A Study Around the Effect of Influencer Endorsement on Sustainable Luxury Brand Charisma

Oxana Lahbib, Camilo R. Contreras, Aurélie Kessous, Pierre Valette-Florence

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Preface

The Academy of Marketing Science was founded in 1971, held its first Annual Conference in 1977, and has grown and prospered ever since. The relevancy of the Academy's mission and activities to our chosen target market of the marketing professoriate has been a key factor in attracting the discipline's best and brightest from all over the world.

The revised Articles of Association of the Academy, approved by the Board of Governors in the spring of 1984 and by the general membership in the fall of that year, define the mission of the Academy as follows:

1. Provide leadership in exploring the normative boundaries of marketing, while simultaneously seeking new ways of bringing theory and practice into practicable conjunction.
2. Further the science of marketing throughout the world by promoting the conduct of research and the dissemination of research results.
3. Provide a forum for the study and improvement of marketing as an economic, ethical, social, and political force and process.
4. Furnish, as appropriate and available, material and other resources for the solution of marketing problems, which confront particular firms and industries, on the one hand, and society at large on the other.
5. Provide publishing media and facilities for fellows of the Academy and reviewer assistance on the fellow's scholarly activities.
6. Sponsor one or more annual conferences to enable the fellows of the Academy to present research results; to learn by listening to other presentations and through interaction with other fellows and guests; to avail themselves of the placements process; to conduct discussion with book editors; and to exchange other relevant information.
7. Assist fellows in the better utilization of their professional marketing talents through redirection, reassignment, and relocation.
8. Provide educator fellows with insights and resources as may be available to aid them in the development of improved teaching methods, materials, devices, and directions.
9. Seek means for establishing student scholarships and professional university chairs in the field of marketing.
10. Offer fellows of the Academy status to business and institutional executives and organizations.
11. Modify the Academy's purpose and direction as the influence of time and appropriate constructive forces may dictate.

Glassboro, USA — Vincent Jeseo
Thibodaux, USA — Juliann Allen

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The Academy of Marketing Science would like to acknowledge the individuals who have made the conference a success. Special recognition goes to the Annual Conference co-chairs, Cleopatra Veloutsou and Rajesh Iyer. An incredible commitment is necessary to coordinate and organize a conference of this measure. Further, track chairs were essential in encouraging submissions, managing the review process, and organizing session details.

Lastly, the Academy of Marketing Science extends sincere appreciation to all authors who submitted and presented their research and contributed as reviewers and session chairs. In addition, the success of the meeting depended on tireless volunteers including the AMS officers and directors. Gratitude is also extended to the AMS home office who diligently worked behind the scenes to ensure the success of the event. Thank you to all attendees from around the world who made this conference another special AMS event. The 2023 Academy of Marketing Science Conference – Annual would not have been possible without the support of all of these individuals.

Vincent Jeseo
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A Study Around the Effect of Influencer Endorsement on Sustainable Luxury Brand Charisma: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Lately, we observe that luxury brands develop collaborations with influencers who tend to generate stronger impressions of connection and identification with customers, compared to a celebrity (Shi et al., 2021). If the positive effect of celebrity endorsement on ethical luxury have been demonstrated though the literature (Muniz & Guzmán, 2021), the effects of influencer endorsement on ethical luxury remain unknown, to our knowledge. Similarly, luxury brands that engage in sustainable activities can be perceived as more charismatic (Semaan et al., 2019). Through their natural or built charisma (Cocker & Cronin, 2017), both celebrities and influencers can increase brand charisma through endorsement. This research hence tries to understand the effects of influencers on the perceptions of ethical luxury and brand charisma.

Through quantitative experimentation, the effects of a celebrity, an influencer and a no endorsement condition (control group) have been compared. A total of 895 respondents have been recruited from Prolific. PLS-SEM tested the effects of endorsers on self-brand connection, brand-cause fit, brand charisma, brand attractiveness and other managerial variables.

Both the celebrity and the influencer have a positive influence on brand-cause fit ($\beta_{cel.}$ = .235; $\beta_{inf.}$ = .310) and on brand connection ($\beta_{cel.}$ = .096; $\beta_{inf.}$ = .147). For a celebrity, brand charisma has a slightly stronger direct effect on luxury impression ($\beta_{cel.}$ = .646; $\beta_{inf.}$ = .636) and brand social media engagement ($\beta_{cel.}$ = .197; $\beta_{inf.}$ =.123), whereas in the case of an influencer, the effect of brand charisma is indirect, through brand attractiveness ($\beta_{cel.}$ = .735; $\beta_{inf.}$ = .801). Influencers, compared to celebrities, tend to have stronger positive impacts on consumer-brand relationship.

These results encourage luxury brands to promote their sustainable activities through the strategy of influencer endorsement compared to celebrities, who are perceived as more distant and more exposed in other promotional campaigns (Song & Kim, 2020). This new finding offers an interesting managerial path for luxury brands that want to promote their sustainable activities.

Keywords: Luxury; Corporate social responsibility; Celebrity endorsement; Influencer endorsement; Brand charisma

References Available Upon Request

ALGORITHMIC SOCIETY: Theorizing Digital Media Landscape: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Digital media are the dominant information technology of our time. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok invite new kinds of interaction, impacting friendships, family and peer groups, and business relationships while reconfiguring public engagement and discourse through influencers, memes, and viral media. That said, the algorithms drive how social media is consumed and often drive the influence these platforms can have over individuals and a population. Nevertheless, many questions remain open to answers and debate about the impact and meaning of social media (Sujon, 2021).

For example, throughout much of literate human culture, literacy has been viewed as an indicator of proficiency in using written language be it Egyptian hieroglyphics, Medieval poetry, or Incan knot-tying (Keefe & Copeland, 2011; Scribner, 1984; Smith, 1977), but more recent sociological definitions recast literacy as more than just the ability to read and write but as an interaction between culture and the mind (Wallendorf, 2001). According to Wallendorf (2001), this moves the notion of literacy beyond its meaning as an individual attribute concerned with reading and writing and aligns it more with Nicolopoulou and Cole's (1999) understanding of literacy as a socially constituted practice.

Digitalization seems to give rise to revisiting the dynamics and agencies of nonhumans, materialities, digital media, technologies, and how they (re)configure and shape the world (Edwards, 2003). Musik and Bogner (2019) posit that digitalization in this strand of post-humanist and material-semiotic approaches might be described as the process in which a wide array of heterogeneous human and nonhuman actors entangles in more or less durable socio-digital assemblages or actor networks. This research comprehensively reviews the digital media landscape and its interface with today's consumers. It examines the impact of digital media on three cultural areas, including the culture of participation, the culture of public presentation, and the culture of digital literacy. Furthermore, we propose a theoretical framework that may capture the meaning of digital interfaces with consumers. Ultimately, this study contributes to marketing literature by enriching theories on technology and consumer culture and providing future research directions for marketing scholars.

Keywords: Digital landscape; IoT; Social media; Search Engine; Algorithms; Consumer culture

References Available Upon Request

Effect of Brand Trust on Behavioral Intentions Toward AI-based Virtual Agents: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Artificial intelligence (AI) has been developing fast for many years now (Haenlein & Kaplan, 2019) and takes many forms in several products. However, we still lack knowledge about why individuals adopt AI devices. A recent article by Venkatesh (2022) points out the need to identify new antecedents and moderators to explain adoption and use of AI tools. We answer to this call by studying the relationship between the brand and the individual. Thus, we investigate the following research question: *can personal relationship to the brand influence behavioral intentions to use an AI-based virtual agent?*

Relying on the UTAUT framework (Venkatesh et al., 2003; 2012; 2016), we hypothesize that the level of trust in the brand is an antecedent of the model, and that brand affect and smartphone use are two potential moderators. To test these hypotheses, we implemented an online experiment, manipulating five conditions (i.e., five different brands) within the same scenario. The scenario introduced a new feature, based on AI technology, to the respondents. The text was strictly identical in all conditions, except for the brand. We selected 5 well-known tech brands (Amazon, Google, Apple, Meta and Samsung) and we assumed that the level of brand trust could vary from one brand to the other. Respondents were randomly assigned to one of the conditions. After reading the scenario, they had to answer a survey. All questions were measured through 7-points scales developed in previous research and adapted to our study (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001; Gurviez & Korchia, 2003; van Deursen et al., 2015; Venkatesh et al., 2012). We recruited respondents via a panel of consumers and obtained a total of 504 valid responses (Women= 52.2%; average age= 29.10).

Results show that our respondents associate different levels of trust to the five brands. We find that brand trust is indeed an antecedent of the UTAUT model. We also confirm the moderating role of both brand affect and smartphone use. From a theoretical perspective, this research complements the existing framework and highlight a strong effect of brand trust as an antecedent. Considering that a lot of people are reluctant to use AI, exploring more precisely what drives its adoption is of major importance. We also identify two new moderators, which can leverage the adoption of AI. For practice, this work suggests that brands can rely on their reputation and on their existing relationship with their consumers to encourage adoption of AI tools.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence; Brand trust; Technology adoption; Virtual assistant, UTAUT

References Available Upon Request

Examining The Use of AI-Based Hybrid Recommender System in The Automotive Industry: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

The concept of relationship marketing has evolved from an offline to an online context (Thaichon et al., 2020) and has advanced to include artificial intelligence (AI) (Steinhoff et al., 2019). The key to relationship marketing is targeting customers as individuals with unique offerings. Current literature suggests applying personalisation is highly effective in establishing stronger one-to-one relationships with customers (Thaichon et al., 2019). Moreover, technological advancement has elevated the importance of personalisation (Chandra et al., 2022). Among the various types of technological and AI tools used for personalised marketing, the recommender system remains widely popular as it is regarded as one of the most useful tools to provide a high degree of personalisation (Kumar et al., 2019; Zanker et al., 2019). This led to the birth of "recommendation marketing" which is defined as the process in which businesses suggest a product or service based on their current and prospective customers' interests by leveraging on available data (Chinchanachokchai et al., 2021).

It is established that all recommender systems are created differently. Therefore, its effect on consumers using the recommender system is to an extent, influenced by the specific features of the recommender system (i.e., type, design, presentation) (Xiao & Benbasat, 2007). However, research that examines the "perception and helpfulness of a deployed recommender system through user experience surveys" are lacking (Jannach & Jugovac, 2019). Hence, this research aims to investigate consumers' acceptance of a hybrid AI recommender system that provides them with personalised recommendations. This is done by examining the variation of features that goes into developing the hybrid AI recommender system and its impact on consumers' subsequent behaviour and perception.

Lastly, while marketers emphasise the importance of accurate personalisation, computer science researchers have argued that strong emphasis on this criterion does not correspond to satisfying the user's needs (Kotkov et al., 2016) as recommendations can become homogenised and predictable (Lin et. al., 2021) due to an over-fitting model. Therefore, this research could bridge the gap between services marketing and computer science by understanding the impact of accuracy and diversity trade-off on consumers acceptance of a hybrid AI recommender system.

Keywords: Personalisation; Recommender systems; Artificial intelligence; Consumer behaviour

References Available Upon Request

Consumer Memories of Brand Interactions in Virtual Reality: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Prior literature provides conflicting insights regarding consumer memory of VR experiences in comparison to real-world experiences. More importantly, existing research makes little distinction between different types of human memory. Yet, the differential effect of the VR vs. real brand interactions on consumer memory could be explained from the perspective of different memory types. Further, there are different approaches to evaluating consumer memories. In particular, their objective correctness (i.e., recall accuracy) can be studied in conjunction with consumers' subjective confidence in their memories (i.e., recall confidence). Given their crucial role in consumer decision-making, it is proposed that both types of memories resulting from VR interactions are investigated from recall accuracy and recall confidence perspective. Formally,

H1a: VR (vs. real) brand interaction will result in better (vs. worse) episodic memory recall accuracy in short term and long term.

H1b: VR (vs. real) brand interaction will result in better (vs. worse) episodic memory recall confidence in short term and long term.

H2: VR (vs. real) brand interaction will result in worse (vs. better) semantic memory recall accuracy in short term and long term.

H2b: VR (vs. real) brand interaction will result in better (vs. worse) semantic memory recall confidence in short term and long term.

A longitudinal field experiment (N = 259) was conducted in collaboration with an industry partner (Liege Aquarium Museum). Consumers who participated in the VR brand interaction had more correct episodic memories than those who participated in regular brand interaction. VR was also advantageous in terms of consumer confidence in their episodic memories: while immediately after the experience those who had a regular brand interaction felt more confident, as time passed those who had a VR interaction were more confident in their episodic memories. This finding is useful for marketers who seek new ways to deliver direct brand interactions to consumers due to geographical, financial, or other constraints associated with developing real-world interactions.

Semantic memories recall accuracy and confidence were unaffected by the interaction type. Yet it is noteworthy that consumers felt more confident in their semantic memories at T2 than at T1. This can be due to 'solidification' of semantic brand memories as time passed. Notably, VR stands out as a true brand interaction highlight, which solidifies over time as a "wow moment", even if specific details of the VR are forgotten.

Keywords: Virtual reality; Brand interactions; Memory; Recall

References Available Upon Request

Democratizing Luxury in the Metaverse: An Experimental Study: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Defined as a virtual reality space that uses internet and augmented reality (AR), the Metaverse is quickly establishing itself as a brand-new environment where people may buy products, enjoy entertainment, and take part in events that blur the boundaries between real life and virtual life. The emergence of the Metaverse is revolutionizing the future of retail, marking another milestone in the evolution of omnichannel strategies. The Metaverse is a fully immersive virtual world that can be accessed and explored using different devices and platforms such as virtual reality headsets, gaming consoles, and smartphones. With the Metaverse, companies have the opportunity to take the concept of immersive customer experience to unprecedented heights. By embracing this virtual realm, businesses can create innovative customer experiences through new phygital (physical + digital) environments and devices. Instead of relying solely on a data-driven analytical approach, brands can now prioritize an experience-based logic to drive their strategies. The Metaverse represents the ultimate fusion of physical and digital interactions between customers and companies, enabling brands to pioneer mixed and co-created consumption experiences. This revolutionary form of co-creative marketing involves crafting a customer journey that leverages cutting-edge digital technologies to create unique interactions at the convergence of physical and phygital touchpoints, which were previously unimaginable. For example, Decentraland, a prominent Metaverse platform, recently made history by hosting the world's first-ever Metaverse Fashion Week, demonstrating the vast potential for immersive experiences and new avenues for creative expression in the virtual realm. By helping brands create a truly frictionless and seamless shopping experience that is Direct-to-Avatar (D2A) - as opposed to Direct-to-Consumer (D2C) - the Metaverse represents a further step in the evolution of omnichannel in the fashion sector. Despite the increasing interest in the Metaverse, scant research has dealt with the characteristics of the Metaverse on consumer behaviour. This research consists of a qualitative study (i.e., 10 semi-structured interviews with brand managers) and two experimental studies that test a number of hypotheses in relation to the Metaverse experience. This research also investigates the role of perceived seamlessness as mediator of the relationship between type of shopping experience (D2A vs. D2C) and customer engagement. Results show that the type of shopping experience has a significant main effect on customer perceived seamlessness and confirm the mediation effect.

Keywords: Direct-to-consumer (D2C); Direct-to-avatar (D2A); Omnichannel; Metaverse; Perceived seamlessness

References Available Upon Request

Entrepreneurial Network Embeddedness: The Place of Emotion: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Understanding of relationships and networks in an entrepreneurial context has attracted growing interest in recent years (Ebbers, 2014; Hoang & Yi, 2015). This is not surprising given that, on account of being new and small, entrepreneurial firms need to interact in relationships and engage in networks to access external resources and capabilities. Connecting to relationships and networks is not automatic for the entrepreneurial venture, rather it is an ability that takes time to be develop. This process of embedding (Jack, 2005; Jack & Anderson, 2002; Slotte-Kock & Coviello, 2010), developing and actively maintaining a network of ties within a social structure, is not straightforward for the entrepreneur, and in most cases not a priority. Studies have found that considerable diversity in the ability of firms to use and become embedded in business networks (Möller & Svahn, 2003), but factors accounting for such differences remain less known. We focus on emotion as one factor connected to network embeddedness.

Emotion in the entrepreneurial domain is a "hot topic" (Cardon et al., 2012, p. 1), with social interaction being a key driver of emotion experienced by the entrepreneur (Doern & Goss, 2013). Studies of emotions connected to entrepreneurship tend to take an "atomistic" rather than relational approach (Doern & Goss, 2014), which means that the influence of emotions on the process of embedding are not captured (Baron, 2008; Engel et al., 2017). This paper seeks to address this gap. Drawing from an exploratory study of entrepreneurial businesses involved in craft food and drinks we answer the question: What role do emotions play in the entrepreneurs' process of network embedding? Our findings suggest that entrepreneurial emotions can both enable and constrict network embedding processes. It is also clear that emotions are not static, rather similar to networks they are dynamic and change over time. We present our findings at three levels, the individual level, in the relationship and in networks. The three levels are not linear or cyclical, yet they do influence each other in the process of embedding.

Connecting network embedding to emotions is important because we would expect that emotions experienced in relationship interaction may augment or limit the benefits that the entrepreneur could expect to gain from relationship and network development. Our paper adds to extant knowledge of the entrepreneurial network embedding process, developing a framework to show the influence of emotions on relationship and network development (Jack, 2005; Jack & Anderson, 2002; Jack et al., 2008; Slotte-Kock & Coviello, 2010).

Keywords: Network embedding; Emotions; Entrepreneurship; Case study; Craft sector

References Available Upon Request

Work in Progress: B2B Negotiation Styles in Distributive Negotiations and Their Effect on Socioemotional Outcomes and Price: A Neuroscience Experiment: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Negotiations between buyers and sellers are critical key processes within organizations because transactions within most markets occur through such negotiation processes (Agndal et al., 2017; Gligor et al., 2021). Despite their importance and considerable research efforts, many issues around B2B negotiations remain unclear (Agndal et al., 2017; Boyer & Jap, 2022; Singh et al., 2020). There are also calls for new methodological approaches, which may help the research field of business negotiations to develop further (Agndal et al., 2017). Advances in social cognitive neuroscience and neuroeconomics call into question several psychological foundations that form the fundament of large bodies of work in B2B (Hodgkinson, 2015), and implicit study results measured by neuroscience diverge from explicit results measured e. g. by self-report.

Against this background, the research question of this project is: How can neuroscientific experiments contribute to and extend current B2B negotiation knowledge? Specifically, we aim to explore the effectiveness of hardline and softline negotiation strategies in B2B sales contexts, with a focus on economic and socioemotional outcomes, as well as the mediating role of the perception of the negotiation situation.

We propose the following hypotheses:
1. Hardline negotiation strategies lead to higher economic outcomes than softline strategies.
2. Hardline negotiation strategies lead to lower socioemotional outcomes than softline negotiation.
3. The socioemotional perception of the negotiation situation mediates the relationship between negotiation strategies and economic outcomes.
4. The socioemotional perception of the negotiation situation mediates the relationship between negotiation strategies and socioemotional outcomes

We aim to use a triangulative experimental design based on a distributive negotiation situation. B2B salespersons will be exposed to fictitious buyer-seller negotiation scenarios where they negotiate the price of an item, with the buyer employing either a hardline or softline negotiation strategy. Participants subsequently answer a survey indicating their price offer as a measure of the economic outcome. Socioemotional outcomes will be assessed using three complementary approaches: (1) 5-channel EEG to evaluate frontal asymmetry as an emotional signal; (2) Affdex by Affectiva, a facial expression recognition (FER) algorithm to measure seven fundamental emotions; and (3) an online survey for measuring emotions, as explicit counterpart to the implicit neuroscientific measurements. The survey will also include questions regarding participants' perception of the negotiation situation and their intention for future collaboration.

With this overall approach, to the best of our knowledge, we would be one of the first to evaluate the effects of B2B negotiation styles in distributive negotiations on socioemotional outcomes and price using neuroscience. This new methodological approach could strongly contribute to further developing the B2B field in times where its foundations are challenged by neuroscientific findings (Lindgreen et al., 2021; Hodgkinson, 2015).

Keywords: B2B; Negotiation; Neuroscience; Experiment

References Available Upon Request

The Role of Market Intelligence in Enhancing Regional Buyer-Supplier Relationships in Agri-food SMEs: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

In an increasingly competitive retail landscape, blighted by cost inflation, shifting supermarket strategies and evolving buying structures, small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are more vulnerable than ever to the hazards of retailer processes, such as range rationalisation and product de-listing. Recent research reveals that the longevity of buyer-supplier relationships no longer assures security of retail product listings, rather, the best means of managing channels is through an espousal of market focus (Golgeci et al., 2021). This is of particular concern to regional SMEs, who lack access and expertise to deploy formal market intelligence (MI) and often rely on the familiarity and colloquial nature of their retail buyer relationship to ensure financial stability (Malagueño et al., 2019).

There is limited empirical research that explores buyer-supplier relationships from a regional perspective, highlighting the nuances in regional buyer behaviour and the resources SMEs require to support their permanence in retail supermarket sector. Drawing on extant Resource-based View (RBV) literature, our study explores the role of MI in enhancing regional SME channel management capabilities and the buyer-supplier relationship. To facilitate this, a longitudinal case-based study of seven agri-food SMEs was conducted to monitor the development of channel management capabilities pre, during and post MI provision. Semi-structured interviews were also conducted with seven supermarket retail buyers. Interview transcripts were thematically analysed using QSR NVivo 12 to identify pertinent themes in the datasets.

Post-MI provision, we observed an increase in SME retail contract acquisitions, lucrative price promotional changes, and improved sales performance. Thus, we suggest that the adoption of digitally driven, MI resources provide regional SMEs with a pathway to leverage their power through improved channel management capabilities. This is based upon the condition of an increased learning orientation, driving supplier preparedness, confidence in communication and increased value-add. In modifying behaviours, suppliers facilitated their buyers and enhanced the buying experience. Our research contributes to the channel and marketing capabilities literature by providing new insight into how MI and recent worldwide environmental forces have altered the longstanding buyer-supplier power asymmetry. It answers calls by Morgan (2012) to explore how market intelligence resources are utilised to enhance SME capabilities. Consequently, we contribute to the limited body of literature pertaining to MI usage in SMEs and assess the effectiveness of MI as a marketing resource in the SME context (Kozlenkova et al., 2014). This responds to theoretical criticism of the RBV that little is known about how firm resources are isolated and transformed into impactful capabilities (Corredoira & McDermott, 2020).

Keywords: Market intelligence; Channel management capabilities; Buyer-supplier relationships; SMEs

References Available Upon Request

An Investigation of Member-Initiated Online Communities From a Marketing Perspective: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Member-initiated online communities (MIOCs) serve as digital spaces where members meet, exchange ideas, and form relationships around a topic of common interest. With the rise of digital communication channels, MIOCs have grown and constitute potential market segments for companies to seize (Kotler et al., 2017). Prior research has investigated information exchange and value generation in MIOCs for members, but third-party leverage of MIOCs from a marketing perspective is an underexplored research field. Motivated by recent calls for research and by the relevance of MIOCs for practice, the aim of the present study is to explore the marketing potential of MIOCs by investigating how companies can foster positive brand word of mouth (WOM) in these communities. To understand how members perceive brand-generated posts in their MIOCs, we employ the persuasion knowledge model and the social capital theory.

We conduct an exploratory online survey, three online experiments, and a field experiment to explore the generation of positive brand WOM in MIOCs. Brand prominence of brand-generated posts is the key independent variable varying across the studies. Study 1 is an online experiment testing the effect of the presence or absence of brand prominence on WOM and the role of authenticity. In Study 2, we cooperate with a skincare start-up and conduct a field experiment to externally validate the relationship between brand prominence and clicks-generated, a WOM-related metric. Studies 3 and 4, two more online experiments, explore the moderating role of social capital and test the model holistically. In all the studies, our respondents are active participants of MIOCs of interest, and we align the brand-generated posts with the MIOCs' thematic focus and post type. Our findings show that lower brand prominence of a brand-generated post induces higher WOM, mediated by the mechanism of perceived post authenticity. Further, we find that social capital moderates the relationship between perceived post authenticity and brand WOM.

This study is the first to explore how brands can create content for MIOCs to achieve positive WOM while contributing to the literature on communication elements that influence persuasion knowledge activation (Eisend & Tarrahi, 2022) and to the literature on applications of social capital to marketing (van den Bulte et al., 2018). We find that MIOCs can be effectively leveraged for marketing purposes if marketing managers create authentic brand content, which can be achieved with lower levels of brand prominence. Further, members with high social capital with their MIOC will likely generate positive brand WOM, regardless of the content's perceived authenticity.

Keywords: Online communities; Perceived authenticity; Brand prominence; Social capital; Digital marketing

References Available Upon Request

Panel: Ethical Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Marketing: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

There have been significant artificial intelligence (AI) advances over the last five years, leading companies to adopt this technology at a rapid pace. AI has applications across industries, and recent articles have highlighted the potential impact in areas such as healthcare, automotive manufacturing, music, technology, and education. When considering AI use for different functions, marketing is increasingly the most impacted.

The infusion of AI can have positive effects but also carries inherent risks. The increased speed of adoption has left insufficient time for companies to create an ethical AI culture and, in some cases, unsuccessful efforts to create ethical controls. As a result, governments are beginning to study measures to regulate AI tools. Research and companies are in the early stages of addressing ethical challenges. However, this is a critical time in the adoption of AI since, as the growth of AI use expands, ethical issues are also expected to increase.

The objective of this panel session is to discuss the idea of AI ethics in both academia and practice. First, we will conduct an analysis of the present situation, which includes consumer, corporate, and ethical perspectives, to better understand ethical AI in marketing. Second, we will examine recent concerns related to AI use, such as with Generative AI. Third, we will explore the role of government regulations and self-regulating corporate strategies in protecting society from unethical AI. Finally, we will present findings from existing research and discuss future opportunities. The panel session will include an introduction to AI ethics in practice, panel member insights for designing and implementing AI ethical principles, and strategies for advancing research, followed by audience Q&A.

Keywords: Ethics, Principles, Artificial intelligence, Ethical decision-making, Ethical AI, AI decision making, AI principles

References Available Upon Request

Robotic Service Failure: Robot Recovery and Customer Forgiveness: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

It is a generally accepted notion that apology combined with compensation represents a higher degree of recovery effort (Bozkurt & Gligor, 2021) and is a more effective recovery response (DiFonzo et al., 2020) than apology alone. Even though this notion has previously been tested in situations when recovery is delivered by human employees (Bozkurt & Gligor, 2021), it remains unknown whether providing compensation in addition to apology can lead customers to respond more positively to a service robot's failure and recovery. Our research seeks to address this issue because service robots do make errors (Leo & Huh, 2020) and robotic service failures are inevitable (Shen & Wang, 2022) although service robots can benefit service, sales, and retail sectors (Grewal et al., 2020) by allowing organizations to reduce labor costs while increasing the efficiency of service delivery (Lee et al., 2020; Wirtz et al., 2018).

Robotic service failure can be detrimental to organizations by triggering negative customer responses, such as low customer satisfaction (Ho et al., 2020) and a decrease in usage intentions (Honig & Oron-Gilad, 2018). As such, it is essential for organizations to engage in successful service recovery to correct service delivery efficiencies (Shen & Wang, 2022). While the current literature (e.g., Choi et al., 2021; Hu et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2021) has focused on comparing the differences between recovery by human employees and service robots, we extend this literature by drawing upon the theory of stress and coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) to compare different types of service recovery provided by a service robot.

We conducted a field experiment and found that, in a robotic service failure encounter, apology combined with monetary compensation was more likely to positively influence customers' constructive coping of forgiveness than a simple apology; more importantly, the positive influence occurred only at low levels of customer-robot rapport. As a result of customer forgiveness, customers were more likely to rate the robotic service quality positively. This research takes initial steps toward understanding that offering compensation in addition to apology does not always increase the effectiveness of a service robot's failure recovery and that robotic employees can be a possible target of customer forgiveness. This paper also offers service organizations a better understanding of managing robotic service failure recovery.

Keywords: Service failure, Service robot, Apology, Compensation, Forgiveness, Rapport

References Available Upon Request

Marketing in the Peer-to-peer Sharing Economy: A Systematic Literature Review: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

From a market perspective, the peer-to-peer sharing economy and its application in several industries (like the accommodation and transportation sector) represent an increasing variety of businesses that offer several benefits to their customers. In the peer-to-peer sharing economy, consumers do not pay for ownership and sole consumption but for temporary access. Therefore, the success of businesses in the sharing economy depends on building and retaining a critical mass of users (Kumar et al., 2018; Laczko et al., 2019), and understanding users' motivations, barriers, and outcomes is an important marketing task. Because shared goods and services are consumed collaboratively and can be provided by the network of customers, challenges from the marketing and consumer behavior perspectives arise (Eckhardt et al., 2019). For example, in marketer-provided sharing (e.g., commercial car sharing like Zipcar), the marketing and the provision of the sharing exchange are carried out by the platform itself. In peer-to-peer-provided sharing (e.g., private car sharing Getaround) the exchange is conducted by the peer provider, and marketing is usually performed by the platform. To help unravel the complexities of these new forms of exchange, consumer behavior and marketing research has paid attention to the adoption, sharing process, and outcomes of sharing exchange in the last decade, both from user and business perspectives. This study reviews 141 articles using the theory-context-characteristics-methodology (TCCM) framework protocol (Paul & Criado, 2020; Paul & Rosado-Serrano, 2019; Rosado-Serrano et al., 2018) to paint a comprehensive and precise picture of the field and to develop a future research agenda. By using this framework, we intend to answer the following questions: what theories have been used to explain consumer behaviors in the peer-to-peer sharing economy (e.g., the adoption, sharing process, and outcomes)?; in what contexts (e.g., industries, countries) has research been investigated?; what characteristics from the user, exchange, and platform perspective have been studied?; and what methods have been utilized in marketing and consumer behavior research? Our review reveals an existing focus on user- and exchange-related theories. While there is much research on accommodation sharing and ride sharing (as Airbnb and Uber are the most popular past examples), we identified contribution gaps for more recent applications (e.g., micromobility sharing). Regarding investigated characteristics, we see little empirical research from a non-user perspective and research would contribute by studying not only intentions but also real use and possible outcomes. This, in turn, opens up chances from a methodological perspective. For instance, literature would contribute from investigating more non-declarative behavioral data and more longitudinal studies to increase the validity of further insights.

Keywords: Peer-to-peer sharing; Collaborative consumption; Marketing; Consumer behavior; Literature review; Theory-context-characteristics-methodology; Framework-based review

References Available Upon Request

Post-purchase Advertising Effectiveness: Who Should Be Targeted for Positive Word-of- mouth: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Advertising literature is rife with consumer behavior in the pre-purchase phase, but little is known about consumer behavior in post-purchase advertising. This research examines the impact of longer exposure to advertisements in the post-purchase phase and how it affects attitudes and especially positive word of mouth (WOM). Social comparison literature enabled the uncovering of the psychological motivations and beliefs that drive the willingness toward post-purchase advertising effectiveness. Accordingly, longer exposure to repetitive ads helped to mitigate a cognitive bias called a "bias blind spot", identified as a psychological driver of post-purchase advertising effectiveness. Examining perceived uniqueness as a boundary condition reveals that because low-uniqueness customers were more biased in their judgments and decisions, longer exposure to post-purchase advertising enhanced their confidence. This results in less consumer annoyance, a more positive attitude toward ads, and a higher chance of positive WOM, while no effect was found for attitude toward the brand. Conversely, for high-uniqueness customers who were less biased in their judgments and decisions, longer exposure to post-purchase advertising make them more annoyed and decreased their attitude toward ads and the brand, and the chance of positive WOM, while a marginally significant effect was found for attitude toward the brand for medium versus low repetition. Furthermore, repetitive advertisements are objective tasks delivered by algorithms, and consumers generally believe algorithms to be superior at these tasks in comparison with humans. This belief satisfies consumers' expectations and yields post-purchase advertising effectiveness. For consumers with a high level of algorithm aversion, perceived computers as capable of operating in a standardized and repetitive manner and superior in performing objective tasks compared to humans, longer exposure to post-purchase advertising will be effective. The findings showed that they show more positive attitudes toward ads and the brand, and a higher chance of spreading positive WOM, while no effect was found on consumer annoyance. In contrast, for consumers with a low level of algorithm aversion, longer exposure to post-purchase advertising resulted in more annoyance, more negative attitudes towards ads and the brand, and a lower chance of positive WOM. These findings make contributions to understanding consumers' behavior in post-purchase advertising and who would be a suitable customer to be targeted in order to enhance positive WOM, the most desirable post-purchase behavior for practitioners.

Keywords: Post-purchase, Ad repetition, Retargeted advertising, Cognitive bias, Algorithm aversion, Uniqueness

References Available Upon Request

Define digital self-inclusion to better understand digital users: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Digital is a growth driver for organizations that engaged a massive digital transformation of their journeys (Moravcikova & Kliestikova, 2017). There is an acceleration in digital adoption over three years compared to the average adoption acceleration rate between 2017 and 2019 (McKinsey, 2020). Nevertheless, the digital transformation creates a new type of pressure among users: to be equipped and to have the digital skills to take advantage of it (Pinède, 2018). This dual requirement feeds inequalities between individuals and a risk of developing exclusive services that *« deliberately or unintentionally fail to include or to adequately serve customers in a fair manner. »* (Fisk et al., 2018, p. 838). Consequently, "digital inclusion" is now everywhere, and building more inclusive digital journeys offers significant development opportunities for organizations (value creation, sustainable engagement, target market expansion, etc.) Some work suggests that perceived social inclusion has more impacts than real and actual social inclusion on users (Hartung et al., 2015; Patrick & Hollenbeck, 2021; Metz et al., 2022). So, to create new business models that are relevant to users' expectations, it is essential to focus on their perceptions. This research then proposes a conceptualization of user's digital self-inclusion (DSI) based on a literature review about the process of inclusion, and a qualitative study.

Following the recommendations of Fujimoto et al. (2014) and Cassell et al. (2021), we take a holistic view of inclusion by considering all users. A total of 25 interviews were conducted in France between March 2020 and April 2021 with two distinct populations (13 users aged 21 to 63 and 12 professionals actively involved in the digital inclusion value chain). We chose a thematic content analysis based on units of meaning via pre-analysis, exploitation of the material, and processing of the results through inferences and interpretations (Gavard-Perret et al., 2018). Firstly, we find dissonances between professionals and users in the way they define digital inclusion, its issues, and its implications. Secondly, we identify four dimensions to define DSI. It refers to the cognitive self-assessment process set up by users when they are facing digital devices. DSI refers to the way users: estimate their level of access to digital devices (accessibility), use their skills to adapt themselves to their digital environment according to their social identity and values (autonomy), assess the experience they get compared to others (external equity), and evaluate how their digital tasks and practices are considered and regarded by others (social recognition). These four dimensions can be structured according to two axes and nine sub-dimensions.

This research provides new insights into understanding the process of digital inclusion to support companies in creating more inclusive marketing strategies and digital journeys for the benefit of fulfilling experiences.

Keywords: Digital inclusion; Perceptions; Inclusion process; Inclusive design; User inclusion

References Available Upon Request

Gamification of the Point of Sale: When Hybrid-Reality Game Players Meet Non-Players: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Hybrid reality games (HRGs) such as *Pokémon Go* are transforming the city into a virtual playground. Commercial venues wishing to be transposed in such games play a proactive role in this large-scale gamification process. By playing at the point of sale (POS), players become part of the service environment. Yet, little is known of how technology influences customer-to-customer interaction (CCI) on-site. Also, the negative consequences of gamification remain understudied. Hence, we wonder, how players' service experience may be negatively impacted by the interaction with customers who do not play and, ultimately, how this new type of interaction may negatively affect players' perception of POS.

Mobilizing the Critical Incident Technique, we investigate Pokémon Go players' past experiences while playing at a POS and reveal the importance of players' interactions with non-playing customers: among 12 players, 3 spontaneously described how feeling judged by non-players was a significant negative experience.

The second study is a 2x2 between-subjects experiment among 377 Pokémon Go players manipulating a negative interaction with non-players and the presence of a discount dedicated to players. Based on previous literature, we hypothesize that a negative interaction with non-playing clients (vs no negative interaction) reduces players' satisfaction towards the gamified POS which in turn reduces positive WOM (H1). Also, when the gamified POS offers a discount dedicated to players, the player's satisfaction level is the same whether the interaction with non-players was bad or absent, which in turn results in the same level of WOM (H2). We test our hypotheses using a moderated mediated multiple regression model. Results indicate that, in the absence of an exclusive discount, a negative interaction with non-players will reduce players' satisfaction and in turn, positive WOM ($\beta = -0.41$; 95% CI = [-0.65; -0.21]). Plus, the lower the satisfaction, the lower the intention of positive WOM ($\beta = 0.56$; 95% CI = [0.48; 0.64]). Finally, an exclusive discount preserves players' satisfaction, and in turn WOM after the negative interaction, as if it had not occurred (95% CI = [-0.32; 0.08] including zero).

This research answers the call to explore the link between technology and social change (e.g., Hoffman et al., 2022; Nicholls, 2010) in a CCI context. Moreover, most research on gamification of the customer experience has focused on the customer-company relationship and on the positive outcomes for the user and the business (*e.g.,* Harwood & Gary, 2015; Hofacker et al., 2016; Hsu & Chen, 2018). On the contrary, we focus on the negative outcome of gamification for the POS by considering gamification's negative influence on CCI. At the managerial level, we suggest a solution for the POS to maintain a favorable standing among players while avoiding the struggle of controlling players and non-players' interactions.

Keywords: Hybrid-reality; Pokémon Go; Gamification; Customer interaction; Service experience; Mixed methods

References Available Upon Request

A Research Agenda on the UN Sustainable Development Goals in B2B Branding: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Businesses have acknowledged their role to contribute to achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Most marketing activities result in consumption (Pujari et al., 2004), and the highest use of environmental resources occurs in business-to-business (B2B) supply chains for production and manufacturing of goods (Kapitan et al., 2019). Hence, the contribution of B2B marketing to sustainable development seems to be essential. One potentially important tool and a specific area of inquiry concerning sustainability in the B2B marketing realm is branding (Voola et al., 2022).

This leads to the question of how B2B branding research and practice can be used to promote the SDGs. By means of a bibliographic literature review using performance analysis and bibliographic coupling (Donthu et al., 2021), we address the following research questions:

1. What are top authors, institutions, journals, and publications in sustainable B2B branding research?
2. a) How does sustainable B2B branding literature fit the SDGs, and b) according to this literature, how do B2B brands and the SDGs impact each other?
3. What are knowledge gaps and implications for future research for B2B branding with respect to the SDGs?

This paper identifies four clusters in sustainable B2B branding research that deal with the (1) ingredients and strategies towards building sustainable B2B brands, (2) the effects of a sustainability orientation on branding outcomes, (3) success factors of CSR brands, and (4) the development of a conscientious corporate brand model. The results indicate that the engagement of B2B marketing scholars with the SDGs is still at a nascent stage. To date, hardly any of the SDGs have been directly addressed in the B2B branding literature, neither as a potential target of branding activities nor as a factor contributing to branding. This raises intriguing questions regarding the constituents of a sustainable B2B brand, the measurement of its impact on the SDGs, as well as the causal direction between sustainability efforts and branding decisions. These need to be investigated further and thus form the basis for a future research agenda.

The contribution of this investigation is threefold. First, we provide a list of the most productive authors, institutions, and journals, as well as the most relevant articles in the field of sustainable B2B branding. Second, we give a so far not existing overview of sustainable B2B branding literature and its underlying structure. Third, we argue for the focus of sustainable B2B branding research on the SDGs as operationalization of the major global challenges, to produce action-oriented research relevant to society. Thereof, we derive research directions for sustainable B2B branding with respect to the SDGs.

Keywords: SDGs; Bibliometric analysis; B2B; Branding

References Available Upon Request

Persuading Financial Stakeholders through Rational and Emotional Corporate Communication Appeals: an IPO Case Study Perspective: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Firm disclosure to the financial market is essential as it affects investor responses and capital market outcomes. However, firms often struggle to identify what constitutes effective corporate communication with financial stakeholders and what is the best communication approach to use. Conventional wisdom would suggest focusing on more rational and functional forms of corporate communications (e.g., Swani et al., 2017). Given the characteristics of financial communication, viewers are more likely to pay attention to messages that contain functional appeals due to their rational considerations (Nitani et al., 2019). Some research supports this approach as the financial market tends to be viewed as a highly involved and rational situation, thus requiring high levels of cognition (e.g., Swani et al., 2017). However, other research (e.g., Swani et al., 2020) shows that the use of emotional appeals in financial communication could be effective because they can provide a differential advantage and enhance relationships with the audience (Lynch & De Chernatony, 2004). Therefore, this paper aims to investigate the best way for firms to communicate with potential investors to ensure their continued financial support.

Using a large sample of SEC filings from 2010 to 2020, we examine the impact of communication appeals on market premiums. Given the textual nature of the data, we employ dictionary-based automated text analysis techniques to autonomously extract affective and cognitive appeals presented in the IPO prospectus, allowing us to investigate how different communication appeals affect the financial market. Our study contributes to the B2B marketing literature from both conceptual and empirical perspectives. Previous research has examined various factors that influence IPO success, including firm characteristics (Willenborg et al., 2015), CEO human capital (Kaplan et al., 2012; Cadman & Sunder, 2014), and the involvement of sophisticated investors such as venture capitalists (Jain & Kini, 2000). However, limited studies (e.g., Falconieri & Tastan, 2018) have investigated the communication style of IPO prospectuses. Our research addresses this gap by examining the role of communication appeals in IPO prospectuses and analyzing how these appeals influence IPO performance. Given that IPO firms compete for attention in a global information environment, it is crucial for issuers and underwriters to consider how to effectively communicate with a diverse range of stakeholders who may show interest in the conveyed message (Cardi et al., 2019).

Keywords: Corporate communication; Rational appeals; Emotional appeals; IPO

References Available Upon Request

I'll Try That, Too: A Field Experiment in Retailing on the Effect of Variety During Display Promotions: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Companies intend to increase their brand power by offering more variety within a product line. This strategy is in line with the assumption according to standard economic theory, that a greater variety (i.e., a larger number of alternatives) in a choice set increases the probability that shoppers will find a choice that satisfies their heterogeneous preferences (Baumol & Ide, 1956). On the other hand, a higher number of options increases the cognitive costs associated with a choice. Consequently, shoppers are overwhelmed by too many alternatives and suffer from choice overload. Choice overload is a mental construct that describes the difficulty for shoppers of making a choice when confronted with too many options (Chernev, 2003; Iyengar & Lepper, 2000).

At the same time, promotions are an essential part of retailing and are used to increase product sales. Promotions often include temporary price reductions combined with in-store displays. Displays offer an additional space (i.e., secondary placement) for the products on promotion and are usually placed in the main aisle of the store, at the ends of aisles or close to the checkouts. Retailers have several options when planning an in-store display promotion. Since displays do not only differ according to their location in the store, but also to the size of the display or its layout. A display's layout may also include how many and which products are placed and whether products are evenly or disproportionately distributed. In this paper, we will focus on the layout of the display and test for the effect of the variety offered on the display.

In a field experiment with a major chocolate brand conducted at a German retail chain, we test for variety during a price and display promotion. We find a significantly positive effect of the display promotion on unit sales but cannot confirm on choice overload. Further findings show a stronger promotion uplift for less popular products in stores with high variety on the display. This suggests that more variety may increase consumers' willingness to try new products, when the financial risk is low. Based on the results, we propose an optimized display allocation for retailers to increase overall sales. The optimal display allocation suggests a more even distribution compared to the displays in the experiment. Overall, we observe a positive effect of variety on sales in the context of display promotions. We contribute to the literature on variety for consumer choices by offering insights from actual purchases with store-level scanner data of display promotions.

Keywords: Retailing; Variety; Display promotion; Aisle management; Field experiment

References Available Upon Request

It's the Heart that Matters: The Effect of Benefactor Income on Perceived Motivation, Moral Elevation, and Donation Behaviors: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

When news headlines and charities highlight others' helping behaviors, it is important to understand which aspects of a previous donor's identity elicit the greatest generosity among consumers (as "observers"). We examine one, specific aspect: income level. Rather than the "millionaire" prompting greater generosity, we find that consumers are more motivated to give after observing donations from someone at the low end of the income spectrum. Specifically, seven experiments featuring both hypothetical and incentivized designs demonstrate that consumers are both more likely to donate and donate more money in response to a low-income versus high-income donor's donation. These effects are robust across various charitable domains, and are driven by enhanced feelings of moral elevation, or a warm, uplifting feeling experienced after witnessing others' kindness and goodness. We further demonstrate why moral elevation shifts in response to donor income—observers believe that low-income versus high-income donors have stronger altruistic motives for their giving. Thus, factors that increase moral elevation via altruistic motives (e.g., a personal experience with the cause) can attenuate observers' differential generosity in response to a low-income versus high-income donor.

The current research offers practical implications, providing charities with actionable insights about when and why donor-based appeals are effective. Specifically, our results inform nonprofits about a specific donor characteristic, income, that motivates others to donate. It is important for charities to understand the impact of donor characteristics on observer donations as donor stories are frequently shared on websites, social media, and fundraising campaigns as a means to motivate giving. Some donors' income information may be explicit (e.g., a billionaire donor or a celebrity), while others' might be inferred (Kraus & Keltner, 2009). Our own research shows that observers can draw inferences about donor income from quotes or cues in a photograph. Nonprofits could responsibly use such cues to motivate potential donors.

Keywords: Prosocial behavior; Income; Moral elevation; Donation motives

References Available Upon Request

Consumers Are More Dishonest Towards Large Firms Than Small Firms: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, we examine the effect of business size on *consumer dishonesty* - a severe yet surprisingly overlooked problematic marketplace behavior. For example, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (2020) estimates the cost of non-health insurance fraud in the United States at over 40 billion USD, costing the average American family between $400 and $700 in increased premiums. Merchandise returns fraud cost US retailers $23.2 billion in 2021 (NRF, Appriss Retail, 2022). However, interventions to fight dishonesty have shown limited success (Skowronek, 2022), and a key critique is that the research focus has been on the outcomes of the interventions, rather than understanding the psychological mechanisms of dishonesty itself (Hertwig & Mazar, 2022). In that spirit, the current research investigates how a recipient business's size can influence consumer dishonesty toward them. Our primary hypothesis is that customers are more (less) likely to cheat large (small) businesses. We further propose that the differences are driven by low vulnerability and moral perceptions of large businesses.

Using two pre-registered experiments, we show that people were not only more likely to return under false pretenses (Study 1; (https://aspredicted.org/JCY_QVB) to a large business (M = 21, SD = 64.2) than a small business (M = -.94, SD = 66.0), Welch's $t(968.8) = 5.4$, $p < .001$, $g = .34$, 95% CI [.21, .46], but also behaved more dishonesty (Study 2; (https://aspredicted.org/WVY_GV8) toward a large business $\chi 2(1, 591) = 15.4$, $p = .001$, Cramer's V = .161 (odds ratio = .521 95% CI [.376, .723]. This suggest there seems to be *business-size bias* in consumer dishonesty.

This is among the few in the (dis)honesty literature that tested the effect of recipient characteristics on consumer dishonesty, and the first to connect business size to consumer dishonesty. Against the backdrop of the failure of a range of honesty interventions (Hertwig & Mazar, 2022), understanding the business size bias in dishonesty can inform decision-makers to design interventions, and increase societal honesty.

Keywords: Business size; Consumer dishonesty; Recipient characteristics; Behavioral experiment

References Available Upon Request

Is AI Killing Branding? Understanding Consumers' Perceptions of AI Influence on Brand Decision-Making: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Due to the pervasiveness of AI in consumers' lives, marketers now operate in brand contexts that are increasingly shaped by rapidly evolving technologies. To enhance competitive advantage and sustain healthy profit margins, brands have surrendered to increased pressure and embraced AI. The path to brand discovery has changed, brands are now introduced to consumers' consideration set across a plethora of new touch points and through a multitude of media sources. During the customer journey, algorithms are often used in automation to make recommendations that influence decision-making, leading some to question consumer autonomy and whether traditional brand strategies i.e., developing a logo or distinctive brand assets to identify the source of the product/service, are still required for purchase. Little attention has been devoted to understanding whether consumers value automation and how AI and the path to brand discovery are disrupting traditional brand strategies. Therefore, this research seeks to better understand claims surrounding AI's impact on consumer autonomy and brand decision-making. This study poses two questions: in what ways has AI altered the customer journey to brand discovery in the contemporary environment? and are traditional brand-building strategies being rendered obsolete in this AI-pervasive consumer context? We adopted a qualitative methodology which was conducted over two phases. The visual method of customer journey mapping drawing on a recent online purchase was completed prior to a semi-structured interview for each participant. Our sample criteria included consumers with two active social media accounts who have purchased from a brand online in the last two months. Participants were recruited from a wide pool of professions and from different nations. Our findings revealed that effective brand building is vital for navigating the rapidly evolving landscape of AI and data-driven decision-making. Brands must develop strong, resilient brand identities that can guide consumer choice in the face of complex data inputs and outputs. Theoretically, our study contributes to the literature on automation, consumer autonomy and brands' sustainable use of AI. We also offer insight into effective brand-building strategies in the evolving field of online brand management. Our findings have produced practical consumer typologies with the associated customer journeys to demonstrate how the path to brand discovery has changed. Brands can use this information to produce more ethical, relevant and effective algorithmic recommendations to target specific consumer groups.

Keywords: Branding; Algorithms; Automation; Consumer autonomy; Decision-making; Sustainable AI

References Available Upon Request

Augmented Reality Digital Assistants (ARDAs): Examining the Role of Anthropomorphism: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

The role of Augmented Reality (AR) has expanded dramatically across contexts in recent years, with the rise of AR games (e.g., Pokémon Go), AR shopping (e.g., IKEA app), AR social media (e.g., Snapchat), and AR product demonstrations (e.g., Toyota and Hyundai). AR is gradually becoming a part of everyday life, from using filters on social media to being an educational tool, and is expected to continue to grow. In 2021, the mobile AR market was worth approximately 12.45bn USD and is expected to reach over 36bn USD by 2026 (Alsop, 2022). Alongside AR, Digital Assistants (DAs) have also developed at a considerable rate, with an expected eight billion DAs being used globally by 2024 (Thormundsson, 2022). DAs can be categorised into two fundamental streams, being (1) voice assistants (VAs) and (2) chatbots.

With both Augmented Reality and Digital Assistant technologies serving a plethora of consumer needs and services, and as they are expected to see considerable growth over the coming years, it is important to not only examine them individually but also collectively. Doing so will provide further understanding into these technologies and their propensity to transform the consumer experience. Thus, the term "Augmented Reality Digital Assistants" (i.e. ARDAs) is coined. Augmented reality (AR) technology transforms a user's visual experience of the physical world in real-time, by allowing the user to, "see the real world, with virtual objects superimposed upon or composited with the real world," (Azuma, 1997). On the other hand, Digital assistants are Internet-enabled devices that provide daily technical, administrative, and social assistance to their users, including activities from setting alarms and playing music to communicating with other users (Han & Yang, 2018; Santos et al., 2016)

ARDAs can, therefore, assist individuals through overlaying instructions from the virtual environment on the real-world environment through an array of modalities (e.g., audio, video, text) conveyed either with or without an anthropomorphised figure.

Through an experimental approach, in which a number of bespoke ARDA experiences have been developed, this research aims to understand if ARDAs can have a positive influence on a consumer's service experience and further aims understand if human vs non-human ARDAs play a role on consumer responses and preferences.

The results of this research will advance our understanding on the role of AR in service provision and how intelligent digital assistants can contribute to everyday service settings.

Keywords: Augmented reality; Digital assistants; Anthropomorphism; Artificial intelligence

References Available Upon Request

Physicians as Social Media Influencers on TikTok: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

The past decade has witnessed the rise of social media health influencers. Researchers have posited that government and public health organizations can benefit from using social media influencers to spread relevant health information and promote positive health behaviors. This research aims to better understand physicians as social media influencers and to explore their use of the video platform TikTok, in terms of how they present themselves, the content they share, and consumer engagement with that content. A content analysis of 330 TikTok videos posted by eleven physicians, identified as top/most followed on TikTok showed that physicians on TikTok present themselves with medical credentials and other cues that reflect their professionalism. We used descriptive data analysis and exploratory content analysis at the level of each TikTok video posted by a physician, to identify typical social media engagement metrics and the content and format of videos.

Physicians on TikTok present themselves with medical credentials and other cues, in a way that can positively influence consumer perceptions of their healthcare professionalism. A descriptive analysis of content types and formats showed that physicians on TikTok post mostly medical information and/or advice (41.2%) and about their life both personal (25.5%) and life as a doctor (23.0%). Although some TikTok videos (5.5%) reflect the physician's perspective or opinion on healthcare related topics, it is rare that physicians express non-healthcare related opinions (2.4%) or post about other content (2.4%) on TikTok. In terms of content format, the most common format is written text content (38.2%) followed by the physician speaking in the video (34.2%). 12.4% of the physician videos had motion, dance, or acting associated with one of these two common formats. TikTok video content with non-healthcare related opinions (political/social), text-to-speech format, and Duet format have more customer engagement in the form of comments than the other content types and formats.

Although physicians on TikTok seem to understand the importance of getting higher visibility by using TikTok music/sound trends even when those are not related to their messages, they might not be using all the technical capabilities TikTok offers, including popular formats such as Duets or speech-to-text which can result in higher consumer engagement. This study contributes to the literature by providing insights into the personal branding of physicians and their digital marketing strategy.

Keywords: Healthcare social media influencers; Physicians as social media influencers; Physicians on TikTok; The microcontent of health influencers

References Available Upon Request

Disentangling and Measuring Discount Credibility: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Scholars have a longstanding interest in exploring how consumers respond to price promotion strategies such as price discounts, including perceptions of savings associated with discounts, perception of value, and their subsequent purchase behavior (e.g., Alford & Biswas, 2002; Della Bitta et al., 1981; Grewal et al., 1998; Liu et al., 2021; Weisstein et al., 2013). Included within this body of work is research on discount credibility, which refers to the extent to which consumers believe the advertised discount. Pricing research has demonstrated that consumers are skeptical about the veracity of price offers, including high reference price claims, large percentage discounts, hidden-price promotions, or deep refunds (Kim & Kramer, 2006; Kukar-Kinney & Carlson, 2015; Li et al., 2022; Mobley et al., 1988). The more extreme the claims are, the lower their believability (Urbany et al., 1988). Large discounts are also associated with lower perceived quality (Jedidi et al., 1999; Zheng et al., 2021).

Research shows that credibility may stem from multiple entities including the source, the message, or the channel. For example, high reputation advertisers have higher source credibility than lower reputation advertisers (Goldberg & Hartwick, 1990). Overall, this line of work demonstrates that when persuasive messages are perceived as credible, consumers' responses should be more favorable. Research also suggests that credibility is related to concepts such as believability, skepticism, and trust. Recognizing that credibility relates to varied entities and different concepts, previous work has relied upon multiple ways to study and measure aspects of discount credibility (e.g., Carlson & Kukar-Kinney, 2018; Gupta & Cooper, 1992; Mobley et al., 1988). Nonetheless, existing research on discount credibility is fragmented, which has resulted in multiple conceptualizations of discount credibility and consequently no reliable and established measure of this construct.

To address this research gap, the purpose of this research is to conceptualize discount credibility and develop a new multi-item measure of it. In addition, this research aims to offer a nomological network of theoretical constructs that will explain how discount-related concepts conceptually relate to and differ from each other and from the proposed discount credibility construct. Overall, we contribute to pricing theory by 1) conceptualizing price discount credibility as a construct comprising of four facets: general message-related discount credibility, source familiarity-related discount credibility, quality-related discount credibility, and inferred regular price-related discount credibility, and 2) developing a valid and reliable measure of the construct. The research has important implications for retailers and pricing managers with respect to designing and implementing effective price discount strategies and credibly communicating price discount information.

Keywords: Discount credibility; Measurement; Scale development; Pricing discounts

References Available Upon Request

Paradoxical Fairness Perceptions of Dynamic Pricing Sequences: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

As dynamic pricing gains popularity, an increasing amount of research has examined customer price fairness perceptions within this context. Previous research focuses mainly on the negative influence of price discrepancies on fairness perceptions. In this paper, we suggest a more optimistic outlook and argue that an overlooked price fairness paradox occurs under certain con- stellations of fluctuating prices. By using loss aversion theory and regulatory focus theory we compare price fairness perceptions for four dynamic pricing sequences (within-group design): gains (a sequence of three prices below the price another customer has paid), losses (a sequence of three prices above another customer's price), non-gains (a sequence of two prices below and one above another customer's price), and non-losses (two prices above another customer's price and the final price below it). We measured the customer's price fairness perceptions after their exposure to each new price and compared the groups "loss" and "non-gains" as well as "gains" and "non-losses" with independent samples t-tests. We also conducted multiple paired t-tests to analyze how fairness evolved between price changes. We found paradoxical results as customers who previously received advantageous prices but ended up with a higher price (non- gains) report higher levels of fairness than customers who received the same disadvantageous price but were never given the opportunity to pay a lower price (losses). This is unexpected, as one would expect fairness perceptions to be lower for customers who had previously been exposed to lower prices. Furthermore, customers who first only received prices above the initial reference price and then received an advantageous price (non-losses) recover fairness perceptions to the same level as customers who were always given a price below the reference price (gains). Moreover, the group that only received advantageous prices (gains) experienced stable and high fairness perceptions, whereas the group that only experienced disadvantageous prices (losses) reported declining fairness perceptions. This is interesting for managers as it illustrates that fairness perceptions are not always stable, yet that fairness can be recovered. Moreover, this paradox, which shows that exposure to previous prices that are low leads to higher perceived fairness than exposure to only increasing prices, means that marketers who implement dynamic pricing should allow their algorithms to fluctuate between higher and lower prices and not only implement price-increasing algorithms.

Keywords: Dynamic pricing; Fluctuating prices; Fairness; Loss; Gain

References Available Upon Request

How Pictogram Arrangements Impact Consumer Optimism and Judgments: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

We demonstrate how consumers' judgments differ significantly when they see the objectively equivalent information of the different arrangements of pictograms. Frequency pictograms are one of the most common and effective graphical representations of quantitative information used in communications (Haber & Myers, 1982; Pylar et al., 2007; Zikmund-Fisher et al., 2014). According to our findings, individuals react differently to objectively equivalent information when represented in a sorted versus an unsorted pictogram. We show that individuals form a more optimistic judgment when presented with numerical information in the form of a sorted pictogram versus an unsorted pictogram. Optimism bias is one's tendency to underestimate the possibility of negative events and overestimate the likelihood of positive events that can ensue with oneself (Lovallo & Kahneman, 2003; Sharot, 2011; Weinstein, 1980). Using the backdrop of attribute framing across four studies, we demonstrate the above-posited phenomenon and find evidence for an optimism bias-based underlying mechanism.

Study 1a investigates the effect of attribute framing (negative and positive) and the format of graphical representations (sorted and unsorted) on individuals' judgments. Study 1b tests the effect in a different context. Study 2 tests the combined (i.e., graphical and numerical) effect of framing on judgments. Study 3 tests the relationship between graphical representation format, the use of pronouns (self vs. others) and attribute framing on judgments. Study 4 tests the effect of pictogram format on compliance behavior. Study1a shows the validity of framing effect on the graphical domain. Study 1b shows that the individuals are more optimistic under sorted pictogram. Study 2 addresses the potential issue about the misestimation of graphical quantity. Study 3 depicts the optimism bias in sorted pictogram condition. Lastly, study 4 demonstrates the applicability of the phenomenon to the communication messages using Covid 19 scenario. So, our aim is to demonstrate the impact of perceptual features of pictograms on consumer judgments.

Depending on the purpose, marketers could manipulate the level of optimism created by exposing consumers to various display formats along with the framing. Marketers might use sorted pictograms in a promotion-focused message and unsorted pictograms in a prevention-focused message.

Keywords: Pictograms; Attribute framing; Optimism bias; Graphical framing; Graphical attribute framing

References Available Upon Request

The Area as a Visual Heuristic: How Does the Highlighted Area Under the Stock Price Curve Impact Retail Investor Behavior: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Financial decisions play a crucial role in consumer welfare and consumers' prospective economic behavior, including complex educational choices, investment decisions, saving goals, and homeownership choices (Greenberg & Hershfield, 2018). Our focus is to understand the investment decisions of retail investors in the stock market context. Besides the innate complexity embedded in those financial decisions, the explicit or externally available visual stock price information plays an essential role in impacting retail investors' decision-making processes, as per the results of our findings.

The irrationality in choices and decisions that has been continuously acknowledged in behavioral finance literature should bring up the necessity to consider other psychological factors which influence investor decision-making processes (Barberis & Thaler, 2003; De Bondt, 1998; Slovic, 1972; Thaler, 1980; Tversky & Kahneman, 1979). The highlighted area under the price curve compared to the unhighlighted area normally should act as an irrelevant factor in stock price volatility and risk perception.

Raghubir and Das (2010) investigated the risk judgments by using visual cues, which is the first paper adding to the literature on biases in judgments due to the utilization of graphical information in the context of financial decision-making, and they found that higher run lengths in the stock price movements are perceived to be riskier. We further investigate the role of irrelevant psychological factors, which might be called "out of the blue" factors by the defendants of classical economics, on stock price volatility perception.

The visual preference heuristic has been suggested due to images' fast, less deliberate gestalt processing and easy-to-process nature (Townsend & Kahn, 2014). The advantages coming from the processing speed of images over textual information have been repeatedly shown in psychology and marketing literatures (Clark & Paivio, 1991; Paivio, 1971, 1986; Stenberg et al., 1998; Unnava & Burnkrant, 1991). We specifically focus on comparing absolute stock price graphs, with and without the highlighted area, as a visual representation of financial information instead of using tables or bar charts.

According to our findings, the highlighted area under the curve impacts the perception of volatility through differences in perceived steadiness between graphs. Therefore, we propose the perception of steadiness as a potential factor causing distortion in volatility perception.

Keywords: Shaded area; Perception of steadiness; Investor behavior; Visual cues; Volatility perception

References Available Upon Request

Looking for Advice? Financial Advice-Seeking and the COVID-19 Pandemic: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Financial decision-making is an area of study that involves consumer well-being discussions with long-term impact. As the complexity of services available in the financial market increases, what challenges consumers experience in their decision-making and how they can be improved becomes more important. Consumer financial decision-making can be influenced by financial advisors, specifically in the COVID-19 situation (Hildebrand & Bergner, 2021).

Various studies on consumer attitudes and decision-making have been conducted using the construal level theory. For example, consumers made specific judgments about actual events. Consumers understand the object at an abstract level if the psychological distance is far. On the other hand, the closer the psychological distance is to the object, the more the consumer understands the object at a concrete level (Trope & Liberman, 2012). In other words, if the psychological distance is far from consumers' purchasing decision-making, the importance of service quality or intrinsic properties will increase to consumers. Meanwhile, as the psychological distance of the object is closer to the consumer, the importance of the extrinsic property will increase. There have been many studies discussing the construal level theory on tangible goods. However, in a financial market where more complex products and services exist, little is known about how decision-making in selecting intangible goods such as financial advice seeking, can be related to the construal level theory.

To fill the gap in the literature, the research purposes of this study were two faucets. First, this study examined if finance-related construal levels of psychological distance (i.e., financial stress, financial risk tolerance, and financial satisfaction) were associated with financial advice-seeking behavior by types of professional services. Second, this study analyzed whether or not the financial situation affected by COVID-19 was associated with financial advice-seeking behavior by types of professional services.

Logistic regression analysis with seemingly unrelated estimation (SUE) was employed. As a result, the effect of psychological characteristics varies by type of financial advice-seeking. As financial stress levels increased, the use of some form of financial advice-seeking behaviors increased, while a lower level of financial stress was related to not seeking financial advice. In the meantime, the financial effect of COVID-19 was only associated with seeking advice from financial advisors. It implies that clients under some circumstances such as a pandemic crisis would seek advice on a specific part of their portfolio rather than their whole financial performance that includes other areas of personal finances.

Keywords**:** Financial service; Advise-seeking; Construal level theory; Psychological distance

References Available Upon Request

Understanding the Dynamic Adoption and Outcomes of Shared Micromobility: A Longitudinal Study Based on User Experience: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Nowadays, innovative and new technologies, products, and services continue to emerge and evolve in our changing and demanding economic and social environment (Venkatesh et al., 2021). This continuous advancement in product and service designs also applies to shared micromobility services (Lazarus et al., 2020), characterized as a sensitive and publicly debated issue (Bortoli, 2021; Gössling, 2020; Milakis et al., 2020). Recent research on the acceptance of new technologies, products, and services highlights the need to understand the changing importance of predictors and outcomes of acceptance depending on user experience and calls for greater examination of temporal aspects in empirical acceptance research (Blut et al., 2021; Venkatesh et al., 2021). In this regard, we analyze the longitudinal effects of user experience on antecedents and outcomes of the use of shared micromobility in a closed-campus environment. Based on the unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT2; Venkatesh et al., 2012), we establish a model and add context-specific constructs from consumer perceived value theory (Holbrook, 1994; Zeithaml, 1988), employee enablement theory (Adler & Borys, 1996; Permana et al., 2015), theory of well-being (Diener et al., 1999; Diener & Chan, 2011) and social identity theory (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). To test the model and check for longitudinal effects of user experience, we use a two-wave within-subject survey design with two independent samples and an evolutional path modeling approach for panel data (Roemer, 2016) in partial least square structural modeling (PLS-SEM): Study 1 is based on an age- and gender-representative sample of inexperienced testers (N=234, short-term experience); Study 2 is a sample of shared micromobility users of DHBW Drive (N=149, long-term experience). Our findings indicate that performance expectancy and task enablement are stable predictors of usage intention that do not change with user experience. On the other hand, we find that hedonic value is an important predictor before using the service. However, its importance diminishes as the level of user experience increases. In addition, we find that perceived economic value and perceived environmental value are stable antecedents, but they depend on the user segment being studied. In terms of consequences and outcomes, we highlight the role of subjective well-being, which is an important and stable outcome. Finally, we show that organizational identification is a significant outcome before using, but is not significant in either sample after using the service.

Keywords: Technology acceptance; Longitudinal data; User experience; Micromobility; Closed-campus; Subjective well-being; Organizational identification; Perceived value; Task enablement

References Available Upon Request

How, Why, and When Contextual Environments Matter for Customer Engagement in E-Commerce Live Streaming: An Eye-Tracking Study: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

As e-commerce live streaming becomes a crucial component of marketing strategies, businesses are beginning to consider how to further improve profitability and customer retention, which makes enhancing customer engagement become the top priority for companies. The intense rivalry in the e-commerce live streaming sector has forced retailers to create appealing environments to engage consumers. Although prior research has demonstrated that environmental cues have substantial impacts on consumer behaviors in offline retail stores and online shopping webpages, it is unknown which environment setting is beneficial for customer engagement in e-commerce live streaming. In addition, existing research fails to adequately capture the comprehensive nature of live e-commerce customer engagement, mainly focusing on transactional behaviors instead of customer retention.

To address research gaps, this paper examines a specific environmental cue in e-commerce live streaming—contextual environments. An e-commerce live streaming customer engagement model, including customer engagement perception (CEP) and customer engagement behavior (CEB), is proposed from the perspective of contextual environments. Drawing on the dual model of environmental perception, we assume the effects of contextual environments on customer engagement in three sequential stages: initial attention capture, integrated perception formation, and subsequent engagement behavior. Using real-world live streaming as stimuli, we conduct an eye-tracking study to validate our model. Study results reveal that contextual environments initially capture attention to the servicescape (background and anchor) and focal (product) areas. Then, perception processing in these areas promotes perceived diagnosticity, which further enhances purchase intention and approach tendency. Similar product display and product involvement are boundary conditions that moderate the effect of contextual environments on customer engagement.

Our research provides direct practice implications that managers can increase consumer engagement by using contextual environments in their live streaming. It is worth noting that attention greatly elaborates on the mechanism underlying consumer engagement behavior. Thus, managers can engage customers in experiments before launching their live streaming by using the eye-tracking method to capture their eye fixation data and learn about their engagement.

Keywords: Customer engagement; E-commerce; Live streaming; Contextual environments; Eye tracking

References Available Upon Request

A Multi-method Study on ICAs User Experiences and Brand Relationships: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Intelligent Conversational Agents (ICAs) are supporting customer service activities in myriad industries. Along with social platforms, ICAs are the main tool for engage with customers. However, these innovative channels raised new realities about social and brand relationships.

In this study, we identify a theoretical gap on the elements related to ICAs users' experience dimensions and brand relationship impacts. By using social systems, brands are now being perceived as social agents subject to prove reciprocity and compliance with norms. This study addresses this gap focusing on understanding how ICAs influence customer service expectations and brand relationships. We empirically explore this question through three approaches. First, we performed a data mining analysis of the literature on customer experience (CX) ICA usage (2087 documents). Second, we conducted interviews (N=17) regarding the CX and expectations of branded ICAs. Finally, we developed a mixed study through the Album-On-Line (AOL) technique (Kessous et al. 2017), to reveal deep mental representations (N=29).

In the first study, we discovered three main CX responses: 1) Cognitive, related to usefulness, helpfulness, ease of use, and information quality. 2) Affective, regarding hedonic motivation, joy, control, and trust. 3) Recent works reveal Social Presence relevance in chatbots CX.

In study 2, interviews suggests that ICAs users expect brands to propose social interactions and personality (Osei-Frimpong & McLean, 2018). Through ICAs, brands elicit usage pleasure and conversation satisfaction (Yang & Lee, 2019). Also, perceived ICAs CX quality is influenced by brand image. Customers negatively rate service quality when lack of brand congruence.

For the study 3 (AOL), in a cognitive situation, people reveal functional attitudes toward ICA, anticipating customer support while rejecting anthropomorphism. Moreover, customers seek brand congruence, manifested in service quality, social connection, and brand trust. An affective scenario reveals factors relating to social presence and brand attachment, and customers perceive ICAs as quasi-sentient others. Interactions with close brands also elicit hedonic responses.

This study offers insights for brand interactions management. Brand may use ICAs for delivering brand's human qualities. Communications should prioritize the consumer's relationship status. In new interactions, ICA design should focus on pragmatic interactions. When strong relationships exist, the implementation of conversational technologies should emphasize the human touch while remaining customer-centric. Finally, we help to reduce time and cost of deploying ICAs.

Keywords: Service quality; Virtual agents; Consumer behavior; Brand relationship

References Available Upon Request

B2B Salespeople: The Fundamental Emotions at Their Current Job: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Probably more than any other occupation, salespeople ride an emotional rollercoaster daily. They regularly experience emotional peaks and valleys (Mulki et al., 2015). The job is filled with the lows of rejection and lost sales, the highs of sales successes, the triumphs of successful customer relationships, and the agonies of customer bonds suddenly broken. It is particularly true for salespeople in business-to-business (B2B) environments. The B2B salesperson runs a gamut of widely varying emotions in their job. These can range, for example, from fear of losing a major account to the sadness that occurs when it is lost, through anger and disgust at the inappropriate sales tactics of an unethical competitor to the surprise and joy that will come from winning a closely contested bid. Emotions, in general, are overlooked in the B2B sales literature (Briggs et al., 2018). However, researchers should not neglect emotions as emotions are influential psychological forces that affect how salespeople behave and perform (Bande et al., 2015; Brown et al., 1997). Yet scholarship concerning emotions in the field of B2B sales, particularly from the perspective of the B2B salesperson, continues to be an understudied phenomenon.

There is a substantial need for more research on emotions in B2B sales contexts to "incorporate ideas grounded in human behavior and institutional and public action" (Bagozzi, 2006). This study seeks to contribute to the research on emotions in the field of B2B sales by exploring the basic emotions expressed by B2B salespeople in online reviews of their jobs. To study the basic emotions of B2B salespeople, I adopted Ekman's (1992) six basic emotions: Anger, Fear, Surprise, Disgust, Joy, and Sadness. I used almost 28,000 job reviews B2B salespeople wrote on Glassdoor.com and the NRC emotion lexicon (Mohammad & Turney, 2013) to measure the emotions expressed in the job reviews. I found several intriguing patterns. First, there is a monotonically decreasing trend as the company rating goes up from one star to five stars for Anger, Fear, Disgust, and Sadness. Second, the scores for Surprise and Joy rise as the company rating increases from one star, reaching the peak at four stars, and then declining. Third, all six emotions significantly predict company rating, with Joy being the only emotion that rises as the company rating increases. I provide some possible explanations for our findings. Then I conclude this paper by discussing the study's managerial implications, limitations, and avenues for future research.

Keywords: Salespeople; Business-to-business; Selling; Emotions; NRC emotion lexicon; Job review; Automated text analysis

References Available Upon Request

How Jealousy and Job Stress Affect the Salesforce: The Role of Organizational Commitment: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Salespeople are traditionally put in competitive situations. They compete with salespeople from other organizations for a limited share of customer business. They compete with salespeople in their organization for a limited share of compensation awards. Yet, despite these conditions, limited attention has been given to understanding the role of jealousy as a salesperson's emotion. Further, as sales organizations are now forced to adapt to changes in the market and economic climate, they may find resource structures are even more limited and competitive. Increasingly, concern has been expressed for salesperson well-being. Thus, the need to understand jealousy and its possible effect on salesperson well-being and sales outcomes has increased.

If changes begin to make a salesperson feel they are losing something from their current professional relationship that is assigned to another, then jealousy can begin to plague the salesperson's morale. Once jealousy forms, salespeople can begin to feel more stressed in their role, leading to negative consequences for the sales organization. This study uses the conservation of resources theory (COR) and equity theory to explore constructs that may serve to intensify these negative effects of salesperson jealousy. We hypothesize that salesperson jealousy significantly influences job stress. In addition, we show that job stress leads to both unethical selling behaviors and turnover intentions. These effects are further analyzed through a mediation analysis showing that job stress provides a significant mediated effect on both unethical selling and turnover intentions. Finally, organizational commitment is examined as a moderator that enhances the mediated effect. Our findings show that organizational commitment strengthens the role of jealousy in driving job stress. This effect suggests that those that have organizational commitment may take resource reallocation more personally and experience greater tension when jealousy is experienced. As market and economic needs drive more competitive selling conditions, selling firms need to be concerned with salesperson well-being and attempt to preempt problems within their salesforce. Specifically, sales managers and selling firms should ensure that resource allocations such as territories, compensation, rewards, and accounts are distributed equitably to prevent jealousy that will lead to job stress, especially with committed employees. If jealousy emerges, job stress will cause unethical selling behaviors and turnover in the salesforce causing larger-scale issues.

Keywords: Jealousy; Job stress; Organizational commitment; Turnover; Unethical selling

References Available Upon Request

All Salespeople Are (Not) Created Equal: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Sales-service ambidexterity has become an integral part of any sales job. Extant literature investigates how these dual requirements - exhibiting excellence in selling to and servicing the customer - affect salespeople performance. We build on these notions and argue that, depending on the type of job a salesperson does, different levels of intensity of sales and service provision are required. For example, certain sales jobs are more consultative in nature and, as such, pose higher expectancies for service provision. There also might be instances in which high levels of both selling and servicing are expected from salespeople. Considering that sales jobs indeed vary in the intensity with which salespeople engage in selling to or servicing the customer, the first question that arises relates to the role of service provision in satisfying the customers across different types of sales encounters. That is, does service provision universally contribute to customer satisfaction regardless of the level of selling intensity involved in the encounter? Engaging in both sales and service provision during sales encounters represents two conflicting demands, each on its own competing for employees' limited resources (e.g. time, emotional capacity and cognitive capacity). Therefore, the second question of how job demands for service provision affect salespeople, their work and their health (e.g. stress) across sales jobs with varying levels of selling intensity is long overdue. In response to this we run three studies (7276 salespeople and 254 customers) to investigate the contribution of service provision to customer satisfaction and salespeople performance across sales jobs with varying levels of selling intensity.

Our research makes at least three critical theoretical contributions. First, we add to the sales literature by showing that sales provision intensity (low, medium and high) can be used as a criterion for distinguishing between sales job types. Our results indicate that employees across the three groups of sales jobs exhibit differing levels of stress as a function of increasing job demands. Second, we also show that depending on the selling intensity of the sales encounter, customers value the service provision differently. This points to the necessity of considering sales-service ambidexterity effectiveness from customer's and selling situation's perspective. Third, we gain a more fine-grained insight into of the unique role of each of the constituent of sales-service ambidexterity in influencing salespeople and their performance above and beyond their aggregated effects. Our results imply that demands for service provision might be regarded by salespeople as a hindrance or a depending on the sales job type and the extent to which salespeople engage in service provision.

Keywords: Regulation of emotion; Sales job; Sales-service ambidexterity; Salespeople

References Available Upon Request

Enhancing Customer Engagement Behaviour from Their Journey Seamlessness Experience in the Omnichannel Retailing Context: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Omnichannel selling requires seamlessness (Hsia et al., 2020). Interconnected service content and product information make omnichannel shopping seamless (Chang & Li, 2022). Academic research on retail customer experience and engagement has grown during the past decade. However, the mechanism relating seamlessness experience and consumer involvement is unstudied. Self-brand connection, or how customers feel related to a brand (Park et al., 2010), may correlate journey seamlessness experience and customer engagement behaviours. Established companies can also give customers a feeling of groundedness (Eichinger et al., 2021), making their brand experience more valued (Brakus et al., 2009) and increasing engagement. Thus, this study seeks to (1) examine the effect of journey seamlessness experience on customer engagement behaviours, (2) investigate the mediating role of self-brand connection, and (3) determine the moderating role of groundedness feeling on the effect of journey seamlessness experience on self-brand connection.

A survey was conducted with omnichannel retailing Vietnamese customers who have shopped more than one channel at retailers (e.g. two or more channels among traditional channels, websites, social networks, and mobile applications) within six months from the date of purchase to the date of sample collection. The survey was conducted through mall intercept. The survey was conducted at different times throughout the week to increase the sample's representativeness. Six hundred fifty survey questionnaires were distributed, 514 responses were received, and 474 were retained after removing outliers. Hypothesis testing was conducted using Smart PLS.

Findings support previous research that emphasises the critical role of omnichannel customer experience in developing customer engagement behaviours in retailing (Quach et al., 2020). In particular, journey seamlessness experiences strongly impact customer purchase behaviours, namely purchase, knowledge, referral and influencer. Furthermore, the self-brand connection mediates the effect of journey seamlessness experience and customer engagement behaviours; the results align with prior studies (Dorai et al., 2021; Loh et al., 2021). Finally, the current study provides evidence of the moderating effect of the feeling of groundedness on the positive relationship between journey seamlessness experience and self-brand connection. A brand can enhance the relationship between customer and firm through self-brand connection by providing customers with a feeling of groundedness through product consumption (Eichinger et al., 2021). Theoretical and practical implications are also provided.

Keywords: Journey seamlessness; Omnichannel retailers; Self-brand connection; Customer engagement

References Available Upon Request

The Impact of Mobile and Physical Channel Integration: How Cross-Channel Integration in Different Purchase Phases Influences the Number of Mobile Channel Users: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

As mobile devices were rapidly adopted among consumers, many retailers introduced mobile channels and worked on mobile and physical channel integration. This integration refers to the alignment of the service and operation of mobile and physical channels to create synergies for the firm and the customers. While there is growing practical interest in integrating the mobile channel with other channels, existing research has not distinguished between mobile and PC channels and grouped them as "online channels". They have not systematically evaluated the impact of this integration on retailers' success.

To address this research gap, this study investigates the effect of mobile and physical channel integration on retailer outcomes. As prior studies have not presented a systematic model for this integration, this study analyzes the characteristics of Japanese retailers' mobile apps and how retailers align the operation, information access, and service between the channels. Furthermore, we develop a measurement framework for mobile and physical channel integration.

Based on this framework, the authors hypothesize and test to what extent mobile and physical channel integration in the pre-purchase, purchase, and post-purchase phases influence the number of mobile channel users. The statistical analysis of data regarding 90 Japanese retail apps suggests that mobile and physical channel integration has a significant positive impact on the number of mobile channel users. The results also suggest that the positive effect of cross-channel integration in the post-purchase phase is stronger than in the purchase phase. Practical applications of this result suggest retailers would gain benefits from investing in cross-channel integration during the post-purchase phase.

This study contributes to the development of omnichannel and mobile app research by providing a framework for measuring mobile and physical channel integration and examining its effect on the number of mobile channel users.

Keywords: Omnichannel retailing; Cross-channel integration; Mobile marketing; Multi-channel retailing

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Comparing Regular Consumers and Brand Fans for Engagement in Creative Activities: A Managerial Perspective: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Co-creation with users is a key driver for a better understanding of market needs and thereby, innovation success (Smith et al., 2013; Whitla, 2009). Since the 1970s, researchers have suggested that users are an important external source of innovation for firms (von Hippel, 1976; Claussen & Halbinger, 2021; Martinez, 2015). In fact, sourcing external knowledge for innovation is highly correlated with a firm's performance (Ebersberger et al., 2021). Despite the importance of users to a firm's innovation practices, researchers have found that managers tend to underestimate the value of user innovation. To tackle this problem, this study proposes a framework for managers to identify why and how they should engage users in innovation processes.

Among various types of users, we focus on the role of brand fans as a source of innovation because it yet remains marginal (Ehls et al., 2020). Brand fans are defined not only by their loyalty through high levels of purchase and consumption but also by high levels of emotional attachment and engagement with the brand through social interactions (e.g., Jones et al., 2022), giving them profound sticky brand knowledge. How and why do companies optimize their search space design to leverage brand fans instead of the crowd of users as sources of external knowledge for innovation?

To address this research question, we conducted 23 interviews with decision makers in different industries and countries. Our research reveals that firms use four key factors to structure their search space for external knowledge from brand fans: the scope of the search, the search format, the search environment, and the time perspective of the search. Further, managers tend to select brand fans as external sources of knowledge when searching for incremental innovation.

Finally, our study shows that these knowledge search activities for innovation can serve as a pathway to convert regular users into brand fans. These findings have significant implications for the external knowledge search literature on innovation and provide managers with valuable insights for more efficiently integrating different types of users as sources of external knowledge.

Keywords: Co-creation; Brand fans; User knowledge; Innovation

References Available Upon Request

When Does Brand Love Matter in Augmented Reality?: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Creating quality experience and improving customer value cocreation has been an objective from augmented reality application. This research explores the roles of AR perceived values (i.e. (utilitarian, social and hedonic) in value cocreation and the moderating impact of brand love on the cocreation engagement relationship on both shared and individually consumed products.

Data was collected using an online survey via MTurk. 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. In total, we collected a total of 290 surveys in the IKEA group and 286 in the Wannakicks.

PLS-SEM technique was employed to assess the measurement model and test the hypothesized relationships. At first, for each sample, we examined study constructs' psychometric properties. The formative construct items had an VIF values less than 3 and significant weights. All items had significant loadings on their corresponding constructs. Cronbach's alpha and Composite reliability values ranges between 0.81-0.85, and constructs discriminant validity was established through average variance extracted and HTMT values were less than 0.90.

The results support the proposed model hypotheses. More specifically, experience quality of using AR applications for both Wannakicks and IKEA drives users perceived values (utilitarian, social and hedonic). Further, the results support the mediational roles of perceived value on customer value cocreation. For both samples, hedonic and social values mediate the effect of AR experience on value cocreation. However, the results did not support the effect of perceived utilitarian value of using IKEA AR on value cocreation, but it was significant for the Wannakicks users. Finally, the data support the finding that value cocreation is a pre-requisite to increasing customer engagement for both study samples, but this effect is moderated by customers love for IKEA brand, but not for the Wannakicks brand.

Keywords: Brand love; Cocreation; Engagement; Augmented reality

References Available Upon Request

Examining How Customer-To-Customer Schadenfreude Influences Social Media Service Recovery Perceptions of Observers: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Social media complaints are creating situations of customer-to-customer (C2C) exchanges that include schadenfreude, defined as one person's amusement or pleasure felt due to another's misfortune (i.e., malicious joy; Schumpe & Lafrenière, 2016). A contrasting emotion is sympathy, defined as compassion or concern for another person's negative situation (Decety & Michalska, 2010). Schadenfreude and sympathy are unexamined in social media complaint and recovery research despite an increasing focus on C2C service exchanges (e.g., Bacile, 2020; Bacile et al., 2018; Bacile et al., 2020; Schaefers & Schamari, 2016; Weitzl & Hutzinger, 2017; Wolter et al., 2023). One aspect that differentiates social media complaints and recovery is the large audience of virtually present other-consumers (i.e., observers), such as those who read and observe these C2C exchanges, yet do not respond or participate in the dialogue (Johnen & Schnittka, 2019). A gap in services marketing literature is how two unexamined emotions – schadenfreude and sympathy – in the context of C2C incivility in online complaints and recovery influence observers' perceptions. Our research fills this gap by answering the following research questions:

1. Will observers of another's C2C schadenfreude in a digital customer service environment elicit sympathy for a targeted victim?
2. Will the effect vary if the C2C comment associated with schadenfreude is from a loyal customer or troll?
3. How is a brand affected by a C2C comment associated with schadenfreude?

The overarching framework used to support the proposed linkages is drawn from the social-servicescapes model stemming from a C2C environmental stimulus (Tombs & McColl-Kennedy, 2003), with additional support drawn from backlash theory, stereotype theory, and role theory (Rudman et al., 2012; Schneider, 2004). The results across two studies using panel data subjects exposed to an online survey with experimental stimuli find that observers have an emotional reaction to C2C schadenfreude in the form of sympathy, which ultimately influences observers' purchase intent with a brand. Notably, the direct relationship between C2C schadenfreude and purchase intent is extremely weak and fully mediated by sympathy. Furthermore, we find moderated mediation: observers' perceived C2C schadenfreude from comments posted by a loyal customer elicits more observer sympathy versus comments posted by a troll. The implications of our work introduce the effects of schadenfreude and sympathy to the domain of digital service recovery. C2C Schadenfreude and the sympathy observers elicit have never been applied to any services marketing works. Due to the increasing level of rude commentary within social media channels (Beauchere, 2020) and the increasing use of social media customer service by brands (Bacile et al., 2020), schadenfreude's and sympathy's negative influence on purchase intent highlight a darker side of these digital service venues.

Keywords: Customer interactions; Online incivility; Schadenfreude; Sympathy; Observers; Trolls

References Available Upon Request

Brand Narratives: A Typology and Archetypal Consumer Narratives: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

The inquiry employed 138 consumer brand narratives from a qualitative survey. A narrative analysis resulted in 13 types of consumer brand narratives fitted into a 4 quadrant 2 x 2 typology. An archetypal consumer narrative was also created for each type to aid overall understanding and to help in placing narratives into the proper quadrant and type within the typology.

The research questions focused on characteristics, the creation of a typology, and forming archetypal consumer brand narratives to illustrate each type of consumer brand narrative.

RQ1 – What common characteristics do consumers' brand narratives share?
RQ2 – Can the common characteristics of consumers' brand narratives be classified and typified sufficiently to form a useful typology?
RQ3 – Can a set of archetypal narratives be created to illustrate a typology of consumer's brand narratives?

In addressing these questions, the research contributed to the literature in several ways. First, the data came from a wider set of contexts than is typically seen in brand narrative research. The data represented over 100 brands representing many products and services and including small and medium size enterprises; so it was not just highly narrated brands. Second, the research did not focus on the brand's intended brand narrative but rather brand narratives as they were actually told by consumers. This can move research and practice away from a brand-centric to a consumer-centric modality, which is critical due to consumers' increasing digital input. Third, classification is foundational to explanation and theorizing, so producing a typology of brand narratives should move both research and practice forward onto more solid theoretical ground. Fourth, a set of types with associated archetypal narratives based in empirical exploration of consumer's brand narratives may shed a different light on the area than the use of cultural archetypes founded long ago and relating mainly to long-form narratives.

The research should help both academics and practitioners to better understand how consumers narrate brands. It may thus facilitate not only the understanding of consumers' brand narratives but also the creation of intended brand narratives that mesh with and enhance consumers' brand narratives.

Keywords: Brand narrative; Brand story; Intended brand narratives; Qualitative; Narrative analysis

References Available Upon Request

Towards Generalizable Psychographic Segmentation Research: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

For decades, a sizeable amount of corporate marketing research has been dedicated to determining psychographic segments on which to base corporate strategy. Yet, psychographic segmentation research has lacked sufficient theoretical concern about the types of variables, or theories, of any type, that should be used to develop the studies. A number of segmentation studies are examined below to determine the extent to which they suggest promising theories for future psychographic segmentation research.

Initially, a psychographic segmentation article by Lesser and Hughes (1986a), one of the authors of this abstract, was considered. Lesser and Hughes (1986a) examined thirty-four probability samples of individuals from seventeen different geographical markets within the United States. The research found promising support about the existence of similar segments across each of the markets, and samples of individuals. In addition, and not reported in Lesser and Hughes (1986a), the segments appeared to have similarities with the "adopter categories" from Everett Rogers' diffusion of innovations theory (Rogers, 2003). Furthermore, the segments appeared to capture both Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1943), and intrinsic and extrinsic motivation concepts.

Then, a number of other psychographic segmentation studies were examined from the approximate time period of Lesser and Hughes (1986a). These different studies were considered in an article by Lesser and Hughes (1986b). The article found the different studies to have similarities with the psychographic segments developed by Lesser and Hughes (1986a). The different studies also appeared to have other similarities, not reported in Lesser and Hughes (1986b). For example, a number of the studies continued to capture both Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow 1943), and intrinsic and extrinsic motivation concepts.

Published academic psychographic segmentation research has not been prevalent in major journals in recent years. However, two segmentation directions have had a major impact today, VALS^{TM} (Strategic Business Insights, 2020), and Experion's Mosaic (Experian Ltd 2018). Care should be taken when comparing these two studies with other psychographic segmentation research. For example, Experion's Mosaic does not directly consist of psychographic variables. Regardless, both studies appeared to show some relationship with Rogers' adoption categories and intrinsic and extrinsic motivation concepts.

Although this research has important limitations, it shows promise about developing generalizable psychographic segmentation theory. Some areas of theory appeared to be found with enough consistency to warrant expanded interest in research about the generalizability of psychographic segmentation research.

Keywords: Market segmentation; Psychographics; Marketing research; Research generalizability

References Available Upon Request

Herd Mentality, Consumer Coping Self-Efficacies and Post-Adoption of Online Shopping Adoption: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

As many parts of the world have started returning to normal, a hybrid mode is still preferable; for example, hybrid working and education. Researchers and retail practitioners wonder whether the online shift in the retailing industry has lasting effects. While expectancy-disconfirmation theory (EDT) has been argued to be advantageous to explain behavioural continuance and online shopping adoption has been investigated as a technology acceptance (Ashraf et al., 2015), scant research underpinned explanations with EDT. This study seeks to advance an integrative theory about the antecedents of expectancy-disconfirmation. First, information technology literature argues that herding is a crucial mechanism for explaining technology adoption and post-adoption behaviour (Sun, 2013; Vedadi & Warkentin, 2020). While herding literature emphasises the role of herd mentality, limited research has examined the role of herd mentality in the online shopping adoption context. Second, consumer resilience, one of coping self-efficacies, was once triggered by the unpredictable, adverse condition of the pandemic (Milakovic, 2021). But as consumers learn and cope with new things, whether their coping self-efficacies still influence their online shopping continuance warrants research. Furthermore, despite prior research suggesting resilience and vulnerability as two distinct coping self-efficacies (Miller et al., 2010), prior research mainly focused on the former (Milakovic, 2021). Finally, when consumers changed to shopping online, consumers would have to interact with a completely different set of elements other than physical retailers (Rigby, 2011). There could be an influence of mindfulness that activates greater attention and awareness of customers to the online shopping environment. Therefore, this study examines the impact of herd mentality, consumer resilience, consumer vulnerability, and mindfulness on online shopping post-adoption disconfirmation and continuance intention. Towards this end, this research integrated aspects of herd literature, social cognitive theory, and mindfulness literature into expectancy-disconfirmation theory (EDT).

Survey data were collected using convenience sampling. Data from a survey of Vietnamese consumers who have switched to or accelerated online shopping due to the Covid-19 pandemic was analysed using PLS-SEM. It is noted that Vietnamese consumers are still hesitant and unwilling to accept online shopping (McKinsey & Company, 2019). Findings revealed that consumers' herd mentality, capturing their discount own information and imitation of others, significantly affected the disconfirmation of online shopping. Results offered mixed results for coping self-efficacies: whereas consumer resilience did not affect the disconfirmation, consumer vulnerability did. Furthermore, mindfulness affected the disconfirmation directly and moderated the effects of coping self-efficacies on disconfirmation. The findings provided evidence for the role of mindfulness as a regulatory mechanism of behavioural change. Theoretical and practical implications are also provided.

Keywords: Herd mentality; Resilience; Vulnerability; Mindfulness; Disconfirmation; Continuance intention

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What Works for Him Won't Work for Her: Future Selves and Gender Differences in Financial Planning: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Effective financial planning is essential for financial wellbeing. Yet, too many people are financially unprepared for retirement, with a significant gender gap. There is an urgent need to consider effective mechanisms to engage individuals in thinking about and planning for the future and improving longer-term financial wellbeing. We build on and extend earlier research that tested the effect of an aged faces approach on future-self continuity and allocation to retirement savings. Building on identity-based theory of motivation and social comparison theory, we include two new identity-congruent methods for facilitating future self-continuity and financial allocation for later life. We developed a Role Model condition providing age- and gender-relevant examples modeling long-term financial planning behaviors and a Future Visualization task. A Financial Education condition was included as a point of comparison, recognizing the limitations of financial education and information-only interventions. Participants were randomly assigned to one of four conditions, each aimed at aiding long term financial planning: a) Aged Faces b) Financial Education c) Role Models and d) Future Visualization. Participants were screened for financial stability, and those who identified as being in financial chaos were excluded. The final sample consisted of 861 financial consumers. Allocation towards retirement was measured using a financial windfall task in which participants allocated £10,000 between spending in the present, paying off past debts, short-term savings and long-term and retirement savings. Future-self continuity was measured using a Future Self-Continuity Scale. Additional subjective response measures assessed the degree to which participants found each task meaningful, enjoyable and irrelevant. All the interventions individually led to statistically significant improvements in future-self continuity and allocation towards retirement. However, we found no statistically significant differences between the interventions on either future-self continuity or allocation to retirement. When considering the effect by gender, however, we find that the Aged Faces intervention had a polarizing effect on men and women, leading to a decrease in future-self continuity for women. This is particularly worrying given considerable retirement savings gaps between men and women. The Future Visualization task proved to be the most engaging for both genders, and significantly more so than the other three interventions. Our research highlights the hidden dangers of the Aged Faces approach, which is currently in use by some financial organizations, and highlights the benefits of taking a more rounded approach such as Future Visualization that leads to improvements in future-self connection and longer-term saving for both men and women equally.

Keywords: Future-self; Financial consumers; Financial planning; Financial education; Financial technology

References Available Upon Request

Where and When Do Consumers Experience Well-Being? A Taxonomy of Technology-Based Daily Activities: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Although well-being is the unit of analysis of marketing research streams, consumer well-being remains at the fringes of marketing research. Dominant marketing perspectives focus on behaviors fully associated with consumption and overlook societal outcomes of consumption. Bibliometric studies show that there is little research on the effects of technology on consumer well-being, and given that exchanges are mediated by technologies and frequently lack the taste of human interaction, aside from the call to understand the effect of product-related (digital vs tangible) and consumer-related variables (individual vs social activities). Concerns about well-being were amplified by the Covid-19 pandemic, which blurred the boundaries between work, leisure, and consumption and their impact on consumer well-being. Hence, this study analyzes the times and spaces in which consumers' activities are associated with hedonic and eudaimonic types of well-being. Understanding where and when consumers experience positive and negative levels of well-being contributes to paving the way to pursue more nuanced research on the topic. To associate daily activities with levels of consumer well-being, this study opted to use the Daily Reconstruction Method to addresses activities, feelings, and thoughts during their daily life, DRM explicitly gathers perceptions on well-being. DRM is a tool to collect data on activities conducted the previous day on the application of the instrument. DRM reconstructs 'a day in the life' of the sample.

Data collected on how participants assigned time throughout the day were grouped into the categories: activities, places, and use of technology: (1) Well-being and activities. Results show that commuting, socializing, exercising, and praying/worship/meditating were ranked as the most pleasurable activities, whereas using social media, studying, and working were ranked as the least pleasurable activities during the day. In terms of negative emotions, exercising, going for a walk, and planning activities are ranked with high levels of negative emotions. (2) Wellbeing and places. Shops were the places most highly ranked in positive emotions, followed by work and school and outdoor places. Work and school also present the highest negative emotions (3) Well-being and use of technology. Activities online and offline did not show differences either in hedonic and eudaimonic well-being.

Keywords: Consumer well-being; Technology; Daily Reconstruction Method; Eudaimonic well-being; Hedonic well-being

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The Effect of Virtual Reality Perspective Taking on Brand Relationships of Decision for Others: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Choosing for others happens regularly in our daily lives for several reasons, such as gift-giving or caregiving. It is an emerging research stream and has been a research priority of MSI since 2018 (Liu et al., 2019; Ordabayeva et al., 2022, Wright & Schultz, 2022). In particular, the caregiving context is characterised by the caregiver's huge focus on the recipient and their wellbeing. Unlike choice for self that is usually self-centred, choice for others is centred around the recipient, who plays a vital role in choosing and potentially the brand relationship. Thus, the major challenge for the decision-maker when choosing for others, is the absence of the recipient's involvement in the process. Immersive technologies can help overcome this challenge by bringing the recipient perspective to the decision-maker through "Virtual Reality Perspective Taking".

Virtual Reality (VR) is a multi-sensory immersive technology that is being increasingly adopted by consumers and businesses, especially during & after the Covid-19 pandemic. Besides the characteristics of a simulated real environment and interactivity, one unique feature of VR is maximising empathy that enables decision-makers to experience how significant others / third parties feel. Such perspective taking, therefore, can increase the quality of decision-making and related consumer wellbeing (e.g., reduce stress caused by the outcome of choice for others). Hence, the aim of our research is to examine how VR perspective-taking influences the choice for others and brand relationships. Three studies including a large-scale survey and two VR experiments were conducted.

Our survey results demonstrate that differences between self-other choice (caregiving) and self-choice (self-indulgence) are reflected in customer equity drivers. We further argue that choice for others will diverge from a customer-brand relationship to an intergroup brand relationship. Our experiment findings indicate that different levels and types of immersive and interactive perspective-taking have different effects on intergroup brand relationships, customer engagement and behavioural outcomes. Furthermore, state empathy and affective commitment are mediating these relationships. Differing from traditional perspective-taking and choice-for-others studies, our research provides new insights on intergroup brand relationships and customer engagement by linking the customer perception into the reality through various levels of immersive technology and contributing to the under-researched choice for others literature.

Keywords: Brand relationship; Choice for others; Virtual reality perspective-taking; Caregiving

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Dynamic Managerial Capabilities and Technology-Enabled Sales Capability: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Drawing on resource-based theory (Barney, 1991; Barney et al., 2011; Kozlenkova et al., 2014), competences/capabilities theory (Day, 1994; Prahalad & Hamel, 1990; Sanchez & Heene, 1997), and dynamic capabilities theory (Eisenhardt & Martin, 2000; Makadok, 2001; Teece, 2007; Teece et al., 1997; Winter, 2003; Zahra et al., 2006), prior research in the sales literature conceptually investigated the dynamic managerial capabilities (DMCs) of sales managers (e.g., Badrinarayanan et al., 2019). This research builds on prior research by proposing a framework to assess how sales manager's DMCs – "capabilities with which managers build, integrate, and reconfigure organizational resources and competences" (Adner & Helfat, 2003, p. 1012) – influence operational sales capabilities, and, in turn, firm performance. Specifically, we discuss how technology-enabled sales capability, an operational sales capability, mediates the three components of DMCs – managerial cognition, managerial social capital, and managerial human capital – and three types of firm performance – financial performance, growth, and customer relationship performance – under conditions of environmental turbulence. While several studies examine components of DMCs (see Helfat & Martin, 2015 for a review), this research is among the few studies that examine all three components of DMCs (e.g., Mostafiz et al., 2019; Tasheva & Nielsen, 2020). Accordingly, this research has the potential to provide a more holistic view of DMCs and provide scholars with future opportunities to investigate DMCs with other operational sales capabilities and/or other performance measures or measures of strategic change. Future scholars could investigate how DMCs influence other operational sales capabilities, such as sales force management and personal selling capabilities (Guenzi et al., 2016). Moreover, practitioners can use this research to understand which components and sub-components of DMCs are most critical for building technology-enabled sales capability under conditions of change. Given that dynamic capabilities and technology-specific capabilities will continue to be important for firm heterogeneity, we conclude with a call for further research investigating other types of dynamic capabilities and technology-related capabilities in sales.

Keywords: Dynamic managerial capabilities; Operational capabilities; Technology-enabled sales capability; Environmental turbulence

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Should I Stay or Should I Go? The Role of Perceived Organizational Support as a Mediating Mechanism in the Context of Salespeople's Turnover Intentions: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Today's sales organizations face uncertainties, new models/approaches to selling, and technological developments, and as a consequence, high employee turnover. Organizations that can retain their salespeople often benefit from improved performance, as experienced and trained salespeople can connect better with customers and help the organization achieve short- and long-term objectives. Accordingly, organizations must focus on strategies to improve employee perceptions of various aspects of the firm.

In the context of digitalization and/or virtualization of sales processes, this research: (i) identifies organizational, sales manager, and individual influences of salespeople turnover intentions and (ii) proposes "perceived organizational support (POS) to relationship quality" as a mediating mechanism. Overall, we offer a conceptual framework that provides insights into how organizations can sustain relationships with salespeople in the context of technology-charged sales processes. Specifically, we identify (i) open communication and technological investments as key organizational influences, (ii) skills, leadership style, support, and leadership worthiness as key managerial influences, and (iii) perceptions of the digitization and virtualization of sales, technology orientation, and adaptive self-efficacy as crucial individual influences of turnover intentions. We also identify "POS to relationship quality" as a mechanism that impacts turnover intentions.

Given the high turnover of salespeople, we hope our research serves as a starting point for examining how salespeople's perceptions of organizational support stem from multilevel influences and how those perceptions affect relationship quality and turnover in the current technology-charged sales era. We also aim to answer previous calls to understand better how organizations can curb the negative impacts of the recent COVID-19 pandemic, digitalization and/or virtualizations of sales processes, and shifts in employee commitment to organizations. Accordingly, this research has several implications for sales management theory and practice. By understanding the nature of POS in today's technology-charged sales environment, firms can build strategies to engage and retain salespeople and make them feel valued and supported.

Keywords: Perceived organizational support; Turnover intentions; Relationship quality; Technology orientation

References Available Upon Request

How do Traffic Light Labels work for Food Choices?: Insights of two Empirical Studies on underlying Mechanisms and Effects in Self-Service Canteens: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

As part of a global trend, governments are increasingly implementing policies to help consumers make healthy food choices. Recently, some have introduced (voluntary) simplified nutrition labeling systems, such as traffic-light labels (TLLs) in Europe (Deutscher Bundestag 2019), aimed to help consumers easily identify the nutritional quality of a food product (Dubois et al., 2020). Although TLLs were initially used mainly on pre-packaged food products in retailing, they are now increasingly tested in the gastronomy sector (Elior Group 2020). However, food choices in retail settings fundamentally differ from those of the gastronomy sector, as "people make purchase decisions in supermarkets, whereas they make consumption decisions in restaurants" (Dubois et al., 2020, p. 2). Moreover, previous research on TLLs in the gastronomy sector shows ambiguous findings regarding improving consumers' food choices (e.g., Seward et al., 2016, Sonnenberg et al., 2013). Therefore, one purpose of this article is to investigate the effects of a TLL on the selection of prepared food in a self-service canteen. However, to promote healthier eating choices, it is not only essential to know "what" consumers usually choose but also to understand "why" consumers choose (un)healthy foods (Bauer & Reisch, 2019). When selecting food, e.g., food choice motives, such as "healthiness," "taste," and "expected satiation," play a particularly significant role (Liu & Haws, 2020). This project aims to 1) gain insights into the effectiveness of a TLL in a self-service canteen, 2) obtain a better understanding of the underlying mechanisms of action, and 3) get insights into food choice motives in a self-service canteen.

We address these aims by using two experiments: First, we conducted an online experiment (study 1) introducing the TLL "Nutri-Score" in a fictitious self-service canteen scenario. The goal of study 1 was to investigate the mechanisms underlying the Nutri-Score's effect on expected healthiness, taste, and satiety and how these expectations explain food choice in a self-service canteen scenario. Since previous literature strongly recommends that results on food choices should also be assessed in the field (Haws et al., 2022), following up on study 1, we will conduct a field experiment in a large German university canteen *(research-in-progress)*. The aim of study 2 is to investigate the effect of the Nutri-Score on food choices in a real self-service canteen setting. Furthermore, we strive to uncover cognitive processes during consumers' food choices. Hence, we conduct in-depth investigations using video-cued thought protocols during study 2 to better understand food choice motives and the effect of the Nutri-Score on prepared dishes. Our research contributes to theory and practice by examining TLL's mode of action and its effect on consumer choice in self-service canteens.

Keywords: Traffic-light; Labelling; Food choice; Online experiment; Field experiment; Thought protocols

References Available Upon Request

Transformative Marketing in B2B: Facing Dynamic Changes in Mobility Ecosystems: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Facing dynamic market environments and continuous change, numerous companies are challenged to conduct a successful transformation. Reflecting this from a conceptual perspective, the approach of transformative marketing (TM) has been introduced (Kumar, 2018). TM is currently mainly addressed in the context of consumer relationships. However, the unique dynamics leading to the necessity of a TM approach are especially present in B2B and the context of mobility. Disruptions are triggered by key emerging trends such as e-mobility and related legislation changes, autonomous driving, digital business models and changes in transaction structures. Considering the scarce research on TM in B2B mobility, further exploration may lead to novel insights for both academia and practitioners. This abstract outlines a PhD project contributing to this promising research field within a cooperation of Toulouse School of Management (France), Robert Bosch GmbH (Germany), and the Baden-Württemberg Cooperative State University (Germany).

The project is structured in a cumulative approach and comprises four different studies. The first study targets the concept of business ecosystems (BES) as the context of transformation. It contributes to closing existing research gaps related to the theoretical foundation, criteria-based characterization, and delineation of BES. Within bibliometric and a subsequent qualitative content analysis, the study shares new perspectives on the BES. The main contribution lies in a novel framework delineating ecosystems within a structure of horizontal and vertical forms. Further, the paper suggests a first conceptualization of the B2B BES and highlights their uniquenesses based on the phenomenon of firms' "forward-backward-integration" in value chains. The second paper focuses on TM and aims at closing the lack of overviews on the current research state and research agendas. Within a Theory-Context-Characteristics-Methods Analysis (Paul & Criado, 2020; Paul & Rosado-Serrano, 2019), 70 TM publications are explored. Major findings point to a high dominance of resource-based theories in TM research. Furthermore, the study reveals a strong focus on B2C sectors, especially within finance, insurance, and healthcare applications. However, B2B and mobility ecosystems are neglected. In terms of characteristics, the study points to an instrumental TM perspective while a holistic view is subordinated. Within the methodology section, the study shows a high focus on conceptual contributions. Qualitative and quantitative explorations remain scarce. In studies three and four, the project therefore explores TM in B2B mobility through expert interviews followed by the derivation and testing of a conceptual model. Through the introduction of a "Transformative Resource Gap (TRG)", the framework seeks to explain transformational success in B2B mobility ecosystems through a resource-based lens. In sum, the dissertation seeks to offer novel insights for both academic and managerial communities and thus support the understanding of successful transformation in disruptive B2B mobility ecosystems.

Keywords: Transformative marketing; Business ecosystems; Business-to-business; Mobility market

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Exploring Digital Storytelling through Place Branding: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Earlier, branding of places has been portrayed through celebrity endorsements, and word of mouth has been pivotal. However, such dynamics are changing, and digital consumption is a primary catalyst for updated place branding versions. Nowadays, places are marketed through the internet, where the inclusion of digital stories is the primary mode of communication with engaging stories of a place. Digital stories, through story attributes, depict a place as the hero. Subsequently, these stories align relevant messages which make a place meaningful. The depiction of meaningful messages integrated through relevant images and videos makes a place meaningful amongst the audiences. However, existing literature has drawn minimum insights on the efficacies of digital stories in place branding. Our paper follows a qualitative research inquiry; this paper introduced the idea of Real-time digital stories, and the memory of audiences is volatile in the digital era, so the inclusion of real-time inclusive messages is impactful. Subsequently, our paper discusses the role of digital stories in creating place nostalgia and experiential learning. The results of our paper discuss specific vital insights. At first, our paper discussed the relevance of digital stories in place branding. Digital stories, being realistic, are more credible. Similarly, stories' creative elements further extend the elongated place experience. Similarly, the credibility of the source is highly relevant. At the same time, a digital story's source credibility and creative elements are pivotal. Moreover, the importance of digital channels is noteworthy. Our data revealed that audiences are always more credible to legitimate digital channels. Our data suggest including digital stories in place branding, exclusively through authentic sources. Lastly, our paper also discussed emotions, eventually resulting in place-making. Our paper makes relevant contributions to the scholars by extending the academic literature; relevant place-specific strategies are also told for practice. Overall, this paper increases the understanding of place branding and articulates the significance of digital stories in making a place.

Keywords: Place branding; Digital storytelling; Real-time stories; Qualitative research; Grounded theory

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An Exploration of Consumer Experiences in the Age of Artificial Intelligence: Perception of Being Observed: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

This research explores consumers' experiences in the age of artificial intelligence and identifies a phenomenon, the perception of being observed, which evolved with the rapid transformation of the social environment with the technological revolution. I use the term "being observed" to refer to the instances where consumers think that they are being recorded, watched, or tracked by other parties (i.e., companies, governments). Through three essays, this dissertation aims to provide an understanding of what it means "to be observed" in the digital age, identify antecedents and consequences that are important for consumers' wellbeing and improving their interactions with companies. Essay 1 provides an understanding of the perception of being observed. Identifying the technology anxiety, self-consciousness and privacy concerns as antecedents, this research develops a scale to measure the extent to which individuals think that they are being observed. Further, it demonstrates that people who think that they are being observed are more sensitive to the data collection practices and protective of their data through limiting their information disclosure. Essay 2 explores an important outcome of being observed by companies and shows that it decreases consumers' willingness to engage with the company. While being observed, consumers become reluctant to use their resources such as time, money, and data in their interactions. Essay 3 focuses on the consequences of the use of privacy notices. Identifying a novel process, this research shows that privacy notices decrease consumers' willingness to use websites and applications, and purchase products. Overall, this dissertation contributes to the consumer behavior literature through enhancing our understanding of consumers' experiences evolving with the advancements in technology and providing important managerial and public policy implications.

Keywords: Perception of being observed; Consumer-technology interaction; Privacy; Customer engagement

References Available Upon Request

Examining the Key Consumer-Related Determinants towards Their Intention to Participate in Anti-Brand Communities: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

At a time when companies increasingly focus on consumers' brand-related views, feelings and behaviours and are concerned about brand negativity, online anti-brand communities increase in popularity providing consumers unique opportunities to express their unfavourable brand views and interact with other consumers around the brand on deep and meaningful levels (Bowden et al., 2017; Hollebeek & Chen, 2014). Studies indicate that consumers' brand negativity is commoner (Rissanen & Luoma-Aho, 2016; Rodrigues & Borges, 2021), potentially more impactful (Bowden et al., 2017) and detrimental (Moran et al., 2020; Parihar & Dawra, 2020) than positive to brands, and can be actioned online or offline via various channels (Dessart et al., 2020; Veloutsou & Ruiz Mafe, 2020).

This work aims to explore negative brand-related cognition and affection effects on consumers' negative constructive and destructive online behaviours and their further intention to participate in anti-brand communities, a context existing literature largely overlooks (Veloutsou & Ruiz Mafe, 2020). Using data from an online survey collected from anti-brand community members, this paper reveals the effects of consumers' negative brand-related cognitions and affections on online destructive behaviours. Also, consumers' anti-brand community participation intention is related to their negative brand-related cognitions, affections and online destructive behaviours rather than online constructive behaviours.

The paucity of empirical insights on negative brand-related cognition, affection, constructive and destructive behaviours, anti-brand community participation intention and the importance of the online context, puts this investigation at the heart of this study. This unique focus shed light on and enhances our understanding of why consumers develop negative brand-related behaviours and intend to participate in anti-brand communities. It can also help brand managers understand consumers (Dessart, 2017), online anti-brand community participation (Rodrigues et al., 2021) and identify brand recovery strategies for managing brand negativity in the appropriate manner (Brandão & Popoli, 2022).

Keywords: Negative cognition; Negative affection; Negative behaviour; Anti-brand community participation intention

Reference Available Upon Request

Exogenous Brand Crisis and its Impact on Consumer Purchase Intention: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

The global brands have become increasingly vulnerable to external disruptions in recent times. Exogenous crises, such as terrorism (9/11 twin tower attack), economic downturn (2009 financial crisis) or political restrains (United States and China) often affect the business and brands. The ripple effects of the crisis and deviating consumer demands lead to brand's financial struggles, stakeholder distrust and weakening of brand image. Here the brand damage is neither through transgression nor shared associations, but through an unrelated, external threat (Grewal et al., 2007; Whitler et al., 2021). When a brand perceives to be facing a crisis, then it certainly is facing the crisis, hence must be prudent and discreet on its response.

The study aims to identify which exogenous crisis has the most significant impact on brands, through its impact on consumer consumption and the underlying reasons. Given the contextual relevance, we embrace qualitative research design applying repertory grid technique (RGT) (Jankowicz, 2005). We chose a list of exogenous crisis events, based on the typology given by Chandrasekar et al. (2021), as elements of the RGT grid. Data were collected through in-depth interviews conducted with 15 participants, applying photo-elicitation technique to elicit individual perceptions and constructs regarding the crisis impact on their purchase intentions. Following the core-categorization procedure, collected data were systematized and aggregated into categories. Key determinants were identified by applying the frequency and variability of constructs methods (Goffin et al. 2006). By evaluating and comparing the key determinants across each crisis event, intriguing results are unveiled.

We observe that 'spread of disease'(SoD) crisis overhauls other crisis types notably (seven out of nine key determinants). The post-hoc output also validates SoD as the most statistically significant crisis, followed by the natural disasters and unemployment. The results ascertain that these crises have been the most impactful due to their evidently increased impact on consumer behavioural shifts and consumption lifestyles. Moreover, the results reveal the surge of negative emotions, fear of unknown and perceived uncertainty, affecting consumers' lives, attitudes, and buying behaviours (Yuen et al., 2020). Brands need to be prepared to handle the challenges of changing demands, stockouts and consumer disappointments. Contrastingly, the results also indicate rise of positive factors such as hopefulness, unity and community bonding that drive consumers to recuperate and adapt to new conditions. Our findings may help brand managers to strategize their deliverables and communication messages according to consumers' changing circumstances. Thus, evidence obtained in this study provides an analytical lens to guide brands on when and how to respond during the exogenous crises that influence consumption.

Keywords: Exogenous crisis; Brand management; Repertory grid; Consumer behaviour; Purchase intention

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Examining Consumers' Ideological Incompatibility with Brand Hate and Social Desirability: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Brands have evolved from simple transaction facilitators to entities that engage and create value for consumers. In this way, marketing became based on relationships. Consequently, research on consumer-brand relationships is an increasingly important topic. Previous research on consumer-brand relationships showed that the personality traits influence consumer attitudes, behaviors and purchasing decisions. The desire for social acceptance is known as one of the main influences on a person's behavior. This communication shows how, within a context of Brand Hate, consumers react to ideological incompatibility towards a brand by switching to another brand, complaining to third parties in private or making their complaints in a public way, and how the social desirability moderates these effects. SmartPLS software was used to test the hypotheses. The results obtained with 204 participants in an online survey indicate that when there is an ideological incompatibility towards a brand in people with low levels of social desirability, there tends to exist a stronger relationship with consequences such as brand switch or private complaint. Despite the occurrence of all three types of consequences, people with a lower social desirability tend to change brands or complain more in private than those with a higher desire for social acceptance. These findings are crucial for brands as they allow them to understand the behaviors and consequences that ideological incompatibility can cause. In addition, brands should be aware that the social desirability influences consumer behavior. People who feel Brand Hate and have a lower desire for social acceptance may be more easily identified than those with a higher level. This should lead future investigations to question if high levels of desire for social acceptance can outweigh the ideological incompatibility felt by consumers towards a brand. This may indeed happen because high levels of desire for social acceptance can lead individuals to act in a way that does not correspond to their actual state.

Keywords: Brand hate; Brand management; Social desirability; Ideological incompatibility; Consumer behavior

References Available Upon Request

The Impact of Humor on Responses to Complaints: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Humor can be helpful in tense situations, helping agents to solve conflicts and mitigating confrontation in unpleasant situations (Dews et al., 1995; Fraley & Aron, 2004), such as consumer complaints. However, interactions between companies using humor and consumers can be risky since companies deal with dissatisfied and impatient consumers. The use of humor in different research contexts, such as complaints (Mcgraw et al., 2015), advertisements (Eisend, 2009; Warren & McGraw, 2016), interactions between friends (Kuiper et al., 2010), physical health (Martin, 2001) and consumer well-being (Warren et al., 2018) have shown conflicting results. Sometimes humor brings positive consequences for the company, and sometimes not. Research has advanced the knowledge of the effect of humor in different contexts (e.g., Martin, 2001; McGraw et al., 2015; Warren & McGraw, 2016) and also on the online communication styles adopted by companies (p. (e.g., Kelleher & Miller, 2006; Kelleher, 2009; Van Noort & Willemsen, 2011). According to Van Noort and Willemsen (2011), communication styles are distinguished into professional voice (PV) and conversational human voice (CHV). PV communications represent a more standardized corporate response (Sparks et al., 2016). This style is respectful, formal, and task-oriented. On the other hand, CHV includes natural, close, and humanized communication (Park & Cameron, 2015). Responses to complaints play a crucial role for the consumer who is observing this interaction, and on average, a complaint posted by a customer is read by 825 observers (Chevalier et al., 2018; CRS, 2017). However, there needs to be more research investigating the use of humor in responses to complaints. In order to fill this gap in the literature, this paper investigates the effects of humor on organizational responses to online complaints on the perceptions of observant consumers. Two experiments investigated how humorous responses to complaints affect virtually present others. The main findings show that the humorous voice differs from the conversational human voice style in complaint handling. The use of humorous responses to complaints is associated with the perception of higher prices but lower satisfaction levels with the response and attitude towards the company compared to the professional and conversational human voice. The effect of the humorous response to complaints on satisfaction with the response and attitude towards the company is explained by the company's perceived empathy for the complaining customer.

Keywords: Humor; Humorous responses; Complaint handling; Virtually present others; Empathy

References Available Upon Request

Would Unearned Preferential Treatment Make Customers More Tolerant and Amiable? An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Offering unearned preferential treatment has increasingly become a commonly adopted relationship marketing strategy, which has attracted research attention (Jiang et al., 2013). Surprisingly, few studies bridge the unearned preferential treatment literature, customer tolerance and amiability, the key indicators of effective marketing strategies, accounting for distinct characteristics of unearned preferential treatment.

To this end, this research aims to advance the relationship marketing and preferential treatment literature through unveiling new insights, which bear substantial practical implications in relation to unearned preferential treatments. Our central interest is to explore whether, when and why distinct unearned preferential treatments conferred at the initial stage of service *process* influence the standards employed for evaluation of subsequent services and relational outcomes. Specifically, through defining distinct unearned preferential treatment according to the key characteristic metrics, namely status (status- vs. non-status-oriented) and value (high vs. low), we uncover the influential and distinguishable impacts of distinct unearned preferential treatments at the initial stage of service *process* on customer and their relational reactions, including tolerance and amiability. We also analyse the competing mechanisms underpinning the observed influences. That is, unearned preferential treatments evoke customer affections and cognitions, in the form of delight, social power, feeling of unease (not social discomfort) and inequity, the interplay of which, in turn, casts variations of customer response.

Our findings bear substantial theoretical and far-reaching managerial implications. The unique, service-process-driven focus of our framework (as opposed to the transaction-focus of previous work) ensures that the nature of services is accounted for. Therefore, practitioners can easily apply our findings to services delivery in the hotel sector. In addition, we deliver a comprehensive set of recommendations that services industry (e.g., hospitality, airline, tourism and retailing) can use as they pursue their strategic business goals through offering unearned preferential treatments. Directions for future research are offer in light of limitations of this research.

Keywords: Unearned preferential treatment; Tolerance; Amiability; Social power

References Available Upon Request

Artificial Intelligence That Errs: Repercussions of AI-Induced Errors on Consumers and Society: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Examples from the popular press demonstrate that AI is not error-free. This study explores the consequences of AI-induced errors from a marketing perspective. Specifically, we explore consumer responses to different error types as the literature distinguishes between technical errors, resulting from a technical disruption of algorithmic processes, and social errors, representing task outcomes that may be mathematically correct but deemed inappropriate due to a social norm violation. We also investigate the impact of error severity. This distinction is important because prior research has shown different response patterns depending on error severity. Errors can sometimes even evoke positive reactions, as described by the pratfall effect. Moreover, we explore whether eXplainable AI (XAI), denoting AI providing explanations of its inner processes, can be used as a strategic remedy after the occurrence of an error.

Based on data gathered in four studies, we find that severe errors, regardless of error type, evoke negative responses from consumers. Additionally, minor social errors lead to significantly fewer negative consumer responses than minor technical errors, indicating evidence of the pratfall effect. In the context of self-learning AI, this consumer behavior is problematic since AI does not recognize its error as such, fostering the social norm violation. Hence, our results provide a granular perspective on consumer responses to erroneous AI and highlight the importance of AI's adherence to social norms. The study uncovers the adverse consequence when the pratfall effect occurs in human-AI interactions and emphasizes the necessity of implementing additional safeguards against social norm violations by AI.

Moreover, we show that cognitive and affective trust both mediate the relationship between error type and consumer responses. While cognitive and affective trust in AI is significantly decreased after technical errors, minor social errors primarily lead to diminished cognitive but not affective trust. These results support our hypothesis that consumers tend to ignore minor social errors because of the limited emotional capabilities ascribed to AI. Our results also reveal that companies should incorporate explainable AI (XAI) into AI applications to mitigate negative effects on consumer responses to erring AI.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence; Social error; Technical error; Cognitive trust; Affective trust; Pratfall effect; Social norm violation

References Available Upon Request

"Let The Driver Off The Hook?" Moral Decisions Of Autonomous Cars And Their Impact On Consumers' Well-Being: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Equipped with sophisticated, AI-based driver assistant systems, passenger cars are becoming increasingly smart. It seems to be a matter of a few years until fully autonomous vehicles will operate without any driver intervention. In this regard, researchers are addressing the question of how fully automated vehicles should make decisions in critical situations (Etienne, 2022; Kriebitz et al., 2022; Atakishiyev et al., 2021). Should they spare the driver, the child jumping on the road, or the elderly person standing on the sidewalk? Projects like MIT's "moral machine" are investigating the preferences for ethical decision algorithms in different nations and cultures (Awad et al., 2018; Harris, 2020). The evaluation of these decisions impacting consumer perception and well-being is still scarce. Therefore, we want to investigate 1) Do alternative AI-based moral decision scenarios of autonomous cars impact consumers' emotions and well-being?, 2) Do by consequence these perception factors mediate between the moral decision scenarios and the usage intention? In our experimental study, participants experience a simulator-based driving situation in a fully autonomous car followed by a confrontation with alternative automated action scenarios of the car in a critical situation. As a result, either a child, an elderly person, or oneself dies. We used three different methods to evaluate emotions. First, while being confronted with the scenarios, we measured frontal alpha asymmetry (FAA) as an emotional indicator using a 5-channel EEG system. Second, we measured 7 basic emotions using facial expression recognition (FER) software. Third, the test persons had to fill out an online questionnaire presented on the screen after each scenario. The panel consisted of 24 participants. An ANOVA was used to evaluate research question 1. Results indicate that there are detectable differences between the scenarios for 3 of the 7 emotions asked in the questionnaire. Regarding Subjective Well-being, Behavioral Intention, and Facial Recognition, there are no significant differences. Regarding EEG, no differences could be shown due to the small sample. The second research question is to be answered in the future by surveying further test persons with the help of structural equation modeling.

Keywords: Autonomous driving; Ethics; Moral decisions; Well-being; Neuroanalytics

References Available Upon Request

Consumers As "Rational Agents": The Role of Ethical Perceptions and Perceived Value in Online News Media Consumption: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

In today's digital media environment, personal data is a valuable commodity that businesses require to thrive and the news media industry is no exception from this. This study focuses on the perceived data practices during the formation of customer relationships on news media platforms. We highlight ethical concerns and potential harms of personal data use and emphasize the importance of trust in willingness to disclose personal data and purchase intentions. Scandals such as the Cambridge Analytica involving Facebook have eroded trust in both platforms and the institutions that operate on them.

This study examines the formation and outcomes of perceived data ethics during digital customer journeys in the digital news media context. The privacy calculus theory is applied that claims consumers behave as rational agents, weighing the perceived benefits of sharing personal information against its perceived ethical concerns. A between-subjects experimental research design was constructed to test the effects of 'ethical calculus' on trust toward the news media organization, data disclosure willingness, and subscription intentions. A sample of 600 young adults (aged 18-39 years) who engage with news on social media was drawn from a consumer panel. The results showed that ethical perception of personal data use and perceived value of the news media service interact and together impact trust toward the news media organization, data disclosure willingness, and subscription intentions. Furthermore, price fairness and transaction convenience as well as the interest in the news and the perceived amount of data gathered were found to moderate the effects of ethical calculus. The effect of ethical calculus is emphasized if the consumer experiences a high volume of personal data collection, a perceived high or unfair price, difficulties with payment, or uninteresting news content.

In conclusion, the study tested the model for explaining the formation and outcomes of perceived data use ethics in online news media consumer behavior. The findings provide validated explanations for the discrepancy in consumers' behavior, known as the privacy paradox. Ethical concerns of personal data disclosure are weighed against the value obtained in exchange. The effect size on outcome variables was also found to depend on attainable immediate benefits (i.e., low price, ease of payment, an interesting news story) and the amount of data gathered during the subscription. The implications suggest that news media organizations should prioritize transparency about data collection and use and present the benefits of their service to gain trust and willingness to disclose information from consumers. Understanding the ethical calculus surrounding personal data use can help businesses create a sustainable relationship with their customers and foster greater trust and loyalty.

Keywords: Ethical Calculus; Ethical perception; Perceived value; Personal data; Brand trust; Disclosure willingness; Price fairness; Transaction convenience

References Available Upon Request

Impacting Online Customers' Post-Privacy Breach Behavior: A Relationship Marketing Approach: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

The privacy breach threat is amplified for online businesses because their growth largely depends on the ability to protect their customers' digital footprints. Martin et al. (2017) identifies that customer's feeling of vulnerability after knowing about the data breach of a firm they use, and after they experience a misuse of their personal data, can impact customer behavior and subsequent firm performance. This study argues that while security and privacy protection safeguards are very important, the way that a firm manages and attempts to repair its reputation following a breach is critical to maintaining the longevity of the relationships and trust between customers and firms. Drawing from the customer's extended identity (Bagozzi et al., 2012), online relationship marketing (Steinhoff et al., 2018), and online relationship formation theories (Kozlenkova et al., 2017), we address the following research question: Which relationship marketing strategy more effectively mitigate customer's post-privacy breach behavior when the customer is connected to the firm via small-connected groups or virtual community and the connections react differently following the breach? In the proposed model there are interplays between various forms of customer-firm relationship, social influences, and relationship marketing strategies. The model tries to compare the effectiveness of the three relationship marketing strategies in the presence of these interactions. The effectiveness of strategies will be measured using two post-privacy breach behaviors namely negative word-of-mouth, and intention to switch. This research will employ four vignette-based experiments (Trevino, 1992; Weber, 1992) using a completely randomized design to test the proposed hypotheses. This study expands the literature on privacy breach handling strategies that currently focus on service recovery perspective, customer's perception on justice, and corporate reputation. Moreover, we extend research in online customer relationship and operationalize it to enhance current knowledge in post-privacy relationship marketing strategies. The findings of our study guide the formulation of relationship marketing strategies in future customer privacy breach incidents and help organizations to handle customer attrition following a data breach.

Keywords: Relationship marketing; Post-privacy breach behavior; Reputation repair; Customer-firm relationship; Social influence

References Available Upon Request

Improving Social Media Video Advertising Acceptance Using Priming: Evidence from Big Data Analysis: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Video advertising has drawn much attention from marketers and researchers due to its remarkable performance in boosting traffic and communicating a clear picture of products. In this study, we examine Story ads, a unique form of social media video ads. Story ads are popular among major online social platforms such as Instagram and Snapchat but understudied in academia. In addition, Story ads also differ from traditional social media video ads. Thus, it is crucial and timely to understand users' acceptance to Story ads.

Users commonly post Stories on social platforms for social sharing. Both Stories and ads have a video format or image format that lasts for seconds. During their watching experience of Stories, they may encounter an ad between two consecutive Stories. Using the Story preceding each ad as a natural prime, we investigate how two types of Story-ad congruence: media format (i.e., video or image) and content (17 categories, e.g., sports and gaming), affect ad acceptance. The prior Story and following ad have congruent media content only if their content categories are the same such as sports Story and sports ad while their media formats are congruent when they are the same such as video Story and video ad. An ad with congruence content topic or format makes the ad look like a natural extension to the proceeding Story, increasing processing ease and reducing ad intrusiveness and reactance, which in turn could improve ad acceptance.

To uncover the congruence effects, we collect a large-scale first-party dataset with 8,260,689 individual-level observations from a top-ranked American technology company. After accounting for endogeneity issues using propensity score weighting, the results show that both Story-ad format and content congruence significantly generate additional ad viewing time. However, the format congruence between video Stories and video ads has an attenuating effect. Our research makes theoretical and managerial contributions. The findings offer insights to marketers and publishers and can be helpful for ad placement, ranking, and recommendation systems.

Keywords: Congruence; Social media; Priming; Image analytics; Big data

References Available Upon Request

All or Nothing: The Effect of Absolute Language in Sales Communication: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

To shed some light into the communicative aspect of entrepreneurial selling, this paper employs a text-analysis-based field study and randomized experiment to investigate the persuasive impact of entrepreneurial salespeople's linguistic choice on one's willingness to invest. Specifically, in the present research, we find that salespeople's use of absolute language creates negative reactions from their intended audience, such as entrepreneurial investors, which decreases salespeople's likelihood of obtaining entrepreneurial funding. For example, consider an entrepreneurial salesperson seeking funding for a new healthcare product. The salesperson may refer to some of the benefits of this new product as very absolute (e.g., always effective), versus very non-absolute (e.g., sometimes effective) or somewhere in the middle (e.g., mostly effective). In the present research, we show that these subtle differences in word choice can directly influence investor perceptions of salesperson credibility, which impacts one's willingness to invest in a product or company.

Through textual analysis of field data containing 250 sales pitches to expert judges, we find that as the proportion of absolute language in a sales pitch increases, the level of investment decreases. To uncover the underlying variables driving this process, we conduct a randomized experiment. Experimental results suggest the use of absolute language decreases perceived credibility of the salesperson, which decreases investors' willingness to invest. Results also suggest that the mediating role of salesperson credibility is moderated by investors' expertise such that the negative relationship between use of absolute language and perceptions of salesperson credibility becomes more negative as investors' expertise increases.

Because spoken and textual forms of language are a necessity of the selling process, knowing the aspects of language that drive entrepreneurial selling effectiveness is paramount. The present research provides sales managers and entrepreneurs with an additional tool to understand entrepreneurial salesperson effectiveness through the use of absolute language. Results from this research suggest that, to increase the chances of making a successful pitch, one should refrain from making overgeneralized statements about the product or company being represented to the prospect. These are concrete adjustments in language that can be made depending on the expertise of the entrepreneurial seller's target. Furthermore, this research has provided entrepreneurial salespeople with another layer of understanding of what can increase or decrease their perceived credibility. Given the transitory nature of language, our findings give salespeople additional tactics on when to use or avoid absolute language in order to maximize perceptions of credibility.

Keywords: Absolute language; Salesperson credibility; Investor expertise; Willingness to invest

References Available Upon Request

Managing Time for Selling Effectively: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

The allocation and management of time are crucial in the sales context because of their impact on sales performance. Nearly thirty-three percent of high-growth companies cite challenges around sales representatives' time management as one of the top three challenges for their organization (Gartner, 2019). The sales field is highly competitive, where the salespeople operate in a dynamic environment by encountering incredible challenges as the representative of the selling firm to buyers. Salespeople need to manage varied marketing relationships by dealing with customers and gatekeepers outside of their organization, coworkers in different business units, teammates, and sales managers who are insiders. This article suggests that effective time management is essential to sales professionals' productivity and can help surpass performance challenges before they occur. To sell effectively, salespeople may choose to multitask in the job environment. As one of the time management strategies, multitasking is an essential endearing attribute of successful salespeople that is just a natural occurrence in any sales environment (Freedman, 2022). Multitasking, specifically in the workplace context, is the degree to which two or more tasks compete for one's attention within a given timeframe (Kapadia & Melwani, 2021). This article uncovers the role of multitasking in sales, an under-researched topic in the marketing field.

Using the theory of threaded cognition (Salvucci & Taatgen, 2008), we examine the effects of multitasking on salesperson response flexibility in different job scenarios. We also try to understand whether product complexity enhances or hinders salesperson response flexibility and adaptive selling behavior. The results of our experimental research design showed that a flexible salesperson could perform adaptive selling in job situations demanding multitasking. This research emphasizes that individual choices of working and situational aspects can change the effect of multitasking on adaptive selling behavior.

Theoretically, this research advances our understanding of the mechanisms by which multitasking can influence adaptive selling behavior. We propose that salespeople can achieve their business goals using effective time management practices. New salespeople must know the benefits of effectively managing work tasks simultaneously (Arndt et al., 2006). This research can guide salespeople and sales managers to understand the importance of effective time management practices. From a managerial standpoint, this research emphasizes the need for organizations to emphasize the effectiveness of time management in sales.

Keywords: Time management; Multitasking; Response flexibility; Adaptive selling behavior

References Available Upon Request

Fans and Haters: Sentiment and Customer Analysis of Tweets for Three Top Athletes: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Simone Biles, arguably the greatest gymnast of all time was forced to make the gut-wrenching decision to pull out of the Olympics to focus on her mental health (Lim, 2021). Naomi Osaka, a 23-year-old tennis super star, and the highest paid female athlete in the world pulled out of the French Open. Osaka, publicly cited her desire to focus on her mental health, after a lengthy appeal with Roland Garros to allow her to stop taking press inquiries at the end of matches (Futterman, 2021). Track and field star Sha'Carri Richardson was disqualified from competing in the Summer Olympics after she tested positive for consuming marijuana (Goldman, 2021). Richardson admitted she had consumed marijuana, apologized and explained that she had consumed the marijuana in order to cope with mental health issues arising from the death of her biological mother (Goldman, 2021). Three dominant powerhouses, sitting out competition at highest level of their respective sports because of mental health concerns.

Following each case there was an outcry from the public as seen online. Twitter became a space where all three athletes faced significant scrutiny. In this paper, we investigate the reactions of twitter users towards each of the athletes during these events and develop an understanding of the relationship between people who tweeted regarding the athletes.

We conducted a sentiment analysis of Twitter posts related to all three athletes over the length of their respective careers in order to ascertain the impact of not competing in 2021. We assess the impact and relationship by first identifying distinct groups of people who tweeted about Biles, Osaka, and Richardson: ‘Fans’, ‘Haters’, and ‘Onlookers’. Using these categories, we were able to analyze the impact of different methods and intensities of engagement with each athlete as they made decisions to protect their mental health. This provides an initial glimpse into the impact of athletes addressing mental health concerns in a public forum.

Keywords: Personal brands; Sports marketing; Mental health; Social media; Twitter analysis

References Available Upon Request

Investigating the antecedents and moderators of Pro-Environmental Customer Behavior in Dessert Café: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to address the factors that promote pro-environmental behavior (PEB) of the customer and examines the role of perceived effectiveness (PCE) towards PEB. Additionally, extant literature has found that gender plays an important role in PEB (Cuddy et al., 2015; McEvoy, 1972; Deitz et al., 1998). Research has shown that males are more favorable toward pro-environmental attitudes than women. While women more actively show pro-environmental action respectively in the private sphere (i.e. buying organic products, cutting back on vehicle use, sorting recyclables), men more actively show in the public sphere (i.e. being a member of environmental groups and signing a petition) (Dietz et al., 1998). This study also investigates whether men and women have the same motivation towards environmentally friendly behavior.

Responses were solicited from patrons who had visited a dessert café. An online Internet search firm was employed for data collection. A total of 563 usable responses were available for analyses. All items in the study were measured using existing scales that were modified/adopted for the purposes of this study. The sample for the study was evenly distributed in terms of gender and 85% of the respondents had visited the dessert café more than once in the past month.

Using SmartPLS 3.3.3 we found support for the relationship between sense of obligation and PEB (for both males and females); third party certification and PEB (only for females); eco-friendly behavior and PEB (only for females). We also found support for the relationship between PCE and PEB (only for males). We found support that PCE moderates the relationship between sense of obligation, third-party certification, eco-friendly behavior, and pro-environmental consumer behavior.

Based on the findings we recommend that dessert cafés should induce customers to take pro-environment actions through promotional efforts as well as by providing recycling instructions. Additionally, this study found that males showed stronger relationship between sense of obligation and pro-environment behavior while females showed stronger relationship between third-party certification and pro-environment actions. We assume that men receive higher sense of obligation due to dessert café's space characteristic as a public place while women concern more about third-party certification due to their collectivistic characteristics. Even though there was difference between male and female groups, sense of obligation and third-party certification affected pro-environment behavior in both groups. As a result, dessert cafés should establish a marketing strategy to inculcate sense of obligation to take pro-environmental actions and to effectively advertise their third-party certifications to customers.

Keywords: Pro-environmental behavior, Sense of obligation, Perceived effectiveness, Third-party certification

References: Available upon request

"Follow Me to Your Dream Destination": Behavioral Analysis of the Effects of Persuasion Disclosure and Number of Followers on Followers' Purchase Intention and Decision in Tourism: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

This research contributes to the current state of the literature by providing new insights into the effect of sponsored content posted by social media influencers (SMIs) and the impact of SMI follower counts on purchase intentions and decisions in the leisure context. Using a 2x3 between-subjects factorial design based on the current state of the art of social media influencing and an Instagram SMI setting, the experiment revealed that advertisement recognition and purchase intention have an inverse full serial mediation effect starting at the point of sponsorship disclosure and ending with the purchase decision. This is a novel finding in the leisure context, as reliable results in this line of research were previously lacking.

Most experimental designs in this field focus on purchase intention, as evaluating final decisions is rather difficult and costly to implement. This study introduced a typical setting from behavioral economics to operationalize purchase decisions in such a way that a clear choice had to be made. At the end of the study, the subjects were able to choose to keep the agreed-upon compensation or give it up for the chance to go on the promoted trip. This is a novel approach for the underlying line of research, tackling the intention-behavior gap and introducing a new method that goes beyond pure purchase intention and its inherent problems when measuring actual behavior.

Furthermore, the results show that higher SMI follower counts led to a stronger perception among the study subjects that the sender was indeed an SMI. In addition, this research shows that follower counts have a positive effect on whether the shared content is perceived as advertising. However, according to the Persuasion Knowledge Model (PKM), this negatively affects the subject's general perception of the advertisement as well as output variables such as purchase intention – what the central findings of this study are supporting.

These findings reveal numerous research gaps, serve as a reference point for future research efforts, and can help marketers design impactful SMI marketing campaigns that support future sales and marketing practices and outline innovative business models that use SMIs. For context, this approach was one of the first attempts in the still relatively young SMI research field to successfully prove the effects of influencer categorizations and sponsorship disclosure beyond classic operationalizations such as brand attitude and purchase intention, strengthening the findings in conjunction with actual – not just intended – purchase behavior.

Keywords: Social media influencer (SMI); Persuasion; Digital marketing; Sponsorship disclosure; Purchase decision; Advertisement recognition

References Available Upon Request

Improving Service Quality in Collaboration Consumption through Brand Image: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Collaborative consumption refers to consumers' shared ownership or access to certain goods and services, usually through online community platforms such as Airbnb (Hamari et al., 2016). Recent research has spent significant effort on studying collaborative consumption, and its effect on consumer perceptions and decision making (Wei et al., 2021). Whereas consumer engagement is an essential part of collaborative consumption, this topic has been under-researched. This study therefore aims to provide more insights on consumer engagement in collaborative consumption. Particularly, we explore the role of an important brand characteristic, brand image, on consumers' decision to engage with the brand.

An online survey was administered with customers who had ordered an accommodation through Airbnb. The results show that whether consumers are engaged with the platform brand depends on the type of brand image it is associated with. We further observe that consumer brand engagement drives both perceived authenticity and brand trust which eventually determine perceived service quality. Finally, self-construal is also examined as a moderating factor of brand trust and perceived authenticity to service quality.

There are some important theoretical and practical implications from our study. Unlike traditional brands, platform companies may find it hard to build brand attachment and loyalty because consumers are less likely to identify themselves with those brands. Our findings indicate that once a brand invests in its image, especially the hedonic aspect of it like fun and excitement, it will be easier for the brand to engage its customers. The study therefore points to the importance of building brand image among sharing economy brands. The study also confirms the positive impact of engagement on consumers' brand evaluations in the context of collaborative consumption. Finally, whereas other studies suggest the positive effects of brand trust and perceived authenticity, the present study shows that the effects significantly depend on customers' self-construal.

Keywords: Service quality; Brand image; Collaborative consumption; Consumer engagement

References Available Upon Request

Revisiting the Debate on the Preferred Length of Scales in Advertising Research: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Rating scales are commonly used to measure constructs that are not directly observable, such as attitudes. The existing research in the literature has informed us about having a good understanding of attitude measurement. Designing the appropriate number of scale points is one of the critical aspects of developing a measurement instrument. Yet, the length of rating scales is inconsistent across academic research and industry practice, as noted by Bergkvist and Langner (2017) and Bruner (1998).

The current study aims to discuss this topic in an advertising research context. In this study, we conduct an extensive literature review of direct self-report attitude measures, providing a thorough summary of the empirical evidence spanning from 1924 to 2021. Moreover, we examine articles published in the Journal of Advertising over the past ten years, with a focus on the length of rating scales used in attitude measurement. In other words, the current research focuses on examining a design choice that arises while designing closed-ended attitude questions with rating scales: the number of points for a rating scale. Our goal is to examine the current practice of measuring attitudes in the context of advertising and further address questions such as the number of scale points used by researchers to measure ad attitudes and the rationale behind their selection and use, as described in published articles.

The results of this analysis are generally consistent with prior studies. Similar to what was presented in Bergkvist and Langner (2017), this research showed that advertising researchers, in general, favor 7-point scales over other numbers, although the exact reason for this is not crystal clear. Furthermore, confirming what Bruner (1998) had identified, this study found that advertising researchers seldom explained or justified why they chose to use a particular rating scale. We present the key issues and propose several practical recommendations for future research.

Keywords: Attitude measurement; Length of scales; Justification; Reliability; Validity

References Available Upon Request

Short and Simple: How to Make Exciting and Eye-catching Videos: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the effects of visual complexity and scene cuts on consumers' attention during the dynamic process of video viewing. We further investigate attentional focus, a crucial component of narrative transportation, previously described as a feeling of being “hooked” and concentrated viewing of the content. The purpose of this study is to gain a better understanding of how attentional focus changes depending on the content of the video, and to provide insights to marketers for creating engaging video content. The findings of this study are important for marketers who want to create effective video content that captures and retains viewers' attention.

The current study employs eye tracking to measure viewers’ attention over time, as well as time series analysis- and computer vision methods to capture the dynamic effects of visual complexity and scene cuts on attention. These methods allow us to objectively track viewers’ attentional focus, and compute metrics of unstructured video content features on a frame-by-frame basis. Using the eye-tracking data, we compute an objective and time-specific metric of attentional focus by measuring the degree of attentional synchrony between viewers. The degree of attentional synchrony indicates how well attention is captured by the video, and it is associated with engaging visual narratives. We therefore hypothesize that attentional synchrony is a valid metric of viewer engagement over time, and we predict specific effects of visual complexity and scene cuts on this measure.

Our tentative findings show that viewer engagement positively affects ad liking and video memorability, and that attentional synchrony is a valid metric of viewer engagement over time. We further show that attentional synchrony predicts individual levels of viewer engagement, ad liking, and video memorability after a delay. Moreover, we also demonstrate that visual complexity decreases attentional synchrony, while scene cuts increase attentional synchrony.

The study's findings provide marketers with actionable guidelines for creating engaging video content. It also shows that the combination of computer vision and neuromarketing methods offers a powerful approach to studying audio-visual storytelling. The study is a proof of concept, demonstrating how these methods can be used to provide detailed insights into viewer responses and the dynamic effects of specific video content elements. The study contributes to the growing body of research on the intersection of marketing, neuroscience, and computer vision, and provides a promising avenue for future research in this area.

Keywords: Video; Eye-tracking; Narrative transportation; Attentional synchrony; Visual complexity; Scene cuts; Neuromarketing; Computer vision; Time series

References Available Upon Request

Receptivity to Personalized Digital Advertisements Scale Development and Validation: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

The evolution of digital platforms shifted the interest of consumers and brands from mass marketing to personalized marketing (Carufel, 2020; Orazi & Nyilasy, 2019). At the same time, digital platforms provide marketers with tools to gather individual information and customize and personalize their advertisements to appeal individually to consumers (Gupta et al., 2021). The digital media platforms further facilitate consumers in co-creating the experience by sharing their tastes and preferences with brands. Prior literature has further indicated that consumers like such advertisements (Orazi & Nyilasy, 2019; Tran et al., 2020). The literature also expresses concerns about personalized digital advertisements (Aguirre et al., 2015) related to privacy and other issues. Hence, understanding consumers' receptivity to such personalized advertisements is crucial from a managerial and academic perspective. While personalized digital advertisements are fairly common, there is a lack of research on them, especially on their acceptability and receptivity.

However, no valid and comprehensive scale exists to measure consumers' receptivity to personalized digital advertisements. In this research, we developed a 16-item scale for measuring consumers' Receptivity to Personalized Digital Advertisements (RPDA) that helps researchers measure consumers' readiness to accept such advertisements. We followed a six-step approach to establish the scale. We first conducted an exploratory qualitative study for item generation. Next, we performed a content validation, item purification, dimensionality, and reliability study. Finally, we conducted a study that established the nomological validity of RPDA and its relationship with an antecedent and a consequence. Finally, we conducted a study that demonstrated the generalizability of the scale in another country. Based on the study, we now refine the definition of Receptivity to Personalized Digital Advertisements as the extent to which consumers connect (relate) and intend to act (respond) positively to personalized digital advertisements.

It is possibly the first attempt to develop and validate an extensive scale to measure consumers' receptivity to personalized digital advertisements to the best of our understanding. This paper's significant contribution lies in developing and validating the RPDA scale to measure consumers' readiness to engage with personalized digital advertisements.

Keywords: Personalized digital advertisements; Scale development; Consumer receptivity; RPDA scale

References Available Upon Request

Irritation with Digital Advertisement: Scale Development and Validation

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ABSTRACT

Personalization of advertisements in digital marketing have proved to be effective as it provides the benefit of cost efficiency, forms consumer attitude, and drives behavioral intention (Maslowska et al., 2016). However, consumers exposed to personalized ads have shown unfavourable and negative attitude of irritation due to ad relevance and data privacy concerns (Baek & Morimoto, 2012). The negative attitude of irritation towards advertising has driven consumers to install ad blockers to avoid personalized digital ads completely (Brinson & Brit, 2021). Prior studies have measured irritation in the context of a specific platform or ad format, there is a need for a unified scale of irritation in the context of digital advertising. This study therefore attempts to develop a multi-dimensional scale, empirically measure irritation, and evaluate the factor structure of irritation with digital advertising.

We followed the standard scale development process suggested by Churchill (1979). As the first step to scale development, we operationalised the ad irritation construct using extant literature (Churchill et al., 1974). In study one we followed an inductive approach to item generation suggested by Hinkin (1995), to generate an adequate pool of items for Ad Irritation by conducting semi-formal in-depth interviews. In study 2 a self-administered questionnaire of 72 items was administered. A sample of 247 responses were collected, and exploratory factor analysis was conducted. In study 3, data was collected from 583 respondents and confirmatory factor analysis was performed. In the final study the authors conducted a second-order CFA for the Ad irritation model. The model comprised three first-order factors namely, Ad Exhaustion, Ad Frustration, and Ad Disturbance.

The authors conceptualize Ad Irritation as a three-dimensional construct that adds to the existing knowledge on Ad irritation by operationalising the construct Ad irritation into Ad Exhaustion, Ad Frustration, and Ad Disturbance. The conception of Ad Irritation follows Hinkin's (1995) inductive approach to scale development. The result of the scale development and validation process was a reliable, valid and parsimonious scale of 25 items to measure irritation towards ads on digital platforms. We conducted separate studies with varied respondent samples in order to build a reliable and valid scale. The results confirm the multidimensional nature of ad irritation construct. The empirical investigation performed in order to identify the measures of ad irritation contributes to theory by providing a comprehensive measure for irritation towards ads. Prior studies measured ad irritation on various platforms but lacked operationalising the construct and generalisability to the application of the measure. The current measure of irritation adds to a relatively unexplored area of great interest amongst academicians.

Keywords: Ad irritation; Scale development and validation; Inductive approach; Digital marketing

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Re-Approaching Brand-Centric Groups: Definitions, Forms and Terminology Issues: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Over the past two decades, there is a sharp and constant rise in studies examining brand-centric groups (Veloutsou & Ruiz Mafe, 2020), and advancing knowledge in the area is among the top research priorities in brand management research (Veloutsou & Guzmán, 2017). The literature uses different terms to portray brand-centric groups, such as brand communities, brand tribes and brand sub-cultures to label brand-centric social groups (Miliopoulou, 2021).

The existing research on brand-centric groups has three main shortcomings. First, the brand-centric terms are used interchangeably and there is no consensus in the definition and differences (Cova & Pace, 2006; Fournier & Lee, 2009), not allowing the development of research with high precision (Summers, 2001; Teas & Palan, 1997). Second, some researchers argue that they are reporting research on brand communities, but use non community members as respondents (i.e. Marbach et al., 2016; Weiger et al., 2019). Third the groups portrait as brand communities have or non brand-centric group members (i.e. Abosag et al., 2020; Hanson et al., 2019). A clear definition of each brand centric group type is needed.

This work aims to facilitate theorising, by interrogating the brand-centric concepts, and present their unsettled differences, clarifying their meaning, and presenting good, clear concept definitions. The analysis is based on a systematic literature review (Siddaway et al., 2019), as a response to the call to use this method in the context (Hook et al., 2018; Roy Bhattacharjee et al., 2022).

This work argues that all brand-centric groups have some common characteristics, namely that they are not geographically bound and their participants are characterised by high brand share of heart and share of mind that have the brand as a part of their self-expression. However, there are differences between these groups. In particular, brand communities is the most tight brand-centric group in terms of the members connections with a formal structure who have consciousness of a kind, specific rituals and traditions and sense of moral responsibility towards the brand to the brand community members. Brand tribes are a somewhat looser in terms of members connections brand-centric groups and brand sub-cultures are the most loose brand-centric grouping. Specific aspects of these differences are discussed in the full paper.

For researchers, the clear definition of the brand centric groups will facilitate theorising and developing clear research directions and informants/respondents recruitment. For marketers, the findings can help in the customisation of brand-centric group approaches and strategies (Bazaki & Veloutsou, 2010).

Keywords: Brand-centric groups; Systematic literature review; Definition; Conceptual; Brand sub-cultures; Brand tribes; Brand communities

References Available Upon Request

An Interdisciplinary-Informed Brand Experience Scale: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Experience represents the next frontier for consumers, and marketing managers. The purchase of experience, focuses on the act of doing, rather than the act of having (Kumar, 2022). This shift from materialism towards experiential consumption, reflects a change in consumers' priorities (Gilovich & Gallo, 2020). Given the importance and impact of brand experience, it is not surprising that there have been several measurement attempts (Biedenbach & Marell, 2010; Brakus et al., 2009; de Kerviler & Rodriguez, 2019; Junaid et al., 2019; Khan & Rahman, 2016; Roy et al., 2019; Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012; Schouten et al., 2007). In terms of operationalisation, these scales were not developed according to best practices, and are subject to numerous shortcomings. Following best practices is crucial to the brand experience literature, as it has already shown signs of a conceptual and credibility crisis, putting the domain at risk (Carù & Cova, 2003; Lee & Wang, 2020). This leaves the academic community without an adequate measure to capture the phenomena of brand experience, which this study aims to rectify.

Following well established procedures for scale development (Churchill, 1979; MacKenzie et al., 2011), this study followed four steps and collected five data sets to develop the brand experience scale. A systematic literature review in marketing, philosophy, and psychology was conducted. To aid the identification of the construct's dimensionality, and support item generation, focus groups and interviews were completed until theoretical saturation was achieved (Baker & Edwards, 2012). An expert panel was sought (Podsakoff & Podsakoff, 2011), who agreed with the proposed dimensionality of the brand experience scale. A pilot-test was recruited to identify and adjust possible issues with the design of the questionnaire (Saunders et al., 2016). Changes were made to enhance clarity. A scale development sample was recruited via Prolific Academic and executed in two stages. In stage one, respondents were invited to complete the preliminary survey, and those who passed the screening and qualification criteria were invited to complete the final survey. The KMO and Bartlett's reflect a high degree of usefulness and need for further testing. The EFA revealed similarity between items, thus some were eliminated. Overall, factors loaded strongly on three components; affective, sensory, and cognitive dimensions, each achieving a value higher than the 0.4 cut-off point (Hair et al., 2006), exhibiting good reliability. The CFA showed strong regression weights, with values that meet academic guidelines. Nomological validity of the scale was assessed by testing the psychometric properties of brand experience in relation to word-of-mouth. The model demonstrated excellent model fit. These results support the nomological validity of the brand experience scale, and indicates that the new scale is a reliable and valid instrument.

Keywords: Brand experience; Experiential consumption; Scale development; Experience economy; Interdisciplinary; Service experience; Customer experience; Consumption experience; Product experience

References Available Upon Request

That's (Not) My Kind of Robot! Trust in Human-Robot Interactions: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Intelligent robots are becoming increasingly embedded in social spaces giving rise to changes in social relation structures driven by our trust in such robots (i.e., human-robot trust). They have become increasingly widespread and taken on various roles in people's lives and work. Intelligent robots are becoming more human-like, assuming particular human roles, and developing new social relations with humans. However, it is less clear how trust has evolved in the process and its influences on user behavior such as adoption of AI. Intelligent robots have two distinctive features. First, they may be human-like in appearance, yet they are non-human beings (Mende et al., 2019), thus interpersonal trust perception may not fully capture the trust elements in the interaction between humans and robots. Second, they have the ability to interact with their surrounding environment including the user. Their embeddedness within the environment indicates intrusion into users' living spaces and environments (Čaić et al., 2018). Since user adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI) relies on their trust in robots, understanding the factors that drive human-robot trust is crucial for marketers to understand. Yet research in this area is sparse given the rapid rise of such intelligent robots. The new human-robot interaction environment has challenged the traditional conceptualization of trust, reshaping it into functional trust and embedding trust. As an advanced form of AI, intelligent robots present a unique human-robot interaction environment to review and advance theories of trust. Through sentiment analysis and survey research, we find consistent results that human-imitation perception of a robot attenuates user functional trust and enhances embedding trust, while human-likeness perception enhances user functional trust and weakens embedding trust; both trust elements facilitate adoption intention. We also find initial evidence that these effects are moderated by a robot's "social savvy" and anthropomorphic features. This article contributes to interdisciplinary AI research in several ways. Building on prior research which studies the antecedents and mechanisms of human-robot trust, this research explores and identifies new trust elements that arise in human-robot interactions. It also helps to develop a framework of user adoption for intelligent robots, which considers cognitive, behavioral and environmental factors. Ultimately we develop a framework which assists us in understanding why intelligent robots are adopted or rejected.

Keywords: Lateral exchange markets (LEMs); Risk; Power; Trust

References Available Upon Request

Uncovering the Unexplored Role of Feedback Types during Gamified Crowdsourcing Campaigns: Case of a Loss Situation: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Crowdsourcing has received a substantial academic and professional interest for its ability to generate a range of creative ideas at low cost (Roth, 2016). This practice often mobilized in the process of developing new products increasingly makes use of gamification mechanisms and dynamics to design playful platforms that stimulate participants' motivation and commitment to the co-creation activity (Huotari & Hamari, 2012). Gamification is based on the use of game elements in serious contexts (Detrding et al., 2011). The Mechanics, Dynamics and Emotion (MDE) framework developed by Robson et al. (2015) argues that deployed game mechanics such as points, badges, deadlines, rewards, ranking etc. influence the dynamics of games.While the competitive dynamic is the one most often implemented by platforms, it has often been a focus of protest for participants. Thus, produces few winners and many losers (Cova, 2011; Dujarier, 2008). Moreover, generate adverse effects, such as the demotivation of participants, which can go as far as disengagement from the co-creation activity and the platform (Siala & Amine, 2022).

Despite the increasing use of gamification, the pressures placed on the designers of crowdsourcing campaigns make the use of certain features, such as feedback on the quality of submitted proposals, costly. While feedback is a peripheral element for competitive structure platforms, it is nonetheless important for participants, as it is a means of information but also of recognition of the efforts and tasks accomplished by contributors (Afuah & Tucci, 2012). It enhances the sense of self-efficacy (Yang et al., 2021) and is an important lever in the generation of quality ideas (Camacho et al., 2019; Wooten & Ulrish, 2017).

By focusing on the loss situation of a gamified crowdsourcing campaign, we test in this research the impact of the feedback mechanics on the perceived value of the participants' experience to a competitive crowdsourcing campaign and its effect on their engagement with the platform and the co-creation activity.

Our results provide interesting contributions for institutes with crowdsourcing platforms or for brands that use crowdsourcing campaign organizers. We Suggest that gamified crowdsourcing platforms designed according to the competitive dynamic are therefore required to provide Task-Motivation Feedback & Task-Learning that triggers a learning and motivational process that fuels the improvement of participants' skills from the early stages of the campaign. Thus, to improve the value of loser's participants experience favoring their engagement towards the platform and the co-creation activity. The implementation of this system contributes to the development of close relationships and social links between the contributors and the platforms.

Keywords: Crowdsourcing; Gamification; Feedback; Value experience; Consumer engagement

References Available Upon Request

Consumption and Alternatives to Meat in Portugal: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

The unsustainable nature of current meat consumption levels has provoked an urgent need to explore viable alternatives. This study aims to investigate the perceptions of Portuguese consumers regarding meat consumption and meat alternatives. An exploratory approach was employed, using an online survey administered over a period of 8 days, with 384 participants providing their responses. The collected data underwent mixed-method analysis using NVivo 12 and SPSS software. The findings reveal that men have higher weekly meat consumption rates compared to women. The most consumed meats among participants were chicken, cow, pig, and veal. Interestingly, men also exhibited greater familiarity and knowledge about meat alternatives, including plant-based and insect-based options. Surprisingly, women tend to perceive these alternatives as healthier options than men. This study sheds light on the key characteristics associated with meat, emphasizing factors such as flavor, protein content, juiciness, satiating properties, and texture. The primary reasons reported for meat consumption were its taste, high protein content, its role as a staple food, and cultural consumption. Participants described meat alternatives as tasty, good, and healthy. However, several concerns were expressed regarding their relatively high cost. It is essential to acknowledge that the non-probabilistic and convenience-based sampling method employed in this study limits the generalizability of the findings. Future research ways should prioritize conducting on-site experiences that involve tasting meat alternatives. Additionally, the emergence of entomophagy, exemplified by the introduction of insect-derived products such as flour, represents a novel development within the Western world's exploration of meat substitutes. Considering the urgency of establishing sustainable food systems, understanding consumer perceptions and preferences regarding meat alternatives is crucial for facilitating a successful transition towards more sustainable dietary practices. By identifying consumer attitudes and motivations, policymakers, food producers, and researchers can develop strategies to promote and popularize sustainable meat alternatives, ultimately contributing to a more environmentally friendly and ethically conscious food landscape.

Keywords: Meat consumption; Sustainability; Entomophagy; Food; Edibles

References Available Upon Request

Non-fungible token game consumer investments: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

The global video game market is forecasted to expand and generate US$ 268.8 billion in 2025 (Clement, 2021). In terms of revenue mechanisms, game developers have been pivoting from existing and popular subscription-based pay-to-play to free-to-play models since the early 2000s which has led to a change in revenue compositions for game developers and simultaneously to a change in consumer (purchasing) behaviors (Hanner & Zarnekow, 2015). This is mainly driven by the fact that free-to-play games are monetized predominately through the purchase of virtual in-game items which can be classified as functional and non-functional items (Marder et al., 2019).

Concurrently, the gamification of decentralized finance and the rising popularity of non-fungible token (NFT), has ushered in the next revolution as we are now moving from a free-to-play to play-to-earn/ own models (a.k.a. GameFi) which allows monetizing the consumers time and assets (e.g., via liquidity mining, earning crypto-tokens and yield farming: Kiong, 2021). While several GameFi games have become highly popular, research in this area is still nascent (Fowler & Pirker, 2021; Jiao et al., 2021). That is why this research explores utilitarian and hedonistic factors driving consumer motivations and behavior, with a specific focus on the financial decision-making process, in NFT games. To achieve the research aim, this study employs in-depth interviews with players from one of the most popular NFT games, Axie Infinity.

This study provides support for existing hedonistic factors driving consumer motivations and behavior in traditional gaming environments (e.g., enjoyment and modification of the gaming experience) and utilitarian factors observed in crypto contexts (e.g., potential for monetary gains) and makes a contribution to the extant literature through the novel finding of social entrepreneurship as a motivational factor for NFT game investments. Suggestions for future research are provided.

Keywords: NFT; Financial decision making; Gaming; Future of work

References Available Upon Request

Social Media (In)Dispensability in Consumers' Life: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Social networks have become part of people's daily lives (Maier et al., 2015), revolutionizing how people communicate and interact (Wang et al., 2021). Social media brought users novel venues for socializing (Crosier et al., 2012), with updated and ubiquitous access to content generated by firms and peers. This global connectivity and socialization are attractive to users and firms (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). However, since 2011, evidence has pointed to fatigue as a significant enhancer of users' activity diminishing or abandoning social networks (Talwar et al. 2019), exacerbated after the Covid-19 pandemic (He & Liu, 2021). As a result, firms have been compelled to invest in social media to reach large audiences, create direct connections with customers, develop organic content or even get valuable insight about customers (Tiago and Veríssimo 2014). However, besides offering several benefits (Dollinger, 2015), social networks can promote negative behaviors with consequences for their users (Fox & Moreland, 2015), namely the fatigue of social networks (Talwar et al., 2019), leading users to show discontinuance intention or adopt alternative behaviors. This fatigue and disconnection, combined with the lower impact of firms' generated content compared to user-generated content (Santiago et al., 2022), led firms to question their investments in social media.

Aiming to help firms assess social media investments' relevance, this research explores the roots of users' well-being on social media, considering as antecedents of well-being the social media users' fatigue, discontinuance intention, and sharing fake news. An online survey was conducted two years after Covid-19 to unveil these dimensions. The data was analyzed through Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 3.3.3. In the estimated model, social media fatigue was the strongest determinant of social media discontinuance intention. This outcome is considered one of the main contributions of the present study, especially considering that social media fatigue is a dimension affected by internal and external factors, and its influence on social media discontinuance intention only received limited attention from previous research. The outcome also highlights fake news's impact on users' well-being. The path analysis of the relationship between relevant variables, stimulus variables, and the user's response showed that not all consumers could cope with fake news and social interaction overload and adopted a silent quitting position. However, findings also show that some users can address it positively. Thus, firms must focus on those with higher capabilities of leading with these different pressure forces on social media and try enhancing their relationships based on personalized and target content in diverse formats and platforms. Moreover, it should try to audit and adjust accordingly to meet customers' changing needs and preferences.

Keywords: Social media; Users' well-being; Fatigue; Fake news; Information overload; Discontinuance intention

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Sentiment Analysis of Grooming Messages Sent by Online Predators: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

The Internet provides a vast array of outlets for people to establish and maintain intimate or sexual relationships (Hernandez et al., 2021). Unfortunately, this also offers opportunities for sexual predators to target underage victims since the younger population is especially vulnerable to these online advances (Gámez-Guadix & Mateos-Pérez, 2019). Despite lengthy prison sentences and additional punishments, online sexual misconduct continues to increase especially on social media platforms. An estimate of at least 500,000 predators are online often with multiple online profiles (Child Crime and Prevention Center, 2021). Over 50% of those targeted are between the age of 12 and 15 (Child Crime and Prevention, Center 2021). Despite these inappropriate online behaviors, there is a lack of research in the marketing literature that addresses the problem of online predators and social media.

As such, the current research analyzes Facebook messages from a law enforcement sting operation that resulted in the arrest of 14 individuals who communicated with a law enforcement officer who they thought was an underage victim. Specifically, over 600 pages of 134 different individuals that communicated with a fake profile are reviewed. R was used for sentiment analysis of the messages between the 'victim' and the adult males. Current insights extend previous research on predator behavior and offer a glimpse into the emotional tone used by predators to groom victims online. Overall, predators seem to utilize positive valence to communicate with victims while trying to elicit a sense of trust. Furthermore, predators applied numerous strategies during the grooming, including very graphic sexual messaging.

The findings of the current research can guide education programs on social media safety. In addition, suggestions are issued for policymakers to prevent predators from communicating with victims online. Future research should examine additional social media platforms beyond Facebook to identify platform-specific predator behavior. Lastly, messages of actual victims should be explored in addition to surveying victims.

Keywords: Online predators; Online grooming; Sentiment analysis; Facebook

References Available Upon Request

Look at Me Giving: Luxury Motivations and Charitable Fundraisers: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

This research examines how luxury motivations can influence charitable giving through the use of three luxury motivation scenarios and their influence of consumers' donations intentions. Furthermore, we wanted to explore the relationship between luxury motivation and donation intentions as mediated by Clary and Snyder's (1999) functions of charitable behavior. There is support in the literature that charitable behaviors are not always driven by self-sacrifice and altruism but can motivated by more self-serving needs (Bock et al., 2018; White & Peloza, 2009). Costly Signaling Theory (Griskevicius et al., 2010) was used as it offers that status needs can influence pro-social behaviors because publicly visible actions enable one to enhance their reputation (Hardy & Van Vugt, 2006; Van Vugt & Hardy, 2009) by engaging in behaviors that benefit others (Semmann et al., 2005; Wedekind & Braithwaite, 2002).

Respondents were solicited through a Qualtrics US panel. A total of 309 usable responses were available for analyses. The respondents were asked to consider an important charity to them was holding a fundraising drive with an event at the end to thank donors. Respondents were randomly assigned to one of three charitable event scenarios (a bandwagon scenario where all donors were invited and recognized, a snob scenario where all donors were invited but only the top 10% of donors were recognized, and an inconspicuous luxury scenario where only the top 10% of donors were invited). With all scenarios, the respondent was asked to assume that they could make the financial donation they desired.

CFA analyses indicated a good model fit. Using the PROCESS macro, we found that social motivations indirectly affected the relationship between those who are influenced by the bandwagon effect as well as those who prefer to be inconspicuous in their donation intentions. Similarly, protection motivations indirectly influenced the snob effect on donation intentions and enhancement motivations affected those who preferred to remain inconspicuous in their donation intentions.

This research contributes to the literature by illustrating that Costly Signalling Theory can impact pro-social behaviors beyond sustainability in impacting charitable giving. The results also suggest that all three types of events can be effective depending on the audience. For charitable organizations, these findings suggest care must be taken in creating and promoting charitable events. Consumers with higher incomes, motivated by luxury, are an important donor market. But these luxury motivations can vary and are influenced by different charitable functions. Through considering these motivations and functions when planning fundraisers, charities may better reach their target donors and raise needed funds.

Keywords: Bandwagon effect, Social motivations, Intentions to donate, Attitude towards charity, Luxury motivations

References Available Upon Request

When Internal Marketing Is the Key Performance of the Service Experience: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Service companies are tackling challenges every day. The service organization must take the right decision even in the most critical situations. Marketing is dealing with these situations and challenges, keeping the service performance through the customer satisfaction, a priority. Focusing on the human capital development (Baran, 2021) and the key concepts of human resources (Pocztowski, 2018) became a priority since services' employees are connecting the internal environment of an organization to the external world, while being responsible for these two parts (Agnihotri et al., 2014). These thoughts brought a new marketing orientation that is the Internal Marketing (IM). Indeed, it seems important to study the bearer of the message and the image of the service company that is the service employees, having sometimes more focus on the frontline staff. Considering that the role of "frontline service personnel", has become a differentiating element, this research therefore considers the IM as an alternative to the service performance and examines the relationships among Internal Marketing, Frontline service employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction. The study also, attempts to conceptualize and develop a measurement scale of the "Internal Marketing" concept.

The concept of internal marketing and its measurements are investigated in this research; qualitative and quantitative analysis are combined to accomplish the objective of the study. Thus, the recommendations of Churchill (1979) revised by Gerbing and Anderson (1988) are followed. In this research, a dyadic analysis is applied to test relationships between variables from different populations, having regular contact: Bank advisors and their customers. Thinking that contact employee satisfaction can be expressed through several aspects of the job, we used the scale of Weiss et al., (1967), the short version of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ). Customer satisfaction was measured through the scale of Oliver (1997). A two-dimensional measuring scale with 9 items was developed and validated in the context of financial service sector.

This research serves several theoretical interests, first it offers a wide reliable and valid measure to fill the gaps in the current literature on the internal marketing. Existing scales do not fully capture the different dimensions of IM concept. This research goes further with the question of whether internal marketing, through gratitude and mentoring dimensions, impacts the service frontline staff providing customer satisfaction. Future research studies and limitation are mentioned here. The internal marketing scale developed and tested in the French financial context needs to be further validated and confirmed in other contexts; this could be a path for future research.

Keywords: Internal marketing; Job satisfaction; Customer satisfaction; Service performance

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Emotional Labour Online: Does the Old Wine Fit into the New Bottle: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Emotional labour has long been a defining feature of frontline service jobs. Employees constantly need to engage in acting strategies to display desirable organizational emotions during service encounters. Although a huge amount of research has been conducted to understand the implications of adopting emotional labour strategies in the traditional in-person or voice-to-voice service contexts, little is known about their implications in the online context. Responding to this gap, the current study is one of the first to look into the implications of deep acting online and contrast it within the traditional (i.e., call-centre) context.

Cross-sectional data were collected from frontline service employees working in one of the Chinese service branches of a Fortune 100 consumer goods company. Half of the sample served customers in a call-centre environment (i.e., voice-to-voice), and the other half interacted with customers online (e.g., in the brand community and e-commerce website).

The key findings from the study reveal that the service interface serves as a boundary condition for the preventative effect of deep acting on emotional exhaustion. Specifically, the results suggest that engaging in deep acting seems more effective for employees who have direct voice-to-voice interactions with customers than for online employees.

Going beyond previous emotional labour studies that only study employees serving in traditional service contexts (i.e., face-to-face and call-centre), the current study contributes to the literature by providing refreshing insights into how employees engage in emotional la-bour in the novel online service context. The differential effects of deep acting found in the current research suggest that the previous findings regarding emotional labour may not be generalizable to the novel online service context. These findings highlight the importance of considering online encounters as a unique context in future emotional labour research. In practice, the results suggest that service managers facilitate the exchange of “human touch” between customers and employees online.

Key words: Emotional labour; Deep acting; Frontline employees; Service interface

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Branding with Sound: Examining the Role of Sonic Branding in the Brand Building Process: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Brands have long enlisted visual branding elements, including the brand's visual logo, to identify and communicate the personality and values of the brand. This research examines how organizations are working to shape how consumers perceive their brand by creating a sonic brand. Sonic branding, also referred to as sound, audio or acoustic branding, is the process of designing an auditory equivalent of a graphic representation of a brand that embodies the brand's essence and attributes. This research uses healthcare as a context to examine how sonic brands influence consumer emotional reactions, trust and perceptions of a healthcare provider. Study 1 tested the use of a sonic brand/logo for a provider of cancer care, a consumption context that might potentially evoke negative emotions. Findings demonstrated that the presence of a sonic logo helped to reduce the experience of negative emotions. In addition, a sonic logo helped to engender trust in the provider. Results from Study 1 also revealed that for consumers who were less health conscious, a sonic logo served as a peripheral cue by enhancing perceptions of competence and empathy for the healthcare provider. Study 2 tested how a sonic logo would influence decision making for another affect-rich consumption context, mental healthcare.

Findings suggest that the presence of a sonic logo made individuals less anxious about seeking help for a mental health challenge and helped foster trust in the care provider. In addition, similar to Study 1, individuals who were less engaged in their mental health perceived the care provider as more empathetic when a sonic logo was present. However, the presence of a sonic logo did not enhance perceptions of competence in the care provider as it did in Study 1. This may be partly due to how consumers view the role of a psychotherapist. Findings from this research suggest that sonic logos can appeal to consumer emotions and perceptions about a brand. As brands consider the importance of marketing to the senses, sonic branding becomes an important tool for appealing to consumers. Connecting emotionally with the consumer has become even more important as reports indicate that Gen Z and Millennials tend to support companies based on personal feelings and values (5WPR Consumer Report, 2020). Furthermore, cultivating trust in healthcare is essential. Finding ways to build trust as a consumer interacts with the brand should be a key focus for healthcare organizations. Ultimately, employing sonic branding in communications and interactions with the consumer might help to improve the brand experience and increase the efficiency, efficacy, and engagement of branded communications.

Keywords: Sonic branding; Healthcare; Trust; Emotions

References Available Upon Request

Using Ambient Color to Nudge Children Toward Healthier Food Choices: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

The ambience at a food store or restaurant can influence the types of food items chosen. Color is a relevant ambient factor at almost all shopping and dining environments. Extant studies on the effects of ambient color have mainly focused on color associated with décor such as tablecloths and planters. Studies related to the effects of color on food-related outcomes have examined how color directly associated with food items (e.g., the plate a food is served on) influences food responses. Additionally, most studies examining the effects of color in the context of food examine adults' responses. These studies show that red (e.g., plates, circles surrounding a food) leads adults to avoid unhealthy foods. The present research examines how color in the ambience (e.g., on walls) influences children's food choices in school cafeterias. Three field studies show that children are more likely to choose unhealthy options when ambient color is red (vs. non- red). First, a field study at an elementary school shows that a greater proportion of unhealthy items are sold when the walls of the cafeteria at the point of purchase are covered with red papers than when they are covered with blue papers or left uncovered. Then, study 2 replicates the effects of red ambient color with a month long, natural field experiment at a high school. Finally, study 3 (another field study) examines the moderating effects of health motivation and shows that the effects of red ambient color are stronger when health motivation is high. Collectively, the results of these three field studies contribute to the literature on atmospherics by documenting the effects of red ambient color on food choices. Additionally, the findings contribute to color in context theory by showing that the effects of red color on food choices depends on the type of stimulus color is conveyed through. From a practical perspective, our results suggest that organizations wanting to nudge healthy food choices should avoid using red in the ambience.

Keywords: Ambient color; Food choices; Healthy/unhealthy choices; Children's choices; Red color

References Available Upon Request

Effects of Sampling Healthy versus Unhealthy Foods on Subsequent Choices of Other Foods: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Food sampling at retail stores and restaurants has been a widely prevalent phenomenon mainly because sampling expenses often provide better returns on sales than traditional forms of advertising (Horovitz, 2011). These food samples vary considerably in terms of their healthfulness levels. We examine how sampling healthy versus unhealthy foods might influence subsequent food purchases regarding caloric content and healthfulness levels.

Prior studies on food sampling have mostly examined the effects of sampling a particular product on the subsequent choice of that focal product (Biswas et al., 2014; Nowlis & Shiv, 2005; Shiv & Nowlis, 2004). Studies have also examined the reward-seeking effects of sampling (Wadhwa et al., 2008) and several factors that influence choices between healthy and unhealthy options (Biswas et al., 2019; Shiv & Fedorikhin, 1999). However, to our knowledge, no research has examined the effects of sampling healthy versus unhealthy food items on subsequent *choices* of *other* food items. We make an important step in examining how the healthfulness level of a sampled food item might influence subsequent choices when choosing from a set of healthy and unhealthy options.

Five experiments, two conducted in the field and three conducted in the lab, demonstrate interesting results for the effects of sampling a healthy versus unhealthy food item on subsequent choices and total calorie purchases. With actual sampling, we found effects consistent with a moral licensing account whereby sampling a healthy (vs. an unhealthy) item led to a greater subsequent choice of unhealthy items. The effects seem to be driven by feelings of virtuousness induced by sampling the healthy item.

Our research contributes to prior research on sampling. While prior research has examined the effects of sampling on evaluation/choices related to the sampled product (e.g., Biswas et al., 2010; Biswas et al., 2014; Nowlis & Shiv, 2005), the present research examines the effects of sampling on subsequent choices of *other* products. Our findings have strong implications for consumer health and wellbeing, especially given worldwide concerns related to unhealthy eating.

The results of our studies highlight that while sampling a healthy item at a store, restaurant, or food court might seem prudent, paradoxically, it can give the customer the self-rewarding indulgence to unknowingly end up purchasing more unhealthy items. Our results suggest that having unhealthy (vs. healthy) samples might be the healthier option.

Keywords: Retail sampling; Healthy and unhealthy foods; Product choice; Field experiments

References Available Upon Request

Effects of Corporate Response Patterns in Social Networks on Brand Attitudes and Purchase Intentions of Observing Consumers: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Service encounters that have taken place face-to-face for a long time, nowadays increasingly happen online in social networks. Through this shift of communication that has become the "new normal", more and more companies are present in social networks and need to know how to reply to consumer comments. In addition, companies that are active in social networks need to know how their replies affect not only commenters, but also observers, other virtually present social network users, who have written no comment and are only following interactions between the company and other users.

This study examines the effects of three corporate response patterns in social networks (replies to all consumer comments, replies to selected positive and negative consumer comments, and replies to only negative consumer comments) on brand attitudes and purchase intentions of such observers.

We draw on the accessibility-diagnosticity theory and argue that company replies represent a sort of information that is equally accessible for all social media users, but might be more or less diagnostic depending on the response pattern used. Consequently, the way how a company responds to other consumers' comments can make information accessible, reduce uncertainty and simplify the evaluation of the company by providing signals for observing consumers.

For our study, we created videos showing consumer comments and corporate replies that successively popped up to simulate the vivid character of social networks. We used the context of a fictitious stay at a hotel. The study was based on three experimental groups according to the response pattern (accommodative responses to all comments, to selected comments, or to only negative comments), and we used a between-subjects design.

Our findings show that observers react more positively when the company replies to all or selected positive and negative consumer comments than in the case of replies to only negative comments. Addressing only negative comments might lead to observers' impressions that the social network is used as another complaint channel where a company only recognizes and replies to negative consumer comments. Replying not only to negative, but also to (some) positive consumer comments demonstrates a company's interest in true interactions with many consumers, regardless of whether their inputs are positive or negative.

Our findings provide social media managers with guidelines for a sound response strategy in social networks that triggers favorable attitudinal and behavioral reactions of observing consumers and thus help companies to further leverage the potential of social network communications.

Keywords: Social media communication; Response pattern; Network; Diagnosticity

References Available Upon Request

"At the Beginning, I've Taken Things Lightly But with Time Fear Came…" Emotions Evolution at Different Stages of the Health Crisis and the Role of Media Literacy: Insights from Online Multi-Image Elicitation (OMIE): An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

During the COVID-19 crisis, a large amount of information was disseminated by different sources and actors with varying levels of expertise and intent. The fight against unintentional or intentional misinformation represents a major health and societal issue in containing the epidemic (Lee & Ramazan, 2021). Thus, the fallout from the pandemic had to be mitigated not only by government policies and regulations, but also by individuals' emotional and behavioral responses to the informational messages received.

Using the online multi-image elicitation method (OMIE) (Ganassali, 2016), we explored how individuals' emotions evolved during different stages of the pandemic as well as the role of the media literacy in generating such emotional statements. Data collection was done post hoc, specifically after the vaccine was discovered. It was a matter of appealing to the respondents' memories to re-experience the health crisis. 413 responses were collected from a sample of people residing in France, equally composed of men and women.

The results show that the emotional states expressed during the different stages of the health crisis have evolved from indifference to extreme anxiety before a return to normal. This could be explained by the misinformation or contradictory information disseminated in the media about the spread of the virus. Doubt was omnipresent throughout the management of the crisis. It was pointed out that these emotions were expressed differently by the two genders. At the onset of the virus, women reacted emotionally, while men's attention was more focused on the rational aspect reflected in the content broadcast in the media. The indifference towards the virus was replaced by concern and doubt when the pandemic reached Europe. The dominant reactions to the discovery of the vaccine are doubt about its efficacy, which is more pronounced among men than women, and hope and satisfaction, regardless of gender. Concerning the literacy role in explaining emotional states, results indicate that the most informed profiles welcomed the arrival of the vaccine positively, while the most illiterate profiles showed great reluctance. From a managerial point of view, communication have to take into account the gender in the development of preventive messages, especially while men attach more importance to the quality of the information communicated, women turn out to be more sensitive to emotional aspects. This research has some limitations that can be addressed in future research. The role of media literacy on the evolution of emotional states during three key phases of the pandemic (lockdown, vaccination and the health pass) could be enriched by studying the emotional states during the peak of contamination or even during the second confinement.

Keywords: COVID-19 crisis; Emotions; Media literacy; Gender; OMIE

References Available Upon Request

Understanding The Travel Constraints Faced by Retirees in The Context of Ageing: Development of a Measurement Scale: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Senior tourism has been identified as an essential source of growth for the tourism industry in the 21st century. To tap the potential associated with the retired travelers' segment, tourism professionals need to have a good understanding of their travel behavior. This involves understanding what motivates them to travel at old age, but also what might prevent them from traveling.

Among the motivations mentioned by older travelers are: escape from the constraints of daily life, relaxation, the practice of pleasant activities, the need for socialization, physical activity, well-being (Cleaver et al., 1999; Guilbert & Abdullah, 2004). However, access to these various categories of benefits is only possible if retirees are able to travel when they desire to. Travel constraints are approached in this research through the framework of the leisure constraints theory. Three main categories of travel constraints in seniors are identified (McGuire et al., 2013; Shoemaker, 2000). The first one, intrapersonal constraints, stems from the physiological and psychological influence of ageing. The second category, interpersonal constraints, consists in the lack of social resources. The third category of constraints is structural, including the lack of financial resources, time and information, and the fear of perceived travel risks.

However, these studies presented a certain number of limits (samples included a significant proportion of professionally active respondents, etc.). Based on these observations, Moal (2020) conducted a qualitative approach based on 15 interviews (retired French adults aged 60 to 85). Results obtained led to the identification of ten types of travel constraints structured in three main categories: intrapersonal constraints (physiological and psychological impact of ageing, lack of communication resources), interpersonal constraints (lack of someone to travel with and not wanting to go on holiday alone), structural constraints (parting from pet, lack of financial resources, lack of availability, fear of leaving home unattended, and inadequate travel offer).

A scale for measuring the travel constraints for French retirees was created. A qualitative study was conducted in France (15 depth interviews with retired adults) to generate a sample of items. To validate the factorial structure for the measurement scale, two quantitative surveys were conducted with persons aged 60 to 85. At the end of these analyses, we can confirm that an 8 dimensions with 26 items scale of travel constraints is relevant for French retirees. A confirmatory factor analysis was then performed in order to test the stability of the scale structure. Indicators confirmed the good reliability, convergent validity, discriminant validity and nomological validity of our measurement instrument.

Understanding travel constraints is necessary in the context of ageing to help tourism professionals to adapt their offer, hence recommendations have been provided for that purpose in this paper.

Keywords: Travel; Ageing; Constraint; Retired; Older adult

References Available Upon Request

The Influence of Live Streaming on Live Streamers' Travel Behavior: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Live streaming has been increasingly used by online influencers, travel bloggers, travel agencies and tourism destination marketing organisations (Liu et al., 2022). This is becoming an emerging channel for creating and disseminating travel experiences, selling products and promoting destinations (Xie et al., 2022). Through live streaming platforms, anyone can live stream self-created content or watch other people's live streams in real time. Content creators use live streaming to share their travel activities, capture the destination landscape, and interact with others in real time (Deng et al., 2021). Previous studies indicated that live streaming can provide the public with immediacy, intimacy, authenticity and interactivity by sharing online tourism experience (Lin et al., 2022). However, empirical studies on the motivations of live streamers' travel behavior on live streaming platforms are currently under-explored. This research aims to explore the phenomenon of live streaming in the tourism sector and examine its influence on the live streamer's travel behavior. The five research objectives are: to explore the motivations and travel performance of live streamers in tourism; to develop a typology of live streamers based on their motivations to engage in tourism live streaming; to investigate the process of C2C real-time value co-creation of the live streamer with other stakeholders by drawing on the Porter-Lawler model; to examine its influence on the live streamer's travel behavior; and to examine the factors influencing live streamers' intention to engage in tourism live streaming.

The study follows a mixed-method research approach. The first three objectives are to be fulfilled by collecting qualitative data from semi-structured interviews with individuals who have done live streaming in the last two years and analyzing this data using thematic analysis. The fourth and fifth objectives are to be fulfilled by adopting a quantitative approach, employing a questionnaire to collect quantitative data and analyzing with structural equation modelling. This research has three potential theoretical contributions. First, it will provide the meaning, types and characteristics of live streamers in the tourism sector. Second, this research will demonstrate the process of C2C real-time value co-creation. Third, by examining the factors that influence live streamers' intention to engage with tourism live streaming, this research helps to explain the relationship between live streaming and live streamers' travel behavior.

Keywords: Live streamer; Travel behavior; Co-creation; Value; Customer to customer

References Available Upon Request

Senior Tourists' Value Co-Creation: A Customer-Dominant Logic Perspective: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Along with the population ageing, societies worldwide start to pay extensive attention to various approaches that could enhance seniors' quality of life. The current study aims to explore the value co-creation process between senior tourists and different participants in achieving active ageing. The emphases will be given to the different types of value co-creation that senior tourists take in the process and the routines that values could be jointly generated with different groups.

This study follows an interpretivism paradigm, and in-depth interview was adopted to generate rich primary data from individuals. Bournemouth, which located on the southern coast of England, is a well-known and award-winning seaside destination for seniors (Giousmpasoglou & Hua, 2020) and was selected as the study site. There were two studies conducted, one on the demand side with the Senior Tourist group with 31 interviewees and the other one on the supply side with tourism Service Providers with 16 interviewees. The two studies harnessed insights from both sides of value co-creation.

Six themes emerged from the interviews regarding the value of participating in tourism activities for senior tourists, namely: enjoyment, connectedness, mental vitality, independence, sense of belonging and self-esteem. The six themes were further categorised as functional, social and spiritual levels. The above six themes of seniors' active ageing process can be further divided into continuum-oriented and development-oriented activities. Continuum- (service provider led) and development- (senior tourists led) oriented active ageing values could both be co-created between senior tourists and service providers, but the required efforts from both sides are different (Durrande-Moreau et al., 2012). Interview results concluded that senior tourists could interact with service staff, peer tourists, other tourists, locals, service providers and policy makers in tourism, and jointly create a wide variety of values of active ageing.

By focusing on the value co-creation process from a Customer-Dominant Logic perspective, this study is amongst the first attempts to comprehensively illustrate senior tourists' active ageing through co-creation. It challenges the unified and homogenous assumption regarding the efforts from different co-creating participants and considers the value co-creation in a dynamic and interactive manner. It also provides empirical pathways to support social inclusion and active ageing by engaging service providers, communities, and government policy makers.

Keywords: Senior tourist; Value co-creation; Customer-Dominant Logic; Active ageing

References Available Upon Request

Hotel Guest Experience and Negative Word of Mouth: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Hospitality industry is dramatically influenced by electronic Word-of-Mouth. Litvin et al., (2008) defined e-WOM as "all informal communications directed at consumers through internet-based technology related to the usage or characteristics of particular goods and services or their sellers". Previous research revealed the relationship between service quality and word of mouth behaviour in different service sectors such as health care industry (Chaniotakis et al., 2009), banks (Choudhury & Koushiki, 2014), and hotels (Santika et al., 2020). Henning et al., (2004) identified the factors of platform assistance, venting negative feelings, concern for other consumers, extraversion, social benefits, economic incentives, helping the company, and advice seeking as the constructs of e-WOM behaviour. This study proposes that tangibles, empathy, reliability as service quality associations triggers visitors to spread negative e-WOM.

This research investigated the dimensions of hotel service quality which motivate hotel guests to publish negative electronic word of mouth (e-WOM). For the purpose of this study 5 hotels in Singapore were selected for data collection purpose. Survey questions were adapted from previous studies. Surveyed data of 200 respondents were analysed using confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modelling (SEM).

The findings revealed that tangibles, empathy, and reliability positively triggers visitors to spread negative e-WOM, motivated by their desire to help the other travellers and venting negative feelings. The research highlights the importance of service quality in the context of hotel marketing. This study contributes to hospitality marketing literature by investigating the role of hotel service quality in negative e-WOM formation. Findings show that tangibles have the largest effect on negative e-WOM formation. It highlights the importance of tangibles to manage e-WOM. Finally, the findings emphasize the importance of e-WOM in the hotel industry and provide practical implications for the marketers to manage online reviews. Future research could be expanded to investigate other service quality factors.

Keywords: e-WOM; Service quality; Marketing; Hospitality

References Available Upon Request

Sales Promotion and the Role of Framing: The Special Case of Promotional Product Offers (PPOs): An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Promotional product offers (PPOs) are among the most popular forms of consumer-oriented sales promotion. However, little is known about the impact of salient promotion characteristics in different time periods and the effects of framing. This paper provides a literature review and puts forward research propositions regarding two characteristics: desirability and relatedness.

This paper examines the impact of PPOs in promotion time periods and post-promotion time periods and the effects of framing. It extends the literature on the impact of sales promotion and sheds light on the importance of two promotion characteristics (i.e., desirability of the sales promotion and relatedness of the sales promotion to the product) (DelVecchio et al., 2006). It draws on principles derived from Mandler's Schema Incongruity Theory as a way of investigating the effects of congruent and incongruent levels of desirability in the promotion time periods. It uses principles of memory derived from Spreading Activation Theory as a way of examining the carryover effects of different levels of relatedness in the post-promotion time periods (Buil et al., 2013; Chandon et al., 2000; Lee & Schumann, 2004; Meyers-Levy & Tybout, 1989; Yoon, 2013).

Kahneman and Tversky's Prospect Theory is used as a way of helping to clarify the effects of framing PPO promotions (Kahneman, 2011; Tversky & Kahneman, 1981). Framing effects refer to the idea that consumers respond differently to different descriptions of the same information (Cain et al., 2021; Diamond & Johnson, 1990; Lee & Yi, 2019; Raghubir, 2004). This topic is critical to promotion decision-makers, yet it has received minimal research attention. How information is presented about a promotion can affect its success. An important question considered in this paper is: In promotional product offers, is there a problem with emphasizing the PPO rather than the product? This paper is believed to be the first to put forward research propositions regarding the framing effects of different levels of promotion desirability and relatedness, and whether the effects will have a beneficial or detrimental influence on consumer satisfaction with the product.

Keywords: Promotional product offers; Consumer sales promotion; Desirability of the sales promotion; Relatedness of the sales promotion to the product; Promotion and post-promotion time periods; Framing effects

References Available Upon Request

Ad Typicality Judgments of Creative Television Ads: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to better understand the role consumers' judgments of typicality play in the processing of creative television advertising. This is a vital undertaking because consumers' judgments of typicality are used in judgments of originality—a key dimension of creative ads (Rosengren et al., 2020; Smith et al., 2007). Advertising practitioners typically regard originality as the principal dimension of advertising creativity. Researchers have studied originality as divergence, novelty, unexpectedness, and newness (Lehnert et al., 2014). While research has emerged about originality, such research has not addressed the implicit role of typicality in judgments of ads deemed to be original. In this regard, researchers have not offered rich explanations regarding the antecedents of ad typicality judgments, or the complex effects of ad-typicality judgments regarding attitude toward the ad. This study addresses these issues and offers new understanding for such phenomena related to ad typicality.

In pursuit of a more complete understanding of ad-typicality judgments in television-ad processing, this study includes a large-sample evaluation of the focal model. The study develops the Ad Match scale for ad typicality judgments and highlights the valenced nature of such judgments and their differing effects on attitude toward the ad. Importantly, this Ad Match scale allows a respondent to assess typicality using whatever schema that the respondent would access at that time of exposure to the ad.

This study focused on ad typicality judgments in television ad processing and highlighted the role of Ad Match and its antecedents in the construction of attitude toward the ad. Our research makes five contributions as follows: (1) we develop a scale to measure ad typicality called Ad Match and examine its psychometric properties; (2) we theoretically and empirically demonstrate the moderating roles of brand familiarity and ad familiarity on the relationship between Ad Match and attitude toward the ad; (3) we conceptualize the seminal sources of ad typicality judgments beginning with expectations for product category advertising that serve as antecedents of cognitive and affective responses; (4) we introduce the Ad Expectation constructs, develop scales to measure them, establishing their psychometric properties and their durability over time; and (5) we propose a framework for understanding the relationship between typicality and attitude toward the ad that helps resolve the conflicting findings in the literature.

Keywords: Creative ads; Ad typicality; Ad match; Ad expectations; Feeling expectations; Ad theme expectations

References Available Upon Request

Online Advertising, Youth Attitude and Purchase Intentions: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Advertising has been considered as one of the most important and imperative means of communicating information about a product under marketing. It covers a mass number of people in a very effective manner leaving a considerable impact on the minds of the consumer so that he gets influenced to purchase a product. With the onset of the 21st century, developing economies have also kept pace with global standards in terms of information and technology. Indian consumers have already been introduced to this technology revolution and are now progressing further with digitalization & empowering influence. This has been observed in terms of online advertisements, which are now influencing consumers attitudes towards online purchase intentions. This study examines the attitude of youth towards online advertising and its influence on their purchase Intentions. In the present study, descriptive research design is used. Data were collected using survey research and hypotheses were tested for the hypothetic-deductive method. The factors related to youth attitude towards online advertisements and purchase intentions were extracted from literature and were confirmed using confirmatory factor analysis. To understand the "attitude towards the online advertising" it is significant to see the awareness about them. Consumers' attitude towards online advertising was measured through seven different aspects. Structural equation modeling was used to measure the influence of these factors on the purchase intentions of youth. The results demonstrate that the factors that positively influenced youth behavior were security and privacy risk, social role and image, entertainment, credibility, and assurance. There are few studies in this area in the context of emerging markets. This study assists advertisers in understanding the level of influence of various elements, which means the ranking of important elements that influence the attitude of a consumer towards online advertisement and the weight it holds. The study adds to the body of knowledge in the field of digital marketing, online advertising where one tends to develop an understanding of consumers especially the youth how and why they behave differently in the given situation It provides empirical evidence that despite the fact we are purchasing in the virtual environment, what are motivators which tends to influence our decision of choosing it a new medium to transact. The conceptual model and hypotheses derived in this study are original and novel.

Keywords: Attitude; Online advertisement; Purchase intention; Structural equation modeling; Youth

References Available Upon Request

Impact of Brand Coolness and Virtual Presence Following a Product Failure: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

In 2021 the home fitness giant Peloton, recalled its two highest selling treadmills (Tread+ and Tread) in response to an urgent warning by the U.S Consumer Product Safety Commission for people to stop using the machines. In multiple countries, dozens of injuries were reported (and one child fatality) that were linked to the Tread+ treadmills. Peloton apologized, recalled 125,000 machines, and promised to refund all affected customers. The aftermath of the product recalls saw the firm's stock price lose over 40% of its value.

Research has found that product failures result in negative impacts for the firm including increased conversion rates, lower purchase and brand usage intentions (Hollebeek et al., 2014), negative brand evaluation (So et al., 2016), lower brand satisfaction (Bowden, 2009), brand trust (So et al., 2016), brand commitment (Kim et al., 2008), self-brand connection (Harrigan et al., 2018).

This research investigates the role of Brand Coolness in product-failure-recovery efforts. We manipulate brand coolness asking respondents to recall a cool (uncool) brand and then use that brand name in the product harm failure (no failure) manipulation. Respondents in the failure condition read a scenario about running shoes that caused them shin splints, while the no failure manipulation saw that the shoes met their expectations. We measured post-scenario trust, as well as the participants intentions to avoid that brand in future purchases.

We find that (i) product harm failures increase brand avoidance directly, as well as mediated by trust. We also find (ii) that brand coolness mitigates the impact of product harm on brand avoidance. Finally, we conduct a split sample structural equation model to investigate the process through which product harm failures increase brand avoidance: for uncool brands, product harm decreases trust, which increases brand avoidance; for cool brands, there is no significant mediation through trust.

Our research contributes to the brand coolness literature, extending the knowledge regarding brand coolness and how it can mitigate negative events for a firm. Second, most research that has investigated product failures has used product recalls as a proxy. This research adds to the scant research investigating consumer response to product HARM situations. Finally, our process analysis shows that for uncool brands, consumer trust is reduced by the event, and importantly that perceptions of brand coolness seem to insulate the firm from the degradation of trust. Future research will extend this work to look at other individual difference variables and how they may enhance or diminish our findings.

Keywords: Brand coolness; Trust; Product harm; Recovery

References Available Upon Request

Viewing Social Media from a Social Trap Perspective and the Role of Consumers, Firms, and Public Policy-Makers on the Future of Social Media: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Undoubtedly, social media has created some phenomenal opportunities for its stakeholders (e.g., consumers, firms, brands) to interact freely with one another across the world. Accordingly, social media platforms offer plenty of means for marketers to reach and engage with consumers. However, social media also can have tremendous negative consequences for consumers, firms, and society. Drawing on the concept of social traps, this research (i) conceptualizes the *social media social trap* as *the behavioral inability of entities (firms, individuals, social groups) to go beyond the pursuit of short-term personal interests toward long-term positive consequences of social media for themselves and society*, (ii) identifies a set of significant issues associated with social media platforms that can meaningfully inform the future of social media platforms through three themes – consumers, firms, public policy, and (iii) develops a taxonomy of solutions for resolving the social media social trap.

Accordingly, the current paper's contributions lie in exploring the efficacy of social media for marketing theory and practice. In particular, this research makes three significant contributions. First, exploring both marketing opportunities and challenges created by social media platforms, this research looks at social media through three lenses – consumers, firms, and public policy. Accordingly, this research argues that despite the many advantages that social media provides to its stakeholders (e.g., consumers, firms, policymakers), it also can have tremendous negative consequences. Second, by building on a unique conceptualization of the *social media social trap*, this research highlights a set of significant issues, including the problem of (i) trust, (ii) loneliness, anxiety, and depression, (iii) fake news, misinformation, and polarization, and (iv) artificial intelligence, that may impact negatively the future of social media and, thereby, marketing practices. Third, utilizing a conceptual framework, the current research represents a complex set of interactions and exchanges among different stakeholders and elaborates on a set of significant issues – the problem of (i) trust, (ii) loneliness, anxiety, and depression, (iii) fake news, misinformation, and polarization, and (iv) artificial intelligence to develop research agenda for marketing future. This research concludes with a discussion of the relevance of *social media social trap* for the future of social media platforms and their impact on marketing practices.

Keywords: Social media; Social trap; Marketing strategy; Digital marketing

References Available Upon Request

Improving Public Health Communication During Pandemics: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

As the COVID-19 virus mutates, booster shots continue to be developed to address those genetic changes. Crisis communication, which at its core is marketing communication, continues as a prominent feature of the COVID-19 pandemic. Effective communication among governments, health professionals, scientists, the media, and the public is a key component of effective responses to a public health crisis. Such communication serves three functions: informing, advocating/persuading for policies and reforms, and engaging citizens. It also helps raise public confidence and mobilize public cooperation. However, the 'communication chaos' which characterized COVID-19 early in the pandemic involved confusion, inconsistencies, changing narratives, and half-truths and presents an ongoing challenge to government and health professionals.

In this paper, we start with a discussion about characteristics of the COVID-19 pandemic communication that contribute to the communication chaos, namely a fast development of knowledge about the virus, inconsistent guidance by politicians, world-wide livestreaming in the new media environment, overloaded information that produced (too) simplified narratives, and inconsistent information from governments and other agencies. We then borrow a four-step sensemaking process (Weick, 1995) to explain the sensemaking process during the COVID-19 crisis, which contain ecological change, enactment, selection, and retention. We argue that, it is possible that the next pandemic will take 100 years as happened between Spanish influenza. However, in a world where we cannot predict the next pandemic, it behooves us to use retrospective interpretation of what happened to aid our planning for the next implementation, and regularly updating that plan, such that we are at least more prepared than with COVID-19.

Particularly, government communication during such crisis should educate the public that each individual's commitment, capacity and expectations affect their sensemaking and the very severity of the public health crisis itself (Weick, 1988). Following this overarching goal, government communication should have strategic phased plans centering around the evolving sensemaking process to make their communications engaging to the public. In these phased plans, communications should promote clear and consistent *action* plans, instead of providing rapidly changing *facts*. Collaboration with health advocacies, communities, and religious leaders is essential to ensure shared awareness and understanding of the pandemic.

Keywords: COVID-19; Public health communication; Sensemaking; Crisis communication

References Available Upon Request

A Scale to Measure Consumers' Attitude Towards Intellectually Disabled Frontline Employees: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Labor inclusion is particularly important for adults with intellectual disability, as it strongly influences their quality of life. However, they are underrepresented in the service sector workplace, despite public policies promoting their inclusion. Societal, ethical, and social justice issues play a prominent role in marketing and public policy. Successful public policy requires assessing stakeholders' commitment, capacity, and willingness to work towards a common goal. In this situation, the key stakeholders are adults with ID who want to work, business managers who can hire them, and consumers who interact with them. Frontline employees' appearance, attitudes, knowledge, and skills can affect the consumer experience and the service brand's equity. However, pre-existing negative attitudes towards people with ID and assumptions about their incapability of delivering exceptional customer experiences have led to reluctance to hire them in customer-facing roles. While most consumers support inclusion and believe in the benefits of hiring people with ID, there are still segments with negative views. Inclusion at the frontline depends on consumer agreement, and managers need insight into how it benefits both business and customers. Favorable consumer attitudes would encourage managers to adhere to public policy on labor inclusion.

Past research has studied the inclusion of people with ID in the workplace, but the focus has been on the employer's and co-workers' perceptions, the adaptation of the job, and organizational challenges, neglecting the consumer perspective. This study aims to fill this gap by developing a reliable and valid scale for assessing consumers' attitudes towards intellectually disabled frontline employees informed by intergroup contact theory and following standard scientific scale development procedures. Increased social contact can eradicate negative attitudes and prejudice towards adults with ID. Managers are concerned by the different types of service failures that could be driven by a frontline employee with ID. Past research has found that some managers think that their customers would not be comfortable, tolerant, or patient, or would even prefer to avoid interaction with an intellectually-disabled employee. This new scale captures the relevant dimensions within the construct: interaction with an employee with ID and the service outcome. The use of this scale would inform managers and policymakers about the adequacy of inclusion practices at the frontline in each particular service context. Amidst ubiquitous public policy failure, the knowledge of the attitudes that predominate in a community, which in turn influence the actions of its members, is critical to increasing the effectiveness of public policy for an inclusive society.

Keywords: Labor inclusion; Services; Frontline employees; Scale development

References Available Upon Request

Examining The Interconnections Among Anti-Consumption, Subjective Wellbeing and Time Orientation: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the link between anti-consumption and subjective wellbeing, and the mediating role of time orientation. Consumer culture exacerbates individuation and feelings of emptiness, time pressures that are detrimental to wellbeing, and materially intensive modes of living that are problematic from an environmental and social sustainability perspective. Thus, an enhanced understanding is needed of the effect of anti-consumption on wellbeing and how this effect occurs. Existing research shows that the way in which consumers construe and deploy their time can influence subjective wellbeing (Rudd et al., 2019). Therefore, we draw on the extensive literature on time to clarify the temporal conditions under which anti-consumption might affect subjective wellbeing. Despite the plethora of research showing that how consumers spend and think of time affects consumption behaviors, there is scant cross-fertilization between time and anti-consumption research. By using a quantitative, two-wave survey with 332 UK participants and employing structural equation modelling, this paper tests the interconnections among anti-consumption attitudes, subjective wellbeing, propensity to spend time meaningfully and long-term orientation. Results confirm our hypotheses, establishing that anti-consumption attitudes alone are insufficient to impact individual wellbeing. Further, results establish that this relationship is mediated by spending time meaningfully. Additionally, long-term orientation exerts a significant and negative moderating influence on the relationship between spending time meaningfully and subjective wellbeing. While prior research has signaled long-term orientation as a desirable trait to attain reduced levels of consumption, our results establish that it can be detrimental to more immediate subjective wellbeing. Theoretically, our research contributes to the literature on anti-consumption by clarifying the relationship between anti-consumption and wellbeing, and by determining the significance of time orientations in this relationship. Firms interested in tapping into the needs of anti-consumers must offer services or experiences that facilitate ways for them to spend time meaningfully. Additionally, non-profit organizations seeking to gain support for their environmental causes through reduced consumption will need to deploy campaigning communications that are future-oriented with a focus on people's present wellbeing needs.

Keywords: Anti-consumption; Subjective wellbeing; Time orientation; Temporality

References Available Upon Request

The Dynamics Between Local E-Commerce Support and Global E-Marketplace Reluctance to Buy: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Accelerated by the recent pandemic situation, the adoption rates of e-commerce continue to grow worldwide (Statista, 2022). Forced to compete in this scenario, traditional local retailers are also opening their virtual shops, which is known as local e-commerce (Beckers et al., 2021). Despite the increasing interest in local consumption (Im et al., 2022; Young, 2022), local e-commerce has been largely under researched. Many individuals declare supporting local commerce in general for its positive environmental, social and economic benefits (McCaffrey & Kurland, 2015); such consumers are more likely to avoid big corporations (Young, 2022). When local and global e-retailers are jointly considered, both complementarity and substitution patterns may coexist in consumption (Dias et al., 2020; Colaço & Silva, 2022). But it is not clear to what extent different support/reject dynamics coexist within the local and global e-commerce environments. From an anti-consumption perspective, the study of such relationships represents a less frequent approach, which allows discovering: (1) the relative popularity of consumers' reluctance to buy from global e-marketplaces; (2) the extent to which anti-consumption of global e-marketplaces implies support for local e-commerce; and (3) the examination of anti-consumption within the virtual commerce environment. Hence, this work examines the heterogeneity of reject/support patterns across global e-marketplace and local e-commerce environments to identify different consumer profiles. In addition, consumer profiles are further examined in terms of their global-local identity and actual purchase behavior. Latent class cluster analysis confirmed the existence of three groups of e-consumers according to their support/reject patterns. In line with the anti-consumption literature (McGinnis & Gentry, 2009), for some consumers the support of local e-commerce implies rejection/avoidance of global e-marketplaces. This segment shows high levels of both global and local identity. The rule "think global act local" perfectly applies for this segment. However, the biggest segment is characterized by a complementarity between these two e-business models—namely, support of local e-commerce, but not rejection of global e-marketplaces. Further research is needed to discover whether—beyond their aim to support local e-commerce—the members of this group are adopting global e-marketplaces when these are perceived as more convenient (Vollero et al. 2,021). Finally, the segment "global e-marketplace supporters" represents a 'no local support/no global rejection' pattern that can be best explained by a substitution effect. This latter segment scored lower on both global and local identity. The study has important implications for local and global online retailers.

Keywords: Reluctance to buy; Local e-commerce support; E-commerce; Local identity

References Available Upon Request

Voluntary Simplification as a Response to Unusually High Inflation: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

In the late 1970s, the term "voluntary simplification" was coined for a strategy some consumers adopted for coping with economic conditions by "…changing their lifestyles and values of conspicuous consumption and economic growth." By May 2022, the U.S. annual inflation rate was measured to be 8.6%, a value it had not reached since voluntary simplification gained popularity in the marketing literature. In this research, we seek to determine if today's consumers consider voluntary simplification a viable strategy for navigating the strain on their financial resources caused by rapid increases in product prices as well as exploring differences in consumers' preferences for the various ways companies could adjust their marketing strategies in response to the rising costs they must endure.

Inflation, a general increase in the prices charged for goods and services within an economy, has been a topic of broad economic concern approximately since the invention of money. It is commonly measured through the percent change in a designated price index, a weighted average of prices of goods and services that are considered relatively important. Recently in the United States, inflation had been low for so long that younger generations of Americans had begun to view the issue as something from the distant past. Even during the COVID-19 induced recession that hit in 2020, inflation was granted little attention, with more focus given to unemployment and economic growth. Soon after, the inflation rate began to rise to a point many Americans have never witnessed.

In response to this unusually high inflation, consumers may be forced to alter their buying behavior. One route to this change, Voluntary Simplification (VS), has been defined as a lifestyle of freely reduced consumption involving an effort to live a simple life. However, VS can also include other practices such as taking care of the environment, economic worries and ethical concerns. We seek to elucidate perceptions and preferences around these concepts to draw a comparison of today's consumers with those of past years. The findings will inform researchers and practitioners with regard to marketing strategy formulation. Future research should examine differences in consumer preference tied to consumer groups and product types. Cross-cultural comparisons based on cultural dimensions such as Hofstede's Indulgence vs. Restraint or Long-term vs. Short-term Orientation might also prove informative.

Keywords: Voluntary simplification; Inflation; Marketing strategy; Crisis marketing; Cross-cultural comparison

References Available Upon Request

An Ecosystems' View on ESG in Business Narratives: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Environmental, social, and governance (ESG) topics and standards have gradually taken over discussions on corporate social responsibility (CSR) and sustainability, yet the current reporting and metrics on their performance are aimed at stakeholders and do not always reflect their organizational and market impact and effectiveness (Aksoy et al., 2022; Fernandez-Feijoo et al., 2014; Vitell, 2015). This study aims to evaluate ESG corporate narratives and identify how corporations interpret them, the essential topics of communication, and the key actors from the ESG-related ecosystem that must be considered in the public exchange of information framework.

This study focuses on identifying the main components of ESG in corporate narratives and their relationship with overall corporate sustainability. For this analysis, we use the narratives paradigm based on a theoretical framework incorporating elements from the Theory of Reciprocal Determinism (TRD) (Bandura, 1986; Joshi et al., 2021; Phipps et al., 2013) and the ecosystems' framework (Ng & Vargo, 2018; Petrescu, 2019; Vargo & Lusch, 2016; 2017). We analyze corporate communications for companies from the Corporate Knights list of the Global 100 Most Sustainable Corporations in the world for 2022 (Elijido-Ten & Clarkson, 2019; Pal & Jenkins, 2014). The results of a conceptual mapping analysis and a regression analysis for the carbon productivity score reflect the impact of a combination of reciprocal deterministic variables, including psychological, interpersonal, and sociocultural factors present in narratives (Joshi et al., 2021). From an orientation towards the future to a greater focus on achievement and social affiliation, as well as a positive tone, all these elements are closely related to the ESG success of the organization. They reflect the reciprocal characteristics of ESG strategies and the ecosystem aspect, underlining the need to incorporate all essential actors in this framework.

The narrative-based analysis identified elements from the Theory of Reciprocal Determinism (TRD) (Bandura, 1986; Joshi et al., 2021; Phipps et al., 2013) and the ecosystems' framework (Ng & Vargo, 2018; Petrescu, 2019; Vargo & Lusch, 2016; 2017) as essential for the formulation of an effective ESG strategy and its communication. While the environmental part of the framework is well reflected in communication, the social and governance part especially emphasizes a need for an ecosystem-view of ESG and a better structure that reflects the micro, meso, and macro-level actors. The findings show the applicability of reciprocal deterministic elements in the formulation, implementation, and effective communication of ESG strategies in a global business ecosystem.

Keywords: ESG; Corporate narratives; Theory of reciprocal determinism; Ecosystems

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Mobile Application Service Personalisation: A Structural Topic Modelling Approach: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

The past few years have seen significant changes in consumption and service expectations (Linnhoff & Smith, 2017; Rasul et al., 2021; Su et al., 2022). Moreover, m-commerce has provided highly personalized services (Su et al., 2022). Service personalization has allowed application-based services to be real-time, timely, and rapid. However, the literature provides minimum insights into these applications and their customer reviews (Linnhoff & Smith, 2017).

Our research uses natural language processing techniques to assess customer preferences by identifying reviews of physical and mental health applications (Sabrina et al., 2017; Herbas & Frank, 2019). Physical health applications (PHA) and mental health applications (MHA) are increasingly becoming a part of our lives and demand more satisfying experience from such applications.

This research identifies the customers' preferences and choices using the novel structured topic modelling (STM) technique, we perform our analysis of customer reviews in four steps. We initially identify the issues and since STM allows us to incorporate document metadata, we introduced two dummy covariates *Negative* = 0 and *Negative* = 1 into the model. *Negative*= 0 refers to reviews those positive sentiments and *Negative* = 1 refers to reviews with negative sentiments. We defined each review as positive and negative using the VADER sentiment analysis. We further performed the topic correlation analysis on the list of topics.

We find the aspects of personalisation connecting with customers and leading to prolonged application-based service consumptions. Such consumption plays a pivotal role in customer lifestyles and demand better experiences from application interface, information, and interaction quality (Gasteiger et al., 2021) for continued usage. The results allow us to elucidate the proactive nature of customer experiences and emotions in application usage, customer loyalty and retention. We believe our paper is a standalone gateway in this area, where we make significant contributions to academia and practice.

Keywords: Services; Personalisation; Mobile applications; Structured topic modelling; Customer experience

References Available Upon Request

Consumer Values across the Lifespan: Developmental Trends at Three Hierarchical Levels and What We Can Learn from Them: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Firms routinely tailor marketing messages by matching relevant consumers' values to boost brand appeal, product engagement, and purchasing behaviors. Consider, for example, brands like Dove, Patagonia, or Virgin that have built strong brand promises by matching core consumer values such as kindness, openness, and curiosity. However, the relative importance of values is likely to change across the lifespan of consumers, thus requiring firms to continuously re-assess whether brand and product values are aligned with the intended target market's value systems.

To develop an accurate understanding of how values change over consumer lifespan, we surveyed over 77,000 global consumers through a research collaboration with TIME Magazine. We argue - and demonstrate empirically across 36 analytical model choices, and 180,000 simulation-based decisions - that value development may be more nuanced than how it is typically represented. Specifically, we propose that a systematic investigation of age-graded differences in personal values, from late teenage years to post-retirement across different aggregation levels, may reveal previously unappreciated dynamics.

Furthermore, we examine a methodological challenge with important implications for marketing research. Commonly, researchers aggregate individual questions into parsimonious higher-order concepts to ease interpretation. However, for values, the individual items representing the more granular, underlying value nuances, diverge in their importance and development throughout consumers' lifespan. For the first time, we study the asynchronous change of value nuances, consequently, finding that aggregation i) leads to a loss of critical information, ii) creates conflicting results when nuances diverge and iii) significantly reduces predictive power.

Overall, our findings suggest that marketers are well-advised to adapt values-matched messaging that changes with their target consumers as they grow older. Brand propositions that are based on values and are designed to attract a consumer in their 20s might not work to retain them as they grow older and – in most cases – more affluent.

Keywords: Consumer values; Integrative modeling; Lifespan; Targeting

References Available Upon Request

Are Recommendation Systems Annoying? An Empirical Study of AI Characteristics, Technology Well-being and the Underlying Mechanism in the Context of Recommendation System: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Recommendation systems – that is, a class of machine learning algorithm tools that filter vendors' offerings based on customer data and automatically recommend or generate personalized predictions – are empowered by artificial intelligence (AI) technology and embedded with AI characteristics; but the potential consequences for customer well-being are greatly overlooked. Hence, this research investigates the impact of AI characteristics on customer well-being (self-efficacy, technology satisfaction, emotional dissonance and autonomy) through two mechanisms: intuitiveness vs. intrusiveness. A systematic review which conceptualizes AI characteristics and technology well-being in the recommendation system context is followed by a US-based survey approach (N=600) which shows that higher levels of information optimization, predictability, human likeness, and customizability lead to higher levels of intuitiveness, whereas only information optimization and human likeness leads to increased intrusiveness. However, both intuitiveness and intrusiveness are found to promote technology well-being in the context of a recommendation system, especially for those more vulnerable individuals who respond positively to intrusiveness. Hence, the conclusion is "the recommendations are not always annoying", whereby the relationships between AI characteristics and technology well-being are significantly influenced by perceived intrusiveness, which broadens our current understanding of perceived intrusiveness. Our findings explore the well-being construct by exploring its dimensions under AI-driven technology domain as well as provide an inclusive conceptualization of AI characteristics which can be applied across contexts. By uncovering the two mechanisms of intuitiveness VS intrusiveness, this paper also contributes to AI-consumer engagement literature. The findings help business practitioners, product designers and policy makers to identify how consumers perceive and engage different AI characteristics, and therefore could better take care of consumer well-being while boosting AI development in technology innovation, product design and policy making.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence; Technology well-being; Recommendation systems; Intrusiveness; Intuitiveness; Customer vulnerability

References Available Upon Request

Marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes in Emerging Economies: A Case Study of China: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

In 1981 the World Health Organization (WHO) passed the International Code of Marketing Breast Milk Substitutes (BMS/formula). The code banned advertisements and "gifts" of breast milk substitutes to mothers and health care professionals. The global formula market is huge ($63 billion) and expected to grow; China's share stands at $26.90 billion. In 2017, China repealed the specific provisions of the Administration Rule of Marketing of BMS that protected consumers and enforced the Code. While the health system in China encourages women to breastfeed, increasing labour force participation, and related issues create barriers to breastfeeding. BMS manufacturers capitalize on these vulnerabilities, and may provide disinformation about the benefits of BMS, marketing them as being equal to or even superior to breastmilk. BMS marketing in China is through various means of communication and incentives targeted towards different stakeholder.

This study aims to examine linkages of various health marketing promotions used by BMS marketers in China and shed light on the efficacy of these. Using qualitative and quantitative data we examine how marketing communications affects mothers and other stakeholders in their decisions regarding infant feeding choices. Additionally, we also aim to understand the interplay of various factors at the individual, social, and demographic levels that influence such decisions.

Our findings suggest mothers appreciate that breastfeeding is best but choose BMS in order to return to work. Poorly implemented policies regarding maternity leave and believed lacking breastmilk are the major causes of BMS use. Mothers focus on baby's nutrition and development (increasing immunity, brain development, similarity to breast milk), paying attention to ingredients during brand selection. Mothers' recall attention grabbing advertisements they see on media they consider reliable (Weibo/WeChat, phone Apps, articles, TikTok videos) and also consider price, store, and especially free samples at retail stores during adoption/purchase. Thus, a targeted omnichannel marketing success.

Findings on marketing to and from Healthcare professionals (HCP) corroborates the above. HCP focus on baby, mothers, formula and feeding in that order. Specifically, paediatricians' themes are mothers, brands and work with breastmilk and breastfeeding way behind, suggesting HCP may not be providing enough support on breastfeeding counselling while being influenced by advertising from BMS firms, i.e., a push away from breastfeeding and pull into BMS.

Results from BMS marketing professionals suggest their target messages to mothers are on child health, brand, channels, and free, specifically online and offline and local versus international. Communication to healthcare professionals is via hospital events, hosted by BMS firms, targeted towards doctors. Taken together our findings suggests that marketing professionals play a key role in a) supplying health related brand information to mothers, and HCP and b) helping mothers receive free samples of local BMS products, i.e., enhance adoption.

Keywords: Healthcare; Marketing; Breast milk substitute-formula; Mothers; Brands; Communication; Stakeholders; Policy

References Available Upon Request

Designing Trustworthy Live Commerce Experiences: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

This presentation explores how to design trustworthy live commerce experience surrounding live streaming, which is rapidly emerging in the U.S., following its booming development in China, India, Thailand, Brazil, and other countries. In comparison with HSN, QVC, traditional e-commerce, live commerce excels in the following three areas: backed by data analytics, augmented with social shopping experience, and enhanced with swift trust between buyers and sellers.

The presentation begins with an overview of the features and global development of the live streaming commerce, and then centers the talk in exploring an intriguing phenomenon with a lens of cultural differences (Sun, 2020): Why did live commerce take up very fast in China while it stagnated in the US?

To answer this question, the talk reviews effective social media marketing strategies Chinese ecommerce giants used to craft trustworthy live commerce experiences. Long before live commerce started in China, Alibaba released Ali Wangwang, an instant messaging platform, to help build swift trust between sellers and buyers. As an indigenous e-commerce site, Alibaba understood Chinese consumers' concerns about Internet fraud and included an instant voice-chat feature to allow sellers responding buyer's questions right away. Users reported this system is more trustworthy than the rating of sellers (Gao & Zhang, 2011).

A design framework of discursive affordances (Sun and Hart-Davidson 2014; Sun 2020) is used to demonstrate how instrumental affordances such as content-focused communication (Giertz et al., 2021) and social affordances such as community-focused communication (ibid) were designed in the live commerce events to build swift trust, shorten the last mile, and thus convert live stream viewers into happy and future returning shoppers. This framework traces the interconnectedness of grand narratives (such as ideologies and cultural institutions) and everyday interactions in a global business world, and helps us to uncover design and innovation opportunities for global competition.

This presentation shows why designing trustworthy live commerce experiences matters: It is not only a marketing strategy for Chinese sellers but also a production model for Chinese manufactures and Chinese economy.

Keywords: Live commerce; Streaming; Discursive affordances; Innovation; Cross-Cultural

References Available Upon Request

Transformative Marketing - What We Know and What We Should Research? A Structured Literature Analysis: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Marketplace developments as digitalization, climate issues and other megatrends are leading to turbulence, disruption (Möller et al., 2020) and supply chain vulnerability (Scarpin et al., 2022). Enabling a systematic response to such variabilities, the Transformative Marketing (TM) concept emerged (Kumar, 2018). However, no literature analyzes the state of TM research and outlines future research angles. Our paper therefore contributes to TM through two research questions: What is the current state of TM research (RQ1) and which research agenda on TM can be outlined (RQ2)? We employ a structured literature analysis (n = 70) comprising a bibliometric review and a Theory-Context-Characteristics-Methods (TCCM) analysis (Paul & Criado, 2020).

Within the bibliometric review we perform citation, co-citation, and keyword analyses. The results point to spotlights on artificial intelligence (AI), big data and the product-to-service shift triggering a need for TM. Furthermore, studies highlight instrumental foci on customer experience, co-creation, interactivity, and engagement. Our TCCM review suggests that the TM field underlies a high fragmentation in terms of *theories* employed. We identify 50 theoretical foundations whereof most relate to organizations, behavior, markets, and customers. However, extant gaps point to a missing multi-theory perspective on TM or the scarce analysis of the explanatory power of theories in varying regional and cultural settings. From a *context* perspective, the review suggests that B2C studies predominate while only few studies include B2B. Though, B2B firms are uniquely exposed to transformational phenomena due to their unique value chain position and thus should be considered in TM research. Furthermore, the publications build on 20 different sectors, among which computers, telecommunication and electronics are in focus. Other highly disruptive contexts as mobility or retail, remain underlit to date. In terms of *characteristics*, our study reveals that 28 papers explicitly illustrate conceptual models while another 22 publications allow to draw inferences about variables from the text. Yet, despite the seminal definition of TM (Kumar, 2018), we find that TM currently focuses on single, instrumental variables instead of a holistic combination of multiple characteristics. From a *methodology* perspective, the results imply that TM is still in an exploratory phase and large, generalizing studies are rare. Instead, most articles yield at conceptual contributions and future research angles could aim at a generalization and quantification. In sum, we derive 27 research angles based on the hybrid analysis and a comparison of the results with the 2022-2024 Marketing Science Institute (MSI) research priorities (MSI 2022).

Keywords: Transformative marketing; Structured literature analysis; Bibliometric review; TCCM analysis

References Available Upon Request

Business Ecosystems as Vertical Networks? Outlining a Criteria-Based, Multidimensional Ecosystem Landscape: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Megatrends as digitalization, climate-related issues, and demographic change increasingly influence the reality of companies in various sectors and pose dynamic challenges (Möller et al., 2020). We contribute to research in dynamic markets based on the concept of business ecosystems (BES) which describe firms' embedding in their market structure. Despite increasing conceptualization of the BES, we identify three extant gaps related to their theoretical foundation, criteria-based characterization, and delineation from other ecosystem-types. Thus, we offer novel contributions for the BES research field based on three research questions: First, on which underlying theories is the BES view based? Second, how can BES be defined and characterized with distinctive criteria? Third, how can the BES concept be delineated from other ecosystem approaches? We answer these questions within a literature review including a bibliometric and an inductive qualitative analysis.

To identify relevant publications, we employed the Scopus and Web of Science (WoS) databases. The final dataset included 67 articles for the bibliometric analysis with VosViewer and 19 studies for the qualitative content analysis using MaxQDA Software. The results of the bibliometric citation analysis point to high relevance of especially Moore (1993), Adner and Kapoor (2010), Adner (2017) and Jacobides et al., (2018). The findings were underlined by a co-citation analysis. To identify previous BES topics and extant gaps, we additionally performed a keyword analysis that revealed eight overlapping thematic clusters related to the BES. Within the content analysis, we observe a fragmented picture in terms of underlying theories of BES. As each theory might offer a different perspective on BES-phenomena, we recommend assessing their suitability based on research applications: While Behavioral Economics might aid to explain BES decision-making, Complex Adaptive Systems Theory could offer insights on dynamic, networked structures. In response to the second research question, we offer a new framework of six main characterization categories, of which we consider three as unique and distinctive to BES. Based on these criteria, we share a new definition of the BES. Our main contribution lies in the derivation of a new ecosystem landscape distinguishing different ecosystem-types into vertical and horizontal forms. We outline the framework based on organizational theory and delineate ecosystems based on their origin, unit of analysis and perspective. In sum, our work seeks to not only to advance the BES research field but also pave the way for a more rigorous application of the BES concept in managerial practice. In particular, we suggest corporate self-analyses, the setup of a BES intelligence function as well as the incorporation of a BES view in corporate strategy.

Keywords: Business ecosystems; Bibliometric review; Qualitative content analysis; Ecosystem landscape

References Available Upon Request

Algorithm Morality: The Impact of Autonomous Vehicles' Accidents on Driver Responsibilities, Guilt, and Well-being: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Artificial intelligence (AI) based autonomous vehicles (AVs) are the ultimate step in the automobile industry. Despite promising to improve many aspects of our life, such as well-being and safety, AVs will have to face dramatic situations such as accidents resulting in the death of the victims. This raises questions about the morality of algorithms car or user responsibilities, guilt, and well-being as research on these subjects is scarce. Since fully autonomous vehicles do not require any human interaction who is going to be feeling the impact of such events? Therefore, we contribute to theoretical knowledge by developing a conceptual model that integrates user responsibilities, guilt, and well-being to better understand the consequences of those dramatic accident situations.

We realize two studies in Germany. One online uses only a questionnaire. The other is an experiment using the same questionnaire but before answering the respondents have to go inside a virtual reality-based AV simulator. This enables us to increase the realism of our second study as well as make sure that respondents have some AV experience before answering. We go beyond the simple examination of how consumers would prefer the car to act, as we rob them of this choice and present them only with the aftermath.

Our results show a positive direct impact of the accident victim's death on responsibilities, of responsibilities on guilt, and a negative direct effect of guilt on the well-being of the user. We also show the negative indirect effect of accident consequences on well-being passing through responsibility and guilt. Our study raises the question of AV behavioral choices. If the car is self-protective and protects its passengers at all costs, it could cause severe psychological damage. We also demonstrate that passengers of fully autonomous cars will keep a part of their responsibility in case of accidents leading to a decrease in their well-being. Hence, we recommend companies not to rush the release of AVs. It would only increase the likelihood of such dramatic incidents happening, as the technology could have been improved.

Keywords: Autonomous vehicles; Algorithm morality; Well-being; Responsibility; Guilt

References Available Upon Request

Paradoxical Tensions: The Pervasiveness of Social Media?: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Social media is a pervasive part of society, with approximately half the world's population having at least one social media account (Datareportal, 2020). It has infiltrated our work environments, with 94% of managers using social media to promote their organizations and via the rapid growth of internal organizational platforms. Consequently, several organizational issues arise as managers implement policies and disciplinary procedures to manage frontline employees' social media activity (ACAS, 2020). Social media encompasses various communication platforms that may be leveraged in a work context for corporate branding, knowledge sharing, and professional development; and in a personal context to communicate and connect with family and friends (Banghart et al., 2018). Although research shows that work-orientated social media increases firm performance by facilitating connections and interactions with various stakeholders (Kumar & Pansari, 2016), the ubiquity of social media within the employment relationship is fraught with complex and evolving tensions (Hurrell et al., 2017; Rasmussen, 2020).

Extensive social media use at work can impact employees negatively, resulting in emotional exhaustion (Tang et al., 2019) or depression and anxiety (Coyne et al., 2020). However, there is a lack of empirical work investigating the nature and drivers of the tensions surrounding work-orientated social media (McDonald & Thompson, 2016). Furthermore, most of the social media literature investigates the experiences of frontline employees as receptors of social media strategies (e.g., Duxbury et al., 2014; Hurrel et al., 2017), with little attention paid to how social media is managed. Therefore, our research extends paradox theory to examine manager perspectives of the intertwining tensions characterizing work-orientated social media.

We elucidate these complex relationships by drawing upon rich qualitative data from semi-structured interviews with 67 managers across various hierarchical levels. This research contributes to the theorization of work-orientated social media and attempts to control managers' use of such media to extend the current state of knowledge within paradox theory. Specifically, we illustrate how social media magnifies a societal paradox between economic and non-economic objectives, which cascades to trigger other paradoxes. In this regard, we contribute insights into how navigating paradoxes involves negotiating different forms of work-life boundaries. The managerial contributions address multiple parties, such as middle managers, HR practitioners, senior managers, policymakers, and trade unions, and highlight the need for employers to focus more on addressing social media paradoxes in their behaviors and strategies.

Keywords: Social media; Paradox theory; Technology; Work-life

References Available Upon Request

Exploitation, Empathy, and Change: A Historical Assessment of Arguments Against the Regulation of Business Practices: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

John Conyers and Steven Cohen both refer to the story of the crusade to save the American economy from "job-killing" regulations as a kind of mythology with all the powers of myth to inspire both faith and fear (Cohen, 2017; Conyers Jr et al., 2017). In this paper, I will demonstrate that this mythology is neither new nor exclusively American; it is almost as old as the Industrial Revolution itself. Factory owners in early nineteenth-century England warned that attempts to regulate child labor would result in dire consequences for both the British economy and for the workers themselves: "the proposed regulation would injure trade and drive it out of the country, eventually reducing not only the capitalists, but also the workers to beggary" (Hutchins & Harrison, 1911). The familiarity of such an argument (here presented against The Factory Act of 1819, which stated that no children under 9 were to be employed and that children aged 9–16 years were to be limited to 12 hours' work per day) is undeniable, echoing such as might be made today against the cost of compliance with increased (or existing) protections for workers or for the environment. The repetition of such patterns is enough to make one despair of positive change, yet regulation can be transformative: the lives of working-class children in England were utterly transformed by factory legislation during the nineteenth century. How do we break free of the cycle of anti-regulatory mythmaking to move toward fairness and sustainability? Reviewing works of historiography and moral/political philosophy, I suggest that while the prioritization of the social contract over profit is necessary for progress in this direction, it is not by itself enough. I argue that the moral imagination must be central to the project of regulation because it renders accessible what is impossible to commodify or quantify: motivations, sufferings, experiences, and dreams. Utilizing the capability approach of Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum, I further argue that only humane engagement can put us on a path toward a more just market (Nussbaum, 2007; Sen, 2009).

Keywords: Regulations; Ethics; Fairness; Justice; Sustainability

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Systematic Literature Review on Parasocial Interaction and Parasocial Relationship: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Although existing studies established the importance of parasocial interaction and parasocial relationship in marketing, some conceptual problems remain, especially the debate about the main domain characteristics of these two concepts. According to this systematic literature review, around of 50% of PSI research defined PSI as "relationship", which is the same as PSR. Meanwhile, due to the unclear definition of PSI and PSR, some scholars adopted the embracing approach, used PSI and PSR interchangeably. In addition, the existing PSI and PSR definitions are proposed based on the particular research context (e.g., social media), but the scope of the definitions is much broader.

This research argue that these practices lack rigor for mainly two reasons. First, the unclear definition of PSI and PSR could lead to operationalization issues and low construct validly, which will have a negative impact on theory testing. Second, it will lead to misleading communications among writers, editors, and readers.

Amidst calls to distinguish PSI and PSR, only a few researchers have attempted to do so. Some scholars identified PSI and PSR to explain why PSI or PSR was chosen in the research (e.g., Breves et al., 2019). Other researchers identified PSI and PSR to discuss the interchangeability phenomenon (e.g., Yuan & Lou, 2020). To date, no clear criteria that could distinguish between PSI and PSR have been put forward. This is strongly suggested that the need to revisit the concepts of PSI and PSR to solve these ongoing issues and advance our knowledge of their differentiation and conceptual meaning. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to resolve the long-standing definitional debate and to propose prerequisites that can identify PSI and PSR in the offline and online environment, respectively.

To do so, this study adopts a systematic literature review. A total of 113 high-quality journal articles related to PSI and PSR were identified from 1956 to 2021 based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria and then analyzed. Presented systematic analysis proposes seven prerequisites that allow to fundamentally distinguish between PSI and PSR both offline and online. Further, this work puts forward new definitions of PSI and PSR. Finally, it compares potential conditions for PSI and PSR in the offline and online environments to explore how the two concepts change between environments.

Keywords: Parasocial interaction; Parasocial relationship; Consumer behavior; Influencer marketing

References Available Upon Request

Scale Development to Identify Cancel Culture Behavior: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

The term *cancel culture* has evolved over the last decade and has roots in Black Twitter and the social justice movement; however, its use originated from a misogynistic statement made by a character in the movie *New Jack City.* The character said, "Cancel that b****. I'll buy a new one" (Romano, 2020). In 2020, Clark provided an etymology of the evolution of the term. She defined 'canceling' as an expression of agency, a choice to withdraw one's attention from someone or something whose values, (in) action, or speech are so offensive one no longer wishes to grace them with their presence, time, and money." Using this definition, Mueller (2021) investigated psychological predictors of cancel culture but the proposed scale lacked reliability and validity.

The extant research lacks a validated scale that measures *cancel culture behavior*; thus, this research begins the scale development process. We define *cancel culture behavior* as the collaborative attempt to 'cancel' or draw business or support away from a particular entity by 1) boycotting or 2) generating negative word of mouth (posting comments) on social media platforms.

For step one, the researchers conducted 31 qualitative interviews via Zoom with students at a private university in the Southwest. Participants were asked questions about their participation in social media and cancel culture. Scale items were created by using the coded results. For the second step, data were collected using a Qualtrics survey (n= 200) with paid respondents from Prolific. The two-dimensional construct was measured using a 5-pt. Likert scale, 1 is not very likely and 5 is very likely that they would engage in the behavior. Next, the ten-item Mueller (2021) scale and the eleven-item social justice attitudinal scale (Sebastianelli et al., 2021) were measured using a 7-pt. Likert scale with 1 being strongly disagree to 7 being strongly agree.

The Principal Components Analysis (PCA) results did not support using the Mueller scale for our future research purpose. Additionally, the social justice scale loaded on one factor with no cross-loadings indicating this is a separate construct. The results validated our hypothesis that *cancel culture behavior* has two dimensions, boycotting and actively commenting. A second PCA with a Varimax rotation found two factors, and factor loadings account for 73 percent of the variance in the data. Eigenvalues for each item were greater than 1.5. Reliability, as reported by Cronbach's Alpha, was high, at .90 or above.

For future research, a second data collection will be conducted using confirmatory factor analysis to further purify and test for discriminant and convergent validity.

Keywords: Cancel culture; Boycott; Social media; Scale development

References Available Upon Request

The Connected Consumer: A Bibliometric Analysis: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Internet has 5.0 billion users, social media 4.65 billion users and there are 6.6 billions of smart phones. This enables consumer to chat, hail cabs, order last mile food delivery, socialize, and conduct financial transactions through mobile phones and networks. This abstract aims to identify the connected consumer by mapping and organizing the academic literature in the last ten years. By conducting a bibliometric analysis which focuses on consumers' connected interactions, this abstract describes the current stage of research to achieve a nuanced and coherent understanding of the connected consumer and their implications for marketing. To gain an overall perspective of a given field of research, a bibliometric study is suitable to produce a current overview and temporal evolution of the field, identify apparent research gaps, and consequently ideas to advance the field (Donthu et al., 2021). Internet and mobile phones have been in the market for more than 20 years, so it is reasonable to expect a large corpus of research; a bibliometric analysis is suitable to summarize in the form of themes, academic authorship, academic journals, and their interactions. This contrasts to meta-analyses and systematic reviews which focus on analysis of models, theories, and constructs for small databases which can be analyzed manually (Mukherjee, 2022). Database queries and quantitative techniques, bibliometric analysis provides a replicable approach to unveil research trends. The topic of the connected consumer is focused on social networks and Facebook. Research is conducted by isolated, small teams of researchers in USA, China, and UK. Theories from social network, cognitive models, technology adoption models, and seminal methodological papers highly cited in marketing helped to extend scientific production in time. However, mobile's screen of a connected consumer have more interacting channels than only Facebook. Hence, applications, digital social networks, consumer goals, type of engagement, and type of interaction, can be organized and into the following topics to conduct future research: (1) Applications. How consumers interact with messaging, banking, audio/video streaming? How do they engage in these applications? (2) Level of social interaction: How are lone online activities different to online social activities? (3) Technology affordances. How consumers use each function in mobile application? Are there unforeseen uses to be discovered in mobile applications (e.g. missed calls signal purchase interest; WhatsApp to create groups of local e-commerce)? (4) Value co-creation. How is value created among consumers? Among brands and consumers? (5) Privacy and trust. How trust is developed in platforms? How consumers respond to permanent surveillance?

Keywords: Connected consumer; Bibliometric analysis; Social networks; Future research

References Available Upon Request

Going Private: Exploring the Impact of Privacy Protection Initiatives on Privacy Concerns and Information Disclosure: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the sharing economy, but it also caused consumers to rethink the way they live, work, and travel. As a result, the sharing economy has shown resilience and is recovering from the pandemic's setbacks. Nevertheless, issues of trust, transparency, and regulations have emerged, and data privacy concerns have become increasingly important. For instance, incidents where the personal data of Uber and Airbnb users and employers were hacked and consumer data was revealed, as well as criticism of Airbnb's identity verification system and its use of consumer data, have raised concerns. Sharing economy businesses and governments have made significant efforts to address data privacy and transparency, especially since the implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in 2018 (Urban, 2018).

Recent literature refers to the conflict between consumers' willingness to compromise their privacy and certain gain benefits as the privacy paradox (Teubner & Flath, 2019). Consumers weigh potential risks and anticipated benefits in a decision-making process called privacy calculus. If perceived benefits are higher than perceived risks, consumers are more likely to disclose personal information (Dinev & Hart, 2006). This study aims to investigate how privacy protection initiatives, such as regulation awareness, perceived control over information, and perceived transparency, affect consumers' privacy calculus (i.e., privacy concerns and risk/benefit analysis) in the context of the sharing economy.

Drawing on privacy calculus theory and analysing data from Airbnb users, this study found that perceived regulation awareness mitigates consumers' privacy concerns and perceived risk assessments, while it strengthens consumers' benefit perceptions and leads them to disclose information. On the other hand, perceived information transparency was found to mitigate consumers' privacy concerns and risk assessments, but it had no effect on their privacy concerns and benefit perceptions. Additionally, this study found that consumers' perceived risk is negatively related to their information disclosure, whereas perceived benefit is positively related to information disclosure when using sharing economy platforms.

This study contributes to privacy-related research in two ways. Firstly, prior research on privacy calculus and privacy paradox in the sharing economy has mainly focused on the antecedents of privacy concerns, as well as why and when consumers disclose their information (Zhu & Grover, 2022). This research expands the privacy calculus model by considering current privacy protection initiatives. Secondly, despite the growing number of sharing economy users, the criticism of lacking privacy mechanisms is gaining considerable attention. Therefore, this study sheds light on how current initiatives taken by sharing economy platforms have influenced consumers' privacy calculus assessments.

Keywords: Sharing economy, Privacy policy, Privacy protection, Information disclosure

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Does a Cute Logo Enhance Luxury Brand? The Unique Effect of Cuteness on Brand Equity Perception: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

The use of a cute design can be seen in a wide range of consumer products, from an animal shaped cup to a plane adorned with the Hello Kitty logo. Because of its broad attractiveness to people from all walks of life, cuteness frequently appears on mundane products. At the same time, cuteness has emerged on luxury products, becoming an element of their extravagant designs. In this paper, we aim to investigate the effect cuteness plays in luxury to discover the underlying processes of this effect. The influence of cuteness in marketing has been widely examined. Research has shown that consumers' purchase intentions increase toward cute products. Cuteness is frequently seen in mainstream products but not on luxury products, which makes cuteness in luxury brands unique and desirable for luxury consumers.

Across three studies, we obtained consistent evidence for our proposition that cuteness has a positive effect on luxury brand equity and confirmed that it occurs through perceived uniqueness. In particular, a cute logo in luxury brand marketing communications, such as social media, increases consumers' luxury brand equity perception and purchase intention. This effect likely arises because the use of cuteness elements is uncommon in luxury design, thereby eliciting perceived uniqueness. Specifically, the cuteness effect on luxury brand equity is stronger for those with an external motivation to associate with the elite. We also identify brand type as a boundary condition. The cuteness effect on brand equity manifests for traditional luxury brands but not for masstige or mass consumer brands.

This research makes three theoretical contributions. First, this research contributes to the cuteness literature by showing the cuteness effect in the luxury context. Second, this research expands the luxury literature by adding cuteness as a design factor to enhance luxury brand equity. Third, this research also aligns with previous research that offers that one-size-fits-all does not apply to all luxury brands. The current findings also have several important managerial implications. First, this research suggests a new way to enhance luxury brands by including cuteness as a design element. Furthermore, using cuteness can be more attractive to a particular group of luxury customers. Finally, luxury brand managers need to be cautious about applying cuteness in their marketing communications.

Keywords: Cuteness; Luxury; Brand equity; Uniqueness

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Stroking Luxury Product Images on Online Retail Increases Purchase Intentions: The Effects of Image Interactivity: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

The value of the online luxury market worldwide has not stopped to increase, rising 62 billion euros in 2021 (Bain & Company, 2021). Nine percent of worldwide luxury good sales were made online in 2017. This figure was expected to reach 25 percent by 2025 (Statista, 2023). The current limitations in online shopping prevents consumers from touching, stroking, and even trying on the product as you could do in a traditional retail store (Hu & Wise, 2020).

Introducing digitalization in luxury sector to improve customer interaction with the product is a factor differentiated from customer service (Son et al., 2023). Moreover, the use of touch devices (e.g., tablets using with fingers) have become prevalent in the daily lives of consumers, including when shopping online for fashion items (Lee & Choi, 2022). Customers prefer easy-to-use websites in order to optimize their actions; the more intuitive an experience is, the higher the quality of that experience (Pelet & Taieb, 2018; Pelet & Taieb, 2022). Such an experience may be created through image interactivity, which may enhance shopping experiences, provided that the consumer keeps control of their moves on the screen and feels 'dominating' it. Unlike non-touch, click-based devices (e.g., desktop computers with a mouse), touch devices allow online shoppers to directly touch product images on the screen with their fingers (Lee & Choi, 2022).

The objective of designers of such e-commerce websites is to turn the in-store experience into the online environment, through the use of object interactivity, virtual try-ons, mix-and-match functionalities, etc. (Perry et al., 2013). Furthermore, image interactivity includes techniques which replace a sense that is normally not activated on the Internet: the sense of touch.

Prior research has examined the effects of image interactivity technology on consumer responses. However, such effects have not been fully investigated in the context of online luxury shopping. In this study, we investigate the effects of product image interactivity (zoom, rotation and 3D) on perceived control and willingness to purchase online. We also are interested in exploring whether the type of interfaces (touch screen vs mouse) moderates these relationships. A confirmatory study was conducted. The data were collected through an online survey (n=395). The results show that image interactivity positively influences perceived control and willingness to purchase luxury product online. The effect of image interactivity on willingness to purchase becomes stronger when this relation is mediated by perceived control. The results indicate no significant differences when accessing interactive images through a touch screen compared to a mouse. Managerial implications for luxury brands are discussed.

Keywords: Image interactivity; Perceived control; Touch screen; Luxurious goods; Buying intention

References Available Upon Request

Content Creation by Luxury Travel Influencers in Times of Crisis: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 outbreak has devastated the global economy, with unprecedented travel restrictions since World War II. During the COVID pandemic, travel influencers encountered the challenges of engaging followers and brands while staying true to the nature of their social media accounts. Nevertheless, the content creation around luxury travel continued, as the travel influencer's life and earnings depended entirely on monetizing their efforts through fame and obtaining various opportunities, such as collaboration with travel and destination brands, creating travel content. However, a lack of studies illuminated luxury travel influencer's content creation behaviors in the face of the COVID global pandemic. To this end, this study explores the content creation practices adopted by luxury travel influencers on Instagram during and pre-COVID-19 phase of the pandemic. It also compares the social media content used by mega and micro-influencers. It acknowledges the challenges of engaging followers and brands while staying true to the nature of their social media accounts. Three independent coders conducted a content analysis of 316 posts drawn from 18 luxury travel influencers using the 2/3 decision rule. The findings suggest that luxury travel influencers persisted by sticking to their identity despite travel challenges due to COVID-19. They coped with the pandemic by highlighting non-travel content. At the same time, mega-influencers leveraged their reputation in the subject area by actively engaging in various promotions and collaborations with travel/destination brands. Micro-influencers focused on communicating their daily lives and non-travel-specific content. The study's time frame allowed the researchers to observe the details about luxury travel influencers and their posting content in crisis by comparing them with pre and during COVID-19 and content and between mega and micro-influencers. This study adds to the influencer marketing literature by undertaking the travel influencers' lived experiences and presenting the work at the intersection of luxury travel and influencer content. This study also outlines practical implications for travel influencers to navigate similar future contagious disease pandemics while keeping their business alive by engaging audiences and brands.

Keywords: Luxury travel; Social media influencer; COVID-19; Instagram; Content analysis

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A Cross-Cultural Study of the Consumer Responses Towards Femvertising Evidence from Mexico and Spain: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Brands have continued to adopt so-called femvertising, a combination of feminist ideals and advertising, which represents a radical shift in women's portrayal to more equal roles. As this practice expands globally, brand managers and marketing researchers should understand how the causes and effects of femvertising vary across countries. They must distinguish between communication strategies that can be applied globally and those that must be adapted to specific cultural contexts. This study seeks to understand, in a cross-cultural context, how feminist-self-identification and support for women's rights, which are at the heart of femvertising's purpose, moderate brand-related effects of femvertising and how consumers from various nations with different gender gaps respond to femvertising. The proposed theoretical model also measures attitudes toward femvertising, reaction towards femvertising message, attitudes toward the brand and purchase intention. A survey was conducted to provide evidence from two countries: Mexico, a country with lower gender equality index representing Latin America, and Spain, which has a higher-gender-equality index, representing Southern Europe. A pre-test with established key criteria was conducted to select the femvertising ad from a group of femvertising award winning campaigns. In total, 641 valid responses were obtained, and several forms of measurement invariance were examined. The results revealed two significant contributions. First, the effects of femvertising can be generalized to other nations, as consumers from countries with varying levels of gender equality respond positively to femvertising messages and have a direct and positive effect on consumers' perceptions of the brand. Second, feminist consumers from countries with lower gender equality negatively moderate the attitude toward femvertising. This finding suggests that feminist consumers with weak gender equality policies and widespread feminist activism, are more critical of female empowerment advertisements promoting female empowerment. The practical implication of the study suggests that brands must use diverse representation of their female consumers including, roles, race, gender identity, age, sexual orientation, and body diversity. The study also recommends that brands committed to female empowerment should create their communication strategy with an interdisciplinary team that includes not only marketing experts but gender equality experts.

Keywords: Advertising; Feminism; Femvertising; Women's rights

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The Impact of Digital Resources on Export Performance: Does Absorptive Capacity Make a Difference: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Resolving the inconsistencies related to the effects of a country-level determinant, such as ICT (information and communication technologies) investments on exports, is critical to academic researchers and practitioners, given that exporting is a driver of the world economy (Leonidou & Katsikeas, 2010), as well as its centrality in international business as a key performance variable (Leonidou & Katsikeas, 1996). Accordingly, building upon the organizational learning theory, we suggest that the investment into human resources will increase the absorptive capacity needed to translate digital resources into digital adoption and, ultimately, exports.

It is our assertion that ICTs represent resources that—with sufficient investment—may influence a nation's exports. Concurrently, human capital is a strategic resource within firms but also at a national level. The investment in its citizenry should also influence economic outcomes, such as exports. We advance that the proper orchestration of these resources would have an interactive effect on exporting. Further, given this combination of bundled resources, we posit firms would be better positioned to adopt the digital technology needed to expand export operations. At the crux of each of these theories and constructs is the ability to view information as a strategic resource and utilize it so that other resources are optimized.

We test our hypotheses using a longitudinal dataset of 151 countries spanning six years from 2011 to 2016. We find that digital resources help countries' exports. We also find that digital resources are positively associated with digital adoption; besides, digital adoption is positively associated with countries' export when controlled for digital resources and control variables. For practice and policy, our results provide new insights into the role that digital adoption at the country level plays in increasing exports.

Keywords: Digital resources; Export; Absorptive capacity; Human capital

References Available Upon Request

The Impact of Choice and Decision Autonomy on Adoption of AI-Enabled Purchase Aids: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Although artificial intelligence (AI) outperforms humans in many tasks, research suggests that consumers are still averse to having AI perform tasks on their behalf. While AI applications such as recommender systems and autonomous shopping systems can ease the purchase decision-making process by helping consumers to find items that match their preferences more efficiently, AI can also undermine consumers' sense of autonomy. Autonomy refers to the perception that one is able to make and enact their own decisions. In the context of consumer decision making, AI can take over two roles. First, AI-enabled aids can generate recommendation and narrow down choices to consideration sets on behalf of customers. Second, these AI-enabled aids can also have the ability to go beyond filtering choices and actively take over the final purchasing decisions without intervention from consumers. These tasks interfere with consumer perceived autonomy. Despite the prevalent use of AI in consumer decision making process and scholars' warning that AI applications may reduce customers' sense of autonomy, empirical examination remains scarce. We propose that consumer autonomy is a significant predictor of customer's decision to adopt AI in the purchasing context. Across three experiments, we found that the delegation of purchasing tasks to AI, which restricts *choice* and *decision* dimensions of consumers' perceived autonomy, reduces the likelihood of AI adoption. Our results show that the effects of choice and decision autonomy on AI adoption holds even when product choice evaluation is complex. That is, even when a purchase decision is complex, consumers demonstrate higher intentions to adopt AI-enabled aids when they have choice autonomy and decision autonomy (vs. not have choice autonomy and decision autonomy). We also found that identity-relevant consumption moderates the relationship between choice and decision autonomy on AI adoption. We provide theoretical and managerial contributions on when and why consumers are likely to use AI-enabled technology, which may help marketers to effectively increase AI adoption.

Keywords: Autonomy; AI adoption; Decision; Choice

References Available Upon Request

An Inclusive Curriculum Framework for Marketing Research Modules: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents an evidence-based inclusive curriculum towards addressing outcomes of social inequalities in HE. A systematic approach (Cronin, 2008) was adopted to identify key elements contributing to inclusive curriculum design and identify the external stimuli that impacts the emotional and cognitive states of university students (e.g., sense of belonginess) in HE (e.g., curriculum). An Inclusive Curriculum is proposed and tested to an MSc Marketing class in the UK (n=107). The effectiveness of the curriculum was assessed through focus groups with students (n=60), award data (grades) and module evaluations. Inclusive values conveyed during learning experience make students feeling safe and free to be themselves without the fear of judgment, supported to bring the best of themselves to their studies (Dewsbury & Brame, 2019). We suggest that a clear statement about the inclusive module value such as flexible, equitable, transparent, anticipatory will inspire a respectful environment where students will feel confident to be themselves. We also suggest presenting module's values along with the learning expectations and objectives of the marketing research module. Students during the focus groups suggested that 'Data analysis is a dry topic, I never expected that we will get to talk about values, as a female not from the West, I felt I can easily share my views in a Western country, prestigious University'. The use of hidden curriculum may unintentionally offend or hurt parties involved in a conversation (Margolis et al., 2001). We propose that the use of inclusive examples, activities, language and avoiding colloquial language will help students to feel included. In the marketing research class, we amended data sets and research questions to offer inclusive examples to students. We also review module material to ensure that we do not use gendered pronouns (he/she) and instead we replace them with they/them. Students suggested that 'we dealt with real world examples examining diverse consumers, I particularly liked the example with gender neutral clothing case.... I felt represented'. The optimal distinctiveness theory (Brewer, 1991) that suggests that students want to be part of a social group (class), but they also want to feel distinctive within this group and successful. While teaching research, it is challenging to reinforce optimal distinctiveness. We propose that the internationalisation of the curriculum by employing research studies from different cultures and the use of open assessments make students feel included and allow them to draw upon their own experiences and feel heard and appreciated. Students suggest: 'It was exciting to work on datasets from the Indian market, to share my experience as ... I felt I contributed to the project'. Using diverse research cases also reinforce students to feel included and cultural awareness is raised (Witte, 2010).

Keywords: Inclusive curriculum; Diversity and inclusion; Student success; Marketing education

References Available Upon Request

Applied Class Projects: Developing and Accessing an Inventory of Applied Research Projects in Marketing Courses: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Since many undergraduate marketing courses conclude with a semester long Applied Class Project (ACP), there was faculty interest in determining if students found the use of ACPs as meaningful in their education as did instructors. Underwood (2003, p. 319) points out that students often fail to match the enthusiasm for collaborative learning shown by educators and learning theorists. It was also of interest to discover if the use of ACPs was helping marketing alumni with the skills, they needed to succeed on the job such as critical thinking and problem solving, communication and collaboration, creativity and innovation, leadership and innovation, flexibility and adaptability, and leadership and responsibility. (Trilling & Fadel, 2009).

There were two research objectives in the study: What do current students think about ACPs and how can these class projects be improved. A survey was sent to students currently taking marketing courses and to recent alumni who had taken a marketing course in the past year. Additionally, personal interviews were conducted with alumni from various graduating classes to better understand how ACPs helped them in their first job.

The study supports other findings that conclude group projects can help students develop a host of skills that are increasingly important in the professional world (Caruso & Woolley, 2008; Mannix & Neale, 2005). These skills result from positive groups experiences that contribute to student learning, retention, and overall college success. (Astin, 1997; Tinto, 1998; National Survey of Student Engagement, 2006). Other conclusions from the study that can be useful to faculty in the development of future curricula utilizing ACPs include: 1) it is unwise to reduce the number of ACPs as both students and alumni find them to be effective in the classroom and later on the job 2) students do not find ACPs to be repetitive and they view them as a positive experience 3) ACPs can be better coordinated through improved faculty communications 4) students prefer ACPs that include national brands as they offer more interesting marketing challenges and they can result in meaningful additions to resumes.

Keywords: Marketing education; Student engagement; Group projects; Team assignments; Collaborative learning

References Available Upon Request

The Concept of Strategic Change Capability: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Studying strategic change lies at the heart of marketing research as organizations have no other choice than change and adapt their strategic marketing decisions to cope with the dynamism and uncertainty inherent in contemporary business environments (Kalaignanam et al., 2021). Interest in the topic of strategic change has recently become more pronounced as the outbreak of Covid-19 highlighted the need for organizations to be constantly ready for change (Hughes et al., 2020); yet research shows that only one-third of change initiatives succeed (McKinsey and Company, 2021). Even when organizations recognize the need or opportunity to change, they often fail to respond (Nayak et al., 2020).

The dynamic capabilities theory (e.g., Eisenhardt & Martin, 2000; Teece et al., 1997) has significantly augmented our understanding of why some firms have greater capacity to change than others by suggesting that high-performing organizations possess superior sensing, seizing, and reconfiguring capabilities that enable them to respond to or create market change. In this vein, scholars (e.g., Grewal and Tansuhaj, 2001; Kalaignanam et al., 2021; Wei et al., 2014) have used a plethora of concepts/constructs (e.g., strategic flexibility, agility, responsiveness) to explain phenomena pertaining to how organizations initiate and implement strategic changes. Even though these concepts have shed light on the high-level processes that explain how (e.g., by redeploying organizational resources) and why (e.g., as a response to environmental change) organizations change their strategies, we lack knowledge about the micro-level strategy development and execution mechanisms that underpin an organization's ability to initiate and implement strategic changes successfully (Muller & Kunisch, 2018). Vital aspects of the change process such as how organizations formulate change plans and use feedback/control mechanisms are elusive from existing concepts that scholars have used to explain how organizations achieve strategic change (Abernethy et al., 2021; Stouten et al., 2018).

The current study addresses this gap by introducing the concept of "Strategic Change Capability" (SCC). Based on data from twenty-six in depth interviews with consultants and top-level managers representing different firm and industry characteristics, as well as a Delphi study with eight academic experts, SCC is conceptualized as a multi-dimensional capability that manifests in a firm's ability to design, prepare for, execute/control, and sustain strategic changes for managing its competitive standing. The study findings enrich the dynamic capabilities theory by uncovering the distinct processes, decision rules and organizational structures that underpin a firm's ability to achieve strategic change in a repeated and reliable manner. As such, we provide a more nuanced explanation of why some firms have greater capacity to change than others. Our fieldwork findings offer key managerial guidance on what is required for organizations to succeed in an era that change is the "new normal".

Keywords: Strategic change; Change initiation; Change implementation; Dynamic capabilities

References Available Upon Request

Exploring Video Game Player Profiles in the Context of Cosmetic Microtransactions: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Microtransactions refer to the purchasing of a wide variety of digital content, ranging from single items, through items embedded into a bundle, to a pack that contains several digital objects under one umbrella. Given their versatile nature, microtransactions represent an increasingly popular business practice within many video games, giving players the opportunity to purchase digital items, which in turn enables them to gain various advantages over their peers and fellow community members. A particularly interesting segment of digital content captures those purely cosmetic and aesthetically oriented goods that do not provide users with concrete mechanical or technical benefits, yet are nonetheless valued and pursued by members of the gaming community. Building on in-depth interviews with a group of 20 active video game players residing in France, the present study explores variations in user preferences, motivations, expectations and perceived benefits associated with microtransaction and the consumption of cosmetic digital goods in video games. Based on our results, various key motivations were identified that encouraged video game players to engage in cosmetic microtransaction, including personal and achievement goals, social and belonging needs, prestige seeking and status signaling motives, and the pursuit of novelty. Although these motivations frequently operated in a complementary fashion, at times they were found to be conflicting as well. Furthermore, our findings indicate that even cosmetic digital items can offer competitive advantages and benefits (e.g., becoming thinner, gaining latency time or becoming less visible via acquiring certain digital clothes or armors in the game). This is particularly interesting as it is contradictory to prior assumptions that cosmetic digital items do not hold value above and beyond their hedonic or aesthetic appeal. Incorporating these emergent themes and categories, we construct six gamer personas together with certain core attributes that capture needs, perceptions and expectations concerning the valuation of digital transactions. Ultimately, our results can offer guidance to marketing professionals and consumer researchers to mitigate their approach towards this massive, complex and dynamically growing consumer group of video gamers and identify effective strategies to cultivate user engagement.

Keywords: Video games; Digital items; Microtransactions; Consumer personas; Motivations

References Available Upon Request

Investigating the Role of Mobile Service Quality on Customer Engagement among Mobile Banking Application Users: The Moderating Impact of Age: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

The proliferation of technology has remarkably transformed consumers' lives as they can use their smartphones and mobile applications to receive a wide range of services (Alalwan et al., 2018). Technology services such as mobile banking (m-banking) application is a prominent example of breakthrough innovation in the financial sector with substantial benefits (Thusi & Maduku, 2020). Service providers can provide various services using smartphones and mobile applications to offer convenience for customers, and thus, such technology is widespread. However, technology service providers still face challenges regarding the varying degree of customer engagement towards app-based services, and this phenomenon leads to a need for an in-depth investigation. Researchers extensively investigate the factors leading to technology service adoption (Wong et al., 2021). Nevertheless, while initial acceptance is fundamental for advancing a new technology (for instance, an m-banking application), such acceptance does not ensure that customers will be engaged (Ozturk et al., 2016). The objective of this research, therefore, is to examine the antecedents and consequences of technology customer engagement and how generational differences play a role in the context of technology services such as mobile banking applications. This research answers the following three research questions: how do mobile service quality (technology versus non-technology) dimensions play a significant role in driving customer engagement for technology service users; how does customer engagement impact brand attachment and brand advocacy for technology services; and how do the younger and older generations differ in engaging with technology services? The re-search findings advance the theoretical understanding by identifying mobile service quality dimensions as key determinants, proposing technology customer engagement as a significant driver of brand attachment and brand advocacy, and finding the moderating impact of the generational gap. This study also provides critical practical implications for technology service providers in creating an engaging user experience via technology customer engagement.

Keywords: Technology customer engagement; Mobile service quality; Brand attachment; Brand advocacy; Mobile banking; Generational gap theory

References Available Upon Request

Shop 'Til You Drop While Consumer Experiences FLOW in Transactional Retail Website: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Prior research examines customer Flow experiences in e-retailer settings, yet little research exists in e-retailer and Flow experiences in China. To comprehend the Flow experience with shopping in one of the largest and fast-growing e-retailers (Taobao), this study explores the position of flow experience, a feeling that arises as a consequence of significant cognitive attachment. In so doing, this study investigates how e-retailers' computer-mediated human interaction with the customer has influenced building trust and brand equity as well as customer satisfaction. Consumer experiences, an important key to recurring spending, is a fascinating yet mystifying observable fact due to the increasing popularity of e-retailing websites such as Taobao in China.

Using a stimulus–organism–response framework (S–O–R framework) as the theoretical basis, this study examines the impact of consumer perceptions of website atmospheric cues (platform informativeness, e-service quality) on the development of flow and its subsequent impact on satisfaction, trust, and brand equity. Consumer experiences are an important key to recurring spending, thus, this study focused on analyzing the antecedents of Flow and e-loyalty behavior in terms of brand equity and trust for the particular e-retailer (Taobao) and the effects of Flow on customer satisfaction.

The analysis was conducted using SmartPLS (Structural Equation Modeling) based on 238 participants collected via an online survey evaluating E-shopping experiences in Taobao. Results from the structural equation modeling in support of the model and most of the set hypotheses demonstrate that website service innovativeness is the stronger antecedent's impact on consumer Flow experience. The results also illustrate that a consumer's flow state with the e-retailer website mediates the effects of customer satisfaction and trust subsequently leading to brand equity towards the e-retailer website. We also find that brand equity has a larger significant impact on the developing e-loyalty towards the e-retailer website.

Findings confirm that overall e-service quality and website service innovativeness for the online shopping platform directly and positively affect consumer trust toward e-retailer.

Keywords: Flow; Service innovativeness; E-service quality; Trust; Customer satisfaction; Brand equity

References Available Upon Request

"White" Space in the Websites of Luxury Fashion Brands and Its Impact on Consumers' Attention, Attitudes, and Intentions: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Until recently, luxury brands have demonstrated limited online presence based on the consensus that the internet's openness will jeopardize their exclusive and aesthetic aura (Chadha & Hiusband, 2006). At the same time, web aesthetics play a pivotal role in creating and preserving luxurious experiences that result in positive consumers' responses (Kim, 2019). "White" space in web design (either the classical, minimal, monochrome style, or the expressive, decorative, yet uniform and flat style) (Coursaris & Kripintris, 2012; Nielsen Norman Group, 2015), could lead consumers perceive that brands have higher luxury values (Lee et al., 2018). Interestingly, research in advertising demonstrates that "white" space reflects prestigiousness, creativity and high aesthetics (Feasley & Stuart, 1987; Pracejus et al., 2006), thus values that are highly related to luxuriousness.

To the best of our knowledge, no prior study has ever investigated the role of "white" space on the effectiveness of a luxury fashion brand website, in terms of signaling aesthetics and luxuriousness, and shaping favorable attitudes and purchase intentions. Building on the studies of Silvia (2005) on appraisal theory and Kusumasondjaja (2019), the current research proposes a model to discuss the influence of "white" space on consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions towards luxury brands, taking into consideration the role of perceived classical and expressive aesthetics, luxuriousness and informativeness.

One hundred and nineteen (119) undergraduate students were recruited from a large Greek university to participate in a laboratory experiment. First, a remote eye-tracking technology (Gazepoint, GP3) recorded participants' eye movements across eight different versions of websites. Attention was measured through the number of fixations and the fixations' duration (Brand et al., 2021). Upon completion of the recordings, participants were required to fill out a questionnaire that examined the perceived classical and expressive aesthetics, perceived luxuriousness, perceived informativeness, attitude toward the brand and purchase intention. The current study advocates that websites of luxury fashion brands that incorporate an extended (classical or expressive) vs. limited "white" space will generate increased attention towards "white" space. Additionally, the study suggests a serial mediation model with perceived classical and expressive aesthetics, perceived informativeness and perceived luxuriousness as mediating factors in the relationship between number of fixations on "white" space and attitude toward the brand and purchase intentions.

This study adds value to both academia and professionals by clarifying the significance of incorporating "white" space in website design (Coursaris & Kripintris, 2012). It emphasizes how this technique can aid in creating a well-structured, refined, and innovative stimulus that attracts attention.

Keywords: Luxury brands; Eye-tracking; Classical aesthetics; Expressive aesthetics; Attention; Brand attitude; Purchase intention

References Available Upon Request

Smartness and Real Time: Developing Destinations Marketing Capacity in Crisis: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Tourism marketing is a cornerstone for economic development in tourism-dependent regions like the Caribbean. In the post-COVID era, the pull, back into a space dominated by high growth numbers as a catalyst for economic growth must be evaluated within what Lagadec (2009) frames as "terra incognita" (unknown territory) of crisis and disasters. The cross-border solutions in response to the pandemic provided opportunities for a *non-mediated, real-time and direct connection* with destination brands and their market. In tourism, crises have a major impact as people travel away from their familiar environments to "hostile" and unfamiliar regions. When crisis strikes, time becomes an indispensable variable for contextualizing information, and as part of the competitive digital landscape, real-time management is critical for tourism brands and destinations (Buhalis & Sinarta, 2018).

The uncertainty of crisis demonstrates the case for real-time information communication to operate as a critical connector within and outside of the destination ecosystem**.** Ecosystems have the potential to create the enabling environment for either marketplace competition or alliances to provide integrated services for their common advantage (Curry, 2020; Laihonen, 2012). Smart systems engage technology as a methodology for inclusive participation. Within the tourism system it provides an enabling tool for real time data integration and marketing, as well as a communication platform (Bethune et al., 2022). Poor connectivity, coordination and broad brushed generalizations following a natural hazard can stymie recovery efforts. Smart tourism coordinates the effort of the tourism ecosystem and marketing is critical for the clarity of communications which leads to effective recovery and resilience at the destination.

A qualitative methodology was employed to understand Jamaica's approach to the development of its resilience. This was undertaken through documentary analysis of one hundred and twenty (120) documents and twenty-five (25) semi-structured interviews of strategic tourism decision-makers. Findings demonstrated that Jamaica's destination resilience was contingent in part on its ability to manage the marketing narrative during crisis. Centrally coordinated by the government, Jamaica tourism was one of the few exceptions that managed the crisis effectively. Real-Time communication and information distribution, through an interconnected mechanism of similar destinations with shared vulnerabilities, presents an opportunity to strengthen marketing capacity.

The development of an interdependent tourism marketing body representing the collective interest of a region, could become a broker between the impacted destination and its market enabling effective management of marketing communications. This could provide a more contextualized framing of the messaging and facilitate quick recovery. This is advantageous for tourism destinations that don't have expansive budgets for marketing firms. However, if this body is to be effective, it needs to develop shared outcomes that represents the collective interest supported by local real-time response capacity so that the destination's resilience is enhanced.

Keywords: Real-time response; Tourism crisis management; Destination resilience; Destination marketing

References Available Upon Request

An Analysis of Perceived Event Innovation: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Experiences leave lasting impressions and lead to stronger connections for individuals over products and services and the hospitality and tourism industry is the ideal place for experiences to be curated and lived through. In a tourism context, innovation can be any form of creative and successful new products, solutions for cost reduction, higher quality service, or source of competitive advantage to greater market share. Recent research on Tourism experiences has found that the field is still evolving, especially from an innovative perspective. At the current stage, there is still a lack of a holistic understanding of experience innovation and how the concept should be measured. Through the use of rigorous scale development methods following Churchill (1979), DeVellis (2016), and Nenkov et al. (2008), this study developed 1) a holistic scale to capture the underlining components of tourism experience innovation, and 2) validated the instrument through empirical studies. In this study, tourism experience innovation is defined as an innovation created to enhance a tourism experience. Innovations are anything new or modern that results in some type of transformation. Thus, a tourism experience innovation is something new that tourists will encounter during the tourism process that integrates various elements of an experience to create something better than before based on shifting consumer wants. In short, an innovative tourist experience is something new that makes a tourist's life better. This study contributes to the literature by developing and validating a parsimonious scale through a series of empirical studies. We also included the derived scale in a nomological framework to examine its structural relationships with tourist innovation and behavioral intentions. Our study contributes to tourism managers' understanding of how to corroborate and customize a tourism experience through innovations in their businesses, considering tourists' profiles and needs.

Keywords: Experience innovation; Scale development; Diffusion of innovation; Tourist innovation; Behavioral intention

References Available Upon Request

Exploration of How Sponsorship Types Influence Esport Consumers Based on Ideal Self Congruence: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Esports has quickly evolved into a billion-dollar industry. Especially during the recent pandemic, esport viewership enjoyed tremendous growth due to the shutdown of traditional sports and the ease of accessing esports on online channels during work-from-home orders. Post-pandemic, esport organizations continuously seek change and try to understand consumers' rapidly changing tastes on the way to 'normalcy.' Hence, a new understanding of these 'shifted' consumers requires esport organizations to adjust to the 'new beginning. 'Accordingly, this study aims to explore esport fan behavior based on different types of sponsorships. This study examines the role of the consumers' ideal self-congruity with esports to the different types of sponsors. Following an in-depth literature review, to test the proposed hypotheses of the main study, a 2 (Self Congruity: High vs. Low) × 2 (Match-up: Endemic vs. Non-Endemic) experimental designed survey was distributed. Next, the participants will be asked to provide their thoughts, attitudes (sponsors, sponsored esport league), and behavioral intentions (attendance intent, streaming intent) based on the different types (match-up) of sponsors. Demographic questions will also be asked for further exploration on providing in-depth findings on esport consumers. This highly controlled experimental study explores evidence that for esport consumers, the sponsorships' fit may affect purchase intentions and attitudes toward the brand and esports. Also, the ideal self-congruence of esport fans with esports and sponsorships was examined to provide implications on the different types of sponsorships and how the match-up of these sponsorships with esports leads to different consumer behavior intentions. We expect that fit/endemic sponsors will positively affect behavior and attitudes regardless of the functional or symbolic image of the brand images. Especially if the individual has a higher level of ideal self-congruence to esports, we assume that the influence of both sponsor's fit with esports and the sponsor's influence will positively emphasize consumer behavior and attitudes toward esports. The proposed study extends the literature on esport sponsorships, luxury marketing, match-up hypothesis, and esport consumer behavior in general. In this vastly changing digital era, we intend to identify primary attractants for esport fans by segmenting them by their differences in self-congruity to different types of sponsors, understanding the consequences based on different types of sponsorships. By understanding how each consumer reacts based on their ideal self-congruity to esports on different types of sponsorships, this study's results find evidence of the sponsors' images, alongside the sponsor's match-up with esports, as essential factors to consider when selecting sponsors. The findings will benefit esport practitioners by providing strategies for selecting appropriate and effective sponsors for their events, teams, and organizations, enhancing brand and esport organization images and consumption intentions.

Keywords: Esports; Sponsorships; Match up hypothesis; Ideal self congruity; Luxury brands

References Available Upon Request

Special Session: Marketing for Better Cities: Setting the Agenda for Responsible, Inclusive, Smart and Equitable Places: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

This Special Session seeks to set the agenda for sustainable place marketing theory and practice. Place marketing and place branding are rapidly growing fields of academic inquiry and practical application. However, their connection to the requirements of a sustainable future development of our places remains unclear and underexplored. This is a major oversight of marketing academia and a crucial deficiency in place branding and marketing debate, which needs to theoretically frame tensions and trade-offs between the economic growth of cities and regions and the sustainability goals in a precarious and uncertain time.

The pandemic scenarios became a fertile ground for revitalising the attention to sustainability and accelerating digital transformations in cities and regions. Unprecedented consumer empowerment, widening opportunities for stakeholder engagement resulting from the rapid advancement of information and communication technology, and growing 'blended' practices of place consumption (e.g., for work, study, visit and shopping) impose new forms and practices of place marketing. Growing awareness of social sustainability makes place marketing and branding operate under the democratic pressure to be socially sensitive, to cater for the needs of the weaker and to allow for resident participation in decision-making that affects the future of the place. This trend reshapes and strengthens the necessary relationship of marketing with public policies and the collective interest. Now more than ever, place marketing scholars' task is to initiate and facilitate responsible, inclusive, smart and equitable place marketing practice, setting an agenda for concrete and actionable research.

The session aims at becoming a reference point for the future of marketing application for places in terms of theoretical development, as well as methodological refinement regarding social, economic and ecological sustainability. The ambition is to set the vision and pave the way for a new and better form of place marketing and branding that will aid cities and regions throughout the transition to sustainable development. This session will lay the foundations for a conclusive link between place marketing and economic, social and environmental sustainability.

Keywords: Place marketing; Place branding; Sustainability; City marketing

References Available Upon Request

Utilizing the SCARF Framework to Improve Marketing Educators' Effectiveness: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

The pandemic has created unprecedented learning challenges for business education. As a result, isolation, loneliness, depression, and anxiety are reported to be increasing, according to several trade press reports. Consequently, it is vital for educators to understand which experience elements might impact students' learning experience.

The goal of this research is to theorize on and begin to examine how learning is influenced by different motivation elements in the worst versus the best marketing classroom experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We examine a set of five motivation elements—status, certainty, autonomy, relatedness, fairness— from neuroscience leadership research that might impact the student learning experience during the pandemic challenges. We pay special attention to the possible contrast of what matters in good classes versus in bad marketing classes.

An online survey was distributed to students enrolled in business classes at two business schools in the United States during spring 2022. One business school is located in the intermountain west. The other business school is located in the Midwest. The data was analyzed using a combination of paired T-tests and OLS regression modeling with fixed effects for the respondents given the paired data of evaluating the two groups of classes during the pandemic.

The results indicate that status, certainty, autonomy, relatedness, and fairness are all important drivers of student satisfaction with the classroom learning experience when it comes to marketing- related topics. For example, the results support the idea that status feedback to students is a significant determinant of the student learning experience and the level of the status feedback can contribute to the class being grouped into a best learning experience or a worst learning experience. We propose that in regards to 'certainty' it is important for educators to be clear and concise in providing direct instruction on topics that may be intentionally ambiguous. The exercises may intentionally leave lots of opportunities for different experiences and learnings. But the instructions should be direct. This concept seems simple, but there is evidence it does not always occur.

We outline implications for pedagogical research and educational practice.

Keywords: University student learning; Covid-19 pandemic impact; SCARF; Status; Certainty; Autonomy; Relatedness; Fairness

References Available Upon Request

Self-Regulation Indirect Impact on Student Learning in the Blended and Flipped Classroom: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

The covid pandemic has been a catalyst for the implementation, often rushed, of blended and flipped approaches to teaching in higher education (Divjak et. al, 2022). At the same time, there has been an increased expectation of students to engage independently with the online material and learning technologies (Liu et al., 2020). We therefore need to better understand whether the self-regulatory behaviours benefit from such investments.

This study takes a task technology fit (TTF) perspective to explore the indirect impact of self-regulation (SRL) on learning performance in a flipped and blended classroom. TTF proposes that "technologies positively impact performance outcomes when they are *utilized* and *match* a task" (Howard & Rose, 2019, p. 103). Previous research examined separately and with mixed results only the direct effects. For example, research looked at the enhancing effects of self-regulatory behaviours on students' academic performance (e.g., Barnard et al., 2009; Landrum, 2020), the technological competency challenges in education (see Rasheed et al., 2020), and the impact of flipped approaches on performance (e.g., Mclaughlin, 2013). This study contributes by exploring the *indirect effects* of online self-regulation on student learning in the context of flipped and blended learning. More specifically, the serial mediating effects of task technology fit as well as students' perceptions of flipped learning are explored.

A survey method was applied and a sample of 115 student responses from three postgraduate modules in a business school in the UK were collected. The data was analysed using Hayes process model 6 in SPSS. This study shows that self-regulatory strategies and behaviours can result in higher perceived learning, but this can only be achieved indirectly, via a serial indirect effect through TTF and perception of the flipped model, and one simple indirect effect through TTF.

We can then conclude that blended approaches both inside and outside the classroom, in the flipped component, can support self-regulatory behaviours in a productive way. Blended approaches refer to the full suite of applications included in the e-learning system. In this case these included MCQs, polls, pin boards, etc. These functionalities were used to support goal setting, environmental structuring, time management, help-seeking and self-valuation. The flipped classroom refers to the provision of some content being assigned as homework, so to free-up class time for other learning activities (Sletten, 2017). The flipped part can take different forms, and, in this case, a bespoke workbook format was adopted.

Keywords: Self-regulation; Blended learning; Flipped classroom; Learning performance

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Environmental Sustainability Communications, Online Customer Engagement and Sales Performance: Evidence from the Luxury Fashion Industry: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Building on the stakeholder theory and using data from listed firms in the luxury fashion industry with high Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) ratings, the aim of this study is to analyse the impact of environmental sustainability communications on online customer engagement–on social media–and sales performance. The luxury fashion industry is forecasted to increase from 309.6 billion USD in 2021 to 382.6 billion USD in 2025 with a compound annual growth rate of 5.4% (Reyes-Menendez et al., 2022). The rise of the luxury fashion market is increasing pressure for luxury fashion brands to become more sustainable in their practices due to its previous associations with consumerism and inconsiderate practices towards the environment. Due to generational changes (among customers) and increased public awareness on corporate sustainability, the luxury fashion industry is gradually starting to adopt more corporate sustainable practices (Goldstein & Carpenter, 2022). As a result of the focus on these sustainable business practices, conscious shareholders, stakeholders, investors, and the general public are now demanding that luxury fashion organisations are held accountable for the impact their business operations have on society. Consequently, this study is focused on examining the impact of environmental sustainability communications on online customer engagement–on social media–and the impact it has on sales performance, among firms in the fashion industry. Linear analyses were first conducted to determine if financial slack leads to higher levels of environmental, social, and economic tweets. All hypothesised relationships between financial slack and environmental social and economic tweets were accepted. Secondly, hypotheses tests were conducted to examine if environmental, social, or economic tweets would lead to higher levels of online customer engagement on Twitter, through likes and retweets. The findings showed that for social tweets the hypotheses for both likes and retweets were accepted. This verifies previous studies that socially focused dimension is most popular in online consumer engagement and potentially electronic word of mouth. However, for environmental tweets, although inclusion of these dimensions had positive effects on the number of likes, the impact on retweets was negative. Our findings have important contributions to the extant sustainability and luxury fashion industry.

Keywords: Environmental sustainability communications; Online customer engagement; Sales performance; Luxury fashion industry

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Systematically Reviewing and Revisiting the Concept of Corporate Philanthropy in the Marketing Context: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

The importance of corporate philanthropy (CP) has grown substantially over the last 50 years in virtually all organisations (Gautier & Pache, 2015). However, there remains an inherent contradiction regarding whether CP can help improve a commercial brand and at the same time make a genuine contribution to social benefits. Given the existing haziness surrounding CP, this seems an appropriate occasion to revisit, critique, and enhance this concept through the lens of marketing research. In response, this review synthesises the growing literature and displays how the mature field of philanthropy can be applied to the prolific marketing context.

This review is based on a protocol with agree-on inclusion and exclusion criteria. Overall, our final database consists of 102 items (including 7 books and 95 articles). Within them, some references cover different topics. The number of articles about the difference between CP and general philanthropy=25, distinguishing CP from CSR=14, working definition of CP=34, types and relevant effects of CP=62.

This review has been one of the first attempts to systematically examine corporate philanthropy in the marketing context. The finding of this review makes a significant contribution to the current knowledge base by critiquing the traditional view of corporate philanthropy as an altruistic activity. This review effectively demonstrates the reciprocal mechanism of CP and reveals that it is just another mutually beneficial exchange in the marketplace motivated by self-interest. This provides a deeper insight into linking CP to its competitive context. Meanwhile, the review of CP classification and its effects advances our understanding of the diversity of CP. It highlights key roles which can be played by customers and employees in enhancing synchronised social and economic impact through philanthropic involvement. This new understanding should pave the way for new contributions. This work suggests future researchers think outside the box of altruism when considering how corporate giving led to getting. Plus, by clearly understanding the definition and the classification of CP, companies and practitioners can take CP as a new set of competitive and remarkable marketing tools. More research should be carried out in the future by linking CP with other marketing concepts. Following this, further research might explore a framework for CP activities and its marketing-related consequences then open the door to making a change in societal issues.

Keywords: Corporate philanthropy; Systematic literature review; Reciprocal; Competitive context

References Available Upon Request

An Exploratory Investigation of the Annoyance Factor and Cross-Channel Engagement Intentions When Consumers are Exposed to Website Pop-Ups on Owned Sites: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Websites that include disruptive digital marketing tactics such as interstitial pop-ups can be downright annoying to website visitors (Burns & Lutz, 2006), regardless of whether the message is relevant or irrelevant (Zha & Wu, 2014). Marketers have choices when it comes to executing the timing of pop-ups. Marketers can choose to set the ad to show immediately after a web visitor lands on a page, after the web visitor scrolls to a certain page depth such as 50%, 75% or 100%, or after the web visitor shows intent of exiting a page. Previous research has found that designing pop-ups to show too early will negatively impact attitudes toward the ad. Yet, other research has found pop-ups to be perceived as more intrusive as visitors become more cognitively involved with the web page (Li et al., 2002).

Since some research found a pop-up delay is best and other research has found the opposite, we aim to add additional evidence toward one side or the other by investigating if website visitors perceive pop-ups as more (or less) annoying as more of the page is viewed. Secondly, this research explores what cross-channel engagement behaviors brands could gain (or lose) from web visitors by implementing pop-ups on their owned sites.

To investigate both research questions, we designed five one-page websites for a fictitious nonprofit, called Small Acts of Kindness, for a one factor (pop-up timing) with five conditions between-subjects experimental design. Four websites had a pop-up encouraging visitors to "make a difference". Each of the four sites had varied pop-up interval timing: 1) immediately upon entering the site, 2) at mid-page scroll, 3) at end-of-page scroll, and 4) on behavior intent to exit the website detected by the website visitor's cursor hovering over the browser exit icon. The fifth website was the control for the experiment; it was designed without a pop-up. Undergraduate college students (n = 111; 94% were 18-22 years old and 59% were male) participated in the study by visiting the website from their own device at home.

Survey participants did not perceive the pop-ups as annoying, and this is the case regardless of their timing. Regarding the impact of pop-up timing on cross channel engagement behaviors, there were no significant differences in willingness to engage with the brand on social and email channels comparing the different times of the pop-ups. However, increasing the sample size may change these results in the future.

Keywords: Pop-ups; Website design; Consumer behavior; Cross-channel engagement

References Available Upon Request

Designers' Resistance to Hybrid Products: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

A divergence of points of view in the literature raises some fundamental questions about the place of affordance in the design of New Hybrid Products (NHP). For some authors, affordance is important and has a central place for these newly created objects combining two (or more) concepts/products and for others it plays a minor role for Hi-Tech NHPs. Recent studies dealt with the issues raised by NHPs related to their evaluation, categorization and adoption by consumers under the light of affordance theory. Other studies presented other issues of these products from a consumers' privacy perspective explaining consumers' resistance toward their adoption (El Amri, 2019; Chouk & Mani, 2019). Although we do not want to discount these issues for consumers, the aim of this study is to provide a better understanding of the factors that explain resistance to hybrid product from designer perspective.

To this end, an exploratory qualitative study was carried out with sixteen French Hi-Tech design experts on two communicating hybrid concepts, the "Flip phone" and the "Roll top". The findings show that product affordance is one of the factors with an impact on designers' willingness to conceive hybrid innovation. Assessing the affordance of NHPs in designers' perspective has also implications for companies in the early stages of design. There are two main tends in terms of design approaches either to create objects that are black boxes that are extremely simple in appearance and that do not reflect at all the complexity of the object or we create objects that reflect a maximum of things and the user is able to trace everything that happens. While formalizing affordance in the early stages of design, companies and researchers in the topic should take into account the reluctance of designers to conceive these hybrid products as this reluctance may impact their design. Furthermore, they gain in understanding the various brakes presented in this study explaining this reluctance.

Keywords: Affordance; Design; Resistance; Innovation; Product development

References Available Upon Request

Methods Variance Extracted (MVE): Toward a Universal Metric for Detectable Common Methods Variance: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

A new data quality metric, called methods variance extracted (MVE), is introduced and proposed. MVE is a universal measure of methods variance identified through the process of item level correction (ILC). This practical guide provides a step-by-step approach to evaluate, prepare, and transform a dataset by removing and replacing common methods variance with random variance. When the process is completed, the results allow for the calculation of MVE. This process should occur almost immediately after data cleaning and before any statistical analysis. In doing so, researchers can avoid many of the numerous real and perceived pitfalls of common methods variance in their analysis, results, and conclusions. ILC, and by extension MVE, are solution-oriented approaches which begin to move past the discussion of when or how much common methods variance is acceptable.

As marketers, we are often specifically interested in the relationships between within-person traits and variables which essentially requires the collection of data from the same source (Podsakoff et al., 2012). ILC is suggested as one of the leading ways to improve rigor in cross-sectional, survey-based marketing research (Baumgartner et al., 2021; Chin et al., 2013; Hulland et al., 2018; Teehsen et al., 2017). Few publications devote any significant time explaining how to perform this method. Moreover, item level correction provides a way for researchers to calculate MVE, which can be used as a standardized way to report methods variance extracted.

This research offers a step-by-step guide for use in performing ILC and provides evidence that the method is useful to detect and remove methods variance. The benefits of performing item level correction include: (1) measuring and correcting for uneven CMV across each survey item, (2) using multiple-method factors without negatively impacting sample size, (3) the ability to report MVE, and (4) more accurate reporting of construct reliability, validity, correlation, regression, and SEM results based on CMV-reduced measures.

Keywords: Methods variance; Item level correction; Method variables; MLMV

References Available Upon Request

Quantifying Model Selection Uncertainty Via Bootstrapping and Akaike Weights: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

To explain the complex mechanisms underlying consumer behavior, researchers typically derive models as formal quantitative representations of theories and hypotheses. In doing so, they consider specific contexts or make different assumptions, giving rise to the existence of multiple models (Sharma et al., 2019). Researchers therefore routinely estimate competing models and pick the "best" model based on fit statistics and conceptual considerations. However, by doing so, they ignore all evidence that favored other models, or was inconclusive, thereby disregarding the uncertainty inherent in the model selection process (Preacher & Merkle, 2012).

Researchers have proposed methods to measure this uncertainty (Burnham & Anderson, 2002) in an effort to improve the model selection process and safeguard replicability (Lubke & Campbell, 2016). However, these methods rely on an error-centric framework, defining uncertainty solely as a function of sampling variance—despite sampling variance being only one element of model selection uncertainty. Capturing the other elements require reaching beyond social sciences concepts, and conceptualizing "uncertainty" as done in metrology (Bell, 1999): quantified doubt about the value of the measurand (JCGM, 2012). High uncertainty implies that a measurement is consistent with a wide range of plausible values for the measurand, which may lead to different measurement values obtained across various measurements and studies (Rigdon et al., 2020). Metrologists seek to quantify overall uncertainty by inventorying its material components (including potential doubt about which statistical model is "best"), with the aim of reducing uncertainty in future research (Bell, 1999).

Surprisingly, the concept of uncertainty is largely unknown to marketing researchers, even though they typically focus on perceptions, intentions, and behaviors that are inherently difficult to measure. For example, ambiguous concept definitions, item selection, and measurement validation contribute to uncertainty in the measurement process (Rigdon & Sarstedt, 2022). Various researchers that take an interdisciplinary view of measurement therefore have sought anchoring an uncertainty-centric research framework in marketing research (Bach et al., 2020).

The aim of this study is to take a further step in that direction by describing an approach for quantifying model selection uncertainty that captures variation in parameter estimates across models. Our approach extends beyond prior research in that it captures all material components that emerge from the model selection process—rather than focusing on sampling variance only. To provide support for and illustrate our approach, we present the results of a simulation study and offer an empirical example. By quantifying model selection uncertainty, our approach offers the means to contextualize research findings and improve model selection practice.

Keywords: Model selection; Uncertainty; Akaike weights; Bootstrapping; Information criteria

References Available Upon Request

The Value of Marketing Analytics Innovation: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Marketing analytics is broadly defined as the collection, management, and analysis of *data* to obtain insights for the purpose of improving marketing decisions and, ultimately, firm performance (Germann et al., 2013; Wedel & Kannan, 2016). Analytics on customers, markets, and competitors aim to improve key marketing decisions such as promotion, pricing, customer relationship management (CRM), and marketing-mix allocation (Germann et al., 2013; Liang et al., 2022). With the abundance of data available in today's digital economy, most marketing decisions are now influenced by marketing analytics (Gartner, 2022). The financial impact of marketing analytics, however, remains somewhat murky. Empirical papers on this topic report that the *deployment* of marketing analytics (e.g., off-the-shelf solutions) generally enhances firm performance via improved customer and market responsiveness (e.g., Anderson et al., 2021; Berman & Israeli, 2022; Germann et al., 2013; Liang et al., 2022). Yet, to our knowledge, no work has examined the impact of *innovating* novel marketing analytics. In a survey of *Fortune* 1000 executives, nearly half reported using analytics developed primarily in-house (Germann et al., 2013). When and how do these home-grown analytics innovations provide a sustainable competitive advantage for firms to justify their substantial investment?

These questions are important to investigate mainly because the data collected for this research evinces the exponential growth of marketing analytics innovations, which we define as *novel processes that are specially adapted for creating or updating marketing analytics activities*. Considering the relevance, prevalence, and possible countervailing financial impacts of these innovations, we draw on the contingent view of resource-based theory (e.g., Aragon-Correa & Sharma, 2003) and use an extensive panel dataset of major firms from multiple secondary data sources to answer the research questions. Our results support the notion that marketing analytics innovation positively impacts firm performance. Furthermore, we show that various diversification strategies create either synergies or counter-synergies for the marketing analytics innovation deployed by the companies.

Keywords: Marketing innovation; Analytics; Analytics innovation; Performance

References Available Upon Request

Does Industry Digitization Shape the Efficiency of Big Data Driven Supply Chains: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Digital transformation is booming and digitally transformed companies are predicted to generate more than half of the world's gross domestic product in year 2023 (Statista, 2022). At the same time, supply chains are becoming progressively complex due to increasing amount of interactions, rising customer expectations, and expanded need for tailored products and services. In the dynamic business environment, market competition is shifting from between individual companies to between entire supply chains (Li et al., 2006). Hence, companies are forced to examine ways for more effective supply chain management (SCM) to achieve competitive advantage (Li et al., 2006). Indeed, the ability to make informed decisions fast has become a priority. This requires data analytics tools that allow the right people to have the right data at the right time. However, Mikalef et al. (2018) highlight that despite the high hopes associated with big data analytics, scholars have paid little attention to the mechanisms through which big data analytics improves efficiency.

The earlier literature claims that the effects of digital transformation are likely to vary across industries (Guellec et al., 2020). Thus, we anticipate that the level of industry digitization (Gandhi et al., 2016) affects how companies manage to achieve better financial performance with the help of big data analytics. We expect that companies in highly digitalized industries have better capabilities and more experience in implementing technological breakthroughs at large, and have access to more voluminous and versatile data from their business processes and the entire supply chain. This is likely to enhance the efficiency of big data analytics.

A study combining manager-reported survey data, secondary company performance data, and industry digitization index, suggests that big data analytics in supply chain management improves company profits. The effect is even greater when digital engagement with customers and suppliers is high. However, investments in assets such as hardware, software, data and IT services, or digital engagement with employees do not moderate the effect of big data analytics on company profits. The findings shed light on the varying effects of industry digitization on the efficiency of big data driven supply chain management.

Keywords: Big data; Marketing analytics; Firm performance; Firm profitability; Industry digitization; Supply chains

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Big Data as Supportive Incentivization for Sustainable Behavior: Shaping Sustainable Tourism Behavior in the Alps with the Support of Image Recognition: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

After two years of almost no tourism or chaotic tourism-related situations, people are once again starting to travel around the globe, bringing relief to tourist destinations. However, the threat of climate change and the global call to reduce CO2 emissions is forcing tourist destinations, especially those associated with winter tourism, to promote a long-term sustainable transition to a more resilient, low-carbon tourism strategy. Therefore, in addition to reducing CO2 emissions, measures must be taken to counter the potential effects of overtourism, and a more qualitative than quantitative approach to tourism should be promoted. To achieve these goals, technology-driven solutions should be part of the conversation.

That is why the authors are tackling this issue by combining highly aggregated telecommunication data (several million data points) and anonymized image recognition technology from webcams (about 34,000 pictures showing the paths of around 2.8 million people) to map pedestrian flows in Zurich.

We find that both image recognition software using live webcams and highly aggregated tele-communication data provide a robust prediction of actual pedestrian flows. However, it is more valid at night to use telecommunication data since bad light conditions harm the validity of webcam data. To validate the results, people were also counted manually. These results demonstrated that the tallies generated by the technology are stable and valid, as it only slightly underestimates the number of people in more crowded settings, which can be controlled for. This led to the conclusion that the two technologies can be used together to understand better how people behave, making it easier to work on strategies to counteract the adverse effects of large flows of people.

This study validates the insights of big data and image recognition technology and reveals tourism behavior patterns that can be used to divide and guide tourists to different routes, reduce massive crowds in tourist hotspots (and thus the threat of overtourism), transform tourist transportation to make use of more environmentally friendly options and balance out the negative effects on the environment and the local population – all the while promoting a long-term sustainable economy.

In summary, this study shows that image recognition can be a tool for analyzing current and potential future people flows when combined with the (sometimes criticized) use of highly aggregated telecommunication data. These predictive capabilities will enable future destination managers to channel tourist flows by providing incentives for various categories of tourists to use different routes at staggered times for areas at risk of overtourism.

Keywords: Sustainable travel behavior; Tourism; Image recognition; Alps; Climate change

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Challenges of Artificial Intelligence in Big Data Analytics: The Role of Ignorance-Based View: An Abstract

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ABSTRACT

Today, many firms employ artificial intelligence (AI) to enhance their market performance through extracting insights from Big Data and achieving radical/incremental innovation. Despite the AI's potential capabilities, many firms fail to achieve their goals in their AI projects (Gartner, 2018; Sankaran, 2021). Furthermore, despite wide applications of AI in Big Data analytics in practice, "corresponding academic advances have been slow" (Hossain et al., 2022, p. 240). What determines a successful AI application in Big Data analytics? We respond to this question by studying potential mediating factors (radical innovation and incremental innovation) of the effect of AI usage on market performance. Additionally, we study whether a firm's level of ignorance-based view moderates these mediating effects, and possibly explains challenges in AI projects.

The ignorance-based view refers to the state of scientific inquiry in which individuals admit that ignorance (i.e., recognizing what we do not know) outweighs knowledge (i.e., understanding what we know) (e.g., Erevelles et al., 2016; Firestein, 2012; Sammut & Sartawi, 2012; Vitek & Jackson, 2008). In general, products developed with latent customer needs could lead to radical innovation and enable firms to achieve big success in a market, but with higher risk (Narver et al., 2004). In contrast, products developed from expressed customer needs could lead to incremental innovation and enable firms to achieve small success in a market with minimum risk (Narver et al., 2004). Should an organization encourage marketers to utilize latent customer needs extracted with AI from Big Data, and enjoy potentially big success while accommodating a high risk of failure? We argue that this view reflects the ignorance-based view and provides a firm with an opportunity for formulating new questions and examining something unexplored, instead of providing conclusive answers and solutions.

In sum, we have three main objectives for this research. First, we develop the very first scale of the ignorance-based view specifically for Big Data research. Second, through a survey on 228 Japanese firms, we test whether the ignorance-based view moderates the mediating effects of radical and incremental innovations in relation to the effect of AI usage on market performance. Finally, we discuss managerial and theorical implications of our research. Our study results reveal that the effect of AI usage on market performance is fully mediated through radical innovation (incremental innovation) for firms with high (low) levels of ignorance-based view.

Keywords: Ignorance-based view; Artificial intelligence; Big Data analytics; Innovation

References Available Upon Request