. Insofar, de alio FDSPs do not exploit the full potential of CO in free digital services and thus are less effective and efficient in their CO activities. By leveraging the context of free digital services and contrasting de novo and de alio FDSPs, our results yield several important theoretical and practical implications.

On-Demand Features: Opportunities and Challenges of Fractional as-a Service Business Models

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Sharing economy business models provide consumers with temporary access to resources as an alternative to ownership. These range from access-based services offered by large service providers, such as car sharing or fashion rentals, to peer-to-peer sharing platforms (e.g., Airbnb), to B2B services that replace ownership of industrial machinery, such as outcome-based contracts. In addition to offering access to a complete resource (e.g., car sharing vehicle), digitalization has enabled companies to offer temporary access to specific *features* of a core product or service. For example, owners of certain Tesla car models were able to remotely unlock more battery capacity by paying a fee, and other car manufacturers now offer temporary access to features such as heated seats in return for subscription fees. We conceptualize such fractional as-a-service business models as on-demand features (ODFs), which allow customers to temporarily access additional features of a product they already own in return for a fee. For manufacturers, ODFs offer the opportunity of developing digital business models that complement traditional, ownership-centric approaches. By tapping into the sharing economy,

manufacturers intend to generate additional revenues with existing customers. Although ODFs are based on sharing economy principles (e.g., temporary access; digitalization), manufacturers currently combine such digital services (e.g., on-demand battery capacity) with an asset that is still sold to and owned by customers (e.g., a private car). On the positive side, customers thus obtain temporary access to additional resources that they may not need all of the time when using their owned asset. At the same time, however, consumers need to pay for extended features of something they already own.

To provide a better understanding of an innovative business model that is gaining increasing attention in the marketplace, we conceptualize ODFs and delineate the concept from other sharing economy business models as well as other general selling approaches (e.g., cross-selling, up-selling). Moreover, we report the results of several empirical studies that examine the consumer perspective. The results show that consumers' perceptions are influenced by the nature of the features that are available on demand (e.g., level of feature tangibility) and the underlying pricing structure (e.g., pay-per-use vs. flat fee). Depending on these characteristics, consumers perceive ODFs as unfair and exhibit low intentions to purchase such services. We discuss the implications for service and marketing research, as well as the opportunities and challenges that companies may face when marketing ODFs.

EMERGING PERSPECTIVES IN B2B MARKETING AND RELATONSHIP MANAGEMENT

Research on interfirm relationships has gained enormous attention over the past decade with increasing proximity between the literature and the real-world business-to-business (B2B) scenarios. However, a myriad of potential issues and advancements in the real-world B2B settings still remain unexplored in the academic literature. The current special session offers a forum to discuss these potential and often neglected issues with an emphasis on those that lead to undesirable outcomes in B2B settings. Besides, advancements in technology and proliferation of internet globally have radically transformed the way B2B interactions and negotiations take place. The current session also sheds light on the impact of such technologies on the efficiency of marketing channels.

One paper (Antia, Butt, and Wathne) discusses the role of *public* and *private ordering mechanisms* to mitigate relationship termination in franchisor-franchisee relationships. In particular, the paper describes the isolated as well complementary effects of public and private ordering mechanisms on relationship termination rate. In addition, the paper provides empirical evidence to the negative association between relationship termination rate and system-wide financial performance, thus, offering useful implications for both theory and practice. A second paper (Ghosh, John, and Ray) discusses how new business technologies like blockchain and smart contracts are transforming the interactions and transactions in B2C, B2B, and policy/government domains. A conceptual framework delineating the governance implications of such digitization in a variety of contexts including marketing channels, Internet-of-Technology (IOT), and consumer markets is described. A third paper (Cindy, Crosno, and Cui) discusses the impact of *power* and *power distance orientation (PDO)* on channel outcomes. Specifically, the

paper advances the notion of *PDO symmetry* and *PDO asymmetry* to depict several scenarios that lead to favorable and unfavorable outcomes in channel relationships. A fourth paper (Abe, Agarwal, Cannon, and Kumar) describes different arrangements through which B2B industrial firms develop the capabilities of their suppliers. A conceptual framework based on new institutional economics and interfirm literature is described which outlines two different modes of supplier development, viz. *direct involvement* and *incentive offerings*; and, describes the differing effects of these modes on *supplier performance* and *supplier cohesiveness* under different boundary conditions.

In addition, the current session will include a special discussion led by Dr. Lisa Scheer on neglected issues in interfirm research. The purpose of this discussion is to brainstorm topics that can explain significant variance in interfirm relational and economic outcomes but are largely ignored in academic literature. Collectively, the papers and the special discussion forum are expected to offer unexplored insights on interfirm relationships and offer various practitioner-relevant suggestions.

AMA Winter Conference 2022 *Special Session*

PRESENTATION 1

MITIGATING UNILATERAL RELATIONSHIP TERMINATION: THE ROLE OF FRANCHISE SYSTEM HIERARCHY, REPUTATION, AND REGULATION

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ABSTRACT

Prior to their actual affiliation with a franchise system, potential franchisees have less information than the franchisors do about the abilities and motivation of the franchisor, resulting in an increased risk of mismatched expectations, unmet performance obligations, and in the worst case, termination of the relationship by the franchisor. High-quality franchisors might rely on *private ordering* mechanisms to signal their quality to potential franchisees via their reputation or by means of structural investments, such as company-owned outlets, that serve as a bond or "hostage" vis-à-vis new franchisees. Regulators might also impose a *public ordering* mechanism of increased information disclosure, with the aim of reducing information asymmetry and thereby mitigating the incidence of terminations. To the best of our knowledge, however, there has been no systematic assessment of the effects of both private and public ordering mechanisms on relational outcomes.

The present study assesses the individual and joint effects of *private* (dual distribution and reputation) and *public ordering* (regulation) with respect to mitigating unilateral relationship termination. Within the context of US business format franchising, we match-merge franchise disclosure document (FDD)-provided information from 63 franchise systems across all 50 US states spanning more than two decades both prior to and after the promulgation of the FTC Franchise rule in 2007 (imposing mandatory disclosure requirements on franchisors) with matching information on franchise system reputation from Entrepreneur magazine's Franchise 500 rankings from 1993 to 2017.

We find that the public ordering solution of mandatory information disclosure has the strongest effect on franchisor-franchisee relationships, reducing the observed termination incidence by nearly 59%. This is followed by the private ordering solutions of dual distribution and reputation, a 10% increase in each resulting in a reduction of 5.26% and 1% in termination incidence respectively. We also hypothesize and find significant evidence of complementarities between both private ordering mechanisms. Higher reputation-franchisors exhibit an even greater temperance with respect to franchisee terminations, strengthening the inverse association between dual distribution and termination incidence by .6%. The salutary relational effect of the combination of private ordering mechanisms is reinforced further by public ordering, the deployment of all three mechanisms reducing terminations by a further 11.3%. We also establish an unambiguous association between better relational outcomes and stronger system-wide financial performance—across our sample, system-wide annual sales revenues increase by 4.29% for every10% reduction in franchisees terminated by the franchisor. Our findings speak to the importance of regulation, and clearly establish reputation and dual distribution as credible commitments relied on by high quality-franchisors to signal their type to potential franchisees.

We provide the first evidence, to the best of our knowledge, of the complementary (strengthening) role of both private and public ordering in mitigating unilateral termination and eliciting enhanced financial performance.

Keywords: *Franchising; Information asymmetry; Termination; Signaling; Hierarchy; Reputation; Regulation.*

AMA Winter Conference 2022 *Special Session*

PRESENTATION 2

GOVERNANCE ISSUES IN A DIGITAL ECONOMY

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Saurav Ray, McMaster University

ABSTRACT

New business technologies like Blockchain and Smart Contracts, leverage advances in algorithm design, increasing power of computing, and ever advancing developments in information and communications technologies (ICT). As these technologies populate the business ecosystem, they are poised to impact an increasing number of human and business interactions and transactions in B2C, B2B, and policy/government domains. Nevertheless, our understanding of the implications of such technologies to the governance of such interactions remain in their infancy. We seek to provide a preliminary framework to understand the governance implications of such digitization in a variety of contexts including marketing channels, Internet-of-Technology (IOT), and consumer markets. Our work will draw implications for systematic empirical analysis on the structure of governance in a digital economy.

AMA Winter Conference 2022 *Special Session*

PRESENTATION 3

POWER AND POWER DISTANCE ORIENTATION IN CHANNEL RELATIONSHIPS: PDO SYMMETRY AND PDO ASYMMETRY

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Jody L. Crosno, West Virginia University*

Annie P. Cui, West Virginia University

ABSTRACT

This research examines both powerful and less powerful firms' power distance orientation (PDO), which refers to a firm's acceptance of unequally distributed power in a channel relationship (Wuyts and Geyskens 2005). Specifically, we propose that a powerful firm's high (low) PDO is positively (negatively) related to its power usage. A powerful firm with high PDO values hierarch, views itself as superior, desires tight control over its less powerful partner, and expects the partner to comply with its control (Huang, Zhu, and Brass 2016; Wuyts and Geyskens 2005), whereas a powerful firm with low PDO values equality and believes that a powerful firm has obligations to its partner rather than treating it unfairly (Lund, Scheer, and Kozlenkova 2013; Wuyts and Geyskens 2005).

Furthermore, we also argue that a less powerful firm's high (low) PDO is positively (negatively) related to its tolerance of its powerful partner's power usage. A less powerful firm with high PDO tends to view its position in the channel relationship as inferior (Huang, Zhu, and

Brass 2016) and tends not to react negatively if it is treated unfairly because it believes doing so would not have a meaningful impact (Lund, Scheer, and Kozlenkova 2013). By contrast, a powerless firm with low PDO values the equality between itself and its powerful partner, so it tends to rebel against its partner if being treated unfairly (Huang, Zhu, and Brass 2016; Lund, Scheer, and Kozlenkova 2013).

This paper extends extant research by examining firm PDO at a dyadic level and proposing four concepts: *symmetry on high PDO, symmetry on low PDO, negative PDO asymmetry,* and *positive PDO asymmetry,* to capture four different scenarios of firm PDO across both sides of the dyad. We argue that PDO symmetry (both low and high) will yield lower levels of conflict and higher levels of compliance by the less powerful firm. Contrary to traditional power research, we posit that positive PDO asymmetry (where the powerful partner has low PDO, and the less powerful partner has high PDO) may also lead to desirable channel outcomes, such as lower conflict. Lastly, we argue that negative PDO asymmetry (where the powerful partner has high PDO, and the less powerful partner has low PDO) will yield undesirable channel outcomes (e.g., higher conflict, lower compliance). Theoretical and practical implication are discussed.

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AMA Winter Conference 2022 *Special Session*

PRESENTATION 4

SUPPLIER DEVELOPMENT BY INDUSTRIAL CUSTOMERS IN B2B MARKETS: WHEN AND HOW?

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Masato Abe, Economics Affairs Officer at UNESCAP, Bangkok, Thailand

Joe Cannon, Colorado State University

Alok Kumar, University of Nebraska—Lincoln

ABSTRACT

Buying firms increasingly use disparate supplier development strategies to improve supplier performance including direct involvement with suppliers and offering direct incentives such as monetary resources. Drawing on the new institutional economics and theories of interfirm exchange, authors examine the impact of buyer firm's supplier development efforts on supplier outcomes. Authors propose a series of hypotheses concerning the impact of joint interactions between buyer's supplier development efforts and three different relationship contexts (joint action, buyer's specialized investments, and goal setting by buyer) on supplier performance. A cross classified hierarchical linear model tested on 109 'matched' buyer-supplier dyads generally provides support for the proposed hypotheses. Implications for theory and practice are discussed.

PRESENTATION 5

NEGLECTED ISSUES IN INTERFIRM RESEARCH: OPPORTUNITIES FOR A CONTRIBUTION

Lisa K. Scheer, University of Missouri*

This portion of the session will focus on encouraging brainstorming among attendees regarding issues in B2B relationships that deserve research attention. The presenter will offer a few topics that deserve research attention to get the brainstorming started such as, for example:

- Under what conditions is it beneficial for a firm to encourage its boundary spanners to advocate for a partner?
- How to assess fully the ramifications of acceding to, resisting, or advocating for "cancel culture." The dangers and potential upside of allowing political views to impose standards on B2B relationship partners.
- How to detect/measure corrupt, collusive cross-firm practices of boundary spanners, what mechanisms encourage or enable this corruption, and what mechanisms, governance structures, or governance mechanism can disrupt or imped cross-firm corruption between boundary spanners.

This is simply a sample. Most of this portion of the session will focus on audience participation and brainstorming a list of potential research topics.

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FACTORS INFLUENCING PURCHASE INTENTION TOWARDS ONLINE PRIVATE LABEL

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Keywords: Private Label, E-retail, Online Shopping, Purchase Intention, PLS-SEM

Description: In this project, we apply the cue utilisation theory, theory of planned behaviour and theory of reasoned action to assess the antecedents to purchase intention.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Private labels (PLs) are preferred in an economic downturn situation such as during Covid-19 pandemic. This is due to the value and price consciousness of the consumers coupled with earning uncertainty in the economy as a whole. The private labels are bought by all kinds of consumers having low or high income. Therefore, retailers position their products in three types- generic, mimic and premium. The generic is the cheapest with minimal packaging and low quality, mimic copies the packaging of national brand (NB) product with low price and reasonable quality. The premium PLs are the of highest quality and the pricing is at par with national brands.

There has been a fair launch of such products by online retailers such as Amazon and Flipkart which has led to increased profit margin. The PLs generally command higher margins and therefore adopted by online retailers. However, the literature on consumer behaviour of online retailers is relatively scarce and retailers have a need-to-know what drives consumers. To answer this question, we take variables from well-established theories like cue utilisation, theory of planned behaviour and theory of reasoned action from literature and verify them with respect to online PL.

Method and Data-

This quantitative study was conducted using online questionnaire floated on social media and other online channels to collect data. A sample of 30 responses was pre-tested and further responses

were collected through personally administered surveys and various social media platforms. We received 318 responses using convenient sampling and analysed it using Smart PLS software. Well established scales were adapted from the literature. Further, measurement model was analysed by running PLS algorithm. The outer loading of all constructs was beyond the threshold of 0.7. The reliability and validity measures were found to satisfy the criteria. The Fornell-Larcker and Heterotrait Monotrait ratio criteria were checked and found to be significant and thus discriminant validity was established. Structural model was verified after satisfying measurement model criteria to test the proposed hypothesis. The R square values were in the moderate to high range up to 0.5 and up to 0.75. The Q Square was measured using blindfolding and taking omission distance as 9, it was in the moderate range of up to 0.5.

Summary of Findings-

The findings of the current study revealed that quality perception of a PL product sold online is an antecedent of purchase intention. The PL retailer's reputation is mediated positively by PL image towards purchase intention. The PL attitude of consumer mediates value consciousness and convenience facilitating purchase intention. The PL awareness, price consciousness and functional risk cannot be validated as they were found to be statistically irrelevant as their t-value was less than 1.96.

Statement of Key Contributions-

The key findings of the study contribute significantly to the existing literature by identifying attitude as a mediator to purchase intention of online PL products. The theoretical background was successfully established and tested. Findings suggest that online PL products with better quality

influence consumers buying behaviour. The image of PL and the retailer reputation are important and therefore the online retailers must focus on it to improve their sales. The PL products must fit value conscious customers and convenience to shop online should be enhanced.

References are available on request.

HOW PSYCHOLOGICAL AND FINANCIAL VULNERABILITY AFFECT FINANCIAL PLANNING IN A POST CRISIS: THE CASE OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Keywords: Pandemic, Vulnerability, Household Decision Making, Financial Planning, Personality

Description: The present research examines the relationship between psychological vulnerability, financial vulnerability, and intentions to improve financial planning for U.S. households.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Unlike prior crises, the economic adversities that accompanied the COVID-19 pandemic (hereafter, the pandemic) came with remarkable psychological tensions (Goodell, 2020; Liu, Pan, and Yin, 2020; Galoni, Carpenter, and Hayagreeva, 2020). As such, it is plausible to suspect that consumers' reactions to the pandemic and the change in their behaviors are determined not only by their financial aptitude, but also by their individual perception of the severity of the crisis and by their individual sensitivity to adverse stimuli. This study explores this overarching supposition with a consumer behavior perspective, focusing on how pandemic-induced vulnerabilities result in change in consumer behavior.

Method and Data

Data were collected via an online survey created by Qualtrics data collection software and distributed through Prolific. Participation was restricted to individuals living in the U.S.A (permanents resident or citizens), and at least 18 years old. To further ensure reliability of responses, participation was restricted to respondents who were one of the primary financial decision makers in their household (see Campbell, 2006; Alhenawi & Elkhal, 2013). The final dataset included 545 complete, valid responses (Mean age = 31.47; 42.5% female). The questionnaire was designed in accordance with the underlying theories and the relevant variables of interest. When possible, constructs were measured using previously validated scales.

Summary of Findings

The first hypothesis proposed a mediation relationship between psychological vulnerability, financial vulnerability, and financial planning intentions. PROCESS model 4 (Hayes and Preacher, 2013) ran a bootstrapping test with 2,000 samples. Notably, age, gender, financial knowledge, and household size were not significant control variables and thus the results are reported without these variables. Results indicated a significant indirect effect of financial vulnerability in the relationships between psychological vulnerability and financial planning intentions ($b = -.05$; $SE = .01$; 95% CI: -.08 to -.03), supporting H1. More specifically psychological vulnerability significantly influenced financial vulnerability ($b = .15$; $t = 4.96$, $p < .001$; 95% CI: .09 to .21), which in turn influenced financial planning intentions ($b = -.36$, $t = -5.92$, $p < .001$; 95% CI: -.48 to -.24). H2 proposed a moderated mediation relationship, where personality trait conscientiousness moderates the effects in H1. We used 2,000 bootstrapped

samples (PROCESS Model 14; Hayes and Preacher, 2013), with psychological vulnerability as the independent variable, financial vulnerability as the mediator, financial planning intention as the dependent variable, and conscientiousness as the moderator (affecting the path from the mediator to dependent variable). The results supported H2.

Statement of Key Contributions

The present research provides three main contributions. First, the research highlights the role of vulnerability by identifying two different but interconnected types of vulnerability namely, psychological and financial vulnerability. However, as opposed to the majority of pandemic research, the present investigation focuses on consumer responses beyond the immediate coping reactions and examines adapting strategies of American households as manifested by their financial planning intentions. Second, given the focus of the present research on financial decision making (as opposed to consumption decisions), our approach links a growing body of research on household finance with consumer behavior research and provides evidence for the role of psychological vulnerability (raised from psychological fears and concerns elicited due to the pandemic) in heightened financial vulnerability (i.e., financial fears and concerns elicited due to the pandemic), and the consequent effect on plans for being more vigilant with household financial matters. Third, by drawing on personality research, the present research identifies a conceptually relevant personality trait with the potential to influence future planning. Specifically, this study examines the moderating role of conscientiousness. The results add specificity to our understanding of the vulnerability dynamics of the COVID-19 pandemic and indicate that the fears and concerns elicited due to the pandemic result in stronger intention to improve financial planning only for those who score high on conscientiousness.

References Available Upon Request

SPECIAL SESSION PROPOSAL: DOCTORAL STUDENT RESEARCH ON THE FUTURE TRENDS IN CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

Special Session Proposed by Marketing for Higher Education SIG

Session Co-Chairs:

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Paper Title: How Psychological and Financial Vulnerability Affect Financial Planning in a Post Crisis: The Case of COVID-19 Pandemic

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Keywords: Special Issue, Doctoral Students, Consumer Behavior, Future Trends

Description: Organizations that lead in customer experience outperform laggards on the S&P 500 index by nearly 80%. As such, it is pertinent for organizations in any industry and context, from higher education to healthcare, retail, and manufacturing, to understand change drivers in consumer behavior and to be prepared for what is to come. The change in consumer generations coupled with a growing reliance on digital technology, the recent COVID-19 pandemic, and the rising importance of sustainability and ethics in business are expected to result in new trends in consumer behavior. As such, in collaboration with *Journal of Consumer Behaviour* (JCB), an A-level journal according to ABDC journal rankings, this special session is dedicated to research on "The Future Trends in Consumer Behavior."

THE DARK TRIAD AND INTENTIONS FOR RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION: A PROSPECT THEORY PERSPECTIVE

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Keywords: *Fear of missing out; dark triad personality; message framing; society; responsible consumption*

Description: This paper examines the impact of message framing and select psychological constructs on the intentions of Dark Triad individuals to participate in responsible consumption.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Questions

In response to the call for studies focusing on post-pandemic consumer behavior trends, the origins of this manuscript focused on the exploration of consumer responses to COVID-19 vaccine marketing efforts. With a specific focus on Dark Triad personality traits and their impact on post-pandemic consumer behavior, the paper proposes a framework that investigates how personality, message framing (Barberis, 2013), and the fear (or joy) of missing out (FOMO/JOMO, Zhang, Jimenez & Cicala, 2020) impact consumer intentions to vaccinate. In effort to broaden the scope of the paper and generalizability of the model, the manuscript will also examine how these variables impact other responsible consumption outcomes, such as recycling and/or sustainable living intentions. Building on prospect theory, the paper presents a framework that is applicable across various contexts that examine how individuals respond to different gain/loss messages framed around responsible consumption. Thus, the paper addresses the following research questions:

RQ1. How do Dark Triad personality individuals react to marketing efforts to promote responsible consumption?

RQ2. How does message framing impact the intentions of Dark Triad personalities to participate in responsible consumption initiatives?

RQ3. How do constructs such as FOMO, conspicuous consumption, and consumer guilt mediate the personality-responsible consumption relationship?

Method and Data

This paper presents an experimental survey design that will examine the consumption intentions of individuals with Dark Triad personality types. Grant funding will be used to purchase survey data through Qualtrics. The survey will present individuals with a general advertisement for responsible consumption that is either gain-framed or loss-framed, and will collect data pertaining to personality type, FOMO, consumer guilty, conspicuous consumption, and intentions to participate in responsible consumption behaviors. The data will be analyzed using IBM SPSS and the Hayes Process Model macro (Model 7) to determine how gain/loss message framing and mediating constructs impact the consumption behaviors of individuals with Dark Triad personality types.

We expect that individuals with Dark Triad personality characteristics will respond to responsible messaging differently, depending upon whether the message is gain or loss framed. Additionally, it is expected that specific message framing will cause these individuals to experience different emotions related to FOMO, conspicuous consumption, and consumer guilt, via a moderating effect. Ultimately, it is expected that and that both message framing (as a moderating construct) and feelings of FOMO, guilt, and conspicuousness (as mediators) will impact consumption intentions.

Key Contributions

Many academic journals and conferences have called for papers focusing on the role of marketing in a post-pandemic world, and/or the impact of personality characteristics on consumer behavior and decision-making. Top journals have encouraged research focusing on the psychological aspects of consumer decision-making and, in some cases, how it applies specifically in a post-pandemic context. Additionally, the manifestation of the emotion of FOMO due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the resultant effects are a timely area for research. Merging this and other constructs, such as consumer guilt and conspicuous consumption, with message framing and Dark Triad personality theories creates a unique avenue for exploring post-pandemic marketing and communications initiatives.

From a practical standpoint, this research will provide a better understanding of how individuals with dark triad personality types respond to responsible consumption initiatives. This will help marketers to more effectively incentivize people who are unwilling to participate in these behaviors. Since this population is easily reached via social media, there are clear implications for how to effectively create and deliver relevant, engaging content to this demographic. Something as simple as message framing could potentially transform consumption intentions for a significant portion of the population in a positive manner.

Journals Programming

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