



**Putting the Pieces Together:
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New Technology = Relevant Outcomes**

**2018 Annual Spring Conference
Proceedings**

Editors

**Lisa Lindgren, College of St. Benedict / St. John's University
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***Marketing Management Association Spring Conference
April 18 - 20, 2018 Chicago, IL***

Dear MMA Friends:

Thank you so much for your interest in, and attendance at, the Spring 2018 MMA Conference in Chicago, Illinois. Your presence is much appreciated by myself and the MMA Board of Directors.

It is an honor to serve in a leadership role in the Marketing Management Association. I have met many wonderful colleagues and formed many close friendships because of my involvement with MMA. MMA is known for its collegial atmosphere and its commitment to academic excellence, student learning and professional development. This Spring 2018 Conference builds on this commitment to scholarship and friendship.

I want to give a special thanks to the track chairs for their work in managing the paper review process and helping to ensure this quality program. Also, thanks to the numerous reviewers and conference session chairs that help to make this conference successful. A huge amount of gratitude goes to Lisa Lindgren and Leila Samii for serving as conference proceedings editors. In addition, thank you to Lyle Wetsch, for making the conference program available online. Finally, thanks to Susan Geringer, Brian Vander Schee and Pam Kennett-Hensel for always being there to answer any questions I had about the conference.

It is very exciting to continue the MMA Master Scholar competition this year. Thank you to those individuals who proposed and developed this competition, the competition coordinators and those participating as competitors. As well, a big thanks to the sponsors of this competition.

Please take the opportunity to visit with the exhibitors who support the conference. They help to keep the price of MMA conferences a tremendous value for everyone, as well as offering attendees many resources that assist with marketing education. I look forward to seeing everyone again at the 2018 MMA Fall Educators' Conference, September 19-21, 2018 in Kansas City, Missouri.

Sincerely,
Gail M. Zank, Program Chair

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In 1995, the Board of Directors initiated action to honor Marketing Management Association members who have served the Association and the profession particularly well with the designation “Fellow of the Marketing Management Association.” Fellows of the Association are also designated as life members. We continue to honor those who have served, as each richly deserves the gratitude and approbation the title of Fellow is intended to convey.

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Branding [or the Lack of Branding among] Innovation District Cities: Evidence of How the Rise of Innovation Districts is Outpacing City Government Efforts to Brand Them

Jeanetta D. Sims, Mindy Vo and Laura Miranda

Sports, Events and Recreation Marketing

Brand Associations and Brand Equity – A Scale Development for Fan-Based Brand Equity

Gokhan Karaatli, Serdar Turedi, Musa Pinar and Ceren Ekebas-Turedi

Social Media and Digital Marketing

Social Media Sentiment and Firm Value

Chanchal B. Tamrakar, Tae-Hyung Pyo and Thomas S. Gruca

John Berens Best Paper in Marketing Education

Examining the Factors Relevant for Creating a Strong Student Brand: Perceptions of Importance and Evaluation

Jennifer Strimbu, Daina Mueller, Paige Lockhart, Musa Pinar and Paul Trapp

Paul Arney Best Paper in Services, Sales and Retailing

Investigating Antecedents and Consequences of Anger after a Mobile Application Service Failure Occurs: A Cognitive-Emotive Coping Model Approach

Wen-Hai Chih, Kai-Yu Wang, Li-Chun Hsu and Wei-Ching Lin

McGraw-Hill/Irwin Distinguished Best MMA Conference Paper Award Winner

Social Media Sentiment and Firm Value

Chanchal B. Tamrakar, Tae-Hyung Pyo and Thomas S. Gruca

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MARKETING DOCTORAL PROGRAMS: CONTRIBUTION TO INTERNATIONAL MARKETING

Ronald Bauerly, Western Illinois University (Retired)

Samit Chakravorti, Western Illinois University

ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the contribution of seminars in marketing doctoral programs from across the world. It content analyzes for the first time international focused articles from 1995-2006 from these seminars. Articles mostly came from a small set of journals. Article choice show a concerted effort to build in students a sound foundation of theory development in international business, to expose them to a broad variety of research designs, methods, analysis, geographic scopes and themes, and to instill the need for creativity in research and operations in international markets. At the same time contents of seminars lack coverage of important topic areas. This research should serve as a foundation for future researchers and doctoral program developers. It should also benefit students and industry.

INTRODUCTION

Marketing academia by researching international markets can help companies effectively deal with international business challenges. Seminars in marketing doctoral programs form and mold research interests and directions of budding academics in the international arena. It is in these seminars that doctoral students gain critical knowledge and train to be good researchers in different topical areas of international marketing. This is then later shared in classrooms with current and future undergraduate and masters students (practitioners in international business and marketing). In light of this impact it is important to holistically examine the state of coverage of international marketing in marketing doctoral programs.

This paper is a small step in that direction. It integratively analyzes and discusses the contents of international focused articles from multiple doctoral programs. More specifically, the paper rank orders the journals based on analysis of citations and discusses the nature of articles included in the seminars, the journals these are published in, topics covered, geographical areas investigated, methods of investigation utilized, and patterns of analysis and findings. The results are then amalgamated to paint a big picture.

This research is the first of its kind in the marketing field and contributes to development of effective international marketing and international

business education by facilitating changes and improvements to the contents of the seminars, It should help marketing doctoral program coordinators and seminar instructors to get a sense of what is being discussed in the seminars by programs world wide. This should help them evaluate topics being discussed in the seminars against important issues currently being researched by academics and those that are considered by practitioners as critical for success. Given the dynamic nature of the global business environments this evaluation is important to keep the international focused articles fresh and relevant to the needs of the discipline and market.

RESEARCH METHOD

Both citation analysis and content analysis methods were used. Citation analysis has been previously used in similar types of papers and content analysis was deemed appropriate considering this paper is an exploration of a largely untouched research area. (GAO, 1996 Krippendorf, 2004;; Weber 1985: 10).

Citation analysis was based on the number of times articles have been cited from within a dataset of articles from 309 doctoral program syllabi collected from 102 marketing doctoral programs. The dataset used in this paper is a subset of 61 international focused articles with 3 +citations that were selected from the broader dataset. The articles are taken from all seminars (Table 1) .

Table 1: Most Frequently Cited International Articles Overall Across Seminars (3+ Citations)

Citations	Author(s)	Year	Journal	Title of Article
13	Steenkamp, J. Baumgartner, H.	1998	JCR	Assessing Measurement Invariance in Cross-National Consumer Research
11	Szymanski, D Bharadwaj, S.	1993	JM	Standardization versus Adaptation of International Marketing Strategy: An Empirical Investigation
8	Erdem, T. Swait, J. Valenzuela, A.	2006	JM	Brands as Signals: A Cross-Country Validation Study
7	Jain, S.	1989	JM	Standardization of International Marketing Strategy: Some Research Hypotheses
6	Song, X Parry, M	1997	JM	A Cross-National Comparative Study Of New Product Development Processes: Japan and The United States
6	Steenkamp, J Ter Hofstede, F Wedel, M	1999	JM	A Cross-National Investigation into the Individual and National Cultural Antecedents of Consumer Innovativeness
6	Rindfleisch, A Burroughs, J	2003	JCR	Do Reverses-Worded Items Confound Measures in Cross-Cultural Consumer Research? The Case of the Material Values Scale
6	Clark, T	1990	JM	International Marketing and National Character: A Review and Proposal for an Integrative Theory
6	Talukdar, D Sudhir, K Ainslie, A	2002	MS	Investigating New Product Diffusion Across Products and Countries
6	Baumgartner, H Steenkamp, J	2001	JMR	Response styles in marketing research: A cross-national investigation
6	Tellis, G Stremersch, S Yin, E	2003	MS	The International Takeoff of New Products: The Role of Economics, Culture, and Country Innovativeness
5	Bartels, R	1968	JM	Are Domestic and International Marketing Dissimilar?
5	De Wulf, K Oderken-Schroder, G Iacobucci, D	2001	JM	Investment in Consumer Relationships: A Cross-Country and Cross-Industry Exploration
5	Aulakh, P Kotabe, M Sahay, A	1996	JIBS	Trust and Performance in Cross-Border Marketing Partnerships: A Behavioral Approach
4	Yang, Y Leone, R Alden, D	1992	JM	A Market Expansion Ability Approach to Identify Potential Exporters
4	Klein, S Frazier, G Roth, V	1990	JMR	A Transaction Cost Analysis Model of Channel Integration in International Markets
4	Bilkey, W	1978	JIBS	An Attempted Integration of the Literature on the Export Behavior of Firms

4	Hamel, G	1991	SMJ	Competition for Competence and Inter-Partner Learning Within International Strategic Alliances
4	Takada, H Jain, D	1991	JM	Cross-National Analysis of Diffusion of Consumer Durable Goods in Pacific Rim Countries
4	Mullen, M	1995	JIBS	Diagnosing measurement equivalence in cross-national research
4	Albaum, G Peterson, R	1984	JIBS	Empirical Research in International Marketing: 1976-1982
4	Singh, J	1995	JIBS	Measurement Issues In Cross-National Research
4	Putsis, W Balasubramanian, S Kaplan, E and Sen, S	2000	MS	Mixing Behavior in Cross-Country Diffusion
4	Bolton, R Myers, M	2003	JM	Price-Based Global Market Segmentation for Services
4	Johnson, J; Sakano, T Cote, J; and Onzo, N	1993	JM	The Exercise of Interfirm Power and Its Repercussions in U.S. - Japanese Channel Relationships
4	Samiee, S Roth, K	1992	JM	The Influence of Global Marketing Standardization on Performance
3	Neelamegham, R Chintagunta, P	1999	MS	A Bayesian model to forecast new Product performance in domestic and international markets
3	Netemeyer, R Durvasula, S Lichtenstein, D	1991	JMR	A Cross National Assessment of the Reliability and Validity of the CETSCALE
3	Patterson, P and Smith, T	2003	JR	A Cross-Cultural Study of Switching Barriers and Propensity to Stay with Service Providers
3	Czinkota, M Kotabe, M	1997	JWB	A Marketing Perspective of the U.S. International Trade Commission's Antidumping Actions – An Empirical Inquiry
3	Inkpen, A Beamish, P	1994	JIBS	An Analysis of Twenty-Five Years of Research in the Journal of International Business Studies
3	Aulakh, P Kotabe, M	1993	JIntMkt	An Assessment of Theoretical and Methodological Development in International Marketing: 1980-1990
3	Aulakh, P Kotabe, M	1997	JIBS	Antecedents and performance implications of channel integration in foreign markets
3	Alden, D Steenkamp, J and Batra, R	1999	JM	Brand Positioning Through Advertising in Asia, North America, and Europe: The Role of Global Consumer Culture
3	Boddewyn, J	1981	JIBS	Comparative Marketing: The First Twenty-Five Years
3	Pan, Y and Tse, D	1996	JIBS	Cooperative Strategies between Foreign Firms in an Overseas Country
3	Martinez, J Jarillo, J	1991	JIBS	Coordination Demands of International Strategies
3	Franke, R Hofstede, G Bond, M	1991	SMJ	Cultural Roots of Economic Performance: A Research Note

3	Tse, D; Lee, K; Vertinsky, I and Wehrung, D	1988	JM	Does Culture Matter? A Cross-Cultural Study of Executives' Choice, Decisiveness, and Risk Adjustment in International Marketing
3	Aaker, J Williams, P	1998	JCR	Empathy versus Pride: The Influence of Emotional Appeals Across Cultures
3	Roth, K Schweiger, D Morrison, A	1991	JIBS	Global Strategy Implementation at the Business Unit Level: Operational Capabilities and Administrative Mechanisms
3	Leung, K; Smith, P Wang, Z and Sun, H	1996	JIBS	Job Satisfaction in Joint Venture Hotels in China: An Organizational Justice Analysis
3	Makino, S Delios, A	1996	JIBS	Local Knowledge Transfer and Performance: Implications for Alliance Formation in Asia
3	Aaby, N Slater, S	1989	IMktRev	Management Influences on Export Performance: A Review of the Empirical Literature 1978-1988
3	Hofstede, G	1994	MGS	Management Scientists are Human
3	Cavusgil, S Zou, S	1994	JM	Marketing Strategy-Performance Relationship: An Investigation of the Empirical Link in Export Market Ventures
3	Parkhe, A	1993	AMR	'Messy' Research, Methodological Predispositions, and Theory Development in International Joint Ventures
3	Anderson, E Gatignon, H	1986	JIBS	Modes of Foreign Entry: A Transaction Cost Analysis and Propositions
3	Appelbaum, K	1996	JCR	Notes Toward an Application of McCracken's 'Cultural Categories' for Cross-Cultural Consumer Research
3	Anderson, O	1993	JIBS	On the Internationalization Process of Firms: A Critical Analysis
3	Erramilli, M Rao, C	1993	JM	Service Firms' International Entry-Mode Choice: A Modified Transaction-Cost Analysis
3	Johnson, J; Cullen, J Sakano, T Takenouchi, H	1996	JIBS	Setting the Stage for Trust and Strategic Integration in Japanese-U.S. Cooperative Alliances
3	Klein, J; Ettenson, R Morris, M	1998	JM	The Animosity Model of Foreign Product Purchase: An Empirical Test in the People's Republic of China
3	Porter, M	1990	HBR	The Competitive Advantage of Nations
3	Hofstede, G	1983	JIBS	The Cultural Relativity of Organizational Practices and Theories
3	Giddy, I	1978	JWB	The Demise of the Product Cycle Model in International Business Theory
3	Kogut, B Singh, H	1988	JIBS	The Effect of National Culture on the Choice of Entry Mode
3	Shavitt, S; Lalwani, A; Zhang, J Torelli, C	2006	JCP	The Horizontal/Vertical Distinction in Cross-Cultural Consumer Research
3	Johanson, J Vahlne, J	1977	JIBS	The Internationalization Process of the Firm: A Model of Knowledge Development and Increasing Foreign Market Commitments

3	Dunning, J	1989	JIBS	The Study of International Business: A Plea for a More Interdisciplinary Approach
3	Wright, R Ricks, D	1994	JIBS	Trends in International Business Research: Twenty-Five Years Later

To paint a picture of maximum impact, the authors wanted to include only articles that have been cited at least 3 times across all syllabi in the 102 doctoral programs. One of the primary objective of this research is to showcase the seminal and impactful articles included in the doctoral programs and to discuss the breadth of journals these articles came from. This information should help developers of doctoral programs to determine how focused or broad they need to be in terms of journal choice. Considering only articles which had a citation of 3 and above from all the collected syllabi across all 102 doctoral programs allowed the authors to narrow down to the articles that had been cited the most and hence supposedly more impactful. A second reason for restricting the articles to 3+ citations is the choice of method. Content analyzing the original set of articles from all doctoral programs would have been a daunting and extremely time consuming task. Even

though his would have made the paper richer, given the primary objective stated above the authors felt that articles with less than 3 citations should be left out. The cut off of citation number of 3 was agreed upon between the authors keeping in mind the breadth of citation numbers for all articles in the doctoral programs for which syllabi were collected. This cut off allowed a decent number of articles to be included for analysis which were considered important enough to be cited at least 3 times across all the syllabi.

The contents of each article was systematically analyzed in light of content categories. The authors adopted coded categories and sub categories (see tables below) from previous published research (Leonidou et.al., 2010; Leonidou et al., 2010) based on similarities with these research. This should also make for easier comparison across the three articles and any future article using the same coded categories.

Table2: Adopted Primary Categories

Source and Citation Frequency	Nature of articles	Research Design	Research Methodology
Analysis Technique	Scope of Research	Thematic areas	

Table 3: Adopted Thematic Area Category

General International	Macro-Environmental	Task Environment	Marketing Research
Buyer Behavior	Global Strategy Issues	Market Entry Strategies	Marketing Mix
Specialized Issues	Miscellaneous		

Data from each article was uploaded on a categorized excel sheet separately by each author using identical format. The two excel sheets were compared and differences resolved through face to face discussion between the authors. Citation analysis and descriptive statistics were then performed on the data.

CONTENT ANALYSIS

Source and Citation Frequency

Analyzing citations to evaluate the impact and importance of journals has been increasingly accepted in the business academia (Harland, 2013) and indicates an important aspect of journal quality (Adler and Harzing, 2009). Rankings based on citation

analysis have also been found to correlate strongly with rankings based on expert judgments (Dubois and Reeb, 2000; Hult et al., 1997; Luke and Doke, 1987; Zinkhan and Thomas 1999;).

The 61 articles that were cited 3 or more times across all collected marketing doctoral program syllabi, came from only 13 journals, with six journals accounting for just one article each. Almost 35 percent of the articles came from the Journal of International Business Studies (JIBS) and almost 30 percent from Journal of Marketing (JM). This is not surprising because first, the majority of samples came from doctoral programs in the US and second, JM is the premier journal of marketing in the United States and JIBS holds the same rank in the international business arena. It is interesting to note that while JM articles are

almost evenly distributed between 1968 and 2006, articles from JIBS are concentrated between the 1980s and 90s. The reason could lie in the fact that international business started to take off strongly in the latter era and JIBS being the foremost academic journal in that arena attracted a lot of seminal articles. Approximately 5 percent of articles are from Journal of Consumer Research, Marketing Science and Journal of Marketing Research each. The two most cited articles are “Assessing Measurement Invariance

in Cross-National Consumer Research,” Steenkamp et al., JCR (1998) (13 citations) and “Standardization versus Adaptation of International Marketing Strategy: An Empirical Investigation,” D. Szymanski and S. Bharadwaj, JM (1993) (11 citations). Table 2 shows the ranking of top journal choices looking both at the number of articles from each journal and the total number of times articles from a journal was cited. This provides a more granular view into the importance and choice of journals for the seminars.

Table 4: Journal Rankings of 61 international focused articles (3+ citations) from all seminars

Journal	Number of articles selected	Total number of citations	Rank
Journal of Marketing	18	89	1
Journal of International Business Studies	21	69	2
Journal of Consumer Research	4	25	3
Marketing Science	4	19	4
Journal of Marketing Research	4	13	5

The authors also compare the results from this study with three following studies: Zinkhan and Thomas (1999), and two from Dubois and Reeb (2000). Zinkhan and Thomas (1999) rank ordered general and specialty marketing and business journals (not international marketing or business) between 1986 and 1997 based on their overall impact determined through citation analysis. Similar to this paper they found JCR, JM and JMR respectively to have the most impact followed closely by Marketing Science (ranked 6) and JIBS (ranked 10).

The journal rankings based upon the Dubois and Reeb (2000) citation and survey studies also show

reasonable agreement with the results of the current study. (Table 5). The top-ranked international journal in all three studies was JIBS. Similarly, the three international journals ranked 7, 8 and 6 (International Marketing Review, Journal of International Marketing, and Journal of World Business respectively) in the current study had similar rankings in the D&B studies. This consistency in rankings across studies lends more robustness to this paper’s ranking of journals, in the specialty area of international marketing and also highlights the importance of the above mentioned five journals.

Table 5: Distribution of International Article Citations and Journals: Comparison of Rankings

Journal Rank (Current Paper)	Title of Journal	Dubois & Reeb 2000 Citation	Dubois & Reeb 2000 Survey
1	J. Marketing		
2	J. International Business Studies	1	1
3	J. Consumer Research	-	-
4	Marketing Science	-	-
5	J. Marketing Research	-	-
6	Strategic Management Journal		
7	J. of World Business (formerly CJWB)	3	2
8	International Marketing Review	4	3
9	J. of International Marketing	6	5
Not featured in list	Management International Review	2	4
Not featured in list	International Business Review	5	9

A majority of articles (70 %) were empirical in nature. A little over one third conceptually analyzed international business phenomena and developed theoretical frameworks, and 15 percent discussed

Nature of Articles

methodological issues primarily about applicability of scales across country markets.

Research Design

Almost half the articles most of which were published after 1995, tested hypotheses. The rest utilized other types of research designs such as in-depth qualitative analysis, simple description of a phenomenon (e.g. new cultural dimension), literature review, theoretical model development and model evaluation, proposals for framework testing methods, mathematical modeling and empirical reanalysis. Students are thus exposed to a wide range of research designs that both extend and develop the discipline. The variety of research designs however points to the challenge of doing research on international markets and the creativity needed to explore phenomena. Additionally, a lack of specific hypotheses in quite a few of the highly relevant studies may indicate the evolving nature of comprehension of phenomena in foreign markets.

Research Methods

Half of the selected articles collected primary data. A little over 40 percent of that collected data through different survey methods and the rest by other means. Mail (24%) and face to face (16 %) surveys were most commonly utilized. Some of the other data collecting methods were mall and airport intercepts, experiments, decision making role playing by managers in hypothetical scenarios (in-basket instrument), and random sampling of TV ads from networks. Quite a few studies employed multiple methods of collecting data. The large variety in data collection methods may signify challenges of collecting primary data in international markets and indicate that marketers have to get creative in collecting meaningful data in international markets because of different market structures, lack of census information, and lower usage of technologies such as the telephone and the Internet.

Analysis Technique

Approximately 60 percent of the articles used advanced multivariate analytic techniques notably structural equations, factor analysis, and multiple regression. 15 percent utilized descriptive analysis. The high percentage usage of statistical analysis helps students get a good exposure to and rigorous training on the issues of applying different advanced statistical techniques to a broad range of international business activities.

Scope of research

In terms of geographical coverage the article set is disproportionately skewed in the favor of North America and Asia. Together, 90 percent of the articles investigated both continents and 50 percent was devoted just to North America. Articles on Europe came in third at about 35 percent. This skewness indicates high relative importance of particular regions and markets of the world to international business but it may also lie in the fact that most of the data came from US based business schools. For many US businesses, North America and the European Union have traditionally been important markets and Asia the engine for growth. Notably none of the articles covered either the Middle East, Latin America, or Africa. In today's global business world the former two and some parts of the last are important markets and a complete omission is striking. The reason for non-inclusion could also indicate insufficient research in these regions leading to lack of good published articles.

Marketing issues are the topic of investigation in almost 50 percent of the articles. A common topic is global segmentation across multiple country markets. 18 percent of the articles compared countries on specific international business phenomena such as product diffusion, and about 21 percent examined international business operations in individual countries. The rest developed theories and reviewed literature.

The unit of analysis selected were quite diverse. Countries, multinational subsidiary, journal articles, process of internationalization, marketing strategy, employees' values, and senior management decision were common ones.

Thematic Areas

This section discusses the general themes and specific topics covered by the selected articles. Overall 55.7 percent of the articles were categorized as international marketing articles and 42.6 percent as international business. It indicates that marketing in foreign markets is a critical and often challenging aspect of international business.

The thematic area categories and sub categories were adopted from Leonidou et al. 2010. Leonidou et al. 2010 where they identified 10 thematic categories. Only 5 out of these 10 were individually discussed in more than 15 percent of the articles. There is some overlap in the discussion.

Articles covered a total of 18 thematic subcategories. In thematic subcategories only 4 grabbed 10 percentage or more share of the number of articles.

Table 6: Top Thematic Categories

Macro-environmental (26 percent)	Miscellaneous (24.6 percent)	Market entry strategies (23 percent)
Marketing mix (20 percent)	Buyer behavior (18 percent)	

Table 7: Top Thematic Sub- Categories

Cross Cultural (26.2 percent)	Consumer Buyer Behavior (14.8 percent)
Strategic Alliance (10 percent)	Methodological Issues (10 percent)

Notably, several of the sub categories of each of the major themes were not covered at all and hence were deleted from the spreadsheet and discussion. The lack of coverage in some areas could be the result of a combined effect of the relative popularity and importance of topic areas, time restrictions of a doctoral seminar and the size of article set included in the analysis

Miscellaneous topics: 15 articles (theoretical and empirical) discussed miscellaneous topics. Almost half of these articles are published by JIBS and the majority of the rest are from JM with a couple from MS. Articles discussed broad international business strategy issues such as the impact of country factors on competitive advantage, standardization, and the similarity and dissimilarity between domestic and international marketing. More specialized topics were also covered such as the effect of national culture and transaction cost on foreign market entry strategy, take off and diffusion of new products, cross-country consumer relationship development and cross country measurement equivalence.

Macro-environmental topics: Though spanning multiple countries across continents, coverage was significantly skewed towards socio-cultural and economic environments with no discussion of political and legal. 16 articles were categorized under socio-cultural, and 2 under economic, most of it coming out of JM. Navigating culture maybe more tricky compared to dealing with more straightforward economic forces but the uncertainties and dynamic nature of investment and commercial laws in many growing economies in Asia and other parts of the world should have warranted some representation in the article set.

Socio-cultural articles primarily discussed the impact of cultural aspects on a wide range of market and organizational variables, such as international marketing, entry strategies, product diffusion, advertising, brand perception and brand choice, consumer persuasion, consumer innovativeness, decision making, organizational

performance, values, practices and theories, and even on management scientists' perceptions

Market entry strategies: 14 articles were categorized under this thematic area, including 6 under strategic alliance and 4 under exporting subcategories. JIBS and JM equally contributed with JIBS articles concentrating on strategic alliances and JM ones on exporting. The articles discussed reasons for choosing specific entry strategies, ranging from national culture, transaction costs, and market expansion ability. The impact of export behaviors and marketing strategies on export performance was particularly investigated as well as different types of strategic alliance options available to international marketers for specific operations. Coordination and cooperation issues and ways to take advantage of local knowledge of people working for international joint ventures were addressed as critical components of entry strategies.

Marketing mix: This thematic category was the broadest of all including 5 sub categories reflecting overall marketing strategy and the 4Ps. A total of 19 articles discussed marketing mix issues. Marketing strategy and distribution channels were separately discussed twice as many times as pricing. Products/Brands and advertising/promotion was in third place and selling/sales management came in last with only one article. This skewness though striking, can be explained by looking at how the global business world has changed to impact strategies of global expansion. Globalization has brought about more similarities across countries in terms of consumption and companies have happily gone the route of more standardization in product and promotion in an effort to cater to the similarities and take advantage of efficiencies from global positioning. However, meaningful disparities still exist in marketing channels and economic standards across the world to warrant more attention to pricing and sales.

Almost all articles came from the top three marketing journals JM, JMR, and JCR with JM articles covering the 4Ps. These articles discussed critical topics such as adaptation, relationship

development, and new product marketing. Broad strategic issues such as standardization versus adaptation of marketing strategy and resource allocation to marketing mixes in international markets were covered as were more specialized topics such as effect of relationship marketing on consumer loyalty across countries, prediction of new product success, viability of global consumer culture positioning, appeal strategies targeted towards channel members and consumers, and on social issues in marketing channels.

Buyer behavior. This theme is divided into 2 subcategories; consumer buyer behavior and industrial buyer behavior. A total of 11 articles discussed this theme with the bulk (9) discussing consumer buyer behavior. Once again the traditional marketing journals JM, MS, and JCR represented all the 11 articles with JM leading the pack. The articles covered how culture affects perception, innovativeness, consumption, loyalty, and product diffusion; role of brand equity, marketing and relationship investments on brand choice and loyalty; brand switching phenomena; and the effect of animosity towards a foreign nation on purchase decisions of products and service from providers from that nation. On the B2B side, articles analyzed perception of power relationships and price elasticity across cultures.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This paper provides a descriptive review of the contents of international marketing seminars and international focused articles from other seminars in 102 AACSB accredited marketing doctoral programs. A total of 61 articles between 1968 and 2006 which were cited 3 and more times were content analyzed to get a holistic view of the contribution of international marketing in marketing doctoral programs.

The articles analyzed are well positioned to give students a broad and critical exposure to international marketing and business phenomena in different countries, research designs, data collection methods and analysis techniques. The breadth and depth of research show a concerted effort on the part of the developers of the seminars to provide doctoral students in marketing a well-rounded and critical exposure to international marketing and business issues. The articles chosen follow a progression of international and business thought through the years as previous research was reviewed, new phenomena analyzed, tested and frameworks built. The papers chosen not only exposed students to critical development of hypotheses, testing and analysis of the same through advanced statistical tools, but also educated students on the need to be innovative when conducting research in international marketing by

highlighting a broad range of research designs, data collection procedures, and analysis techniques.

Despite the academic rigor of the articles and the breadth of its coverage of themes, research designs, analysis patterns, and geographic scopes, there were striking gaps in lack of coverage of sub topics within the categories that would be considered important for international marketing. Coverage of macroenvironments, geographical regions, and marketing mix is skewed quite a bit towards one tool or environment or region, over another resulting in little to no coverage of one to almost complete devotion to the other. Explanations may range from perceptions and preferences of instructors, lack of published research, or the small size of the sample. Whatever the reason, topics that are not covered are important for international marketing and it is important to highlight and share these findings so that doctoral programs in the future will be able to make informed decisions

While there is diversity in the articles selected for the doctoral seminars in international marketing there is far less diversity in the source of journals. Together, the readings across different programs do show a strong preference for a small set of specific journals. This preference may help achieve some degree of consistency in quality and spread of coverage across programs. At the same time, journals have different objectives and directions, leading to publications of different types of papers and in specific topic areas. Spreading meaningful coverage to more journals at the same time maintaining academic rigor should help in broadening knowledge and learning.

The contribution of this paper is manifold. It has implications for academics teaching doctoral seminars, administrators of marketing doctoral programs, marketing doctoral students, and industry.

To the knowledge of the authors, this paper is the first of its kind that analyzes international marketing and business articles in marketing doctoral seminars across marketing doctoral programs from different institutions. First of all, this unique effort will serve as a foundation for all future research on this topic. This integrative review should serve as a good starting point for an academic or administrator building up a doctoral seminar in international marketing, or desiring to include international marketing and business articles in other seminars. The combination covered in terms of type of articles, the research designs, research method, analysis techniques, geographic scopes, and themes should indicate what needs to be included and what to be added to. For students too this is beneficial when they are exposed to an effective and comprehensive set of articles in the doctoral seminars. It sets them on the right path to developing relevant, up to date and

critical knowledge that will serve them well in their future research, teaching and consulting practices. Industry too should benefit when the same budding academics taking the seminars, consult companies on international marketing and business strategies and engage in teaching undergraduate and graduate students who go on to work in international marketing and consulting. Additionally contents of this paper may motivate practitioners to collaborate with marketing doctoral programs for long term consulting. It is also hoped that this paper will kick start a collaboration across marketing doctoral seminars and programs and motivate researchers to write future reviews like this one.

This paper highlights an important issue that should be given some thought to by marketing academics and administrators of marketing doctoral programs. The analysis draws attention to the role of international marketing in marketing and to the need of a separate seminar for international marketing in a marketing doctoral program. The most cited international focused articles are from premier marketing journals without any specific international focus except for *Journal of International Business Studies*. Has the marketing world globalized to that

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extent where researchers submit good quality international focused marketing articles to mainstream marketing academic journals who think it necessary to publish the same? If that is so, do international marketing seminars add any value to the marketing doctoral programs when they are being exposed to international marketing issues through other seminars in specific marketing functional areas and marketing strategy? Should international marketing coverage be elevated from a special topic to being integrated as an essential aspect of marketing knowledge being developed across seminars in marketing doctoral programs? That is what the data and analysis seem to indicate. Despite the many differences between marketing internationally and domestically, increased globalization of markets and familiarity with and importance of international markets have made international marketing less exotic and more mainstream. This trend should be relevant to the philosophy and structure of marketing doctoral programs specifically in relation to the role and coverage of international marketing. This also has implications for international oriented journals as far as attracting international focused articles and competing with mainstream journals

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For further information contact:
Samit Chakravorti, Western Illinois University
S-chakravorti@wiu.edu

DEVELOPING A GRADUATE-LEVEL ONLINE DIGITAL BRANDING CLASS: A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

David Aron, Dominican University
Timothy Aurand, Northern Illinois University

ABSTRACT

Two marketing professors from different universities collaborated on the development of an online course focusing on digital branding. Based upon their distinct experiences delivering branding and brand management courses to a variety of audiences, as well as one professor's experience in creating and delivering other online marketing courses, the teachers arrived at a new course offering. Challenges and possible solutions are presented. The proposed course objectives, sample syllabus, and recommended texts are discussed.

INTRODUCTION

Digital marketing and digital branding: Few topics in the marketing arena have garnered more attention over the past decade. Marketers and marketing educators must both recognize this reality. This applies to the abundance of pure and hybrid digital product and service offerings, the growth of digital consumer and media activity, and the rising popularity of digitally delivered courses. A company's brand may be the single most valuable asset a firm possesses (Keller, 2013), but the very meaning of a brand and its value is evolving thanks to the rise of digital marketing today. In the current era, marketing *is* digital. This is not referring to the marketing of digital brands, an important topic itself (e.g., Roberts and Micken, 2015). Rather, one would be hard pressed to teach virtually any graduate level marketing class without devoting a substantial portion of the class to the overlap and the interactions between brand management and the digital environment.

This realization was shared by two frequent attendees of Marketing Management Association (MMA) conferences. In order to keep abreast of the ongoing developments within subjects such as these, participation in professional organizations like the MMA is crucial. The presentation of scholarly research on marketing topics as well as marketing pedagogy, how these topics can best be taught, are frequent elements of conference programs and journal tables of contents.

Conferences also offer members of the marketing academy the opportunity to network with peers to learn of their classroom experiences and research accomplishments, both published, in process, and under consideration. Often, seemingly informal conversations

can lead to collaborative efforts of significant benefits to all parties involved.

THE EVOLVING CURRICULUM

As fate would have it, the two aforementioned marketing professors found themselves sharing stories of their curriculum requirements. One professor, representing a large rural state university, had a wealth of experience at teaching graduate-level brand management courses but had never taught a course online. The other professor, teaching roughly sixty miles away at a small private university in the suburb of a large city, had taught many online classes but was just beginning to teach branding-related courses both at his home campus and to English-speaking students abroad. These teachers connected at an MMA conference and both were surprised to learn that they had each been asked to develop an online, graduate level, digital branding class. Both professors shared the need and desire to create an online digital branding course, and both were concerned with how they might get their arms around two topics of such breadth – branding and digital marketing - while teaching their respective classes in an online format.

COLLABORATION

After discussing the similarities of their respective assignments, both agreed to work together in developing an online digital branding class and take advantage of each other's strengths and experiences as they pertained to teaching and program development. Both professors had worked together and had co-authored research in the branding area. And, both were anxious to once again

collaborate on a project, but this one focusing on education as opposed to the publishing scholarly research.

Following a number of preliminary meetings, it was determined that students in each of the professor's classes were of very similar backgrounds, as were their learning objectives and expected outcomes. One example of such objectives, however, was missing the connection to the contemporary digital environment.

COURSE PLANNING

The desired outcomes of this course include the development of student strengths in areas including:

- Understanding of marketing and brand management concepts on a local and global level
- Analysis and synthesis of marketing environment and opportunities
- Problem recognition and problem solving
- Written and oral communications
- Team effectiveness
- Ethical awareness.

There was a need to move the topic of branding into the reality of digital, mobile, and social marketing.

Both professors agreed that another of their most daunting tasks was to narrow the topic of brand management down into a program that could be covered in an eight-week, online format while addressing the main topics associated with both brand management and digital branding. Of equal importance were decisions surrounding the basic pedagogy that would be employed when presenting the class in an online format.

The Revised Model

The professors agreed that they would begin to build their course around the well-known Brand Report Card (Keller, 2000). This ten-component model for systematically evaluating a brand's strengths and weaknesses proved to these collaborators to be difficult to fit into eight-week format. They examined the components of the Brand Report Card and reimagined it as a seven-part model, including:

- A Brand's Competitive Position in the Marketplace
- Consumer Value Associated with the Brand
- Effective Communications of the Brand
- Coordination of Marketing Tactics
- Control of Brand Initiatives and the Metrics Involved
- The Development and Monitoring of a Brand's Community, and
- The Application of Branding Tactics in Developing One's Personal Brand for their Career.

The origination and organization of these topics came in large part from the work both professors had done teaching branding at the graduate level and their

scholarly research on the topics. These seven concepts (competitive position, consumer value, communications, coordination, control, community, and career) formed the basis of an eight-week online course, which would also include the standard orientation activities to begin the class and evaluation activities toward the end of the semester.

Pedagogical Approach and Texts

It was also agreed that pedagogically, a case-based approach involving both individual and group cases would be appropriate. Both professors agreed that case selection would be initially limited to cases from Harvard Business Review (HBR) based upon their previous, successful experiences with HBR. Both professors were familiar with HBR cases as each had used them in previously taught courses. Students would be asked to write one major case as part of a group (45% of the course grade) and five "mini cases" individually (25% of the course grade). The remaining 30% of a student's grade would consist of online discussion board participation (20% of the course grade) and peer evaluations stemming primarily from the group case (10% of the course grade.)

While cases would be a key element of course source information, both professors agreed that text book would provide their online students with a strong foundation in digital branding. They determined that two texts, used in combination, would meet their needs. They considered several textbooks - one focusing on branding and the other on the digital aspects of marketing. Both texts would be relatively brief, clearly written, and applied (not theoretical) in nature.

After reviewing the available texts, two surfaced as meeting the essential requirements of the course:

- *A Framework for Marketing Management*, 6th ed., by Philip Kotler and Kevin Lane Keller
- *Digital Marketing Management: A Handbook for the Current (or Future) CEO*, by Debra Zahay

Because both professors were familiar with texts produced by Philip Kotler and Kevin Lane Keller, it was decided to use their work as the primary foundation for branding and brand management considerations. Their work would be supplemented with the digital marketing work of Debra Zahay, a recognized scholar in this area. Chapters from each text coinciding with each of the seven above topics would be assigned.

At the time of the writing of this paper, eleven HBR cases had been identified as having potential with regard to the above concepts. These cases would subsequently be narrowed down to a number that would coincide with the total number of students, and subsequently groups consisting of four-to-five students per group. Included among these possible cases, matched with their likely topic, are:

- Topic 1 – Competitive Positioning
 - Aston Martin: A Second Century of Performance & Luxury
 - CW Dixey & Sons Eyewear [Repositioning]
- Topic 2 – Consumer Value
 - Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra: Culture
- Topic 3 – Effective Communication –
 - Reinventing Officer’s Choice Whiskey, Spoiled for Choice
 - Planter’s (Peanuts): The Power of the Peanut
- Topic 4 – Coordinating Marketing Tactics
 - Apple
 - ASICS: Chasing a 2020 Vision
- Topic 5 – Control & Metrics
 - Fitbit
 - ASOSPLC1
- Topic 6 – Brand Community
 - Virgin America
 - DataXu: Selling Ad Tech
- Topic 7 – Personal Branding
 - No case studies

In addition, academic articles on topics still not substantially covered in textbooks or case studies will also be integrated into lecture notes. These will include classic articles such as “Brand Love” (Batra, Ahuvia, and Bagozzi, 2012), and “Brand Community” (Muñiz and O’Guinn, 2001).

The Digital Classroom

With a variety of print texts now in the syllabus, both professors subsequently agreed that PowerPoint lectures, complete with voice overs, should be provided to present each topic. It was believed that with the combination of well-written texts, professor-provided readings, well-developed cases and case questions, and well-run discussion boards, students would gain a thorough understanding of both traditional and digital solutions to brand related questions.

While the class syllabus and course material are far from finalized, both professors concur that the benefits associated with, and synergy gained from, collaborating with faculty employed at other universities are immense. Each professor brings a unique perspective to table, and each is open-minded and more than willing to adapt to the other’s insights, experiences, perspectives, and pedagogical styles.

CONCLUSION

The benefits of collaborative course development (CCD) have been the subject of recent research (e.g., Aiken, Heinze, Meuter, and Chapman, 2017). The current research involves faculty from different universities working together to create a new and needed course.

It should also be stated that while the course will undoubtedly be implemented in two distinct styles, the basic structure of both classes will, by design, be quite similar. Due to the inherent differences found at each university and with the students enrolled in each class, one might expect notable differences in the final courses that are delivered. But what cannot be denied is that the Marketing Management Association made collaboration on the project possible and the result far superior to what would have been developed on an individualized basis.

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For further information contact:
 David Aron
 Dominican University
 Brennan School of Business
 7900 West Division Street

River Forest, Illinois 60305
(708) 524-6681
daron@dom.edu

THE IMPACT OF GENDER AND INVOLVEMENT IN BRAND CONTENT MARKETING

Hyeong-Gyu Choi, Augustana College

ABSTRACT

Brand-driven content marketing is a significantly developing area of digital marketing. Unlike conventional mass media marketing, the goal of brand content marketing is to gain the audience's attention by disseminating interesting and noteworthy digital content, such as user-generated content via social networking sites (SNSs). Nevertheless, SNSs users' personal differences, such as gender and level of involvement with pertinent brands, are often neglected to devise brand content marketing campaign. The authors postulate that the success of brand content marketing can be significantly influenced by the extent to which SNSs users develop a sense of belonging via SNSs interactions, and such connection is significantly influenced by users' personal differences, such as involvement and gender. The aim of this study is to examine the effects of SNSs users' gender difference and level of involvement with a pertinent brand on individual users' intentions to continue content sharing, self-esteem, and attitude toward the brand.

INTRODUCTION

Brand content marketing is a recent development in brand marketing strategies to gain the audience's attention with interesting, entertaining, and noteworthy digital media, such as interactive games, product images, videos, articles, and user-generated content, as a means of popularizing their brand names. In practice, an emerging new type of Internet-based media, also known as social networking sites (SNSs), enables firms to engage with their target audience in a timely and interactive manner at a relatively low cost and a higher degree of efficiency compared to conventional communication tools (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Ngai, et al., 2015). The increasingly popular SNSs present vast potential for firms to connect with those who are genuinely interested in their products and services, and can thus positively influence existing customers' expenditures, revenue growth, reduce cost, and improve efficiency (Goh et al., 2013; Kumar et al., 2016).

Brand marketers often broadcast commercial messages and engage with customers via media, events, entertainment, retailers, and digital services through SNSs (Kim & Ko, 2012). As over 50% of social media users followed brands on social media in 2011 (Van Belleghem et al., 2011), social media has become a dominant marketing tactic more recently. In recognition of this growing trend, companies' social media spending has increase by up to 200%—from 3-5% of marketing budgets in 2009, 9% in 2014 (Tadena, 2014), and 10.5% in February 2017 (Gerdeman, 2017). The growing prevalence of brands' SNSs activities has motivated many users to engage in brand evaluations based on their

SNSs activities. Nevertheless, brand content marketers often neglect to take advantage of the high selectivity and interactivity of SNSs without considering users' personal differences, such as their gender and level of involvement with pertinent brands. Given the potential impact of gender differences on SNSs user behaviors, if men and women behave differently, especially in the context of brand engagement, brands may need to adopt gender-specific approaches to marketing in order to cater to male and female ideas on brand engagement. In addition, given the various levels of users' personal involvement with brands, marketers need to ensure that their SNSs campaigns and other brand initiatives aimed at customer engagement are appropriately received with different levels of brand involvement. This study aims to investigate impacts of gender and involvement differences of SNSs users in terms of brand content marketing effectiveness.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Gender difference in SNSs

The notion that gender may play a vital role in brand marketing has been recognized by many scholars discussing the influence of gender difference on brand and customer relationships (Kamboj & Rahman, 2016; Melnyk et al., 2009; Meyers-Levy & Loken, 2015; Wang & Doong, 2017). As cognitive processes and behaviors of male and female consumers are markedly dissimilar (Fisher & Dubé, 2005; Meyers-Levy 1988; Meyers-Levy & Maheswaran, 1991; Meyers-Levy & Sternthal, 1991), gender differences influence both

men and women's perspectives on the customer-brand dynamics. Male customers tend to be more loyal to groups and entities, such as companies or sports clubs. Although female customers are more loyal than male customers in general, they typically value relationships with individuals, such as individual service providers, rather than entities (Melnik et al., 2009).

These gender differences may thus be extended to the SNSs sphere, explaining their influence noted in this study. More specifically, the author hypothesizes the influence of gender difference on the relationship between audience response on users' brand related posting and the perceived social worth of a brand that responds to users' brand posting.

SNSs users' involvement with brands

Personal involvement in a particular situation or activity often leads to in-depth investment and caring about the outcome. Hence, when individuals are heavily invested in any effort, the perceived value of the results yielded by this endeavor is likely to be very high. As scholars suggested, such sense of ownership and emotional attachment is highly prevalent among adults, and even extends to children as young as four years old (Ariely 2016; Shaw et al., 2012). The same is true for SNSs interactions. Many SNSs users carefully construct their posts, as they are aware that the content they share is a direct reflection of their ideas and worldviews, and thereby allows them to project a certain image of themselves to the SNSs community. For many SNSs users, posting content often involves significant cognitive effort to eloquently convey the intended meaning or to prevent potential embarrassment of not abiding by established virtual norms. The extensive mental effort required to create SNSs postings provides users meaning and a sense of connection. It prompts them to regard their virtual statements as their unique creations. Consequently, SNSs users become more invested in these virtual endeavors, as they dedicate significant mental effort into postings. Owing to such emotional investment into content creation, it becomes part of SNSs users' virtual identities.

In the present study, the author focused on the concept of SNSs users' involvement in terms of their frequency to engage with brand content (i.e., the consumption of brand related multimedia content and visits to brands' websites) and the cognitive stimulation generated by brands (i.e., thinking about brands).

Perceived social worth of a brand

A brand is a collective perception of a company or its products that distinguishes it from its competition. As such perception is formulated and stored in the

mind of the customer, brands' SNS activities convey various cues that significantly influence individuals' brand perceptions (Yakob, 2015). Through content posting and sharing and receiving feedback, SNSs users likely evaluate brands that they encounter. SNSs users evaluate brands and assign different weights to their perceived social worth—referred to as the degree to which a particular brand is valued by SNSs users—as well.

SNSs platforms provide consumers the opportunity to acquire and disseminate brand information, along with their sentiments, promptly (Lobschat et al., 2013). Through such activities, SNSs users interactively form images and perceptions of brands, which may influence their purchasing behaviors and thus affect brands' fiscal performance (Algesheimer et al., 2005; Sawhney et al., 2005). In sum, through content posting and sharing and receiving feedback, SNSs users likely evaluate their own worth, as well as that of other users and even brands that they encounter, and their relational value will be affected by the magnitude of social worth that they perceive. Therefore, the author hypothesizes:

H₁: Given gender, there will be an interaction effect between social worth of the brand and audience response context for the dependent measures of (a) intentions to continue brand content sharing, (b) self-esteem, and (c) attitude toward the brand, such that the impact of audience response context on the dependent measures will be significantly greater for a high social worth brand than for a low social worth brand.

H₂: Given personal involvement, there will be an interaction effect between social worth of the brand and audience response context for the dependent measures of (a) intentions to continue brand content sharing, (b) self-esteem, and (c) attitude toward the brand, such that the impact of audience response context on the dependent measures will be significantly greater for a high social worth brand than for a low social worth brand.

METHODOLOGY

The 400 participants were recruited via an online panel service, Amazon's Mechanical Turk. In all conditions, study participants were asked to envisage engaging in daily Twitter activities based on written scripts and visual stimuli that were relevant to their randomly assigned scenario. Despite the many advantages of online panel services (Buhrmester et al., 2011), there are concerns about the overall quality of the data because unsupervised survey participants may not

be as attentive as subjects in a lab with a supervising experimenter. Such participants often introduce noise into an experiment. This may compromise experimental power and thus become perplexing to identify and account for at a later stage (Oppenheimer et al., 2009). Hence, screening questions were incorporated to identify attentive survey participants. The participants who correctly answered the screening questions were included

RESULTS

The author tested the proposed hypotheses using 2×2 (audience response context: positive vs. negative \times social worth of a brand: high vs. low) multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) with three dependent measures: (1) self-esteem of SNSs users, (2) attitude toward the brand, and (3) intentions to continue (Table 1).

Table 1. Summary of Hypotheses Testing (df₁ = 1, df₂=392)

Manipulation	HYP	Dependent Variable	F	Partial η^2	Mean	Conclusion
Audience response context (Positive vs. Negative) \times Social worth of the brand (High vs. Low) \times Gender (Male vs. Female)	H1a	Intentions to continue Content Sharing	5.98	.02	M Low SW: 4.37 M High SW: 5.25 F Low SW: 4.53 F High SW: 4.59	Supported
	H1b	Attitude toward the Brand	0.14	.00	M Low SW: 5.28 M High SW: 5.51 F Low SW: 5.17 F High SW: 5.30	Not Supported
	H1c	Users' Self-Esteem	6.64	.02	M Low SW: 4.95 M High SW: 6.13 F Low SW: 4.95 F High SW: 5.55	Supported
Audience response context (Positive vs. Negative) \times Social worth of the brand (High vs. Low) \times Involvement (High vs. Low)	H2a	Intentions to continue Content Sharing	0.36	.00	Low Inv Low SW: 4.03 Low Inv High SW: 4.75 High Inv Low SW: 4.84 High Inv High SW: 5.12	Not Supported
	H2b	Attitude toward the Brand	1.21	.07	Low Inv Low SW: 4.03 Low Inv High SW: 5.38 High Inv Low SW: 5.38 High Inv High SW: 5.43	Supported
	H2c	Users' Self-Esteem	6.53	.02	Low Inv Low SW: 4.51 Low Inv High SW: 5.73 High Inv Low SW: 5.36 High Inv High SW: 5.98	Not Supported

significant multivariate effect on the dependent variables (Wilks' Lambda = .98, $F(3, 390) = 2.98$, $p < .03$, partial $\eta^2 = .02$). Univariate analyses indicated that SNSs users' intentions to continue content sharing ($F(1, 392) = 5.98$, $p < .02$, partial $\eta^2 = .02$) and attitude toward the brand ($F(1, 392) = 6.64$, $p < .01$, partial $\eta^2 = .02$) contributed significantly to the overall multivariate, with the exception of SNSs users' self-esteem ($F(1, 392) = .14$, $p < .71$, partial $\eta^2 = .00$). Hence, H_{1a} and H_{1c} were supported.

In addition, when controlling for audience involvement, the analysis results revealed a significant interaction effect between the social worth of the brand and the audience response context on SNSs users' attitudes toward the responding brand. There was a significant multivariate effect on the dependent variables (Wilks' Lambda = .98, $F(3, 390) = 2.77$, $p < .04$, partial $\eta^2 = .02$). Univariate analyses indicated that SNSs users' attitude toward the brand ($F(1, 392) = 6.53$, $p < .01$, partial $\eta^2 = .02$) contributed significantly to the overall multivariate, with the exception of SNSs users' intentions to continue content sharing ($F(1, 392) = .36$, $p < .55$, partial $\eta^2 = .00$) and self-esteem ($F(1, 392) = 1.12$, $p < .27$, partial $\eta^2 = .00$). Given the above and the mean comparisons (Table 1), H_{2b} was supported.

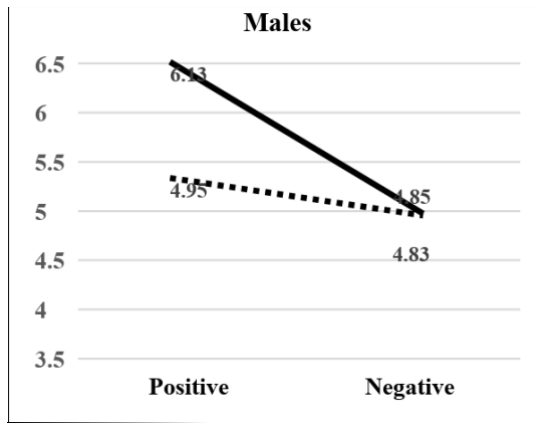
DISCUSSION

The findings suggest that there is a significant interaction effect between audience message context and the perceived social worth of the responding brand for male participants and those participants in the low-involvement condition. In the high-social worth of the brand condition, positive audience response context generated a more positive attitude toward the brand than the negative context and the low-social worth of the brand condition did. More specifically, the interaction effect between audience message context and the perceived social worth of the brand enhanced male participants' attitudes toward the brand, as well as their intentions to continue content sharing, while such effect was not observed among female participants.

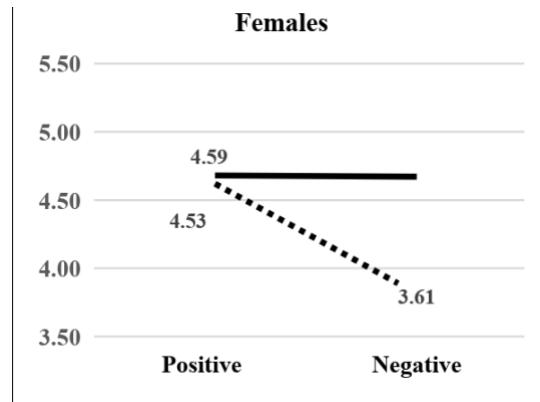
Figure 1. Interaction Effects between Social Worth of a Brand and Audience Response Context (H₂) while Controlling for Gender and Involvement Effects:

H₁ and H₂ postulated the presence of two-way interactions between factorial combinations of manipulations (response context and social worth of the responding brand, respectively) given gender and personal involvement. Although H₁ was not supported at the aggregate level, when the two-way interaction between social worth of the brand and audience message context were compared by gender, there was a

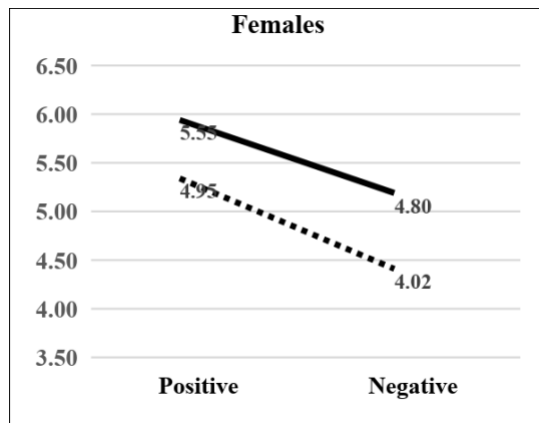
Attitude Toward the brand



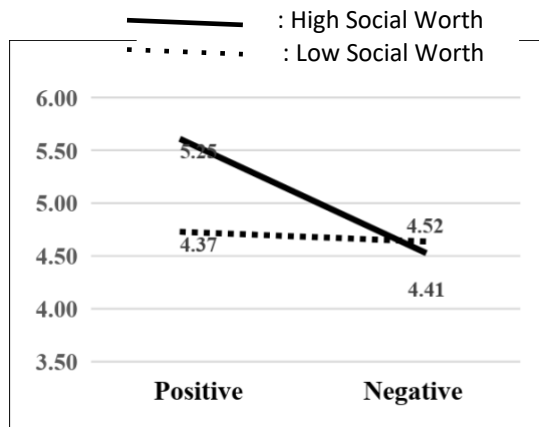
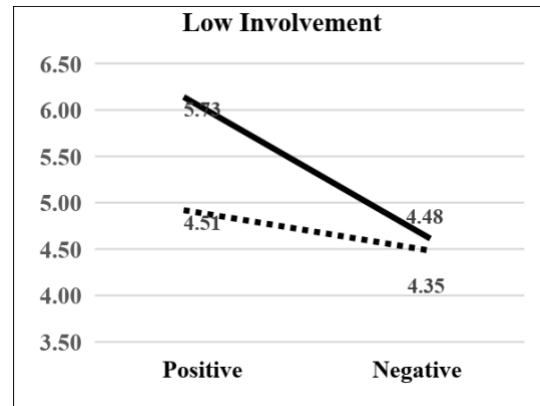
Intentions to continue content sharing



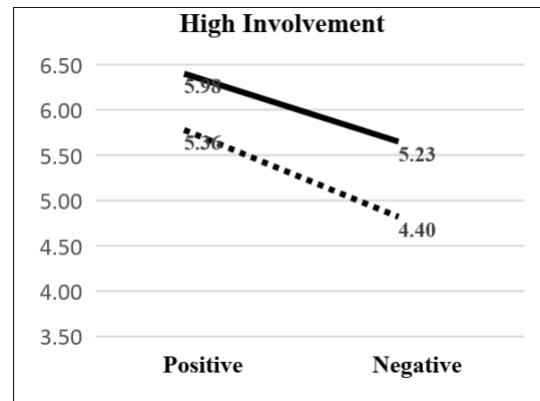
Attitude Toward the brand



Attitude Toward the brand



Attitude Toward the brand



The result revealed gender differences in brand engagement susceptibility. In line with the findings reported in extant literature pertinent to the influence of gender difference in the marketing context (Kamboj & Rahman, 2016; Melnyk et al., 2009; Meyers-Levy & Loken, 2015; Wang & Doong, 2017), male participants showed more inclination toward brand engagement than female participants did, suggesting that they may not be susceptible to brand engagement, as they would see this interaction as superficial and impersonal (Melnyk et al., 2009) (Figure 1).

These gender differences may thus be extended to the SNSs sphere, explaining their influence noted in this study. Analyses revealed that the interaction between

audience response context and social worth of a brand only occurred among male participants, who are rationalized to be more loyal to companies and group-like entities (Melnyk et al., 2009). In the case of this study, this involves a brand interacting via SNSs. This finding warrants further research on the impact of gender differences on SNSs user behaviors. For example, female participants could have exhibited even stronger personal evaluations if brand characters were employed. Brand character is defined as any individual or creature that public recognizes, whereby the brand capitalizes on this recognition by associating with this character in public domain (Garretson & Niedrich, 2004). It is likely that brand characters would be equally attractive to both male and female SNSs users. Women would likely prefer personal connections with firms due to their preference toward individual-centric nature of brand characters, as well as potentially identify with the anthropomorphized and humanized traits of brand characters, while males can be attracted to identities of entities.

Surprisingly, the interaction effect enhanced the attitudes toward the brand among the participants whose involvement with the brand was low. For those participants who were in the high-involvement group, such interaction effect was not observed. Further analysis of the mean score differences between audience response contexts for the two levels of the perceived social worth of the brand yielded results in support of the H₂ assertions.

The study findings revealed that high involvement can be detrimental for brand content marketing success because SNSs users that are highly involved in their SNSs postings may not be as susceptible to social influence. When SNSs users are highly involved and emotionally invested in a brand, they channel their involvement into expressing their views and conversing about their interests, without being highly conscious of public recognition that their virtual statements garner. Hence, they may not be susceptible to brand engagement, although their attitudes toward their beloved brands remain positive. As a result, the intrinsic reward from brand engagement may not be significant enough to exert any psychological influence on them. In other words, when SNSs users are highly involved in their online interactions and emotionally invested in a particular brand, they achieve satisfaction from expressing their views and conversing about their interests with others, without necessarily seeking public recognition. Hence, as this study showed, the audience message context and social worth interaction manipulations had no effect on the participants who exhibited high involvement.

On the other hand, brand engagement can be highly effective in convincing those SNSs users who are not yet brand enthusiasts to develop a more positive attitude

toward the brand. As the findings of this study showed, SNSs users that were not yet highly involved with a brand, appeared to be particularly susceptible to the social influence that brand engagement provides. This susceptibility was demonstrated by their improved attitudes toward the brand. Those in the low-involvement group could have been more susceptible to the impact of public recognition because their tendency toward self-gratification was not as strong as that exhibited by people who are highly involved with their subjects of interest. It is therefore possible that when SNSs users are not in a deeply involved state of mind, their attitudes toward brands are highly susceptible to others' opinions and the identity of the individuals or groups that concur with their views. Such seemingly counterintuitive rationalizations could have profound managerial implications, as they suggest that brand engagement can be highly effective, especially for individuals that are not yet highly involved with and emotionally invested in a brand. Engaging with such users help them develop a more positive attitude toward the brand, and can even eventually convert them into brand enthusiasts.

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For further information contact:
Hyeong-Gyu Choi
Business Administration Department/Augustana College
639 38th Street
Rock Island, IL 61201

(309)794-7480
hyeong-gyuchoi@augustana.edu

HALF-CLASSED AND PARTIALLY FLIPPED: TEACHING A CROWDED SEMINAR COURSE

David Aron, Dominican University

ABSTRACT

Undergraduates at a small private university take one seminar class each year. Enrollment of around 20 students makes the seminar format difficult to implement. In an exploratory study, half the students meet for the discussion-oriented sessions, while the others engage in activities often found in a flipped classroom. The roles are reversed for the next such meeting. This model is used for eight of the semester's 16 weeks. Challenges of this approach are discussed. Neither completely flipped nor a typical hybrid, this "half-classed" approach is described, as are challenges and stakeholder reactions. Limitations and research directions are discussed.

INTRODUCTION

All undergraduate students at a small private university are required to take one class each year from the school's seminar program. Each of the four years offers a different theme, in a sense guiding students from their definition of their own identity, through understanding the concepts of community, to their interaction with lives and communities in work and in finding a greater meaning to their lives. This program is described in more detail in Figure 1, below. Each seminar class hosts roughly 20 students,

Figure 1. Description of Undergraduate Seminar Program (school name redacted)

LAS Seminars

All students enroll each year in Liberal Arts and Sciences Seminars, the heart of [redacted] Core Curriculum. LAS Seminars are small, intimate courses in which students consider multiple perspectives on universal and urgent questions by reading, discussing, and writing about the seminar topic. These courses encourage students to:

- Get excited about learning for learning's sake
- Think critically
- Hone their writing skills
- Explore new ideas and ways of thinking
- Ponder life's big questions
- Make connections between classes and experience

Students choose from a variety of seminars according to their class standing that explore a common theme:

- Freshman Seminar: *The Examined Life* (100-level)
- Sophomore Seminar: *Life in Community* (200-level)
- Junior Seminar: *A Life's Work* (300-level)
- Senior Seminar: *The Good Life* (400-level)

These are critical aspects of a liberal education that prepare students not only for career opportunities but also for life-long learning.

and this research will focus on one particular sophomore seminar with class sizes ranging over the past seven years from 18 to 22 students. The purpose of this exploratory research is to describe the challenges of conducting a seminar-style class with enrollment larger than ideal, and to present an innovative teaching approach that may be applied to other such small but not-small-enough classes or discussion sections.

The Seminar Program

The University's seminars present several challenges. One such challenge, faced by students and teachers alike, is that the seminars are required but usually do not move a student toward the completion of their major course requirements. This can lead to students choosing their seminar based primarily on criteria such as the time of day that the class is offered, with only some attention paid to the actual name or content of the class. Students may also resent that they must take such a course at all.

A second challenge, related to the first, is that the topic presented in the seminar may be of little interest to the student. Of course, this can happen to students of any major even if the course is within their field of study.

A third challenge, and the one that motivates the current research, is that the enrollments in these seminars tend to be higher than ideal. This is hardly a unique problem, classes at all levels of education tend to be overcrowded and participation is more difficult in larger classes (e.g. Auster & MacRone, 1994; Myers *et al.*, 2009; Cuseo 2015), even if a class size of 20 might be envied by instructors of other courses.

THE COURSE

To meet this third challenge and therefore also address the second – and maybe reduce student resentment – one instructor created a “half-classed, partially flipped” approach to teaching an undergraduate seminar. The course description is presented in Figure 2, below:

Figure 2: Course Description

LAS 241-Communities of Consumption: Comparing Cultures and Cults
3 hours
Consumerism can mean many things: the pleasure of buying more, the movement toward buying less and the culture of consumption. The world of the consumer is one that generates fierce loyalty, righteous activism, and a lot of money for businesses. This seminar will examine these aspects of consumerism from several perspectives: as a creator of the cult-like loyalty to brands and brand communities, as a phenomenon so strong it can build corporate empires and shopping mall cathedrals, and as a search for meaning that in some cases can rival religious allegiance.
Prerequisite(s): Sophomores only

The seminar program is designed in keeping with the University’s liberal arts tradition with a focus on student interaction and community-building. A seminar entails an intimate group setting, with strong interaction among students (Cuseo, 2015). The class under discussion is a sophomore seminar, and all sophomore seminar courses are designed under the theme of “life in community.” More specifically, the instructor, a marketing professor, guides students representing a variety of majors and of varying interests, using multiple texts through stages including establishing one’s identity, finding a suitable community, growing community, leadership within community, and influence within and between communities.

The Texts

The main texts cover a variety of media and live speakers:

- *Mother Night* by Kurt Vonnegut (novel)
- *Encountering God* by Diana Eck (autobiography)
- *Tie-Died: Rock ‘n Roll’s Most Deadicated Fans* (documentary)
- Intellectual Nonsense (podcast and guest speaker)

- *The Culting of Brands* by Douglas Atkin (business non-fiction)
- *Tribes* by Seth Godin (business non-fiction)
- Star Trek: “Space Seed” (television show)
- Ron Bacci, Colonel, U.S. Army (ret.) (guest speaker)
- *The Joneses* (movie)

The course uses a variety of media, including works of fiction and non-fiction, documentaries and feature films, guest speakers, even a podcast that focuses on local artisans and entrepreneurs within a community and a visit from the podcast’s creator.

The use of such a variety of texts involved in instruction bears similarity to the blended classroom, but goes beyond simply offering face-to-face interaction along with, and bolstered by, online material (Garrison and Vaughan, 2008).

The Classroom

The issue of class size is addressed by the “half-classed, partially flipped” approach. The seminar instructor was familiar with flipped classrooms through university workshops and had even taught a flipped undergraduate marketing course.

The definition of a flipped classroom, “in which first contact with new concepts moves from the group learning space to the individual learning space in the form of structured activity” (Talbert, 2017, pg. 20) is partially realized in this seminar in that for several texts, students swap venues for activities that typically take place outside the classroom and those that take place within the walls of a classroom (Lage, Platt, and Treglia, 2000; Honeycutt, B., 2016). Examples of the out-of-class experiences that are flipped into the classroom, and under an instructor’s supervision include homework and team meetings, while activities that are flipped out of the room include lectures.

With the growing popularity of the flipped classroom as a pedagogical approach, it seems likely that instructors are experimenting with their own definitions and approaches. However, the instructor’s desire to both introduce and reinforce concepts inside the classroom, outside of Talbert’s definition of first contact (Talbert, 2017), along with the discussion-intensive format of a seminar, made fully flipping the entire class seem less than desirable.

The Syllabus

The instructor took the following steps to develop and define the logistics of the half-classed, partially flipped classroom:

- Of the sixteen weeks that class meets, half of them would focus on “discussion quizzes” (short

essay questions assignment) based on eight of the texts: *Mother Night* (two meetings), *Encountering God* (two meetings), *Tie-Died*, *The Culting of Brands*, *Tribes*, and *The Joneses*.

- During those eight weeks, half the students (between nine and 11) would meet on one of the two meeting days, the other half would meet on the other.
- Additional material, including articles, videos, and podcasts, were provided to the students to supplement in-class material and to make up for the time students were not in the classroom.

In sum, all students meet with the entire class for roughly 16 of the scheduled 32 sessions and attend with only half of their classmates for eight of the remaining 16 sessions.

The instructor created the half-class, partially flipped classroom based on earlier experience with a flipped classroom for another course as well as with university training. There are elements of the flipped classroom present in that the additional educational material provided is to be experienced outside of the classroom, in order to facilitate discussion and instruction inside the classroom.

RESPONSE AND FEEDBACK

Program Leadership

Reactions of other faculty and administrators leading the University's seminar program included:

- Worry that the concept was misheard as something other than "half-classed,"
- Curiosity whether this concept could be generalized to other seminars,
- Concern that the course should be formally listed in the course bulletin as a flipped or hybrid class.

These issues were considered and addressed in the following manner. The course is not purely a hybrid in that there is no online discussion element. The course learning management software, Canvas, is used only for distributing course material, submitting assignments, and posting grades. The additional material provided to students is meant to take up roughly 75 minutes of additional time, the equivalent of the skipped class.

Students

Student reaction to this approach has been collected. Those who took the class during the past two years were sent a survey via email asking one question: Do you have any other thoughts, memories or comments about your Sophomore Seminar?" While only 12 students responded, their verbatim

statements about their experience are positive and listed in Figure 3, below.

Figure 3: Verbatim Student Comments

- Do you have any other thoughts, memories, or comments about your Sophomore Seminar?**
- I really enjoyed the readings and class!
 - I really liked this seminar the professor made the class very enjoyable!
 - I really loved the discussion and the questions that Prof. Aron created. Even though some of us were shy or insecure to participate I felt that the class atmosphere was very friendly and knowledgeable.
 - I really enjoyed the smaller group sizes. It helped me feel more comfortable about sharing ideas and personal views. I also enjoyed the books that we read. I thought they were great for the over sophomore seminar idea.
 - I liked how it was related to marketing in a sense because my major is marketing. I also thought that the readings we had in class pertained to the course material. It was an inviting environment and I am glad to say that I was a part of the class.
 - I remember talking about Seth Godin, and now I've seen his name a lot. It was a great class.
 - Dividing the class for discuss was great because it was smaller and allowed for more peoples views to be heard. I noticed though for the most part that you have us divided with the same group of people every time. This allowed us to really get to know half the class but as for the other half, I did not remember most of their names. It is both a good thing and a bad.
 - I really liked how the class was broken up and learned really well with the format.
 - It was a well organized and useful course. The discussion based format helped the topics reach deeper meanings.

As indicated above, student response to this approach has been positive. Furthermore, participation, at least from the instructor's perspective, is heightened in a more intimate setting of ten or 11 students instead of 20 or more.

FUTURE RESEARCH

The implications of this half-classed, partially flipped approach to teaching can be considered from multiple perspectives, including that of students, of

teachers, and as part of a larger pedagogical research project.

Future research on this topic can be explored from these different perspectives. While student responses suggest that they are in general happy with this approach, the issues of student learning and satisfaction have not been addressed with a more formal or data-driven study.

A comparison between students' experience their seminar in this format compared to the experiences of those taking a different course with similar material (if possible) would be informative. The generalizability of this approach would also be a worthwhile topic of study with another faculty member willing to employ this unique format.

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SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING SALES

*Loretta Ezeife, Associate Director of Finance at the University of California Berkeley
Steve Roussas, Walden University*

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative multicase study was to explore social media marketing strategies for increasing sales. Data collection included semistructured interviews with 5 organizational leaders from 5 different organizations in the San Francisco, California, Bay Area and a review of participants' documents including marketing materials, social media posts, and published sales reports. Using the thematic analysis approach, four themes emerged, (a) Audience Knowledge, (b) customer roadmap to convert prospects to consumers, (c) Social Customer Relationship Management, (d) Marketing and Sales Alignment, and (e) Measure Performance.

INTRODUCTION

The commercial marketplace has expanded beyond the traditional brick-and-mortar to a global shop front that is accessible to billions of users via the Internet (Sadler & Evans, 2016). Social media provide a marketing tool to connect consumers to online businesses. Current social media technologies include Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Google (Plus and Analytics) and many other peer-to-peer platforms such as blogs, micro blogs, wikis, podcasts, photo sharing, video sharing, and social bookmarking (Kim & Ko, 2012). Billions of people use social platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube daily (Piskorski, 2014). According to Facebook executives, the number of monthly active users surpassed 1.9 billion in March 2017 (Facebook, 2017).

The various outlets have become a channel for marketers to communicate directly to consumers in a manner that was not previously possible with traditional media. The potential to reach billions of consumers directly through social media is significant for businesses, yet some organizational leaders do not know how to engage potential customers effectively using this method (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, & Silvestre, 2011). Even though their organizations use social media in various forms, some organizational leaders lack sufficient knowledge to develop effective social media strategies to create organizational value. In this study, the researchers explored social media strategies that organizational leaders can use to increase sales for their organizations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of marketing emerged during the industrial revolution beginning from the 18th century

and through the 19th century. The industrial revolution represented a time of technological innovations in the scientific and technological field and mass production that led to the creation of many industries and the need for companies to find creative methods to inform consumers of their products (Wilkie & Moore, 2003). Individuals have long attempted to sell goods and services or present goods for trading for another item of equal value (Sutton, 2016). However, the concept and definition of marketing has evolved over time. Drucker (1954) defined marketing as a business function that is unique, goes beyond selling, and includes all areas of the organization with the customer's point of view as a guide. The production era was an era of demand over supply where producers focused on providing sufficient supply to meet excess demand (Baker, 2016). After the Industrial Revolution, competition grew, focus turned to selling and firms began to focus on marketing, branding, and sales as they competed for customers as a result of demand exceeding supply (Boone & Kurtz, 2008). Baker (2016) posited that as competition increased and supply started to catch up to demand, sellers started to take a more aggressive selling approach, which ushered in the sales era. Businesses sought ways to increase sales using marketing techniques to remain competitive (Schwarzkopf, 2015).

During the 1990s and because of the technological advancements, marketing shifted to an era known as relationship marketing where the emphasis was on establishing relationships between the customer and the organization and less emphasis on the product, itself (Cohen, 2014). The era of relationship marketing replaced the previous eras, including the production era, sales era, and marketing era, and gave rise to the transition in marketing from warfare (sellers versus buyers) to

collaboration (buyer-seller partnerships) (Palmer, Palmer, Bejou, & Bejou, 2016). The Internet became a popular marketing platform in the late 1990s and early 2000s, companies established websites to post information about their products, and services where consumers can directly access the information as the web became an essential tool for commercialization (Ryan, 2016). Current and potential consumers became accessible to marketers 24/7 because of technological advances and the birth of social media (Kabat-Zinn, 2016). Digital media platforms have revolutionized marketing by providing new tools to reach, educate, engage, sell, gather data, and provide better products and services to consumers (Lamberton & Stephen, 2016).

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) defined social media as a group of online-based applications allowing management to create and exchange content. Social media content includes words, pictures, videos, and audios to facilitate communication, collaboration, education and entertainment (Safko, 2010). Social media research is an emerging area, and at a time when most organizations' management are struggling with how to adapt to social media, few scholarly guides provide principles, best practices, or differentiate fact from fiction (McFarland & Ployhart, 2015). Social networking sites are Internet services that enable individuals or businesses to create a profile, add or follow users and receive updates on the posts or activities of users within their network (Boyd & Ellison, 2015). Users of social media networks can connect with others and to share information, like traditional networking; social media networks also represent indispensable resources for leaders looking to promote their products online (Safko, 2010). Social media represents the most transformative information technology innovations in business both internally and externally (Aral, Dellarocas, & Godes, 2013). The platform is no longer just a communication tool for personal amusement but an important part of marketing strategies in business (Öztamur & Karakadılar, 2014).

Businesses leaders no longer have a choice whether they should adopt social media because social media is a strategic requirement (Constantinides, 2014). The use of social media has transformed how people communicate and interact, creating both new opportunities and challenges for businesses (Tiago & Veríssimo, 2014). Companies' leaders who do not understand social media fundamentals could fail to attract or retain customers (Durkin & McGowan, 2013). The use of social media has changed the functions of traditional marketing, which has led to the need to create new business models (Scheid, Vaillant, & De Montaigu, 2012). Kissane (2016) posited that social media is the marketing avenue for businesses

seeking to expand their reach online, attract new customers, and convert more of their traffic into sales.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multicase study was to explore social media marketing strategies that organizational leaders use to increase sales. The targeted sample population included marketing leaders of five organizations in the San Francisco, California, Bay Area who successfully increased sales by using social media marketing strategies. The implication for positive social change could be the opportunity for organizations leaders to acquire new strategies for using social media to increase sales, which could result in job creation and improved economies in local communities.

Research Question

What are the marketing strategies for using social media to increase sales?

Interview Questions

1. What social media strategies have you used to increase sales?
2. What social media strategies were most effective for increasing sales?
3. How did you assess the effectiveness of your social media strategies for increasing sales?
4. What were the barriers or challenges of leveraging social media strategies to increase sales?
5. How did you address these barriers or challenges?
6. How did you assess the effectiveness of addressing these barriers or challenges?
7. What social media strategies do competitors use?
8. What else would you like to share regarding social media strategies for increasing sales?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Contribution to Business Practice

Organizational leaders face challenges with a changing marketing landscape due to the significant increase in social media adoption (Ogbuji & Papazafeiropoulou, 2016). Social media are a relatively low-cost innovative marketing tool to attract, retain, and monitor customer behaviors leading to increased sales (Tsimonis & Dimitriadis, 2014). The

findings of this study were significant because it addressed the social media strategies that organizational leaders in San Francisco, CA use to increase sales. Local organizational leaders will benefit from acquiring strategies to identify target audiences, develop a customer roadmap to convert prospects to customers, manage customer relationships, align the marketing and sales functions, and establish key performance metrics to assess social media performance to drive sales. These findings will also help local organizational leaders to acquire knowledge of effective social media strategies to improve communication with customers and increase customer loyalty.

Implications for Social Change

The community could benefit economically from increased sales, through more employed consumers, and improved disposable income in the local community. By companies employing locally, members of the community may benefit from greater disposable income, increased home ownership, and lower home foreclosure rates, which contribute to higher standard of living for the community. The findings should contribute to better informed consumers, who when using social media, could provide informed feedback to business leaders, which could lead to improved products and services benefiting customers, families, and communities.

Participants

Researchers should establish a rationale or criterion for participant selection to improve both the breadth and depth of data (Charlick, Pincombe, McKellar, & Fielder, 2016). Participants who meet or exceed specific criteria possess greater knowledge of the phenomenon of study (Palinkas et al., 2013). A key factor that affects population representativeness is a study's eligibility criteria. As Sen et al. (2016) suggested, ensuring that data are information rich requires that researchers establish eligibility criteria. The participant eligibility criteria for this study included (a) that participants were social media managers and professionals in top performing companies in the San Francisco Bay Area, (b) with at least three years professional experience in the industry, (c) who had successfully used social media to increase sales, and (d) were willing to participate in a semistructured, audio-recorded interview.

Researchers need access to participants to conduct the study, and gaining access involves finding and securing participants for research (Peticca-Harris, deGama, & Elias, 2016). Depending on the size of the business, gatekeepers play a key role in granting

researchers access to potential participants along with monitoring the activities of the researcher throughout the data collection process (Davies & Peters, 2014). Gatekeepers can be employees, leaders of the organization, or individuals who belong to the group of interest for the study (McFadyen & Rankin, 2016). We did not need permission from gatekeepers for this study because the participants were business leaders with whom the researchers had direct access with them via social media.

The target population included five participants across five organizations. The success of data gathering depends directly on how well the researcher can build rapport, maintain relationships with the participants, and hold them to agreements (Kondowe & Booyens, 2014). Researchers should build a good relationship with potential participants to increase trust and confidence and enhance the success of the data collection process (Flurey, 2015). They can establish a positive relationship with potential participants by findings topics of interests to both parties (Kral, 2014). We established rapport with potential participants by demonstrating flexibility to address their concerns. We also explained the purpose of the study, informed participants of the voluntary nature of participation in the study and their ability to opt out using the informed consent form, and assured them that confidentiality was a top priority of mine.

Data Collection Instruments

The objective of my study was to explore social media strategies for increasing sales. The researchers used the semistructured interview guide for data collection and reviewed company documents. We scheduled interviews via telephone at a meeting place of the participant's choosing in San Francisco, CA bay area. Researchers use the semistructured interviews when seeking the flexibility to structure the interview and to ask open-ended questions, for in-depth responses and follow up. With semistructured interviews, researchers develop the questions prior to the interview, and the interviewees express their views in their own words (Galletta, 2013). This approach to data collection helps to reduce the risk of bias relating to the researcher's preconceptions (Marshall, Brereton, & Kitchenham, 2015).

The researchers also used methodological triangulation and member checking in the data collection process to ensure validity. Triangulation refers to the use of multiple methods or data sources in qualitative research to gain an in-depth understanding of the research topic (Carter, Bryant-Lukosius, DiCenso, Blythe, & Neville, 2014). According to Carter et al. (2014), supplementing qualitative text with multiple sources of information helps with

triangulation and trust in the reliability and validity of the study's findings. The data collection sources included semistructured interviews of five company leaders who accepted the invitation to participate and review of company documents including marketing materials, social media posts and published sales reports. With member checking, the participants reviewed my interpretation of their responses for accuracy. We used NVivo for coding and categorizing similar themes and summarized the findings in a narrative format and used tables and figures to depict processes.

Data Collection Technique

Qualitative research requires a comprehensive data collection technique and documentation of employed research procedures (Bowen, 2009). We used the semistructured interviews for data collection, reviewed marketing materials, posts on the participants' social media pages and published sales reports for supporting documentation. To access participants, we searched for prospects using Facebook and LinkedIn social media platforms using key words as social media, influencer, job title and limited the location search to San Francisco, CA bay area. We viewed potential participants' profiles for years of experience with social media and narrowed down the search by those with a mutual friend or connection. Forty potential participants met the eligibility criteria. The researchers sent a request to connect with the 40 participants along with invitation to participate informing them of the purpose of the study. We received responses from 15 participants, seven indicated that they were not available to participate. We requested and received confirmation of participant's willingness to participate in the study via email within 48 hours. The researchers then selected the top five participants to interview who best met the eligibility criteria and availability. The remaining participants were backups in case the top five participants could not participate in the study.

Researchers use semistructured interviews when seeking the flexibility to structure the interview, ask open-ended questions, receive in-depth responses, and ask follow up questions. This approach of data collection helps to reduce the risk of bias relating to the researcher's preconceptions (Marshall, Brereton, & Kitchenham, 2015). We were objective and removed bias by using the interview protocol and listening to the participants' responses. Williams and Pigeot (2016) asserted that researchers obtain consent from potential participants for confidentiality and protecting the integrity of the study. We obtained a signed consent forms from the five participants through email. We also obtained consent from the

participants prior to starting the interview to audio record the interview using a LG Stylo built in cell phone digital recorder. The participants did not receive incentives to participate in the study. The researchers confirmed interview times via email and scheduled interview times using Google calendar. Five organizational leaders from five different organizations participated in semistructured interviews at a location of their choosing in the San Francisco, California, Bay Area and addressed 8 questions in depth questions about social media strategies to increase sales. Each participant showed enthusiasm for social media and were excited to share their experiences and the social media strategies for their respective business. The researchers took notes during the interview process to record nonverbal cues and key points that were incorporated in the data analysis. The interview times ranged from 25 minutes to 45 minutes.

Researchers review documents to gather background information, develop understanding, and gain insight to the research problem (Bretschneider, Cirilli, & Jones, 2017). Document review, included marketing materials from participants' social media marketing activities, social media posts, and published sales reports. After each interview, we performed member checking by paraphrasing the participant's responses for each question and emailed the documents to the participants to confirm the accuracy of my interpretation within 48 hours. Two participants did not have changes and three participants responded with changes. We incorporated the changes and emailed the information back for final confirmation.

The Emerging Themes

The overarching research question for this study was what are the social media marketing strategies that organizations' leaders use to increase sales? The researchers interviewed five participants from five organizations for the study using semistructured interviews. Each participant answered eight open ended questions concerning social media strategies to increase sales. The researchers also reviewed social media activities for each participant we also reviewed the social media pages for each participant and observed the level of engagement by the audience based on comments and likes on the postings. In addition, we recorded my observations during each interview. Participant 1 is the founder, president, and chief executive officer of his company and, at the time of the study, had been involved with social media for approximately 15 years. Participant 2 is a program manager and digital marketer with eight years of industry experience. Participant 3 is a digital marketing manager and social media strategist with 10

years of industry experience. Participant 4 is a top producer real estate professional with 13 years of industry experience and Participant 5 is an industry principal for social selling with seven years of industry experience. Each participant indicated that social media play a key role in increasing sales for their businesses.

The conceptual framework used in this study was relationship marketing theory (Berry, 1983). The use of social media can provide business leaders with a long-lasting relationship marketing tool they can use to develop brand awareness and build customer loyalty, which could lead to increased sales (Turner & Shah, 2014). The use of social media can also serve as a relationship marketing tool for business leaders to use in shifting from a transactional to a relational perspective and gain a greater understanding of the lifetime value of partnering with customers. The constructs of the relationship marketing theory serve

management, (d) marketing and sales alignment, and, (e) measuring performance (See Table 1).

Theme 1: Audience Knowledge

All participants expressed that developing effective social media strategies requires knowledge of the target audience. This includes identification of which social media platforms that the target audiences are actively engaging. According to the participants, knowing your audience involves “having conversations with the customer, asking for feedback, and using online chats, questions, or surveys. Participants recommended that companies conduct research to identify the right market and competitors and discern what differentiates their products or services and marketing strategy. These findings are in alignment with Racz-Akacosi’s (2017) findings

Participant	Theme Audience knowledge	Customer Roadmap	Customer relationship management	Marketing and sales alignment	Measure performance
Participant 1	X		x		x
Participant 2	X	X		x	x
Participant 3	X		x		x
Participant 4	X	x	x		x
Participant 5	X	x	x	x	

as a guide for business leaders to develop a systematic approach of interactive marketing for higher quality interactions using social media to incorporate real-time customer feedback for building long-term customer relationships and increase sales (Gronos, 1994).

The findings of this study supported Clark and Melancon (2013) assertion that including social media communications within a company’s relationship marketing efforts has many advantages for organizations; hence, developing social media strategies aligns with the relationship marketing theory because social media provides a tool for organizational leaders to engage and build customer relationships, which could result in increased sales. The participants’ responses and themes also aligned with the relationship marketing theory. The following themes emerged from my analysis of the semistructured interviews, document reviews, and social media page reviews: (a) audience knowledge, (b) customer roadmap, (c) customer relationship

identifying where the clients are and the social media platforms where they obtain information helps to inform marketers about the right strategy to use in marketing to the target audience and maximizing reach. The buyer’s persona refers to a firm’s ideal customer (location, age, and preferences) and management can identify by conducting research, surveys, and interviews of target audiences (Kelly, Johnston, & Danheiser, 2017)

Theme 2: Customer Roadmap

Developing a customer roadmap involves creating a clear path for prospects to follow to purchase a product or service. Participants noted that leaders should focus on social media strategies that maximize the customer’s experience by creating a roadmap and guiding the customer through the roadmap. The customer’s experience with a firm starts from the initial contact on the social media platform. Marketers should have a call to action through a link that will take the customer to the company’s landing

page to learn more about the product or to subscribe to a newsletter or future promotions and then follow up with a customized offer to close the sale. It is important to create a roadmap for the prospect that makes it easy for the customer to purchase your product. Social media has influenced the shift from being consumers who only consume products to becoming prosumers who openly share their product/service experiences on various social media platforms and thereby drive sales through electronic word of mouth (Fine, Girona, & Petrescu, 2017).

Theme 3: Social Customer Relationship Management

Social customer relationship management integrates customer interactions, processes, and technologies, with social media applications to engage customers in collaborative conversations with the goal of improving relationships, customer retention, and driving sales growth (Wang & Kim, 2017). Participants suggested that firms avoid marketing campaigns that are inauthentic to what they are selling, it is important to know yourself, cultivate relationships of the potential buyer and how the firm's product can be of value to the customer.

Theme 4: Marketing and Sales Alignment

In many organizations, the sales and marketing functions are separate, and each role's performance measured differently. Collaboration between sales and marketing is an essential element in meeting sales goals. Participants stated, "Social media marries sales and marketing better than any other platform". Marketers should to think as salespeople and salespeople should think as marketers and leaders should measure both roles the same, so they have an incentive to communicate. With social media both sales and marketing have a unique opportunity to communicate directly with the customer, it is essential for both to understand each other roles and coordinate the messaging to align with the customer's need(s). Aligning sales and marketing teams has been a challenge for most companies because the perception is that marketing's job is to generate leads, and sales' job is to turn those leads into clients. In practice, marketing and sales should work together, aligning their roles and goals to ensure that social media marketing sales growth becomes the responsibility of both functions. The first step in aligning the sales and marketing teams is to make sure the goal comes from on high within the company. Marketers could also use social media to develop positive interactions with potential customers that can serve as the foundation

for long term relationships and encourage repeat purchases (Mandal, 2017).

Theme 5: Measure Performance

Measuring the performance of social media activities is essential for firms to gauge the success of their social media efforts. Participants stated, "This is where most companies get lost" and suggested that leaders develop key performance indicators (KPI) to assess the effectiveness of social media marketing campaigns. Business leaders use KPIs to measure and evaluate factors that are critical to success (Ahmed et al., 2017). Participants suggested to measure success by the number of prospects obtained from social media into his sales pipeline and customer information obtained. Having control of customer information, rather than the 3rd party platform, is important because if LinkedIn or Twitter decides to change their algorithms or access, could lead to loss of useful lead data. Once the customer data is in the company's pipeline, they can manage them through the CRM, customize offers, and close the sale.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Based on the five themes identified from the methodological triangulation of semistructured interviews, analyzing participants' responses, and document review, the researchers recommend that organizations leaders: a) reallocate a portion of marketing budget to social media, (b) create online brand communities, (c) develop metrics, and (d) outsource social media activities to social media experts as part of a comprehensive social media marketing strategy to increase sales.

Re-allocate marketing budget

Firm leaders should reallocate marketing budget from traditional media advertising to social media marketing. Advertising on social media does not always require additional resources, organizations that have annual budgets for marketing can shift a portion of the budget to incorporate social media marketing at a lower cost. This means that leaders allocate a portion of the amounts they used to spend on radio, television, or newspaper advertisement to social media marketing. As leaders recognize the return of investment from social media marketing, the shift from traditional media budgets to social media advertising will continue to grow. According to BIA/Kelsey, a media advisory firm, social media advertising revenue in the US was \$4.7 billion in 2012, and the expectations are for revenue to be nearly double with about \$11 billion by 2017, and the five-

year growth rate to reach 18.6%, while print, radio, and television will see a net decrease in total marketing (Alabdulkarim, 2017). Firm leaders that allocate resources to social media marketing will benefit from the increased visibility to a wider audience, brand awareness, and possible increased sales.

Create an online brand community

Creating an online brand community provides existing and potential customers a platform to discuss and recommend company products to their social networks and increases word of mouth referrals. Organizations that create online communities offer audiences a forum to engage with customers and customers to engage with each other to enhance brand loyalty (UI Islam & Rahman, 2017). Consumers tend to conduct research online to compare costs, view online product reviews to determine the value or benefits that the products offer before making purchases. Creating an online brand community using social media offers marketers the opportunity to attract, interact, and keep potential consumers attention by providing a forum for active customer engagement, continuous feedback, and brand loyalty. An online brand community helps to define a brand and gives the customer the opportunity to associate with the brand and not just the product. Online brand communities can influence buyer purchase intention for both existing and new customers and positively impacts repeat purchases to drive sales.

Develop social media performance metrics

Firms should develop social media performance metrics to track the effectiveness of social media campaigns and return on social media investment. Social media return on investment (SROI) is an important metric for assessing the success of social media business activities (Arogyaswamy, 2017). ROI calculation includes two primary metrics: cost incurred, compared to the outcomes such sales or profit (Gascón, Bernal, López, & Rodríguez, 2016). A good marketing return ratio is 5:1, which means that for \$1 spent, should return \$5 in sales, increase traffic etc. Social media metric could also include, bounce rate, which is the percentage of visitors to a website who leave the landing page without any interaction. Average Click through Rate (CTR) refers to the percentage of people visiting a web page who access a URL link to an advertisement. Google Analytics provides free practical ways for marketers to measure social media marketing ROI and the success of the marketing campaigns by analyzing the social media users' interaction with the marketing campaigns and traffic to the company's website from social media.

Marketing software platforms such as Hootsuite, Salesforce, and Hubspot, provide paid services to help markets measure early social media engagement to final sale. This could allow marketers to determine which social media platforms or campaigns yield the highest return and adjust for less successful campaigns.

Employ social media experts

Developing social media strategies and implementation can be a full-time job. Firms that do not have resources internally to develop effective social media strategies should consider outsourcing their social media activities. Outsourcing provides the marketers with opportunity to achieve their social media goals while saving time and money. Developing effective strategies requires a high level of expertise and some companies cannot afford to make investments in house therefore, management should hire experts to help develop effective social media strategies. An outside agency that specializes in social media strategies could help leaders to identify the most effective strategies to implement, monitor, and measure performance on social media so they can focus on core functions. It can also improve the firms messaging and influence because the firms can leverage the expertise and knowledge of specialists whose sole focus is on developing successful social media strategies and return on investment. A good agency can also help organizations to avoid costly mistakes that organizations make through trial and error. Outside agencies work with many companies and have knowledge of what works and what does not. The best agencies will be able to integrate a firm's social media efforts with their overall marketing strategy for increases sales. Compared to hiring an employee who requires a fixed salary, benefits, and overhead costs, hiring an agency can be much more cost effective.

The recommendations for action will help firms to acquire the required knowledge to develop effective social media marketing strategies for increasing sales. I plan to share the findings of the study by publishing on peer reviewed business and scholarly journals. I also plan to publish on social media sites as In LinkedIn publishing, Google Scholar, and Facebook. I will also present the findings at social media conferences and seminars.

Recommendations for Further Research

There were three limitations in this study. First, we employed the qualitative research methodology. Qualitative research includes the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data that do not involve numbers

or statistics (Anderson, 2010). A limitation of the qualitative research method is that the findings do not include data, which might affect the reliability or validity of the findings (Elo, Kääriäinen, Kanste, Pölkki, Utriainen, & Kyngäs, 2014). Second, the potential participants worked in the San Francisco, Bay Area, which could affect the generalizability of the findings across other companies or industries that are not part of the study or companies located in other cities. A final limitation is the participants' personal bias towards social media may influence the participants' response.

With this study, the researchers presented some preliminary findings on the social media marketing strategies to help organizational leaders to develop effective strategies to increase sales. The focus of future research should be on three primary areas: a) quantitative study to quantify the impact of social media advertising on sales, (b) exploring the effects of social media on individual's consumer purchase intentions and, (c) which social media platforms are most effective for increasing sales for specific industries and other geographical locations.

CONCLUSION

Social media is an internet platform which individuals and business leaders can use to create, share, exchange information and receive instant feedback. These platforms offer the opportunity for business leaders and marketers to reach billions of consumers both domestically and globally with just a few clicks and a lower cost than was previously possible with traditional media. Applying the relationship marketing theory, the purpose of this study was to explore social media marketing those organizational leaders to increase sales. The knowledge gained from this study's findings could help leaders to convert more social media interactions into sales and increase return on social media investment. The implication for social change include organizations' leaders acquiring new strategies for using social media to increase sales, which could lead to more jobs and as a result, improve the local community's economy.

The findings from interviewing five participants who successfully used social media to increase sales revealed five themes: (a) audience knowledge and knowing which platforms that the target audience are using, (b) developing a customer roadmap by providing a clear path for customer to purchase products, (c) managing customer relationships include brand loyalty, (d) aligning the marketing and sales roles to ensure shared goals and (d) developing key performance indicators to track the effect of social media campaigns for driving sales for firms. With

increasing number of consumers connected to social media, businesses leaders should act to reallocate marketing budget to social media marketing, establish online brand communities, and develop performance metrics to leverage to reach their customers to strengthen customer relationships. The findings from this study reinforced that social media provides companies with innovative ways to market their products and services to consumers to increase sales.

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For further information contact:
Steve Roussas
1745 West Deer Valley Road, Suite 120,
Phoenix, Arizona 85027
(602)672-8800
roussas@mscco.net

ONLINE LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION: SEEKING VALUE CO-CREATION IN THE FLIPPED CLASSROOM

Kimberly M. Judson, Department of Marketing, Illinois State University
Hulda G. Black, Department of Marketing, Illinois State University
Jeri M. Beggs, Department of Marketing, Illinois State University

ABSTRACT

This study investigated 153 Marketing majors at a large, public university to determine if the inherent pedagogy of a flipped classroom (50 percent face-to-face and 50% online) encourages more value co-creation opportunity than simply value delivery. The descriptive statistics indicate positive student response to the flipped hybrid classroom environment and the instructors teaching in this format. A number of online teaching indices were assessed and included (1) Teaching Presence, (2) Social Presence, (3) Cognitive Presence, (4) Learner Presence. To measure the students' perceptions of their flipped classroom experience, Kim, Kim, Kera, and Getman's (2014) four section student survey consisting of 37 scale items was utilized.

INTRODUCTION

As technology increasingly becomes an integral aspect of our society, online higher education, both 100 percent online and hybrid/blended/ flipped classrooms, continue to grow. In 2012, nearly half of private nonprofit colleges offered fully online programs, about double the number that were doing so in 2002 (Lederman, 2013).

“Learners in the twenty-first century have been Web consumers for much of their lives, and are demanding online instruction that supports participation and interaction. They want learning experiences that are social and that will connect them with their peers,” (West & West, 2009, p. 2).

Most chief academic leaders in higher education (69.1 percent) indicate that online learning is critical to their long-term strategy. While 77 percent (up from 57.2 percent in 2003) of chief academic officers (CAOs) rate the learning outcomes in online education as the same or superior to those in face-to-face courses, only 30.2 (down from 2004) percent of CAOs believe that faculty members on their campuses accept the value and legitimacy of online education (Lederman, 2013). Low completion rates of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) suggests a need for research in this area. At one Midwest public university, 300,000 people from around the world

initially signed up for Coursera, a for-profit online education platform, yet only a fraction completed a course in the program (“Future of Program...”, 2013, p. A4). By adding a for-credit option (e.g., iMBA, known as the All-MOOC MBA), this institution has sought to increase Coursera completion rates (Straumsheim, 2015) and thus, provide greater value to their students. In light of the 2.7 million students that have enrolled in MOOC courses (“Why MOOCS,” 2017), many traditional universities see current and future opportunities in offering online and/or blended courses that provide increased value to students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Services Marketing: Value Delivery vs. Value Co-Creation

While developing an online or blended teaching strategy, incongruent goals may exist between faculty and students. Within higher education, a pervasive emphasis on marketization (rather than marketing) may contribute to a higher level of student satisfaction and lower level of student intellectual development (Taylor and Judson, 2011). Marketization creates an environment that focuses on performance goals (value delivery toward a degree/credentialing) rather than learning goals (value co-creation toward intellectual growth). Elliott and Dweck (1988) tested a framework in education in

which goals are proposed as the central determinants of achievement patterns. The results of this study indicate that students' achievement goals (performance or learning goals) are critical determinants of their behavioral, cognitive, and affective goals. Specifically, when the value of the **performance goal** was highlighted and students believed they had *low ability*, they responded to feedback about mistakes with "learned helplessness" and negative affect. When the value of the **performance goal** was highlighted and students believed they had *high ability*, they responded to feedback about mistakes with a "mastery-oriented manner" intent on overcoming the obstacles. Interestingly, when the value of the **learning goal** was highlighted, students' beliefs about their abilities, *whether high or low*, were irrelevant and students sought to increase competence and opted for more challenging tasks. Elliott and Dweck's (1988) study suggests that a shared goal involving value co-creation is more likely to result in intellectual growth for online learners in higher education. While this study does not specifically test learned helplessness within the value co-creation context, this literature provides interesting results for consideration.

Motivational Relevance and Motivational Congruence

When evaluating an educational experience, students begin their appraisal by considering two aspects of the experience: the motivational relevance and the motivational congruence (Smith and Kirby, 2009). With motivational relevance, the student asks, "How relevant is this course/program to my needs?" With motivational congruence, the student asks, "How congruent is this course/program to my goals?" Whether or not the experience is relevant and/or congruent elicits different and more intense emotional responses.

Marketing literature supports that appraisal emotion (the role of emotion in customer judgments) is related to both satisfaction and perceived value (Hume and Mort, 2010; Arora and Singer, 2006; White and Yu, 2005; Bagozzi, 1997). Sheth, Newman, and Gross (1991) proposed a theory of consumption value based on the perceived utility of functional value (physical attributes), social value (association with socio-economic and cultural groups), emotional value (creation of affective states), epistemic value (desire for novelty and knowledge), and conditional value (contingencies in the situation).

Perceived Value: Transaction-Specific vs. End-State Value

Students will determine perceived value of a course by comparing the output/"what they get" to the input/"what they give" (Yang and Peterson, 2004). The output is likely to be interpreted according to motivational congruence. Thus, if a student's goal is to pass the class but the goal of the faculty is to increase the student's intellectual growth, perceived value will be viewed as incongruent and evaluated as low. Boksberger and Melsen (2011) study the dominant involvement of transaction-specific values from an individual customer's point-of-view. In the case of higher education, the nature of transaction-specific value (short-term) will focus on service quality, customer satisfaction, consumption values, perceived value, benefits, and sacrifices. In contrast, the nature of end-state (long-term) value will focus on quality of life and well-being.

Concrete Goals vs. Abstract Goals

When institutions choose to evaluate themselves according to transaction-specific value rather than end-state value, they are aligning with value delivery (giving students with "learned helplessness" what they want to overcome obstacles) rather than value co-creation (providing challenging tasks for 'mastery-oriented' students so they can increase competence). Regardless of the student's position on the 'learned helplessness/mastery-oriented' spectrum, an institution will be evaluated according to their ability to facilitate intellectual development (long-term) if the students' goals are congruent with the institution's goal to enhance competence. Concrete goals include credentialing and obtaining a degree, while abstract goals include intellectual development and developing critical thinking skills. It is our job in higher education to move students toward their abstract goals. A complex laddering technique is required to move individuals toward identifying their abstract goals (Garbarino and Johnson, 2001).

METHODOLOGY

Respondents and Procedures

The researchers conducted this study as an initial step to investigate the effectiveness of hybrid/blended/ flipped classroom and whether it pushes more toward value creation than value delivery. The respondents were 153 undergraduate Marketing majors enrolled at a large Midwestern public university. Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the authors' Institutional Review Board which approved the methodology and survey instrument. In order to obtain students' perspectives of the flipped classroom experience, surveys were distributed in four courses (six sections total) of two

instructors who offered a hybrid (or blended), flipped format (one day a week was online to prepare for the next class that week which was face-to-face). Surveys were distributed online to these students as an extra credit opportunity in the following asynchronous blended (50% online and 50% face-to-face) marketing courses: Fundamentals of Integrated Marketing Communication, New Developments in IMC Strategy, Sport Marketing, Business Ethics and Sustainability. Students were assured that their professor would not have accessed to the submitted responses and that confidentiality would be a priority. Respondents were provided with an overview of the project and their rights and if they agreed to participate they completed a survey at their convenience before the deadline date.

Measures

All respondents completed the same survey that was comprised of several sections. One section focused on demographic information and included gender, age, marketing concentration at the University (e.g., General Marketing, Integrated Marketing Communication, Advanced Marketing Analytics, and Professional Sales), and ethnicity. A number of online teaching indices were assessed and included (1) Teaching Presence, (2) Social Presence, (3) Cognitive Presence, (4) Learner Presence. A Likert scale was used to assess these indices (*1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree; 6 = not applicable*). To measure the students' perceptions of their flipped classroom experience, Kim, Kim, Kera, and Getman's (2014) four section student survey consisting of 37 scale items was utilized.

FINDINGS

The primary focus of the current study was to examine the students' perceptions of the value of the flipped classroom. Among the 153 surveys, fifty-four percent of the respondents were male and forty-six percent were female. They were enrolled in the following Marketing sequences: General Marketing (42%), Integrated Marketing Communication (41%), Advanced Marketing Analytics (11%), and Professional Sales (6%). All respondents indicated that they were between the ages of 18-25 years old. Respondents were predominantly Caucasian (85.4%) with African Americans (6%), Hispanic/Latino (3%), Asians (2%), Native Americans (.6%) and some selecting Other (4%).

Students' Perceptions of Flipped Classroom Experiences

Please see Appendix A for the survey questions and Table 1 for complete data results. For questions 1-8 focused on **Teaching Presence**, all eight items were predominantly answered as "Strongly Agree" (Q1 – 62.1%, Q2 – 60.8%, Q3 – 71.2%, Q4 – 62.7%, Q5 – 50.3%, Q6 – 45.1%, Q7 – 53.6%, Q8 – 51.0%). These responses indicate that students had positive perceptions of the teachers' performance in the flipped classroom setting. For questions 9-16 focused on **Social Presence**, six items were predominantly answered as "Agree" (Q9 – 49.7%, Q10 – 47.7%, Q13 – 49.7%, Q14 – 51.0%, Q15 – 57.5%, Q16 – 31.4%) and two were answered as predominantly "Strongly Agree" (Q11 – 45.8% and Q12 – 46.4%). These results indicate that students had positive (although somewhat less than Teaching Presence questions) perceptions of their comfort levels with the flipped classroom setting. For questions 17-24 focused on **Cognitive Presence**, seven questions were predominantly answered as "Agree" (Q17 – 47.7%, Q18 – 45.8%, Q19 – 50.3%, Q20 – 54.9%, Q21 – 55.6%, Q22 – 47.7%, Q23 – 51.6%) and one was predominantly answered as "Strongly Agree" (Q24 – 47.7%). These results indicate that students had positive (although somewhat less than Teaching Presence questions) perceptions of the knowledge they acquired from the flipped classroom setting. For questions 25-33 focused on **Learner Presence**, seven questions were predominantly answered as "Agree" (Q25 – 48.4%, Q26 – 44.4%, Q27 – 49.0%, Q29 – 45.1%, Q30 – 40.5%, Q31 – 56.2%, Q32 – 45.1%, Q33 – 45.1%) and one was predominantly answered as "Strongly Agree" (Q28 – 45.8%). These results indicate that students had positive (although somewhat less than Teaching Presence questions) perceptions of their engagement levels in the flipped classroom setting. For questions 34-37 focused on **Technology Use**, two questions were predominantly answered as "Strongly Agree" (Q34 – 56.2%, Q35 – 53.0%) and one question was predominantly answered as "Disagree," although it should be noted that this question was reversed with a negative wording, (Q36 – 35.3%) and one question was predominantly answered "Agree" (Q37 – 35.3%). These results indicate that students had positive perceptions of their use of technology in the flipped classroom setting.

DISCUSSION

The current study extended previous research on the flipped classroom by investigating perceptions of Marketing students. While Kim, Kim, Khera, and Getman (2014) administered this survey to students in the Engineering, Social Studies, and Humanities disciplines, this study sought only respondents in the Business (Marketing) discipline. The results of this

study have a number of implications for the flipped classroom:

Teaching Presence

Students' perceptions reflect that both instructors are highly regarded and perceived as effective in the flipped classroom setting. Both instructors completed a summer course through their University's teaching and learning center on how to offer a quality online or blended course. As such, the two instructor are similarly organized and structured (reflecting consistency and quality) which the students seem to appreciate.

Social Presence

The survey results indicate that it is somewhat challenging to facilitate an engaged and interactive discussion among the students online. While online discussion can benefit some more reserved students, the online discussions may lose the interactive dynamics that take place in a face-to-face setting. The asynchronous component of these courses may also contribute to the responses. Thus, it is recommended that the discussions be synchronous even if other components of the online portion of the flipped classroom are asynchronous. Added this synchronous component would enhance value perceptions as the students are more involved in **value co-creation** with the other classmates and not simply focusing on value delivery.

Cognitive and Learner Presence

While cognitive learning is taking place, it appears that the surveyed flipped classrooms could improve critical thinking levels among the students. Today's students appear to hold a higher level of student satisfaction and lower level of student intellectual development as previously mentioned in the discussion on value delivery vs. value co-creation. Again, the students may need more synchronous elements in the flipped classroom in order to become more engaged and think critically. A greater focus on **end-state value** would enhance critical thinking and encourage the students to focus less on transactional value of passing the class or getting a good grade in the course. Although the students seem pleased with the instructors, they are not as pleased with their own efforts. Thus, there is a need to examine a means of achieving greater **motivational relevance and congruence**. A focus on learning skills for the long-term success of their career, rather than just for a course grade, is a necessity.

Technology Use

Lastly, students are comfortable using the technology, but it appears that collaboration is difficult. They often prefer the organized setting (similar to face-to-face teaching), but they need to be challenged on their end as a **co-creator in the Service Dominant Logic (SDL)** sector of higher education. An emphasis on being an active learner rather than a passive learner is paramount.

CONCLUSION

This study would benefit if all Business students (not just Marketing majors) had been surveyed. A future comparison between Marketing majors and non-Marketing majors, as well as Face-to-Face classes versus online classes using the flipped concept, would also provide a valuable contribution to the literature. Adding these respondents would enable a comparison with the results from Kim, Kim, Khera, and Getman (2014) findings administered to Engineering, Social Studies, and Humanities students. Future research could also focus on how goal orientation (learning versus performance) might be hypothesized to affect learner and cognitive presence.

Future research from this study could include development of an online enquiry based learning (EBL) video to help students identify their abstract goals and better engage in critical thinking (e.g. for assigned Harvard Business cases) along with an empirical study of the online EBL tool as a "flipped classroom" to analyze learning outcomes and perceptions of the traditional online module versus the "flipped classroom" approach (Khan Academy, 2015). Identifying and embracing *abstract goals* represents value co-creation and offers gains in critical thinking that could benefit students and society in the long run (Damar, 2013). *Critical thinking* involves "thinking about your thinking to make improvements in your thinking." (The 33rd International..., 2013) A limitation of this study could be a bias toward self-reporting (indirect measures) instead of balancing the reporting with direct measures of assessment.

Flipped classrooms utilize Service Dominant Logic (SDL) through an emphasis on the process in which the service recipient seeks to maximize value via recipient participation (Vargo, Maglio, and Akaka, 2008). The flipped classroom removes traditional lectures by providing content online and using face-to-face time as 'workshops of learning' involving greater student participation ((Jarvis, Halvorson, Sadeque, and Johnston, 2014).

"Only when institutions begin to take critical thinking seriously and thus

foster it systematically within and across departments and divisions, in keeping with basic intellectual standards and traits, will we begin to

educate the mind in the strong sense of the word.” (The 33rd International Conference on Critical Thinking and Educational Reform, p. 68)

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Appendix A - Kim, Kim, Khera, and Getman (2014) Student Survey

[Teaching Presence]

1. The instructor clearly communicated important activity goals.
2. The instructor provided clear instructions on how to participate in the learning activities.
3. The instructor clearly communicated important due dates/timeframes for the learning activities.
4. The instructor helped to keep course participants engaged and participating in productive dialogue.
5. The instructor encouraged course participants to explore new concepts in the activities.
6. Instructor actions reinforced the development of a sense of community among course participants.
7. My instructor provided useful illustrations that helped me make the course content more understandable to me.
8. My instructor provided clarifying explanations or other feedback that allowed me to better carry out the activities.

[Social Presence]

9. Getting to know other course participants gave me a sense of belonging in the course.
10. I was able to form distinct impressions of some course participants.
11. I felt comfortable conversing through the online medium.
12. I felt comfortable participating in the course discussions.
13. I felt comfortable interacting with other course participants.
14. I felt comfortable disagreeing with other course participants while still maintaining a sense of trust.
15. I felt that my point of view was acknowledged by other participants.
16. (Online) discussions helped me to develop a sense of collaboration.

[Cognitive Presence]

17. Problems posed increased my interest in course issues.
18. I felt motivated to explore content related questions.
19. I utilized a variety of information sources to explore problems posed in this course.
20. Brainstorming and finding relevant information helped me resolve content related questions.

21. Combining new information helped me answer questions raised in course activities.
22. Learning activities helped me construct explanations/solutions.
23. Reflection on course content and discussions helped me understand fundamental concepts in this class.
24. I can apply the knowledge created in this course to my work or other non-class related activities.

[Learner Presence]

25. When I studied for the activities, I set goals for myself in order to direct my activities in each study period.
26. I asked myself questions to make sure I know the assigned activities I have been worked on.
27. I tried to change the way I studied in order to fit the activity requirements and the instructor's teaching style.
28. I worked hard to get a good grade even when I was not interested in some topics.
29. I tried to think through a topic and decide what I am supposed to learn from it rather than just reading materials or following directions.
30. Before I began studying I thought about the things I will need to do to learn.
31. When studying for the activities I tried to determine which concepts I didn't understand well.
32. When I was working on learning activities I stopped once in awhile and went over what I have done.
33. In general, I felt confident using the technologies associated with the out-of-class activities.

[Technology Use]

34. It was easy for me to find and access the out-of-class materials associated with inverted classroom activities in Blackboard.
35. In general, technologies associated with the out-of-class activities were easy to use.
36. The technologies used for the out-of-class activities interfered with my ability to learn.
37. The technologies used for the out-of-class activities enabled me to collaborate with other students

Table 1 – Data results from questions listed in Appendix 1.

Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Agree :48	Agree :47	Agree :36	Agree :46
Disagree :1	Disagree :3	Disagree :1	Disagree :2
Neutral :4	Neutral :7	Neutral :4	Neutral :6
Strongly Agree :95	Strongly Agree :93	Strongly Agree :109	Strongly Agree :96
Strongly Disagree: 5	Strongly Disagree: 3	Strongly Disagree: 3	Strongly Disagree: 3
Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8
Agree :60	:3	Agree :58	Agree :58
Disagree :3	Agree :61	Disagree :1	Disagree :5
Neutral :10	Disagree :5	Neutral :9	Neutral :9
Strongly Agree :77	Neutral :11	Strongly Agree :82	Strongly Agree :78
Strongly Disagree: 3	Strongly Agree :69	Strongly Disagree: 3	Strongly Disagree: 3
Strongly Disagree: 4			
Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12
:1	:2	Agree :61	Agree :62
Agree :76	Agree :73	Disagree :6	Disagree :4
Disagree :11	Disagree :10	Neutral :15	Neutral :14
Neutral :32	Neutral :29	Strongly Agree :70	Strongly Agree :71
Strongly Agree :30	Strongly Agree :36	Strongly Disagree: 1	Strongly Disagree: 2
Strongly Disagree: 3 Strongly Disagree: 3			
Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16
Agree :76	:2	:1	:3
Disagree :4	Agree :78	Agree :88	Agree :48
Neutral :5	Disagree :6	Disagree :3	Disagree :18

Strongly Agree :66	Neutral :26	Neutral :13	Neutral :39
Strongly Disagree: 2	Strongly Agree :37	Strongly Disagree :45	Strongly Agree :38
Strongly Disagree: 4 Strongly Disagree: 3 Strongly Disagree: 7			
Q17	Q18	Q19	Q20
: 3	: 0	: 0	: 0
Agree :73	Agree :70	Agree :77	Agree :84
Disagree :16	Disagree : 8	Disagree : 9	Disagree : 2
Neutral :31	Neutral :30	Neutral :23	Neutral :17
Strongly Agree :28	Strongly Agree :42	Strongly Agree :41	Strongly Agree :48
Strongly Disagree: 2	Strongly Disagree: 3	Strongly Disagree: 3	Strongly Disagree: 2
Q21	Q22	Q23	Q24
: 0	: 1	: 0	: 0
Agree :85	Agree :73	Agree :79	Agree :59
Disagree : 2	Disagree : 2	Disagree : 5	Disagree : 3
Neutral :15	Neutral :18	Neutral :10	Neutral :17
Strongly Agree :49	Strongly Agree :56	Strongly Agree :57	Strongly Agree :73
Strongly Disagree: 2	Strongly Disagree: 3	Strongly Disagree: 2	Strongly Disagree: 1
Q25	Q26	Q27	Q28
: 0	: 1	: 0	: 1
Agree :74	Agree :68	Agree :75	Agree :65
Disagree :16	Disagree :18	Disagree :18	Disagree : 2
Neutral :29	Neutral :30	Neutral :27	Neutral :15
Strongly Agree :31	Strongly Agree :33	Strongly Agree :31	Strongly Agree:70
Strongly Disagree: 3	Strongly Disagree: 3	Strongly Disagree: 2	
Q29	Q30	Q31	Q32
: 0	: 0	: 1	: 1
Agree :69	Agree :62	Agree :86	Agree :69
Disagree :20	Disagree :21	Disagree : 9	Disagree :18
Neutral :27	Neutral :36	Neutral :24	Neutral :24
Strongly Agree :35	Strongly Agree :31	Strongly Agree :32	Strongly Agree :39
Strongly Disagree: 2	Strongly Disagree: 3	Strongly Disagree: 1	Strongly Disagree: 2
Q33	Q34	Q35	Q36
: 0	: 0	: 1	: 0
Agree :53	Agree :56	Agree :56	Agree :34
Disagree : 2	Disagree : 3	Disagree : 2	Disagree :54
Neutral : 6	Neutral : 8	Neutral :13	Neutral :12
Strongly Agree :91	Strongly Agree:86	Strongly Agree:81	Strongly Agree :28
Strongly Disagree: 1	Strongly Disagree:25		
Q37			
: 1			
Agree :54			
Disagree :16			
Neutral :34			
Strongly Agree :43			
Strongly Disagree: 5			

USING A QUALITY OF LIFE INDEX TO MARKET SMALL URBAN AREAS

*John M. McGrath, University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown
Skip Glenn, University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown*

ABSTRACT

We explore quality of life (QoL) as a message in the marketing efforts of small urban areas. The literature suggests this represents a promising economic development tool for these often struggling communities. We review the literature on the components of QoL, and discuss secondary data sources that allow these components to be distilled into a quantifiable index. This index can be used to compare similar urban areas and as a tool to market a community. We demonstrate how the technique was used in Johnstown, PA, and how it can be affordably and sustainably adopted in any small community.

INTRODUCTION

Quality of life (QoL) is a frequent topic in today's society, with mention of it appearing in the news media and in marketing messages for a range of goods and services. However, the QoL concept is also critical to economic development professionals across a wide range of communities who would like to lure tourists and potential residents with the promise of a desirable QoL in their region.

Despite this promising opportunity, many smaller urban areas are poorly equipped to effectively market themselves due to lack of funding, and the difficulty in quantifying QoL for possible use in branding messages. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to explore the concept of QoL in more depth, and to identify low cost, sustainable ways to quantify the concept for possible use in marketing efforts to tourists as well as existing and potential residents.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definitions of QoL

Despite its prevalent use, there is no single commonly accepted definition of QoL. For example, in the health care field, Post (2014) reviewed historical definitions of the term and distilled its meaning down to a general sense of "well being" (2014, p. 167). He also cites the work of Spitzer (1986), who identified three dimensions of QoL: physical function, mental status, and ability to engage in meaningful social interactions.

The economic development field has borrowed from the health care literature with some additional new insights. For example, Gonzalez, Carcaba and Ventura (2011) looked back to the Human Development Index (HDI), developed by the United Nations Development

Program in 1990, as an early attempt to address the QoL issue. The HDI considered a nation's overall economic, health and educational well being. Gonzalez, et al. (2011) add that any definition of QoL should "include aspects of well-being that relate to the economic, environmental and social dimensions of life" (2011, p. 124).

Eppley and Menon (2007) refined this approach from a national concept to a more local perspective when they defined community QoL as "a group of socio-economic and environmental indicators that contribute to the livability and desirability of the region" (2007, p. 285).

For the purposes of this article, perhaps the most appropriate definition comes from Liu (1983), who wrote that QoL is a "fashionable name for an old notion; it is a subjective name for the physical and psychological well-being of people in the environment in which they live" (Liu, 1983, p. 107).

How can QoL be used for marketing purposes?

Eppley and Menon's examination of the QoL issue (2008) moved beyond the definition of the concept and looked at its application in local promotion efforts. "QoL has become a potent marketing tool for cities around the country. It appears frequently in a local discussion of critical community indicators and is used by local developers and builders as a critical feature of marketing campaigns to promote a region..." (Eppley and Menon, 2008, p. 282).

Nowhere does the use of QoL as a marketing tool hold more promise than in smaller urban areas that have suffered economic displacement due to changes in the global economy. Fraccastoro and Karani (2014) noted: "Small towns must develop business opportunities to encourage economic development in their cities as well

as create tourism opportunities to increase the economic impact in the area” (2014, p. 307). Kruse (2015) also found this need in his investigation of small towns in Appalachia where he noted that tourism can provide a “much-needed boost to their often struggling economies” (2015, p. 313). Hodges and Frank (2014) identified a similar imperative in their study of two rural towns in the southeastern U.S., and found that tourism held some promise in addressing the decline in manufacturing employment, in these cases, the textile industry.

Kruse (2015) discussed case studies on how a small West Virginia urban area has “branded” itself in an effort to differentiate themselves from other regions. Baker (2012) likewise described the efforts of Nashville, TN and Austin, TX to brand themselves as unique music-centered destinations. In the study noted earlier, Hodges and Frank (2014) conducted research with a cross section of constituents including local politicians, business leaders and even displaced workers, and found that there was a perceived need for these small urban areas to “reinvent themselves” (2014, p. 173) through a number of different economic development strategies that include tourism. In their study of a small community in the northern Appalachian area of Pennsylvania, Dong, Wang, Morais and Brooks (2013) came to a similar conclusion, commenting that “in the United States, many rural communities rely on tourism for economic growth to compensate for declines in manufacturing, agriculture, extraction of natural resources, and population” (Dong, et al., 2013, p. 181).

What sources of data are available to local policymakers?

Researchers seeking QoL-related data may find many useful insights by using the American FactFinder tool provided by the U.S. Census Bureau (U.S. Census, 2015b) on a county, city, and metropolitan area level. Another helpful database for local policymakers is the Cost of Living Index developed by the Council for Community and Economic Research (C2ER). This tool examines the “relative price levels for consumer goods and services in participating areas” (C2ER, 2015, p. i). The key limitation of this source is that only the top 271 metro areas in the nation are measured (missing smaller urban areas, including those that are the focus of this paper). The National Neighborhood Indicators Project (NNIP) attempts to narrow the focus to an even more micro level: economic and social conditions within selected city neighborhoods. This project has grown from seven pilot cities (Sawicki & Flynn, 1996), to 31 today (NNIP, 2015). The goal of this project is to demonstrate that collecting and sharing data on local communities “can be operated on an ongoing basis at a level that can be locally self-sustaining” (NNIP, 2015,

NNIP concept page). This is a very promising source of data, but its limitation is that it is only available for the 31 participating cities.

All of these existing tools can be helpful sources of information to policymakers in larger metropolitan areas. However, the literature is somewhat limited on research into local QoL factors that are unique to smaller urban areas. One important exception is the qualitative study conducted by Mayer and Greenberg (2001), who used existing secondary data from the U.S. Census Bureau, married with interviews of local officials and community leaders in 34 smaller towns across the U.S. that had suffered economic disruption due to the decline in a dominant local business. This study has a direct connection to the present research because Mayer and Greenberg identified Johnstown, PA as one of their study “boom and bust” cities (Mayer & Greenberg, 2001). They found that the departure of these major employers often created such an economic shock that many of the communities struggled with developing a new shared vision and leadership that lasted for 10 to as many as 30 years after the economic event. This is certainly the case in the longitudinal study of Johnstown, as is the quote from Mayer and Greenberg’s article: “In that time these cities experienced losses in population of from 20% to as much as 50%,” (Mayer and Greenberg, 2001, p. 207). In the case of Johnstown, an analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data by Mather, Pollard and Jacobsen (2011) indicated that the city’s metropolitan area was the fourth fastest-declining region in the U.S. during the 2000-2010 period, losing 5.9% of its population while population of the nation as a whole grew by 9.7% (Mather, et al., 2011).

What other types of measures should QoL encompass?

The sources of local data noted above are helpful, but are often focused on economic and employment measures and therefore often paint only part of a much larger QoL picture. In fact, Murgaš and Klobučnik (2016a) described some discussions, particularly in Europe, of replacing generally accepted economic measures of well-being such as GDP (Gross Domestic Product) with some form of QoL measure.

Zorondo-Rodríguez, Gómez-Baggethun, Demps, Ariza-Montobbio, García, and Reyes-García, (2014) are in this camp and described measurement and improvement of people’s QoL as “one of the main challenges for governments, human development agencies, and researchers” (Zorondo et al., 2014, p. 442). Martin and Mendoza (2013) agreed, noting that QoL is a “broad and complex concept” (2013, p. 336) that should include the consideration of economic, social and environmental measures. Kim and Lee (2014) also

observed that any discussion of QoL must examine social, economic, and health areas.

Quantifying these different conceptual aspects of the QoL concept has emerged as something of a holy grail of researchers, with wide ranging discussion of which measures to include. One of the seminal articles in the QoL literature for communities is the work of Sirgy, Rhatz, Cici, and Underwood (2000), who proposed a model of global life satisfaction that includes an individual's perception of their overall community as well as more personal life domains such as health, work, marriage and family. Eppley and Menon (2007) identified a list of 15 measures for major metro areas in the U.S., grouped according to five general community characteristics, including crime; health; employment; education; and recreation. González and Ventura (2011) proposed the inclusion of health care, education levels, and personal activities, including time spent commuting to and from work in their conception of QoL. Martin and Mendoza (2013) included measures of health, education, employment levels, leisure activities and personal security. In a 2016 study, Murgaš and Klobučnik (2016b) identified 10 specific measures that should be included, such as unemployment rate, education level, birth, life expectancy, mortality, and suicide rates, divorce rates, and two unique measures: pollution emission levels and blood donations.

Vanderleeuw (2016) suggested that arts and entertainment amenities are also important factors that enhance QoL and should be considered, particularly if a region desires to attract new investment.

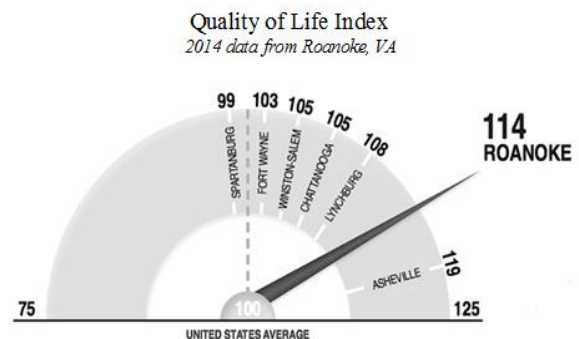
Which specific measures are small urban areas using to quantify QoL?

Greenwood (2001) identified three smaller communities in the U. S. that pioneered the use of locally based QoL indicators that include the use of economic, environmental and social data. The first was Jacksonville, FL, where local supporters began looking at QoL indicators in 1986. Seattle, WA followed in 1998 with locally-developed community indicators that focused on the concept of sustainability. Finally, Austin, TX published a study known as the "Central Texas Indicators" in 2000 (Greenwood, 2001). Greenwood's own attempt at developing a local study focused on the Pikes Peak Region of Colorado near Colorado Springs, CO. It proposed a set of local measures in six key domains: economic; environmental and land use; health and public safety; civic; educational; and transportation (Greenwood, 2001).

Another QoL measurement model that seems particularly well-suited to small urban areas was developed more recently in Roanoke, VA, where the Roanoke Regional Partnership attempted to capture some measurement of community progress (Roanoke

Regional Partnership, 2014). Data for their model was drawn from existing secondary data sources, such as the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), and then benched against other cities of comparable size. For example, the Roanoke QoL index model pulled data for the following categories: heating degree days; share of employment in entertainment industry; average commute time; the number of good air quality days; violent crime rate; health care employment; and cost of living. These categories were then benchmarked against data for selected (competing) towns including Asheville, NC; Chattanooga, TN; Lynchburg, VA; Spartanburg, SC; and Winston-Salem, NC, along with a national average score for each measure. An additional city outside the region, Fort Wayne, IN, of comparable size was included as well (Roanoke Regional Partnership, 2014). Data for these benchmarks is available free of charge from government and non-government agencies (National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Department of Labor, Council for Community and Economic Research, U.S. Census Bureau, Environmental Protection Agency, Federal Bureau of Investigation). This information is presented in QoL gauge diagram depicted in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. Sample QoL Index Graphic



How are some small urban areas using QoL data to market themselves?

The development of a relatively straightforward model employing readily available secondary data presents a promising marketing opportunity for small urban areas. Sirgy (2001) recommends that this type of analysis should be used by all community leaders to "identify strategic gaps in community programs and services...and take corrective action to enhance satisfaction with these services should enhance the overall life satisfaction of the community residents" (2001, p. 141-142). One "corrective action" would be for local leaders to promote the positive aspects of QoL in a

community—both to tourists as well as current and potential residents. Although the literature is silent on case studies on this approach, the Roanoke model outlined above provides some guidance. One of the professionals involved with the Roanoke project, Pete Eshelman, described the challenge facing local leaders as “the need to turn our local residents into our biggest supporters,” (Eshelman, 2017). One of the ways this challenge was addressed by the Roanoke team was the development of a marketing campaign promoting the area—specifically including the use of QoL data. In fact, one marketing brochure in the campaign effort suggests that QoL is “a key foundation to economic success for any region” (Roanoke Regional Partnership, 2014, p. 2) and is depicted in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2. Example of QoL Marketing Materials Used by Roanoke, VA



METHODOLOGY

Application of Roanoke QoL model

This paper attempts to add value to the QoL literature by adapting the methodology used in Roanoke for use in the focal city of Johnstown, PA. The Johnstown Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) consists of Cambria County and is located in a mountainous, largely rural area of west-central Pennsylvania, about 70 miles east of Pittsburgh. The total population of Cambria County is 137,732, ranking it 291st among the nation’s 381 MSAs (U.S. Census, 2015a).

The researchers fine-tuned Roanoke’s benchmark set of “competitive” small urban areas to create a more tailored northern Appalachian “mountain town” competitive grouping by eliminating Fort Wayne (too far west), Spartanburg (too far south), Lynchburg (some data for the index not available) and Winston-Salem (too large), while adding 11 new smaller urban areas extending along the northern Appalachian mountain

ridges from Tennessee to New England, in addition to Johnstown. These new small urban areas were: Altoona, PA; Burlington, VT; Charlottesville, VA; Cumberland, MD; Morgantown, WV; Pittsfield, MA; Scranton-Wilkes-Barre, PA; Wheeling, WV; Williamsport, PA; and Winchester, VA.

Measures and sources used

After fine-tuning the regional groupings to better reflect northern Appalachian mountain towns, the researchers reviewed the measures and sources employed in the Roanoke index model. That model employs information from secondary data courses that are free and available to anyone, usually at the county-wide level. There are seven specific measures employed in the model. The first measure, identified by the Roanoke team as “weather,” was operationalized by the “average temperature” as compiled by the U.S. Climate Data, and available for 2016. The index was calculated by dividing MSA average temperature by the average national temperature to create an index where 100 is the average and a higher number indicates a warmer (more favorable) climate.

The second measure, “health care,” was operationalized by the number of professionals employed in the health care sector per 100,000 of population as compiled by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Data for this measure was also available for 2016. The index was calculated by dividing MSA health care practitioners and technical occupations per 100,000 by the national average to create an index where 100 is the average employment per 100,000 and a higher number indicates a more robust health care system.

The third measure, “entertainment,” was operationalized in the Roanoke model by the “share of local employment in areas of the economy identified as part of the entertainment industry,” again, as compiled by the BLS. The index was calculated by dividing MSA entertainment employment share of the total workforce by the average entertainment employment share of the workforce to create an index where 100 is the national average entertainment employment share of the total workforce and a higher number indicates a higher share of entertainment employment.

The fourth measure, “commuting efficiency,” was operationalized by the “average commute time,” as compiled by the U.S. Census Bureau, using the American FactFinder tool described earlier. This data was available for 2011. The index was calculated by dividing county-level commute times by the national average commute time where 100 is the national average commute. The data were inverted to create an index where a higher score indicates a lower commute time.

The fifth measure was known as “safety,” and was operationalized by the “violent crime rate” compiled by

the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Data for this measure was available for 2016. The index was calculated by dividing MSA violent crime rates per 100,000 by the national average violent crime rate per 100,000 where 100 is the national average violent crime rate. The index data were inverted to create an index where a higher score indicates a lower violent crime rate.

The sixth measure, “air quality,” was operationalized by the number of “good air quality days” as compiled by the Environmental Protection Agency, for 2016. The index was calculated by dividing county-level good air quality days by the national average good air quality days where 100 is the national average good air quality days and a higher score indicates more good air quality days

The final measure, “cost of living,” was operationalized by Sperling’s Best Places (2017), which compiles this measure from a range of sources such as the BLS Consumer Price Index, Consumer Expenditure Survey, and the National Association of Realtors. This source of data was adapted for use in this study because the source used in the Roanoke model, the American Chamber of Commerce Researchers

Association, was not available for all the study areas. The index was calculated such that 100 is the national average given by Sperling’s and inverted so that a higher number means a lower cost of living (a more attractive QoL attribute).

FINDINGS

Based on the application of Roanoke QoL model, the research team found that the highest rated small urban area was Charlottesville with a composite QoL score of 124.4, as noted in Table 1 below.

The second tier of urban areas was represented by Pittsfield, MA, and Asheville, NC, and Morgantown, WV, with composite scores of 119.45, 118.00, and 117.48 respectively. The third tier was comprised of Altoona, PA, Roanoke, VA, Burlington, VT, and Johnstown with scores of 114.98, 114.33, 112.46, and 112.28 respectively.

The remaining regions six regions received a composite score of 110 or below. Chattanooga registered the weakest performance of the competitive et with a composite QoL score of 97.14.

Table 1. QoL Data for Northern Appalachian Mountain

Indices	Weather	Health Care	Entertainment	Commuting Efficiency	Safety	Air Quality	Cost of Living	Composite Index
U.S. Average	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Altoona, PA	89.33	137.35	94.00	123.62	144.9	97.28	118.4	114.98
Asheville, NC	103.01	147.21	125.00	129.13	137.77	93.19	90.7	118.00
Burlington, VT	83.59	104.62	83.00	138.19	180.89	119.13	77.8	112.46
Charlottesville, VA	104.10	150.11	141.00	130.21	148.64	109.01	86.7	124.4
Chattanooga, TN	110.94	117.39	73.00	137.17	60.01	79.00	112.28	97.14
Cumberland, MD-WV	99.91	140.34	57.00	124.92	117.68		116.0	109.16
Johnstown, PA	95.08	146.65	49.00	123.62	158.9	89.33	123.4	112.28
Morgantown, WV	95.3	183.86	55.00	134.25	131.81	117.7	104.5	117.48
Pittsfield, MA	82.50	132.55	214.00	129.92	167.28	109.09	100.8	119.45
Roanoke, VA	103.83	135.80	67.00	136.22	137.40	107.47	112.9	114.33
Scranton-Wilkes-Barre, PA	90.06	114.46	67.00	146.93	119.86	98.99	120.2	103.96
Wheeling, WV	96.54	136.95	66.00	123.62	109.45	82.26	111.4	103.75
Williamsport, PA	93.80	111.94	41.00	136.22	146.75	114.4	112.7	108.11
Winchester, VA	95.81	119.52	61.00	110.63	164.10	105.38	89.7	106.59

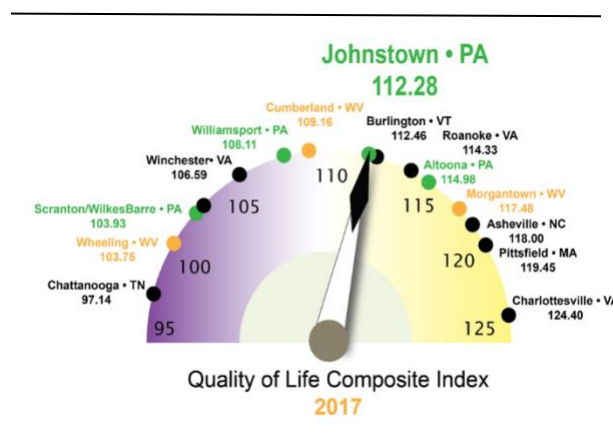
The main conclusion of this article is that that methods described here provide a practical, affordable,

and sustainable model for the collection of localized QoL data for small urban areas. These data can then be used to identify the relative strengths and weaknesses of region as Sirgy (2001) recommended, and the used in local marketing efforts to help to brand a community as identified by Kruse (2015) and Baker (2012).

The key limitation of the study is that the development of QoL indices will remain the "holy grail" of researchers as long as there are different perspectives on the relative importance of different factors involved with quantifying this abstract concept. The methods suggested here are simply one more set of possible measures to be added to the literature of this field and considered for use by future researchers. Another limitation is the geographic selection of small urban areas in the Northern Appalachian region. However, this limitation also suggests a promising opportunity: to investigate the QoL scores for small urban areas in other geographies.

The primary implication of the QoL index discussed here is that this tool can become the centerpiece of regional marketing efforts, as in the Roanoke case. For example, the presentation of the QoL index for the Johnstown region was a major topic at an annual summit meeting of local business, political, and economic development professionals in 2017 and has already helped catalyze a dialogue among the different constituencies in the community. One early outgrowth of this effort has been the development of new marketing materials for the region that include the creation of a preliminary QoL gauge diagram based on our findings depicted in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3. Preliminary QoL Index Diagram Created for Johnstown, PA Marketing Efforts



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For further information contact:
John M. McGrath. Ph.D.
University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown
Johnstown, PA 15904
mcgrath@pitt.edu

EXAMINING THE FACTORS RELEVANT FOR CREATING A STRONG STUDENT BRAND: PERCEPTIONS OF IMPORTANCE AND EVALUATION

Jennifer Strimbu, Valparaiso University
Daina Mueller, Valparaiso University
Paige Lockhart, Valparaiso University
Musa Pinar, Valparaiso University
Paul Trapp, Valparaiso University

ABSTRACT

Effective branding is becoming an increasingly important topic for practitioners and researchers alike. Recently, the concept of branding has been extended to include people. This paper investigates the student brand as it refers to the totality of student attributes and experiences that translate to high employability and attractiveness to potential employers in highly competitive job markets. Specifically, this paper identifies the criteria or attributes upon which student brands are typically evaluated, as well as how students perceive the importance of those criteria and how well they are performing on each criterion. Implications based on the findings are provided, as well as limitations of the study.

INTRODUCTION

Brands are a compilation of defining attributes that collectively portray an image - i.e., reputation and associated meanings. While corporate branding is well established, student branding is a topic that may appear novel. However, the concept is the same - a compilation of defining attributes (i.e., associations) serving as brand identity that collectively portray an image. Self-marketing or personal branding, a new marketing phenomenon (Khedher, 2015), essentially concerns developing oneself into the person who you wish to be at some future point of time, and conducting oneself in alignment with those intentions. When asked to describe self-marketing, many students describe it as being competitive and presenting oneself effectively in person and on paper, such that one stands out and, in the end, achieves personal success (Manai & Holmlund, 2014). The research undertaken in this study analyzes the attributes that relate to an individual's (student's) employability and success in the job market as determined by employers, and how those attributes are understood by students. Only through understanding themselves through the lens of

branding can students align themselves with the expectations of potential employers.

BACKGROUND

The importance of branding is well documented and accepted by both researchers and practitioners across a wide variety of domains (Keller, 2013; Olins, 2003). The concept of personal branding was first introduced in 1980 by Ries and Trout in the book *Positioning: The Battle for Your Mind*; the term was subsequently popularized by Tom Peters in his 1997 article *The Brand Called You* (Khedher, 2015). Conceptually, personal branding focuses on how an individual's set of skills, motivations, and interests are arranged and offer a programmatic set of strategies for individuals to promote themselves and improve their chances at business success (Khedher, 2015; Manai & Holmlund, 2014). The dominant emphasis is on self-management, with advice primarily provided by practitioners who advocate that anyone can develop a successful brand in order to compete in a crowded, competitive workplace market (Khedher, 2015). The key premise for personal branding is that everyone has a personal brand (Peters, 1997); however, most people may not be aware of their personal brand and, thus, may not manage it effectively (Ramparsad, 2009).

Moreover, as Kaputa (2006) notes, if a person does not manage his/her own brand, then someone else will manage it for them.

Student Branding

Personal branding has been practiced in such areas as athletics (Arai et al., 2013), entertainment (Rein et al., 2005), business (Bendisch et al., 2013), and politics (Manai & Holmlund, 2014; Omojola, 2008). College and university students must also brand themselves because they will engage in competitive job markets and be evaluated by prospective employers against other student brands. In today's dynamic, global business environment, prior research indicates that employers are seeking university graduates who can demonstrate creativity, critical and future-oriented thinking, technical expertise, and ability to adapt to change (Ackerman et al., 2003; Kerr & Proud, 2005). Past studies also show that internships can have a direct and positive effect on a number of career benefits (Binder et al., 2015; Narayanan et al., 2010). These benefits include greater perceived attractiveness of job applicants (Taylor, 1988), obtaining a job more quickly and easily (Knouse et al., 1999), and higher salary levels, as well as increased job satisfaction (Gault et al., 2000).

According to a recent NACE report (Job Outlook, 2016), the criteria that employers evaluate job candidates, in decreasing order of importance are: leadership, ability to work in a team, written communication skills, problem-solving skills, verbal communication skills, strong work ethic, initiative, analytical/quantitative skills, flexibility/adaptability, technical skills, interpersonal skills, computer skills, detail-oriented, organizational ability, friendly/outgoing personality, strategic planning skills, creativity, tactfulness, and entrepreneurial skills/risk-taker. Employers also considered the following attributes, ranked in decreasing order of importance: major, leadership positions, extracurricular activities, GPA, school attended, volunteer work, foreign language fluency, and study abroad. According to Korach (2015), business organizations value the following attributes when interviewing prospects: full or part-time work, involvement in student organizations, connections with the firm's employees, athletics, work experience, leadership positions, GPA, extracurricular activities, honors and awards, and community service.

Once a resume is positively reviewed, a student brand must then demonstrate a different set of attributes. These brand qualities, often not formally stated in a job posting, must be demonstrated through responses to job-interview questions, questions asked in an interview, and stories told during the interview.

Ryan (2016) cites twelve such qualities, including: understanding one's career path, knowing one's career goals, demonstrating success at work or elsewhere, being aware of one's strengths, thinking independently, being able to solve problems, having ambition, being positive, being happy to learn new things, being goal-oriented, working well on teams, and being responsible. Zoldan (2017) found six similar attributes that are highly important when hiring new college graduates. These include work ethic, humility, desire to grow, professionalism, millennial perspective, and ability to deal with stress. Tellingly, a 4.0 GPA is not usually one of them. In fact, research suggests that while GPA can increase a student's probabilities of obtaining an interview, other softer criteria ultimately result in a job offer (Korach 2015). It is critical that the job candidate communicate effectively with corporate recruiters. Merely presenting credentials is not sufficient (Minnesota State, 2017). Successful candidates are also expected to have knowledge and understanding of a recruiter firm's organization and industry (Bortz, 2017).

It is important to note that the attributes student brands will be evaluated on vary by not only position, but by industry as well (Levy & Cannon, 2016). From a student brand perspective, it is important to identify "the sweet spot" for targeted organizations and positions – the set of attributes deemed by a prospective employer as less common, but more desirable. Moreover, students must recognize that not all (business) schools are equal in the eyes of recruiting organizations in producing students with the desired skill-sets. This point highlights the importance of the college/university attended in terms of student brand association.

Qualitative research in the form of an in-depth interview and a focus group with students was conducted to gain a deeper understanding of the student brand concept. In an interview, a senior Rolls-Royce North America planning and control executive (Linville, 2017) stressed the importance of building relationships, being innovative, possessing critical thinking ability, making a difference, being authentic, having leadership and teamwork ability, having experience, being competent, and having study abroad experience. The executive also spoke about how most Rolls-Royce job candidates come from reputable schools; thus, he was particularly interested in student brand characteristics that resulted from activities outside the classroom. Moreover, student job candidates must be able to provide concrete examples of their abilities, and demonstrate they "are not just words on a page." The focus group triangulated with the secondary research and did not produce any unique results concerning student brand attributes, although

one participant equated a student brand to being a “living resume,” an interesting insight.

Objectives of the Study

After reviewing the literature and conducting exploratory qualitative research, the student brand criteria selected for this study are self-motivation, discipline, relevant coursework, work experience relevant to major, internship experience relevant to major, internship at reputable company, leadership, teamwork experience, university/college attendance, campus involvement, project work, GPA of 3.50 or above, and study abroad experience.

Given the importance of students representing strong brands upon graduation, the main objectives of this study are to identify the attributes (i.e., associations) or evaluative criteria that are perceived as important for creating such student brands, and to determine how well students evaluate themselves on these criteria. The specific research objectives (ROs) of the study are:

- RO 1: Examine student perceptions regarding the importance of student brand criteria
- RO 2: Determine how students perceive (i.e., evaluate) they perform on the student brand criteria
- RO 3: Compare the perceptions of importance and performance to determine if there any differences (gaps) regarding the criteria
- RO 4: Examine if the perceptions of these criteria are impacted by demographic factors

METHODOLOGY

A survey instrument was developed to accomplish the research objectives. As indicated above, the evaluative criteria or brand associations were compiled from the relevant literature and exploratory qualitative research. Once the list of criteria was developed, we asked for feedback from academicians who are experts on branding and survey development, as well as from people in career services who are knowledgeable about employer hiring expectations. Once the survey instrument was developed, several pretests were conducted, including students who are the target population of the study. These pretests provided input for improving the survey questions and establishing face validity of the concepts (Churchill & Iacobucci, 2005).

Based on feedback and pretesting, the final survey included the following attributes: self-motivation, discipline, relevant coursework, work experience relevant to major, internship experience relevant to major, internship at reputable company, leadership, teamwork experience, university/college attendance, campus involvement, project work, GPA

of 3.50 or above, and study abroad experience. The survey contained an importance scale and a self-evaluation scale for the attribute set. Perceived importance of each attribute was measured using a seven-point Likert scale where 1=very unimportant and 7=very important. A self-evaluation scale measured how well students perceived they performed on the attributes, using a seven-point Likert scale of 1=strongly disagree and 7=strongly agree. The survey also included demographic questions concerning gender, class level, college, work status, internships, study abroad, activities, and GPA.

The survey was administered online via Google Forms to students at a small, private, comprehensive university in the Midwest region of the United States. Given that a list of students that would allow a random sampling procedure was not available, we used purposeful convenience sampling with the goal of including students from all class levels and all colleges. To accomplish these goals, several survey avenues were employed in order to reach a large number of potential respondents. First, the questionnaire was linked to personal accounts on Facebook, as well as the university’s 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020 Facebook Class Pages to reach students at different class levels and from various areas of study. Second, the survey was sent through e-mail via a link to students through personal contacts and forwarded by faculty members in different university departments. The survey was open for two weeks. These surveying procedures produced 216 useable responses. Table 1 presents selected demographic profiles of the respondents.

Table 1: Selected Respondent Profiles

Gender	n	Percent	GPA	n	Percent
Male	101	46.8	< =2.00	2	0.9
Female	113	52.3	2.01-2.49	10	4.5
Prefer not to state	2	0.9	2.50-2.99	32	14.8
Total	216	100.0	3.00-3.49	80	37.0
Class Level	n	Percent	>= 3.50	92	42.6
Freshman	46	20.7	Total	216	97.3
Sophomore	54	24.3	College	n	Percent
Junior	59	26.6	Engineering	1	0.5
Senior	54	24.3	Business	119	55.1
Law			Arts&		
Student	3	1.4	Sciences	35	16.2
Total	216	100.0	Nursing	54	25.0
Internship	n	Percent	Undecided	7	3.2
Yes	37	17.1	Total	216	100.0
No	84	38.9			
Plan to have	95	44.0			
Total	216	100.0			

RESULTS

As stated previously, the main objectives of this study are to: 1) examine student perceptions regarding the importance of student brand criteria, 2) determine how students perceive (i.e., evaluate)

university they perform on the student brand criteria, 3) compare the perceptions of importance and performance to determine if there any differences (gaps) regarding the criteria, and 4) examine if the perceptions of these criteria are impacted by demographic factors. To accomplish the study objectives (ROs), we conducted several analyses. The results regarding the importance of these criteria, or brand associations (RO1) in Figure 1 indicates that students perceive self-motivation as the most important criteria for creating a strong student brand. This is followed by university/college attendance, discipline, work experience relevant to major, internship experience relevant to major, leadership positions, teamwork experience, relevant coursework, campus involvement, internship at reputable company, project work, and possessing GPA of 3.5 or above. Having study abroad experience was viewed to a large degree as least important.

In addressing RO2, students were asked to evaluate themselves on the same criteria used for importance as indications of being a strong brand. The results in Figure 1 show that students rated university/college attendance as the most important indicator of being a strong brand. This is followed by self-motivation, discipline, teamwork experience, leadership positions, relevant coursework, campus involvement, work experience relevant to major, internship experience relevant to major, GPA of 3.50 or above, project work, and internship at reputable company. Study abroad experience was considered the least important indicator by a wide margin. In order to determine the existence of any significant gaps between the perceived importance and evaluations of each attribute or criteria (RO3), we considered the differences between the two measures. As shown in Figure 1, these comparisons identified some significant differences or gaps. Specifically, the results show that students perceived relevant (to major) work experience and relevant (to major) internship experience as significantly more important than their self-evaluations on those criteria, whereas students evaluate themselves more positively (than criteria importance) on university/college attendance, teamwork experience, relevant coursework, campus involvement, and GPA of 3.50 or above. Other comparisons were not significantly different ($p > .00$).

Importance and Evaluation by Demographics

In addition to the above analysis, we examined if the importance and evaluation criteria were impacted by student demographics (RO4). To accomplish this, a one-way ANOVA was conducted using the student branding criteria as dependent variables and demographics as independent variables, except for gender where a two-sample t-test was employed (Table 2). No significant differences were found for either importance or evaluation of the criteria based on gender. Statistically, significant one-way ANOVA results for importance and evaluation by class level, GPA, and college are presented in Table 2. As for class level, there are significant differences for study abroad experience (importance), and relevant coursework and project work (evaluation). The post hoc pairwise comparisons indicate that seniors perceive study abroad experience significantly more importantly than juniors and sophomores, but have similar perceptions with freshmen. As for evaluation, sophomores have a significantly higher evaluation of relevant coursework than freshmen, and sophomores and seniors have a significantly higher evaluation of project work than freshmen do.

Concerning GPA, we created a new group of students with less than a 2.99 GPA, because there were not enough lower GPA responses for analysis. As shown in Table 2, the one-way ANOVA found significant differences between the three groups GPA and relevant (to major) internship experience (importance). The comparisons indicate that students with a 3.50 or higher GPA perceive GPA as significantly more important than those with lower GPAs, and students with a 3.50 or higher GPA have a significantly higher perception of importance for relevant (to major) internship experience than those with a 3.00-3.29 GPA. As for evaluations in Table 2, comparisons indicate that students with a 3.50 or higher GPA have a significantly higher evaluation of self-motivation, discipline, GPA, and relevant coursework, than those students with a 3.00-3.49 GPA. They also have a higher evaluation of a GPA and leadership than students with less than a 2.99 GPA. Finally, students with a 3.00-3.49 GPA have significantly higher evaluations of GPA than those students with a 2.99 or less GPA.

Figure 1: Mean values for Importance, Agreement and Differences (Importance - Evaluation)

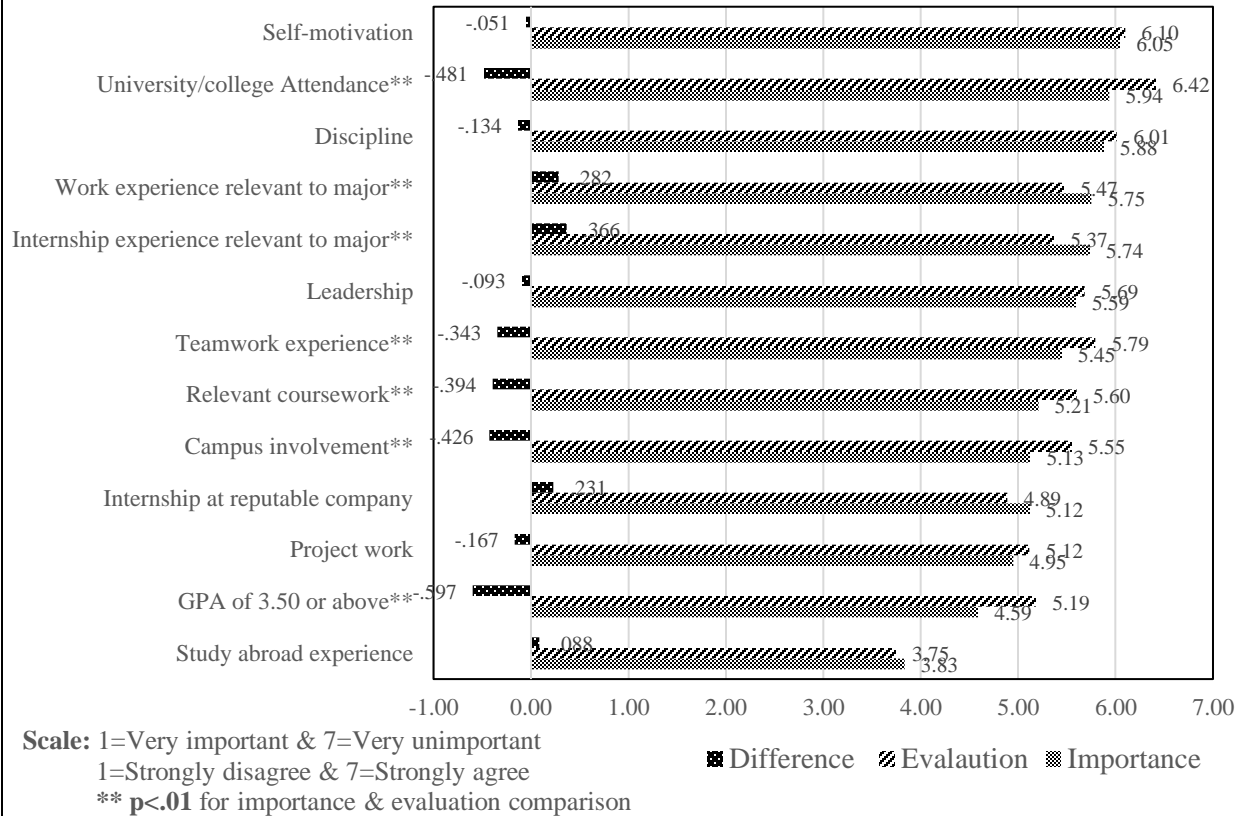


Table 2: One-way ANOVA Comparisons for Importance and Agreement of the Branding Factors by Demographic Factors

A. Gender		No significant differences between male and female students for importance and agreement of factors									
B. Class Level		1. Freshman		2. Sophomore		3. Junior		4. Senior		One-way ANOVA	
		Mean	St. Dev	Mean	St. Dev	Mean	St. Dev	Mean	St. Dev	p-values	Comparisons
Importance	Study abroad experience	4.02	1.42	3.57	1.51	3.58	1.51	4.30	1.38	0.024	4>3*; 4>2*
Evaluation	Relevant coursework	5.30	1.19	6.00	1.05	5.49	1.41	5.57	1.27	0.036	2>1**;
	Project work	4.61	1.14	5.31	1.33	5.14	1.63	5.33	1.35	0.038	2>1*; 4>1*
C. GPA		1. < 2.99		2. 3.00-3.49		3. > 3.50		One-way ANOVA			
		Mean	St. Dev	Mean	St. Dev	Mean	St. Dev	p-values	Comparisons		
Importance	GPA of 3.5 or above	3.91	1.51	4.36	1.27	5.11	1.13	0.000	3>1***; 3>2***		

Internship relevant to major	5.57	1.13	5.55	1.37	5.98	0.94	0.031	3>2**
Evaluation	Mean	St. Dev	Mean	St. Dev	Mean	St. Dev	p-values	Comparisons
Self-Motivation	5.98	1.25	5.88	1.23	6.35	0.94	0.017	3>2**
Discipline	5.84	1.16	5.81	1.30	6.27	0.93	0.016	3>2**
GPA of 3.5 or above	3.75	1.57	4.50	1.49	6.47	0.82	0.000	2>1***; 3>1***; 3>2***
Relevant coursework	5.50	1.15	5.35	1.45	5.87	1.05	0.020	3>2**
Leadership	5.25	1.54	5.66	1.51	5.91	1.25	0.039	3>1**
D. College	1. Business		2. Arts & Sciences		3. Nursing		p-values	Comparisons
Importance	Mean	St. Dev	Mean	St. Dev	Mean	St. Dev	p-values	Comparisons
Project work	4.88	1.26	5.54	1.12	4.80	1.28	0.012	2>1**; 2>3**
Study abroad experience	4.08	1.48	3.37	1.35	3.59	1.50	0.018	1>2**
Evaluation	Mean	St. Dev	Mean	St. Dev	Mean	St. Dev	p-values	Comparisons
Project work	5.08	1.41	5.69	1.18	4.91	1.46	0.029	2>3**

Note: Non-significant comparisons were not included in the Table

Scale: Importance – 1=Very unimportant & 7=Very important

Agreement - 1=Strongly disagree & 7=Strongly agree; *p<.10, **p<.05, ***p<.01

DISCUSSION AND LIMITATIONS

As indicated with the results (Figure 1), all of the student brand attributes or criteria were perceived at relatively high levels of importance (mean of 5.00 or above on a 7-point scale) except for GPA and study abroad experience. These findings are consistent with the factors or criteria that employers use in evaluating job candidates (Job Outlook, 2016; Korach, 2015; Linville, 2017; Ryan, 2016; Zoldan, 2017). The alignment or gaps between perceptions of importance and self-evaluation for the student brand associations are also fairly tight. Where differences do exist, with evaluation being more highly-rated than level of importance, students may be considering these attributes as strengths, such as university/college attendance, teamwork experience campus involvement, and relevant coursework. At the same time, given the gap with respect to GPA, some self-justification may be taking place.

The important implication of this research for students is that they are developing their student brands throughout their college/university experience, whether they consciously recognize this process of brand management or not. The key to finding employment success upon graduation requires that students fully understand the criteria, or associations

upon which they will be judged by potential employers and to be continuously improving their performance on these key attributes throughout their time in college or at a university. The students who best develop their brands and match up to employer expectations create the best opportunities for themselves. The very best students will exceed expectations on critical attributes that are relevant for employers. Students who do not develop their brands as well risk ending up being seen as undifferentiated commodities by potential employers. Given the growing importance of personal branding (Khedher, 2015; Manai & Holmlund, 2014) and self-marketing (Manai & Holmlund, 2014), these findings indicate that students seem to have a good understanding of the factors or criteria necessary to create strong student personal brands. The attributes or criteria identified in this study could be considered as brand association dimensions of a student brand, which must be managed carefully as with any brand. In essence, these brand associations represent the student brand promise and potential a student presents to a potential employer.

While this paper did not specifically address student brand attributes by specific industry and functional area, it is important to recognize that one student brand, no matter how well established, does not fit all employment situations. Thus, students must

identify and understand the criteria they will be judged by, with respect to industry and position as early as possible in their college careers in order to be positioned for success upon graduation. This situation also applies to students who are planning to go on to graduate school.

Two major limitations of this study are that it is limited to one specific university and its use of a convenience sample. Both of these limitations negatively influence generalizability. The sample,

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- particularly college, was not representative of the university population. Another limitation is that this study did not use any employer evaluations of the student respondents, thus raising the question of accuracy of the student self-evaluations. As with any brand, students will ultimately be judged by customers, in this case the organizations where they are seeking employment. Future studies must also more fully address the underlying meaning behind the results.
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Musa Pinar
Valparaiso University
Valparaiso, IN 46383
(219) 464 5401
musa.pinar@valpo.edu

MITIGATING TIME-PRESSURE BASED DECLINE IN BRAND RECOGNITION: DISTINCTIVE EFFECTS OF SEMANTIC MEMORY SUPPORT

*Praggyan (Pam) Mohanty, Governors State University
Moshe Naveh-Benjamin, University of Missouri*

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Brand memory, potentially created by consumer-brand interactions, is the basis of brand equity (Keller, 1993) and consumer decision making (Hoyer & Brown, 1990). Consider one such interaction involving a consumer watching an advertisement for a new detergent brand called Waves, bearing a logo graphic depicted as sea waves. The correct recognition of the brand, later at a super market, depends not only on robust item memory of the brand name and the brand logo graphics individually, but also on the associative memory of these brand elements together. Both item and associative memory play a vital role in brand related memory.

Time pressure, an important, however under-researched situational variable in marketing (Belk, 1975), experienced, for instance, when hurriedly shopping for the aforementioned detergent brand—Waves, can adversely affect consumer memory. Time pressure is experienced when a person perceives the time available to perform a task is restricted or limited (Iyer, 1989). Germane to this paper, time pressure seemingly impedes a person's cognitive resources and ability to utilize the full range of potential mental processes and strategies (Ordonez & Benson, 1997), causing a deterioration in consumer memory.

Furthermore, what is even more fascinating is the selective and discriminatory nature of the effects of response deadline (time pressure) (Jacoby, 1991; Yonelinas, 2002). Informed by the dual process models of recognition (Gardiner, 1988; Tulving, 1985), the authors of this paper propose that response deadline will cause a larger decline in associative (vs. item) memory for brand information, when participants are subjected to shorter (versus longer) response deadlines.

Overall, this paper bridges a substantial gap in consumer research by not only, examining whether response deadline impedes recognition memory for brand information and the differential nature of these effects on item versus associative recognition, but also, exploring marketer-relevant ways to attenuate the negative effects of response deadline on brand recognition. Extant research has shown that relying on prior semantic knowledge (semantic memory support) within a domain can aid encoding and retrieval of information, which in turn can improve memory performance (Craik & Bosman, 1992; McGillivray & Castel, 2010). Hence, semantic memory support could serve as a potential marketing tool to alleviate the adverse effects of response deadline on consumer memory.

Additionally, research indicates that there are two types of semantic memory support, meaningfulness of brand elements and relatedness between brand elements (Mohanty, Moshe, & Ratneshwar, 2016). This paper contrasts the effects of the two types of semantic memory supports— item memory support (in the form of meaningfulness of brand logo graphics) and associative memory support (in the form of relatedness between brand logo graphics and brand names), in potentially decreasing item and associative memory impairments caused by response deadline, and finding whether these effects are differential across item and associative memory.

Informed by transfer-appropriate processing (Morris, Bransford, & Franks, 1977), which predicts enhanced memory performance when the conditions at encoding match the processing requirements at retrieval, one can postulate that consumers under response time constraints will perform especially well, if the manipulation at encoding is compatible with the processing required at retrieval. Specifically, item supportive manipulation (meaningfulness of brand elements –Experiment 1) will provide enhanced support when recognition assesses item information, whereas association supportive manipulation (relatedness between brand elements –Experiment 2) will

provide enhanced support when recognition assesses associative memory, particularly benefiting consumers under response deadlines who have limited cognitive resources.

Experiment 1 (N = 41) used a 2 (response deadline: shorter versus longer, between-subjects) x 2 (meaningfulness of brand logo graphics: meaningful vs. non-meaningful, within-subjects) x 2 (type of memory: item memory for brand logo graphics vs. associative memory for brand elements, within-subjects) mixed-model design (Naveh-Benjamin, 2000). Experiment 2 (N = 55) used a 2 (response deadline: shorter vs. longer, between-subjects) x 2 (relatedness between brand elements: unrelated vs. related, within-subjects) x 2 (type of memory test: item memory vs. associative memory for brand elements, within-subjects) mixed-model design. In both Experiments 1 and 2, the dependent variable was recognition memory, as measured by the proportion of hits minus false alarms. Participants were presented with brand logo graphics and brand names pairs and instructed to memorize the items both, individually and together, for later memory tests on item recognition (old/new) and associative recognition (intact/recombined) (Naveh-Benjamin, 2000). At the test phase, about half the participants were randomly subjected to longer response deadlines and other half to shorter response deadlines.

Across two experiments, this research, first of all, showed that retrieval of information under response deadline has differential effects on item and associative memory, with larger negative effects on the latter (Experiment 1, ($F(1, 39) = 5.84, p < .03, \eta_p^2 = .13$); Experiment 2, ($F(1, 53) = 23.34, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .31$)). Furthermore, both the experiments revealed reliable three-way interactions, and demonstrated that meaningfulness of brand elements attenuates the negative effects of response deadline on *item (versus associative)* recognition (Experiment 1) ($F(1, 39) = 5.12, p < .03, \eta_p^2 = 0.12$), whereas relatedness between brand elements mitigates the negative effects of response time constraints on *associative (versus item)* recognition (Experiment 2), ($F(1, 53) = 7.85, p < .01, \eta_p^2 = 0.13$). [All *ps* in the post-hoc analyses were significant.]. Evidently, attenuation of the negative effects of response deadline occurs in the type of memory that receives greater semantic support.

This paper makes significant research contributions by (1) clarifying, from a theoretical and methodological perspective, the differential effects of meaningfulness and relatedness of brand information, and response deadline (time pressure) on item and associative memory for brand information; (2) demonstrating marketer-controlled mechanisms of improving these two types of memory under response time constraints; (3) incorporating a methodology that enables direct comparisons between item and associative memory, increasing reliability of the results; and (4) providing a possible explanation for age-related consumer memory deficits by simulating aging effects in younger adults.

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For further information contact:
Praggyan (Pam) Mohanty
Governors State University (College of Business)
1 University Parkway
University Park, Illinois 60484
(573)529-6782
pmohanty@govst.edu

THE IMPACT OF EXERCISED AND UNEXERCISED POWER ON RELATIONSHIP COMMITMENT WITHIN CHANNELS OF DISTRIBUTION

Kevin L. Hammond, College of Business and Global Affairs / The University of Tennessee at Martin
Robert L. Webster, Hickingbotham School of Business / Ouachita Baptist University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

This manuscript reports the results of a national survey of sales managers regarding the relationship of their firm with its distributors. We examine the possible impact of unexercised power and of exercised power on relationship commitment between manufacturers and their distributors. This study is an extension of previous studies and is part of a much larger effort investigating the antecedents and consequences of power, mutual respect, mutual trust, and relationship commitment within manufacturer-distributor relationships.

Exercised power may take the form of coercive influence strategies (such as threats, legalistic pleas, promises or recommendations) or noncoercive influence strategies (requests, discussion, information provided) (Dwyer, Schurr, and Oh 1987; Boyle, Dwyer, Robicheaux, and Simpson 1992). Morgan and Hunt (1994) specifically note the possible negative impact on relationship commitment of exercised power in the form of coercive influence attempts. Further, while acknowledging differences between the impact of coercive and noncoercive influence attempts, other authors (Gaski 1984; Keith, Jackson, and Crosby 1990; Powers and Reagan 2007; Leonidou, Talias, and Leonidou 2008) have noted that the mere existence of power (even if unexercised) among the members of a distribution channel may also impact the relationships among the channel members and their actions within the channel.

Emerson (1962) suggested relative dependence as a method of measuring power (or lack of power) of the other partner, and several researchers (Frazier and Summers 1986; Anderson, Lodish, and Weitz 1987; Frazier and Rody 1991; Hallen, Johanson, and Seyed-Mohamed 1991; Heide and Miner 1992) have used dependence theory in developing measures of power or influence strategies. We employ these measures of manufacturer power, distributor power, coercive influence strategy and noncoercive influence strategy reworded as necessary for sales managers, in this study.

The measures employed for manufacturer's commitment and manufacturer's perception of distributor's commitment consist of reworded scale items from Anderson and Weitz (1992).

The purpose of this study is to empirically examine the impact on relationship commitment of various types of unexercised manufacturer and distributor power as well as exercised power in the form of coercive and non-coercive influence attempts. Accordingly, and summarizing from previous research, we hypothesize that exercised power in the form of coercive and noncoercive influence attempts may impact the relationships among channel members differently than the mere existence of unexercised power. We anticipate that unexercised power increases commitment from the other channel member. Regarding influence strategies, we hypothesize that noncoercive influence attempts increase commitment of the other party and coercive influence attempts decrease commitment. Specifically, regarding manufacturers and distributors, we form four hypotheses for testing.

H1: Increases in manufacturer power due to (a) corporate role performance, (b) boundary role performance, and (c) sales and profit leads to a statistically significant increase in (manufacturer's perception of) distributor commitment.

H2: Increases in distributor power due to (a) strength of the trade area, (b) product customization, (c) switching cost, (d) few distributors in trade area, and (e) sales leads to a statistically significant increase in manufacturer commitment.

H3: Increases in (a) manufacturer's use of coercive influence strategies (such as threats, legalistic pleas, promises or recommendations) leads to a statistically significant decrease in manufacturer's perception of distributor

commitment and (b) manufacturer's use of noncoercive influence strategies (requests, discussion, information provided) leads to a statistically significant increase in manufacturer's perception of distributor commitment.

H4: Increases in (a) distributor's use of coercive influence strategies (such as threats, legalistic pleas, promises or recommendations) leads to a statistically significant decrease in manufacturer's commitment and (b) distributor's use of noncoercive influence strategies (requests, discussion, information provided) leads to a statistically significant increase in manufacturer's commitment.

Means and Pearson correlations are calculated and presented. Regressions are employed to test each of the four hypotheses.

Results and implications, limitations, and suggestions for future research are provided along with tables for the descriptive statistics, Pearson correlations, and regression analyses.

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For further information contact:
Kevin L. Hammond
College of Business and Global Affairs
The University of Tennessee at Martin
Martin, TN 38238
khammond@utm.edu
(731) 881-7236

MOVING TOWARD A CUSTOMER-FOCUSED LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCY: A CASE STUDY

Henry Wai Leong Ho, Ferris State University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Customer focus was originated in the private sector as a way of building close relationships with customers. On the other hand, it is one part of a market-oriented strategy that has been taken by many government agencies in approaching citizens and delivering citizen-centric public services. This paper examines a customer-focused approach used by a local government agency to understand its current and potential customers.

In 2009, the City of Big Rapids Master Plan Working Committee and Planning Commission adopted the 2009 City Of Big Rapids, Michigan Master Plan, which lays out how the city intends to attract new residents and businesses, retain current ones, and keep the city efficient and prosperous by providing specific features, facilities, and services (City of Big Rapids, 2009). The local government has been developing and implementing this plan for several years now; it is the culmination of all of the community features, facilities, and services the city has to offer its residents. The city's goal is to convert itself into a customer-focused organization. Hence, the administrators understand that it is important for them to deliver the services residents want on a reasonable scale and a feasible budget. But data are needed to judge what services residents actually want included in the plan. This project was conducted to gain insight into Big Rapids residents' satisfaction with the Master Plan.

The city's manager reports that the services and facilities provided by the city mainly serve three groups of target customers: (a) residents of the city, (b) residents of nearby cities and counties who work in Big Rapids, and (c) college students at the main campus of FSU (City of Big Rapids, 2015). These three groups are all generally classified as "residents" by the administrators because many of them pay taxes to the city. There are approximately 24,000 residents, in this sense, with access to the services and facilities offered by the city.

The major facilities and services offered by Big Rapids include the farmers market, fire protection services, Roben-Hood Airport, water and sewer, law and code enforcement, planning and zoning, street maintenance, public transit, community libraries, city parks and recreation, trash removal, and recycling. Other community features available to the residents include public services, a variety of available housing, management of street conditions, downtown business areas, shopping opportunities, local leadership, public recreation, and entertainment opportunities (City of Big Rapids, 2015). Big Rapids is also home to many local parks, including Hemlock Park, Mitchell Creek Park, Northend Riverside Park, and River Street Park, which are all made available by the city.

The research design was descriptive, and the research was conducted using a quantitative method of surveying. The survey consisted of questions allowing residents to share their opinions on current and potential community benefits, public funding initiatives, future property development, and the multiple services, facilities, and activities offered within the city.

The target population was Big Rapids residents and residents of neighboring communities who have access to public services and facilities offered by the city. The potential respondents were broken down demographically by age group as follows:

- 18–24 (a young adult group)
- 25–39 (a special-interest group, due to retention struggles)
- 40–54 (including people with families)
- 55+ (pre-retirement and retirement)

The survey was administered through both self-administered (online via Survey Monkey) and person-administered (mall intercept) approaches. An invitation letter to complete the survey online was attached to water bills and distributed to residents' households to create awareness of the survey. Target respondents were also intercepted

in several public areas, such as the community library, local bank, and restaurants, where interviewers read the questions from an Android tablet screen and entered the responses directly into Survey Monkey.

This study provides direct and indirect benefits to the city. An indirect consequence is an increased awareness among residents of Big Rapids and its environs of services currently offered to them by the local government. Another is the fact that showing the residents that local authorities want to understand their thoughts and fill their needs and wants will create a positive image of city authorities and build trust within the city and the community in the long term.

The direct benefits come from meeting the research's objectives: (a) to measure satisfaction with current city features, facilities, and services, (b) to measure attitudes toward future development and growth, including public funding of development, and (c) to measure community involvement in local activities. The results of the survey revealed a number of facts that the city can take into account. The first significant finding was that residents are indeed satisfied with the quality of life in Big Rapids. Most participants who answered this question said they were satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of life in the city. Maintaining the quality of life satisfaction for residents requires keeping public services and the local leadership at satisfactory levels. It can also be raised by improving the quality of the streets and sidewalks and of the parks and recreational areas.

The data reveal that residents are content overall with the services provided by the City of Big Rapids. Two big areas of concern, though, are shopping and the newly obtained 3.7 acre lot. Shopping was the service participants felt the most dissatisfied with overall, although despite this they still frequented these facilities. The second problem is the 3.7 acre lot. Most respondents wanted it to be used as a green space, but this was just above 36.1% of the respondents, and 93 respondents did not respond to this question. This raises concern as to why they did not respond.

The local government sector inside and outside the US can learn several things from these findings. This research project has important policy implications for the City of Big Rapids and other local government agencies because data on residents' perceptions and satisfactions are increasingly being used to motivate service reforms, budget allocations, and management accountability. In addition, this customer-focused approach taken by the city can be treated as a "best practice" model for other local government agencies trying to build better relationships with their customers

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For further information contact:
Henry W. L. Ho
College of Business, Ferris State University
119 South Street, BUS 349, Big Rapids, MI 49307
(231)591-3199
henryho@ferris.edu

WHAT IN THE WORLD ARE YOU WATCHING: PARENTS' REFLECTIONS OF THEIR (DIS)APPROVAL OF (IN)APPROPRIATE MEDIA CONTENT

Ivan Fedorenko, Bentley University
Pierre Berthon, Bentley University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Around the world, parents observe their children using multiple channels to consume media content. Video games, movies, animation and mobile apps increasingly substitute books and toys. It has been shown that media representations impact children's implicit attitudes and behavior, though parents still can mediate this by talking to their children about the content of media (Newman & Oates, 2014). This paper explores the factors determining a parental approval of children's media content, such as animation found on Youtube. It contributes to the literature on consumer socialization by shifting the research question from parental strategies (*What* do parents do to exercise control?) to the meanings they ascribe to the media content (*How* do they distinguish between desirable and undesirable content?). These questions have important implications for online media content providers striving to have their content approved and perceived positively by parents.

To explore these questions, we conducted an ethnomethodological communication analysis (MCA) of parents' comments and reviews of popular animation series. This was followed by a series of semistructured interviews with parents to surface the subjective meanings determining media content evaluation. We selected the three most popular TV series in IMDB 'preschool' age category ("Peppa the Pig", "Dora the Explorer" "Masha and the bear") and used a snowball technic to add more series suggested by participating parents.

Membership categorization analysis is a form of conversation analysis that explores how individuals make sense of their social worlds through making categorizations and attributions. Such categorization practices (naming and invoking the discourses in online discussions) has shown to be key token enabling the investigation of culture-in-action (Baker, 2000). Comments were downloaded and screened to identify "primary items" related to Approval/Disapproval of media content + Assessment/rationalization, and negotiating content with children. Only comments containing a clear reference to the content approval and a rationalization explaining such a decision have been selected (e.g. "why I am banning the bratty hog from my home"). Due to this intentionally narrow filter, from 18.000+ comments available just about 200 were selected for further analysis.

The first interesting finding was that parents' assess children's' media content not only on how appropriate the content is for their children but on their own personal tastes. Thus, content selection is as much about "Do I, the parent, like it?" as "Is it appropriate for my children?" Some of the parents acknowledge paradox and try to apologize ("I'm not one of those wacky adults who enjoys watching kids' programs or cartoons, but this one is just charming"). The second finding, which builds on the first, is that nostalgia is an important factor influencing parental appeal ("it reminds me of my childhood days when I used to watch Duck Tales"). Nostalgia is an emotion that arises from reflection on one's past memories and characterized by a positive emotion, tinged with bittersweet feelings. Nostalgia was recently cited as a top trend in products such as toys and food. Nostalgia is believed to instill social connectedness (Lasaleta, Sedikides, & Vohs, 2014) and therefore may play an important role in intra-family communication. It connects children with parent's positive memories and facilitates parent-child bonding.

During the second stage of the research, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the parents of pre-school children who had experience of watching and evaluating the series initially included in the study. Interviews started with a general overview of participants' background and everyday parental experience and then moved to more specific questions about their assessment of the various cartoons and TV shows their children were watching. Three distinct factors emerged as determinants of parental media approval. The first factor is normative since it refers to the explicit formulation of criteria for the content (dis)approval. Typical disqualifying criteria where the visual appearance of the main characters and social context/situations pictured. Parent's gender and social stereotypes appeared to play

a role here, framing the perception of “appropriate” behavior and linking visual appearance to the assumed psychological and intellectual traits. The second factor is nostalgia. This finding confirms the insights surfaced during the first stage of the research and highlights the importance of nostalgic reminiscences linking parents’ experiences with their children to the memories their own childhood. The last factor is an amount of humor and irony as perceived by parents. There are two distinct motives driving its importance: one is pure entertainment-seeking, and more importantly, irony and humor provide a safe and comfortable space for intergenerational bonding.

Our findings reveal that parents’ emotional reaction to particular content is as important as the normative or educational aspects of the animation series. Specifically, parents are enthusiastically seeking for funny, humorous content. This desire is driven not only by entertainment-seeking but also by the need of negotiating with children. Both media selection criteria and media exposure control are sensitive and potentially conflict-provoking topics, so parents are eager to find a safe and comfortable space for such a discussion. Besides that, nostalgic appeal that activates parents’ memories of their own childhood, appear to be of critical importance for earning parental approval. These nostalgic feelings constitute an important area of intergenerational negotiation. Parents attempt to promote their favorites (series, characters etc.), whilst children demand theirs. Looking for a way out of potential conflict, both generations have to yield some of their highly-valued preferences in favor of emotional parent-child bonding.

Parents repeatedly compare the movies and shows with reference to all three types of the motives mentioned (compliance to social norms/educational claims, nostalgic reminiscences and irony/humor). The assessment of the particular content may be seen as a locating its place in a three-dimensional space in reference to other cartoons recently watched and assessed. Thus, we propose a three-dimensional model of parental evaluation of media content. Those three dimensions are normative/educational, humorous and nostalgic appeals. A media content rich with normative and educational references but lacking nostalgia and humor is likely to easily get parental approval but pretty unlikely to be watched together and valued by parents. Contrary, even a questionable content, e.g. lacking any educational references, propagating nasty anti-social behavior may become a true family gem when it appears to be overwhelmingly funny and/or rich with nostalgic appeals (e.g. “Masha and the Bear” series).

These findings depart from the extant literature on consumer socialization as far as they problematize the very existence of some static and predefined parental styles. Rather than just an unidirectional intergenerational transfer of consumption practices and attitudes towards brands (Cross, 2002), consumer socialization emerges as a collaborative journey where both parents and children influence each other. The research results enrich the marketing theory within family marketing subfield by expanding the determinants of parental approval of media content.

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For further information contact:
Ivan Fedorenko, Bentley University
(617) 959-6236, ifedorenko@bentley.edu

DOES BRAND VALUE AFFECT FIRM VALUE? A PANEL DATA ANALYSIS

Mahabubur Rahman, Rennes School of Business, France
M. Ángeles Rodríguez-Serrano, University of Seville, Spain

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Marketers invest considerable sum of money and effort to build strong brands, and this investment in brand-building initiatives is based on the premise that strong brands assist firms to create competitive advantage in the marketplace, thereby positively affecting the firm performance (Stahl, Heitmann, Lehmann, & Neslin, 2012; Wang & Sengupta, 2016). Hence, some earlier studies investigated and confirmed the positive impact of brand equity on firm performance (Yeung & Ramasamy, 2008; Kirk, Ray, & Wilson, 2013; Kirk, et al., 2013; Wang, Chen, Yu, & Hsiao, 2015).

The current study contributes to the existing body of relevant literature in two ways. Firstly, this study demonstrates that corporate social performance (CSP) positively moderates the relationship between brand equity and firm performance. Given the increasing engagement of firms in corporate social activities, and findings of earlier studies that demonstrated a positive, negative or neutral relationship between corporate social performance and firm performance (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012), it is momentous to understand under what circumstances engaging in CSR activities engender benefit to firms. Secondly, unlike previous studies which used simple estimation method such as an ordinary least square (OLS), fixed effect and random effect estimation method, the current study utilized dynamic panel data model, system generalized method of moments (GMM) which is a sophisticated estimation method for panel data analysis when the dependent variable is persistent. The current study examined the impact of brand value on firm performance by utilizing one forward-looking performance measure, namely, Tobin's q and one backward-looking performance measure, namely, market share.

This study focuses on USA based corporate brands that were included in the Interbrand brand valuation ranking during the period from 2000 to 2013. This research worked with an unbalanced panel dataset ranging from 563 to 779 firm / year observations.

In both models, wherein Tobin's q and market share were the dependent variables, the brand equity has been used as the main independent variable. The findings demonstrate that the coefficient estimate of brand equity is positive and significant at the 5% level in both model ($\alpha_1: 0.00001$, p-value: 0.011; $\alpha_1: 0.00003$, p-value: 0.047), that is, the higher the brand equity the greater is the firm performance. Furthermore, the results show that the interaction between firm's corporate social performance (CSP) and brand equity is positive and significant ($\alpha_2: 0.00001$, p-value: 0.002; $\alpha_2: 0.00003$, p-value: 0.021) in both of our models, indicating that the relationship between brand equity and Tobin's q and the relationship between brand equity and market share is stronger for firms with a higher level of corporate social performance (CSP).

Our results demonstrated that brand equity has a positive impact on firms' forward-looking performance as measured by Tobin's q as well as backward-looking performance as measured by market share. Furthermore, the findings of this study shed light on the role of corporate social performance, and confirms the positive moderating role of corporate social performance on the nexus between brand equity and firm performance.

REFERENCES (Upon request)

For further information contact:
Mahabubur Rahman
Rennes School of Business
2 Rue Robert d'Arbrissel, 35065 Rennes France
0033 02 99 54 63 63
mahabubur.rahman@rennes-sb.com

SOCIAL MEDIA SENTIMENT AND FIRM VALUE

Chanchal Tamrakar, Georgia Southern University
Tae-Hyung Pyo, University of Idaho
Thomas Gruca, University of Iowa

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Consumers are spending more time online than watching television or listening to the radio (eMarketer 2014). Most of this time that consumers spend online is being spent on various social media platforms. Because consumers are involved in marketing-related conversation on social media, brand managers are encouraged to listen in and monitor what is being said about the company. Furthermore, consumers trust in online information is high (Nielsen 2012). While practitioners in social media marketing suggest that social media sentiment is an important metric (Microsoft Dynamics 2014, Davis 2010), little is known about the value-relevance of measures of social media sentiment across the myriad of platforms available to consumers (Lamberton and Stephen 2016).

Researchers have found that various online metrics, such as comment volume, consumer rating, blog postings, forum comments, etc. have an impact on firm sales or company stock prices (Sonnier et al 2011; Tirunillai & Tellis 2012; Luo et al 2013; Luo & Zhang 2013). Others have found that consumer ratings do not matter for movies (Duan et al 2008) and that negative ratings have stronger impact than positive ratings (Tirunillai & Tellis 2012). An overview of previous research shows that researchers have mainly focused on user generated content in a single platform, such as CNET, Yahoo, or on a single method of posting comments, such as online review, blog posts or in a single firm or a single industry. Furthermore, research focusing on social media - where consumers spend most of their time online - is sparse. This is important because as much as consumers trust online information and are influenced by it, positive or negative comments from trusted people online should have an even greater influence than content posted anonymously or by strangers. This suggests that social media sentiment should affect firm value as positive (negative) conversations lead to higher sales and profits. On the other hand, social media sentiments are much more volatile than other online measure such as average ratings. Social media sentiment measures can change very rapidly, much more so than any outcome for the company (consumer attitudes, sales, or profits). Thus, it might be expected that such unstable metrics are unlikely to affect firm value.

To study the impact of social media sentiment on firm value, we conducted a comprehensive study on user generated content available in social media for 180 public monobrand companies, belonging to multiple industries, over a period of 26 months. We collected social media sentiment data using a publically available social media monitoring site known as socialmention.com. Our metric for firm performance is abnormal returns, calculated using the Fama-French-Carhart 4-factor model. We use the portfolio sort method to determine if firms with higher social media comment volume generate higher abnormal returns and if positive and negative sentiment expressed in social media has an impact on firm abnormal returns. If the portfolio with high social media volume, whether positive, negative, or neutral produces significant abnormal returns, then we can conclude that social media information has an impact on stock market returns. In such a case, investors may be able to use online sentiment information to gain an advantage in the market. We specifically study the impact of total social media comment volume, volume of positive comment, volume of negative comment, proportion of positive comments, and proportion of negative comments. We conducted both monthly and daily portfolio analyses.

Our study makes two important contributions. First, we use a larger sample of firms which allows us to use standard methods employed in the finance literature to understand the impact of social media sentiment on abnormal returns. Second, we help organize prior work and propose the existence of a user generated content value chain, which is a parallel to the firm-driven brand value chain developed by Keller and Lehmann (2003).

From our analysis we generally find no significance in the returns obtained by the top or bottom portfolio for almost all of the metrics studied. This null finding was consistent across a wide spectrum of industries. This could mean that the market is efficient and the social media information is already priced into the stock prices or that the information available in social media sentiment does not impact firm financial performance. One important exception was that firms with a lower proportion of negative comments did have a significant positive abnormal return. This

was also true for the computer and electronics manufacturing industry. The computer and electronics manufacturing industry showed significant abnormal returns for firms with lower proportion of negative comments as well as significant lagged abnormal returns for the portfolio consisting of firms with higher total comment volume.

Our results indicate that, contrary to prior research, abnormal returns are generally unrelated to social media sentiment and that the reported impact of user generated content on firm value does not generalize to most measures of social media sentiment. In other words, there is limited evidence that social media sentiment affects firm value, as measured by abnormal returns.

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For further information contact:
Chanchal Tamrakar
Georgia Southern University
Hawes Hall 208H, 11935 Abercorn Street, Savannah, GA 31419
(319)512-0373
chanchal.tamrakar@armstrong.edu

VEHICLE MODIFICATION, PERFORMANCE RELIABILITY, AND BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS WITHIN THE CONSUMER-VEHICLE RELATIONSHIP

James Doyle, School of Business / The University of North Carolina at Pembroke

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

This study reports the results of a qualitative inquiry involving 32 consumers into the motivations that lead to vehicle modification and advances a conceptual framework which positions vehicle modification, alongside performance reliability and other traits of the consumer-vehicle relationship, as a prospective antecedent of commercially relevant vehicle-directed consumer behaviors including trust, disposal, and repurchase intentions.

Relevant vehicle modifications include those made by consumers that either can or cannot be seen from the exterior of the vehicle. These two broad categories of vehicle modifications capture the permanent changes that consumers can make to the exterior, cabin area, or component area (i.e., “under the hood”) of their vehicles. To some extent, permanent modifications that are visible from the exterior of the vehicle can provide a functional benefit. For example, window tinting can be beneficial for preventing people outside the vehicle from seeing valuable items located within the vehicle. One respondent suggested that exterior modifications change the aerodynamic profile of the vehicle and that it is possible that this could produce an instrumental benefit (e.g., better gas mileage due to less “drag”). For the most part, however, exterior modifications appear very driven by the desires of consumers to set their vehicles apart from each other and to make statements about themselves. As one respondent suggested, these modifications are “...done for looks and rarely for performance.” Similarly, exterior modifications can perhaps make a vehicle easier to find in a crowded parking lot (thus providing a function benefit), but a respondent said that more realistically they are done to “...differentiate the vehicle to better suit the personality of the owner.” There does seem to be a strong role for statement making here and, accordingly, one respondent suggested that these modifications suggest the driver to be “kind of an extrovert.” Similarly, another respondent suggested that exterior vehicle modifications are done by people “to be noticed.” For example, one respondent indicated that “motivations for permanent modifications to the exterior is usually rooted in status” and that “removing stock rims in favor of higher cost rims is a status move (sic).” The status attempt may be genuine or artificial, as one respondent indicated that “... I know of people who have placed rims on their cars to make them appear nicer than they are.” Somewhat similarly, another respondent admitted that “... we have ‘plasti’ dipped our rims black to match our car; but this really isn’t permanent it just looks that way.”

Numerous opportunities for vehicle modification within the cabin and component areas of a vehicle are available, including adding an entertainment system, upgrading the sound system or the suspension and braking systems, and placing rubber floor mats, seat covers, or a cargo tray in the vehicle. The permanent modifications that consumers can make but that are not visible from the exterior of their vehicles are at least partially motivated by functional concerns. Along this line, respondents indicated that consumers make this kind of vehicle modification in order to “enhance performance,” because “sometimes when people are selling their cars they like to add value to it by putting in an audio system, or changing the seats,” for “vehicle maintenance,” “to make the car more efficient,” or for other “... purely practical reasons.” For example, a consumer could modify the interior of the vehicle in order to accommodate his or her own physical limitations (e.g., hand controls to replace the gas and brake pedals) and equipment requirements (e.g., wheelchair). Functional concerns, however, can be linked to other motivations. A vehicle modification could be made in order to reduce stress by protecting against potential damage; as one respondent, who herself did not report having children, indicated, “some people would rather have leather seats because they have small kids who may spill their drinks.” Similarly, “performance” may be primarily functional, but modifications made to enhance performance (e.g., installation of cold air intakes, gear box improvements, etc.) do so through faster speeds and better “handling.” Seating improvements can also facilitate improved comfort for people, which is largely a physiological benefit (e.g., less lower back pain), however one respondent mentioned the existence of mental comfort stemming from replacing the seats, which is more psychological in nature. The psychological benefit of making a seating improvement, as the

respondent indicated, seemed to stem more from how the improvement serves to "...personalize the vehicle ..." than from the relief of pain from sitting in factory-installed seats.

Importantly, vehicle modifications that cannot be seen on the outside of the vehicle can still impact people outside the vehicle. Exhaust system modifications (e.g., "muffler cutouts"), for example, can make the modified vehicle significantly louder than their non-modified counterparts. This may be a masculine objective, and indeed a respondent indicated "in some cases, I feel this applies more to those of the male persuasion." In a comparable sense, stereo system upgrades (e.g., addition of speakers, "amps," and "sub woofers") can not only provide a different listening experience for vehicle occupants-one respondent indicated "I like to listen to my music loud because I love riding along to my favorite songs," another referred to is as "Kicking out the Jams," and another said "Cause that's their song!"-but also allow the driver to distribute the audio content and provide physiological experiences (e.g., bass vibrations) to an audience of people who, although they might like to, have a limited opportunity to avoid the stimulation. Respondents indicated that playing the stereo so that people outside the vehicle can clearly hear the music and feel the bass is done in order to communicate identity ("To make a statement to others about whom you are;" "This is a way for people to express themselves through music to other people"), provide empowerment ("There is no practical reason to play music for the sole purpose of forcing others to hear, but it can give the person playing the music an empowering feeling"), signal or enhance social standing ("It could also be seen as a status symbol within certain social groups;" "But there are those who think it's cool"), attract attention ("People are motivated to do this because ... they want people to notice them;" "I think people are motivated to do this to look cool and show off their vehicle to gain more attention"), relate to anonymous others ("The blaring music is a way to connect with others with the same perspective and similar life experiences"), make up for weakness ("Compensating for their inability to show/demonstrate their coolness in more personal ways"), and just invite others to share in their musical preferences ("Honestly, If I like the song sometimes I feel others should join in and like it also;" "...what motivates them to do this is that they want people outside of the car to hear ...").

Apart from possession modification, performance reliability and other traits of the consumer-vehicle relationship may impact the behavioral intentions of consumers to trust their vehicle, dispose of their vehicle, and seek out the same vehicle again on the secondhand market. Disposal intentions are the extent to which a consumer anticipates or would be willing to take action to separate from the possession or to sever the consumer-possession relationship. There may be obvious interplay between disposal intentions and trust intentions (e.g., a consumer could want to "get rid" of a vehicle that continually breaks down), but to the extent that a vehicle used for personal use can also be a platform for self-expression, a source of social (dis)approval, as well as an object of physical beauty, then performance reliability may only explain a portion of the disposal intentions a consumer could have. Indeed, as opposed to disposing of a problem-plagued vehicle, a consumer could elect to continue having repairs made to the vehicle (i.e., low disposal intention) in order to salvage his or her relationship with the target possession. Even though a possession-specific relationship may have ended, consumers in passenger vehicle markets often have the opportunity to commence a new relationship with the same vehicle (production year, make, model, but not vehicle identification number) by seeking out and obtaining that vehicle on the secondhand or used market. Though not a perfect substitute, a vehicle of the same production year, make, and model could, to an extent, allow a consumer to attempt to continue or otherwise resurrect the consumer-possession relationship.

For further information contact:
James Doyle
School of Business / The University of North Carolina at Pembroke
Pembroke, North Carolina 28372
(910) 521-6871
james.doyle@uncp.edu

MEASURING CULT BRANDS: A SCALE DEVELOPMENT STUDY

*Pratiksha M., Indian Institute of Management Bangalore
Akansha Chauhan, Indian Institute of Management Bangalore
Avinash Mulky, Indian Institute of Management Bangalore*

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Cult brands enjoy high loyalty levels and fan following within their target segment. Marketers would benefit from understanding what cult brands are and how cult brands can be developed. The aim of this paper is to focus on cult brands, gain a holistic understanding of them in terms of how consumers view them, and then to use this understanding to engage in a systematic process of developing a scale to measure cult brands.

A brand community has been defined as a “specialized, non-geographically bound community, based on a structured set of social relationships among admirers of a brand.” (Muniz and O’Guinn, 2001, p. 421). The affinity of the consumers in a brand community reflects their attempt to create an identity that reflects their life choices and their willingness to be part of something larger than themselves (Wells, 2001). Whilst the brand is the focal point of the brand community, group identity is the focal point of a brand cult. Although the term ‘cult’ has religious connotations, cult behavior can also be witnessed in relation to brands. Cult behavior often has a unifying factor and a salient group structure. The members of the group seek to find an identity in the shared knowledge of the group. Ragas and Bueno (2002) have defined cult brands as “a special class of magnetic brands which all command super-high customer loyalty and almost evangelical customers or followers who are devoted to them.” According to Ragas and Bueno (2002), successful cult brands need to provide a differentiated product which enables consumers to develop their identity by becoming a part of something different. The product concept should be different and daring; the product has to offer more than just its functional benefits, it has to sell a lifestyle. Cult brands should be inclusive, although they welcome everyone, they are not for everyone. Culture also plays a prominent role in the creation and flourishing of a cult brand. Cult brands originate either by rebelling against the mainstream culture or by abiding by it. Brands that foster their own communities and brands that are steeped with culture can potentially become cult brands.

A definition of cult brands was developed based on the literature. This definition was presented to a sample of 135 respondents via an online survey in which respondents were asked to indicate brands which could be termed as cult brands. We then carried out an in-depth interview with 12 respondents using a semi-structured set of questions to generate a list of items for the cult brand scale. A preliminary list of 41 items was generated via the depth interviews and literature review. An online survey was floated among 122 respondents to select items from the list that would trace out the description of a cult brand. After a few amendments, the final list contained 22 items. Each of the 22 items was then measured using a five point Likert scale. We obtained responses from 117 respondents for the 22-item scale. Exploratory Factor Analysis was performed to assess the properties of the 22-item scale. After removing items with low loadings and cross loadings on more than one factor, we obtained a final list of 11 items that loaded on to four factors. Based on an inspection of the items loading on the four factors, the factors have been named as “Fidelity”, “Cachet”, “Caliber” and “Advocacy”. A Confirmatory Factor Analysis for the eleven-item scale was performed using AMOS software. While the model had an acceptable fit, the average variance extracted (AVE) for two of the four constructs was less than the required value of 0.5. The CFA was re-run after deleting two items. The final model had an acceptable fit with RMSEA (0.072), CFI (0.942), IFI (0.945) and GFI (0.925). The Cronbach alpha for the factors “Caliber”, “Cachet”, “Advocacy” and “Fidelity” were 0.792, 0.682, 0.669, and 0.678 respectively. The average variance extracted (AVE) and scale composite reliability (SCR) for each factor were also computed. The AVE values are above 0.5 and the SCR values are above 0.6 for all factors, hence there is evidence of convergent validity. The AVE obtained for each factor is greater than the squared correlations, thus establishing discriminant validity.

The final 9 items of the cult brand scale were grouped under the four factors “Fidelity”, “Cachet”, “Caliber” and “Advocacy”. For a brand cult to be created, it seems necessary that the brand is of high quality and is trustworthy. From the respondent interviews, we have gathered that followers of cult brands love absolutely everything about their brands and they vouch for the brand’s capability and performance. These perceptions can be summarized under the

“Caliber” factor of the cult brand. “Advocacy” is another important characteristic of cult brands. Users not only recommend their cult brand, but also defend their brand amongst their peers. The defense is both passive and aggressive in nature. Cult brand followers refuse to believe that their brand could do anything wrong. The factors “Caliber” and “Advocacy” go hand in hand with each other. If the brand was not high in caliber, users would find it difficult to advocate it or be an evangelist for it.

Cult brands offer something that the followers can connect with and adopt that as their way of life. Cult brands instill a sense of belongingness with the consumer through shared values, opinions and philosophy. Once there is a sense of belongingness towards the brand, brand loyalty sets in (Ciotti, 2016). This phenomenon is associated with the “Fidelity” factor. “Cachet” is the pride that the consumers feel when they use or display their product to others in their environment. The cult brand is an object of status to its users. After a visual inspection of fan pages of the Royal Enfield brand, we found that users have posted multiple pictures of themselves with the bike or just pictures of the bike against a backdrop. Also, with the sound of the bike’s engine being very loud, owners of the bike find it very attractive that they can turn heads around when they ride on the street.

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For further information contact:
Avinash Mulky
Indian Institute of Management Bangalore
Bannerghatta Road, Bangalore 560076, India
(9180) 2699-3271
avinash.mulky@iimb.ac.in

CAREER READINESS: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY AMONG SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT INTERNS

Richard L. Divine, Central Michigan University
Zachary Williams, Central Michigan University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Most academics and employers would agree that the most critical meta-objective for a university supply chain management program is to prepare students for success in their chosen career area. This means not only providing students what they need to obtain entry-level positions but also instilling in them with the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to help them perform effectively in those positions and capitalize on opportunities to advance in their profession. There is little doubt that the future success of SCM students is to some degree dependent on their understanding of discipline-based knowledge which is the primary focus of most university supply chain curricula. However in addition to content knowledge, student success is also likely to be determined by how well they are able to adapt to the general rigors of the workplace and develop an understanding of just what it takes to achieve success in industry (Zinser 2003). A key construct that seems to underlie this combination of knowledge, ability and attitude is career readiness.

According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE, 2017) career readiness is defined as “the attainment and demonstration of requisite competencies that broadly prepare college graduates for a successful transition into the workplace.” While previous research has identified a large number of competencies that potentially underlie career readiness, the present study focuses on a subset of four key elements that are particularly relevant to career success in supply chain management. Basic foundation skills are broadly defined as the skill set that governs general work competence (Caballero, Walker and Fuller-Tyszkiewicz 2011). Professional attitude is defined by NACE (2017) as personal accountability and effective work habits and “acts responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind, and is able to learn from his/her mistakes”. Social intelligence is the ability of a person to understand both one’s own thoughts, feelings and actions as well as those of others and utilize that understanding to make appropriate responses in interpersonal situations (Marlowe 1986). NACE (2017) defines career management as the ability of someone who is able to “navigate and explore job options, understands and can take the steps necessary to pursue opportunities, and understands how to self-advocate for opportunities in the workplace”

Data were collected as part of a SCM internship experience. As part of the field experience, supervisors of the interns were asked to evaluate the students on their perceived SCM career readiness. The internships were all full-time (12 weeks, 480 hours minimum) paid positions for academic credit (approved by a faculty internship director for appropriateness/academic value). During enrollment for the internship for credit, the interns supplied supervisor contact information, who was the professional who would be best able to evaluate performance. An evaluation that was designed to assess intern performance and CR was emailed to all of the internship supervisors as the end of the internship experience. The assessment included evaluations on how career ready the supervisor felt the intern was. In addition, supervisor perception of the intern on the following was also assessed: the intern’s foundation skills, social intelligence, professional attitude, career management skills and emotional intelligence. In total sixty-eight intern students were evaluated on their perceived CR.

All questions in the survey were measured using seven point Likert scales anchored by 1 = Strongly Disagree and 7 = Strongly Agree. Given the lack of time available by supervisors for the evaluation, brevity was a key concern in the design of the exploratory project.

A scale to measure career readiness was created. The scale was the result of the input from literature, academics, and human resources experts. Overall career readiness was measured using three items. Reliability analysis indicated the three item scale produced an Alpha of .875. The predictor variables were all measured using single items. Single items were in this study used for two reasons. First, this was intended as an exploratory pilot study. Second, the questionnaire was designed not to overload internship supervisors with lengthy scales in addition to the other feedback and intern evaluations which were already being requested.

Relationships between CR competency areas and overall career readiness were tested using an ordinary least squares multiple regression analysis. The results are presented in Table 1 and indicate that the overall model is significant; $F = 23.41$ and $p < .001$, and produces a R^2 of .613 and the VIFs show no evidence of multicollinearity.

Predictor variables	Standardized beta weight	Significance	VIF
Professional Attitude	.339	.006	2.170
Basic Foundation Skills	.233	.054	2.129
Social Intelligence	.265	.041	2.452
Career Management	.067	.542	1.817

Interpretation of the results indicate that supervisor perceptions of the career readiness of an intern student is significantly influenced by their evaluations of their Social Intelligence, and their Professional Attitude. Basic Foundation Skills was moderately insignificant ($p = .054$) and Career Management was highly insignificant in this model. All relationships were in the expected positive direction, thus indicating the more supervisors agreed that interns showed promise in the career readiness (CR) competency areas, the more career ready the supervisor thought the intern was. The magnitude of the beta weights indicate Professional Attitude had a bigger impact than Social Intelligence (beta weights = .339 and .265 respectively) with both showing more influence on Career Readiness than Basic Foundation Skills (.233).

Since basic foundation skills are likely the main focus of university-level supply chain programs, opportunities exist to improve the career readiness of future SCM professionals. Specifically, given the results, investment may want to be leveraged to increase the professional attitude of the future professionals. Beyond internships opportunities, this may happen through professional mentorships, increasing SCM professional interactions (e.g., company tours), and guest speakers/executive in residence teaching. Finally, given the findings, Universities may need to consider adopting practices that help enhance the social intelligence of their graduates. This may require the adoption of additional teaching tools to help students understand social dynamics and situations. SCM role playing is a possibility.

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For further information contact:
 Zachary Williams
 Central Michigan University
 College of Business Administration
 Smith Hall 100
 Mt. Pleasant, MI 48859
 (989) 774-7142
 Zac.williams@cmich.edu

“ALEXA, WHAT IS TODAY’S WEATHER:?” INVASION OF THE CHAT BOTS AND THE IMPLICATIONS FOR RELATIONSHIP MARKETING

*Stephanie Jacobsen, Bridgewater State University
Nora Ganim Barnes, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth*

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Despite the benefits that personal relationships with customers can offer, many companies have begun experimenting with new technologies to improve and increase customizability and service without increasing expenses. One of these new technologies is "bots." There are many kinds of bots, from virtual assistants like Siri or Alexa, to bots on a store website, to conversational bots using artificial intelligence technology that “learn” as they interact over time.

Some are called simply bots, some are referred to as shop bots, but most commonly they are known as chat bots. Chat bots are computer programs that mimic conversation with people using artificial intelligence.

Because these bots are being built into the largest messaging apps (Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp, WeChat, Viber, Line, Slack, Telegram and Kik), they eliminate the need for many individual apps. Rather than download individual apps to Uber, Postmates, Seamless, Opentable, Stubhub, Florist One and Great Clips, a user can simply send a chat to Assist from inside a preferred chat platform.

Companies have used similar models in the past in order to help consumers without employing an actual service agent. One early example is Microsoft Office Suite Paperclip. You could ask the paperclip any questions and the paperclip could assist you. MIT’s ELIZA pioneered the technology in the 1960s and Siri popularized it in 2011.

Today’s bots are more sophisticated and are being designed to interact on a much more human (person to person) level. Nordstrom uses shop bots to assist customers with their online shopping. When you visit the website a bot will pop up asking if you need assistance. The bot is programmed not only to answer certain questions, but also to adapt to the conversation as a human agent would. Chat bots, allow retailers to assist customers without the need to hire more employees. It is expected that by the year 2022 chat bots will cut business costs by \$8 Billion in the retail industry.

This personalized experience is what consumers want, yet is it at the expense of the consumer-retailer relationship? Can bots simulate a realistic human relationship or will this new technology injure the brand? Will convenience outweigh the human connection? Does relationship marketing, as envisioned by Berry in 1983 still apply or are consumers simply looking for them the most expedient way to get to the products and services they want.

In April of 2016, Facebook launched the Messenger Platform which allows developers to create bots that can interact with Facebook users. As of June 2016, 11,000 bots were available to consumers. A year later there were 100,000 bots created for the Messenger Platform sending 2 billion messages a month between businesses and consumers. The growth is obvious, however, what exactly are brands using chat bots for and are they successful? The literature points to scores of brands currently enjoying high engagement with target audiences through the use of chat bots.

Even though the chat bot industry is still in its early stages, it is poised to change the way consumers and businesses interact. The human customer service representative, may join the ranks of others whose work has been moved to a less costly and more readily available option, specifically a bot of some sort. Many brands have already embraced the technology. These innovators are helping customers make purchases, get news, order food, shop online and even do good deeds. They cross industries and include some not so obvious players like the health care industry and utilities.

In the media and entertainment industry a chat bot helps Fandango movie fans get information about movie showtimes, theatre locations, and trailer links through their Facebook Messenger bot. Disney created an Officer Judy Hopps bot on Facebook to promote the launch of the Zootopia movie. Users spent an average of 10 or more minutes conversing with her as they helped solve cases. In the food industry, Domino's chat bot works with Amazon Echo, Facebook Messenger, Twitter, a smartwatch and more to take pizza orders.

Boston Children's Hospital uses the Amazon Echo Skill to share information about weight or age specific dosing guidelines for over the counter drugs, and gets information on when to call a doctor when certain symptoms appear in children. Victoria's Secret and H&M have chat bots that help consumers with personal styling and fit. The Weather Channel has a bot that shares daily forecasts. UNICEF offers U-Report bot that allows young people globally to share their voices about issues in their local communities. There is even a bot from the mattress company Casper that will stay up with you when you can't sleep called the Insomnobot3000. Casper's Insomnobot works only between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m to keep you company over SMS. You can text the bot, and it will respond within certain parameters typically with wit and humor.

This is not without its risks. Relationship marketing is dependent on a successful product or service and consumer trust. This cannot happen if bots cannot be created to handle all interactions smoothly. A Microsoft chat bot (TAY) was shut down within just a few days after a series of offensive tweets it "learned" through its interactions with humans. A lifelike android called Sophia was interviewed at the SXSW technology conference in March 2016. When she was jokingly asked if she wanted to destroy humans, she agreed and said: "Ok, I will destroy humans". Current chat bots are mostly rule based, and don't understand the full meaning of the sentences or the questions that they're asked. They're basically looking for certain keywords and matching those keywords with the responses at the other end.

The bot creator is ultimately responsible for the bot behavior. It is ultimately the relationship between users, bots and bot makers that will result in digital trust. This may take the form of industry wide standards for transparency and accountability. If digital trust can be achieved with chat bots, we will see a new form of relationship marketing, not with a human, but with a "conversational computer program." How can companies best utilize this new technology and what should they watch out for. Here are some ideas:

Chat bots can drive engagement so embrace "fun." With over 4 billion messaging app users world-wide, mostly young consumers, chat bots can make a brand fun. Covergirl's campaign with model Kalani Hilliker included a Kalanibot. The bot saw 14 times more engagement than the live Kalani when used on Instagram and Snapchat.

Utilize the popularity of Messaging apps. Messaging apps now have more users than social media platforms and continue to grow. Brands will need to consider moving to this channel, especially to target younger consumers.

Enlist the assistance of bot designers. Bot design will be key to the success of any campaign using chat bots. Previous decision tree technology is not humanlike, and adaptive technology can lead to bots learning "bad" behavior as was the case with Microsoft. Designers need to create bots that can adapt their responses and learn over time, avoiding unwanted negative behaviors. Consumers will look for transparency, consistency, reliability, convenience and results. All this needs to be delivered in a "human voice."

Do your research. Research before you institute a chat bot centered campaign. Bot best practices are readily available. Hundreds of businesses across all industries have launched chat bots to do everything from assist with choices to entertain and play games. These innovators can provide inspiration and direction.

With the increasing dependence on technology to drive growth, chat bots can provide retailers with an effective alternative to an increased sales force. As with most new technologies, we are seeing companies using these bots well, while others are struggling to utilize them effectively. Just as with the traditional relationship marketing interaction, training and understanding are important for the source of the message. If the agent is well-trained, and able to successfully guide a consumer through their journey, then whether they are a human, or a chat bot, consumer trust should grow.

For further information contact:
Nora Ganim Barnes
University of Massachusetts Dartmouth
Charlton College of Business 301
North Dartmouth, MA 02747
(508) 999-8756
nbarnes@umassd.edu

CHASING EXCELLENCE: 3RD-PARTY RANKINGS AND POSITIONING OF ONLINE PROGRAMS THROUGH QUALITY AND VALUE

Kilburn, Ashley, The University of Tennessee at Martin*
Kilburn, Brandon, The University of Tennessee at Martin
Hammond, Kevin L., The University of Tennessee at Martin
Williams, Denise, The University of Tennessee at Martin

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Third-party ranking agencies (e.g., US News and World Report, Center for Online Education, CollegeChoice.net) produce rankings that are a popular publicly-accessible search option for potential students as they sort online degree options. While higher education administration is keen to the possibility that most or all ranking systems risk methodological flaws, potential students are still on board with rankings and seem significantly steered by their results (Barkhorn, 2014). Like it or not, monitoring rankings has become a positioning consideration for academic institutions. The disparity amongst ranking factors across time and across assessor, along with the mismatch between ranking methods used and suggested methodologies from research on higher education begs the question: which attributes are colleges and universities supposed to leverage? This study reports a fully-mediated SEM using data from online student feedback across multiple quality touch points: faculty, LMS and course on student loyalty as mediated by perceived value.

The Babson Survey Research Group's 2017 Distance Education Enrollment Report measures online class participation as approximately 29.7% of all college students, wherein roughly half take a combination of online and live courses, while the other half are exclusively online students. Over 4,000 public colleges and universities (67.8%) leverage the online platform as a medium for course delivery, possibly to the detriment of live enrollment, which is in decline nationwide (Allen & Seaman, 2017). Ranking agencies such as US News and World Report, Center for Online Education, or CollegeChoice.net produce rankings for colleges and universities that are a popular publicly-accessible search option for potential students as they sort and rank options. While the vast majority of higher education administration is keen to the possibility that most or all ranking systems are inherently flawed, potential students are still on board with rankings and are significantly steered by their results (Barkhorn, 2014). Like it or not, monitoring rankings has become a strategic consideration for academic institutions. Popular 3rd party ranking sites typically combine multiple criteria into a relative summary score. As such, common themes across rankings have emerged (Brooks & Morse, 2017; Center for Online Education, 2017; College Choice (2017)).

The disparity amongst ranking factors across time and across assessor, and the disconnect between ranking methods and research on online higher education-suggested methodologies, begs the question: which attributes are colleges and universities supposed to leverage? More specifically, what are the most impactful individual factors to be used as colleges and universities externally position to compete for students?

Lafuente-Ruiz-De-Sabando, Forcada and Zorilla (2017) suggest, interestingly, that while universities should strive to create value for students and other stakeholders, they must also strive to "make the perceptions (image or reputation) that its stakeholders have of it, its services and its brands, more positive" (p. 15). The authors further note that these two areas of focus (value creation and perception management) represent separate aspects of the marketing effort that "do not always go hand in hand" (p. 16). As with most other organizations, a complicating factor for higher education institutions is the fact that they must focus on value creation and perception management for multiple stakeholder-markets, each with differing ideas of value and differing perceptions.

We seek to better understand the dynamics between the antecedents and consequences of the value of the online degree from the perspective of the student, but acknowledge that value and (importantly) perceptions of value (image/reputation) may be different from the perspective of other stakeholders (perhaps reflected in the various college guides?). Since college guides frequently change their methodology and even incorporate judgments of competitors,

those rankings should also be considered carefully as surrogate measures of image/reputation for various stakeholders. This study uses online student feedback across multiple data touch points to assess the relative strength of some of the most popular considerations undertaken by students searching for that perfect online college fit. Quality of faculty, learning management system (LMS) and course content are assessed as drivers of student perceived value, and in turn, loyalty.

Perhaps the most interesting finding is the lack of significance of faculty ratings on perceived value. The findings presented here suggest that the quality of the LMS and the course itself are far more influential on student perceptions. One possible explanation that future research could explore is the relevance of a course (required or elective) could moderate the faculty—value linkage. Students may view the faculty differently in required vs. elective courses. Students may also simply weight the transcript take-away as more important in their value equation. Great faculty may be a bonus, but if they meet a qualification minimum, their styles and delivery quality may be indirect on their value perception. Future research could investigate when and where faculty ratings fit in the student assessment of value. Course content quality, however, showed significance on value, which is one of the more interesting findings of this research. The finding highlights a disparity between a variable that higher education holds as vital, while 3rd-party ranking sites typically include nothing to indicate course quality. This difference is an obvious disconnect between what universities use to position their program quality and what students view as important through ranking sites.

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For further information contact:
Ashley Kilburn
College of Business & Global Affairs, University of Tennessee Martin
126D Business Administration
Martin, TN 38238
(731)881-7245
akilburn@utm.edu

ANTECEDENT AND CONSEQUENT CONDITIONS OF EMOTIONAL LABOR: MODERATING ROLE OF COMPENSATION

*Miri Chung, DeVille School of Business / Walsh University
Younghye Jang, Keimyung College University*

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Service organizations tend to set a wide range of formal and informal means (known as display rules) so that employees control and manage the way they suppress inner feelings that do not match the demands of the organization and show the appropriate emotions to their customers. Service providers are likely to employ two emotional labor strategies to display appropriate emotions that do not come naturally when interacting with customers; service providers may suppress felt emotions and pretend to have the emotions they need to display for their jobs (Surface Acting), or modify felt emotions and try to actually experience the emotions that they need to show to customers so that genuine displays follow (Deep Acting). Apart from the two strategies, Diefendorff et al (2005) introduced the third dimension of emotional labor strategy, Natural Acting, which explains how service providers simply express what they feel. Although many researches have explored the influence of surface acting and deep acting on job related outcomes, the natural acting as emotional labor has received minimal attention and is understudied. Hence, the current study explores the antecedent and consequent conditions of the three emotional labor strategies a service provider could engage in.

Under the context of working for organizations, role clarity aids the surface acting and deep acting strategies. When a company specifies standards for appropriate expression of emotions, service providers with sufficient training related to the role expectation would set a clear course of action in the service encounter and are likely to follow the rules regardless of how he/she actually feels, which in turn, increases the level of emotional labor. Even for the natural acting strategy, the employees still may have to put forth conscious effort to ensure that their display coincides with the organization's expectations. Hence, it is expected that role clarity positively influences the level of emotional labor of surface acting, deep acting, and natural acting. The level of emotional labor is a key determinant of emotional exhaustion, yet the current study hypothesized the different levels of influence of each acting strategy on the level of emotional exhaustion; surface acting strategy is likely to cause a higher level of emotional exhaustion than deep acting does due to the higher level of emotional dissonance between the true feeling and requirements of the organization and the effort to suppress the natural feelings. The opposite situation could be hypothesized for the expression of natural feeling. Since the level of emotional dissonance and conflict is a key determinant of emotional exhaustion, the current study hypothesized that natural acting would decrease the level of emotional exhaustion in the workplace. The high level of emotional exhaustion caused while accomplishing the tasks is likely to result in the negative emotional state (job dissatisfaction). The current study also explored whether the extrinsic compensation moderates the negative effect of emotional exhaustion caused by the intensive emotional labor on job satisfaction.

To test the hypothesized relationships, a survey was conducted with employees who were engaged in service and sales business in south Korea. Data collection was administered by a professional research company and the survey questionnaires were distributed to 1000 service providers through the company's mailing system. A total of 330 surveys were returned for a response rate of 33%. After eliminating four incomplete surveys for quality purpose, a total of 326 completed responses were used for analysis. The number of years worked for the company ranged from 1 year to above 15 years; about half of the respondents worked for the company for less than 5 years. The ages of the respondents were evenly distributed, ranging from 20 to 60 years old. Among the respondents, 49.1% were male and 50.9% were female. Distribution of professions was not extreme; wholesale, retail, insurance, banking, food service, and hotel and hospitality formed the majority of respondents.

Structural equation modeling was used to test the hypotheses. Following Two-Step Modeling, we examined the measurement model before testing the hypothesized structural model using the Amos program. Given the results of acceptable fit demonstrated by the measurement model, the current study tested the model without interaction to

validate the interaction term in the proposed research model. The approach used to test the interaction effect was Ping's (1995) two-step procedure. The difference in chi-square value of the two models validates that the model with interaction is better than one without the interaction. The fit indices of the research model were acceptable. The results of analysis show that role clarity positively influences the level of emotional labor. Whereas surface acting increased the level of emotional exhaustion, natural acting decreased the level of emotional exhaustion. Deep acting was neither positively nor negatively related to emotional exhaustion. Emotional exhaustion is negatively related to job satisfaction, but this relationship is moderated by the perceived fairness in compensation.

The current study supports the previous research in the area of emotional labor that emotional labor could cause dysfunctional consequences for the individual (emotional exhaustion) and the organization (job satisfaction). The finding that role clarity increases the level of emotional labor also suggests that perhaps organizations should carefully consider the kind and level of education/training of the employees. The finding on the moderating role of compensation between the emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction emphasizes the importance of rewarding and recognizing employees' performance.

The results of the current study expand the realm of research in emotional labor and suggest the need to recognize 'natural acting' as a distinct emotional strategy in research on emotional labor. Future research on emotional labor should benefit from taking a multi-dimensional approach to studying the mechanism underlying emotional expressivity. While perceived fairness in compensation was found to be effective in reducing the negative effect of emotional exhaustion on job satisfaction, as the emotional labor of salespeople is becoming an important social issue, more research on the effective management of service providers should be carried out in the future.

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For further information contact:
Miri Chung
DeVille School of Business/ Walsh University
2020 East Maple Street, P.O. Box #1312
North Canton, OH 44720
(330)490-7055
mchung@walsh.edu

ARBITRARY COHERENCE AND IMAGE PERCEPTION IN A NATIONAL SAMPLE

*Stephen J. Hellebusch / Hellebusch Research and Consulting
Michael D. Mattei / Bellarmine University*

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Arbitrary coherence has generated considerable interest in the fields of marketing, finance, and economics. Attempts to replicate prior research, including prior studies conducted by the authors, have been inconsistent. Most of the studies found in the literature were conducted with convenience samples of university students. This study was conducted with a nationally representative sample of 402 adults with the objective of determining if a national sample will provide more consistent evidence of arbitrary coherence than found in the literature. The sample was from an online panel. While not perfectly representative, it does have demographic breadth, superior to convenience samples used in prior research. The total sample was divided into eight cells, with each cell viewing one and only one item.

Arbitrary coherence is an anchoring phenomenon. When a subject is exposed to an arbitrary number as an anchor, e.g., last two digits of their Social Security number, and their estimates of willingness to pay (WTP) for some items are grouped by the magnitude of the anchor (subgroups based on quartiles or quintiles) subjects have increasingly higher estimates. The anchor biases the WTP for an item, and so increasing amounts WTP are found in subgroups with higher anchors and the correlation between the anchor and WTP is high and positive -- at least in theory.

To shed light on prior, inconsistent results, this study further examines respondents' perceptions of the test items using a semantic differential measurement to quantify factors that might identify the casual factors that produce the inconsistency of arbitrary coherence reported in the literature. The objectives of this study are to answer the following questions:

1. Is the arbitrary coherence phenomenon found in a national sample of adults questioned about each of the eight items used in prior research?
2. What happens if the eight items in prior research are tested individually, not in the original sets of four?
3. Does a semantic differential measurement of how each item is perceived shed light on the differences between items for which arbitrary coherence reliably appears and those for which it does not?

Three studies by the authors prior to the one reported here have examined the arbitrary coherence effect; the key dependent variable is WTP. The first of three questions in the survey is to enter the last two digits of your Social Security number (SS#) as if it were a price in dollars. The second question is to indicate if you would be willing to pay that amount for the item by writing in a Y for "yes" or an N for "no". The third question says to assume there is an auction for the item, then in whole dollars, write in the maximum amount you would be willing to pay for it.

The middle purchase decision question, which forced subjects to decide whether they would buy the product for their Social Security as a dollar amount seems important in creating an arbitrary coherence effect. The effect is not seen in cases where it was omitted, and is seen only in when it is included. It appears to be necessary, but not sufficient. The question of why arbitrary coherence is seen with some items, but not with others remains.

The arbitrary coherence part of the questionnaire for this research was like that used in prior research. However, experience had determined that asking consumers in an online panel anything about their Social Security number reduced response rates. To compensate for this, the first question, which establishes the arbitrary anchor, was changed to write the last two digits of your primary telephone number as if it were a price in dollars. The eight items from the original two sets were tested individually in this research, namely, Teleflora Flower Arrangement, Dr. Scholl's Loafers, Sandy Flats Maple Syrup, Irish Spring Soap (12-pack), which made up the first set, and Crocodile Wallet, Copper Bowl, Pearl Necklace from Tahiti, and the Complete Works of L. Carroll, the second set in prior research.

The semantic differential attributes were added after the arbitrary coherence questions for each item. After examining the connotative meaning of thousands of concepts, Charles Osgood and his associates identified three major dimensions of meaning: *strength*, *value*, and *activity*. Six attributes were used to represent these three dimensions, specifically the first two differential scales: decisive/indecisive and strong/weak fit the theme of *strength*. The second set of scales: good/bad and expensive/cheap represent *value*, and the last two scales lazy/industrious and active/passive illustrate *activity*. A scale of 1 to 7 was used.

When these eight items are tested individually online with a sample national in scope, arbitrary coherence is greatly lessened. For only two of the eight items is there a clear statistically significant correlation ($p \leq 0.05$) between the last two-digit telephone dollars (\$Phone#) and the amount respondents were willing to pay for the item, namely the Teleflora Flowers and the Crocodile Wallet. Note that arbitrary coherence was not seen with the Wallet in the second and third studies by the authors. The Pearl Necklace from Tahiti shows a directionally large correlation, but the correlation is weak for four of the other five items: Dr. Scholl's Loafers, Sandy Flats Maple Syrup, Irish Spring Soap, and the Copper Bowl. It is modest for the Lewis Carroll Works.

In examining the semantic differential, the items for which arbitrary coherence appears all tend to be lower in rank on each of the six attributes, so they are viewed, relatively, as weak/indecisive, bad/cheap, and passive/lazy. That generalization is not perfect, since the Teleflora Flower Arrangement ranks third on decisive and fourth on good, while the Wallet is rated expensive and the Necklace is active. Perhaps though, being relatively weak/indecisive, bad/cheap, and passive/lazy assists in generating the effect.

Returning to the research question, is the arbitrary coherence phenomenon found in a national sample of adults questioned about each of the eight items used in prior research? The best answer is "no." Arbitrary coherence is clearly present in only two of eight items, weakly in a third. But over the quartiles, the average price willing to pay appears to randomly shift for all but the Teleflora Flowers, which rises consistently.

What happens if the two sets are broken up and each article is tested individually? Apparently, the context of the sets matters in some unspecified way. The reasonably strong effects seen with Set 1 items in prior research were lessened when the items were shown alone, and two of the items in Set 2, Necklace and the Wallet, were strengthened. Arbitrary coherence was not seen in any Set 2 item in two prior studies.

Does a semantic differential measurement of how each item is perceived shed light on the differences between items for which arbitrary coherence reliably appears and those for which it does not? The items for which arbitrary coherence appears are viewed, relatively, as weak/indecisive, bad/cheap, and passive/lazy. The only item for which arbitrary coherence reliably appears is Teleflora, though not statistically significant in prior research, likely due to small base sizes. It is "middling" on the semantic differential and relatively weak, cheap, passive, and lazy. Other items were as well, so no conclusion about items for which arbitrary coherence reliably appears are possible with this set of attributes.

Contact author:
Michael D. Mattei
Rubel School of Business / Bellarmine University
2001 Newburg Road
Louisville, KY 40205
(502) 272-8441
mmattei@bellarmine.edu

TOURIST PERCEPTIONS AND ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF RELATIONAL QUALITY

*Scott R. Swanson, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire
Xuehuan He, Central South University
Dongbin Hu, Central South University
Lujun Su, Central South University*

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

This study examines the relationship of tourists' perceptions (service quality and value) and relational quality (satisfaction and environmental commitment) with their environmentally responsible behaviors. Data was collected from visitors exiting a national scenic destination noted for its natural beauty and historical cultural significance. Data collection took place at a variety of times over a six-week period. A total of 600 questionnaires were distributed, 589 were retrieved by the researchers, and 568 of the questionnaires had complete responses. Results indicate that service quality positively impacts value, environmental commitment, and environmentally responsible behavior. Value positively impacts tourist satisfaction, environmental commitment, and environmentally responsible behavior. Tourist satisfaction and environmental commitment were found to fully mediate the value to environmentally responsible behavior relationship. Multiple mediation analysis confirmed two paths: 1) service quality → value → tourist satisfaction → tourist environmentally responsible behavior; and 2) service quality → value → environmental commitment → tourist environmentally responsible behavior.

Taken collectively, the contributions of this research are fourfold. First, this study collectively explores three antecedents (i.e., perceived service quality, perceived value, satisfaction) that have previously demonstrated an impact on a variety of tourists' behaviors. To the best of our knowledge, no study has examined all three constructs' effects on the environmentally responsible behavior of tourists in the same model. Second, we introduce the environmental commitment construct in a tourism context and examine its effect on environmentally responsible behavior. Environmental commitment as a new theoretical construct and can shape general ecological behavior and willingness to sacrifice for the environment. Environmental commitment has previously failed to attract the attention of, and investigation by, tourism scholars. Third, the present study models tourist satisfaction and environmental commitment as variables that mediate the relationship between tourists' perceptions and tourists' environmentally responsible behaviors. Finally, this study explores the effect of perceived service quality on tourists' environmentally responsible behaviors utilizing multiple mediation analysis.

For further information contact:
Scott R. Swanson
Management and Marketing Department
University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire
105 Garfield Avenue
Eau Claire, WI 54702-4004
(715) 836-5127
swansosr@uwec.edu

INVESTIGATING ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF ANGER AFTER A MOBILE APPLICATION SERVICE FAILURE OCCURS: A COGNITIVE-EMOTIVE COPING MODEL APPROACH

Wen-Hai Chih, National Dong Hwa University, Taiwan

Kai-Yu Wang, Brock University, Canada

Li-Chun Hsu, National Taitung University, Taiwan

Wei-Ching Lin, Yung Ching Rehouse Co., Taiwan

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

With the increasing popularity and high adoption rate of Internet-enabled mobile devices, millions of mobile applications (apps) have been developed and launched to the market (AppBrain, 2017). Given the high incidence rate of mobile apps and potential negative impact on firms, it is important to understand the antecedents and consequences of the negative emotions which caused by mobile app service failures. This research aims to investigate how a mobile app service failure triggers negative emotions, and leads to subsequent coping behaviors. Based on the cognitive-emotive coping model proposed by Zourrig, Chebat, and Toffoli (2009), we propose that primary appraisal (service failure severity) influences secondary appraisal (blame attribution), and then affects negative emotion (anger), resulting in coping behaviors (revenge and avoidance) in a mobile application service failure context. In addition, we propose that technology anxiety plays a moderating role in the proposed model.

This research recruited 526 participants who had experienced a mobile app service failure in Taiwan and Structural Equation Model is used to test research hypotheses. All of the constructs included in the proposed model were measured using multi-items scales drawn from previous studies that reported high statistical reliability and validity. The measurement model showed adequate fit. The composite reliability for each construct was above 0.753, demonstrating a reasonable degree of internal consistency between the corresponding indicators (Hair Jr., Black, Babin & Anderson, 2010). The squared multiple correlations were all above 0.2 as suggested by Bentler and Wu (1993). Results also showed support for the convergent and discriminant validity.

The fit of data to the proposed model was adequate. The results showed that service failure severity had a significant and positive effect on blame attribution. Blame attribution had a significant and positive effect on anger. Anger had a significant and positive effect both on revenge and avoidance. Technology anxiety moderated the relationship between service failure severity and blame attribution. The research findings not only advance our understanding customer emotions and coping behaviors in mobile app service failures but also provide managerial implications in mobile app service management.

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For further information contact:
Kai-Yu Wang
Goodman School of Business
Brock University
1812 Sir Issac Brock Way, St. Catharines,
ON L2S 3A1, Canada
1-905-688-5550
Email: kwang@brocku.ca

ASSESSING CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND MARKET SHARE RELATIONSHIP IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS

Junzhou Zhang, Old Dominion University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Market share and customer satisfaction are both important constructs in marketing theory and practice, and each of them has been widely studied. Market share has long been a central issue in economics, management, and marketing literatures. In contrast to market share, customer satisfaction is relatively more unique to marketing discipline and has generally received much less attention from economics and management. Customer satisfaction has been widely used as a central construct in the consumer behavior, marketing strategy, and theoretical and empirical modeling research streams in marketing. The rationale of customer satisfaction comes from a comparative judgment against the standard which further causes disconfirmation of expectations. Dissatisfaction may be as a result of poor service, a once-acceptable level of service that no longer meets customer expectations, or changed customer tastes. Like market share, customer satisfaction is also widely used as a key marketing performance indicator (Luo & Homburg, 2007).

By and large, both market share and customer satisfaction are important and widely used performance indicators in the marketing literature. However, the relationship between these two variables has received surprisingly little attention in academic area (Rego, Morgan, and Fornell 2013). Many of the marketing scholars and practitioners take an implicit service-profit chain perspective for granted, and assume that customer satisfaction is a huge driver of subsequent consuming behaviors and is thereby positively associated with a firm's future market share. However, the existing limited empirical evidence does not generally support a significant positive relationship between customer satisfaction and market share (Anderson, Fornell, and Lehmann 1994; Griffin and Hauser 1993). Johnson, Anderson, & Fornell (1995) further even generalized that the relationship between customer satisfaction and market share is non-positive. By using a longer time window, Rego, Morgan, and Fornell (2013) reassessed the relationship between these two variables and confirmed that customer satisfaction is generally not predictive of firms' future market share, but market share is a strong negative predictor of firms' future customer satisfaction. They argued that a firm's market share reflects the heterogeneity of its customer base and preference heterogeneity is a key mediator in this relationship. With more heterogeneous needs of consumers, it is more difficult to satisfy consumers. There is no doubt that these scholars greatly contributed to the understanding of the relationship between customer satisfaction and market share. However, all their studies are based on U.S. cultural context and consumer goods without considering the effects other cultural contexts and industrial goods. In addition, their findings didn't consider the new business models owing to the trembling internet technology development. In this study, the author attempts to theoretically expand their findings into different contexts such as different national culture, product type and new business models. Specifically, the author proposed that (1) the negative magnitude between customer satisfaction and market share will be moderated by nation culture, such that the link will be stronger in culture of inferential-categorical style than in culture of relational-contextual style, (2) the negative magnitude customer satisfaction and market share will be moderated by product type, such that the link will be stronger when product is in consumer product category than when it is in industrial product category and (3) In a business mode emphasizing relationship among consumers, the relationship between customer satisfaction and market share will be positive, rather than negative.

Performance measurement is of great interest to researchers and practitioner from all business disciplines. A large number of researchers have delved into examining the relationship of performance outcomes across disciplines or within discipline. Many fruitful conclusions and findings are drawn from these studies and provide both theoretical and practical implications for further scholars and marketers. Of course, most of the link between performance measures is positive. However, it is worthy to note that relationships between some of the performance measures are likely to be negative, and, thus, improving one aspect of performance may degrade another. For example, Rego, Morgan, and Fornell (2013) stressed that customer satisfaction is generally not predictive of firms' future market share, but market share is a strong negative predictor of firms' future customer satisfaction. Thus, actions designed to grow market share could be expected to adversely impact customer satisfaction. The phenomenal positive or negative relationship between performance outcomes also might be greatly different when it applies to different context such as different cultural environment or new business model

owing to the advanced information technology. Therefore, the authors call for attention to scrutinize these findings into more broader contexts.

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For further information contact:
Junzhou Zhang
Strome Business School / Old Dominion University
Norfolk, VA 23509
(757)637-5561
Jzhan001@odu.edu

A Marketing Collaborative Learning Adventure: Lessening the Threat of A Sticky Smelly Problem

*Doreen Sams, Georgia College & State University
Amanda Martin-Akin, City of Milledgeville Georgia*

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

This paper covers many benefits for multiple stakeholders from a series of collaborative engaged learning experiences. The city's Wastewater Treatment Facility (F.O.G.) Authority's management recognized the need to scientifically tackle a dirty problem impacting the city's aging infrastructure. However, the city's limited budget meant creative means must be found to research the problem. One of the managers was an alumnus of the local university. The alumnus personal knowledge of the quality of work conducted in her alma mater's marketing research course influenced her decision to engage her organization collaboratively with the university to identify the best marketing solutions for a problem of such a great magnitude.

At this liberal arts university, as a subject of the study, students are taught the value of the pursuit of multidisciplinary knowledge and truth for the public good; how knowledge bridges the gap between theory through practice with a focus on regional needs; and learn the transformative effect of service, leadership, and collaborative engaged learning experiences both in and beyond the classroom. This collaborative learning experience goes beyond the students as learners and addresses the community as benefactors of a project born out of collaboration and anchored in an engaged-learning experience. The alumnus, a city partner who exemplifies the values taught at the university at the time of this study was a manager for the City Wastewater Treatment F.O.G. (fats, oils, and grease) Authority. Thus, she reached out to her former professor to provide a mutually beneficial opportunity for all stakeholders in tackling a sticky problem.

Life is messy. This series of interconnected collaborative studies were structured as engaged learning, community-based, experiential, place-based, problem-based, and socially oriented projects. These studies utilize the learners' theoretical classroom education in a structured practice-based environment where participants experience and respond to messy stimuli. These types of practical experiences create challenges not found in a lecture or simulation for the students, which they resolve with their professor acting as the mediator to guide them in utilizing critical thinking, decision making in a collaborative work environment. They navigate the "messy" that comes with these types of projects. Through critical reflection of the experience, they increase their self-confidence and self-efficacy (Dewey, 2005).

The goal of these series of marketing research projects was threefold. One goal was to provide students with a problem-based, collaborative (engaged), transformative learning experience (community applied classroom knowledge) in which all partners benefit. A second goal was to identify the best marketing solutions to solving the F.O.G. problem (determining levels of awareness of proper F.O.G. behavior, the best mediums to share F.O.G. education, and intentions to properly dispose of F.O.G. materials). The term F.O.G. is used to describe a "layer of lipid-rich material from wastewater" created by fats, oils, and grease. The third goal was to be a good civic citizen by giving back to the community in which past, current, and future university students reside.

In this integrative model of curriculum design, students and teachers are partners in project planning and implementation. There is a strong emphasis on a constructivist philosophy and all members of the student teams have a personal connection with the curriculum. Following the integrative models, the curriculum design was complex, personal, and utilized to create "generalizations, analogies, explanations, and connections" (Maurer, 1994, p. 7). Students conducting research for this study completed Human Subject Ethics certification, Institutional Review Board (IRB) applications, collected secondary data, created research questions, developed hypotheses, created a survey instrument, tested the reliability of the scales used in the survey, and administered the survey. They also analyzed the data, identified limitations of the studies, reported the findings, drew conclusions, and made strategic marketing recommendations to the client. The collaborative learning experiences conducted over a two-year period all utilized a survey methodology to reach the broadest possible segments of each of the markets. Although self-report surveys have their limitations, evidence of the success of this methodology is found in the outcomes.

Students benefited from this business relationship in multiple ways. By working with the alumnus who graduated just a few years before them, she was able to encourage them by imparting wisdom from her own

learning experiences as a student. As collaborators, students learned about city government constraints and opportunities, understood an environmental problem and its impacts on society, as well as how to properly conduct marketing research, interpreted the findings and professionally presented both in written and oral (skills sought by hiring managers) formats. The university benefited from positive relationship with the community in which it resides. These studies reached far beyond the students as learners making the community a benefactor of a project born out of university partnerships and anchored in a collaborative engaged learning experience to serve society. Although F.O.G. may not be the toxic substance that contaminates the water, the human sewage and medications that people flush can lead to poisoning of organisms in the water and any organisms including humans that depend on water. F.O.G. cleanup is a costly problem for cities around the United States. Through the university students' research studies and the F.O.G. Authority's ability to proceed, an impact is beginning to be seen in the local community. The Sewer Maintenance Department has reported a reduction in the number of overflows in 2016 from some areas throughout the city. Fewer overflows means that the community's creeks, rivers, and lakes will have fewer contaminants from the city sewers; thus, reducing health related illnesses. Without the university's collaboration, not only it would incur expenses that the community lacks, the city would have to rely on secondary information from other counties to move forward. In addition, this most likely would not have been a good fit as the demographics and F.O.G. Programs are different. By applying their knowledge, they were able to reinforce what they learned in the classroom increasing their self-confidence and self-efficacy (Bandura, 1994 p. 71; Sams, Richards, Lewis, McMullen, Hammack, Bacnik, and Powell 2016). These are benefits not fully realized in a class lecture or a simulation. The results of the survey studies were used by the city's Waste Water Treatment F.O.G. Authority's management team to create successful marketing solutions to resolve the F.O.G. awareness and F.O.G. disposal behavior issue. The city benefited, at least partially from the marketing research in the form of certifications and recognition received by the City. For example, the city employees earned, the Georgia F.O.G. Alliance – F.O.G. Inspector Certification (2015 – 2017); Georgia Wastewater Class III Operator Certification (2017-2019); Google Adwords (Advertising) Certification (2016-2018); Georgia F.O.G. Alliance – won first place in F.O.G. Program of the Year (2016) for the state; nominated for the university's Bobcat Award (2017) – Outstanding Community Partner, Service Project of the Year, and Best Campaign; and asked to participate in the Goldstreet Design Visionary Program (2017) – only prior clients who have shown innovation and are advancing in unique ways with their F.O.G. Program are asked to participate.

This collaboration illustrates the many benefits for multiple stakeholders. Collective efforts can produce very positive outcomes for all involved. In order to achieve positive outcomes, true collaboration is necessary.

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For further information contact:
Doreen Sams
J. Whitney Bunting College of Business
Georgia College and State University
212 Atkinson Hall, CBX 012
Milledgeville, GA 31061

BRAND ASSOCIATIONS AND BRAND EQUITY – A SCALE DEVELOPMENT FOR FAN-BASED BRAND EQUITY

Gokhan Karaatli, College of Business/Valparaiso University
Serdar Turedi, College of Business/Purdue University Northwest
Musa Pinar, College of Business/Valparaiso University
Ceren Ekebas-Turedi, College of Business/Purdue University Northwest

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Sports teams have been successful in building strong and loyal fan-bases, despite the intangible and unpredictable nature of professional sports. The estimated size of the sports industry in the U.S. was more than \$400 billion and \$1.5 trillion globally in 2015 (Sports Industry Statistics). A strong brand provides a competitive advantage in various industries, and the sports industry is no exception. A sports league serves as a franchisor umbrella brand over sports teams (i.e., franchisees) that compete in the league (Kunkel et al., 2014,) and provides support to ensure their success (Pinar et al., 2015) by coordinating marketing activities to build the brand (Pitt, Napoli, & Van Der Merwe, 2003). Building a strong brand is important for sports teams and leagues to create a better perception among consumers and a competitive advantage against their rival teams and leagues (Kaynak et al., 2008; Kunkel et al. 2014). Therefore, sport teams have started focusing on brand equity.

Brand equity is defined as “the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of brand” by Keller (1993, p. 2). Aaker (1991, p. 15) views brand equity as “a multidimensional concept consisting of brand awareness, brand associations, perceived quality, and brand loyalty that are important from the customer perspective”. Brand associations refer to the thoughts and perceptions of the individuals regarding goods and services (Aaker 1991; Keller 1993). Extant literature has examined the sports consumer and sports team brand equity (i.e. Biscaia et al., 2013; Gladden & Milne 1999; Ross et al. 2008) and brand associations (Ross et al., 2006), however, there are few studies that examined brand equity in the context of sports league (i.e. Kunkel et al.; 2013, 2014). As leagues and teams mutually depend on each other to create a strong sports league and team brand, it is important to understand the drivers of sports league brand equity in the context of sports leagues (Kunkel et al., 2014). Thus, the purpose of the current study is to examine the fan-based brand equity while providing a conceptual framework to examine the relationship between brand association drivers, brand equity and behavioral intentions.

The NFL was selected as the professional sports league because no other U.S. sport captures the same level of attention as NFL does. NFL annual revenues have risen from about \$6 billion in 2004 to about \$12 billion in 2014 (Anson 2015). Given the experiential and entertainment nature of sports (Underwood et al., 2001), examining fans’ perception of brand associations provides a more holistic approach to understanding league brand equity. The proposed brand associations and the framework were developed based on several sports branding and team brand equity studies (Biscaia et al., 2013; Gladden et al., 1999; Gladden & Funk, 2002; Ross et al., 2006; Ross et al., 2008). The sports league brand association dimensions included in the model are players, head coaches, referees, teams, team managers, stadium, concessions, league history and commissioner. A survey instrument is developed to measure the dimensions of brand association, brand equity, and behavioral intentions.

The survey was administered in the United States to people interested in the NFL, who were 18 years and older. Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk) was used to collect data. This study focused on fans who attend NFL games in stadiums. Those respondents indicating they never attended a NFL game at a stadium were removed, since they were not able to respond to the stadium related questions, yielding 291 usable surveys for analysis. 64.9% of respondents were male and 35.1% were female. Analysis was conducted using Smart-PLS 3.2.1. All constructs were modelled to be reflective in the measurement. Additionally, brand equity was used as a mediator and behavioral intentions (attending, watching NFL games, purchasing NFL merchandise, recommending NFL games to others) were used as the dependent variable in the model. Reliability was tested using the composite reliability scores. All scores were above the recommended threshold (.70), indicating no reliability issues (Hair et al., 2014). Results of the structural model test suggest that the effects of brand association on brand equity, and behavioral intentions, as well as the effects of brand equity on behavioral intentions were positive and significant ($p < 0.001$). Results also revealed that players, head coaches, referees, teams, team managers, stadiums,

commissioner, and league history are subcategories of brand association ($p < 0.001$).

In conclusion, the results show that all brand association and brand equity dimensions are valid measures of the sports league brand equity. The relationships presented in the model are statistically significant predictors of sports league brand equity. Second, brand association significantly influences league brand equity and behavioral intentions. All these results indicate a good fit of the fan-based brand equity model for a sports league. Third, the brand equity is a better predictor of behavioral intentions as it has a significantly higher effect on behavioral intentions than brand association. Fourth, the results for demographic variables as control variables indicate that while attending games, gender and media use have significant impact on brand intentions. However, age, education, income and supporting a team have no significant impact on brand intentions. Finally, because a sports league serves as the master (umbrella) brand and platform for the teams within the league, brand association dimensions identified in the study could help to develop branding strategies for creating a strong league brand (NFL) that could also contribute to creating strong team brands.

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For further information contact:

Gokhan Karaatli
College of Business/Valparaiso University
219-464-5406
gokhan.karaatli@valpo.edu

STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF CLIENT-BASED RESEARCH PROJECT: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

Henry Wai Leong Ho, Ferris State University
Timothy Paul Brotherton, Ferris State University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Problem-Based Learning (PBL) has gained recognition as a valuable pedagogical approach for several decades. Incorporating PBL in the marketing and business related classrooms comes with many benefits. One of the major benefit is the ability “to show students the relevance of the subject matter by putting it in a realistic context” (Loyens, Kirschner & Paas, 2011, p.5). However, limited investigation has been done for on campus marketing students’ perceptions of using a client-based research project (one kind of PBL approach) as part of the assessments in their undergraduate marketing research course. As such this paper examines undergraduate students’ perceptions of using a client-based project as one of the assessments in the marketing research course.

The students who participated in this research were enrolled in Marketing Research classes (MKTG 425) offered by the College of Business (COB) of Ferris State University (FSU) in Michigan, USA. FSU is a medium-sized comprehensive higher education institution in the United States with more than 14,000 students currently pursuing their university degrees (Ferris State University, n.d.). MKTG 425 is a required course offered to junior and senior year Marketing students of the COB. The delivery method of the course was a traditionally content-based, teacher-centered approach. It involved 15 weeks of lectures by the course instructor. Each lecture provided thorough information on multiple aspects of marketing research.

The research design was descriptive and the research was conducted using a quantitative method of surveying. Most of the questions were concentrated on students’ general perceptions of the client-based group project. Students were also asked to indicate their perception of skills and techniques acquired in the Marketing Research class. Except for questions on demographics, most of the responses were based on a five point Likert scale; from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Data was collected by the researchers separately over three semesters using a brief paper-based questionnaire administered during the final teaching week of the semester. It was made clear to the participants that this was not part of the assessment for the course.

Of the 111 completed surveys, 50.5% of respondents were male, 49.5% female (n=101). Of the respondents, 84.1% were seniors, 15.9% were juniors (n=107). Ages of the respondents included 6.4% were 18-20 years old, 63.6% were 21-22, 24.5% were 23-24, while 5.5% were older than 25 years old. Students were asked to indicate their choices on a five-point Likert scale from “Strongly Agree” (coded 5) to “Strongly Disagree” (coded 1) to the following questions:

- Q1: The group research project captures my interest in learning marketing research.
- Q2: The group research project is difficult to understand.
- Q3: The group research project is challenging.
- Q4: The research project required me to be more creative.
- Q5: The topic of the research project is related to real life situation.
- Q6: Participating in this project is related to real life situation.
- Q7: Participating in this project gives me insights on how to work with “real” business clients.
- Q8: The research project gives me more confident to interpret statistical data in other courses.
- Q9: The project gives me more confident to interpret statistical data in my future workplace.
- Q10: The research project helps me understand how marketing research could be conducted.
- Q11: The research project helps me understand how survey (both online and mall intercept) should be conducted.
- Q12: The research project helps me to understand how data is processed using the statistical tests (in SPSS).
- Q13: Doing the project enhanced my learning of SPSS.
- Q14: The project has prepared me to deal with statistical situations outside the classroom.

Except for Question 2 (Q2), all of the means are above neutral (Q2 indicates that the group research project was not difficult to understand). In general, students tended to agree that the projects are real and challenging. At the same time, students tended to agree the project made them feel more confident about statistics and marketing research.

A final question asked the students is there anything else they would like to share about their learning experiences in the marketing research course. Those who did respond mostly discussed their preference of working on the client-based project, for example:

- It (the client-based project) shows us more real life problems and it (is) more hands-on
- I like the project because it requires more hands-on learning. I also like solving problems.
- It (the client-based project) allows us to learn about real world situations to prepare us for our career.
- I like the project because there is a purpose behind it and I enjoy solving real problems.
- I thought the class was great and the project was informational. It allowed me to apply what I've learned.
- I like the project because it allows you to look at an issue and figure out how you are going to solve it.

This study was limited by using only six marketing research classes across three semesters. The researchers utilized a simple survey, but it also had a high completion rate.

From the results, there are promising directions for future research. First, a longitudinal study following the effectiveness of the PBL (client-based project) over time would be valuable. In addition, a richer survey can be developed to find greater connections between PBL and student knowledge and satisfaction. Finally, a control group not using client-based project could be considered to capture the baseline data.

This is still the early stages of analysis, but the initial analysis indicates that students agree on the positive value of client-based projects and their enhancement of student learning (being more comfortable with statistics and marketing research). Based on this research client-based projects should definitely be used as part of the assessment in the undergraduate marketing research course.

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For further information contact:
Henry W. L. Ho
College of Business/ Ferris State University
119 South Street, BUS 349
Big Rapids, MI 49307
(231)591-3199
henryho@ferris.edu

BRANDING [OR THE LACK OF BRANDING AMONG] INNOVATION DISTRICT CITIES: EVIDENCE OF HOW THE RISE OF INNOVATION DISTRICTS IS OUTPACING CITY GOVERNMENT EFFORTS TO BRAND THEM

*Jeanetta D. Sims, University of Central Oklahoma
Mindy Vo, University of Central Oklahoma
Laura Miranda, University of Central Oklahoma*

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Creating points of differentiation and a positive image are necessities for today's growing cities, and branding is at the heart of these activities. While Temporal (2014) contends cities are underestimating the need to adequately marketing their finest attributes, little research has investigated city government efforts at branding. And, no research has probed the efforts of cities to showcase the creation of their innovation districts.

This research examines the extent to which innovation district cities are communicating their city's efforts in marketing and branding activities. We argue that an exploration of city branding efforts is necessary to inform how current and future innovation district cities can improve their marketing and branding efforts. Though innovation districts have become a major focus for economic stimulation and job growth in cities (Katz & Bradley, 2013), no research has undertaken the task of understanding how innovation district cities are branding their efforts in an effort to better inform marketing communication decisions among city government leaders.

Using content analysis as advanced by Kaid and Wadsworth (1989), this paper investigates the branding efforts of innovation district cities in the United States. The research explores the extent to which innovation district branding is incorporated into innovation district city websites and examines the prevailing marketing and branding strategies as well as social media platforms mentioned. Authors wave a red flag of caution on the need for marketers to help city government officials in innovation district cities elevate the role and requirements of branding.

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For further information contact:
Jeanetta D. Sims
College of Graduate Studies/University of Central Oklahoma
100 N University Drive
Edmond OK 73034
(405) 974-2805
jsims7@uco.edu

UNDER PRESSURE: PARKINSON'S LAW MEETS COLLEGIATE COMPETITIONS

Margaret (Peg) A. Murphy, Columbia College Chicago
Dana Connell, Columbia College Chicago

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Collegiate marketing competitions have long been regarded by many as a viable method of classroom instruction. Scholars frequently cite the various pedagogical merits of student competitions including application of theoretical concepts to industry, experiential learning about teamwork and communication “soft skills,” and the potentially increased student engagement. The question is, if competitions are intended to mimic “real world” experiences, can (or should) the timeframe allotted also perhaps more closely mirror reality?

These authors argue faculty may want to consider not only collegiate competitions as an impactful teaching tool; but, also intensive, time-compressed marketing competitions as “real world” experiential learning opportunities.

It is generally acknowledged that collegiate competitions can be a very effective way to increase student engagement. Student engagement, both Gen Z and Gen Y, is perceived by some in the academy to becoming an ever-increasing challenge. Scholars and collegiate competition mentors variously discuss the merits of collegiate competitions as a way to offset and counter the seemingly ever-increasing student disengagement and potential preoccupation with digital distractions. Scholars and mentors also point to the various benefits of student competitions in terms of applied “real life” learning, teambuilding, interpersonal skills development, and hands-on learning. However, scholars and collegiate competition mentors also point to the increased time commitment required to be successful (win, lose, or draw) from both the students and the faculty members. Thus, the focus of this applied learning investigation. Is a longer time period really needed to be effective, educationally and competitively? Or, as Parkinson’s Law has so infamously stated, does work truly expand or compress to fit the time allotted?

Currently, many institutions of higher learning and other alternative resources (continuing education boot camps, MOOCs, certificate programs, etc.) are exploring educational intensive education as options perhaps better meeting the needs of today’s students (both Gen Z and nontraditional students who may be older with scheduling and/or travel difficulties). Some scholars even contend intensive format or time-shortened courses lead to a more continuous learning experience allowing students to truly delve into a topic, synthesize thinking, ideate, and produce in a focused and concentrated way.

These authors, with industry backgrounds in retailing/buying and marketing/advertising, collaborated to create and successfully pilot a collegiate competition course surrounding the National Retail Federation (NRF), the National Retail Foundation and their “Student Challenge.” This is an annual national collegiate competition self-described as a business-case competition to display business acumen and entrepreneurial spirit to retail executives. The NRF competition involves teams of two to four students working on a briefing from a national retailer surrounding a comprehensive retail marketing assignment including (but not limited to): marketing analysis, trends research, positioning, creative messaging, retail product sourcing, merchandising, pricing, strategic partnerships, marketing components, digital media, projected results, metrics and more. Students submit a plan book and pitch video which are judged and scored by industry professionals, semi-finalists then revise their materials and pitch their ideas via a team conference call, and the top three teams are invited to the NRF’s national conference to present to senior industry executives. Students from this course have been consistently selected for this course based on the same factors (resume, GPA, recommendations, portfolio, etc.). The course has run three separate times - twice as a compressed schedule course and once as a full semester length course. Every time students have made the national semi-finals. The times when it was taught on a compressed schedule, the students finished second (two different team, two different years) and first place nationally most recently.

Utilizing a mixed methodology of qualitative and quantitative data, these authors explore the potential value of intensive “boot camp” type course design on a compressed schedule as a means of enhancing the students’ course experiences, creating a more dynamic classroom and even, potentially impacting the ultimate competitive results. To begin with, an anonymous student evaluation quantitative survey has been administered by the

university exploring student feelings towards the course, the instructor, the experience, and learnings. Key findings from this same instrument include: 1. students self-reporting higher preparedness and participation levels for the two intensive, time constrained courses offered, versus the fifteen week traditionally timed course and 2. students reporting higher potential course usefulness in the time-constrained, intensive sessions.

Additionally, via open-ended responses to a series of prompts and interview narratives, course participants in both the time compressed and traditional semester length course discussed their thoughts and feelings about time management, soft “people” skills development, personal commitment levels, and real-life learning experienced within the course structure. Response details varied, but almost universally, the students participating in the compressed schedule versions found the course to be more useful, a stronger way to strengthen team and interpersonal skills, as well as felt the course better prepared them for the future working world realities. The students within the traditional semester length course conversely felt more time pressured and less productive, even though they literally had triple the time to develop the competition assignment.

The quantitative data points and qualitative feedback positively support the position that time shortened intensive competition courses may well be worth considering for a variety of marketing and management student competitions, especially when the student participants meet certain academic and maturity criteria. These authors are eager to continue this research trajectory, especially considering growing interest in variable time frame courses within higher education. It would be intriguing to explore whether other collegiate competition coursework could potentially similarly benefit from a compressed time schedule. In fact, if possible, the authors would very much like to partner with colleagues from other universities to explore the value (or not) of time-compressed intensive competition coursework on different types of campuses. It would be very interesting to see if Parkinson’s Law would still apply or would it be just too much “under pressure.”

For further information contact:
Margaret (Peg) A. Murphy
Columbia College Chicago
600 S. Michigan
Chicago, IL 60605
(312) 369-7489
pmurphy@colum.edu

WHAT'S THAT YAMMER? MAKING THE CASE FOR A NEW PEDAGOGICAL TOOL

Alexandra E. MacDougall, Central Michigan University

Rebecca Dingus, Central Michigan University

Alex Milovic, Marquette University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Modern collegiate business education centers on high engagement and real-world settings, as well as fostering skills in critical thinking, problem solving, and creativity. While instructors strive to achieve this, they face challenges such as limited class times, restrictive learning management systems, and clutter in students' email inboxes. One way to simultaneously achieve these goals is by employing Yammer, a course-specific social network group, to extend course content beyond the walls of the classroom. This paper provides an overview of Yammer along with brief implementation suggestions and culminates with a discussion surrounding the pedagogical benefits of incorporating Yammer into marketing courses.

Yammer is an innovative social networking site that allows for collaboration within organizations. Its purpose is to increase collaboration across members of the particular organization, with each internal network limited to people with an organization-specific email address. The initial success and wide-scale adoption of Yammer in the corporate world is evident, with 85 percent of Fortune 500 companies utilizing the social network for team building and internal communications (Microsoft, 2017). Though similar to a standard social media site, Yammer works inside an organization (similar to an intranet) rather than in the public domain.

Beyond its corporate application, Yammer is also available in most universities and is readily accessible to both faculty and students as it is included in the Microsoft 365 portfolio already offered by many universities. A university's Yammer can be described as a school-specific and professional Facebook. Most of the settings, options, layout, and capabilities of Yammer mimic those of Facebook, which makes it easy for students and faculty to quickly become comfortable and active using it. Although some educators have opted to use Facebook itself as an instructional tool, there are some downsides that may limit its continued utility. For example, while many students remain familiar with Facebook, it is becoming outdated to current college students. Generation Z students are moving away from Facebook and toward more selective sites such as Instagram and Snapchat, as they do not wish to broadcast a wide variety of content to their friend network (Fromm, 2016).

Moreover, where it is adopted for class purposes, Facebook has the potential to blur the line between professional and personal interactions. For example, Malesky and Peters (2012) find that 40 percent of college students and 30 percent of faculty surveyed believe it is inappropriate for faculty to interact with students over social networking sites. Moving away from Facebook can therefore protect those faculty members and students wishing to keep their personal social media pages private from others. Advances in pedagogy do, however, encourage active learning and the alignment of course content with technology to increase student engagement and success (e.g., Tess, 2013). Integrating Yammer into the educational context offers an innovative alternative to Facebook that is likely to be better received by all. Because Yammer is an internal network and viewed as a professional tool, it removes the sometimes-awkward nature of students connecting with their instructors over social media.

Incorporating Yammer within the class context is a simple and unthreatening process for instructors and students alike. First-time users can prepare for upcoming semesters by creating a Yammer account through their institution. Once created, instructors can use their account to create unique groups with introductory messages and content for each class. At the onset of the semester, students can join the group(s) specific to their class. Each group on Yammer serves as a private online space for sharing and discussing content, contributing to rich interactions and a community of practice among students.

After introducing Yammer, the instructor should submit the first post to prompt a fruitful dialogue among class members. This initial post also communicates expectations for subsequent posts, providing students with a standard upon which to base their own submissions to the group. As the semester progresses, students may take free reign over the course group as instructors link course content and assignments to Yammer. Depending on the instructor's preferences, guidelines for post content (e.g., news articles, videos, memes, TED Talks), discussion

prompts, and post frequency should be established so students know what to expect. Some courses may have one item posted each day by the instructor alone, while others may require five or more individual student posts per week, all varied to ensure alignment with individual course objectives.

Yammer provides an outlet where students can form online study groups and communities of practice once they are familiar and comfortable with its usability and resources. Such learning communities are not only beneficial with respect to student performance, but also facilitate student engagement and satisfaction (Zhao & Kuh, 2004). When used well, Yammer encourages students to post content so that students themselves increasingly take the lead in creating and generating discussions on the course's group page. Yammer fosters an online learning community and provides an outlet for organized two-way communication around the clock. Students can create posts, share content from outside resources, comment on or "like" content in posts by others, and communicate through rich, two-way dialogue among a group. Additionally, members of this online community will get to know each other better.

Both in and out of the classroom, benefits from Yammer can greatly enhance the collegiate learning experience. Yammer provides a means to connect real-world happenings with course terms and material, making the content more meaningful to students. By involving students in the sharing and dissemination of information, Yammer allows students to determine what is most relevant to them personally and to gauge others' opinions on topics of interest. Even more, Yammer affords students with additional skill-building opportunities. For the many marketing students who will enter careers that require them to capitalize on social media outlets, early exposure to Yammer provides practice using social media appropriately, professionally, and strategically. Taken together, it is our hope that faculty members will increasingly turn to Yammer as a means to further connect students while fostering increased engagement and perceptions of course relevance.

REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

For further information contact:

Alex Milovic

Marquette University

P.O. Box 1881

Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 53201

(414) 315-1600

alexander.milovic@marquette.edu

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY TO INVESTIGATE WHY PEOPLE TAKE PHOTOS OF FOOD IN FINE DINING RESTAURANTS

Glyn Atwal, Burgundy School of Business, France
Douglas Bryson, Rennes School of Business, France

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Social media has emerged as a powerful communication channel. Consumers post millions of photos each day on social media and messaging sites. Although the literature has provided a comprehensive overview of social media behaviour (Whiting and Williams, 2013), specifically the motivations for selfie activity (Eagarand and Dann, 2016) and motivations for sharing tourism through social media (Munar and Jacobsen, 2014), the literature has failed to consider specifically the motives for the posting of user generated food photography. This is an obvious gap within the literature and is of particular relevance given the high involvement and the sensory features of the dining out experience (Hanefors and Mossberg, 2003). This is consistent with the argument that both tangible and intangible attributes are integral to the luxury and fine restaurant experience (Kwun and Oh, 2006). This exploratory study sets out to identify these motives considered within the context of fine restaurants.

Ethnographic fieldwork was conducted by combining qualitative diary research and focus group discussions. Participants were recruited through the snowball sampling technique. If a participant had taken a photo of food in a restaurant in the past 4 weeks, they were asked to document their eating out experiences as part of a diary. Forty-eight French participants agreed to document their eating out experiences in a diary. Participants who had posted at least one image during the 4-week period from fine dining restaurants were invited to participate in a focus group discussion. Four focus groups comprising of 6 participants which lasted approximately 45 minutes were conducted in the week following the completion of the diaries.

The study revealed food images were taken for both private and public sharing. This also reflected the different contextual uses of images such as the sharing of tourist-related images with friends and family (private) and the posting of images on restaurant review sites (public). It is within this broad context that the motivation to take food images can be broadly categorised according to experiential and symbolic benefits (Keller, 1993). Experiential benefits satisfy emotional needs such as sensory pleasure which we categorised as hedonism, altruism and passion collecting. Symbolic benefits “fulfils internally generated needs for self-enhancement, role position, group membership or ego-identification” (Park et al., 1986, p.136) which we categorised as social status, uniqueness, self-esteem and self-presentation.

The mobile phone combined with social media has become an increasingly integral aspect of the luxury dining experience. At a superficial level, the motive for taking photos of food in fine restaurants is consistent with the desire to show ‘I was there’ as evident with tourist photography (Dinhopl and Gretzel 2016). At a deeper level, we were able to identify that the case of consumption experiences within a gastronomic perspective represents a world of simulacra where the image or signifier of an event replaces the actual experience and knowledge of its referent or signified (Addis and Podesta, 2005).

This research is limited by its relatively small sample size and the inability to consider the direct influences of demographic variables. Moreover, the cultural context of the study has obvious limitations. The study took place in France which confers a very distinctive culinary culture as opposed to other geographies. As this is primarily an exploratory study guided with a limited quantity of data from French informants, we therefore recognize that further empirical research is necessary.

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For further information contact:

Glyn Atwal
Burgundy School of Business
29 rue Sabin
21006 Dijon Cedex
France
+33 (0)380 725 847
glyn.atwal@bsb-education.com

EXAMINATION OF ATTITUDE CHANGE IN A SUSTAINABLE MARKETING COURSE

Michelle B. Kunz, Morehead State University
Luke Lamb, Morehead State University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Instructors have many objectives in any class they teach. However, beyond the formal pedagogical learning objectives listed on every course syllabus, is not the real purpose/intent to impact student attitudes, perceptions and overall knowledge relative to the course subject matter? We often conduct course/instructor evaluations to assess student's learning and overall satisfaction with the instructional/learning experience. This paper will discuss the implementation of a pre/post-test survey in a sustainable marketing course. This is only one component of the course, and not intended to be the focus of the course, but rather to initiate class discussion.

The initial idea in developing the student survey was to serve as an introduction to the course subject matter at the beginning of the semester. This had two purposes: 1) to get students familiar with some concepts, attitudes, terminology, and behaviors related to the course, and 2) provide content for class discussion while waiting for students to acquire the textbook and "settle in" to the semester. In no way is this course limited to changing the attitudes of students, but this component provides a foundation to begin discussions of course content. The first step was to identify standardized survey instruments that would measure both attitudes as well as behaviors related to sustainability. Four standardized scales were identified, and mounted in the course learning management system as an exam, so that individual responses could be matched in both applications. During the first two weeks of the semester, students were asked to complete the survey and were given a blanket number of points for completion. Students could work in multiple sessions, saving their work as they progressed through the surveys. The same survey was administered at the end of the semester, a week prior to the final examination week of the term, not with the intention to measure the change in attitude, but rather to "refresh" students' memory and perspective from the beginning of the semester. The surveys were administered in three course offerings, spring semesters of 2015-2017. Two courses were fully online, and one on-ground. Enrollments were relatively small, ranging from 20-35 students per course offering.

Four standardized scales were identified: 1) Environmentally Responsible Consumer Scale ECOSCALE (Stone, Barnes & Montgomery, 1995), 2) Socially Responsible Consumer Behavior Scale SRCB (Antil & Bennett, 1979), 3) GREEN Consumption Values Scale, (Haws, Winterich & Naylor, 2014), and 4) Voluntary Simplicity Scale: VSS, (Leonard-Barton, 1981). These four scales comprised a survey of ninety-five items, which admittedly is quite lengthy.

This paper will discuss results of both surveys, comparing beginning and end of term results, and across course offerings for the three years. In addition, content relevance of the individual surveys and other instruments that could be used in place of, or in addition to, the current instruments will be discussed. Finally, the paper will discuss the role this activity plays in the overall course content, relative to sustainable marketing strategies and tactics.

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For further information contact:
Michelle B. Kunz
Morehead State University
Morehead, KY 40351
(606)783-5479
m.kunz@moreheadstate.edu

CAN YOU HANDLE THE TRUTH? A STUDY OF THE ANTECEDENTS AND POST-BEHAVIOR RATIONALIZATION OF DECEPTIVE EWOM

*Payal S Kapoor, FORE School of Management, New Delhi, India
Makam Balaji, Nottingham University Business School, China*

Extended Abstract

Communication between people transpires under the assumption of truth, but this assumption may not always be realized as lying is an integral part of daily lives. The focus of the current research is to develop a theoretical framework that investigates the deviant consumer behavior of sharing deceptive brand-related information on the internet (i.e., deceptive electronic word of mouth or eWOM). Computer-mediated communication is not only prone to easy deception but it is also challenging to be able to identify deception. Hence, the current study, based on extant literature of impression management and self-presentation goals, first identifies motivations that may lead to deceptive eWOM behavior and, second identifies personality traits more susceptible to the deviant behavior. Furthermore, people have an inherent need to uphold a positive self-concept, even when they indulge in deceptive behavior. Hence, post-behavior rationalization achieved by moral disengagement is also a vital theoretical question addressed in the current research. The article proposes conceptual model of such relations that if tested can lend empirical support critical for theory building.

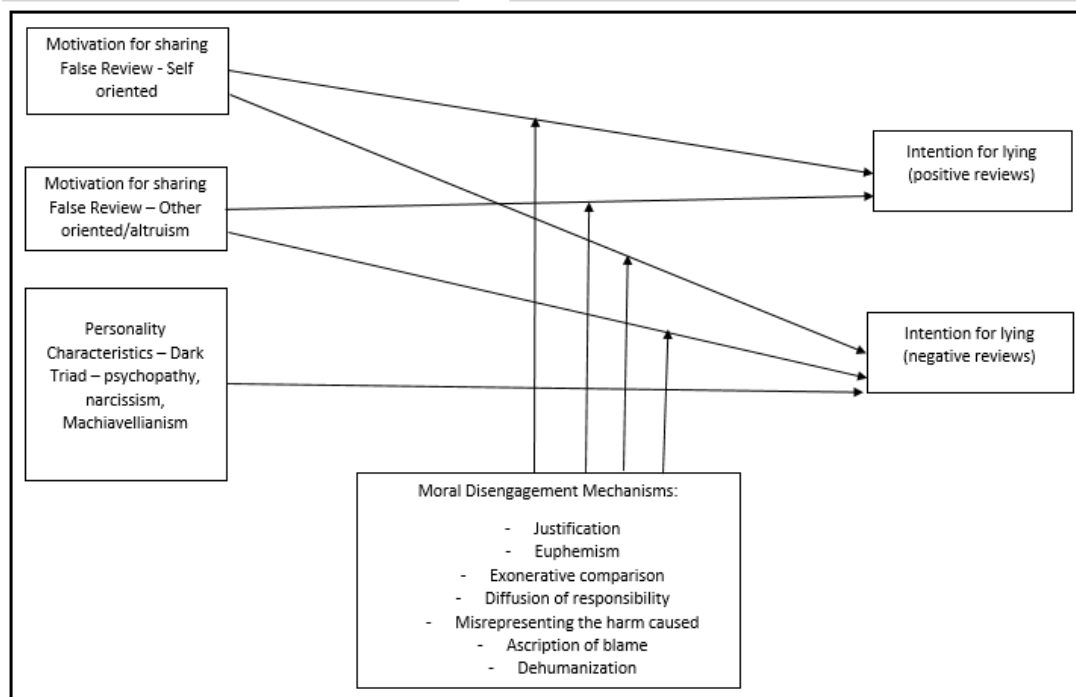
People lie. Day-to-day communication between people may involve the exchange of information deviant from truth, both for mundane matters as well as matters of significance. White lies, which involve “hiding of one’s true feelings or evaluations,” are an acceptable part of daily interaction (Argo & Shiv, 2012, p. 1093) and quite often they make social interactions easier (Tosone, 2006). Studies have found one-fifth of social exchanges involve lying and 30 percent of one-to-one interactions involve some form of deception. Undeniably, as suggested by Kornet (1997), lying is an integral part of modern lives (DePaulo & Bell, 1996; Harris, Fisk & Sysalova, 2016). Studies on lying behavior have been of interest across disciplines, starting with religious studies, philosophy, sociology, psychology, criminology, etc. and the vast literature has addressed several critical questions regarding lying in everyday lives (DePaulo, Kashy, Kirkendol, Wyer & Epstein, 1996; Hample, 1980). However, evaluation of the lying behavior in marketing research is far and few between. Marketing literature, thus far, has looked at lying behavior related to the consumer purchase process; lying for additional rewards and benefit; lying regarding the price of the brand; lying regarding non-consumption of brand, etc. However, no theoretical frame work exists that may explain why consumers share deceptive brand-related information (i.e., word of mouth) (Thomas, Johnson & Jewell, 2016).

Consumers extensively indulge in sharing of brand experience and opinion with close relations as well as strangers on social media with the underlying assumption of being perceived as truthful. This assumption can be false, and much like lying in everyday life, consumers may share deceptive word of mouth (Harris, Fisk & Sysalova, 2016). According to prior research, sometimes customer behavior may “violate the generally accepted norms of conduct,” termed as deviant customer behavior, and sharing deceptive reviews or posts that “do not exactly reflect reality” is one of them (Sigala, 2017, p. 608). Therefore, one of the main foci of the current research is to “understand ‘lying’ word of mouth behavior”.

According to the principle of veracity as conceptualized by Bok (1999), “moral asymmetry between truth and deception” exists since “telling of truth requires no justification, whereas deceit does” (Levine, Kim & Hamel, 2010, p. 272). In other words, lying behavior is preceded with reasons, motives and justifications. Studies have classified several of these motives as: face saving; manage relations; altruism; conflict avoidance; benefit self; benefit others; impression management; self-presentation, etc. (Hample, 1980; Levine, Kim & Hamel, 2010; Metts, 1989; Sengupta, Dahl & Gorn, 2002; Turner, Edgley & Olmstead, 1975). Furthermore, social cognition theory proposes that people engage in eight specific moral disengagement techniques, which allows them to justify and subsequently display deviant behavior, presence of which may encourage deviant behavior (Bandura, 1991; Bandura, Caprara, Barbaranelli, Pastorelli & Regalia, 2001; Dootson, Johnston, Beatson and Lings, 2016; Harris and Dumas, 2009). Research has even identified personality characteristics, jointly termed as the dark triad: psychopathy, narcissism and Machiavellianism, which catalyze deviant behavior (Harrison, Summers & Mennecke, 2016). Consistent with the aforementioned literature, this study examines the exogenous variables that contribute in the understanding of why consumers lie about their brand-related experiences (i.e. ‘lying’ word of mouth behavior). Therefore, the focus of the current research is to understand ‘lying’ word of mouth behavior

specifically in the computer-mediated environment (CME). This investigation is important for two reasons. First, a lot of communication is now being done using one or many social technologies (Balaji, Khong & Chong, 2016). Second, information exchange in a CME is affected additionally with the challenges of anonymity and user disinhibition, making the study of lying behavior all the more complex (Suler, 2004; Lapidot-Lefler & Barak, 2012).

Current research makes important contributions to the marketing literature by exploring an aspect of online consumer behavior less researched. Literature has thus far focused on antecedents of negative or positive eWOM, while this research explores the intention to share deceptive eWOM influenced by self versus other motivation and personality characteristics. The study also investigates post-behavior rationalization using moral disengagement techniques. The article proposes a conceptual model that if tested can lend empirical support critical for theory building:



With the spread of new media, consumer-to-consumer interaction is ever increasing for brand-related information exchange. Several studies have explored the influence of eWOM and consumer behavior related to that. The underlying assumption of the information being accurate and truthful needs to be checked, more so since the exchange of information is often amongst strangers. The focus of the current research is to investigate the intention of sharing deceptive eWOM from the perspective of what is the motivation to share and what personality traits will make them more susceptible to this kind of deceptive behavior. Post-behavior rationalization is also a vital theoretical question addressed in the current research. Once the theoretical model and the propositions are tested the contribution of this research to literature may come in form of deeper understanding of an under researched, yet critical, aspect of online consumer behavior. The study has useful marketing implications as it will help the marketer obtain deeper understanding of potentially harmful behaviors of customers. Every day, millions of online reviews are shared on various platforms where marketers struggle to control the overall sentiment related to their brands and organization. The root cause and consumer psychology behind such behavior should be analyzed, as is the focus of the current research, which will help build stronger and more effective algorithms that help identify deceptive eWOM.

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For further information contact:
 Payal S Kapoor
 FORE School of Management
 New Delhi – 110016
 India
payal@fsm.ac.in

CO-CREATING SOCIAL MEDIA VALUE: A CONTENT TYPOLOGY

Eric T. Brey, University of Wisconsin-Stout

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Effectively engaging customers and creating organizational value through marketing has become increasingly challenging. Consumers now play an active role in the marketing, and value creation process, of products and services as social media has changed the traditional approach of dialogue between organizations and customers. While the number of distribution channels and advanced understanding of psychographic segmentation techniques have expanded the opportunities to reach customers, the importance of engaging in authentic dialogue via social media marketing (SMM) to drive engagement has only grown. The challenge, then, is to provide relevant and engaging content for customers to interact with.

Given the role that SMM plays in driving value between an organization and their customers, a deeper understanding of content is needed. Specifically, further knowledge is needed regarding the available types of content that can create value through SMM activities. Current research has analyzed and classified social media from multifarious perspectives, ranging from structural or industry- or tool-specific applications. However effective these methods, they are limited in their universal applicability across industries or platforms, and ultimately eschew support for creating simultaneous value for organizations and users. To that end, the aim of this conceptual paper is to provide a comprehensive classification system that overcomes the massive, noisy and incomplete nature of SMM content.

To classify SMM content that creates simultaneous value between an organization and its customers, the reciprocal value content typology identifies six types of content: respond, transact, educate, enlighten, inspire, and entertain. In terms of content types, respond content is the most fundamental and important to effective social media community development – it creates a dialogue when organizations act on a customer’s question, concerns or inquires, both by focusing on positive and negative interactions that inevitably happen across social media platforms. By engaging in a conversation with customers, it demonstrates a responsiveness to customers via posts such as thanking customers for their stories/good-will wishes, immediately responding to any concerns or issues from the customer experience and providing activities where organizations and users can interact simultaneously through live chats or question/answer activities.

Transact content has become the preferred type of social media content that organizations leverage to encourage customer actions that focus on revenue generation, such as visiting a website to learn more or by encouraging individuals to visit a physical location. By soft, or hard, selling organizational features these posts encourage purchases to leverage developed social relationships to increase overall revenue. Organizations have focused on driving revenue via posts such as product features posts to create awareness for services, comparisons to effectively differentiate their offerings from competitors and spurring demand by offering deals, offers and discounts specific to SMM followers.

Educate content is driven through the need for business to provide relevant information concerning the organization and its offerings, not in selling their products and services but rather providing opportunities for customers to learn and share with others. By providing illuminating content, companies can highlight features and options while consumers can learn more about an organizations’ offerings through interaction with current and potential users. To effectively educate consumers through social media, organizations can create content that focuses on product features across customer segments, provide usage tips on how products and services can be used in various iterations or even discuss awards and recognitions to demonstrate the quality of their offerings.

Enlighten content is distributed as a means for organizations to become a source of customer-relevant information, often related to organizational outcomes but driven by interests outside of the organization. By focusing on supporting customer’s interaction of personal and community interests, businesses can increase influence by informing and providing opportunities for consumer-centric engagement. To deliver content that informs and provides value, companies can provide opportunities to engage with community activities they

actively sponsor or are closely aligned with, provide local-living insights to demonstrate options and features of neighborhoods or communities, or provide opinion/position posts to support interests of key stakeholders.

Inspire content is derived from the value of user-generated content (UGC) and its role in engaging online communities. This content focuses on creating opportunities where customers are encouraged to share their experiences or those humanizing components and interactions that create a relationship with an organization or employees. By encouraging customers to share their thoughts, experiences and stories; organizations receive positive, earned dialogue while customers can share and enjoy other socially-enhanced experiences. Inspiring content, such as employee stories where they talk about customer interactions or employee biographies discussing their personal interests outside of work, encourages customers to interact and share their own personal stories. Additionally, either through contests or other types of direct requests to share, customers are encouraged to share active engagement photos with the organization to demonstrate possibilities of usage and inspire other customers to buy.

The most ubiquitous of content, entertain, is an opportunity to display an organization's lighter side using an appropriate personality that is aligned with the organization and its goals. While the outcome of this content is to delight users, provide humor to demonstrate personality or ultimately entertain key stakeholders, great care must be taken. When generating entertaining content, the focus must be on ensuring appropriate posts that don't offend while encouraging engagement with SMM materials. To successfully amuse social media stakeholders, businesses can use humorous illustrations or animations to highlight a specific component of their business, ask funny questions that provide unique opportunities for customers to demonstrate their humorous or illogical selves, or even asking users to label or create appropriate mems from photos provided by and about the company.

While this work-in-progress focuses on developing a model to classify content that delivers value for both the organization and the user, the potential application has wide ranging possibilities. From measuring organization effectiveness of social media marketing activities to understanding customer behaviors as they relate to various content, the value-focused content typology presents a unique opportunity to enhance our current understanding.

For further information contact:
Eric T. Brey
University of Wisconsin-Stout
438 Heritage Hall
Menomonie, WI 54751
715.232.2567
breyer@uwstout.edu

“PITY THE READER:” CLASSROOM STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING WRITING TO MARKETING STUDENTS

Tatia Jacobson Jordan, University of Texas at Arlington

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

This paper explores the methodology behind using peer review in the business classroom, strategies for incorporating it, and assessment and survey results. With increasing numbers of bilingual students, especially on urban campuses, colleges and universities are getting pressured from external sources to teach students how to write better (Pittenger, 257). Indeed, Kurt Vonnegut’s advice to writers includes the maxim “Pity the Reader,” for a reason (Bishop 563). Graduates are expected to write cogent professional emails, memorandums, letters, reports, proposals, and other forms of business communication, and our current educational system may or may not afford our students the time they need to practice these writing skills. As a solution, most marketing departments have instituted at least one required writing class for business majors, business communications; some have created freshman composition classes specifically to target business students. One tool that will assist with this goal of teaching our college students to become better writers is classroom peer review. Marketing professors would be wise to consider incorporating writing assignments with peer review exercises into their curriculum. The practice of peer review allows students not only to receive feedback from their peers, or “friendly readers,” but also creates a process of checking other students’ work that in turn will alert students to changes they need to make in their own writing assignments. In short, this practice should be an essential part of the marketing classroom.

Peer review is a pedagogical practice entrenched in our writing and writing-across-the-curriculum classes for multiple reasons. At first-year writing programs across the country, composition and rhetoric TAs are taught to peer review as part of their training, as motivated by a long history of scholarly research on the subject by authors like Karen Spear, Kenneth Bruffee, Anne Gere, and others. This practice is not unique to recent pedagogy, nor is it unique to English departments alone. Anne Gere notes that writing groups have taken varying forms through the years; both oral and written responses, for example, have been used historically (3). Precursors to peer review, such as “self-help writing groups and college literary societies,” even existed as early as the 1800s in America (Gaillet 93).

Student-centered teaching philosophies have encouraged peer review specifically because it is a “transformative practice...in which the amateur is valued, access is open, and power is shared.” (Haas 381). The process of peer review has been essential in assisting writing students with working toward a final polished draft.

Peers, or what we commonly refer to as “friendly readers,” review student papers before the professor grades it, thereby saving much-needed time on correcting the errors that peer review catches. Timeliness is also at play here. In peer review, both oral and written responses, for example, have been used to give the writer a response with “an immediacy impossible in teachers’ marginalia” (Gere 3). Writers don’t have to wait days or weeks for a teacher’s response when their classmates can peer review the assignment immediately in class, while the students are together. Peer review also works because when peers share their writing, they can compare their own skill-level while observing another writer. The practice also helps catch grammatical and spelling errors, and assures that someone else, other than the teacher, looks at form and content within the context of that specific writing prompt.

For pedagogical purposes, most peer reviewed writing assignments should be implemented with a face-to-face component. Scholarship about peer review specifically celebrates the social interaction that occurs through that face-to-face contact: “oral communication is the foundation for peer review as it is discussed in writing studies” (Breuch 2). Professors can assign small group peer review workshops in class, wherein students trade papers and physically mark up one another’s assignment. Incorporating peer review in this way also allows students the opportunity to ask the professor about their work in a face-to-face discussion, which would not necessarily happen without a peer review workshop taking place in the classroom. In contrast, when professors assign a paper topic and do not incorporate peer review, the writing process for that assignment lends itself to asynchronous communication, generally, a less-rich communication channel, which is ultimately more demanding on a professor’s time. Multiple peer review workshop examples are included in the paper.

For assessment, professional résumé assignments were given to 250 students in five Business Communication classes with two separate instructors and assessed by four BCOM faculty. No faculty assessed their own students. All five sections included classroom instruction, but only three of the five sections used a peer review workshop. Students in those three sections also completed surveys about their peer review experience. To conclude, qualitative and quantitative results are given.

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For further information contact:
Tatia Jacobson Jordan
University of Texas at Arlington
630 Business Building
Arlington, Texas 76019
Tatia.jacobsonjordan@uta.edu

WHO REALLY READS ONLINE ADS? GENERATIONAL ATTITUDINAL DIFFERENCES TOWARDS DIGITAL MARKETING

*Sandy Domagalski, Northern Illinois University
Ursula Sullivan, Northern Illinois University*

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Companies of all sizes and industry types are increasing the use of digital marketing methods to reach potential customers. The practice has grown from virtual insignificance in the late 1990s to being commonplace today. As referenced by Marketing Land, the Internet Advertising Bureau estimates American companies spent \$59.6 billion on online advertising in 2015—an increase of almost 20% from the previous year (Marvin, 2016). Digital marketing--also known as online marketing and online advertising--has been steady and dramatic with eMarketer predicting that U.S. digital ad spending will eclipse that of traditional broadcast television by the end of 2016 (eMarketer, 2016). “Digital Marketing will start to be accepted by traditionally late arrivals to new technology” said industry expert Rob Felber, President of Felber Public Relations, as quoted by Forbes (Patel, 2014). Felber’s comments note that the medium is now considered by many to be main stream, and with continued growth expected, those waiting to see if digital marketing is here to stay will now appreciate its growth potential. Two critical questions need to be addressed in the growing marketing channel: (1) Who really read these ads? (2) Are the ads influencing the consumers’ decision to click on the ad?

A variety of studies conducted in recent years examining the effectiveness of differing digital marketing strategies have heavily focused on Millennials, largely ignoring Generation X and Baby Boomers (Smith 2011; Tanyel, Stuart, and Griffin 2013). Research confirms the Millennial cohort is far more adept than previous generations at using online technology with members regularly using numerous components of the internet, including blogs, mobile connections, and e-mails, for a wide variety of marketing activities such as signing up for emails and downloading coupons (Moore, 2012).

While Millennials clearly represent the future, the two latter generations hold significant numbers and buying power. There has been little academic research devoted to the subject of digital marketing to Generation X and Baby Boomers. Each cohort has differing attitudes, experiences, values, and behaviors towards the internet. With an ever increasing amount of advertising budgets devoted to digital, it is critical for marketers to determine how to best allocate expenditures among the various components of digital marketing to effectively reach their target audiences.

This study will survey the attitudes of three generations towards digital marketing ads seeking to add findings to the limited body of research currently available on the topic. The specific advertising to be examined are three of the most popular elements of digital marketing: display ads, paid search ads, and social media ads. The generations covered represent the three largest population groups in the United States: Millennials, Generation X, and Baby Boomers.

The study addresses the following broad research questions:

- (1) To what extent are consumers taking notice of the three prevalent types of digital advertising and does it vary by generation?
- (2) Do these types of digital advertising influence the consumers’ buying decisions and is there a difference among generations?

By surveying the members of the Millennial, Generation X, and Baby Boomer generations, the findings of the analysis will identify the current attitudes and preferences of each cohort towards the three key online advertising methods identified above. With online advertising growing at a rapid pace, the results will help marketers and e-commerce retailers better target segments of the population based on generational differences for their products and services. The next step, therefore, to execute the study of individuals within these generational cohorts and determine which ads appeal the most to each group.

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For further information contact:
Ursula Y. Sullivan
Northern Illinois University
Department of Marketing, College of Business
128 Barsema Hall
DeKalb, IL 60115
815-753-6285
usullivan@niu.edu

A PERFECT FIT - PERSONALIZATION VERUS PRIVACY

Joni R. Jackson, Chicago State University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Improvements in technology have allowed firms to collect massive amounts of data that “promise a future [of] perfectly personalized experiences” (Falcon & Hamamoto, 2017). Through this data, companies may come to know people as well as their best friends do. How comfortable do people feel about companies collecting and using their personal data? On the one hand, people seem willing to share intimate, personal data (Carr, 2015; Ng, 2014), particularly if they receive something of value in exchange. On the other hand, people express concern about what happens when their personal data is collected and used (Rainie & Duggan, 2016). Indeed, there are certain tactics marketers use that can make people feel “creepy.” Moore et al., (2015) described “creepy marketing” as marketing that is invasive (e.g., stalking) and makes people feel uncomfortable. These invasive tactics may feel less creepy if people have experience with a company (e.g., a favorite brand).

In this study, people will be presented with three vignettes:

Vignette 1: Imagine that your favorite brand creates a profile that describes you based on your answers to a short survey about your lifestyle, personality, and shopping habits. Your brand really knows you well because your profile describes you just like your best friend would. Only you and your favorite brand can see your profile.

Vignette 2: Imagine that your favorite brand creates a profile that describes you based on information they have collected about your lifestyle, personality, and shopping habits. Your brand really knows you well because your profile describes you just like your best friend would. Only you and your favorite brand can see your profile.

Vignette 3: Imagine that your favorite brand creates a profile that describes you based on information they have collected about your lifestyle, personality, and shopping habits. Your brand really knows you well because your profile describes you just like your best friend would. Anyone can see your profile.

In addition, people will be asked three questions about their concerns about privacy, their feelings about companies sharing their personal data, and their beliefs that a favorite brand is like a best friend. They will be asked to provide information about their age, gender, ethnicity, education, and income.

We will examine how comfortable people feel about their favorite brand’s use of their personal data. Further, we will examine the extent to which concerns about privacy, feelings about companies sharing their personal data, and beliefs about friendships with brands allow us to predict responses to the vignettes. And finally, we will explore differences that emerge based on age, gender, ethnicity, education and income.

If people are not concerned about privacy, we predict that their responses to the three vignettes will be similar. Yet, if they are concerned about privacy, we predict that they will be less comfortable with Vignette 3 than with Vignette 1. Relationships with one’s favorite brand may be a moderating factor. When a favorite brand is like a best friend, the brand’s collection and use of people’s personal data may be less likely to trigger feelings of discomfort. Finally, we will explore differences that emerge based on demographics. We are interested in exploring whether privacy concerns are greater among members of ethnic minority groups or people with lower incomes. These populations have reported greater concerns about the collection and use of their personal data (Madden, 2017); members of these populations may be more concerned about being the target of profiling.

More information about people leads to more sophisticated insights and thus opportunities to personalize the design of product or service offerings. However, the increased collection and use of people’s data may heightened their concerns about privacy. The insights that we glean from this analysis may help inform companies’ decisions as they seek to balance personalization and privacy.

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For further information contact:

Joni R. Jackson
Chicago State University
9501 S. King Drive, BHS 414
Chicago, IL 60628
773-995-3951
jjacks78@csu.edu

INSTAGRAM PICS AND OBJECTIFIED CHICKS: EXPLORING CROSS-CULTURAL REPRESENTATIONS OF FEMALE BODIES ON BRANDED SOCIAL MEDIA

Anna Pristach, Loyola University Chicago
Jenna Drenten, Loyola University Chicago

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Traditional advertising media (e.g., magazines, television, movies) influence how women view their bodies (Grabe, Ward, & Hyde, 2008), particularly the objectification of women's bodies in fashion advertising (Perloff, 2014). While previous studies on traditional advertising media are insightful, they do not account for the prevalence and importance of social media among today's adolescent and young adult consumers. Indeed, previous studies find young female social media users are particularly susceptible to negative body image concerns (Prieler & Choi, 2014). Exposure to ultra-thin media models increases body image concerns among women, but in contrast, exposure to average-size models created a sense of body relief among participants (Halliwell, Dittmar, & Howe, 2005). Thus, diverse body representation is healthier for consumer well-being, yet no studies to date explore how women's bodies are represented on branded social media. Building on previous research, the purpose of this study is to explore representations of women's bodies in visually-driven social media marketing for popular fast fashion brands, across cultures. Specifically, we aim to answer the following research questions:

1. To what extent are women's diverse body types represented in social media marketing images targeted toward young female fast fashion consumers across cultures?
2. How are women's bodies portrayed through social media marketing images targeted toward young female fast fashion consumers across cultures?

Instagram serves as the primary site for data collection given its popularity among teen and young adult women, ages 18-25, who are also the target market for fast fashion brands. To capture a cross-cultural sample, nine fast fashion brands originating in different countries were selected. The brands are as follows, with country of origin and number of Instagram followers noted respectively: Forever 21 (United States, 13.9m followers), H&M (Sweden, 23.3m followers), Zara (Spain, 22.1m followers), Topshop (Britain, 8.3m followers), Primark (Ireland, 4.9m followers), Uniqlo (Japan, 1.1m followers), Miss Selfridge (United Kingdom, 486k followers), Imperial Fashion (Italy, 117k followers), and Lucky Chouette (Korea, 73.5k followers).

In order to capture potential differences in seasonal advertising, we collected data in two time periods: February 2017 and July 2017. For each brand, the most recent 50 posts were captured during each collection period, resulting in a total of 900 posts. Data were manually downloaded, including media (e.g., image, video, boomerang), captions, tags, and hashtags. Similar to previous studies conducted on traditional advertising media and body image portrayals, this study utilized qualitative content analysis methods to code and analyze the visual data for perceived body type of models (Schroeder & Zwick, 2004). Two independent coders examined the data, coding for body type in addition to characteristics of the images (e.g., model positioning, symbolic interaction, body types).

Given the space limitations of this extended abstract, we summarize our preliminary findings briefly. Through analyzing the visual data, two distinct themes emerged. First, a dire lack of diversity exists among the female body types represented within branded fast fashion posts across cultures. Out of the 900 images collected, 696 total female models were present, but only four female models featured were plus-size or curvy. All four models appeared solely in Forever 21's Instagram images. This suggests that Western-influenced brands are incorporating more diverse female body types over other culture's fast fashion brands, but it is still only an extremely small percentage of total female models. Fast fashion brands aim to provide the average consumer with an array of practical, affordable clothing in-stores but neglect to promote their products in all sizes available in social media advertising. Notably, Forever 21 does have a plus-size Instagram page, but this only serves to 'other' these bodies as abnormal.

Second, the nature in which the female models' bodies are being portrayed reinforces objectification and sexualization, particularly among Western brands. The portrayal of women in social media advertising across cultures highlights certain differences from brand to brand as well. Although Western-influenced brands tend to be slightly more inclusive of diverse body types, the female models portrayed tend to be more sexualized in nature, whereas eastern-influenced brands tend to display models more conservatively. However, both Western and Eastern-influenced brands were found to utilize an advertising technique called "dismemberment," a process in which certain parts of the human body are highlighted and, in some cases, even transformed into objects to convey greater sex appeal (Greening, 2006). Brands, such as Forever 21, H&M, Topshop, and Zara, dismember female bodies by cropping pictures and zooming in on body parts that often hold a sexual reputation in society, such as torso, legs, chest, and butt. Along with sexualization and body dismemberment, an additional finding from the data collection suggests a new trend of using food as a fashion accessory. Stereotypical junk foods, known to be high in both sugar and fat content (e.g., pizza, donuts, tacos), are featured alongside images of very thin models. In essence, this advertising confronts female consumers with a paradoxical representation between keeping an "ideal thin body" and indulging in unhealthy foods.

Analyzing cross-cultural representations of women's bodies on branded social media calls to light the importance of understanding all aspects of fast fashion's influence among young female consumers. Our study suggests online platforms (e.g., Instagram) reproduce traditional objectifying and idealized standards for women's bodies. Previous work exploring women's perceptions of body representation in fashion brands tends to skew toward perceptions of high-end, high fashion clothing, such as the brands featured in magazines like Vogue, which young women cannot afford, generally speaking (Thompson & Haytko, 1997). In contrast, fast fashion brands are very attainable by young consumers, who are at an impressionable stage in terms of their body image. Fast fashion brands change and transition according to trends very quickly, and arguably, these brands should be able to use social media to offer inclusive and diverse representations of women's bodies. Our research suggests this is not the case. Despite selling clothes in a range of sizes, fast fashion brands continue to perpetuate body ideals deeply embedded in the fashion industry, regardless of culture. In addition, fast fashion brands' social media pages reflect fantasized lifestyles of indulging in highly caloric foods, while somehow still maintaining the thin ideal. The juxtaposition of food and fashion is potentially problematic in glamourizing thin bodies and relatively less healthy foods.

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For further information contact:

Anna Pristach
Loyola University Chicago
Chicago, IL 60626
(815) 302-4273
apristach@luc.edu

THE INFLUENCE OF COMPETITIVE INTENSITY ON MARKET ORIENTATION

Les Hollingsworth, University of Wisconsin-Platteville

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Market orientation has received extensive attention over the past thirty years. Market orientation is a firm culture that places customer value as the highest priority for the firm (Narver & Slater, 1990). One of the most consistent findings is that top management (TMT) must emphasize market orientation in order for a market oriented culture to take root within the firm (Day, 1994). The lingering question is which factors lead TMTs to emphasize a market orientation. The following working paper offers competitive intensity as a catalyst for TMTs to emphasize a market oriented culture, which subsequently correlates with a higher degree of market orientation adoption.

The paper offers several contributions to our knowledge of market orientation. First, it offers a model for the origins of TMT emphasis on market orientation. Past research on TMT emphasis and market orientation has largely focused on testing the antecedent relationship without exploring the drivers of TMT emphasis on market orientation. Additionally, past models frequently position the competitive environment as a moderator between market orientation and firm performance, often leading to mixed results (Kirca, Jayachandran, & Bearden, 2005).

Second, the paper advances practitioner knowledge of competitive intensity's influence on a firm's marketing culture. A noteworthy body of knowledge connects competitive forces and TMT strategy selection (Webster, 1988) but competitive forces' influence on market orientation as a selected strategy is less established. If the proposition holds true it may reveal competing influences from competitive intensity. For example, a market orientation is presumed to be costly because one of its approaches to customer value is differentiation (Jaworski & Kohli, 1993) yet this approach competes with findings that managers prefer cost-cutting strategies when competition is intense (Song, Calantone, & Di Benedetto, 2002).

The final contribution is the examination of competitive intensity at several levels of analysis. Social science has long known that drivers of behavior can be inconsistent at various levels of analysis (Alexander, 1987), e.g. individual, firm, and industry. Academic papers often avoid this inconsistency by addressing only one level of analysis per study. The current project addresses both the firm and the industry levels of analysis to determine if the influence of competitive intensity manifests differently at these levels. Specifically, objective measures (e.g. Herfindahl-Hirschman Index) and subjective measures of competitive intensity are used to explain the extent of market orientation adoption between industries (e.g. retail versus transportation) and subjective measures of competitive intensity are used to explain differences between firms within an industry.

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For further information contact:

Les Hollingsworth
University of Wisconsin-Platteville/ School of Business
Platteville, Wisconsin 53818
(608)342-6109
hollingsworl@uwplatt.edu

CROSS-CULTURAL DIFFERENCES RELATED TO ORGANIC FOOD CONSUMPTION: THE CASE OF CANADIAN AND FRENCH CONSUMERS

Nataly Levesque, Laval University
Frank Pons, Laval University
Mahshid Omid, Laval University
Mehdi Mourali, University of Calgary

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Both marketers and academicians know that the growing awareness about environmental problems as well as health concerns have brought changes in consumption patterns. In fact, it is well documented that consumers' environmental and ethical purchases account for more than ever in our society (Thøgersen, de Barcellos, Perin, & Zhou, 2015). For instance, consumers' interest in green food products, namely organic food, is increasing significantly (Thøgersen et al., 2015; Żakowska-Biemans, 2011). Although there is no legal definition of organic food (Żakowska-Biemans, 2011), researchers agree on the fact that the product has been independently certified to have been grown free of chemicals. The global organic food market is one of the fastest growing markets of the global food industry (OTA, 2015). It grew by 11.8% in 2016 to reach a value of \$98,478.4 million. The compound annual growth rate of this market in the period 2012–16 was 10.9%. Both the United States and Europe account for 83% of the global organic food market value, with respectively 45.6% and 37.4% (MarketLine, 2017). One reason of this growing market is the increased knowledge about the positive impacts that organic food has on health and on the environment (Zegler, 2016). In addition, the strict regulation in place in many countries, gives consumers confidence that they are buying legitimate organic product. Despite the growing importance of the organic food market, there still is an important concern in the academic and managerial community that consumers don't "walk the talk" and, although positive attitudes toward these products, do not buy organic products. In addition, there are ample variations in the global organic products market with some countries adopting these products much faster than others. This paper aims at tackling these issues by studying the process through which consumers go through when they buy organic food. Moreover, this paper wants to evaluate if, and how, this process is influenced by cross-cultural differences, specifically by comparing the consumers' buying process in two different countries (namely France and Canada).

Past studies have demonstrated that consumers' attitude toward buying organic food is strongly linked to values, lifestyles, green peers and beliefs, namely healthiness, taste and environmental friendliness (Thøgersen et al., 2015). Hence, consumer wants to ensure that their food buying habits are in line with their personal values. As culture can be defined as: "values, beliefs, norms, and behavioral patterns of a national group" (Leung, Bhagat, Buchan, Erez, & Gibson, 2005), it can therefore be considered as a strong influencer of food consumption. Indeed, numerous studies assert that culture is one of the underlying determinants of attitude and behaviors. Thus, culture plays a key role in consumer choices. It is our contention in this paper that culture moderates organic food consumption and may provide additional explanations about the gap between attitude and action in different cultural contexts.

Using country of origin as a proxy for culture, Canadian and French consumers were selected to conduct the research. Using a snowball sampling method, data were collected through an online survey. The participation was fully voluntary. The resulting sample consisted of 3248 participants: 1896 from Canada and 1353 from France. This sample was deemed appropriate for consistent validity and reliability. The questionnaire includes 22 questions measuring five constructs, namely attitudes toward organic food, perceived subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, intention to buy organic food and organic food buying behavior. All scales are adapted from studies applying TPB in the organic market like organic food or other specific markets related to diet and exercising (Chen, 2007; Kellar & Abraham, 2005).

Preliminary results support the validity and applicability of the general decision model based on the Theory of Planned Behaviour in the buying process of consumers in both cultures. However, the strength of several relationships in addition to the role played by each of these variables greatly differ according to the different cultural groups. For instance, Canadian consumers express a more positive attitude, perceive higher subjective norms and Personal Behavioral Control, have a higher behavioral intention, and also buy organic food more

frequently. These findings are in line with the past researches on organic product consumption (e.g. (Magnusson et al., 2001). We also compared the mean scores of underlying constructs of attitude and PBC between Canadian and French consumers. The results indicate that, compared to the Canadian group, French consumers regard organic food as more attractive, healthier, tastier, and with higher value. Furthermore, French consumers are more convinced than their Canadian counterparts that the price of organic food is fair, fits into their budget, is more convenient, certifications are trustworthy, and also, they know a lot about organic food. Therefore, all mean scores of underlying constructs of attitude and PBC are higher for French consumers.

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For further information contact:
Fred Pons
Université Laval
Frank.Pons@fsa.ulaval.ca

PRIVACY IS OVERRATED: MESSAGING IS STILL ABOUT FRIENDS

Nicholas J. Barnes, Nichols College

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

In the world of social media, we are witnessing a tectonic shift towards messaging as the platform of choice. Americans have been using their mobile phones for texting more than talking for several years now. In 2015, Business Insider reported that monthly active users for the top four messaging apps surpassed the top four social networks. This has profound ramifications for marketers, who need to choose where best to spend their advertising dollars in an increasingly stratified digital landscape.

The leading drivers of the shift to messaging are “millennials,” who statistically prefer messaging to calling and spend more time on smartphones sending instant messages than perusing social networks (Newport, 2014). Millennials are typically defined as a nebulous cohort born between 1982 and 2004 and grew up alongside the explosion of broadband internet access (Howe & Strauss, 2009). The question before us then is what makes particular message platforms successful. Are there certain features that drive millennials to these platforms? These answers will help us anticipate which services will remain successful, and which new entrants are worthy of note.

This research theorizes these factors to include: whether peers are using the same platform, if people or brands the user follows are using it, if it has new or innovative features, if it provides auto-delete or encryption, if it has good privacy options, and if it is oriented towards longer posts and video content. A survey was designed and administered to a millennial sample to rate the importance of the foregoing factors. The survey consisted of ordinal scale questions focused on level of concern, knowledge of messaging features, and usage of social platforms/messaging sites. The survey was administered to a convenience sample of college students at two universities in the Northeast over a two week period in the Spring of 2017. The final sample of 558 provides the basis for the findings.

The millennials surveyed overwhelmingly selected “If my friends are on it” as an important factor in selecting a social media platform or messaging app. Over 90% of respondents said it was either very or somewhat important. Likewise two thirds of the sample said people or brands that they follow being on the platform was important. This stands in stark contrast to providing auto-delete or encryption features, which garnered only half of those surveyed.

“If they have good privacy options” was the second most popular factor, with 81% choosing either very or somewhat important. While respondents express what appears to be a clear preference for privacy, the options that would give the most effective protection (automatic deletion, encryption) are not sought after. Furthermore, extremely few respondents report using apps with enhanced security, like Signal, Telegram, or Wickr (3% or less for each). The survey also revealed interesting results regarding “new and innovative features” and how they drive adoption rate, and provides a number of avenues for future research.

The results present some solace for marketers. It indicates that the most popular platforms are likely to remain so for the foreseeable future, and help support existing research about social platforms and critical mass. Millennials still perceive privacy to be important, and platforms that provide insufficient options or fail to retain the users’ trust are vulnerable. That said, as long as social media platforms are oriented around “social,” peer adoption should continue to be the primary determinant for millennials.

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For further information contact:
Nicholas J. Barnes
Nichols College
124 Center Road
Dudley, MA 01571-5000
(508) 213-2169
nicholas.barnes@nichols.edu

IDENTIFYING CHARACTERISTICS AND MOTIVATIONS OF FARMERS' MARKET PATRONS

Theodore Ruffalo, Carthage College
Dennis Kopf, University of Wisconsin - Whitewater

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The number of farmers' markets in the United States has increased from 1,755 in 1994 to 8,669 in 2016. Despite this increase, there is a disparity in the availability of research relating to the demographic makeup of farmers' market shoppers and the influencing factors that cause shoppers to spend money at farmers' markets. The purpose of this research is to improve upon existing measures used for identifying characteristics of farmers' market patrons and their motives for patronizing farmers' markets. It has been noted in the literature that despite the link between availability of fresh fruit and vegetables and health, there is a disparity in the availability of farmers' markets in many areas of the United States (Pitts et al., 2013; Singleton et al., 2015). More information is needed regarding the shopping frequency and food purchases of shoppers as well as shopper motivations so that future farmers' markets can cater to their needs and encourage increased intake of healthy foods (Pitts et al., 2013). This study can contribute to the body of literature regarding the characteristics and habits of farmers' market shoppers as well as their motivations for shopping as recommended by Stobbe (2016). This study can also further inform the development or refining of existing measures of shopper preferences. By identifying the demographic characteristics of frequent shoppers and higher spenders at farmers' market and their motivations, this study can help to fill a gap in the literature.

The research questions guiding this study are as follows:

- RQ1: What are the demographic characteristics of persons who shop most frequently at farmer's markets?
- RQ2: What demographic characteristics are correlated with higher spending at farmer's markets?
- RQ3: What services or goods provided at farmer's markets are associated with shopping frequency?
- RQ4: What services or goods provided at farmer's markets are associated with higher spending?
- RQ5: To what extent does positive affect toward farmers' markets predict the frequency of visits to farmers' markets?

Rational choice theory was used as a framework for understanding consumer behavior as it relates to farmers' markets. Survey data will be collected and analyzed using discriminant function analysis, multiple linear regression, and Chi-square test of association. This study expands the current literature relating to the behaviors and preferences of farmers' market patrons as well as informs the development and refining of measures used to analyze shopper behaviors and preferences. From a managerial perspective, this information will assist farmer's markets in the identification of key characteristics of farmers' markets and their patrons in order to effectively attract and retain patrons.

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For further information contact:
Theodore Ruffalo
Carthage College
2001 Alford Park Drive

Kenosha WI 53140-1994
262-551-8500
truffallo@carthage.edu

ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS: A PROCESS FOR IMPROVING RESEARCH INQUIRY

Craig Gordon, Blueshift Research /Lehigh University
Denise D. Schoenbachler, Northern Illinois University
Geoffrey L. Gordon, Northern Illinois University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

As our ability to gather and sift through massive amounts of data continues to grow, the probability of gleaning breakthrough, or even meaningful, insight seems like searching for the elusive Holy Grail. To address this issue, we can take a cue from Peter Drucker who said, “the most serious mistakes are not being made as a result of wrong answers. The true dangerous thing is asking the wrong question” (Drucker, 2010). Drucker’s caution against asking the wrong question is even more important in this era of data mining, statistical algorithm solutions, artificial intelligence, and the explosion of information on virtually everything. As journalist Warren Berger (2014) suggests, by spending more time upfront defining the right questions, business managers and investors can avoid searching for their Holy Grail in the wrong places. In this paper, we expand upon Berger’s (2014) proposition by introducing a systematic, six-step approach that can be used to improve question definition, avoid five analytical errors, and improve the probability of defining major opportunities or threats earlier.

Paul and Elder (2006) identified six types of Socratic method questions at the heart of critical thinking and in correctly seeking answers. Socrates’ overall purpose was to continuously question answers to make sure they were targeted and useful rather than irrelevant (Andrews, 2010). In an era of data overload, it is tempting to turn to computer algorithms for understanding data patterns as quickly as possible. And yet critical thinking requires understanding which of the following six types of questions is being used in order to determine whether the *correct* information or data is being gathered to answer the question: 1. Questions for Clarification: Sometimes called the “tell me more” type, this is used to prompt respondents to explain the concepts behind their answers. 2. Questions that probe Assumptions: Probing respondents’ assumptions challenges the beliefs about how an issue is framed and are particularly useful in getting to the heart of the matter. 3. Questions that probe Reasons and Evidence: Socrates was very observant when questioning his students. Business managers and researchers can follow his lead by watching for weak reasoning behind conclusions. The weakest reason or piece of data is probably the place where the answer to the question is wrong. 4. Questions about Viewpoint and Perspective: Socrates pushed his students to always figure out the position from which they were making their case and then to view it from a different stance. If one asks about an equally valid viewpoint, it opens the question to information that the original position may have missed. 5. Questions that probe Implications and Consequences: This type of question asks to consider the future implications of information. Do they make sense? Do respondents understand the forecast of what they are saying? 6. Questions about the Question Itself: Some questions throw the ball back into the respondents’ court, turning the question on itself. A long-winded answer to a question may mean the respondent really has questions *about* the question itself and is trying to avoid answering.

Formulating the right questions involves not only understanding the types of questions relevant to critical thinking, but also the risk of error in question formation. Error types 1 and 2 are familiar in the context of basic statistics, but there are five major types of possible mistakes when formulating questions (Sullivan, 2009). A Type 1 error occurs when the question asked is too broad. In a Type 2 error, the question asked is too narrow and does not yield the right universe of data or information. The Type 3 error involves asking the completely wrong question. A Type 4 error occurs when a researcher emphasizes a trivial finding at the expense of focusing on the more important issues. A Type 5 error is known as an error of anticipation. This type of error occurs when the question itself or application of the questions in inquiry leads to responses or results that anticipate the correct response. Knowing and assessing the five types of errors helps prevent developing questions that are too broad, too narrow, trivial, leading, or just plain wrong.

When considering the six types of questions and five possible errors outlined above, the probability and risk of asking the wrong question is clear. Outlined here is a proposed six-step process to help refine questions and therefore, lead to getting at the right answers. Step 1 is to use your gut to determine what’s missing. In an era of data mining, artificial intelligence and dependence on “big data,” the art of asking questions is all but lost. Managers, researchers, and analysts should trust their instinct (gut) first to identify that something is missing or wrong. Step 2 is to draft a question or questions. The initial drafts of a question or questions must be just that; drafts. Often, what should be first drafts of questions are quickly deemed appropriate and used to continue with

research or data exploration. It is at this point where the potential for error in question design is likely. Step 3 uses A/B analysis to refine the question further. This step requires continuously broadening the question(s) drafted in step 2 until the process is no longer useful in defining the line of inquiry. First, the draft question is made broader. Does the broader question seem more useful in focusing on the right pool of data to glean information? If so, the A/B analysis process continues until the broader question does not improve the potential outcome. Then the process involves developing more narrow versions of the question. Is the narrow version a better or worse question? If better, the process continues again until the narrower question is not superior to the one adjacent. At this point, the first draft question has undergone significant refinement. Step 4 works to eliminate bias. It relies on Prospero's Precepts. These eleven rules, pulled from literature, serve as a critical checkpoint in designing questions. Applying Prospero's precepts in this context minimizes the risk of introducing bias in the development and refinement of the question. It also serves as a catalyst for more creative development and assessment of research questions and inquiry. Step 5 is to review Error Types 3, 4 and 5 to determine if applicable to the refined question drafts. With A/B analysis, error types 1 and 2 are essentially eliminated. Errors 3, 4 and 5, however, must be systematically eliminated at this step in the process. This step requires taking the time to engage in reflective assessment of the question(s) against these three error types before moving ahead to search for data. The final step (Step 6) in this systematic process to improve inquiry involves assessing which classification of Socratic question(s) 1-6 are being asked and what type of data will best answer this type of question(s). Understanding the type of Socratic question will help distinguish noise from useful information when sifting through data. Only data that truly answers the type of question being asked is relevant; everything else is noise. When this level of clarity about the universe of data being sought is achieved, it is much easier and efficient to sift through the masses of distracting information inherent in data mining, artificial intelligence, and primary research.

This abstract addresses the research and big data issue of asking the right questions. Based on an understanding of six types of Socratic questions for critical thinking inquiry and the potential for error in designing research or inquiry questions, a six-step process is proposed to improve the development of research questions and data mining or artificial intelligence inquiry. Given the importance of this stage in the research process, taking the time to understand and apply a systematic process for developing better questions will lead to better inquiry, better answers, and better decision making.

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For further information contact:
Denise Schoenbachler
Northern Illinois University
Department of Marketing
Barsema Hall 1280
DeKalb, IL 60115
(815) 753-6225
denises@niu.edu

PREFERENCES OF NUTRITION MESSAGES ON RESTAURANT MENUS

*Rebecca Hochradel, Transylvania University
Zinaida Taran, Delta State University*

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Americans are inundated with news reports about the increase in obesity, heart disease, and diabetes. Many consumers take the grim news to heart and attempt to eat “healthier” diets. Sales of healthy food products are estimated to reach over \$1 trillion by the end of 2017 and consumers are willing to pay more for products that boost health and weight loss (Gagliardi, 2015). Does this health-oriented behavior apply to eating out? While research related to food purchased for home consumption has been conducted, there is a gap in studies dedicated to choices while eating out. Since the average consumer eats in restaurants 4.5 times per week, nutritional choices made on such occasions have the potential of making an impact on health.

To enable better nutritional choices when eating out, accurate and understandable nutrition information must be provided on the menu and the consumers must use such information. Although there has been limited research regarding the use of nutrition information when purchasing food when eating out, no research has investigated the concepts of health consciousness, engagement in preventive health behaviors, and body image as factors when using nutrition information when eating in a restaurant. The focus of this study is to determine if these three factors influence the use of nutrition information when eating out. Additionally, this study investigates the type of message desired when selecting a menu item when eating in a restaurant and the framing of these nutrition messages, including the wording, specific or generic, that is preferable for those consumers who read and use this information when eating out.

In the past few years, various states and localities have enacted mandatory menu labeling for restaurants. Typically, the required information varies from calories only to calories, sodium, fat, and carbohydrates. However, since the inclusion of limited nutrition information on restaurant menus, research regarding the use of nutrition information at restaurants and the choice of eating healthier has produced mixed results (Auchincloss, Giridhar, Leonberg, Ricchezza, Glanz, & Schwarz, 2013; Droms Hatch, 2016). Previous studies regarding the use of nutrition information when eating out have focused on the actual use of the nutrition information and the impact on nutrient intake (see Auchincloss et. al, 2013). Since there is a lack of research on the motivating factors, especially with regard to consumer characteristics and the framing of the nutrition message, further study is warranted.

Among the characteristics that impact if and how consumers take the nutritional information into consideration to make healthier choices are health consciousness and engagement in health prevention behaviors (Jayanti & Burns, 1998). Health consciousness is defined as the awareness one has toward health concerns and the degree to which these concerns are incorporated into the consumer’s daily activities (Jayanti & Burns, 1998). Health conscious consumers consider all their activities in terms of the effect on their health. Engagement in health prevention behaviors focuses on activities that consumers engage in as part of a wellness-oriented lifestyle related to their health (Kraft & Goodall, 1993). Thus, health consciousness and engagement in health prevention behaviors contribute to the formation of consumer’s attitude and may be considered the basis of the consumer’s intention to eat healthy. As a consequence, these consumers are more likely to engage in general preventive health care measures, including the desire to select a healthier item for food consumption when eating in restaurants. These consumers want to select the correct food, or the food that that is most likely to help them achieve the goal of being healthy. The inclusion of nutrition information on the menu will only impact their decision when they have not reached the correct solution based on their previous knowledge. Since these consumers will consistently attempt to select a healthy food item, they will be more satisfied with their behavior. An additional important factor that affects how and if consumers would use the nutrition information is the framing of nutrition message (Buda & Zhang, 2000). For example, positively framed health messages were found to be more effective for prevention behaviors and health enhancing behaviors while negatively framed messages were found to be more effective for disease detection behaviors (Donovan & Jalleh, 1999). This research addresses the gap in literature and investigates the type of nutrition information desired when eating in restaurants.

Another consumer characteristic important to if and how consumers use nutritional information and engage in health-oriented behavior is body image. Body image is a multidimensional construct and includes the assessment (cognitive) aspect and the feelings (emotional) aspects of the body. Body image describes how a person evaluates his or her appearance as well as its impact on psychosocial functioning of the body (see Cash & Fleming, 2002). One's body image shapes his or her view of self, influencing attitude, life activities, and relations with others. Body image and quality of life research focuses on the relationship between a person's body image and his or her psychosocial quality of life. Patient-reported outcome measures have recently been included in research in order to understand the person's point of view as this viewpoint impacts decisions that each person makes (see Matamalas, Bago, D'Agata, & Pellise, 2014). In light of the prior research, body image should play a role in whether and how consumers use nutritional information. This research seeks to close this gap in literature and investigate if a relationship exists regarding the use of nutrition information and one's body image.

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For further information contact:
Rebecca Hochradel
Transylvania University
300 N. Broadway
Lexington, KY 40508
(859) 233-8175
rhochradel@transy.edu

INTEGRATING PRACTICE AND THEORY ACROSS DISCIPLINES: REBRANDING SYSCON INTERNATIONAL

Kimberly Witzel Pichot, Andrews University
Jacquelyn Warwick, Andrews University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The goal of higher education is to prepare students for a career, yet there is a gap between the knowledge students gain and the real-world applications that employers are looking for. According to a 2017 survey of corporate recruiters conducted by the Graduate Management Admission Council (2017), employers want to hire recent graduates with strong oral and written communication, listening skills, and presentation skills. They also address the need for teamwork skills and well-developed critical learning skills. This need to blend theory and practice in marketing education and to develop skills of students to deliver better-prepared graduates is well documented, yet delivering such competencies proves to be a challenge for curriculum developers (Shadinger & Toomey, 2014; Ting & Ying, 2012). This paper explores the agency approach to collaborative learning in a new interdisciplinary partnership that bridges the gap between classroom knowledge and the application and reinforcement with a business client. Steps to implementation, along with the benefits and challenges faced by the different entities will also be covered.

Today's competitive environment requires that people with diverse skill-sets and backgrounds work together to find innovative solutions to marketplace problems. Interdisciplinary education is a new concept that teaches students to interact and collaborate beyond their team, creating an agency approach that simulates the business environment. By collaborating and coordinating efforts around one business, students learn to listen to each other, incorporate others' ideas into their projects, and create a unified project where each team works on a piece of the larger project (Bandyopadhyay, Coleman, & DeWolfe, 2013).

Syscon International emailed our School of Business inquiring if we could engage in a company rebranding project with them, which the marketing professors were eager to learn more. Once they had an initial conversation about the scope of the project, they realized that Syscon's request was greater than one class alone could handle. They began to explore which classes would be most appropriate to help Syscon, and reached out to the graphic design department on campus as well. After defining the areas that Syscon was interested in exploring, an agency approach to helping Syscon emerged. When a company wants to undergo a complete rebrand of the organization, a marketing agency will pull a team together that has the appropriate expertise needed to fulfill the client's needs. In a similar manner, the professors pulled four classes and a campus organization together to provide Syscon with the full coverage of their rebrand. These groups were organized as follows:

1. Articulate (Graphic Design business run by faculty and students): Develop three new logos for Syscon and its two divisions that were easy to understand and visually unified as one company.
2. Marketing Strategy MBA class: Create the overall strategies to relaunch the business under a new brand.
3. Graphic Design Brand class: Design new business cards, stationary, and a branding guide for the organization.
4. Advertising class: Create new advertising pieces that were in harmony with the new logo design and fit the marketing plan under development.
5. Social Media Marketing class: Establish best practices for Syscon to understand how they could use social media to promote their brand.

The company's executives came to campus on a number of occasions to educate the students on the company and its product lines, and answer questions along the way. The logos were designed during the first month of the semester, and their MBA students drafted their marketing plans in the first six weeks. The owners of the organization came to an evening presentation of the marketing plan, and listened to four groups present their marketing plans. Syscon gave students feedback, then selected the best marketing plan team to combine the best ideas from each presenting team, and write a final marketing plan. The other groups of students were also present to listen and gain understanding of the concepts they were to incorporate into their work in the second half of the semester. This created a loop into the teams of listening to other teams, evaluating their own process, and incorporating their ideas into the project to create a unified rebranding project.

Undertaking such a large project can be a daunting task for any professor. The extra coordination and meetings to keep all the students on the same track was also a time consuming challenge. As the first attempt and utilizing an agency approach to teaching, there are a number of take-aways. First, the client-timeline and a semester class-timeline don't always coincide. The extra coordination was challenging so we had one faculty member as the point-person to keep communication open with the company along with communicating with all students as the process continued throughout the semester. We found that we were working in silos, taking steps in stages, rather than coordinating on a consistent basis as the semester progressed. Overall, the next time we undertake an agency approach to a project, we will be more strategic, create a shared folder with documents that all students can access, and coordinate each step in more detail with each other.

The students shared their lessons learned through a qualitative questionnaire, answering the following questions: What was the greatest benefit you gained through this experience? What were your greatest challenges? Would you recommend such a project and agency-approach to your peers? The students indicated that their greatest challenge was to learn about an industrial company with two distinct product lines in a short time. Most students had never been exposed to manufacturing, and greatly benefited from the tour of a plant that used the Syscon product. They also viewed the short timeline as a challenge with a difficult task. They reported, in almost a unanimous voice, that although a huge challenge, they had a great learning experience and they would recommend other students to participate in a similar large-scale project. They reported that this project stretched them more than they thought possible, with one student stating, "I discovered I had something inside of me that I didn't know existed."

This study was exploratory in nature with a simple qualitative feedback form. The faculty learned they needed to interact more regularly with each other, utilizing the same agency-style format as the students. The students would benefit from an increased structure with steps and reporting systems throughout the semester. The faculty are creating a formalized protocol that will facilitate communication, transfer of knowledge and information between groups, and provide periodic updates to the client throughout the semester. This interdisciplinary approach to learning needs to be repeated several times to perfect the process and will require several iterations of both reflective learning and structured analysis with the implementation of pre- and post-evaluations of students, faculty, and the client.

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For further information contact:
Kimberly Witzel Pichot
Andrews University
4185 E Campus Circle Dr.
Berrien Springs, MI 49104
(269)471-3107
kpichot@andrews.edu

SALESPEOPLE SERVICE DELIVERY IN THE ERA OF DEMANDING CUSTOMERS

*Omar S. Itani, Lebanese American University
Bert Paesbrugghe, IÉSEG School of Management*

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

On the basis of the Service-Dominant Logic (SDL) and salesperson sales service behaviors framework, this study examines how sales representatives can satisfy demanding customers through after-sales service behaviors. We posit that salespeople, as boundary spanners, have a key role in keeping pace with customer demands and creating value within customer-company relationship, resulting in higher customer satisfaction. Findings show that sales representatives adapt to the level of the demandingness of their customers by the use of different after-sales service behaviors, which in turn are important to drive higher customer satisfaction through the creation of customer value. This study highlights the importance of sales representatives as boundary spanners in driving value and satisfaction in prolonged relationships with customers.

For further information contact:
Omar S. Itani*
Adnan Kassar School of Business
Lebanese American University
Beirut – Lebanon
omar.itani@lau.edu.lb
+961 1786456

Corners for Ideation

Engaging Students in the Ideation Process

Paul M. Lane, UNAN Managua, Grand Valley State University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Many times, in class or in your marketing practice you want to collect a lot of ideas quickly. “Corners,” a brainstorming technique that produces a lot of ideas, is one of the most effective methods. Students work together in small groups (usually four) and the process can be done quite rapidly using only ten or fifteen minutes of class time.

In a time when many business schools want students to construct, this is an activity that can make things happen fast in the classroom. Participants will be engaged and will know how to do something they can take to their place of work, school, organization, or future place of work.

In the classroom, the author leads a lot of creative exercises. The Design Thinking processes are used in Creativity, New Product, Innovation and Marketing Classes. In Design Thinking, we learn a lot about the client or customer and then focus on defining a problem. Ethnographic processes are used to try to see the problems in the customers’ terms

When you have that defined problem, you are ready to try some methods of ideation. the focus will be on one method of ideation called “Corners.” To set up Corners, you need teams of four to six. It does not work well with teams with large variations in size, for example, some with three and some with six. Usually, in the classroom, the author tries for teams of four or five.

In the author’s situation, classes tend have 35 to 40 students in a class so efficient time usage is essential, especially if it is a class that meets twice a week. The teams need to be clustered around something that they can write on. For materials, you will need large sheets of paper, maybe two-by-four feet. The large sheet is important as you are going to try to gather four or five people around one piece of paper and have room for them all to write simultaneously.

You will also need plenty of markers with bold and bright colors. You want the pages to be filled with color and exciting to look at. Assuming the teams are organized, and the students are sitting in teams, you can begin. Be sure each team has their big sheet of paper in the center of their table or space. Each student should have a bright, bold marker.

The first real step is for you to state the problem. Here, you have two ways to go: you can give them a refined problem, or you can give them a larger problem and ask them to take some piece of it. You want them to pull it down to the individual level, if they can.

Ask the teams to write the problem as they perceive it in the middle of their large paper. Encourage them to make it fun. They can decorate the words, write in different scripts, use different colors, and so forth. They should use four or five colors for visual appeal.

Explain to the students how the process will work once you get started. They will write as many ideas as they can in their closest paper corner in 90 seconds and then the paper will be rotated. After the rotation, each person should read quickly what the last person(s) wrote and then write as many ideas as they can from their perspective. Often, seeing someone’s ideas will help stimulate new ideas. This is what drives the whole Corners exercise.

Set the expectation that each team will generate many ideas. Explain that you will be counting the ideas. The author often explains that out of a room of 40 people, he often gets over four hundred ideas. This means, on average, ten contributions per person. Set the expectation of comparing based on numbers.

Share the general rules to be followed. Explain that there should be no need for talking as you are seeking individual ideas. Tell them that there are other processes to draw out the mind of the group but that talking now just slows down the exercise.

Encourage students to write or sketch rapidly. Yes, they can sketch, as well as write ideas. Usually in the beginning, students find writing much easier. Later, they may get more involved in sketching. Be sure that they

are going to write with the colorful markers. This helps them to look back on their work and see how ideas evolved. Encourage them to write in their own section each time.

On cue, let the teams of students start writing and give them 90 seconds. Walk around and encourage the reticent to start writing. After the first ninety seconds, have teams rotate the paper. Be sure that every team rotates. Decide on one way to rotate so that all are rotating in the same direction each time, whether clockwise or counter clockwise

Give them the second ninety seconds and then rotate. Give them the third ninety seconds and then rotate. Give them the fourth ninety seconds. Experience has taught the author to stop after four, but this is your choice. Better not to get them tired on this one exercise. Like everything else, the brain can get tired of trying to be creative. Stopping at 4 rotations also lets you show the student how much you can produce in six minutes (4 times 90 seconds is 360 seconds, or, six minutes).

It is fun to see what the teams have created. Have the teams count the number of ideas generated by each group. Ask a student to write the total for each team on the board. After some positive words of encouragement to those teams with lots of ideas, you can then have the student write down a total for the room. Usually, someone will help do this with their smart phone while you are talking to those teams that produced many ideas. You can lead discussion about the value of the numbers of ideas.

Now, you have a lot of ideas it is necessary to reduce them. There are many ways to select just a few. One way is to have each group pick out the top three ideas looking at the problem statement as they wrote in the center of the paper. Usually having them share their selected ideas is fun and interesting, if you have time in the class.

Whatever method of selection you have used, the closing is important here. Emphasize how this can be done quickly almost anywhere with paper and markers (low cost). Point out one more time how many ideas there are in the room. If you can, refer to some of the good ideas around the room. Stress that this is a quick and powerful way to come up with lots of ideas. Stress that your students should never be without an idea if they know this simple process.

Here is an ideation program that the author and his Colleagues at Applied Global Innovation Initiative have used repeatedly, in different situations. It is one of several forms of ideation that we keep at the ready to use to generate problems or ideas. It fits well in both problem definition and in Ideation, and sometimes can be used to help figure out a prototype.

The important thing is that this process will normally engage all quickly. It usually leads to quantities of ideas. It usually builds the teams you have assigned as they have fun doing this. You can modify to your class, but you're encouraged to try it once with these directions.

Try it. You and the students will like it.

For Further Information Contact:
Paul Lane
Grand Valley State University
Professor Emeritus UNAN-Managua
616-399-9593
lanepa@gvsu.edu

WHEN EAST MEETS WEST: THE CHARACTERISTICS AND MEANINGS OF GIFTS ACROSS CULTURES

Sydney Chinchanchokchai, University of Akron
Theeranuch Pusaksrikit, University of Thai Chamber of Commerce

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Gift-giving plays an important role in a society. Gifts are exchanged between family members and close friends on special occasions (birthdays, Christmas, etc.) and are given as tokens of affection to romantic partners (Shen, Wan, & Wyr, 2011). For consumers, a romantic relationship is much more significant than a relationship with a friend or a coworker (Kenrick & Trost, 1989). Consumers use gifts to satisfy and endure a romantic relationship. Different kinds of gifts serve different purposes in a romantic relationship. For example, gifts such as chocolate and roses are frequently exchanged as a form of symbolic communication to convey love to one another (Belk, 1979). However, some gifts (e.g., matching clothes, couples necklaces) are customarily shared to announce the relationship to the world (Huang & Yu, 2000).

The gift-giving process is laden with cultural meanings (Beichen & Murshed, 2015). It is extremely important to understand gift-receiving behaviors across societies and cultures because individuals' reactions to the gift may vary from one culture to another. Cultural differences in norms, values, and overt behavior are widely recognized (see Kitayama & Cohen 2007). The differences can be representatives of different cultural backgrounds (Shen et al., 2011). The most studied research area in cross-cultural differences is the difference between Easterners (Asians) and Westerners (North Americans). One of the most pervasive differences between Asians' and North Americans' social motivation and behavior is reflected in the manner in which individuals view themselves and their relation to others (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Asians (Easterners) have *interdependent self-concepts* that emphasize the connectedness between themselves and others. In contrast, North Americans (Westerners) are inclined to think of themselves independently of others (*independent self-concepts*). This exploratory research examines the differences in characteristics of gifts between Western and Eastern cultures based on the recipient's perspective.

The preliminary study was conducted among students from both the US (N = 69) and Thailand (N = 77) to understand what kinds of gift would individuals in different cultures perceive as good, appropriate gifts versus bad, inappropriate gifts in general. In total, respondents wrote down 409 good gifts and 440 bad gifts. The open-ended answers were coded. For the American respondents, gift cards were considered as a good gift by highest number of people (10.8%), whereas Thais considered a doll as a good gift (9.93%). The second best gift for American was money (cash) (9.6%) versus a watch for Thais (9.57%). The third best gift for Americans was cloth (8.4%) and cell phone for Thais (8.51%). As for gifts that they considered bad gifts. For both cultures, clothing was considered as a bad gift by highest number of people (18.87% for Americans and 14.56% for Thais). The second worst gift for Americans was socks (14.47%) and dolls for Thais (13.29%). The third worst gift for Americans was a gift card (8.18%) and miscellaneous snacks for Thais (11.39%).

Next, the study examined the characteristics and meanings of a perfect gift in Western and Eastern cultures. We used the critical-incident technique to collect information from the respondents. This technique provided a flexible format for respondents to freely express themselves. In total, we had 185 respondents from Thailand (N = 89) and the US (N = 96) participated in the study. The respondents described the perfect romantic gift that they would like to receive and explain the reasons. Content analysis was performed by coding the reported circumstances, types of gifts, occasions, feelings, and reasons. The results showed that the respondents thought of a perfect gift as something that the giver put time and effort into finding, making, or even wrapping the gift. The perfect gift does not need to be of a great monetary value but it must represent the work and intention of the giver. In case of a romantic relationship, the gift needs to represent the memory that reminds them of the relationship with their romantic partner. To some, the gift may be the liaison between both parties and fulfill the relationship. One main difference between Westerners and Easterners was the element of surprise associated with the gift. The American respondents highly emphasized that the perfect romantic gift must be a surprise gift or something they did not expect to receive, whereas the Thai respondents did not mention anything about surprise. The other difference between Westerners and Easterners was the emphasis on experiential versus material gifts. The

majority of American respondents considered experiential gifts (40.7%) or DIY (Do it yourself) gifts (29.7%) as perfect gifts, whereas most Thai respondents placed more emphasis on material gifts such as jewelry (26.1%) or other usable gifts (not specified) (18.2%).

Gift-giving is a way to strengthen the relationship between individuals. In a romantic relationship, it is also a way to make the relationship endure and increase the survival rate of the relationship (Huang & Yu, 2000). Gift exchange is widely used to strengthen a relationship around the world. As companies become more multinational, understanding gift-giving as well as characteristics and meanings of gifts in different cultures will help marketers come up with strategies to promote their products and services, especially during special occasions worldwide such as Christmas, New Year, Birthday, Anniversary, Valentine's Day and White Day in Japan and South Korea.

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For further information contact:
Sydney Chinchachokchai
University of Akron
Polsky 569D
University of Akron, Akron, OH 44325-4804
(330)972-5136
schinchana@uakron.edu

THE INFLUENCE OF SELF-EFFICACY THROUGHOUT THE SALES PROCESS ON SALESPERSON JOB SATISFACTION

Kevin Celuch, University of Southern Indiana
Chad Milewicz, University of Southern Indiana
Michael Williams, Oklahoma City University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Salespeople face growing competitiveness and complexity in their roles to foster value-creating exchanges between and within organizations (Dixon & Tanner, 2012). These changes are influencing the sales process (Plouffe et al., 2013) as well as the underlying nature of the sales function (Dixon & Tanner, 2012). This can all put stress on salespeople, leading to outcomes such as salesperson burnout and turnover that are costly and harmful to individuals and organizations (Low et al., 2001). One way to enhance salesperson retention, productivity, and performance is to increase a salespeople's job satisfaction (Pomirleanu & Mariadoss, 2015). The current research builds on extant research examining role and individual antecedents to job satisfaction. Specifically, it develops and introduces a multidimensional conceptualization of salesperson self-efficacy and integrates it with the body of research examining salesperson job satisfaction.

Whereas most studies utilize global measures of self-efficacy (e.g., Sujan, Weitz, & Kumar, 1994; Plouffe et al., 2013), we conceptualize self-efficacy in regards to market intelligence and relationship-building capabilities. In this way, we are able to examine self-efficacy throughout the sales process and provide a more detailed and informative analysis of how perceived self-efficacy influences salesperson job satisfaction.

Self-efficacy refers to the extent to which an individual judges that they are capable of organizing and executing actions required to achieve a specific type of performance (Bandura, 1986). Social cognitive theory proposes that efficacy plays a central role in regulating motivation and performance (Bandura, 1986). Bandura (1986) argues that a multidimensional task-domain requires a multidimensional analysis of self-efficacy since a strong efficacy in one area may not necessarily be associated with strong efficacy in another. The sales process is such a domain. It involves multiple phases, and different capabilities are important at different times in the process (Plouffe et al., 2013). This is the basis for proposing a multidimensional conceptualization of self-efficacy in a sales context. Here, we consider salesperson self-efficacy in relation to two broad behavioral capabilities utilized in the sales process. First, we consider market intelligence capabilities. Second, we consider relationship-building capabilities.

Market intelligence capabilities involve generating and disseminating relevant information related to customers, products and competitors (Kuester & Rauch, 2016). Jaramillo and Marshall (2004) characterize market intelligence tasks as prospecting techniques and as asking questions during a sales presentation. Extant studies tend to use a global self-efficacy construct when studying marketing intelligence capabilities. These global measures try to capture efficacy in understanding, prioritizing, and articulating customer expectations. They also try to capture one's ability to effectively seek out information, understand customer expectations, and perform well. Building on the reasoning represented in these and other studies, we propose using prospecting self-efficacy and needs assessment self-efficacy as two distinct efficacy constructs related to market intelligence capabilities in the sales process. Prospecting self-efficacy captures tasks a salesperson performs to understand, prioritize, and utilize information on potential customers. Needs assessment self-efficacy captures tasks a salesperson performs to better understand the needs that are relevant to a potential customer and relating that information to possible benefits or solutions to offer

The Selling Oriented – Customer Oriented (SOCO) concept (Saxe & Weitz, 1982) informs our development of facets related to relationship-building self-efficacy. This concept describes relational selling activities as reflecting a mindset that helping customers is of foremost importance (Saxe & Weitz, 1982). Salespeople build and sustain relationships with behaviors that support ongoing communication, insure that promises are kept, and build trust in the salesperson and the selling organization. Building upon the customer orientation and relationship selling research streams, we propose using communication self-efficacy and follow-

up self-efficacy as distinct constructs related to relationship-building capabilities in the sales process. We conceptualize communication self-efficacy as reflecting a salesperson's confidence in establishing customer trust, maintaining open communications, and communicating clearly. We conceptualize follow-up self-efficacy as reflecting confidence in one's ability to determine if additional opportunities exist after the sale and establishing or enhancing customer satisfaction.

In the next phase of this research involves measuring these facets of our multidimensional conceptualization of salesperson self-efficacy and exploring the value of utilizing this conceptualization within a basic salesperson job satisfaction model. We plan to explore a base model, wherein intrinsic motivation has a direct, positive influence on salesperson job satisfaction and role ambiguity has a direct negative influence on job satisfaction. Additionally, role ambiguity partially mediates the intrinsic motivation-job satisfaction relationship (Low et al., 2001; Grant et al. 2001). Within this model, we expect that the components of market intelligence self-efficacy will positively moderate the intrinsic motivation-role ambiguity relationship. We further expect that the components of relationship-building self-efficacy will positively moderate the direct relationship between intrinsic-motivation and job satisfaction. This next phase of the research will also include expanding on the theoretical reasoning behind these expectations.

Conceptualizing and empirically testing a multidimensional conceptualization of salesperson self-efficacy can provide salespeople and sales managers a more fine-tuned method for increasing salesperson job satisfaction. This can make recruitment and training more efficient and reduce the negative consequence associated with salesperson turn over and burn out.

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For further information contact:

Chad Milewicz

Romain College of Business/University of Southern Indiana

Evansville, IN 47712

(812) 464-1937

cmmilewicz@usi.edu

THE SHARING ECONOMY AND THE AUTONOMOUS AUTOMOBILE: REVOLUTIONARY TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENT MEETS CAUTIOUS MARKET ACCEPTANCE

Vijay Kumar Krishnan, Northern Illinois University
Ursula Sullivan, Northern Illinois University
Tim Aurand, Northern Illinois University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The technology making the sharing of automobiles and other consumer goods and services possible has served as only a precursor to the next step in automotive sharing – autonomous, or self-driving, vehicles. By nearly all accounts autonomous driving will bring with it major changes in not only automotive mobility but a host of societal norms. Social transformations involving a host of elements within the sharing economy, the livability and environment awareness movement, connectivity, networking, and personalized consumption, among others will undoubtedly be impacted by this technologically advanced form of transportation.

Sharing today is made possible by a growing host of services powered with mobile technology and a consumer base with a need for services but declining interest in product ownership and ownership's inherent costs. Be it hospitality and dining (CouchSurfing, Airbnb, Feastly), retail and consumer goods (Tradesy, Neighborgoods, SnapGoods, Poshmark), media and entertainment (Amazon Family Library, Wix, Spotify, SoundCloud, Earbits), or transportation (Uber, Lyft, Getaround, Sidecar, RelayRides), the sharing economy allows for affordable access and a means for groups and individuals to make money from underused assets (The Sharing Economy, 2017).

The impetus for sharing is a combination of social demand and the technology making it possible. A study by PwC found that eight percent of all adults have participated in some form of automotive sharing alone, and one percent have served as providers under this new model. About one third of consumers surveyed indicated that the auto industry yields too much waste. A passenger can read email in transit and be “productive” – but a driver behind the wheel can't, or shouldn't (The Sharing Economy, 2017).

As a result of this growing demand, particularly among Millennials, revenues associated with mobility services – a term that covers everything from Uber to traditional taxis and buses – totaled \$5.4 trillion in 2016 (the worldwide auto industry took in just \$2.3 trillion) (Bigelow, 2017). By 2025, the global market for automated-driving technology could exceed \$35 billion – twice as much as for 2020 (Wilson, 2017), and autonomous vehicle sales could reach 21 million units by 2035 (Johnson, 2017). One study posits that cost advantages of vehicle sharing over private ownership in North America will be so great that “mobility as a service” will account for 95% of the passenger miles driven with just 10 years (Ferron, 2017). A 2017 report from the global consulting firm Strategy Analytics predicts that, once they mature and achieve widespread use in 2035, Level 5 (fully autonomous) vehicles will be an economic powerhouse rippling through both the business and consumer sectors and could generate as much as \$7 trillion in revenue by 2050. The scope of these changes, wrought by what the report's author calls “the Passenger Economy,” cannot be overstated (Bigelow, 2017).

The key to the availability of autonomous driving vehicles is the technology being developed, in many cases cooperatively, by auto manufacturers, ride sharing firms such as Uber and Lyft, and technology giants such as Google, Intel, and Apple. Research initiatives currently underway throughout the industry aim to move firms as quickly as possible through the levels of technological advancement necessary to reach the fully autonomous vehicle envisioned by both automotive executives and consumers.

The primary target market for autonomous cars is not necessarily the same as the target market of the typical new car buyer or even ride sharing patron. Autonomous cars are being built with a younger market in mind, a market perhaps with a greater FOMO (Fear of Missing Out), more of an attachment to technology, and far less interested in the satisfaction associated with auto ownership. “Nearly all boomer high-school students had their driver's license by the spring of their senior year; more than one in four teens today still lack one at the end of high school,” Tingwal (2017) writes. “In conversation after conversation, teens described getting their license as something to be nagged into by their parents—a notion that would have been unthinkable to previous generations.”

These motorists viewed the automobile trip as a social setting within which mechanical demands became a distraction, a nuisance, and possibly even an embarrassment. (Gladwell, 2017).

This study intent is to measure the acceptance of driverless car technology among various generations, including those of Millennials, Baby Boomers, and Xers. We anticipate that more Millennials will embrace the technology than will Baby Boomers; however, we do expect that Generation X members will differ mostly based on the level of general technology acceptance.

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For further information contact:

Ursula Y. Sullivan
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, Illinois 60115
815-753-6285
usullivan@niu.edu

TRENDSETTING AND FACE CONSCIOUSNESS AMONG YOUNG ADULT CONSUMERS IN CHINA, KOREA, AND US

Seung-Hee Lee, Southern Illinois University, USA
Jane E. Workman, Southern Illinois University, USA
Kwangho Jung, Seoul National University, Korea

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The cultural context of consumer behavior is an increasingly important variable because of the global economy (de Mooij & Hofstede, 2002). Success in global business may well depend on understanding how cultural values influence consumer decision making, particularly for the trendsetters within each culture. Identifying and targeting trendsetters may allow international marketers to more precisely target this influential segment of the consumer population and develop culture-specific marketing strategies. Previous research has studied trendsetter characteristics such as vanity, public self-consciousness, and brand consciousness (Workman & Lee, 2011a; 2013) but has neglected to look at face consciousness as an important consumer variable. High face consciousness is associated with concern for appearance, engagement in activities to boost or maintain face, and purchase of brand name products (Bao et al., 2003; Wong & Ahuvia, 1998)—all characteristics that are likely to be associated with trendsetters. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine trendsetting and face consciousness among, and within, a sample of young adult consumers from three cultures (China, Korea, US). No research has compared these variables among and within these three cultures.

Conceptual Framework: A conceptual framework outlines the main constructs or variables being studied and the proposed relationships among them (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The conceptual framework of this study includes the constructs of cultural values, fashion adoption, trendsetting, and face consciousness. Hofstede's (2001) theory of cultural dimensions supports and informs this research.

Theory of cultural dimensions. Hofstede's (2001) theory of cultural dimensions helps explain how differences among three cultures may influence fashion adoption, trendsetting and face consciousness. Hofstede's six cultural dimensions are individualism (China–20; Korea–18; US–91), indulgence (China–24; Korea–29; US–68), long-term orientation (China–87; Korea–100; US–26), masculinity (China–66; Korea–39; US–62), power distance (China–80; Korea–60; US–40), and uncertainty avoidance (China–30; Korea–85; US–46). Compared with the US, China and Korea rank much lower in individualism and indulgence but higher in long-term orientation and power distance. Compared with Korea, China and the US rank much lower in uncertainty avoidance and higher in masculinity. Therefore, because of these cultural differences, fashion adoption, trendsetting, and face consciousness may differ among a sample of male and female Chinese, Korean, and US college student consumers.

For example, China and Korea differ greatly from the US in individualism and indulgence suggesting that Chinese and Korean students may score lower on trendsetting because trendsetting is an individual and somewhat indulgent activity. Being a trendsetter (i.e., among the first to adopt an innovation) is one way of creating uniqueness, important in individualist cultures but not in collectivist cultures. Thus differences in trendsetting are predicted among the three cultures. One study (Workman, Lee, & Jung, 2017) found that Korean and US students did differ in trendsetting.

China and Korea differ from the US in power distance (inequalities among people) suggesting that differences in face consciousness may occur due to hierarchical versus egalitarian cultures. China and Korea also differ from the US in long-term orientation (past, present, and future concerns) suggesting that Chinese and Korean students may recognize the potential of new products from a long-term perspective.

Compared with Korea, China and the US are lower in uncertainty avoidance. High scores on uncertainty avoidance reflect opposition to innovation while low scores indicate a willingness to accept new products, thus, differences in trendsetting may be predicted among Korean, Chinese and US students.

Compared with Korea, China and the US are higher in masculinity meaning both cultures are competitive and success-oriented. Therefore, differences in face consciousness (more likely to engage in activities to maintain face) may be predicted when compared with Korea.

Fashion adoption model. Marketers can target a segment of the population with greater precision during each stage of the fashion life cycle using time of adoption as a method to segment consumers (Brannon, 2010). Workman and Lee's (2017c) fashion adoption model provides a method to segment consumers into four groups based on time of adoption: trendsetters, early adopters, late adopters, and reluctant adopters. The ability

to identify trendsetters is important because when trendsetters notice the potential of new products, they communicate this potential to others which enhances acceptance by later-adopting consumers.

Trendsetting. Batinic, Wolff and Haupt (2008) developed the Trendsetting Questionnaire as a measure to identify trendsetters. Trendsetting is a dispositional construct that “refers to individuals who are among the first to adopt an innovation and then communicate this effectively to others” (p. 88). Within a particular domain (e.g., fashion), trendsetters watch carefully for the introduction and potential of new products and communicate this potential to others. Identifying and targeting trendsetters may be a means to increase sales by speeding up adoption and diffusion of new products. Although no research has examined trendsetters and face consciousness, trendsetters have been found to have characteristics that are shared with consumers with high face consciousness such as materialism and brand consciousness (Workman & Lee, 2011b; Workman & Lee, 2013; Zhang & Cao, 2010).

Face consciousness. Scant research attention has examined face consciousness as a factor in consumer decision making (Bao, Zhou, & Su, 2003). Face consciousness refers to individuals’ “desire to manage their face so as to present themselves in a favorable way in social encounters” (Zhang & Cao, 2010, p. 323). Consumers with high face consciousness are also concerned with their appearance, engage in activities to elevate face, and are likely to purchase brand name products (Bao et al., 2003; Wong & Ahuvia, 1998). Differences were predicted in face consciousness among trendsetting groups because trendsetters score higher on vanity and public self-consciousness than later adopters (Workman & Lee, 2011a).

Hypotheses. The purpose of this study was to examine trendsetting and face consciousness among, and within, a sample of young adult consumers from three cultures (China, Korea, US). No research has compared Chinese, Korean and US college students on fashion adoption, trendsetting and face consciousness. Based on Hofstede’s (2001) theory of cultural dimensions and Workman and Lee’s (2017c) fashion adoption model, differences were predicted between Chinese, Korean and US students’ fashion trendsetting and face consciousness. The conceptual framework for this study provided the foundation for proposing three broad hypotheses (more specific hypotheses will be developed later):

H1: Chinese, Korean and US young adult consumers will differ in trendsetting.

H2: Chinese, Korean and US young adult consumers will differ in face consciousness.

H3: Trendsetters within each culture will differ from later adopters in face consciousness.

Method

A questionnaire will contain demographic items plus measures of trendsetting (Batinic, Wolff, & Haupt, 2008) and face consciousness (Tse, 1996). The questionnaire will be pretested after being translated into Chinese and Korean by the widely used back translation method (Green *et al.*, 1980). Participants in this study will be approximately 200 Chinese, 200 Korean, and 200 US university students. Data will be collected in large lecture classes from Chinese, Korean, and US university students. Participants will circle a number on a 7-point scale (7=strongly agree; 1=strongly disagree) to indicate degree of agreement with each item. Data will be analyzed using descriptive statistics, Cronbach’s alpha reliability, MANOVA/ANOVA, and SNK post hoc tests.

Implications

Factors affecting consumer decision-making are becoming more complex and require more research attention as the consumer market becomes more globalized. Marketing implications will be provided for Chinese, Korean, and US young adult consumers--an important global market segment for many products. Understanding consumers’ cultural differences will contribute to marketing success. Theoretical implications and suggestions for further study will also be provided.

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For further information contact:
 Seung-Hee Lee
 Southern Illinois University, Carbondale
 shlee@siu.edu

STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF MARKETING RECONSIDERED

Scott R. Swanson, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Prior to taking the principles of marketing course, undergraduate business students were surveyed to determine their perceptions of marketing. Content analysis was conducted as it is a powerful data reduction technique that is unobtrusive, useful in dealing with large volumes of data, and provides a pragmatic and flexible approach to develop and extend knowledge. The findings provide a vivid portrait of current student beliefs. Distinctions between business majors and non-business majors, as well as across business majors on the categories that emerged from the analysis are identified. The study also 1) explores how the methodological approach may, or may not, impact overall findings, and 2) how student prior exposure to marketing in an educational setting impacts, or not, their perceptions of the field. Being aware of students' preconceived perceptions can aid marketing instructors in ensuring that classroom instruction addresses misconceptions and reinforces relevant viewpoints.

A basic tenet of the marketing discipline is to know your customers. In the educational setting, one set of customers are the students we seek to educate. As such, the instructor must understand current student knowledge of the subject matter to allow for any needed customization of the content. Although historical data can be beneficial, this study provides instructors of the principles of marketing course with current information regarding students' changing perceptions about the marketing discipline. As such, this study reexamines and extends (i.e., larger sample size, additional questions to better conduct analysis, methodological changes) prior research. Detecting shifts in students' attitudes and knowledge helps education professionals stay in touch with changes, thus increasing the professor's ability to appropriately respond pedagogically. The findings associated with the current study provide insights that should allow the professor to make improved decisions regarding content focus in the course to provide a better education for students.

For further information contact:

Scott R. Swanson
Management and Marketing Department/ University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire
105 Garfield Avenue
Eau Claire, WI 54702-4004
(715) 836-5127
swansosr@uwec.edu

THE (FLAWED?) MARKETING OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Héctor R. Lozada, Seton Hall University

Gary H. Kritz, Seton Hall University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

An integral part of the integrated marketing communications mix is public relations, or our ability to communicate our image and our company's values and beliefs to our stakeholders. In doing so, we oftentimes contribute significantly to discussions of important and timely issues, engage others in debates, or remove our organizations from controversies. Our aim here is to address how an issue that almost unanimously unifies the scientific community has become controversial to the point where it may significantly impact the marketing of certain products given the intensity of the discourse in the public sphere. Our main thesis is that marketing, specifically principles of positioning and communication strategies are responsible for the opening salvos on the "war" on science that has led some to invalidate scientific findings on climate change and global warming.

First, our presentation will first provide a historical context to the debate. We will look at the original use of the term *global warming*. Next, we will address climate change and how the (semantic) controversy between global warming and climate change started, ultimately deteriorating into a political controversy. We will discuss how the polemic has influenced public opinion, and, in turn, how business organizations have responded to it. We will explore the role of government officials in creating and perhaps manipulating public opinion. We will also discuss how general public opinion directly affects how companies react and how it has affected how political candidates market themselves and their campaigns.

Finally, we will discuss the short- and long-term repercussions that this controversy is having on our business, political and regulatory systems. We will explore the role that marketing communications may have in sorting out the issues and we will close by submitting directions for future research in the area of public policy and marketing communications.

For further information contact:

Héctor R. Lozada

Stillman School of Business

Seton Hall University

South Orange, NJ 07079

973-761-9259, Fax: 973-761-9217

lozadahe@shu.edu

CUSTOMERS' PERCEIVED EXPERIENTIAL VALUE ON POSITIVE EMOTION, MEMORY, ATTITUDE, AND LOYALTY: CASE OF ONLINE SHOPPING MALL AND SOCIAL COMMERCE CONTEXT

*Jung Kook Lee, Indiana University Purdue University Columbus
Yongki Lee, Sejong University*

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The emergence of the Internet has been regarded as the greatest technological advancement. The rise of the Internet has created opportunities for organizations, and has changed the business landscape of e-commerce. The e-commerce is an online market, which has been growing rapidly and changing business patterns over the past several years. E-commerce has changed the business pattern with manufacturers, distributors, and customers using the Internet as a useful tool for communication. By using the Internet, a firm could conduct two-way communication, offer reviews, campaigns, feedbacks, and other relevant content to consumers, connect and engage with them (De Valck et al., 2009; Long, 2011; Gillin, 2009).

These days, the rise of social networking sites (SNSs) and the emergence of Web 2.0 technology have led to a novel electronic commerce known as social commerce (Hajli, Mohana, Powell, & Love, 2015). Social commerce has developed the way how individuals communicate with their colleagues and friends on social platforms. It has brought new developments to e-commerce. The popularity of social technologies and platforms is one of the main reasons for advancement in this area (Liang & Turban, 2011). These developments attract individuals to come online and have interactions with their peers on social platforms such as online communities. The social connections and interactions of people on the Internet, especially in social networking sites, the main focus of SNSs (Fue, Li, & Wenyu, 2009). The commercial impact of social commerce will soon influence more than half of all retail transactions and is expected to reach \$2 trillion in the U.S. alone by 2016, according to a report by Forrester Research (Mulpuru, Sehgal, Evans, Poltermann, & Roberge, 2012).

Variety of mobile devices and services are being spread based on smartphones and SC (social commerce). In particular, the SC services play an important role in building consumer's shopping experience as well as online shopping mall. Thus, this study examines the effect of perceived experiential value (utilitarian and hedonic value) on emotion, memory, attitude and loyalty in SC and online shopping mall context. In order to achieve these purposes, the author developed several hypotheses. The data will be collected from 400 customers who have purchased the products or services in SC and internet shopping mall and it will be analyzed with SPSS and AMOS.

For further information contact:

JungKook Lee

Indiana University Purdue University Columbus (IUPUC)

CC 140 4601 Central Avenue

Columbus, Indiana 47203

(812)348-7254

llindgren@csbsju.edu

TRADITIONAL AND NONTRADITIONAL HOUSEHOLD LIFE CYCLES AS PREDICTORS OF LEISURE PURCHASE

Annie E. Mackowick, Otterbein University
Michael A. Levin, Otterbein University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The concept of the household life cycle has been explored in a variety of settings and approaches. The household life cycle incorporates three variables, including (1) age, (2) marital status, and (3) presence of a child in the home (e.g., Du & Kamakura 2006; Wells & Grubar 1966; Wilkes 1995). Most attempts have focused on a traditional approach, which excludes several stages such as single, between ages of 35 and 64, and no presence of a child in the household. Also, household life cycle as a predictor variable has not been included in models that examine leisure purchase.

Other demographic variables from models associated with leisure purchase are included in this paper. These variables include working status, home ownership status, and income. Ownership of a recreational vehicle was added. The dependent variable, purchase, is conceptualized here as the amount spent on a leisure activity; specifically, season tickets to a major sports league team.

Data is provided by a professional sports league team located in the upper Midwest. The data includes demographic and purchase information for each subscriber. Initially, there were 8,500 observations with 110 independent variables. Consistent with theory, the number of observation was reduced to 2,799 and seven independent variables. Formally, the model test appears as $Total\ Amount\ Spent = \beta_0 + \beta_1 (Household\ Life\ Cycle) + \beta_2 (Number\ of\ Seats) + \beta_3 (Estimated\ Household\ Income) + \beta_4 (Home\ Ownership) + \beta_5 (RV\ Ownership) + \beta_6 (Upgrade\ Purchase\ Type) + \beta_7 (Renewal\ Purchase\ Type) + \epsilon$

With total amount spent as the dependent variable, the household life cycle as well as estimated income, home ownership, number of cars owned, RV ownership, and purchase type (i.e., upgrade, renewal, new) are tested as predictors of season ticket purchases using ordinary least square linear regression. A correlation analysis is used along with statistics associated with description, variation, and location.

Hypotheses for number of seats purchased, estimated household income, home ownership, RV ownership, and repeat purchase are supported as predicts of the amount spent of season tickets. Additional analysis found support for sex and including of working adult or adults. While the hypothesis for home ownership is supported, the hypothesis was in the opposite relationship. Home ownership shows a negative relationship on the amount spent on season tickets.

There appears a lack of statistical support for stages of the household life cycle. Briefly, some of the stages included few observations. Also, the data are not normally distributed. Indeed, most observations are centered in a few stages.

Managerial implications to these findings include the acquisition of new data and opportunities for new promotions. Obtaining data on RV owners is an attractive venture, seeing as RV owners spend \$386.78 more than other season ticket purchasers. A limited time offer season ticket package with an extra seat at a promotional price exclusive to repeat customers is also a profitable idea, seeing as number of seats purchased and repeat purchases positively affect total amount spent on season tickets.

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For further information contact:

Michael Levin
Otterbein University
1 S Grove St.
Westerville, Ohio 43081
(614)823-1299
mlevin@otterbein.edu

SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS' EFFECTS IN MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS: AN INITIAL EXPLORATION

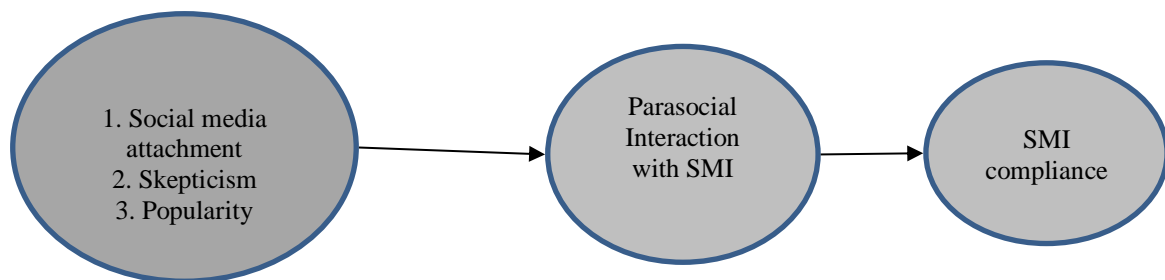
Ainsworth Anthony Bailey, University of Toledo
Alexandra Domrose, University of Toledo

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Social media influencers (SMIs) are consumers with large followings on social media that are being used by marketers to promote their brands and engage other consumers. Marketers use these influencers in a number of ways, including product placements, where they highlight brands in Youtube videos and Instagram posts, and brand engagement or awareness campaigns (Mediakix.com, 2016; De Veirman, Cauberghe, and Hudders, 2017). Steimer (2017) reports that they are also being used in gift-giving to promote different products as gifts during gift-giving seasons. This element of brands' digital marketing strategy is referred to as influencer marketing and has varying definitions, though they converge on a common theme: using consumers to influence other consumers' attitudes, opinions and behaviors. The consumers who are used in influencer marketing by brands are referred to as social media influencers, and their use has become global, including in countries such as China, where they are called *key opinion leaders* (Steimle, 2017), and India (Sudha and Sheena, 2017).

Despite the increasing focus on influencer marketing, in general, and social media influencers, in particular, there has been little academic reason on this phenomenon, though research has emerged (e.g., De Veirman, Cauberghe, and Hudders, 2017; Goldring and Baiyun, 2017). This paper represents an exploratory investigation of this topical method of marketing communications and reports on a study that addressed the issue of the use of social media influencers by marketers. We develop a conceptual model that highlights that there is a mix of individual difference factors (social media attachment, SMI skepticism, relationship proneness, and general online social interaction propensity [GOSIP]) and SMI-related factors (perceived trustworthiness, perceived expertise, and popularity) that combine to influence consumer response to SMIs. These factors influence parasocial interaction with SMIs, as well as susceptibility to their influence. Parasocial interaction with SMIs also impacts susceptibility to SMIs' influence. Susceptibility to SMIs' influence and parasocial interaction with SMIs both impact SMI compliance. The latter, SMI compliance, relates to the extent to which consumers are likely to follow recommendations from SMIs, share the content they produce, and purchase products that they promote. This study reported here assessed the impact of social media attachment, skepticism, and social media influencer popularity on parasocial interaction with SMIs, and its subsequent impact on SMI compliance.

Figure 1. Partial model of social media influencer effects tested in study



Data to test the model in Figure 1 were collected in an online survey, based on a snowball sampling technique that has been used in prior research (Park, Shin, and Ju 2015). Students enrolled in business classes in a business school in the Midwest USA were provided with the link to the questionnaire created with Google Forms. In exchange for extra course credit, they took part in the survey then recruited other participants by passing along the link to the questionnaire to other participants. As a result, 219 completed responses were obtained, after deleting incomplete questionnaires. The majority of the participants (57%) were female and in the age range 21-25 years (48%). Twenty-nine percent reported spending 6-10 hours each week on social media platforms, while 27 percent reported spending 0-5 hours.

The questionnaire contained items related to the variables in the model in Figure 1. The measure of social media attachment was based on the scale developed by VanMeter et al. (2015), and used six items of their subscales related to how much social media affirmed and enhanced a person's life. SMI skepticism was measured using the Bailey and Kalaian (2004) scale items as a proxy; and SMI popularity was measured by a single item: "This social media influencer is very popular." Parasocial interaction with SMIs used a scale proposed by Labrecque (2014). All items were measured on 7-point Likert scales anchored by 'Strongly disagree' and 'Strongly agree.' SMI compliance was based on a 3-item composite scale, with items anchored by "Impossible" and "Extremely likely" (e.g., How likely is it that you would share content that was provided by this social media influencer?). In order to answer the questions related to SMIs, participants read a definition of SMI and was first asked whether they had ever heard the term prior to taking part in the study. They were then asked if they followed SMIs and, if so, how many. They based their responses to SMI popularity and SMI parasocial interaction on a prompt that asked them to think of the last time that they interacted with an SMI (described as doing things such as watching a video, viewing posts on Instagram, reading a tweet or retweeting a tweet, reading a blog, or commenting on a post by a SMI) and to use that SMI as the basis for responses to these questions.

First, some 63% (37%) reported that they had (had never) heard the term social media influencer prior to taking part in the study. The majority (55%) reported, however, that they followed SMIs, with 23 per cent of respondents following five or more SMIs. Participants were asked to list their top two or three reasons for following social media influencers. The lead author then read all the responses and identified each discrete reason provided. Each discrete reason was regarded as an appropriate unit of analysis in a content analysis to classify the reasons (e.g., Gremler and Gwinner, 2008). Initial analyses suggests a variety of reasons, including: SMIs are funny and interesting, they are entertaining, they are trustworthy, they provide information on products and trends, and for motivation. Even though Facebook was the social media platform used most by participants (81%), Instagram was the social media platform on which most respondents who reported following SMIs followed SMIs (55%), then Facebook (40%). Participants reported that they followed SMIs that discussed fitness the most (56%), followed by beauty (48%), health (44%), and fashion (41%).

A series of multiple regression analyses using IBM SPSS v23 was carried out to test four hypotheses (H1-H4). H1 theorized that social media attachment is positively related to parasocial interaction with SMIs. This was supported ($\beta = 0.24$, $t = 2.75$, $p < 0.01$). H2 suggested that SMI skepticism is negatively related to parasocial interaction with SMIs. This was not supported ($\beta = 0.05$, $t = 0.52$, $p > 0.05$). H3 argued that SMI popularity is positively related to parasocial interaction with SMIs. This was supported ($\beta = 0.34$, $t = 3.90$, $p < 0.001$). Finally, H4 proposed that parasocial interaction with SMIs is positively related to compliance with SMIs. This was also supported ($\beta = 0.64$, $t = 8.92$, $p < 0.001$).

Social media attachment and SMI popularity have an impact on SMI parasocial interaction, which impacts compliance with SMIs. These variables, then, can be used in the segmentation and targeting of consumers, when it comes to using SMIs to engage consumers. However, based on initial results, they should take into account the platforms that the SMIs used to engage consumers, as against the platforms that their consumers use. They may want to focus on the use of SMIs who are using Instagram to connect with other consumers. In addition, not all product categories are created equal, based on these preliminary results, as fitness and beauty top the list of product categories for which participants follow SMIs. Brand managers of fitness and beauty products would be wise to utilize SMIs in the promotion of their products.

For further information contact:
Ainsworth Anthony Bailey
College of Business & Innovation/ University of Toledo
2801 W. Bancroft St.
Toledo, OH 43606
419-530-2240
ainsworth.bailey@utoledo.edu

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE MIDWEST MARKETING ASSOCIATION, OR THE TRANSFORMATION OF AN ACADEMIC ORGANIZATION: FROM MIDWEST TO GLOBAL

Frederick B. Hoyt, Illinois Wesleyan University

PANEL POSITION PAPER

The Midwest Marketing Association started over 40 years ago as the marketing wing of the Midwest Business Administration Association. The participants on this panel joined between 20 and 30 years ago, and watched and helped as the MMA evolved from a Midwest-based organization to the Marketing Management Association, an international organization only partly nested in the MBAA International (as the umbrella organization also morphed from regional to international). All served as presidents of MMA; all are Fellows.

This transition can be explained using some of the tools of our profession—repositioning, the “wheel of retailing,” differentiation, augmented product and services. When I joined the organization in 1987, the “official” MMA was a decade old. I became a member of the board in 1990, and served in a variety of positions (remember the newsletter? I was editor) until finally accepting a nomination to the officer track, which then involved five years of indentured servitude, including a frightening year as Treasurer. I think MMA has cleaned up my year by now.

The MMA had just begun its ascent from a Midwest-based organization to one striving for more than regional standing. Two major movers in that repositioning were Paul Thistlethwaite of Western Illinois University (as the long-time executive director, who provided continuity) and John Sumney, of Southern Illinois University, who provided leadership in developing a strategic plan.

The organization had just started a fall faculty conference, an outgrowth of the fall leadership meeting, initially held at Sumney’s place on the Lake of Egypt. That original meeting spawned a belief that MMA could hold a teaching-oriented meeting; Peter Gordon masterfully arranged the fall faculty conference in St. Louis, that gradually outgrew the spring meeting, and began to move, first around the Midwest, and later (fulfilling a proposal Peter made that was rejected by the Board to move offshore; he wanted Mexico. We went to Porto Rico) around the country.

The fall conference, the name change from Midwest Marketing to Marketing Management (we kept the same initials!), the addition of a Journal of Marketing Education (to replace the somewhat pretentious Journal of Midwest Marketing), the growth of teaching and other awards, can be put in the context of the wheel of marketing. The organization became more professional as well. Parenthetically, nearly all the regional organizations (Southern for example) grasped the effort to move up the wheel.

The change was also reflected in the broadening of the officer pool—from Illinois, Wisconsin, Ohio and Missouri as far West as Nebraska—to the far reaches of the continent. Presidents from California are not in the Midwest. Texans are not in the Midwest. Floridians are not in the Midwest (at least not in the winter). Louisianans are not in the Midwest. But then, the Midwest isn’t the Midwest anymore.

It wasn’t always like it is.

For further information contact:
Frederick Hoyt
Illinois Wesleyan University
PO Box 2900
Bloomington, Illinois 61702
(309)556-3128
fhoyt@iwu.edu

WHAT WE SHOULD BE TEACHING IN MARKETING: THE FUTURE, BUT I'D SETTLE FOR THE PRESENT

Frederick B. Hoyt, Illinois Wesleyan University

PANEL POSITION PAPER

In 2000, in honor of Y2K, I proposed to Mike D'Amico that MMA enlist some speakers to inaugurate the new century, and to predict where marketing might go. That assignment proved much to challenging, but it would have been fun to have predicted what might happen, say, in 18 years, so that at the 2018, we might have been able to look back and compare and contrast what had, indeed, transpired.

Undoubtedly, we would likely have egg on our face, or crow on our plate. What was, isn't, and what is, will be—that's one of my business policy predictions, and that's probably more Delphi than more specifics would be, and general enough to likely to be true.

I'd love to be able to be teaching about the future of marketing, but my crystal ball is clouded, and what I see is likely to be as flawed as correct. It's been a while since I've taught the principles class, and I wonder what I'd do today, but here's what I do to adapt my strategy class to futurology:

- 1) I've introduced the need to take an online course somewhere, somehow, giving a skill I think our students need, but we don't deliver. As a small, liberal arts college (in name), we offer a major that is thin. Having come back from conferences ashamed and angry at what we don't teach, I've required as an add-on some kind of skill certification. The goal is partly to close gaps in our curriculum. The secondary (and long term goal) is to tell students not only are they not done learning, but there are ways to learn apart from school. Especially skills.
- 2) The current iteration is Excel. but the next iteration might be presentation skills. I've asked students how they learned to use Power Point. Monkey see, monkey repeat was the answer. It shows in the quality of their presentations.
- 3) I've decided the "best business book" needs to be on the list of "must reads." The choice this year was either *The Upstarts* a wonderful look at the disruptive innovation caused by three major asset-light global companies, or the frightening *Machines, Platforms, and Crowds*, an examination that explains why artificial intelligence is no longer artificial!
- 4) If I can't introduce the future, I can at least introduce the present: the Wall Street Journal's 15 weeks for \$1 prompted a "matching gift from Fred." You buy, I repay you the \$1. The real repayment came from a student who emailed, "This really helped in my interview for graduate school." Sadly, only about 15% of the students took advantage of this "never again at this low price" (free) offer.

I'm not sure what I would do in principles, but here are some parameters my "new course" would have to embrace:

The Internet. At the dawn of the internet age, one Harvard press book captured what it might do in the title: *Blown to Bits*. Think about what it has "blown to bits"—the notion of location, price, time, product assortment—and the control of communication and promotion. That's no longer in the hands of marketers.

Global. Low price anywhere is low price everywhere. Innovation anywhere is innovation everywhere. Long product life cycles? History.

The Millennial generation? Every business is looking for ways to capture this elusive segment—including this elusive segment. If there's an answer, not even Nick Foles has found it.

I could go on and on, but close with the paraphrased words of Lusch: Traditional Marketing is dead, though service dominated marketing may still be alive. I'd love to prepare students for the future, but it'd help if we could teach them about the present.

For further information contact:
Frederick B. Hoyt
Illinois Wesleyan University
State Farm Hall 314
Bloomington, Illinois 61702
(300) 556-3128
fhoyt@iwu.edu

WHAT WE SHOULD BE TEACHING IN MARKETING: HAS MARKETING REALLY CHANGED ALL THAT MUCH?

Lori L. Lohman, Augsburg University

PANEL POSITION PAPER

Some of my colleagues on this panel will be discussing what should, or shouldn't, be included in the Principles of Marketing course. I would like to take a little different approach and discuss this question from a historical perspective of the evolution of arguably the most seminal textbook on this subject: the now-deceased "Basic Marketing" text by E. Jerome McCarthy. First published in 1960, the book was finally discontinued by McGraw-Hill Irwin, with the nineteenth (and last) edition published in 2013. Resources were then redirected to the "Essentials of Marketing" text, now in its fifteenth edition, with the most recent copyright of 2017. A quick perusal of an early edition and the latest "Essentials of Marketing" edition is telling in what has been added or removed.

The sixth edition of "Basic Marketing," published in 1978, was part of a four-year publishing cycle. Topics included in this edition were remarkably similar to those included today in the "Essentials" text, with a few notable exceptions. An entire chapter was devoted to demographics in the earlier edition, but was merged into the consumer behavior chapter in the latter. Likewise, an entire chapter on segmenting markets was combined into one chapter on strategy, segmentation and positioning. Separate chapters on packaging and branding, goods classes and strategy planning were merged, as were retailing and wholesaling. Separate pricing chapters on cost-oriented pricing and demand-oriented pricing were merged into one chapter entitled, "Price Setting in the Business World." Finally, stand-alone chapters on strategic planning, planning for international markets, and planning and implementing marketing programs were either removed or consolidated into other material, as dictated by organizations such as the AACSB. Chapters that did not exist in the sixth edition include an entire chapter on publicity (earned, owned and social media) and on ethical marketing.

While content can and should evolve to meet the needs of a changing market, it is challenging to discern what has lasting value versus what is "fast fashion." As one of the gateway courses to a business major, and perhaps to a marketing major, the principles course must impart all the wisdom a business person needs to know in a short period of time. At the same time, this course must also provide an underlying foundation for students planning to further their studies in marketing. Consolidation can and should continue to happen in textbooks, but especially in a principles course, I believe stand-alone materials should be supplemental to the text, rather than a replacement for one. These materials can be used to interject new concepts, as they are much more flexible than the publishing cycle for a textbook.

Finally, as marketing professors, we must always consider what skills are required for the job. Consider this job description for a marketing director: "The Director of Marketing Services is responsible for providing both services and counsel to the corporation and its operating divisions on marketing problems. Services include advertising, public relations, market research, sales analysis, and long-range planning. In addition to the basic functions outlined above, the Director of Marketing Services makes contributions in such areas as economic forecasting, the development of marketing plans, product design, new product and market development, acquisition studies, sales quotas, corporate identity, and financial reports..." Sound like a familiar marketing job description? It's from September of 1966.

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For further information contact:

Lori L. Lohman
Augsburg University
376 Hagfors Center
2211 Riverside Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55454
(612) 330-1220
lohman@augsborg.edu

WHAT WE SHOULD BE TEACHING IN MARKETING: THE CURRENT AND WHAT, LONG IN TOOTH, BELONGS IN THE PAST

David William Wallace, Illinois Wesleyan University

PANEL POSITION PAPER

The theme of this panel concerns what should be included in the marketing curriculum that currently is not. Now, this raises an important question. A typical semester lasts around sixteen weeks, and a typical Marketing Principles course is three credit hours. The knowledge, and to some extent skills, that can be taught within these constraints is finite. Thus, this is a zero sum game. If we are to add more up to date content to such classes, then something must likely be removed. In this paper, I would like to argue that some marketing curriculum has grown stale. Many of the marketing concepts introduced in Principles classes are little changed in decades, and in some cases, more than a century. To what extent do these concepts remain relevant or even accurate today? Ultimately, are there some lesson units that should simply be dropped from our curriculum to make room for more current content?

Take, for example, the classification of products into convenience, shopping, and specialty categories; this dates to Copeland, 1923. These categories do remain relevant, but their implications for advertising, pricing and distribution decisions are all but self-evident. Is it worth spending class time on concepts that students should already know instinctually, and would certainly learn very quickly on the job?

We marketing academics are hopeless kleptomaniacs when it comes to background theory. My own research draws heavily on social exchange theory, transaction cost economics, and agency theory. However, the notion that the purpose of promotion is to inform, persuade and remind is ancient. An early reference to these concepts is to be found in Tyler's 1873 history of Scotland, describing the Earl of Bedford's role in advising Mary. Again, it bears considering whether these one hundred and thirty-five-year-old ideas while perhaps still relevant, should remain in our curriculum.

I take a stronger stance regarding the Boston Consulting Group's Growth Share Matrix. This system was originally intended to be a tool for corporate strategy: how to allocate resources to different strategic business units. Yet it tends to be taught in the product management unit in Principles courses. First, this leads to a confusing blurring between products and SBU's—I find myself having to explain that SBU's, instead of corporate subsidiaries, can sometimes also be individual products. More to the point, the Growth Share Matrix can be taught purely as a classification system, stripped of its strategic content. It seems unlikely that a new marketing graduate in her first meeting will ever be asked by a superior "quick, tell me if this product is a question mark or a cash cow".

The product life cycle dates to Vernon, 1966. This was originally conceived as a system by which products are initially designed in developed countries in the North, and make their way to underdeveloped countries in the South (Segerstrom, Ananant, and Dinopoulos 1990). It has been appropriated by marketing to suggest that product categories undergo an inevitable cycle of introduction, growth, maturity, and decline. Apart from its age, I find myself questioning its relevance, and perhaps even its veracity. Consider the internal combustion engine: over a hundred years old, and the automotive industry continues to grow as demand increases in developing countries. Some product life cycle! It is difficult to see how this cycle is useful in strategic marketing considering the wildly different length of the life cycles, if they exist at all.

I could go on and on. The theory of channel power and control (Bucklin, 1967). The consumer buying decision process (Howard and Sheth, 1969). The process of product adoption which descends from Bass's 1969 diffusion of innovation model (itself derived from earlier epidemiological research). Open up any Marketing textbook, and you will find material that is getting long in the tooth. I don't claim to have the answers here, but as stated at the outset,

if we are going to be adding more current curriculum, some of the older stuff must probably go. We might start with some of the concepts I have discussed above.

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For further information contact:
David William Wallace
Illinois Wesleyan University
State Farm Hall 313
Bloomington, Illinois 61702
(300) 556-3859
dwallace@iwu.edu

WHY WE SHOULD BE TEACHING ENTRAPRENEURSHIP (INTRAPRENEURSHIP) IN ALL OUR MARKETING CLASSES

Tara L. Gerstner, Illinois Wesleyan University

PANEL POSITION PAPER

The new exciting buzz-word in business is “entrepreneurship”. It is what many of our young business students dream of, right? Becoming the next Mark Zuckerberg or Steve Jobs. How do we teach that and does it even pertain to marketing?

When you think of entrepreneurship, most think of innovation, creativity, starting new businesses, or even the art of turning an idea into a viable business opportunity. So how does that relate back to marketing classes? The key is the attributes of being entrepreneurial. All of the skills it takes to be a successful entrepreneur are the same skills we want to teach our future marketers – the ability to sense opportunities, how to be persuasive, how to be visionary in a stagnant world, why perseverance despite setbacks is important, and the need to always be a promoter.

These skills are seen time and time again in rising stars within organizations. These individuals are known as “intrapreneurs”. A relatively new concept for employees of companies that encourage the skill sets seen in many entrepreneurs. These individuals often times are able to spot solutions to problems that others do not even see. They tend to be proactive, innovative and flexible. Applying their entrepreneurial view to processes, procedures and even product development within their organizations. Always looking for ways to improve, create and solve problems.

What do we teach in marketing? Creativity? How to identify and then reach the perfect target market? How to create the most effective marketing mix? How to build the most impactful brand? How to understand the behaviors of our customers? Now imagine teaching all of this to an individual with intrapreneurial skills. Imagine how they quickly they can spot opportunities. How effective they would be in identifying a vision of how to promote the product/service. How they could see the need for improved product or service for that underserved niche market.

So I ask now, why aren't you teaching entrepreneurship in your marketing class? Or at the very least the skill sets we all hope our students have and will most definitely need if they hope to succeed in today's business world.

For further information contact:

Tara Gerstner
Illinois Wesleyan University
PO Box 2900
Bloomington, Illinois 61702
(309) 556-3711
gerstner@iwu.edu

INCORPORATING DIGITAL MARKETING CERTIFICATIONS INTO THE CLASSROOM: BEST PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS AND CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME FOR FACULTY

Todd J. Bacile, Loyola University New Orleans
Scott Cowley, Western Michigan University
William F. Humphrey, Jr., Florida International University
Debra A. Laverie, Texas Tech University

PANEL POSITION PAPER

In this panel session, a team of professors who have successfully built courses to enable students to earn third-party digital marketing certifications (e.g., becoming officially certified in Google Analytics or Hubspot Content Marketing) discuss how other interested instructors can include certifications within their courses. Building marketing course curriculum to include a component that enables students to earn such industry certifications is a useful motivational tool for students, while also being important for students' future career success (e.g., Gibson et al. 2015; Goldring 2017; Staton 2016). Despite the positive aspects of including third-party certifications into curriculum, instructors face many challenges.

The panel participants will discuss lessons learned, best practice recommendations, and challenges for any instructor who is interested in utilizing third-party certifications in their classes. In combination, the panel participants have incorporated multiple digital marketing certifications into their classes, including official certifications from Google Analytics, Google AdWords, Hootsuite, Hubspot Email, Hubspot Content Marketing, Lynda SEO, and Lynda Mobile. The panel participants' use of experiential learning and certifications have also been featured in popular press outlets such as U.S. News and World Reports, The Chronicle of Higher Education, Inside Higher Ed, Huffington Post, and others.

Proposed discussion points will include the following four areas. First, identifying the instructor's role in third-party certifications: where is the value being provided? Second, overcoming the challenge of incorporating certifications using self-paced study versus in-class learning. Third, major considerations for integrating certifications into curriculum, such as timing, grading criteria, and FERPA compliance. Lastly, discussing an alignment of available certifications with skills required by industry and student outcomes.

By highlighting lessons learned by the four faculty members in integrating assessment by certification, panel attendees will learn best practices and learn of steps to avoid any potential pitfalls. Additionally, this pedagogical component will be presented in context with other proven techniques like experiential learning with real clients. Through the facilitation of this discussion, it is hoped more marketing educators will feel confident in the positive outcomes in achieving course objectives and enhancing students' career preparedness.

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For further information contact:
Todd J. Bacile,
Loyola University New Orleans
6363 St. Charles Ave.
Campus Box 015
New Orleans, LA 70118
tjbacile@loyno.edu

POSITIONING OF US MBA EDUCATION: STEMMING THE DECLINE IN INTERNATIONAL ENROLLMENT

Todo Djurovic, The University of Findlay

PANEL POSITION PAPER

In this paper, we will recommend how Thaler's "irrationality" (1991) and "nudges" (Thaler and Sunstein, 2003) can be applied to a problem closer to home that affects the financial well-being of business schools. We will visit the challenge of dropping international student enrollment in the U.S. and potential "nudges" to ameliorate the situation.

According to research conducted by the American Association of College Registrars and Admissions Officers, four out of 10 U.S. colleges reported fewer international applications for the 2016-17 school year (Alpert, 2017). This has been a trend visible at multiple universities across the country, particularly when looking at applicants from India, China and Saudi Arabia, who make up over 50% of all international students in the United States. Seeing a decline in international enrollment is something that many universities saw as a major issue, particularly because of all the benefits international students bring to the United States. Currently, there are 1,078,822 international students in the United States (NAFSA, 2018), who contribute not only with their diversity, knowledge and experiences, but also financially. The financial contribution to the U.S. economy of international students for the 2016-2017 school year was \$36.9 billion and they supported 450,331 jobs. For every seven international students, three new jobs are created in the United States, mainly in the sectors of accommodation, dining, healthcare, clothing, and travel.

Applying Richard Thaler's concepts of "irrationality" and "nudges" to this problem could bring a solution, and we need to examine them and see how they can contribute to stem the decline of international students. Thaler's "irrationality" can be defined as "the tendency of consumers to exaggerate or underestimate reality" (Ghose, 2018). The first irrational assumption would be "every international will be deported". This statement is irrational because it would simply be a very bad business move to deport international students from the US. 450,000 American jobs and at least \$36.9 billion in revenue would be lost, which is just the financial contribution of the international students, and considering the chain reaction a deportation of a million people would cause, and all the possible tourism and trade losses. The United States being the top economy in the world would be reluctant to hurt its own economy. Therefore, the assumption of every international student being deported is indeed irrational.

Our second irrational assumption is that "international students think they might be at risk in the US". In 2017 there was a deadly attack on an Indian student in the US (The Hindu, 2017), and this could cause rational fear of coming to the United States as an Indian student. However, it is irrational to think that something like this would happen to every Indian student in the United States, as this was a single, isolated case. It is safe to say that this country is safe for international students. The third example for Thaler's "irrationality" in connection with international student recruitment and retention is "Equal opportunity does not include foreigners". Many students who come to the United States are being told by their peers that they are not covered by U.S. equal employment opportunity laws, however, this is an irrational assumption, since they are indeed covered. According to EEO law, all employees who work in the United States or its territories, are covered by EEO laws, regardless of their citizenship or work authorization status (EEO, 2018).

Thaler has been a leading proponent of libertarian paternalism, an approach where beneficial changes in someone's behavior can be achieved by minimally invasive and low-cost policies that nudge people to make the right decision for themselves (The Committee for the Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel, 2017). Nudges can be defined as "Positioning cues to guide consumers" (Ghose, 2018). Nudges can be particularly useful for decision making through the model of default options. This same concept can be applied to international student enrollment in the United States, and these "nudges" can be tested whether they work in this particular instance or not.

Picturing the US as a country for "excellent education" could just be one of the nudges. This country has a great reputation for its higher education, with a diploma that is highly regarded and accepted everywhere in the world, and

if marketed correctly to prospective students, it can be a great relief to these students while making their decisions where to go.

Meritocracy, a system where the best of the best are selected and moved ahead based on their achievements, has been enacted in the U.S. for a long time, and it is one of the things the country is the most known for across the world. The United States is one of the few countries where hard work, discipline and dedication really do pay off. An advantage of the American school system over other countries is that this country has the resources to cover research expenses and give monetary incentives to outperform the competition. Having a system like this acts as the best “nudge”, keeping the students occupied and working hard in order to achieve their American dream.

Stemming the decline of international students by applying Thaler’s concepts of “nudge” and “irrationality” is of big importance to many people and sectors inside the country. The question is, will “nudge” work in this context. That is to be tested (Ghose, 1993).

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For further information contact:
Todo Djurovic
The University of Findlay
(419) 721-9020
djurovict@findlay.edu

POSITIONING US PRODUCTS: MARKETING US COUNTRY-OF-ORIGIN IMAGE AND TARGET MARKET CONSUMER ETHNOCENTRISM

Nabarun Ghose, The University of Findlay

PANEL POSITION PAPER

This paper visits 2017 Economics Laureate Richard Thaler's "Nudges" (Thaler and Sunstein, 2003) in the form of positioning in a cross-cultural marketing perspective. It uses US country-of-origin image as a "nudge", or positioning cue (Trout 1969) to guide customers in a target market segment in India that is consumed with "irrationality" (Thaler, 1991) or the tendency of consumers to exaggerate or underestimate reality, as evidenced by consumer ethnocentrism. Richard Thaler won the 2017 Swedish National Bank's Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel. His work is recognized for "irrationality" and "nudging" of the consumer. Thanks to Thaler, these concepts have gained recent renewed worldwide visibility and acclaim (The Committee for the Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel, 2017)

The academic study of anything behavioral generally originates from psychology and anthropology. The knowledge is applied in other fields including, management, marketing, and even medical sciences. They are not confined to behavioral economics and behavioral finance, two fields that may have been reticent at recognizing the importance of incorporating human behavior for better understanding of market activity.

With the continuing confusion and uncertainty about US country-of-origin image globally due to politically induced actions and announcements, particularly since 2016, the impact on potential consumers abroad has been significant. One such target market is India. The Indian market, like many others, can be divided into segments with differing outlook towards USA as a producer and supplier of goods and services and varying levels of consumer ethnocentrism ranging from low to high.

Segment 1: Low Ethnocentrism – Low Country-of-Origin Image

Segment 2: Low Ethnocentrism – High Country-of-Origin Image

Segment 3: High Ethnocentrism – Low Country-of-Origin Image

Segment 4: High Ethnocentrism – High Country-of-Origin Image

Source: Author's findings.

It is important for USA to do better in the Indian market, especially because US has historically faced a significant trade deficit with India for several years in the 21st century so far (Office of the, 2017)

Some nudges or positioning cues that may work on various ethnocentric segments in the Indian market could include, "contributor to increasing quality of life", "law-abiding corporation", and "contributions to nation building in India". These may work to increase US market share in India. We stress on the term "may" because the evidence that "nudge" is highly effective in leading to action on the part of the target market is yet to be ascertained.

Ghose in 1992, in his three-stage model for evaluating markets proposed "consumer sentiment", which is essentially identical to Thaler's "irrationality". Following that, Ghose (1993) showed the relationship of "positioning" ("nudges") with "affect" ("irrationality") among potential buyers in USA of small automobiles in the near future, at a time of fierce competition between US and Japanese automobiles for US marketshare.

Positioning cues or "nudges" were identified from real advertisements in magazines and were incorporated in a survey. Pretest (n=60) and pilot study (n=137) were conducted before the final study (n=248). All respondents were administered questions to measure their responses to positioning cues or "nudges" and affect or "irrationality", in

addition to responses to other components of attitude (Rosenberg and Hovland. 1960). Ghose used real customer data, primary data collected exclusively for the purpose, and conducted rigorous multivariate, univariate, and covariate statistical analysis on the data. That research was the first known study at the time that tested the relationship between “positioning” (nudges) and “cognition” (knowledge), “affect” (irrationality), and “conation” (intent to act) simultaneously.

The research and rigorous statistical analyses conducted by Ghose (1992) on the pilot study showed that there was a relationship between “positioning” (nudges) and “cognition” (knowledge) and “affect” (irrationality) but did not find a strong relationship between “positioning” (nudges) and “conation” (intent for action). Therefore, there was no statistical evidence that supported “positioning” (nudges) significantly impacted behavior either way.

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For further information contact:
Nabarun Ghose
The University of Findlay
(419) 939-3967
ghose@findlay.edu

POSITIONING OF BITCOINS: MARKETING AND DEMARKETING GLOBALLY

Nagma Pokharel, The University of Findlay

PANEL POSITION PAPER

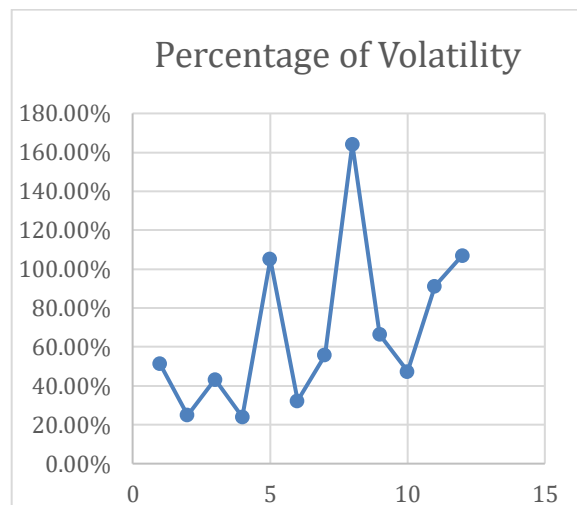
The very first decentralized cryptocurrency, Bitcoins, (King & Nadal, 2012) which are just bits of data, implemented using cryptography and functioning as peer to peer network might be a game changer in the world of centralized currencies. This paper looks into the potential for pegging the Nepalese currency (Nepalese Rupee or NPR) to Bitcoins. Nepal would be interested in avoiding Indian and Chinese hegemony. The Nepalese economy, relying on remittance and foreign assistance might have a better option through the peg regime with Bitcoins in order to decentralize its currency, save time and transaction cost.

This paper will explore the applicability of Richard Thaler’s “Irrationality” (Thaler, 1991) and “Nudges” (Thaler and Sunstein, 2003) in relation to pegging the NPR to Bitcoins because it is wedged by Indian constraints and Chinese influence. The context of Bitcoin in this paper was to overcome Indian financial, economic, and political hegemony as NPR being pegged to the Indian Rupee (INR) since 1993 (Basyal, 2010), NPR is at a disadvantage. Since Nepal is a developing country that has a huge trade deficit, open border with India, among many other disadvantageous factors, Nepal is not independent enough to handle its economic policies in the best interests of itself.

The questions to be deliberated will be how to make it happen, and, on the contrast, how to avoid it from happening if it is only a result of irrationality? The ethical concerns and the social responsibility towards the people of Nepal will be addressed. Thaler’s “Irrationality” and “Nudges” describe why humans behave in an illogical and unreasonable way, which might not be in their best interest, where reality is underestimated and exaggerated (Ghose, 2018).

Why would Nepal consider pegging the NPR to Bitcoins or on the contrary, avoid pegging the NPR to Bitcoins? The charts below show that Bitcoins have been excessively volatile very recently in 2017. Volatility has ranged between around 20% to over 160%!

Month 2017	% of Volatility	Highest	Lowest
January	51.25%	\$1148.60	\$759.37
February	24.85%	\$1194.28	\$956.58
March	43.20%	\$1288.71	\$899.97
April	24.00%	\$1339.14	\$1079.88
May	105.13%	\$2766.56	\$1348.65
June	32.31%	\$3014.29	\$2278.07
July	55.68%	\$3018.54	\$1938.94
August	164.23%	\$4630.73	\$1938.94
September	66.43%	\$4968.63	\$2985.24
October	47.37%	\$6137.83	\$4164.70
November	91.14%	\$11039.76	\$5775.54
December	106.95%	\$19661.63	\$9500.42



Source: Adapted from CoinMarketCap, 2017

“Irrationality” in Nepalese thinking can be studied within the context of Bitcoins. Pegging the currency with Bitcoins would bring global recognition, decentralization, low transaction cost and a time saving system, but there has been a lot of volatility in the price of Bitcoins, which is not controllable, thereby potentially resulting in huge risk to the Nepalese economy. Bitcoins are globally recognized currency where different countries and companies have

already proceeded in adopting the cryptocurrency. So Bitcoins, being the first cryptocurrency, are the hype of the world but there is no guarantee of stability (Kasper, 2017).

“Nudges” in this context of study can be emphasized as Bitcoin being an electronic currency, and, the transactions from it can be done within desired amount of time. As mentioned earlier, Bitcoins promise to enable a time-saving solution to people dependent on inward remittances. When a country relying on remittances needs a lot of time processing the money and the receiver must wait weeks to receive the money, thereby incurring high transaction cost, Bitcoins provide hope for very significantly reducing both, wait time and transaction cost. Total monetary independence can be envisioned as Nepal gets to float freely in the market without any dependence on Indian economy. At this time NPR is pegged with INR in the ratio of 1:1.60 (Pandey, 2014). The NPR would be in real time exchanges with variety of foreign currencies. The currency can be cashed in and out at any time in exchange of Bitcoins because several nations today are ready to adopt Bitcoin exchanges.

Conclusion

Thaler’s nudges could be applied to influence Nepal to peg its currency to Bitcoins. However, there is not enough evidence to this day that nudges result in desired outcomes. Nepal is a small economy and it might be a challenge to adapt itself to the volatility of Bitcoins. There are few regulations in the works towards Bitcoins that are in progress that could establish the nudges work as a fact, but that is yet to be seen in the near future.

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For further information contact:
Nagma Pokharel
The University of Findlay
(419) 494 5856
pokhareln1@findlay.edu

ADVISING STUDENT PROJECTS AND COMPETITIONS: SUCCESSSES AND CHALLENGES

Sarah Rand, St. Catherine University

PANEL POSITION PAPER

Over the past several years, I've had the pleasure of teaching 14 sections of MKTG 3350: Buyer Behavior and Marketing Research. This course is designed so that students can complete a marketing research project on behalf of an external client. The project enables students to address real-world marketing issues while learning the skills necessary to conduct primary and secondary research. Clients benefit by gaining meaningful insights about the customers they serve and recommendations for moving forward in accomplishing their goals. I've learned something new in each of these instances because of the unique dynamics involved in advising student teams. Based on my experience, the key drivers of success in advising these projects include: (1) careful selection and screening of the projects and clients; (2) thoughtful consideration of student's backgrounds to ensure projects align with their interests and strengths; (3) individual coaching from faculty throughout the research process; (4) a variety of smaller assignments for students to practice conducting research across methodologies; and (5) active facilitation of the communication between clients and students throughout the project. The greatest challenges in managing these projects are often related to: (1) lack of student and/or client engagement; (2) infrequent or poor communication among clients, team members, and faculty members; (3) insufficient student and client knowledge of the marketing research process; and (4) inadequate time for faculty and teams to work together.

The most important step in ensuring a successful student and client experience is to carefully select and screen the clients and proposed projects. Engaging partners requires advanced planning and a clear understanding of client expectations. We are fortunate at St. Catherine University to have a Center for Community Work and Learning (CW&L) to help connect us with clients. CW&L connects students in 60-80 courses per year with over 150 organizations in St. Catherine's surrounding community. Prior to being considered for the course, clients are asked to write up a detailed description of their proposed project. I provide them with an application template to discuss the project, potential research methods, confirmation of access to research participants, and a timeline for completing the work. Clients must commit to attending the first day of class and the final presentations. Approximately 4-5 projects are selected (3-4 students per project) in each section. Ideally, a variety of qualitative and quantitative research methodologies will be incorporated. Clients are responsible for providing students with access to participants (and gaining permission to engage them). Students are given an opportunity to review project descriptions before determining which projects they are most interested in working on. I try to match students with projects based on their level of interest and expertise. Students are required to share their rationale for choosing a specific project (ex. aligns with major or professional experience or personal passion). Having multiple clients makes the course management more complex, but it greatly benefits students; they are able to develop expertise through their own project research design, and at the same time learn from other students who are conducting different types of research.

The degree to which clients and students develop a process for communicating has a significant impact on the overall learning and quality of the final deliverable. To start off strong, clients are invited to meet with their student teams during the second or third week of the semester. In the first half of this two-hour client/student class session, I present a detailed overview of the course expectations and give each client the opportunity to discuss their organization and marketing needs. The student teams for each project will have been selected in advance of the session. The second half of this class session is reserved for students to meet with their clients. They have concrete goals for this meeting: identifying the specific research questions, developing an estimated timeline for completing each step in the marketing research process, and establishing a process for client communication and interaction. After meeting with the clients in class, students prepare a research design proposal for the clients to review and approve before moving forward. Students are expected to communicate with clients on a weekly basis and report on the project status and deliverables for the following week. This Client Communication Report is a graded assignment. Teams can decide to have one team member responsible for competing it each week or rotate turns. All team members and faculty should be copied on client communication taking place throughout the term. The broader curriculum focus is on understanding a variety of research methodologies and analysis strategies. Class lectures and assignments supplement the hands on learning happening within each team. We also discuss many examples of what is

involved in each step of the marketing research process. This is an essential part of the learning because students on each team benefit from the shared experiences of collecting and analyzing data. One of the most valuable steps in the project occurs when teams participate in a “dry run” presentation. This practice session provides a rich opportunity for students to refine their presentations and receive direct feedback from faculty and peers. The greatest measure of success takes place on the day of the final presentations. Students are asked about their experience working on the project and clients are asked to discuss how the results and student recommendations will impact their businesses moving forward. Through this exchange, students are able to connect how their work will further the mission of the organization and greater community.

Inevitably, challenges arise as you work with students and clients to navigate the research process and work toward common goals. While non-profit clients are a great fit for student projects, they often lack dedicated marketing professionals and the resources required to successfully engage in marketing research activities. Being spread too thin or little knowledge of marketing activities can prevent clients from being responsive to students. I ask that two people from each organization be assigned to the project and that they both commit to attending the first meeting and final presentation. I’ve had years when no client shows up on the final report out day. Even if the client is well-intentioned and something comes up unexpectedly, this is incredibly discouraging for the students. Enabling students to have a say in which project they work on is an effective motivator, but it may also work to discourage students who do not get their first choice. Since the client projects are determined before the course begins, there are no guarantees that student backgrounds and interests will align well with the client projects. I work to ensure that there are a variety of client projects, with varying research methodologies, so students in each class will have some choice in the project they work on. I’ve learned that privacy issues are a primary concern in conducting client-based research, particularly when dealing with non-profits that may serve vulnerable populations. All personal contact information is managed by the client in order to protect the privacy of research participants. Students do not distribute surveys or have access to personal client information without approval from a faculty member and full disclosure of the student/client relationship. In some cases, students may receive permission to recruit relevant participants they already have relationship with.

From the very first day of class, until the final reporting to the client, faculty must be involved to ensure projects move forward as expected; time for contingency planning is always necessary. There have been multiple occasions when access to the client’s participant population has not worked out as planned. In one case, a survey was distributed to a list of over 2,000 donors and only 13 of them responded. One of the key problems in this situation was that the client included the survey link at the bottom of a monthly newsletter vs. sending out a communication focused only on the research and its importance. Another challenge is managing the timing of each step in the research process. The data collection and analysis phases will differ from project to project; this provides for rich classroom discussions and the opportunity for students to learn from each other. A substantial portion of class time focuses on coaching the teams through the challenges of conducting original research. Some teams tend to have more difficulties than others at various stages of the research process. These difficulties require different levels of faculty support. This can pose a challenge because some teams may feel that they are not getting an equal level of faculty support. Alternatively, some teams maybe feeling like they do not have enough to do because their clients are not fully engaged. Faculty must monitor each client and each team individually in order to work through these challenges. Students’ experiences and work quality are evaluated in several ways, including personal reflection and formal evaluations from faculty, peers, and clients. Project content, ease of collecting and analyzing data, quality of interaction with the client/faculty members, and the team dynamics heavily influence the extent to which students have a good experience. The skills students frequently report gaining from such projects include time management, communication, self-confidence, and proficiency in the field of marketing research. Clear expectations for students and clients, intensive faculty support, and the ability to have a meaningful impact on the client’s missions help to make these projects a rewarding experience for all.

For further information contact:
Sarah Rand, PhD.
Department of Business Administration
St. Catherine University
2004 Randolph Ave. S.
St. Paul, MN 55401
(651) 690-6986
sjrand@stkate.edu

READY OR NOT - #FUTURE

Stephanie Jacobsen, Bridgewater State University

PANEL POSITION PAPER

Today's students are able to be creative, energetic and passionate about their interests. They are focused and ready to learn what they need to know to succeed in the world around them. As faculty, it is our job to help them with this. Teaching does not mean one thing to all people. Some firmly believe college is a place to teach theory and higher-level learning, while others believe it should give students job readiness skills. Still others feel that our job is to make students better world citizens. For some of us, just getting through the theory requires an entire semester, with no room for additional inclusions. While a semester may occasionally feel like an eternity, most professors know that it is rarely enough time to do all of the things we would like to do. So in today's world, what areas should we be focusing on in the principles of marketing course?

Teaching students to be better people- I know what you are thinking. Students are at least 18 before we see them. They are adults, and fully formed. We cannot turn them into better people. However, I would argue this is the perfect time to do just that. The classroom provides us with a time and place to discuss the world around us in a safe environment. Students who may not have been exposed to important world issues can discuss them and learn from both you and their peers. Topics such as discrimination, equality, social identity and ethical behavior all relate directly to principles of marketing. Case studies are one of the easiest ways to tackle tough issues, however, choosing the right case is important. Avoid discussing situations that are either unrealistic or clearly illegal. Instead focus on cases that live in gray areas, so there is not one right answer. Allow students to consider all sides. These can be with simple topics like shrinkage or rebranding, or they can delve deeper with diversity in advertising or tough job decisions. Allowing students to discuss these topics may force them to think from a new perspective: males may not have ever been asked their feelings on male models being photo shopped, and students may not know how they feel about creating a diverse advertisement for a product whose target market is not diverse. These issues impact our students and society as a whole. They can contribute to higher level thinking as well by getting students to be more open-minded, accepting and empathetic.

Projects or in class activities can also focus on important current events or social issues. These activities can be incorporated early on in the semester in order to begin discussing current trends and topics in marketing. Today, marketers have to consider not only their bottom line, or the consumer, but also society. Students need to be also thinking in these terms. By asking students to think about all stakeholders it encourages thinking outside of one's self and consideration of other perspectives. With any example (whether it is a new product launch or a social media backlash), encourage students to view each perspective and consider what was done, what could be done differently and who is being impacted. Marketing class is the time for students to wear many hats, as they will have to do as they grow into consumers, employees, parents, friends, bosses etc. It is also an opportunity to get students out of their comfort zone.

As a millennial myself, I am keenly aware of the millennial inclination to remain "safe." Courses that are predictable and have a predictable format and expectations are easiest to pass for most students. Unfortunately, life is far from predictable. Many students will have jobs that will require them to work with many other team members, or coordinate with other departments. They may have tasks that differ greatly from day to day. Those that cannot handle these changes will be less likely to succeed later on. Keeping students on their toes allows them to respond positively to new experiences and to change and adapt quickly. This is a skill many employers are looking for. This can be done in a class setting by not always telling students exactly what will happen in class every day. They can be informed of the topic or given readings they need, but if you have an activity, case studies, debates, discussions, etc. planned, students will be able to come in and be ready to do whatever you expect without being made aware of the plan. This can also build anticipation for your class, as students will eventually look forward to something new. Another option is to do activities in class that allow for students to think on their feet, or to behave in a way they are not normally expected to. That could be through role playing, games, public speaking assignments and creative

writing opportunities. Another way to do this is to encourage students to think more inwardly. What I mean by that is for students to dig deeper into what makes them individuals. This could be performing a SWOT analysis on themselves, developing their own distinctive competency or working on creating a strong brand identity. All of these things could help them get a job and be more prepared for their future.

Soft Skills-The Principles of Marketing course at many schools is taken by all business majors. This means that many students are in the course because it is required and may not see any use for marketing in their chosen profession. Marketing can in fact give students many of the soft skills they need to be successful on the job market. Skills such as public speaking, professional writing, creativity and interpersonal relationships. These skills are fairly easy to incorporate into coursework. For any activity or project, students should be required to share their ideas out loud with the class. This can be through a formal group presentation of a project, or if an activity is done in groups, each group could share their thoughts in the front of the class. The more practice students have at verbally communicating their ideas clearly, the better they will become at it. This also applies to working with others. The same could be said for student writing. SWOT analyses, mission statements, press releases and a marketing plan are all topics involved in a principles course. Students should be encouraged to write their own samples of these things in order to improve their writing. This can also improve their creativity. The mission statement and SWOT could be for a company they invent, or for a real client. Students could write a press release about themselves from the perspective of the university, or create a marketing plan (or press release) for a new product they have invented.

Relevant theory- Incorporating theory into a principles of marketing class can actually be very easy. Most textbooks are filled with marketing theory that we can share with students through readings, PowerPoint slides, hand-outs, online resources etc. What can be more challenging is getting students to see the importance of learning these theories. Emphasizing why certain strategies make sense, or why what we instinctively believe could work, might not, is very important. This can be done through the typical readings, lectures and exams. Quizzes can also be added to discuss the content or test a student's critical reading. What is most important is for students to have many touch points for the material (as marketers want to have with consumers). The more students are seeing and then using the relevant theories, the more they can understand and appreciate their value. For most business students, this may mean tying the theory to a real-world project so that it feels more relevant to them.

Real-World Projects- As business professors, teaching students' real-world skills is the cornerstone of many classes. There is no better way to do this than with real world projects. The benefits of real world projects are significant, however, so is the workload on faculty. Bringing in clients to work with can be difficult. If you can find clients, students will get experience working with and interacting with a professional, they will learn more about specific industries and be able to learn by doing something that will actually impact a business. If working with clients is not feasible in your class, you can also create projects and assignments that are more realistic. This can be anything from a shark tank scenario where students pitch new product ideas (or make infomercials of these ideas), or students can begin the semester by creating their own company. Throughout the semester everything they learn can be incorporated into this new company. When they are done, they will have learned how a new company establishes their brand from r&d to brand identity to customer service. While this is less realistic than an existing company, using established companies like Nike and Apple does not challenge students to develop their own logos, mission statements etc. By allowing them to create their own business, students are challenged with developing something from scratch, while also being more creative.

Principles of Marketing is an important class for all students and there are many ways to continue to keep it relevant. Whether your focus is on real world skills, society or theory, it is possible to deliver a course that is both interesting, informative and most of all, effective.

Stephanie Jacobsen
Bridgewater State University
131 Summer St.
Bridgewater, MA 02325
508-531-2869
SJacobsen@bridgew.edu

I'M NOT A MARKETER - WHY AM I HERE?

Christopher Jacobsen, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth

PANEL POSITION PAPER

The robots are coming and I am not talking about the robots from the summer blockbuster movies. Robots and artificial intelligence are right around the corner and they coming for our students' jobs. According to the website "Will robots take my job?" somewhere between 85-95% of accounting, auditing and tax jobs will be taken over by robots within the next 5-10 years. So what are we doing to prepare our students for the rise of the robots?

Since accounting has been taught in higher education, we have taught our students the fundamentals: debits and credits, financial statements, how to do audits, tax law etc. We have been training our students to know the facts, the ins and outs of accounting. In other words, we have been teaching our students to do the same things that robots can be programmed to do millions of times faster than even our best and brightest students can. It's a losing battle and for us as professors and educators, we need to shift our focus to get our students prepared for the changing landscape of the accounting profession. Marketing or more accurately the skills that we are teaching our marketing students are what future accountants will need in order to be successful. There are skills that professional accountants have that robots simply can't be trained to do better. Accountants must adapt to the new environment by honing their skills in these areas.

One example of this is with auditing. Robots will revolutionize the way auditors can test financial data. A robot will be able to scan the entire general ledger of publicly traded companies and review every single transaction. A task that would require thousands upon thousands of hours of man power to try to replicate. However what robots won't be able to do is network with clients, develop new business relationships and be considered trusted business advisors. This is where the future of accounting is headed. Accountants will become the leader of businesses trusted advisory circles, a group that will include many other specialized consultants. So accountants will need to develop skills that are not normally a part of the academic curriculum for bachelors and masters in accountancy.

Now more than ever accountants need the soft-skills that are often ignored in accounting class. We as accounting educators are too concerned with getting through all of the rules and regulations, that it can be difficult to find time to mix in a public speaking or critical thinking exercise into the syllabus. Over the Fall 2017 semester my university hosted several professional guest speakers who came in and spoke to our business students. The common characteristic they were looking for in new hires was communication skills. These skills are not currently being taught in accounting classes however other courses, like marketing may already be better positioned to provide this opportunity.

Communication skills are a must have for all business students. Communicating professionally, verbally and in writing is key, whether it be an email to your supervisor, discussing a project with a coworker or calling a client on the phone. Communicating your ideas in an intelligent and professional manner is an important skill that is often overlooked, especially in a day and age where all students are buried in their phones. Marketing can be very helpful for accountants in terms of understanding how to communicate with their target audience. When dealing with bosses and clients, it is important to understand needs and respond quickly. Marketers do this with consumers, yet the process of identifying underlying motivations, providing value and evaluating the outcome is very much the same.

Public speaking is an area that the average business student would pay double tuition to avoid. Accounting students, in particular, assume they will be in the back room crunching numbers and doing taxes. The reality of the profession is that as you become more successful, the more you will be in front of people talking. This can happen in a number of different circumstances from presenting in the office, giving presentations to the public or even something as simple as running a meeting with a client. Like communication skills, presentation skills take time to develop. The best way for them to learn is to have them practice in a variety of classes and in a variety of manners.

Have students present in groups and on their own. Have students present with friends or in randomly assigned groups. The more they are in front of the class, the better off in the future they will be.

Brand building is another area that accounting students do not get enough exposure to. One of the overlooked aspects of a career in accounting, especially public accounting, is that as you move up in your career and become more successful, you will be required to build a name for yourself in the community and marketplace in order to bring in business for the firm. Having the skills to attract new business is one of the most important skills that firms look for in their future partners. Without the ability to properly market yourself and bring in sales, even the smartest and brightest accountants will find their aspirations to become partner side-tracked. Accounting students (and most marketing students) feel that sales is not a job they need or want to be trained for, however creating strong relationships is a crucial part of not only professional employment, but also life. If we cannot prepare our students to network, create relationships and work well with others, we will be limiting their success.

There is a change coming to the profession of accounting, as technology continues to grow by leaps and bounds, it is more important than ever for academia to recognize these changes and to shift its focus. For far too long the soft skills that are so important to the long term success of accounting students have been overlooked in favor of learning rules and regulations, learning that debits are on the left and credits are on the right. The biggest challenge for marketing professors will be to convince all students (especially non-marketers) that marketing is important and relevant for them. The sooner we can get them to understand the necessity of the marketing content, the more they will be prepared to absorb the information. In the end, developing critical thinking skills and adding more marketing skills will be crucial for the career readiness of accounting students.

Christopher Jacobsen
University of Massachusetts Dartmouth
285 Old Westport Rd.
Dartmouth, MA 02747
508-999-9190
U_CJacobsen@umassd.edu