Marketing Under Uncertainty
2021 Annual Spring Conference Proceedings

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Dear MMA Friends,

Thank you for your attendance and engagement of the MMA 2021 Spring Virtual Conference. On behalf of the Board of Directors, we are honored that you are part of the conference. Whether this is your first time or multiple times joining an MMA Conference, we value your contributions to moving the field of marketing forward.

This year has been like no other with the need to pivot to deliver courses and research new approaches to marketing. The positive is that it has provided ample opportunities for research and sharing new techniques in marketing and pedagogy. Although faced with uncertainty, we have learned so much to try to better our discipline and the learning experience.

The MMA conferences are unique in providing an experience that is collegial and open. Through the conference year after year, friendships are formed and connections for research are developed that can outlast time. Every year, I look forward to seeing my colleagues at these conferences to catch up and learn so much.

Conferences are made possible by the contributions and service by so many. It definitely takes a village. This Spring Virtual Conference was made possible by the track chairs that were flexible with the changes while maintaining the quality of the manuscripts. Also, the many reviewers that supported the track chairs through the process. Finally, the conference session chairs that are giving their time to help facilitate each session. To all of you, I am grateful for your time, service and commitment to supporting the spring conference. We would not have been able to kick this off without you.

To the board members, Executive Team and proceedings editors, thank you for all of your support and guidance. Becky Hochradel and Tony Stovall, thank you for serving as conference proceedings co-editors. I am grateful for your quick turn around and flexibility. Also, many thanks go to Lyle Wetsch for communicating the Call for Papers and posting all of the necessary content for the conference. Thank you to the Chad Milewicz, Jeanetta Sims, Gail Zank, Brian Vander Schee, Ursula Sullivan and Susan Geringer for always being there to answer any questions I had about the conference and for the guidance that you provided. I would not have been able to do this without you.

Finally, thank you to all of the presenters and attendees. I am grateful that you are joining us and sharing your knowledge. You are what makes these conferences so collegial and engaging! I look forward to seeing every one again virtually at the 2021 MMA Fall Educators' Conference- October 13-15, 2021!

Gratefully,

Leila Samii, Program Chair

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CONFERENCE BEST PAPER AWARDS

Branding, Strategy & Research
A Survey of Historical Marketing Influences on Artisan Vendors
Aruna Sadasivan, Mary Kay Rickard, Doreen (Dee) Sams, Samuel Mullis

Consumer Behavior Best Paper Award
The Arrival of Self-Driving Vehicles: A Profile of Potential Drivers
Kevin Elliott, Mark Hall, and Juan Gloria Meng

Cross- Cultural, Ethics & Social Responsibility Best Paper Award
Influence of Social Media Factors on Turkish and US Facebook Users
Tugba Bingol, Leila Samii, and Tej Dhakar

Undergraduate Research Poster Award
Examining Disparaging Humor in Advertising Using Biometric and Self-reported Measures
Tabitha Meers and Elias Lignos
Faculty Mentors: Sydney Chinchanachokchai, and James McKelvey

Overall Best Paper for MMA Spring Conference and
Social Media & Digital Marketing Best Paper Award
Connecting Social Media Consumer Engagement and Brand Advocacy Through Brand Involvement: A Case of Competitive Mediation
Brian Vander Schee, Jimmy Peltier, and Andy Dahl

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MAJOR UNIVERSITIES SELLING ONLINE PROGRAMS VIA SOCIAL MEDIA: IS AGENDA SETTING AFOOT?

Lisa Witzig, Colorado State University - Global
Joe Spencer, Anderson University

ABSTRACT

Higher education in America is at a tipping point—only 14% of undergraduates are traditional students attending physical campuses full-time, while enrollment in online programs skyrockets (Betts, 2017). This study tests hypotheses that universities rely on better-known assets in social media to promote their programs, using agenda setting to shift the decision criteria of student customers. This study assesses six universities and 5,993 image posts on Facebook and Twitter dedicated to their online programs over 12 months to determine whether universities are using existing brands to extend their brands to their online programs or pushing features of the online offerings.

INTRODUCTION

Higher education in America is at a tipping point—the traditional, common college student is no longer that traditional or common. While much of America maintains a preconceived notion of the "traditional" college student as 18-22 years old, attending full-time, and living on campus, the numbers show a different picture: traditional students compose only 14% of undergraduates (Betts, 2017). Meanwhile, online programs are becoming mainstream for universities, as more are offering them and many are expanding majors and levels of degrees (Poulin & Strout, 2016). Something has shifted in the academic marketplace, and universities must react to remain relevant. With enrollments of traditional students declining (House, 2018b, Hussar & Bailey, 2019) and online enrollments growing (House, 2018a), universities are scrambling.

HOW CAN UNIVERSITIES RESPOND TO THIS SHIFTING ACADEMIC MARKET?

As the competition heats up for online students, universities are taking a more businesslike approach through their marketing and branding efforts to promote their online offerings (Rutter et al., 2015) and relying less on traditional, on-ground programs (Clinefelter & Aslanian, 2016; Jaschik & Lederman, 2017). Marketing techniques and concepts are as applicable to this market as they are in the commercial space (Lenore-Jenkins & Shasserre, 2016; Nevzat et al.. 2016), and universities are branding their college experiences in an effort to differentiate themselves. Social media has become an important marketing asset for universities, as prospective students are relying on social media for news, information, and opinions (Barnes & Lescault, 2013). Moreover, a university's image and reputation are directly linked to student loyalty to universities; a college's brand personality, external prestige, and reputation are all wrapped up in supportive attitudes and expressions of loyalty by its students (Rutter et al., 2015; Sung & Yang, 2008). Building those images and reputations through social media is quickly becoming a core marketing function, as opposed to an ancillary one (Nevzat et al., 2016).

McCombs and Shaw (1972) performed the original research that created and shaped the theory of agenda setting. The authors demonstrate that by shining a spotlight on specific issues, the media makes them important. Hence, mass media matters. As universities work to attract students—and in some cases, compete for the best students—it might behoove them to focus the students' attention on the university's best attributes, whether those attributes are their campuses, sports programs, research, strong academic programs, or famous alumni. This perspective of agenda setting becomes important if universities are deploying messaging that shines a spotlight on the attributes of a university (e.g., location, campus imagery, athletic successes) to reframe an audience's perception.

This paper seeks to quantify if universities are engaging in agenda setting through the images they choose for their social media posts promoting their online programs. In other words, instead of trying to sell their online programs directly to the prospective students based on the programs, universities are using their branding from traditional programs to influence students through their social media images.

METHODOLOGY

This study analyzes two social media platforms, Twitter and Facebook, for the online programs of six public universities: Ohio State Online, Oregon State University Ecampus, Penn State World Campus, University of Arkansas Global Campus, University of Georgia Online, and University of Nebraska Online. Six universities that met the relevant criteria for the study (ensuring a large enough sample size) were chosen for analysis and comparison of Twitter and Facebook imagery posts. Each of the chosen universities:

- Is a public, state university located in the United States.
- Maintains both a traditional, physical campus and an online program that confers four-year bachelor's degrees.
- Has an online program that is distinct from a traditional program at a physical campus (e.g., students can complete a degree online).
- Has an online program that is ranked in the top 100 of the *U.S. News and World Report's* 2017 rankings.
- Has an active NCAA sports team.
- Uses a separate Twitter feed for its online program (different from the Twitter handle for the university's main campus or on-ground programs).
- Uses a separate Facebook feed for its online program (different from the Facebook page for the university's main campus or on-ground programs).

This study examines the intersection of four key elements (see Figure 1) and tests three hypotheses:

$H0_1$: Facebook posts that include imagery associated with campus image, university sports, and overall university reputation for a university's online program Facebook feed do not exceed 33% of all posts.

$H0_2$: Twitter posts that include imagery associated with campus image, university sports, and overall university reputation for a university's online program do not exceed 11% of all posts.

$H0_3$: The combined Twitter and Facebook posts that include imagery associated with campus image, university sports, and overall university reputation for a university's online program do not exceed 16% of all posts.

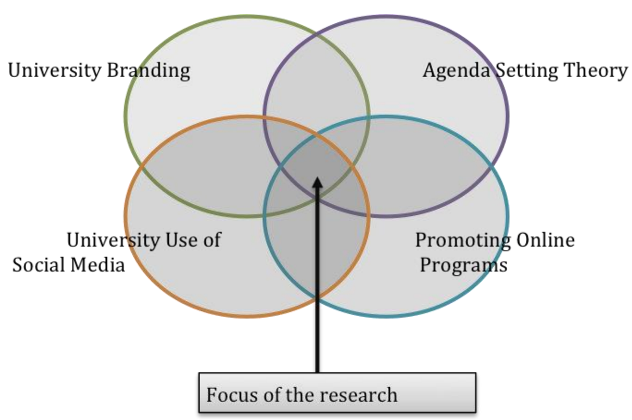

Figure 1. Focus of the research—the intersection of university branding, agenda setting theory, use of social media, and promotion of online programs.

After a review of studies on optimal posting and agenda setting (Buffer Social, 2015; Butler, n.d.; Dow Social, 2015; Patel, 2015), the authors concluded that if a university were following minimum best practices for posting as set by industry benchmarks—three times per day for Twitter and once per day for Facebook—this would equate to approximately an 11% benchmark for agenda setting tweets (120 focused tweets divided by 1,095 total tweets per year) and approximately 33% for agenda setting Facebook posts (120 focused posts divided by 365 posts per year). An overall annual benchmark for both Twitter and Facebook postings would be 16%—that is, the university would post images about its ground-related program approximately 16% of the time for it to be considered agenda setting for this study. The researchers discussed this approach with a professional statistician, who confirmed the validity and appropriateness of this approach (Pilch, personal conversation, January 16, 2018).

DATA-COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

The researchers categorized, coded, and counted images used in the six universities' Facebook and Twitter accounts specifically dedicated to each university's online program over a 12-month period. The images had to originate with the university; a retweet, like, or share was not counted. Each image was assessed and placed in one of three categories: physical campus structure or scene (Duesterhaus & Duesterhaus, 2014); sport program (Roy et al., 2008); or reputation (Chapleo, 2010; Duesterhaus & Duesterhaus, 2014; Sung & Yang, 2008).

RESULTS

Overall, the researchers evaluated a total of 5,993 posts for both Twitter and Facebook from the six universities. Of these, 5,739 posts included images and composed 95.8% of the total posts (Table 1), demonstrating that all six universities placed an emphasis on using images in their social media.

Table 1. Percentage of Social Media Posts With Images

	Image Included			
	No		Yes	
University	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**
University of Nebraska Online	25	3.1%	776	96.9%
Oregon State University Ecampus	5	4.1%	117	95.9%
Ohio State Online	58	8.7%	612	91.3%
Penn State World Campus	111	3.5%	3,100	96.5%
University of Arkansas Global Campus	39	6.0%	607	94.0%
University of Georgia Online	16	2.9%	527	97.1%
Total	**254**	**4.2%**	**5,739**	**95.8%**

The researchers used the chi-square test of homogeneity to compare potential differences in the distribution of focused posts. Also, a test of goodness of fit was used for individual areas of focus. Next, the researchers applied the tests to the null hypotheses. Table 2 shows that while there were images that did not reflect the researchers' codes, a significant percentage of images did (34.3%, p=.002). Table 3 indicates that the chi-square test of homogeneity shows that overall the number of posts was not distributed in such a manner to show that no agenda setting was taking place X^2 (1, N=5,739) = 9.255, p<.001.

Table 2. Overall Distribution of Types of Images

Type of Image	
Non-Focused	**Focused**

Website	N	%	N	%	X^2	P
Facebook	1,157	62.9%	682	37.1%	9.255	.002
Twitter	2,613	67.0%	1,287	33.0%		
Total	**3,770**	**65.7%**	**1,969**	**34.3%**		

Table 3. Chi-Square Test of Homogeneity for Social Media Images

	Type of Image*					
	Non-Focused		Focused			
Website	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	**Z**	**P**
Facebook	1,157	62.9%	682	37.1%	3.74	<.001
Twitter	2,613	67.0%	1,287	33.0%	43.91	<.001
Total	**3,770**	**65.7%**	**1969**	**34.3%**	37.82	<.001

*Facebook tested at p >.33; Twitter at p> .11; total at p>.16

The researchers then tested each null hypothesis. In the case of Facebook, X^2 (1, N=1,830) = 3.74, p<.001, the test was found to be statistically significant, and null hypothesis $H0_1$ is rejected. In the case of Twitter, X^2 (1, N=3,900) = 43.91, p<.001, the test was found to be statistically significant, and null hypothesis $H0_2$ is rejected. Evaluating the combination of Facebook and Twitter posts and expected levels of posts, the results are X^2 (5, N=5,739) = 37.82, p<.16. The test was found to be statistically significant, and null hypothesis $H0_3$ is rejected.

Table 4 shows the results of how the universities employed the types of images X^2 (2, N=5,739) = 27.787, p<.001, which demonstrates a greater usage of images associated with reputation.

Table 4. Breakdown of Images According to Specific Focus Category

	Specific Focus							
	Campus		Sports		Reputation			
Website	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	**X^2**	**P**
Facebook	253	37.1%	67	9.8%	362	53.1%	27.787	<.001
Twitter	347	27.0%	101	7.8%	839	65.2%		
Total	**600**	**30.5%**	**168**	**8.5%**	**1201**	**61.0%**		

Table 5, however, shows that universities do not approach the types of images used in the same manner, X^2 (10, N=5,739) = 151.407, p<.001. The University of Arkansas Online and Oregon State Online relied heavily on campus images, while the other universities used images associated with reputation more often. None of the universities placed an emphasis on sports-related images.

Table 5. Breakdown of Use of Specific Types of Images for Each University

	Specific Focus							
	Campus		Sports		Reputation			
University	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	**X^2**	**P**
University of Nebraska Online	41	17.2%	0	0.0%	197	82.8%	151.407	<.001
Oregon State Ecampus	20	41.7%	12	25.0%	16	33.3%		
Ohio State Online	32	25.8%	13	10.5%	79	63.7%		
Penn State World Campus	341	30.2%	115	10.2%	674	59.6%		
University of Arkansas World Campus	127	50.8%	2	.8%	121	48.4%		
University of Georgia Online	39	21.8%	26	14.5%	114	63.7%		
Total	**600**	**30.5%**	**168**	**8.5%**	**1,201**	**61.0%**		

CONCLUSIONS

Data analysis indicates that universities are engaging in agenda setting. Their choice of images indicate that universities are deliberately choosing to post images associated with the three brand-related categories at a rate higher than otherwise would occur if agenda setting was not present. By doing so, universities may be trying to achieve a halo effect for their online programs (Beyond Brand Exposure, 2016), whereby the online programs may expect the prestige of the ground programs to rub off on the online programs.

Revisiting Table 4, universities collectively place the greatest emphasis on images that are associated with the institutions' reputations; 61% of the images fell into this category. Because online students trend older, reputation may be more important for this demographic, who are focused on advancing current careers or starting new ones. Moreover, universities may realize that students seeking online programs—who are trending older, working part- or full-time, and far more diverse—and less interested in sports programs.

LIMITATIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study does not seek to correlate potential agenda setting with student attitudes or achieving a university's desired outcome of attracting potential students to its online program nor does the study does not demonstrate that the strategy is effective. Additional research could explore if universities are engaging in agenda setting on other social media platforms, such as Pinterest, Snapchat, LinkedIn, Instagram, or YouTube. Each social media platform has its strengths and specific demographics, which would have to be considered when examining the data.

While this study does not demonstrate that universities are intentionally using agenda setting as misdirection or misrepresentation, this research indicates that universities are expending considerable time and energy broadcasting images associated with their ground programs. From a university perspective, institutions that are seeking to grow their online programs may wish to emulate this branding strategy in social media posts for their online programs. Students, in their role as consumers, should be aware that agenda setting might be taking place, so they can assess if the promotion of a traditional, on-ground program as part of the online program's branding has skewed their decisions to attend or continue with a university. By clearly associating the online program with the university's ground program, institutes of higher learning may be seeking to positively influence alumni, too, and encourage generous behaviors toward the university in general.

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THE PARADOX IN PURCHASING IMITATIVE NEW PRODUCTS: ROLES OF CONSUMER DIALECTICAL THINKING, PRODUCT DESIGN, AND NATIONAL CULTURE

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Chengli Shu, Xi'an Jiaotong University

ABSTRACT

Imitative new products are prevalent in many markets. In fact, consumers face a dilemma in purchasing imitative new products. Yet little is known about how do consumers solve this dilemma. We investigate the roles of three consumer and product characteristics in imitative new product purchase intent. We find through an online experiment with 632 Chinese and the US consumers that the consumer dialectical thinking increases purchase intention, an effect contingent on product design as well as national culture. Based on these findings we propose a new conceptual framework on consumer behaviors toward imitative new products.

INTRODUCTION

Shenkar (2010), based on a series of case studies, shows that about 98% of the value created by innovations finally goes to imitators. His observations are echoed by a number of well-known product imitation cases. Diners Card invented credit cards but the market is now dominated by Master Card and Visa, whereas EMI created CAT scans but lost the market to General Electric. These imitative new products are not replicas of already existing items, also known as counterfeits, nor do they rely on piracy for their design; rather, they are bona fide goods invented by firms to meet market demands. An indication of their popularity is that 75% of new products have features in common with previous introductions (Aribarg et al., 2014).

Despite the prevalence of imitative new products, our review of relevant studies indicates that scholars have examined imitative new products, but predominantly from an organizational point of view in terms of capabilities, practices, and the outcomes that are achieved by developing them (Bilgili, Kedia, and Bilgili, 2016; Xia and Liu, 2018). Studies have thus far overlooked buyers and their responses to imitative new products.

Consumers in fact face a dilemma when purchasing an imitative new product (Shu, Liu, and Nakata, 2020). On the one hand, imitative new products could be value-expressive or social-adjustive because they can piggyback on genuine brands (van Horen and Pieters, 2012). Consuming such products can thus facilitate the attainment of important social goals (Grubb and Grathwohl, 1967). On the other hand, consuming an imitative new product could damage a consumer's social image, because it may be misperceived as a counterfeit and therefore as violating intellectual property rights. The current literature, however, is still unclear on how to solve such dilemma in consumption of imitative new products. This raises an important construct in solving this problem—consumer dialectical thinking. Dialectical thinking reflects a more fluid and holistic mindset that leverages the distinctions and synergies between elements in search of both/and solutions (Ingram et al., 2016). Paradox theory posits that individuals who think dialectically are able to embrace and synthesize competing demands (Lewis, 2000; Smith and Lewis, 2011). As such, consumer dialectical thinking can influence the purchase intention on imitative new products.

Moreover, imitative new products can vary not only in terms of how imitative they are but also in terms of which aspects are imitative. Van Horen and Pieters (2012) recognize that brand imitations can occur at two levels—feature imitation and theme imitation. Their findings show that consumers are more favorable for theme imitation as compared with feature imitation, which calls for more studies on "*what* is imitated" rather than "*how much* is imitated". A product has both form and function (Luchs and Swan, 2011; Ulrich and Eppinger, 1995) and, consequently, an imitative new product could be imitative in either its form or function. However, the extant literature only examines the imitation of brand elements such as features and themes, but overlooks important product-level parameters as candidates for imitation such as product form and product function (Shu, Liu, and Nakata, 2020). In addition, prior studies have recognized the importance of cross-cultural factors in consuming imitations under the individualism-collectivism (IC) framework (Phau and Teah, 2009), but they ignored the importance of intricate factors such as dialectical thinking in imitative consumption and how its impact varies across different national cultures.

This study conducted an online experiment, with 632 Chinese and the US adult consumers. This study offers several contributions to the literature. First, this study helps address the paradox of consuming imitative products by considering how consumer dialectical thinking influences imitative new product consumption. Second, based on the product design literature, we extend the current understanding by illustrate the differential impacts of form imitation and function imitation on how consumer dialectical thinking influences the purchase intention of product imitation. Third, we advance the cross-cultural consumer research by explicating the reason why consumer purchase imitative new products and how does the influence of dialectical thinking alter in different countries. The conceptual model is shown in Figure 1.

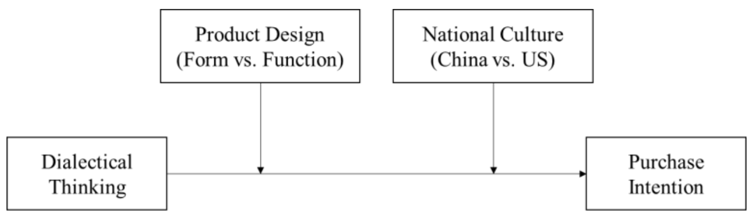

Figure 1. Conceptual Model

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESIS

Dialectical Thinking

Paradox embraces ideas that seem to clash irreconcilably (Chen, 2002). Based on this, dialectical thinking provides a means of incorporating and synthesizing opposing ideas or concepts (Hideg and Ferris, 2017; Kahle et al., 2000). From a dialectical view, the seemingly contradictory or mutually exclusive elements out of which a paradox is constructed actually operate simultaneously (Hideg and van Kleef, 2017; Quinn and Cameron, 1988). As such, a consumer with strong dialectical thinking has a more fluid and holistic mindset that leverages the distinctions and synergies between elements in search of both/and solutions (Ingram et al., 2016). We suggest consumers with strong dialectical thinking are better at dealing with the dilemma in imitative new product consumption, and therefore have higher possibility to purchase imitative new products.

Consumers face a dilemma when purchasing imitative new products. On the one hand, they want to buy imitative new products because such consumption is one means for consumers to enhance their self-image (Shu, Liu, and Nakata, 2020). Individuals may use imitative new products to form or prop their ideal selves in a quest to meet social expectations, rules, and norms (Jussim, Yen, and Aiello, 1995). More specifically, similarities between an imitative new product and earlier competitive product may elevate purchase interest in the imitative item by signaling the wherewithal to seek shared coveted qualities while valuing important differences. On the other hand, purchasing an imitative product may generate social risk. Specifically, these products, while legitimate, may be accidentally mistaken by others as counterfeits, which are illegal. Such negative social evaluations may cause psychological discomfort because an individual’s actions and behaviors have failed to meet social expectations, norms, or rules (Peng, Wong, and Wan, 2012; Sirgy, 1982).

Consumers with strong dialectical thinking can solve this dilemma. When facing the paradox, these consumers can discuss the tensions in this situation, and find a means of meeting competing demands (Poole and Van de Ven, 1989; Smith and Lewis, 2011). The negative influence of imitative new products generates from misunderstanding of its legitimacy by others. From a dialectical view, everything as in a state of continuous movement and change, of renewal and development, where something is always arising and developing and something is always disintegrating and dying away (Basseches, 1980; Kahle et al., 2000). Consumers with dialectical thinking do not afraid of misunderstanding, because they know it can be explained, and negative image from others can be changed when others realize these imitative new products are not illegal. As such, consumers with strong dialectical thinking are less likely to be affected by the negative influence of imitative new products, and thus have more possibilities to purchase them. Therefore, we suggest,

> H1: Consumer dialectical thinking is positively related to purchase intention regarding imitative new products.

Product Design

As firms turn to design as a means of distinguishing their products, illustrated for example by Apple's emphasis on sensory aesthetics (e.g. the look, feel, touch, even sounds of objects from a mouse), form and function are being studied in marketing and innovation for potential to elevate new product acceptance (Bloch, 2011; Micheliet al., 2012). Form is perhaps most often associated with design, as it is the outward appearance that generates initial impressions of the product both in direct material and indirect symbolic ways (Bloch, 2011). Function is less immediately obvious because it reflects the workings, features, and problem-solving capabilities of the product (Luchs and Swan, 2011; Ulrich and Eppinger, 1995). It is no less responsible than form in delivering value and delight to users.

Importantly in our study, we explore the similarity of a new product on these two dimensions with a product brought to market earlier. Imitation can take place either in product form or function, which we label form imitation and function imitation, respectively. Though both are important to consumers (Bloch, 2011; Micheli et al., 2012), we consider the possibility that each has a distinct impact on the dialectical thinking-purchase relationship.

With respect to form imitation, a new product that outwardly seems similar to the original is more easily to piggyback the positive association of the leading product, and thus have stronger attraction to consumers than function imitation (van Horen and Pieters, 2012). However, new products with form imitation, while legitimate, may be easier accidentally mistaken by others as a counterfeit than those with function imitation, because counterfeits typically disguise on form rather than function. Owning a counterfeit rather than buying the genuine article raises the specter of unethical behavior or participating in an illicit trade (Garcia-Ruiz and Rodriguez-Lluesma, 2014), form imitation bears with more social risks. As regard to function imitation, however, the conflict is less obvious, because it may elevate a consumer's self-image while with less possibility to be misperceived as counterfeit. In this case, facing the strong competing impacts, consumer dialectical thinking is more useful in form imitation condition than in function imitation condition, and consumers with strong dialectical thinking are more likely to purchase imitative new products with form imitation. Thus, we suggest,

> H2: The positive relationship between consumer dialectical thinking and imitative new products purchase intention is significant in form imitation condition, but not in function imitation condition.

National Culture

Consumers purchasing imitative new products for elevating their self-images and fulfill social goals (Geng, Yang, and Xu, 2019; van Horen and Pieters, 2012). However, consumers in different cultures value imitative new products differently. We, thus, particularly chose two countries—China and the US—to reflect their consumers' different emphases on dialectical thinking in imitative new product consumption. China is a typical collectivism society, and the United States is a representative of individualism societies.

In collectivist cultures, consumers tend to focus on the exterior components of products and pay more attention to the public visibility of their possessions (Li and Su, 2007). Consumers are more likely to be influenced by their reference groups such as their friends, colleagues, and relatives when making purchase decisions in more collectivist societies (Tse, 1996). On the contrary, consumers in individualist cultures emphasize the interior components of products and regard consuming products only as a source of pleasure (Wong and Ahuvia, 1998). As a result, product choices often reflect social norms and expectations rather than individual attitudes and tastes in collectivist societies than in individualist ones (Li and Su, 2007). Therefore, the positive social values of imitative new products through similarities with leading products are not so attractive to the US consumers as to Chinese consumers. In this case, the dilemma in imitative new product purchase is less obvious in the US, and thus consumer dialectical thinking has less influence on the consumption. As such, we propose that, H3: The positive relationship between consumer dialectical thinking and imitative new products purchase intention is significant in China, but not in the US.

METHOD

Stimuli

Smart phones permeate daily life. Nearly 50% of consumers globally spend over five hours every day on smartphones, and replace them on average every 21 months[1]. Given this context, smart phones are an appropriate category to study imitative new products. The Apple iPhone 7 was introduced in September 2016, and this brand sells well in both China and the US. Meizu launched its Pro 6S two months later, and is among the top 10 best-selling brands in China[2], and their phones are also sold in the US. The product shares form and function similarities to Apple iPhone 7. We adopt the Apple iPhone 7 as the earlier competitive product and Meizu Pro 6S as the later imitative innovation; however, we refer to the latter in all stimuli as "Brand XYZ" to control for brand effects, noting that it is a legitimate and actual product sold in the market.

We chose the gold exterior and fingerprint recognition function to manipulate form imitation and function imitation respectively, because these two attributes are popular and well-known for first introduced by Apple iPhone. The stimuli provided both pictures and word descriptions to convey the nature of each of the phones' form or function, and time of market introductions. In relation to form imitation, a picture of the exterior of the Apple and Brand XYZ phones along a worded description were given as stimuli. For function imitation, the stimuli showed a phone screen of fingerprint recognition function, and not the exterior to rule out a potential confound of product form. We also included a text description of the function.

Participants

A total of 632 adult consumers from China and the US recruited from Sojump (www.sojump.com) and MTurk respectively participated in an online survey with small incentives. Sojump, similar to MTurk, is an online survey service with more than 2.6 million participants from cities across China. Sojump and MTurk have been used in a growing number of published studies (Ding et al., 2017; Jia, Li, and Krishna, 2020).

Procedure

We developed three items, based on Kahle et al. (2000) and Peng and Nisbett (1999), into a seven-point scale to measure dialectical thinking (α= .81): 1) I think things are interactive with each other; 2) I think everything is in a state of continuous movement and change; 3) I think everything has two sides, e.g. strong and weak, good and bad, etc.. The translation-back-translation procedure was employed to prepare the Chinese version (Douglas and Craig, 2007). Next, respondents were randomly assigned to the form imitation or function imitation condition. We first showed pictures of the iPhone 7 with a description of its exterior design or fingerprint recognition and launch time. Subsequently, one of the stimuli on Brand XYZ (form imitation or function imitation) was shown, with description of the similarity as well as the specification of the later launch time. Following that, participants rated their purchase intention towards the Brand XYZ phone. The measure was based on a three-item, seven-point scale (α= .94) adapted from Grewal et al. (1998) and Michaelidou and Hassan (2008). To control for the effect of price, respondents were asked not to consider affordability.

As a manipulation check, participants were then asked to assess new product form imitation ("How much do you think the exterior design of this Brand XYZ phone is similar or different to that of Apple iPhone 7?") and function imitation ("How much do you think the fingerprint recognition function of this Brand XYZ phone is similar or different to that of Apple iPhone 7?"). The options ranged from 1= completely different to 7 = completely the same. Finally, age, gender, and income of participants were also recorded.

RESULTS

[1] 2https://www.counterpointresearch.com/smartphone-users-replace-their-device-everytwenty-one-months/

[2] https://www.counterpointresearch.com/chinese-smartphone-market-2016-and-2017-overview/

Manipulation Checks

We first check the manipulation of the stimuli. The results showed that form similarity received a higher score in the form imitation than that in the function imitation condition (M_{Form} = 5.44 vs. $M_{Function}$ = 3.92, F (1, 631) = 238.81, p < .001), indicating that participants correctly assessed the form similarity. Likewise, in the function-imitation condition, function imitation received a higher score than that in the form-imitation condition ($M_{Function}$ = 5.14 vs. M_{Form} = 4.62, F (1, 631) = 26.56, p < .001). These results provided support of the manipulations.

Hypothesis Testing

Next, we test our hypotheses through a series of liner regression. Regression results are shown in Table 1. We first regress purchase intention regarding imitative products on the consumer dialectical thinking, with age, gender, and income as control variables. As Model 2 indicates, consumer dialectical thinking has a positive relationship with imitative new product purchase intention (β = .09, p < .05), supporting H1. Next, we ran regressions in split samples to test the moderating effects of product design and national culture respectively. As shown in Model 4 and Model 6, the positive relationship between dialectical thinking and imitative new product intention is significant in form imitation condition (β = .12, p < .05), but not in function imitation condition (β = .05, p > .05), supporting H2. As shown in Model 8 and Model 10, the positive relationship between dialectical thinking and imitative new product intention is significant in China (β = .14, p < .05), but not in the US (β = .06, p > .05), supporting H3.

Table 1. Standardized Regression Estimates [a]

Models	Full sample (N = 632)		Form imitation (N = 313)		Function imitation (N = 319)		China (N = 312)		The US (N = 320)	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9	Model 10
Consumer dialectical thinking		.09* (2.23)		.12* (2.09)		.05 (.91)		.14* (2.41)		.06 (1.13)
Controls										
Gender	-.03 (-.65)	-.03 (-.62)	-.02 (-.32)	-.02 (-.32)	-.04 (-.68)	-.04 (-.65)	.03 (.60)	.03 (.52)	-.06 (-1.01)	-.05 (-.90)
Age	.03 (.81)	.03 (.83)	.03 (.45)	.03 (.56)	.04 (.70)	.04 (.67)	.04 (.72)	.03 (.51)	.01 (.22)	.01 (.24)
Income	.01 (.20)	-.01 (-.28)	-.03 (-.47)	-.05 (-.88)	.05 (.83)	.04 (.60)	.21*** (3.68)	.19** (3.40)	-.12* (-2.01)	-.12* (-2.10)
ΔR^2	0.02	0.08	.00	.01	.01	.00	.05	.02	.02	.00
ΔF	0.37	4.98*	.17	4.37*	.49	.82	5.23**	5.82*	1.85	1.27

Note: *** p < 0.001, ** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05 (two-tailed).
a. Standardized coefficients with t-values in parentheses.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Through an online experiment on 632 adult consumers in China and the US, we gain insight on consumer behavior towards imitative new products, from an empirical work on consuming rather than making these critical and prevalent innovations. We learn that dialectical thinking helps consumer deal with the dilemma in imitative new product consumption, and thus has a positive influence on the purchase intention, while such influence is contingent on product design and national culture. Specifically, such positive relationship is prominent in form imitation condition rather than in function imitation condition, and in China rather than in the US. These allow us to make several contributions.

Theoretical Implications

A theoretical implication of our study is providing a new consumer-centric framework on imitative product innovation. The framework focuses on consumer responses to these legitimate offerings, which predominantly from an organizational point of view (Bilgili et al., 2016; Xia and Liu, 2018). Current literature suggest that consumers face a dilemma when purchasing an imitative new product (Shu, Liu, and Nakata, 2020), but the mechanism of how consumer solve the dilemma and make the purchase decision is unclear. This paper addresses such question and shows that dialectical thinking can help consumer solve the dilemma in imitative new product consumption. To be specific, consumers with strong dialectical thinking are more likely to purchase imitative new products, because they are good at dealing with conflicts. This study extends paradox literature by illustrating how dialectical thinking influence consumer behavior, which is often explored from firm strategy or organizational behavior perspective (Ingram et al., 2016; Smith and Lewis, 2011).

A second theoretical implication is that we specify the boundary of the effects of the dialectical thinking on purchase intention by focusing on product design characteristics. We address the importance of product design elements in imitative new products, responding to the call for investigating "*what* is imitate" (van Horen and Pieters, 2012). These elements may be glossed over in scholarly research as attention has been directed almost exclusively to imitative innovation as a strategy or set of organizational actions rather than as what makes for an appealing imitative new product from the buyer perspective (Hagtvedt & Patrick, 2014). By examining the latter and drilling down into the design of these products, we learned several critical distinctions in the role of form versus function imitation in attracting buyers.

Third, we point out the boundary of the effects of the dialectical thinking on purchase intention by focusing on national culture. We advance the cross-cultural consumer research by offering a more granular view of culture. Consistent with current literature, this paper suggests consumer behaviors are distinct among countries (Li and Su, 2007; Wong and Ahuvia, 1998). This paper further examines the differences in consuming imitative products between collectivist and individualist countries, and explains how the influence of dialectical thinking alters in different countries.

Managerial Implications

Our study provides several implications for managers and marketing practice. First, our results indicated that where the imitation taken place, form or function, matters. Because compared with form imitation, function imitation is less likely to create dilemma for consumers. Consequently, we suggest that the design of imitative new products should be consciously considered, with an emphasis on function imitation.

Second, echoing previous studies, this research suggests that firms should pay more attention to consumers from countries with strong collectivism influence as these consumers may be more susceptive and inclined to consume for social purpose. These findings regarding the differences in consumer behaviors between China and the US provide firms with additional insights into how to develop and market their imitative products globally.

Limitations

Several limitations involved in our study are worth attention. First, we only examined how dialectical thinking influences purchase intention of imitative products in two countries. Although China is a typical collectivism society and the US is a typical individualism one, the findings from these two countries may not be completely generalizable to other cultures. Future research is needed that applies our framework to other societies. Second, we purposefully chose smartphones as stimuli, which may raise the generalizability problem of our findings. Future research should employ alternative stimuli to explore the influences of product categories more deeply. Third, this research reveals a paradox for consumers when consuming imitative products, but it would be interesting for future studies to examine how other factors influence consumers in solving the paradox, such as brand-level, and/or environment-level factors.

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THE INFLUENCE OF PRODUCT INVOLVEMENT ON ELECTRONIC WORD OF MOUTH (EWOM) AND PURCHASE INTENTION

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to study the influence of consumer involvement on the relationship between electronic word of mouth and purchase intention in online consumers in Egypt. The results of the study highlight the importance of using online word of mouth in influencing the consumers' purchase intention. The findings suggest that when marketers can positively affect the online word of mouth, consumers' purchase intentions are likely to be positive, thus, the results shed light on the influence of consumer involvement on the relationship between online word of mouth and the purchase intention.

INTRODUCTION

Before customers decide on a particular product to buy, they learn about previous experiences by word of mouth. Today the Internet has substituted traditional face-to-face communication and established a digital, electronic word of mouth platform. Consumers can now access a wide range of data and thousands of customers' online reviews (Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh & Gremler, 2004). The development of the Internet offers more consumer options for obtaining unbiased information about products and services from other customers and gives customers the chance to express their views through the use of EWOM (Hennig-Thurau and Walsh, 2004).

Electronic Word of Mouth (EWOM) is a growing point of interest, as consumers' purchase intention is a subject of great interest to policy makers and business practitioners. Knowing which variables most significantly influence purchase intention is a critical factor in helping product managers and marketers make important decisions. Different levels of customer involvement also in a brand can influence customer opinions and purchasing strategies for the product, leading to modifications in their intention to buy (Chao and Chen, 2016). It can be noted that there is a scarcity of studies that have been conducted in the developing countries, in general, and Egypt, in specific, which focus on customer preferences as they are affected by technology, unlike the research of developed countries (Gopinath and Upadhyay, 2001). This shortage of scholarship on the relationship between EWOM and purchase intention is particularly present in Egypt. Elseidi and El-Baz (2016) suggested investigating the role of EWOM content with a relation of making heuristic and systematic purchase decision, as variations in cultural orientations of Egyptian consumers might be reflected in their consumer involvement.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to see to what degree a relationship between EWOM and purchase intention exists among Egyptian consumers and to what extent consumers' involvement influences the relationship between the EWOM and consumers' purchase intentions. This study thus fills a gap in the marketing research focusing on Egypt's consumer markets and clarifies those electronically-mediated factors which have the most influence on purchase decisions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Electronic Word of Mouth

The term, EWOM, relates to any positive or negative information about a product or brand, which is accessible to the public and produced by prospective, current or former clients on the Internet (Hennig-Thurau and Walsh, 2004). EWOM can also be regarded as extending the traditional word of mouth into the modern cyberspace generation. A great deal of marketing and consumer research has focused on how EWOM affects consumption. Xun and Reynolds (2010) stated that defining EWOM as a static conceptualization leaves its potential unexplored as a method of information sharing, as identified by Hennig-Thurau and Walsh (2004), and suggests that EWOM is a vibrant and continuous exchange method of information.

While Murray (1991) showed that both WOM and EWOM are based on the notion of exchanging knowledge about the experiences of people with different products and services, they also found that customers depend on WOM in both forms to decrease their perceived danger arising from the uncertainty inherent in the decision to buy products and services. Cheung, Lee, and Rabjohn (2008) demonstrated that there are also significant differences, despite basic similarities in purpose between traditional WOM and EWOM.

Purchase Intention

Purchasing intention is defined as the probability or willingness to buy a product (Lis, 2013). Many studies acknowledge statistically significant relationships between intention to buy and buying behavior (Lis, 2013). Whitlark, Geurts, and Swenson (1993) suggested that purchase intention is the likelihood of purchase associated with a category of intention measured against the percentage of individuals actually purchasing the product. Past studies have shown that customers may seek opinions of others in information-intensive environments as a manner to handle perceived risks typically connected with activities that are cognitively demanding (Dowling and Staelin, 1994).

Comprehending the process of how the purchase decision is reached is essential as it can be regarded as the grounds for analyzing the connection between EWOM and the intention to purchase. The most common models were the Engel, Kollat, and Blackwell model (Engel, Kollat, and Blackwell, 1978) and the Hawkins, Best, and Coney model (Hawkins, Best & Coney, 1998). The model of Engel, et al. defines the decision process of consumers and how choices are made when selecting from a list of available options. Their model is founded on the work of Engel et al., and extends it to the external and internal influences that affect the individual. Hawkins, et al. (1998) have shown that consumer needs are the consequence of various internal and external influences grouped under the self-concept and lifestyle of the customer.

EWOM and Purchase Intention

Authors conclude that EWOM affects the intention of the purchase (Prendergast, Ko, and Siu Yin, 2010; Beneke, Mill, Naidoo, and Wickham, 2015). In the scope of blogger suggestions, Hsu, Lin, and Chiang (2013) explored the impact of EWOM on the intention of customers to purchase. Using information from the questionnaire of 327 blog visitors in Taiwan, the outcome showed that the roles of the informant and the recommender favorably affected the buying intention of the consumer. The results also showed that the credibility of bloggers could affect customer behavior and their intention to buy. When consumers recognized a high reputation blogger, their attitude and willingness to shop online were affected by the level of their confidence. Hu, Che, and Wang (2012) researched customer purchase intention with the small and medium-sized enterprise's microblogging marketing EWOM. They found that EWOM had more impact on customer purchasing intention in the context of microblogging marketing. They also determined that EWOM messages containing factual remarks, they had significant impact on the intention of purchasing consumers, whereas EWOM with adverse comments also appeared to have a higher impact on customer purchase decision in microblogging marketing.

Lee and Pee (2013) suggested that before consumers read Internet reviews, the impact of EWOM should be explored along with their expectation. Original product data such as popularity, price, and description provided by the seller can form expectations. Usually, product expectations are mostly positive. Otherwise, people would not read reviews about this product. Consumers, therefore, read reviews not only to find out new product data but also to confirm that they can fulfill their expectations. This research empirically verified the favorable expectations-confirmation relationship. Positive and favorable product reviews can be viewed as more favorable for customers with high expectations, while critical evaluation may seem less critical. Hennig-Thurau and Walsh (2003) provided evidence on the existence of a relationship between consumers' reading motives, as well as their buying behavior and their subsequent online communication about products. They showed that changes in purchase decisions based on customers articulations on opinion platforms affected both online and off-line purchasing, and for communication behavior, it showed that reading online comments will cause a change in the reader's word-of-mouth communication with other consumers about the particular product.

While Park, Lee, and Han (2007) studied the effects of review quality and review quantity on the consumer purchase intention from the perspective of consumer involvement, Cheung, Lee, and Rabjohn (2008) investigated how

EWOM affects the purchasing intention by discovering which factors encourage information adoption (The process in which people engage on purpose in using information. An example would be users scanning the opinions and comments posted by others before they make a buying decision). Cheung et al. (2008) examined the indirect impact of review quality and source credibility on information adoption through affecting the information usefulness. For review quality, they found that message relevance and the degree of comprehensiveness have significant impacts on perceived information usefulness, while accuracy and timeliness were not found to impact information usefulness as much as relevance and comprehensiveness and for source creditability the authors showed that Source credibility did not play a significant role in influencing information usefulness because any user can freely register and post comments without any signature or authorization check.

From another perspective, Prendergast, Ko, and Siu Yin (2010) discovered that in the online forums, an internet community where visitors can read and post subjects, the similarity between a user's interests, the forum's topic, and the users' attitudes towards the forum strongly predicted purchase intentions, as well as having an indirect effect through helping determine the degree of the forum's persuasiveness. As the intention of providing information about the source is a significant element in the receiver's perception of the information's trustworthiness (Romani, 2006), product experiences published by forum members are likely to be perceived as reliable because the information providers are other consumers, who presumably have no interest in marketing the product (Prendergast et al., 2010). Similarly, Tsuifang, Tzu-yin and Yung-kun (2010) investigated the impact of negative online word of mouth on customer purchase intention. They showed that the receiving of negative online WOM information about the product or the brand would influence the customer buying intention because the negative online WOM would become one of the criteria determining customer purchase decisions. Tsuifang, et al. (2010) also showed that the greater the sender's expertise is, the higher the precision and credibility of the information presented by the sender will be considered by the information receiver. Therefore, potential purchasers tend to be more influenced by the negative information on the purchase decision.

From yet another dimension, Lee and Youn (2009) investigated whether and how different online platforms to which EWOM communication is posted influence consumers' judgments of reviewed products. They examined the impact of an independent product review website, a brand's website, and a personal blog on a reviewer's intention and product judgments. Inconsistent with the earlier mentioned literature, these findings seem to suggest that, whether the website is marketer-generated (e.g., a brand's website) or non-marketer-generated (e.g., an independent product review website or a personal blog) does not seem to play a significant role in influencing consumers' product judgment. Lee and Youn (2009) also demonstrated that when the review is positive, consumer willingness to recommend the product to friends increases. However, when the review was negative, it had adverse effects on consumer willingness to recommend the product to friends regardless of the EWOM platform, and that is because consumers may have perceived the negative review as diagnostic, so, regardless of where the participants read the review, they were not willing to recommend the product to their friends. On the other hand, participants may have considered positive product recommendations to be ambiguous, and due to this ambiguity, they may look for other cues such as the characteristics (e.g., personal or public) of the EWOM platform.

Electronic Word of Mouth, Purchase Intention and Consumer Involvement

The understanding that customers' feelings toward EWOM messages can affect their behavior and their purchasing intent has brought much attention to the subject of persuasiveness in EWOM communications (Cheng and Ho, 2015; Kim and Gupta, 2012; Luo, Luo, Xu, Warkentin, and Sia, 2015; Park and Lee, 2008). The assessment of their study suggested that the same EWOM message can differ according to recipients' respective attributes (Cheng and Zhou, 2010). For example, EWOM can determine the confidence propensity of a recipient, the level of engagement, prior assumptions, and experience in the field of a seller, as well as its cultural characteristics, whereas EWOM helpfulness is influenced by involvement and expertise. It can be surmised that the level of involvement of customers in terms of both helpfulness and credibility determines the message assessment, which can be clarified using ELM.

The concept of product/service involvement relates to the degree of psychological identification and strength of the recipient's emotional connections has with a product/service (Cheung and Thadani, 2010); consumers with low involvement have a low need for information, while consumers with high involvement seek for information providing added value (Doh and Hwang, 2009). Studies on the persuasiveness of EWOM communications have found that the level of consumer involvement and level of expertise can influence perceived helpfulness of EWOM communications

(Breazeale, 2009; Park and Kim, 2008).

Previous studies have considered the moderating role of involvement in consumer attitude (Cheung and Thadani, 2012; Lee, et al., 2008). For instance, Lee et al. (2008) showed that as involvement increases, the effect of negative EWOM on consumer attitude is higher for high-quality EWOM than for low-quality EWOM. Wu and Wang (2011) found that product involvement has a moderating effect on the relationship between positive EWOM messages and brand attitude. Also, when product involvement is low, even though the emotional appeal has a powerful effect, it cannot exceed the effect made by a rational appeal. The study of Park et al. (2006) analyzed the impact of online consumer reviews on information processing, which depends on levels of involvement. It found that the number of straightforward recommendations had a positive impact on attitude towards product and purchase intention for low-involvement consumers; however, these recommendations did not change the attitude and intention for high-involvement consumers. For high-involvement consumers, the product attitude and purchase intention initially increased then went down gradually with the number of attribute-value reviews, drawing an inverted U shape. Likewise, Lis (2013) found that involvement strengthens the relationship between expertise and the perceived credibility of online consumer recommendations. Lis' study found that highly involved receivers are less influenced by the sender's trustworthiness than those with low involvement. The effect of informativeness of EWOM can be moderated by involvement, according to the Elaboration Likelihood Model, which will be discussed shortly.

Park, Lee, and Han (2007) examined the effect of EWOM on purchase decision, by investigating whether the quantity and quality of online consumer reviews can affect consumers' purchasing intention and how these effects are changed by consumer involvement. They supported that consumer purchasing intention increases along with the number of online reviews. The presence of many reviews shows that the item is widespread, and this is what raises the intention of buying. Also, they demonstrated that the quality of online consumer reviews had a positive effect on consumer purchasing intention by showing the reviews that are logical and persuasive, with adequate grounds based on particular product facts, having a powerful positive impact on the intention of buying. As Park et al. (2007) suggested, the effects of review quality and review quantity can vary with consumer involvement: Low-involvement consumers are affected by review quantity instead of quality, while high-involvement consumers are affected both by review quantity and by review quality. The effect of review quality on high involvement consumers is more evident when there is a significant number of reviews, whereas the effect of review quantity is significant even when the review quality is low.

The Elaboration Likelihood Model

The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) is the foundation for studying consumers' involvement in this study. This study uses the ELM to explain how the level of involvement with a product affects the relationship between the electronic word of mouth and purchase intention (Yap, Soetarto, and Sweeney, 2013). The Elaboration Likelihood Model, developed by Petty and Cacioppo (1986), shows that consumer involvement affects motivation to process information. The ELM shows that the consumer's involvement affects the consumer's processing route of information. According to Petty and Cacioppo (1986), consumers use one of two routes in processing the available information about products or services they intend to buy. The first route is the central route, where consumers consider the product information more logically. The second route is the peripheral route, where consumers employ pre-existing ideas and use emotions to process the received information (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986).

Consumers with a high degree of involvement are more likely to read and process information about products more carefully and rely less on simple heuristics when making these purchase decisions, whereas consumers with low involvement tend to process product's information heuristically (Petty and Cacioppo, 1986). Sussman and Siegal (2003) used the elaboration likelihood model (ELM) to explain how people are influenced to adopt information posted in computer-mediated communication (CMC) context. They sought to determine how receivers handle the EWOM. The researchers' findings provided evidence that in the CMC context, people can be affected by a message in two routes, which are central and peripheral and the same as in the offline setting. Cheung, Lee, and Rabjohn (2008) suggested that individuals who are highly involved with a product are more likely to engage in the thoughtful and effortful processing of the EWOM. Individuals who are less involved are not affected by the argument contents, but rather by non-content elements, such as the number of online reviews (Cheung et al., 2008).

Using the ELM as a theoretical basis, two hypotheses were thus advanced: H1: A relationship exists between EWOM and consumers' purchase intentions in Egypt. H2: A relationship exists between EWOM and purchase intention based on the level of consumer involvement in Egypt.

METHOD

The goal of this non-experimental quantitative research was to investigate the influence of consumers' involvement on the relationship between the EWOM, the independent variable, and purchase intention, the dependent variable. Since a body of research already existed concerning electronic word and its relevant variables, a conclusive research design was adopted as opposed to a more exploratory design. To meet the requirements of conclusive research design, the survey method was chosen for data collection. This study utilized non-experimental, quantitative methods to investigate the influence of consumer's involvement on the relationship between EWOM and Egyptian consumers' purchase intentions. Pearson and Spearman correlation tests were used, as the analysis methods, to test the first research's hypothesis (Field, 2013). Pearson partial correlation test was used for testing the secondary research's hypothesis. The influence of consumer involvement upon the correlation between EWOM and purchase intention was RYZ-RYZ.X, where the former is the simple and the latter the partial correlation controlling for consumer involvement. A structural equation model statistical technique carried out as a second step for testing the secondary research's hypothesis. Quantitative research methods that were used in gathering information and collecting data are mainly focused on describing and explaining a phenomenon within a more significant number of participants by using numbers to summarize characteristics across groups or relationships (Creswell, 2014). By adopting a quantitative approach, the study was able to investigate a large number of individuals by applying statistical techniques to discover and recognize the relationship between consumers' involvement and the relationship between EWOM and consumer's purchase intentions in Egypt. Using quantitative research methods enabled generalizing this study's findings to the whole population (Creswell, 2014).

Research Design

A correlational research design was used to examine the influence of consumers' involvement on the relationship between EWOM and Egyptian consumer's purchase intention. This study depended on gathering data via a structured, self-administered questionnaire using the online technique from a sample of Egyptian consumers who search for and read online reviews about products and services that are articulated by other consumers. The structured self-administered questionnaire was adopted from previous research from a six-item scale developed by Park et al. (2007). Purchase intention measured by the behavioral intention of purchase that were assessed by a four-item scale developed by Coyle and Thorson (2001). Consumer involvement was measured by the degree of individual reading online reviews based on the inherent needs, values, and interests associated with buying the product, which were assessed by a ten-item scale developed by Zaichkowsky (1994). A Cronbach alpha test was conducted to examine the reliability of the scales. A five-point rating scale is used where 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree.

Sample

Based on the fact that Egypt total Internet user population was 47.8 million users (www.statista.com), with 36 percent of Egypt total Internet users using the Internet to shop online (Statista.com), non-probability convenience sampling was used to collect primary data from Egyptian consumers who read online reviews. A total of 452 participants clicked the questionnaire link, with 49 participants not passing a qualifying question, and a total of 403 answered questionnaires were collected.

Procedures

As a non-probability convenience sampling technique was adopted in conducting, an invitation message with a link to the online questionnaire, targeted Egyptian consumers who read online reviews before purchasing the product, published on several Facebook opinion groups linked to Egyptian consumers ' online reviews. These opinion platforms are specialized in discussing Egyptian consumers' opinions and feedback about local brands and were selected because they characterized with a large number of fans and high interaction with the posted content. An email with the questionnaire invitation was sent to 500 colleagues of the study's author who are working in an Egyptian advertising company. Although all the survey email invitation sent at the beginning of the workday to achieve higher response rates (Hamilton, 2009), only 21 responses were received from the sent invitation and 452 from online submission. The questionnaire constructs were translated by field experts into the Arabic language to increase the response rate. A disqualifying question was introduced to make sure that only the participated respondents are using online reviews before the purchasing behavior.

Although there is some disagreement about the utility of using Likert scales for parametric research, there is support for it. Carifio and Perla (2008), resolving the 50-year discussion on the use and misuse of Likert scales, think that the question of whether a parametric or non-parametric test is suitable for analyzing Likert scale data arises from the authors ' opinions on the information stage itself: ordinal or interval. Gardner and Martin (2007), and Jamieson (2004) argue that data from Likert is of an ordinal or rank order nature and therefore, only non-parametric trials will produce valid outcomes. Using real-scale data, however, Norman (2010) discovered that parametric tests such as Pearson correlation could be used with data from Likert without fear of reaching the incorrect conclusion. As a result of that debate, both parametric and non-parametric statistical techniques were used to test the research hypotheses. Univariate analysis techniques were used (correlation coefficients and partial correlation). The statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS) software is the primary tool to analyze the output data.

Reliability and Validity

Cronbach's alpha was used to test for instrument reliability. The coefficient alpha is the average of all possible split-half coefficients resulting from different ways of splitting scale items (Malhotra, et al., 2006). The reliability coefficient and intrinsic validity for research constructs are (0.943), and (0.971), respectively. The results showed that the reliability coefficient for all research dimensions is considered with high internal consistency based on the average inter-item correlation with Reliability coefficient (0.903), (0.853), (0.780). Since all constructs are higher than the limits of the appropriate value (0.60-70) at least, it can be concluded that the scales are reliable (Hair, et al., 2014).
Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was first conducted to test how well the measured variables represent the constructs. The CFA results showed that all standardized regression weights (factor loading) are higher than 0.50, which means that all measured variables are statistically significant at a level less than (0.001), indicating some common points of convergence (Hair, et al., 2014). The CR also showed results, which are higher than 0.70, which means that the variables did converge at some point (Hair, et al., 2014). As a result of Squared Multiple Correlations; the average variance extracted for all latent constructs is (0.48). This shows that the latent variables had a high convergent validity (Fornell & Larchker, 1981; Hair, et al., 2014). The results also showed that AVEs of all scales turned out to be near to the cut-off values 0.50 (Fornell & Larchker, 1981; Hair et al., 2014). According to Henseler, Ringle and Sarstedt (2015) the Heterotrait-monotrait correlation ratio (HTMT) has recently been suggested as a method for assessing discriminant validity. HTMT is defined as the average of the heterotrait-heteromethod correlations that is relative to the average of the monotrait-heteromethod correlations. Some authors suggest a limit of (0.85) (Kline, 2011), while others recommend a value of (0.90) (Teo, et al. 2008). There is a lack of discriminant validity if the HTMT value is greater than this limit. The CFA results indicated that the majority of HTMT ratio is less than (0.90), which means the latent variables had a high discriminant validity. For the goodness of fit measures of the model the results showed a significant fit of the results i.e., all indicators at acceptable limits or identical to cut-off values

For maximize content validity, a comprehensive literature review was done regarding the scope of this study. The final questionnaire was constructed around three central dimensions, which were drawn from prior research. All the questionnaire's constructs were measured by items adopted from previous studies, which has been validated before that can also increase validity. Besides, the questions were carefully worded in the Arabic language by translation experts to ensure that all respondents would understand the questions in the way that was intended in the original adopted questions.

FINDINGS

The sample population consisted of 58.8% males (n=229) and 43.2% females (n=174), with the most common age group being 18 to 34 (60.3%, n=243), followed by 35 to 44 (29.5%, n=118), with the remaining participants being either over 44 or under 17. Also, 47.6% (n=192) of the partcipants reported that they "always" read online reviews; 36.5% (n=147) "frequently" read them; and 15.9% (n=64) read them "sometimes".

To test the relationship between EWOM and purchase intention, the Pearson correlation, and Spearman correlation statistical techniques were used to test the relationship between the general attitude toward online reviews and the purchase intention. The Pearson correlation test results showed a strong significant positive linear relationship (r=0.748) between the constructs of EWOM, measured by the general attitude toward online reviews, and purchase intention, that is significant at a level less than (0.001). The Spearman correlation test results also indicated a strong significant positive linear relationship (r=0.757) between the constructs of EWOM, measured by the general attitude toward online reviews, and purchase intention, that is significant at a level less than (0.01). These results argue for acceptance of H1.

To investigate the existence of consumer involvement influence on the relationship between EWOM and purchase intention, partial correlation statistical technique was used to assess the relationship between the general attitude toward online reviews and the purchase intention, controlling consumer involvement. The results showed a moderately significant positive linear relationship (r=0.333) between the constructs of EWOM, measured by the general attitude toward online reviews, and purchase intention, controlling the consumer involvement that is significant at a level less than (0.001). The results showed that there is a difference (RYZ-RYZ.X = 0.415) between the correlation between the general attitude toward online reviews and purchase intention, and the correlation between the general attitude toward online reviews and purchase intention, controlling consumer involvement.

A structural equation model statistical technique carried out as shown in Figure 1 as a second step to investigate the existence of consumer involvement influence on the relationship between EWOM and purchase intention. the results showed that the relationship between EWOM and purchase intention was found significant (β = 0.443, t value = 4.028, p < 0.001). The results also showed that the relationship between EWOM and consumer involvement was found significant (β = 0.884, t value = 11.070, p < 0.001). the results showed that there the relationship between consumer involvement and purchase intention was found significant (β = 0.565, t value = 5.147, p < 0.001).

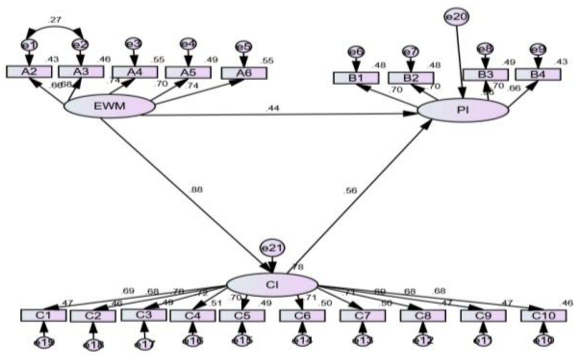

Figure 1. Structural model

The results also showed that there is indirect effect of EWOM on purchase intention (0.499) through consumer involvement that is significant at a level less than (0.001). These findings showed that consumer involvement is acting as a mediator variable, which influence the relationship between EWOM and purchase intention. These results suggest acceptance of H2.

DISCUSSION

EWOM has become increasingly important with the growth of information and the Internet. One advantage of EWOM is that it makes information gathering simpler for customers, which further stimulates buying activity. Park and Lee (2008) disclosed that product reviews by customers influence other customers more than the website of the business, giving EWOM growing significance in e-marketing. The results of the study highlight the relationship between electronic word of mouth and purchase intention. The results of this study in line with previous research as it showed that there is a positive relationship between EWOM and purchase intention (Beneke et al., 2015; Erkan and Evans, 2016; Tsao, et al., 2015).

The involvement of the consumers participating in this study was tested to highlight whether the relationship EWOM and purchase intention changed by the level of consumer involvement. The results of this study indicate that when the general consumer attitude toward the online reviews favors direction of a particular product or service, this will have a positive impact on the consumer purchase intention. Further, this study results also showed that consumer involvement plays an essential role in influencing the relationship between EWOM and purchase intention, which converges with the findings of previous studies (Park et al., 2007; Cheung et al., 2012; Chao and Chen, 2016). This implies that marketer's strategic plan should be based on listening to their consumers' opinions that articulated online, taking into consideration the influence of consumer involvement level. This study result is in line with Park and Lee (2008) because it showed that the level of consumer involvement could influence the impact of the EWOM on purchase intention, which can affect company sales in Egypt.

Moreover, this study also supports the findings of Lis (2013) study, which has shown that the impact of source credibility on the adoption of EWOM has been discovered to be moderated by the level of consumer involvement that affects the purchase intention. On the other hand, this study findings are contradicting with Jiang, Liu, and Agassi (2016), which argued that in emerging markets there is no influence of consumer involvement on the relationship between EWOM and purchase intention. Jiang et al. (2016), showed that customers would pay equal attention to online product reviews in emerging economies when making purchases, regardless of whether the involvement is high or low. Egypt is considered as one of the emerging markets in the Middle East (Mardiros & Dieu, 2014). This study showed that in one of the emerging markets, which is Egypt, consumer involvement is influencing the relationship between EWOM and purchase intention. These findings have a managerial impact on companies' management in Egypt, as it showed in the next section.

Managerial Implications

There are several practical contributions to this study. The primary outcomes highlight the significance of correctly handling customer reviews online. Since online word of mouth works as informants as well as recommenders, they can be used strategically as a channel of communication. Online vendors, for instance, can provide a review format that allows reviewers to post high-quality reviews concentrating on the informant role of online customer reviews (offering user-oriented information to enhance consumer knowledge of a product). This study illustrated that electronic word of mouth could significantly influence Egyptian consumer behavior, especially purchase intention, so marketers should not neglect the influence of the online consumer to consumer communication. The results of this study suggest that, in Egypt, marketers wishing to capitalize on online word of mouth, as a marketing communications tool needs to ensure that the online articulation about their company has a positive direction.

Marketers should also recognize consumer involvement as a significant strategic factor in influencing the relationship between EWOM and buying intention, both low-involvement customers and high-involvement customers are critically important to marketers in creating a tactical plan for dealing with the online word of mouth. Consumers with low involvement may not be very interested in purchasing products at the time, but they should not be treated as unprofitable customers. Instead, they should be regarded as prospective customers for companies' long-term gain, and marketers should impact the EWOM that targeting them.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Inasmuch as this study's sample was gathered from only Egyptian consumers, its conclusions may be considered within a cultural context. Second, this study was conducted by using a convenience sampling technique, which can affect generalizability. Third, this study depended on self-reports but not a logical analysis of the phenomenon under study because the used instrument is an online survey. The reliability of the results thus relies on the honesty, values, and reliable memory of the participants. Although the existence of the above limitations, this research is still considered indicative for future researches based on the fact that it is considered the first study is investigating the influence of consumer involvement on the relationship between EWOM and purchasing intention in Egypt.

Many other interesting questions remain unanswered, however, and require further investigation. Considering other variables can extend the study. Prior knowledge can affect perceptions of online consumer reviews because it is an essential factor in information processing in Egypt. More research should be conducted for further investigations the different effect of each demographic dimension on the relationship between electronic word of mouth and purchase intention in order to create a complete picture of online consumer-to-consumer communications.

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THE ARRIVAL OF SELF-DRIVING VEHICLES: A PROFILE OF POTENTIAL DRIVERS

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ABSTRACT

Self-driving vehicles appear to be on the horizon in the United States. A critical marketing question involves the nature of the segments for self-driving technology and the characteristics of these segments. This study examines the usefulness of the PAD (Pleasure, Arousal, Dominance) paradigm in segmenting potential users of self-driving vehicles. An 18 - item questionnaire was developed in accordance with the PAD framework and a survey of the general public was conducted using Qualtrics (n = 1,050). A hierarchical cluster analysis was conducted using the PAD constructs. The findings suggest that marketers of self-driving vehicles could segment users of self-driving vehicles based on the emotional states described in the PAD model. Marketing implications are discussed and suggestions for future research are provided.

INTRODUCTION

Self-driving vehicles have the potential to reduce fatal car crashes and provide additional mobility for the elderly and the disabled. However, the speed at which self-driving vehicles are adopted by consumers will depend heavily on how these vehicles are marketed to the consuming public. Educating consumers about self-driving vehicles will play a major role in their success and rate of acceptance.

Much of the current research regarding the prediction of consumer acceptance of self-driving vehicles has been focused on the utilitarian motivations of self-driving vehicles, such as perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and perceived safety (Madigan et al., 2017; Panagiotopoulos & Dimitrakopoulous, 2018; Sener et al., 2019). Trust has also been shown to be a critical factor in consumer acceptance of self-driving vehicles (Adnan et al., 2018; Kaur & Rampersad, 2018; Planing & Dursun, 2018). Consumers must trust that the technologies in the self-driving vehicles are safe and reliable for mass use. Perceived risk will also likely play a role in acceptability of self-driving vehicles (Dixit et al., 2019), as well as positive attitudes towards technology in general (Hardman et al., 2019).

At present, little attention has been placed on hedonic motivations, such as pleasure, fun, and excitement as they relate to the use of self-driving vehicles. The purpose of this study is to examine the efficacy of the PAD psychological framework (pleasure, arousal, dominance) in segmenting potential users of self-driving vehicles. This study is the first to use the PAD paradigm to identify market segments of self-driving vehicle users. Cluster analysis is used to identify and profile different market segments of potential users of self-driving vehicles based on the emotional states of pleasure, arousal, and dominance. Marketing implications are also presented that focus on the driver profiles identified in the cluster analysis.

SELF-DRIVING VEHICLES

Self-driving is a broad term that involves a wide array of technologies and levels of automation. U.S. regulators and the Society of Automotive Engineers (2018) identified the following six levels/stages of driving automation:

- *SAE Level 0* (No automation): human driver is at the control of the driving task even when equipped with warning and/or intervention systems.
- *SAE Level 1* (Driver assistance): human driver performs all aspects of the dynamic driving task when automated system can assist the driver with one driver assistance system of either steering or acceleration/deceleration.
- *SAE Level 2* (Partial automation): human driver performs all aspects of the dynamic driving task when automated system can assist the driver with one or more driver assistance systems of both steering and acceleration/deceleration.

SAE Level 3 (Conditional automation): automated driving system performs all aspects of driving mode-specific performance, however, the human driver must be ready to take back control to a request to intervene.
SAE Level 4 (High automation): automated driving system performs all aspects of driving tasks, even if a human driver does not need to take back control to a request to intervene. However, the automated system can operate only in certain environments and under certain conditions.
SAE Level 5 (Full automation): the automated system performs all driving tasks, in any environment and under all conditions that can be conducted by a human driver. (SAE International, 2018)

Automakers, tech giants, and specialty startups have invested at least $50 billion during the last few years to develop self-driving technology (Craig & Lofton, 2019). The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has identified four potential benefits of self-driving vehicles: safety, economic and social benefits, efficiency and convenience, and mobility (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 2020). Optimistic predictions by some suggest that self-driving vehicles will be sufficiently reliable and affordable to replace human driving, provide independent mobility to non-drivers, and reduce driver stress, congestion, accidents, and pollution by 2030. However, Litman (2020) argues that many predictions of self-driving benefits are speculative and exaggerated, and often made by individuals with financial interests in the industry.

Self-driving vehicles can reduce driver stress, increase safety, reduce emissions, and provide independent mobility for non-drivers, to include people with disabilities. However, the technology required to operate a Level 4 or Level 5 self-driving vehicle can add thousands to the vehicle purchase price. Equipment such as sensors, automated controls, and GPS systems will be standard features, and will not only add to the purchase price, but will also increase annual maintenance costs. Initial reports suggest that Level 4 and Level 5 self-driving capability will initially be available only on high-end vehicle models, and may take one to three decades to find this level of technology in middle and lower priced models (Litman, 2019).

THE PAD PARADIGM

Mehrabian and Russell (1974) introduced a psychological framework used to describe and measure emotional states (Pleasure, Arousal, Dominance – PAD). Pleasure relates with whether an individual perceives the environment as enjoyable or not. Arousal reflects the extent to which the environment stimulates an individual. Dominance assesses whether an individual feels in control of his/her environment. Bakker et al. (2014) argued that the original ideas of Mehrabian and Russell (1974) about pleasure, arousal and dominance regarding the environment are valid, and that pleasure, arousal and dominance can be respectively related to affective, cognitive and conative responses.

Donovan and Rossiter (1982) were the first to apply the PAD model to a retail setting. The focus of their research was on store atmosphere. Additional store atmosphere studies regarding PAD have been extended to the online retail environment. Eroglu et al. (2003) findings suggest that pleasure and arousal have a significant impact on online shoppers' attitudes, satisfaction, and approach behaviors. The PAD model has also been used in more recent retail studies in attempts to better understand retail web-site aesthetics (Chang et al., 2014; Hsieh et al., 2014). Hall et al. (2017) extended the application of the PAD paradigm and examined its power in explaining user attitudes toward their Facebook experience. Nordhoff et al. (2016) included pleasure, arousal, and dominance in their conceptual model for predicting user acceptance of self-driving vehicles, and hypothesize that all three emotional states have a positive effect on acceptance of autonomous (self-driving) vehicles.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data Collection

Data were collected from 1,050 respondents using Qualtrics. The demographic profile of respondents appears to be reflective of the general population. Of the sample respondents, 49.3% were men and 50.7% were women. Regarding age of respondent, 21.6% were 18-29; 25.5% were 30-44; 25.9% were 45-60; and 27% were 60 or older. Respondents were generally well educated, with 35.7% having a high school degree; 26.9% obtaining an associate or bachelor's degree; and 11.4% possessing at least a master's degree. Approximately 49% of respondents reported household income of $50,000 or higher.

An 18-item questionnaire was developed in accordance with the framework of the PAD paradigm. The questionnaire assessed respondents' beliefs concerning self-driving vehicles. Respondents were informed that for the purpose of this research, a self-driving vehicle is defined as follows: **"Your car is fully self-driving only on large, multi-lane highways. You must manually steer and accelerate/decelerate when on minor roads, but upon entering a highway the car can take full control and can steer, accelerate/decelerate and switch lanes as appropriate. The car does not rely on your input at all while on the highway. Upon reaching the exit of the highway, the car indicates that you must retake control of the steering and speed control."** The above definition was used by Hewitt et al. (2019) in their description of a Level 4 autonomy scenario to survey respondents. For the purpose of the current study, the term "self-driving" replaced "autonomously" in the definition, as it was felt that respondents could better relate to and visualize self-driving vehicles vs. autonomous vehicles.

Measurement Scales

The measurement scales for Pleasure, Arousal, and Dominance were all five point bi-polar anchor scales. (See Appendix) Pleasure is a continuum that can be defined with adjectives such as happy-unhappy, pleased-annoyed, and satisfied-unsatisfied (Mehrabian and Russell, 1974). Arousal is a mental activity describing the state of feeling along a dimension ranging from sleepy to frantic excitement, and can be described by adjectives such as stimulated-relaxed, excited-calm and wide awake-sleepy (Mehrabian and Russell, 1974). In defining dominance, Mehrabian and Russell (1974) used a continuum ranging from dominance to submissiveness, with adjectives to include controlling, influential and autonomous.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

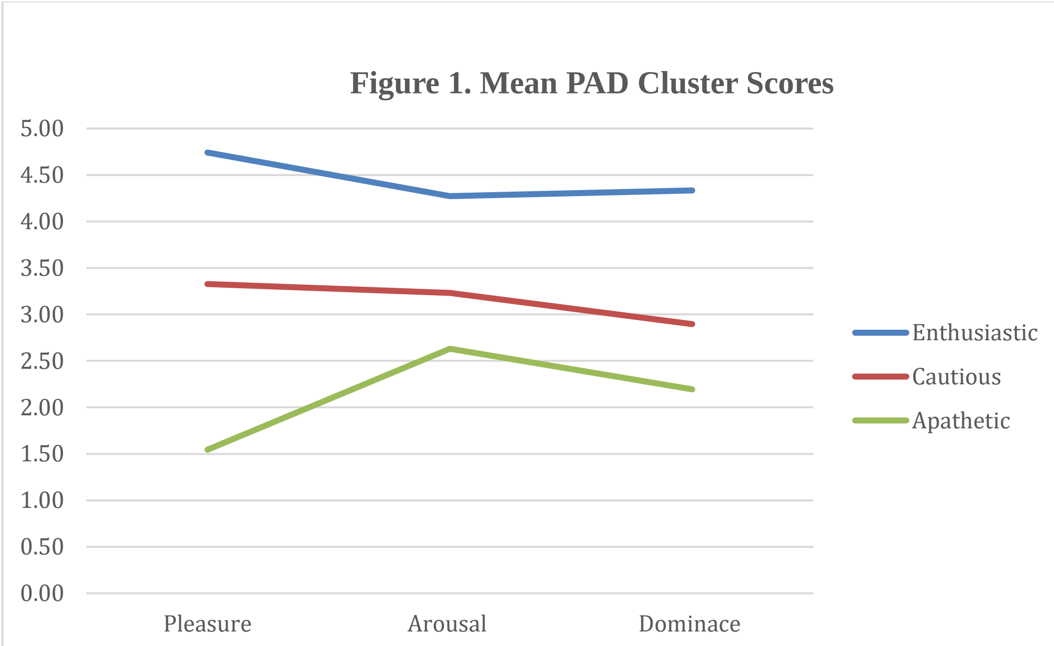
Cluster Analysis

A hierarchical cluster analysis was conducted using the PAD constructs of pleasure, arousal, and dominance. Ward's method was utilized for clustering respondents. Multiple cluster solutions were generated, and a three-cluster solution was accepted eventually based on both statistical and practical considerations.

As shown in both Table 1 and Figure 1, the clusters are labeled based on their mean scores across the three emotional states. Respondents in Cluster 1 are labeled as "Enthusiastic Drivers" since they have the highest mean scores for pleasure, arousal, and dominance relating to intention to use a self-driving vehicle. Respondents in Cluster 2 are labeled as "Cautious Drivers" since they have moderate levels of pleasure, arousal, and dominance relating to intention to use a self- driving vehicle. Their scores fall approximately midway between Cluster 1 and Cluster 3. "Cautious Drivers" account for the largest cluster/segment of drivers (n = 630). Finally, respondents in Cluster 3 are labeled as "Apathetic Drivers" because they have the lowest mean scores for pleasure, arousal, and dominance relating to intention to use a self-driving vehicle. "Apathetic Drivers" are the smallest cluster/segment of drivers (n = 172).

Table 1. Mean PAD Scores by Type of Driver

	Enthusiastic Drivers (n = 248)	Cautious Drivers (n = 630)	Apathetic Drivers (n = 172)
Pleasure	4.74	3.33	1.54
Arousal	4.27	3.23	2.63
Dominance	4.33	2.90	2.19



Driver Profiles

A summary of the driver profiles is presented in Table 2. The majority of Enthusiastic Drivers are male (62%). In addition, a large percentage (63%) are younger than 45, have an annual income of $50,000 or more (54%), and possess a college degree (44%). Cautious Drivers, on the other hand, are 55% female, tend to be a little older (55% are older than 45), earn less per year (53% earn less than $50,000 a year), and are slightly less educated (38% have a college degree) than Enthusiastic Drivers. Apathetic Drivers are more evenly split regarding gender, with 48% male and 52% female. They are the oldest of the three groups, with 68% being at least 45 years old. Apathetic Drivers also have the lowest income and education levels of the three groups, with 50% having an annual income of less than $50,000, and only 32% possessing a college degree.

Table 2. Driver Profiles

	Enthusiastic Drivers	Cautious Drivers	Apathetic Drivers
Gender	Male (62%) Female (38%)	Male (45%) Female (55%)	Male (48%) Female (52%)
Age	18-29 (27%) 30-44 (36%) 45-60 (26%) Over 60 (11%)	18-29 (24%) 30-44 (21%) 45-60 (25%) Over 60 (30%)	18-29 (6%) 30-44 (26%) 45-60 (30%) Over 60 (38%)
Income	Less than $50,000 (46%) $50,000 - $99,999 (22%) $100,000 & above (32%)	Less than $50,000 (53%) $50,000 - $99,999 (30%) $100,000 & above (17%)	Less than $50,000 (50%) $50,000 - $99,999 (34%) $100,000 & above (16%)
Education	HS Degree or less (39%) Some College (17%) College Degree (44%)	HS Degree or less (40%) Some College (22%) College Degree (38%)	HS Degree or less (48%) Some College (20%) College Degree (32%)

DISCUSSION

This study used the PAD paradigm to cluster potential users of self-driving vehicles. The findings support the proposition that potential drivers of self-driving vehicles can be segmented based on the PAD emotional states of pleasure, arousal, and dominance. Clear differences were found among the three segments (clusters) identified as

Enthusiastic Drivers, Cautious Drivers, and Apathetic Drivers along the three PAD emotional states. Segmenting markets based on emotional profiles appears to be a viable option for marketers of self-driving vehicles. This is the first study to use the PAD psychological framework to evaluate and segment future potential drivers of self-driving vehicles.

The perceived levels of pleasure, arousal, and dominance across the three segments of potential drivers of self-driving vehicles seemingly help explain differences in their shopping behavior for these vehicles. It is interesting and significant to note that the differences in the drivers are consistent across the three emotional states. The Enthusiastic Drivers exhibit the highest levels of perceived pleasure, arousal, and dominance relating to self-driving vehicles, the Apathetic Drivers exhibit the lowest levels of perceived pleasure, arousal, and dominance, and the Cautious Drivers project moderate levels of all three emotional states.

The results of this study confirm that marketers should consider differences in consumers' emotional reactions to self-driving vehicles. There is likely to be a group of potential consumers who will be happy, excited, and confident about using a self-driving vehicle. These consumers will more commonly be male, be younger (less than 45), have a relatively high income, and be well educated. These consumers have been labeled the Enthusiastic Drivers in this study.

On the other end of the spectrum, there will also likely be a segment of consumers who will exhibit relatively low levels of happiness, excitement and confidence as it relates to using a self-driving vehicle. These consumers could equally be male or female, are slightly older, and have the lowest income and education levels of the three market segments. These consumers have been labeled as Apathetic Drivers.

Finally, the market segment that will probably form the largest group of consumers will be the Cautious Drivers. They fall somewhere in the middle with regard to happiness, excitement and confidence as it relates to using a self-driving vehicle, as well as in the middle with regard to age, income and educational level when compared to Enthusiastic Drivers and Apathetic Drivers. They will more commonly be female consumers.

Self-driving vehicles are predicted to be available for commercial adoption in the U.S. within the next ten years. However, marketers currently have limited information about the extent to which consumers will embrace this new automotive technology. Marketers will need to correctly identify differences in consumer perceptions and emotional reactions to self-driving vehicles, as this will seemingly play a major role in the speed at which these vehicles are accepted by consumers and adopted by the general driving population

Promotional strategies aimed at the different driver types (Enthusiastic Drivers, Cautious Drivers, and Apathetic Drivers) should increase the likelihood of success for self-driving vehicles. Promotional activities geared towards Enthusiastic Drivers should reinforce the perceived enjoyment and excitement of operating a self-driving vehicle. Similarly, the fear of total helplessness while operating a self-driving vehicle may dampen the enthusiasm and perceived enjoyment envisioned by some potential consumers. For example, marketers will need to emphasize in their promotional activities targeted at the Apathetic Driver complete and accurate information regarding the level of control a driver will actually have when driving down the road.

It is no longer a question of if we will one day have self-driving vehicles on the road within the U.S., but rather a question of when and under what conditions. Some reports predict that by 2030 self-driving vehicles will be replacing most human-operated vehicles (Litman, 2019). Successfully transitioning to fully self-driving vehicles will require the automotive industry and marketers to work together while taking into account available technologies, as well as consumer perceptions and their emotional reactions to the new technologies. This paper provided initial support for the posit that drivers of self-driving vehicles can be segmented based on the PAD emotional states of pleasure, arousal, and dominance.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Although the results of this study provide a number of insights related to potential drivers of self-driving vehicles, a number of limitations do exist. First, the results of this study relied to a large extent on respondents' imagination regarding the operation of self-driving vehicles. Once these vehicles are commercially available and more information is available for consumers, emotions and attitudes may change either more positively or negatively. Second, the findings were obtained from a single study. Therefore, generalizing the results to the entire consuming population should be done with caution. Finally, although the sample size in this study was relatively large, respondent participation was based on self-selection, and as a result, some selection bias could exist within the sample.

Additional research is needed to assess cultural differences that could influence the generalizability of consumer perceptions and emotions towards the use of a self-driving vehicle. A cross-cultural analysis would be beneficial, given that major automobile manufacturers market their vehicles globally. Another area of investigation needed is how perceived pleasure, arousal, and dominance are impacted by different respondent usage motives. For example, these emotional states might be impacted by different factors based on whether the individual's primary motive for using a self-driving vehicle is for utilitarian reasons (e.g., safety, fuel efficiency, stress free driving) versus hedonic reasons (e.g., enjoyment, impressing family and friends).

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APPENDIX
(Measurement Scales)

Pleasure* – Happy/Unhappy; Pleased/Annoyed; Satisfied/Unsatisfied; Contented/Melancholic; Hopeful/Despairing; Relaxed/Bored (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974)

Arousal* - Stimulated/Relaxed; Excited/Calm; Frenzied/Sluggish; Jittery/Dull; Wide-Awake/Sleepy; Aroused/Unaroused (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974)

Dominance* – In Control/Cared For; Controlling/Controlled; Dominant/Submissive; Influential/Influenced; Autonomous/Guided; Important/Awed (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974)

*****Five point scale with bi-polar anchors responding to the following statement: "For each pair of descriptors, please indicate how you feel about the concept of a self-driving vehicle."

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CAPTURING MICRO-EXPRESSIONS ON ZOOM: A PROMISING SALES OPPORTUNITY

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ABSTRACT

The subtleties of salesmanship are changing in this virtual world of online communication. This proof-of-concept study examines the feasibility of capturing customer images at the two, ten, and thirty-second intervals following a Zoom platform's sales query. A captured image underwent a micro-expression analysis employing a computer-driven program that generates an emotional-algorithm. This algorithm enabled researchers to predict a purchase-decision. Findings suggest that micro-expressions captured at the two-second interval exhibited a significant relationship with a customer's purchase decision. A summary table provides a detailed overview of all results using the acronym [MICRO].

INTRODUCTION

The subtleties of salesmanship are ever-changing in this new virtual world. Physical face-to-face communication is declining as technology use increases, for example, using video conferencing (Drago, 2015). Today, the sales professional must be astutely aware of the physical customer and the virtual one. As a result, virtual online sales approaches share numerous similarities with the cold call. Moreover, with the advent of LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook, purchasing verified customer lists (Oldroyd, McElheran & Elkington, 2011), sales calling and cold calling should improve. However, securing such verified lists (by location and email) may be more an act of quiet desperation than a proven business practice, given the historical customer response rate of 1% to 2%; which by comparison is the lowest response or conversion rate of other marketing activities (Taylor, 2010). Yet, conversion rates vary according to industry and product, but most online sales, that is, sixty-two percent, have conversion rates between 1% and 9% (Zumstein and Kotowski, 2020). When analyzing qualification checklists, Banerjee and Bhardwaj (2019) reported that these names of interest often use minimum criteria.

However, Banerjee and Bhardwaj (2019) did clarify that purchasing [lead qualification services] from marketers with more intimate customer knowledge is valuable for sales professionals, especially when a deal's uncertainty is high and sales commissions are sizable and integral to total remuneration. The researchers stress that lead qualification can be an arduous and expensive process but is necessary. Hence, it warrants developing paradigmatic and heuristic strategies that enhance any deemed qualified lead's predictive validity.

Today, many sales professionals, irrespective of their source of sales leads, employ virtual video conferencing platforms to conduct cold calls, presentations, and sales meetings. For example, Zoom has reported 300 million users per day as of April 2020, up from 10 million in December 2019 (Warren 2020). This outcome parallels significant expansions in users for Microsoft Teams and Google Meet, demonstrating increasing support for virtual business (Warren 2020). Likewise, Ali (2021), when analyzing the US. Department of Commerce data found that the online share of total retail sales is up 21.3 percent, and pointed out that online sales were 15.8% in 2019 and 14.3% in 2018.

Now more than ever, a more perceptive understanding of nonverbal communication in the virtual sales call is essential. The contemporary and sophisticated sales professional requires a technique that resonates with a prospective client via the internet's virtual capabilities. Moreover, there is a need to yield an estimate of the probability of a positive purchase-decision elicited by any non-verbal behavior, specifically facial, given the aforementioned mentioned use of online sales platforms. However, facial expressions are fleeting and potentially unnoticed in traditional human visual processing.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Customers express their emotions using verbal and nonverbal cues in numerous ways. Body language is a popular topic and discussed in the academic literature since the 1960s (see Argyle 1969; Duncan,1969; and Knapp, 1972). These researchers investigated the importance of recognizing body contact, posture, physical appearance, gaze, and the individual's tone of voice as an indication of thought. Yet, it is common knowledge that individuals tend to feign, hide, distort, or even exaggerate emotions with guided intention. Still, spontaneous facial expressions endure for seconds, and an individual is hard-pressed to conceal them (Wezowski and Wezowski, 2012). Porter and ten Brinke (2008) explain how these spontaneous facial expressions are really [thought] micro-expressions conveying a plethora of personal information. In the 1960s, Haggard and Isaacs (1966) coined the phrase [micromomentary expressions], which today are micro-expressions. Ekman, in 2003 operationalized micro-expressions as involuntary facial expressions that occur within a fraction of a second and exposes a person's genuine emotions. Thus, it is reasonable to assume that purchase decisions can carry an emotional charge, often embedded in an individual's face as micro-expressions. As Beheshti (2018) postulated, unconscious expressions do more than reinforce our conscious conversation; sometimes, the micro-expressions are the conversation.

A systematic and comprehensive review of research in the business and psychology journals revealed no relevant research utilizing an algorithm-driven model examining the relationship between facial micro-expression and purchasing behavior. However, Afifi (2007) emphasized that characterizing nonverbal communication solely as body language ignores several essential elements and the meaning of micro-behaviors within their social or cultural setting. For example, McKnight et al. (2020) found a significant relationship between students' facial ID micro-expressions and college retention probability. Moreover, Kolb and Williams (2003) researched the role of micro-expressions as a hidden context in negotiations.

However, there is no published research examining micro-expressions and consumer purchase decisions discovered for this research. Nevertheless, this topic is worthy of investigation, given the minuscule return on cold calling reported by Taylor (2010). Also, recognizing that sales professionals often do not possess sufficient time to pursue seventy percent of all prospective customers on any purchased or generated sales list (Sabnis et al., 2013). Given these challenges, the sophisticated sales professional must possess an efficient and effective way to triage high sales-probability customers.

QUESTIONS OF INTEREST

There is research examining the sales influence of what the customer perceives in relationship to the salesperson's image, including positive customer perceptions for virtual sales assistants (Beldad, Hegner, & Hoppen, 2016) and avatars (Bauer et al., 2006). However, this research redefines image analysis by focusing on prospective customers' micro-expressions and their influence on anticipated purchase-decision. Therefore, the image of importance to this research is the potential customer, not any live or virtual sales professional or avatar. As such, this is a proof-of-concept study to explore the possible or theoretical use of micro-expression analysis within sales. Therefore, given this exploratory proof-of-concept research, one fundamental research question is separated into two discrete parts.

1. Is there a significant relationship between a captured micro-expression and an individual purchase decision at the (two, ten, thirty) second interval?
2. Will statistical findings support the feasibility of implementing image analysis, by micro-expression, into the online virtual sales process?

METHODOLOGY

Two focus groups of twelve participants and three alternates (N = 27) matched closely with national demographics to age (median = 55 yrs. old), race (14% minority), and education (HS = 80%) agreed to participate in a Zoom meeting discussing an active legal case's dynamics. However, before their legal case participation, all previously agreed to engage in one collaborative virtual Zoom group and respond to six "icebreaker" questions not related to the legal case. All members, by participation, knowingly and willingly consented to video recording.

Before participation, each individual received a Google survey allowing them to respond [YES] or [NO] to six questions in the privacy of their home during the video call. This format prevented consensus groupthink by eliminating public disclosure of answers. There were no written questions on the form, but an answer key recording initial non-verbal responses in real-time. The six questions originated from a random selection of twenty, written by three practicing sales and marketing professionals. The intent was to select a variety of sales environments to assess generalizability.

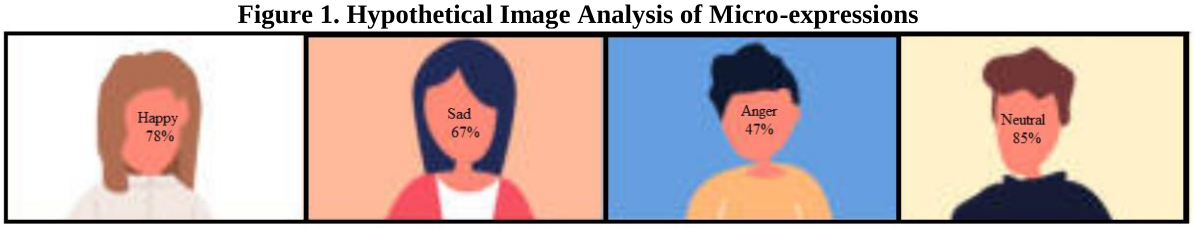
Each question posed during videotaping allotted a one-minute response time, followed by another question. The video analysis included freezing video frames at the two, ten, and thirty-second intervals upon completing the six questions. At each interval, the researchers captured a still frame image of the Zoom meeting. This time frame image became the focal point of micro-expression analysis, with most captured images occurring within 1.5 seconds of the maximum target time. The adjustment reflects the time required to secure a clear picture.

Micro-expression analysis transpired using a facial-feature recognition program utilizing ten thousand faces in a machine learning model. This analytic process is a form of artificial intelligence (AI) that, through "training," recognized the probability of seven expressed emotional states: Happy, Neutral, Sad, Disgust, Fear, Surprise, and Anger.

Each image, by timeframe and question, underwent analysis by sentiment breakdown. The computer program allowed for controlling human researcher bias because an algorithm scored all emotions. For clarification, the program utilizes OpenCV to perform facial recognition and incorporates a Convolutional Neural Network (CNN), trained on a modified version of the FerPlus emotion dataset from Microsoft.

The image has adjustments applied to it (such as brightness, rotation, etc.) before the CNN processes an image. The CNN then ascertains appropriate emotions expressed. The program assigns a probability rating regarding the highest emotion expressed on a one-hundred-point scale, with 1 = lowest probability and 100 = highest probability, then rank-orders the other six emotions into an algorithm for a predictive purpose (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Hypothetical Image Analysis of Micro-expressions



Note. For clarification, image analysis may not detect a micro-expression, or the participant may not be using their camera.

Each image (potential customer) and their assessed micro-expression algorithm came with an artificial weight assigned by the program to create a rank-order. All images maintained the same assigned weights throughout the process for consistency and standardization of the rank-order of the probabilities associated with the detected micro-expression. Happiness possessed the highest weight and Anger the lowest, as noted in Figure 1.

Researchers correlated the resulting rank-order of micro-expressions by the question and time-sequence with the participant's decision to purchase or not purchase. The sales queries were:

Q1. Do you think that you may buy a Lotto Ticket sometime this year?
Q2. Do you think that you would support a new tax levy for Child Protective Services?
Q3. Do you think that you will buy more than one bottle of vitamins this year?
Q4. Do you think that you will pay for the services of a financial planner in the future?
Q5. Do you think that you may purchase a drone camera at some point in the future?
Q6. Do you think that you will purchase a new coat this year?

RESULTS

The fundamental research question examined if there was a significant relationship between a Zoom-captured micro-expression and an individual's purchase-decision at the two, ten, and thirty-second intervals.

In the first query, [*Do you think that you may buy a Lotto Ticket sometime this year?*] findings indicate a significant correlation coefficient of .74 with a probability level of <.0001. The highest emotional micro-expression was Happy. This was a significant positive correlation between the expression and the purchase decision at the two-second interval. However, the ten and thirty-second micro-expressions could not predict the purchase-decision.

In the second query, [*Do you think that you would support a new tax levy for Child Protective Services?*] findings indicate a significant correlation coefficient of -.46 with a probability level of <.03. The highest emotional micro-expression was Sad. This was a significant negative correlation between the expression and the purchase decision at the two-second interval. The ten and thirty-second micro-expressions were not significant.

In the third query, [*Do you think that you will buy more than one bottle of vitamins this year?*] findings indicate a significant correlation coefficient of .57 with a probability level of < .007. The highest emotional micro-expression was Neutral. This was a significant positive correlation between the expression and the purchase decision at the two-second interval. The ten and thirty-second micro-expressions were not significant.

In the fourth query, *[Do you think that you will pay for the services of a financial planner in the future?]* researchers found no significant correlation between the micro-expression and purchase decision at any of the two, ten, and thirty-second intervals. The highest emotional micro-expression was Neutral.

In the fifth query, [*Do you think that you may purchase a drone camera at some point in the future?]* findings indicate a significant correlation coefficient of -.48 with a probability level of < .05. The highest emotional micro-expression was Anger. This was a significant negative correlation between the expression and the purchase decision at the two-second interval. The ten and thirty-second micro-expressions were not significant.

In the sixth query, [*Do you think that you will purchase a new coat this year?]* findings indicate a significant correlation coefficient of .47 with a probability level of < .05. The highest emotional micro-expression was Happy. This was a significant positive correlation between the expression and the purchase decision at the two-second interval. The ten and thirty-second micro-expressions were not significant.

There was an evocative anecdotal finding in eleven of the twelve sales queries when the participants did not activate their camera; their response was [NO]. The probability of this [NO] response occurring by chance is .006 utilizing binomial analysis, two-tail test. However, with no detection of the micro-expression, of the twenty-five, a [NO] response occurred ten times. The probability of this finding is 0.42 utilizing binomial analysis, two-tail test. For a complete summary of results and a validation summary, see Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1. Summary of Findings; Queries 1 – 6

Question	2 seconds	10 seconds	30 seconds	Base Emotion	N-Size (27)	No Detection	No Camera
Q1	0.74****	0.08	-0.17	Happy	n = 20	n = 5	n = 2
Q2	-0.46**	-0.14	0.15	Sad	n = 22	n = 3	n = 2
Q3	0.57***	0.17	0.02	Neutral	n = 21	n = 4	n = 2
Q4	0.1	-0.03	-0.13	Neutral	n = 23	n = 2	n = 2
Q5	-0.48*	0.12	-0.12	Anger	n = 17	n = 8	n = 2
Q6	0.47*	-0.06	0.17	Happy	n = 22	n = 3	n = 2
Mean	**0.47**	**0.10**	**0.13**	4 of 7 emotions	125 of 162	25 of 162	12 of 162
< .05* .03** .<007*** <.0001****							

Table 2. Validation Summary: Hit-Ratio

Hit-Ratio: Validation Table								
Variable	**Q1**	**Q2**	**Q3**	**Q4***	**Q5**	**Q6**	**Hit-Ratio 1**	**Hit-Ratio 2**
Hit-Ratio: Yes Purchase	0.82	0.67	0.71	0.00	0.71	0.67	0.60	0.72
Hit-Ratio: No Purchase	0.78	0.85	0.86	1.00	0.80	0.60	0.82	0.78
Mean Hit-Ratio	0.80	0.77	0.81	0.50	0.76	0.64	0.71	0.76
*Question 4: no statistically significant relationship								

Note. Hit-Ratio 1 includes non-significant findings of Q4. Hit-Ratio 2 excludes non-significant results of Q4.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This research indicates in five of the six queries, individual micro-expressions taken at the two-second interval could successfully differentiate between a YES or NO purchase-decision. However, as time progressed, recorded micro-expressions could not reflect a negative or positive purchase-decision, strengthening the supposition that micro-expressions reflect unconscious and visceral responses. It is also important to note that the Base Emotion (highest probable emotion expressed) was not consistent regarding the expressed purchase-decision. This finding suggests that a researcher cannot assume one specified emotion will consistently exhibit a significant relationship with the purchase-decision.

This research reveals that it is possible to create a sales database of images reflecting a prospective customer's micro-expressions. This micro-expression database would empower a sales professional to run a series of designed tests to identify a significant algorithm predicting a purchase-decision. Findings further indicate an overall accuracy of purchase-decision to be 76% when examining statistically significant results. The benefit of such an analysis or test series is that it would enable the sales professional to identify high-probability purchasers in a virtual sales presentation. Moreover, micro-expressions' historical sales data could help prioritize cold-calls using existing photos of potential clients (See McKnight et al., 2020).

The use of video conferencing or online sales calls is increasing. Consequently, it will become a strategic imperative to explore the potential use of micro-expression analysis online and virtually as a basis for segmenting and prioritizing prospective and current customers. Not only will the process be self-validating, but a professional and empowered sales team equipped with a revolutionary technique will likely result in a more enlightened, efficient, and lucrative approach to segmenting and prioritizing sales leads (Sabnis et al., 2013). Moreover, the ability to communicate the effectiveness of facial micro-expression analysis across industries will reduce the relative inefficiency of focusing on sales leads with a low probability of purchase.

Researchers acknowledge that organizations can spend inordinately on lead generation, viz., 15% of gross target revenue or more (B2B Growth Agents, 2020). The use of software to analyze and prequalify leads can significantly reduce the cost, time, and human resources necessary to achieve a degree of certainty that is much more predictable than self-reporting measures.

As technology, machine learning, and AI grow, their ongoing usefulness in professional sales will also increase. Table 3 summarizes findings using the acronym MICRO.

Table 3. MICRO: A Promising Sales Opportunity

Micro-expressions predict purchase behavior
Intervals of time are essential in predictive algorithms
Conscious deception is difficult given minute timeframes
Recording meetings enables the measurement of micro-expressions
Online virtual salespeople will benefit from micro-expression analysis tools

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This research highlighted several thought-provoking findings and implications; however, researchers convened a convenience sample consisting of two nationally normed focus groups gathered to discuss a pending legal case. The researchers were unable to design or select participants. Moreover, the sample size was relatively small. Therefore, the generalization of results without further replication is tenuous.

Other potential limitations exist with the process. For example, although videotaping the virtual group meetings mitigated the problem of standardizing the timeframes employed, researchers could not control if the participants had activated their camera or if the program would always detect the micro-expressions exhibited. This inability to detect the micro-expression occurred because of blurred images or facial positioning.

Given the limitations mentioned above, this proof-of-concept study warrants a closer examination of customer micro-expressions in the future. For example, sales managers may utilize available and posed public images (e.g., LinkedIn) to assess future leads and sales calls. The exploration of base emotions (highest expressed probability) across industries, products, services, and customer typologies vis-à-vis a purchase-decision may indeed be a promising sales opportunity.

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CONSUMER BEHAVIOR IMPACTS OF A PANDEMIC ON BUSINESS STUDENTS IN THE SHORT TERM: ONE COLLEGE'S EXPERIENCE

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ABSTRACT

In January 2020, scenes of pain and suffering in Chinese hospitals heralded a pandemic that would force the closure or minimization of efforts by many organizations, including the on-campus operations of most universities. Students were told to leave campuses while classes were moved online in an attempt to curtail the virus. Retailers were impacted. As retailers shuttered or transitioned to the new reality of masks, social distancing, and reduced hours, consumers adapted. This article investigates the impact of a stay-at-home order on the consumer behavior of students due to the pandemic shortly after its commencement.

INTRODUCTION

Covid-19 began its unrelenting spread in January 2020 across Asia and Europe, and made its way to the Americas in short order. Political leaders began issuing stay-at-home orders and other edicts shuttering schools and businesses across the world. With little advance notice, stores, bars, restaurants and other retailers found they were front and center in the fight to stop the spread of the virus as their operations were either suspended entirely or severely limited in scope.

On March 22, 2020, the governor of Louisiana became the ninth governor to issue stay-at-home orders impacting all but so-called, essential workers. The order sent many employees (and students) scurrying home to face an unknown and alien environment. Few could argue the importance or the need for the order: Louisiana was exhibiting the fastest growth rate of virus spread (Ballard and Karlin 2020). Besides shuttering businesses deemed non-essential, residents were strongly encouraged to stay home except in cases deemed critical, as in acquiring necessary groceries and medicines (Governor's Order 2020). Social distancing was also encouraged. Impacts on traditional retailing and consumer behavior would prove to be numerous.

Consumer Behavior Does Not Operate in a Vacuum

Consumer behavior drives much of marketing and as consumer behavior changes, marketers also must change if they expect to stay relevant and survive. Consumer behavior is impacted by a variety of internal and external factors. Hunger, thirst, pain, suffering, feelings, love and other personal or internal variables impact one's behavior. External factors including climate, geographic location, physical comfort, esteem and self-actualization needs also impact behavior. Internal and external factors motivate consumers and drive behaviors. Due to the size of the market, the behaviors of college students are of interest to many marketers.

College students spend approximately $11 billion annually on food and snacks, $5.5 billion on alcohol, $4 billion on personal care products and $5 billion on food, to name a few of the categories of interest (StateUniversity.com, 2021). The size of these markets are of interest to marketers serving the college market. College student behavior also influences the behavior of teenagers, another large market, who desire to emulate college students. Teens annually spend an average of $2,600 each. Since the teen market in the US is comprised of 46 million teenagers, their total direct spending accounts for some $119 billion (LexingtonLaw.com, 2020).

In March, as one midsized regional university in the southeastern U.S. quickly moved students off-campus and transitioned to online classes, student behaviors were impacted. The inability to travel easily and safely, the inability to socialize where, how and when they desired, and the inability to access many of their prior shopping and eating venues caused changes in the consumer behavior of students. It is these changes that are investigated in the current study. This study involved a survey of students who had transitioned to a new reality, looking into changes in their consumer behaviors. Many changes were as expected while some were surprising.

OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The pandemic has been a game changer. Distance education has been the norm for most of a year, a trend that continues. This change in educational delivery has been applauded by some and disparaged by others, some of whom have filed lawsuits against universities. The willingness to file lawsuits appears to be gaining steam (Davis, 2020). Filed by students who, unhappy with the move to off-campus, argue the quality of education and campus life experiences they expected when they paid for their enrollment are not present in a digital only format (Davis, 2020). These suits ostensibly argue the experience (and result) of online learning fails to deliver what was promised – hence, unhappy consumers.

So, for better or worse, people are wearing masks, social distancing and in general, staying home. Retailers, too have a new normal. Many, as in the case of bars and restaurants have either been shuttered entirely or have had their operations severely hampered by stay-at-home orders. Retailers able to do so have responded by offering curbside pickup, to go orders, increased their online presence/business, created special shopping hours for seniors, increased hygiene practices including the requiring of masks by employees and customers, and in general responded as positively as possible to the pandemic they did not see coming.

Even with positive responses, many retailers have been stung by the pandemic – as an example, apparel and accessories sales in March were down 52% year over year, which impacted department stores that by themselves endured a sales decline of slightly more than 25% (Kohan, 2020). The report that by the end of September 2020, close to 100,000 businesses had permanently shutdown underscored the changes taking place in the economy (Yelp, 2020). Further, Sraders and Lambert (2020), report that an NFIB representative predicts that 20% of small businesses would not make it until the end of 2020. These market realities represent a continuing impact of the pandemic on consumer behavior. A bright spot, stores that successfully transitioned to offering curbside service, are reaping big benefits. According to one study, stores with curbside service saw a 52% increase in sales during the first two weeks of December, year over year (Evans, 2020). Further, Evans reports methods of payment for goods has been impacted, with a 90% increase in "buy now –pay later" plans and an 85% increase in the use of Apple Pay (2020). So, consumers' responses to the pandemic are many, and perhaps continuing to evolve.

The overall question is, what impacts on students' consumer behaviors – if any – are resulting from the stay at home order? A slate of 10 objectives were developed and used as the basis for a questionnaire aimed at determining stay-at-home order impacts on the consumer behavior of students attending a university in the southeast U.S. The study methodology and the questionnaire were pre-approved by the University's Internal Review Board. The survey, to ascertain the impacts of the pandemic on student consumer behavior was conducted approximately seven weeks after Louisiana's stay-at-home order was implemented.

The specific objectives to assess the impact of the stay-at-home order included:

1. To investigate the impact of the order on student usage of Instacart, Shipt, or similar grocery delivery services.
2. To determine the impact of the order on the act of purchasing online.
3. To assess social media usage after the order.
4. To determine the impact of the order on the number of online sites from which students were purchasing products.
5. To determine the impact of the order on the amount of food consumed through restaurants.
6. To determine the impact of the order on the amount of money students save.
7. To determine the impact of the order on the amount students spent online.
8. To determine the impact of the order on the number of items purchased online by students.
9. To determine the impact of the order on the number of meals prepared and consumed at home.
10. To determine the impact of the order on the weights of students.

In the second week of May, a questionnaire was developed and administered to measure perceived impacts of the order on students' consumer behaviors. The timing was approximately seven weeks after the order. A convenience survey, the questionnaire was administered online via Survey Monkey to a selection of eight classes whose marketing and management faculty had agreed to participate.

Recipients enrolled in more than one of the selected classes were asked to answer only one questionnaire to prevent duplication. A total of 294 completed questionnaires were returned for analysis.

FINDINGS

Objective #1 was to investigate the impact of the order on student usage of Instacart, Shipt, or similar grocery delivery services.

Not surprising, the number of students reporting using grocery delivery services increased, but not by as large a percentage as expected. Almost one in five students (19.9%) reported their use of such services had increased. Students using such services reported using about the same amount as before the pandemic accounted for 52.9% of the respondents, while a surprising 27.1% actually reported using such services less. Perhaps the decrease in the use of such services is attributable to the fact that students had more free time to conduct such shopping after the order. In any event, more students reported using such services less after the order, than used them more.

Objective #2 was to determine the impact of the order on the act of purchasing online.

A majority of respondents (55.2%) reported purchasing more online after the order than prior to the order. Slightly more than one-third (33.8%) of respondents reported no change in their online purchasing habits post-order. And, 11.1% reported their online purchasing actually decreased post order. Again, this may be due to the fact that students were off-campus resulting in more time and perhaps opportunity to shop in person.

Objective #3 was to assess social media usage after the order.

Social media can play a significant role in the influence of student consumer behavior. Besides the presence of so-called influencers, social media facilitates word of mouth and reviews that can spread quickly (or go viral). Some 60.3% of respondents were seen using social media more since the order, while slightly more than 6% reported using it less. Surprising the authors, a third (33.6%) of respondents reported their social media usage was the same as before the order.

Objective #4 was to determine the impact of the order on the number of online sites from which students were purchasing.

Choices for the respondents included: decreased, stayed the same, increased and not applicable. Some 42.5% of respondents reported the number of sites they purchased from had increased since the order. The percentage reporting no change or stayed the same was 47%, while 9.1% reported a decrease in the number of sites from which goods were purchased. Almost 2% reported not applicable, ostensibly because they had not purchased anything online since the order was issued.

Objective #5 was to determine the impact of the order on the amount of food consumed through restaurants.

Of the respondents, 57.2% reported the amount of food consumed from restaurants had decreased since the order was issued. More than one-fourth (26.3%) reported consuming the same amount of restaurant food, while only 15.1% reported an increase in the amount of consumption of restaurant food. A small percentage (1.4%) reported the consumption of restaurant food was not applicable to them.

Objective #6 was to determine the impact of the order on the amount of money students saved.

In a related question, slightly more than 21% of students reported working more hours after the order, than before. Some 23% reported working the same hours and 46.7% reported working less. The impact of working on earnings and consumer behavior impacts the amount of savings one accumulates.

Responses to this inquiry proved surprising. More than 60% reported saving more after the order while 22% reported saving the same amount. Only 16.2% reported saving less after the order was implemented. This may be due to the amount of extra work by some, not getting out and shopping by others, preparing for hard times, and/or perhaps by both unemployment compensation and corresponding stimulus monies enacted by Congress. In any event, a majority of students witnessed their savings accounts grow after the order.

Objective #7 – was to determine the impact of the order on the amount spent on online purchases.

Almost one-half (47%) of respondents reported they had increased the amount of money they spent on online purchases during the first six weeks of the lockdown. The percentage indicating no change on what they were spending online was 39.2%, while 11.7%, perhaps owing to a decrease in income, reported spending less online. A small 1.1% reported this as not applicable to them, ostensibly not buying online.

Objective #8 was to determine the impact of the order on the number of items purchased online by students.

Similarly to objective seven, 47.5% of respondents reported buying more items online after the stay-at-home order. Of the respondents, 43% reported buying the same number of items and 8.8% reported buying fewer items online since the order.

Objective #9 – was to determine the impact of the order on the number of meals prepared and consumed at home.

A measure of the impact on eating habits, this objective sought to see if the number of home cooked meals had changed since the order. A majority (64.8%) reported preparing and eating more meals at home, post-order. Those reported eating home-prepared meals in the same amount as before the order, totaled 29.6% of respondents. Finally, only 4.9% reported no change in meals eaten at home.

Objective #10 was to determine the impact of the order on the weights of students.

As an adjunct measure of the impact on their eating and activities after the order was issued, the questionnaire enquired about the weight of the respondents. Even though it had only been about seven weeks since the order, 22.9% of respondents reported they had gained weight during the order. The exact same percentage (22.9%) reported losing weight. Slightly more than one-half (54.2%) reported maintaining their weight during the lockdown.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Students reported a variety of changes in their consumer behavior during the first seven weeks of the stay-at-home order as issued by the Governor. Impacts were noted as occurring even though the order had been in existence less than two months.

An increase in the purchasing online was noted by more than one-half of the respondents. One fifth reported using grocery delivery services more. Almost two-thirds reported using social media more. Perhaps owing to a lower level of retail loyalty approximately one-half of the respondents reported using more online sites from which they made purchases.

The percentage of respondents (57%) who reported eating less restaurant-prepared food was significant and bodes poorly for many small businesses in the area. That percentage also paralleled the findings indicating almost two-thirds of students were preparing and eating more meals at home after the order was instituted. It was interesting to note the percentage of students indicated gaining weight was equal to the percentage reported losing weight.

Unsurprisingly, the number of online purchases increased, as did the amount spent on purchases. Similarly, the number of sites purchased from increased. One finding that was not expected was that more than 60% of students reported they had increased their savings since the order. The increase in savings could have resulted from the savings on transportation reductions arising from the order, a reduction in restaurant dining, fewer opportunities for impulse purchases, working extra hours, the government stimulus package, from a decrease in extra-curricular activities and a decreased need for clothes and school supplies.

The duration of consumer behavior impacts of the pandemic remain to be seen. While some schools and government leaders are recommending a return to the classroom and vaccinations are underway, the current spike across much of the world presents an impediment to normalcy. The need to monitor the continuing impact of the pandemic on consumer behavior is apparent.

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FOMO, JOMO AND COVID: HOW MISSING OUT AND ENJOYING LIFE ARE IMPACTING HOW WE NAVIGATE A PANDEMIC

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The Fear of Missing out (FOMO) became a household acronym at the beginning of the new millennium. The term was first written about by Dan Herman (2000) as an explanation for why consumers may be less loyal or practicing increased brand switching. FOMO is defined as "an underlying form of anxiety that we're missing out on something or that other people are having more fun than us (Rees, 2017, para. 3)." Research suggests the causes of FOMO include social media and increased social pressure (Rees, 2017). FOMO can reduce personal satisfaction with one's own life and experiences, and lead to a grass is greener mentality (Przybylski, Murayama, DeHaan & Gladwell, 2013). If FOMO leads to an increase in consumer dissatisfaction, it creates a difficult challenge for marketers. Social comparison is a key driver for many consumption exchanges, however less overall satisfaction is a consumption outcome typically avoided (Hill, Martin & Chaplin, 2012). If FOMO causes a consumer to believe what others have is better than what they have, they may feel like they purchased an inferior option. If this is the case, is there potentially a more beneficial marketing strategy that can overcome the negative impacts of FOMO?

The Joy of Missing Out (JOMO) is the opposite of FOMO, and is about disconnecting, opting out and being comfortable with where you are. Various definitions and explanations of JOMO can be found. Cording (2018) and Rees (2017) sum up JOMO by focusing on the now. "JOMO is essentially about being present and okay with where you're at. It's about tuning out the noise and letting go of the "shoulds" and of worrying you're doing something wrong or could be making a better choice" (Cording, 2018, para. 5). According to Rees (2017) JOMO inspires people to focus on what they want, and how they feel right now. It motivates them to devote time and energy to things that bring joy. No matter what one chooses to do, or opt out of, it is the intention that is important.

While both JOMO and FOMO have been playing a role in behavior and consumption, a global pandemic has drastically impacted how exactly people are missing out. FOMO kicked into gear and from panic buying, to spring break parties, consumers have expressed their desire to participate in life, and still have all the essentials at home. Panic buying is still creating shortages in many segments (Pearson, 2020). On March 12, 2020 purchases of toilet paper increased 734% compared with the same day the previous year (Wieczner, 2020). Then consumers started making bread at home, causing a yeast shortage when sales rose 647% in March compared to the previous year (Castrodale, 2020). Consumers also bought bread makers (sales increased sixfold), pasta makers (462% increase) and deep freezers (45%) (Kary, 2020). Clorox wipes immediately sold out and were still hard to find as Fall approached. According to the New York times, "Sales of commuter and fitness bikes …increased 66 percent, leisure bikes jumped 121 percent, children's bikes went up 59 percent and electric bikes rose 85 percent" (Goldbaum, 2020). As cold weather approached, purchases of outdoor heaters at one big box store increased 1,500% (Harder, 2020). All of this buying has been fueled by new product needs, a fear of shortages, and social influence. When one person makes sourdough bread, everyone is inspired to do the same.

So where does this leave the state of consumption? Consumers are isolated, mostly in their homes, and sick of baking sourdough. Unfortunately, many have turned to FOMO instead of JOMO, so while panic buying and social comparison continues, overall life satisfaction has decreased around the world (Gawrych, Cichon & Kiejna, 2020; Helliwell, Schellenberg & Fonberg, 2020). This is where JOMO offers an interesting alternative. JOMO presents ways to embrace life's new and challenging situation safely (Fernandez & Matt, 2020). JOMO suggests savoring the time everyone now has with those in their household, taking the time for self-improvement and self-care. Most importantly, JOMO encourages consumers not to get bogged down worrying about the things they are missing out on, and instead focus on the things they can now do that they wouldn't have otherwise been able to. In true JOMO fashion, this means everything from binge watching shows on streaming services (up 85% according to Nielsen) to more quality family time. In a survey of 2,000 Americans, 75% of parents said that they were able to experience a key moment or milestone they otherwise might have missed during the pandemic. The same study found that nearly 80% of participants learned more about their children's hobbies and passions, 48% learned more about what their spouse actually does for work, and 77% were enjoying spending more time with the members of their household (OnePoll, 2020). Embracing the joy of the small things has been helping to get everyone through and keep them safe.

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BUILDING BEHAVIORAL LOYALTY WITH BRANDED MOBILE APPLICATIONS: THE ROLE OF THE PERCEIVED UBIQUITY OF A BRANDED MOBILE APPLICATION

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Branded mobile apps have changed the way by which consumers interact with brands (Fang, 2019). While branded mobile apps continue to emerge as powerful and ubiquitous service delivery channels, their ubiquitous nature enables retailers and service providers to offer consumers a variety of products and services on the go and establishes audiences' enthusiasm for searching for a wide range of mobile services anytime, anywhere (Okazaki & Mendez, 2013). Perceived ubiquity is one of the factors that can change the paradigm of mobile marketing in enhancing the mobility and experience of the mobile app users. However, little research has investigated the role of perceived ubiquity in developing branded mobile app attitude and its consequences on behavioral loyalty. This study aims to investigate how a branded mobile application's (app) ubiquity influences its users' attitudes and how these attitudes affect their behavioral loyalty, such as subsequent purchase and brand advocacy.

This study employed a structural equation modeling on 417 valid samples from branded mobile app users in Indonesia. All of the constructs included in the proposed model were measured using multi-items scales derived from previous studies that reported high statistical reliability and validity. The measurement model demonstrated an adequate fit. The composite reliability for each construct indicated a reasonable degree of internal consistency between the corresponding indicators. Results for the convergent and discriminant validity were also supported.

The proposed model demonstrated an adequate fit. The results revealed that the perceived ubiquity of a branded mobile app has a significant and positive effect on branded mobile app attitude as well as on brand attitude. Subsequently, branded mobile app attitude has a direct and positive effect on subsequent purchase, whereas brand attitude has a positive and significant effect on brand advocacy. In addition, this study highlights the importance of branded mobile app attitude and brand attitude in mediating the relationship between the perceived ubiquity of a branded mobile app and users' behavioral loyalty. Furthermore, affective commitment moderates the mediation effect of brand attitude on the relationships between perceived ubiquity and subsequent purchase and between perceived ubiquity and brand advocacy, while gender moderates the mediation effect of branded mobile app attitude on the relationships between perceived ubiquity and subsequent purchase and between perceived ubiquity and brand advocacy. The finding of the research contributes both to the advancement of the branded mobile apps literature and the managerial implication in the realm of branded mobile apps management.

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TEACHING TECHNOLOGY AS A MARKETING SKILL SET: EXPLORING DETERMINANTS OF PERCEIVED VS ACTUAL LEARNING AND CAREER READINESS FOR THE REAL WORLD

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The desire to gain deeper consumer insights and to efficiently interpret big data leads marketers to adopt the latest technologies in their profession. Employers are increasingly looking for more analytical and technological skills in marketing graduates (Schlee & Karns, 2017). Therefore, it is important for students to learn to use technology as a skill set for their future career. Technology has been a significant influence on in-class education for many decades. The existing body of literature in marketing education mainly focuses on the use of technology in the classroom to improve student learning and engagement (Tamim et al., 2011). However, to date, there is still a lack of research on teaching technology as a skill set in order to prepare the students for the demanding job market.

Research has shown that motivation (both intrinsic and extrinsic) and perceived competence have positive effects on student learning and performance in the classroom (Cerasoli et al., 2014). Another important factor that educators must focus on is attitude toward using technology, which has been demonstrated to play an important role in technology adoption and learning in the classroom (Hunt et al., 2004). Previous research has not directly compared the effects on both perceived and actual learning as well as career readiness. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to investigate psychological factors that influence student perceived and actual learning, and career readiness when technology is taught as a skill set. The current study focused on eye-tracking as the technology that represents a skill set taught in a marketing research class.

Undergraduate students (N = 72) learned to use eye-tracking technology to conduct a marketing research experiment. To measure actual learning, the participants completed a pre-project eye-tracking technology knowledge test to collect baseline data prior to the project. After project completion, the participants completed a post-project eye-tracking technology knowledge test, which was the same set of questions as the pre-project test. Then, they completed the questionnaire containing the independent variables (intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, perceived competence, and attitude toward using technology) and dependent variable (perceived learning) measurements.

The results showed that intrinsic motivation did not directly affect perceived or actual learning but, instead, had an indirect effect on career readiness via perceived learning. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation positively impacted perceived learning but not actual learning, and perceived learning did not mediate the relationship between extrinsic motivation and career readiness. Perceived competence showed positive effects on perceived learning, but not actual learning and perceived competence indirectly affects career readiness via perceived learning. Attitude toward using the technology positively impacted perceived learning and career readiness, but not actual learning, and that perceived learning mediates the relationship between attitude toward using the technology and career readiness.

In this research, we proposed the new conceptualization of the technology usage in the marketing classroom that is 1) instructional technology and 2) skill-set technology. As employers are increasingly looking for more analytical and technological skills in marketing graduates (Schlee & Karns, 2017), it is important for business schools to emphasize teaching technological skill sets that will make the graduates highly competitive in the job market and succeed in their careers.

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CONNECTING SOCIAL MEDIA CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT AND BRAND ADVOCACY THROUGH BRAND INVOLVEMENT: A CASE OF COMPETITIVE MEDIATION

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Brands have existed in physical spaces for many decades, and more recently in social media virtual spaces. Consumers commonly engage with brands on social media. Moreover, the branding relational consequences of consumer engagement should be researched to provide guidance regarding online branding efforts. More specifically, the progression of brand relationship from brand involvement to brand advocacy requires investigation. Grounded in uses and gratifications theory, this study considers the effect consumer engagement has on brand engagement including brand involvement and brand advocacy. Regression analysis and structural equation models (SEM) were used to analyze the data from the completed surveys. The results show that brand involvement is a competitive mediator in the relationship between consumer engagement and brand advocacy. Thus, firms should focus social media marketing efforts on multiple dimensions of consumer engagement. Moreover, future research is needed to determine if the consumer-brand engagement relationship is self-fulfilling, non-linear, or interrelated.

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A SURVEY OF HISTORICAL MARKETING INFLUENCES ON ARTISAN VENDORS

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

This study takes a historical and global perspective of the evolution of an important yet understudied cottage industry (i.e., artisan vendors). It first focuses on how the external environmental influences of society have changed the role of artisans and how artisans' contributions have changed society. The study examines the evolution of the societal roles played by artisans (and vendors): from one perceived as mere leisure pursuit, adding little value, to one that of noteworthy value by creating products sought by royalty and later by the common man. Marketing and community (e.g., consumer constellations and brand community) are essential to the evolution of the artisan vendors' societal roles; thus, are examined to determine their influences on the resilience and financial success of artisan vendors in their entrepreneurial pursuit to produce authentic products to satisfy the wants of society. $RQ_{1:}$ Historically, what marketing factors influenced societal roles played by artisan vendors' and their ability to persevere in times of adversity?

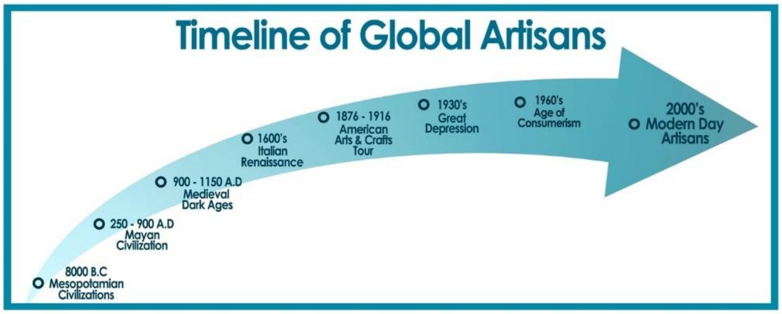
Artisans of the old world's existence has been traced back to around 8,000 B.C. when artisans' skills did not fit within society's agrarian sectors, they were neither nobility nor part of the priesthood. Instead, artisans were part of the middle class of Mesopotamia. Their role in society was significant as they created the upper class's finished goods (Salem Media, 2020). Figure 1 is a historical timeline of the artisan culture.

Therefore, this study examines, with a global historical lens, whether artisan vendors' rich cultural and societal bonds (community of artisans and their patrons) influence their decisions to remain faithful to product authenticity and provide them with resilience in the face of external threats to the industry. Based on the research of this industry, the Mesopotamian era was the first known occurrence where the role of community, the commitment to product authenticity, and the influence and resilience of authentic artisan crafts were found. Cultural life shows patronage of authentic artisan products moved from aristocracy to the common person.

This study is a survey of the literature of key elements of the history of artisan vendors from the Mesopotamian Era through the end of the 20th Century. It examined marketing influences on the artisan vendors ability to remain economically resilient in the face of adversity. However, the study's focus was limited to an overview of the literature and should be further extended to include other influences on the artisan community. Because the artisan cottage industry has historically made both a significant economic and social contribution, the researchers recommend extending this study to examine the role of artisan vendors in the 21st Century. The study could examine changes in marketing strategies of artisan vendors, whether remaining true to their authentic craft is possible in times of extreme consumerism, their resilience during extreme external threats to their industry, and whether financial survival is possible while remaining true to authentic craftmanship.

From the artisan vendors' earliest entrepreneurial pursuits, research has revealed that they have been an economic and societal force in the marketplace. The study makes an important contribution by comparing artisan vendors' historical roots. It reveals which marketing factors continue to influence the authenticity and resilience of craftsmanship. This research study comes when many modern-day artisan vendors have been in the industry for many years and are considering leaving because of external factors. Therefore, understanding the artisan industry by examining its historical roots, growth, and ups and downs within society revealed a strong community of dedicated artisan vendors capable of overcoming insurmountable odds. Their community roots that began with the first appearance of guilds and continue to the brand communities of today demonstrate how community plays a crucial role in the industry's ability to overcome factors that could be detrimental to their livelihood. This study moves marketing concepts into practice by revealing what factors historically influenced artisan vendors' ability to adapt marketing

strategies (e.g., branding, brand communities, and authentic products) for the marketplace.



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OVERCOMING ECONOMIC AND SOCIETAL CONTRAINTS: RESILIENCE OF A U.S. COTTAGE INDUSTRY

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

This study is a response to authors, et al. (2020) study that examines the understudied United States (U.S.) $44 billion cottage (i.e., artisan vendors) industry's economic and societal contributions and the role of marketing and community on the industry's resilience (Dobush, 2017). The current study picks up with the role of artisan vendors within the U.S. society, society's influence on artisans, and artisan vendors' innovativeness in overcoming adversity. By researching an industry broad in scope and under-researched, this study *creates new knowledge that addresses issues severe enough to warrant intellectual engagement.* This study's findings offer insights into artisan vendors' marketing-related decisions that make it possible for them to persist in the face of external threats, as did their predecessors beginning in the Mesopotamian Era (Salem, 2020).

Today's artisan vendors are facing a global Pandemic and extreme global economic and political turmoil. Such external constraints mandate artisan vendors adapt or leave the industry. Adaptation requires making strategic marketing decisions as to product authenticity, distribution (selling online), pricing, etc. Artisan vendors have faced many issues (e.g., industrial revolutions, economic recessions and depressions, plague of 1918) over the centuries and adapted often by bonding together in communities (e.g., guilds). Brand community, today, are "specialized, non-geographically bound communities, based on a structured set of social relations among admirers of a brand" (Muniz Jr. & O'Guinn 2001, 412). The concept of brand communities evolved from consumption constellations and consumption communities. Consumption constellations form among complimentary products, brands, or consumption activities associated with a social role that communicate information among members (Chaplin & Lowrey, 2009). Consumption communities created value for members in the group through a common bond of social relationships with a sense of shared identity and belongingness (Fischer, Bristor, & Gainer, 1996).

The qualitative research consisted of open-ended, unstructured and semi-structured, intuitive questions. Non-probability sampling, such as this study, encompasses samples available to the researcher. The team secured 29 artisan vendors (1st through 3rd generation artisan vendors) and created a natural comfort zone (craft shows) to gather respondents' candid and unreserved expression through the snowball methodology (Naderifar, Goli, & Ghaljaei, 2017). This representative sample of artisan vendors provided diverse and relevant perspectives. Although qualitative data are not generalizable, findings are transferable from interviews to other artisan vendors. This study consisted of four in-depth interviews consisting of seasoned artisan vendors and new enthusiasts (e.g., a physician's second life as an artisan).

This research study comes when many modern-day artisan vendors have been in the industry for many years and are considering leaving because of external factors. The qualitative interview study revealed that the artisans' spirit and perseverance hold today. This study moves marketing concepts into practice by revealing what factors influence artisan vendors' ability to adapt marketing strategies (e.g., branding, brand communities, and authentic product adaptations) for the marketplace. These findings have the potential for artisan vendors to continue to be marketable and profitable, increasing their sales opportunities. In response to the study's research question, the degree to which artisan vendors are willing to respond to consumers' desire for authentic products, the findings show that there is a willingness to stay true to their product authenticity and continue to educate the market on its value. A key factor in their desire to continue with their craft was strengthened by their participation as part of a brand community of artisan vendors. The strength derived from brand community empowers artisan vendors to take charge of controllable factors by adapting to overcome the external environment's influence on their intentions to remain a viable force in the marketplace. The research revealed that artisan vendors are indeed a force in today's society.

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INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA FACTORS ON TURKISH AND US SOCIAL MEDIA USERS FOR PURCHASE INTENTION

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Global brands use creative strategies on social media pages to reach their customers. It is important to increase number of customers and followers through social media applications. As internet usage becomes widespread all around the world, people from different countries get a chance to communicate with each other and talk about brands on social media. When consumers search and think about buying a product, they go to social media pages to get information. Customer reviews, comments and discussions are highly valuable for global companies to show their prestige. The strategies global brands use can differentiate based on country and cultural background as social media brand pages might have different impact on users in western and eastern countries.

In the USA and Turkey, Facebook and Instagram usage became the highest among other social media platforms in recent years (Statista, 2019). USA placed as a third country, which has the highest number of social network users after China and India in world ranking. According to the Statista report (2019), the number of social network users kept increasing in the USA between the years 2017-2019 by millions, from 240 to 246.7 and it is expected to be 257.4 million by the year of 2023. In Turkey, Facebook usage was the highest 24.47%, followed by YouTube 10.1% and Instagram 8.44% in 2017. Turkey has a great potential of young people as the number of young social media users besides adults keep increasing. Although the rate of usage on social media is high in Turkey and USA, interaction of users and content on brand pages might differentiate for their influence on purchase intention due to cultural differences.

Being innovative on social media is crucial for global brands, which try to set better strategies for their target audience in different countries. Demographics, such as age and gender might play role on purchase intention differently in countries by each platform. There is a high amount of consumption among Turkish users and social media is used primarily to follow others for learning and social interaction (Ozturk et al., 2018). In Turkey, between the years 2013-2018, ages 16-24 had the highest social networking share by percentage compared to other age groups (Statista, 2019). Majority of Gen Z watch Snapchat and Instagram stories different than majority of millennials (ages between 25-34) watch Facebook stories in the United States (emarketer pro, 2019). In the US, the total percentage of Facebook usage for women and men are 75% and 63% while this amount for Instagram is 43% and 31% in order (Pew Research Center, 2019).

This study examines the differences of social media factors that impact users in Turkey and the US on purchase intention of global brand products and services. Besides the social media factors which are *brand influencers, brand generated content, consumer generated content* and *brand engagement,* the differences of gender and age groups of both countries to various social media related factors are analyzed for Facebook. In the buying process, different elements on Facebook resulted separation of genders, having females more affected than males while age groups did not show any differences. The results showed evidence that Turkish consumers care about the factors on global brand pages of Facebook more compared to American consumers.

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THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE ON SELF-BRAND CONNECTION

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Marketers are rapidly integrating social media into their advertising strategies to drive brand awareness and digital engagement. Social media has become increasingly prevalent in today's world, with nearly 80% of United States consumers reported to having at least one social media account in 2018. Social media offers immediate gratification and connection with ones' favorite brands, therefore, well-known brands such as Adidas and Louis Vuitton have primarily focused their marketing efforts on social media and other digital channels. You can add all the bells and whistles in your advertisements, but these advertisements will never create the emotional experiences needed to get consumers excited about your brand (Savitz, 2012). Driving digital engagement and creating great user experiences on social media will directly influence the way consumers connect and identify with brands Self-brand connection is only further amplified with social media usage; therefore, it is a must for brands and marketers to focus marketing efforts exclusively on digital channels and social media platforms.

This study examines the impact of social media on how consumers connect and identify with their favorite brands and other companies and subsequently, the differentiating role of gender and income. A sample of 813 undergraduate student respondents at a Midwestern University completed the survey in March 2017. Females were the majority of respondents coming in at 55 percent of the sample (451 respondents) while males made up 45 percent of the sample at 362 respondents.

Self-brand connections were measured using five seven-point scale items. An individual's self-brand connection score was adapted from Escalas (1996) and measured by the average of five seven-point scale items: "Brand X reflects who I am (not at all/extremely well)", "I can identify with Brand X (not at all/extremely well)", "I (can) use Brand X to communicate who I am to other people (not at all/extremely well)", "I think Brand X (could) help(s) me become the type of person I want to be (not at all/extremely well)", and "Brand X suits me well (not at all/extremely well)". All five seven-point scale items were anchored with 1 (Not at all) and 7 (Extremely well). The five items were then averaged to form one self-brand connection score per participant ($\alpha = .90$).

Social media usage scores were measured using four five-point scale items. An individual's social media usage score was adapted from Kumar (2016) and measured by the average of four five-point scale items: "Social networking websites such as Facebook are a part of my everyday activity", "I follow companies and their brands using social networking websites or online blogs", "I would be sorry if my social network website shuts down", and "I feel out of touch when I do not log onto a social networking website". All four five-point scale items were anchored with 1 (Strongly Agree) and 7 (Strongly Disagree). The four items were then averaged to form one social media usage score per participant ($\alpha = .71$).

The findings show that social media usage is directly related to a consumer's personal connection with a brand. Moreover, self-brand connection is directly related to a consumer's daily social network usage. In addition, self-brand connection is directly related to users following brands on social media. It is further shown that social media usage itself is key in explaining how consumers connect and identify with brands on social media. The general conclusion is that social media usage is directly related to and highly dependent on consumers personal connections with their favorite brands online.

Despite the limitations of this study, we hope that this research has contributed to better theories on social media advertising, and how consumers connect with brands on and off social media platforms. The general conclusion is that social media usage is directly related to and highly dependent on consumers personal connections with brands. Future research should continue to investigate the relationship between social media usage and how individuals connect and identify with brands.

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PROMOTING B-TO-B VALUE PROPOSITIONS AND WOM RECOMMENDATIONS: THE SEARCH FOR A SILVER BULLET

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Corporate marketing strategists search for effective communications methods to express value propositions in ways that drive word of mouth (WOM) recommendations for their firms. Many marketers are impressed by the power of digital communications and how these modes might facilitate ongoing and deepening relationships between suppliers and customers. However, while social media platforms can provide a wealth of analytics showing the impact of communication strategies, in B-to-B markets there are open questions about the business impact of various marketing tactics, particularly social media.

Technical audiences like design engineers are highly dependent on and devote considerable energy to accessing up-to-date current information about emerging technology products (such as software, components or sub-systems) and deep technical detail on existing products in order to unravel knotty problems or deploy these solutions to greatest effect (UBM Media 2013). Many of these technology developers continue to rely on traditional methods – such as trade media and supplier websites – but are also open to peer interactions facilitated by online forums and communities, either independent of or overtly sponsored by technology suppliers, for trading information and insights as well as obtaining tech support (Aspencore 2020).

The study examines in B-to-B supplier communications which tactics are most effective in delivering salient value propositions to or generating "word of mouth" peer to peer recommendations among global technical audiences, with particular focus on comparing social media and online forums with traditional trade media and expert opinions. The objective of this research is to provide insight on which communications conditions and tactics are most effective in articulate value propositions vital to their company's competitive positioning and differentiation and generate "word of mouth" (WOM) recommendations, and how the use of social media and online forums compares with traditional trade media in affecting these outcomes?

Data for this study is derived from a survey conducted in 2020 with electronics design engineers and engineering managers in North America, Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA) and Asia (particularly China) who use and specify electronic design automation (EDA) software tools to design semiconductor components, printed circuit boards and systems for next generation electronics products. To determine which marketing communications tactics are most effective in increasing WOM and delivering salient value proposition, two multiple regression models were created, each with a separate outcome variable and controlling for measures of supplier preference and trustworthiness as well as exogenous factors (e.g. region, customer company size, job status, and type of design engaged.

The findings show that both WOM and the ability to solve customer problems are strongly influenced by trust in and preference for the supplier. It was further found that but that credible and curated "traditional" media sources (e.g., trade media articles and advertising, press releases and supplier website visits) are preeminent when instilling salient value proposition "promises" such as solving customer problems, while neither expert recommendations nor digital/social media are effectual. Additionally, WOM is influenced more significantly by traditional and social/digital media than by expert recommendations,

Why? Perhaps traditional media sources have earned the credibility that social media and other digital assets have yet to acquire and lack the ax-grinding agendas of industry experts and analysts. The best supplier websites are repositories of deeper information about a firm's resources and solutions. Press releases are clarion calls of innovation. Articles in industry media promise boots-on-the-ground industry knowledge combined with supplier independence.

Social media and digital media, by contrast, may be seen as less curated and dependable.

The analysis provided convincing evidence that for any B-to-B technology supplier to effectively promulgate its messages, the supplier's credibility must be developed and nurtured by mutually reinforced trust and by instilling some level of preference for the supplier's products, personnel and support resources. B-to-B marketing is about relationship building between suppliers and value-creating customers, and suppliers that are seen helping customers create value are rewarded with greater trust (Aaker 1996). Once credibility has begun to form, suppliers create and share value propositions through a variety of channels to target engineering customers, both current and prospective. The salience of the supplier's value propositions, together with the credibility of the supplier itself, provides the necessary leverage to ensure that the messaging is received and consumed. Its effectiveness is seen in greater acceptance by the targeted engineers of the veracity of the value propositions, which in turn increases the propensity of the engineers on the receiving end to share this newly acquired information with peer engineers, which reinforces supplier trustworthiness and preference in a virtuous cycle.

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THE NEXT CLICK

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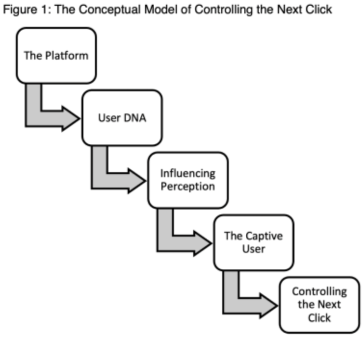
EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The documentary, the Social Dilemma (Netflix, 2020), highlights that society is at a crossroads with social media. What started as a collaborative space to socially connect with others, has evolved into a full-on digital data trove allowing social media companies to monetize their users data. Technology has matured over the years. At first it was an underlying platform allowing social media users a way to connect to now being a massive data collector which feeds the social media customer content through predictive behavior algorithms. This shift in the underlying technology has introduced a new revenue model for social network companies to commoditize their user communities by creating an unconscious user participation model that generates an opportunity for targeted advertising. This paper introduces a new model concept of Controlling the Next Click which is rooted in how social media companies influence the user's next click by modeling behavior through predictive model algorithms.

The Next Click is a concept which flows through a series of steps before finally materializing. Referring to Figure 1: The Conceptual Model of Controlling the Next Click, the theory of who controls the next click expects moving sequentially through these levels. First, the Platform provides the environment where the user and social media interact. Second, the User DNA is all the of data the social media platform collects about the user as interactive participants in the social media space. Third, Influencing Perception occurs through the social media modeled information fed to the user based on the user DNA profile. Fourth, the Captive User is engaging with the social media platform on a regular and predictable basis and responds to placed nudges by the social media company. These four steps build reciprocal relationship trust and expectation between the social media company and user which is called Controlling the Next Click.

Figure 1: The Conceptual Model of Controlling the Next Click



Social media has been a very fluid topic since its inception which has made it difficult to define in research (Carr & Hayes, 2015). Structurally, it is a framework which provides a platform for user generated content. Over time, the content continues to build and extend. As users interact on the platform there is more and more content. In recent years, social media companies have evolved with the users and found ways to match users with content they would typically have to seek out. This ability to match user to content has resulted in a one-on-one relationship between the user and social media company (Capatina, Kachour, Lichy, Micu, Micu, & Codignola, 2020). Today's social media user expects the social media company to provide them a feed that is tailored to their personal likes. This includes all type of content available from news, videos, network connections (friends), to products, communities, local businesses, groups and travel. To satisfy this relationship expectation, social media uses Artificial Intelligence (AI) or predictive modeling. The addition of AI is how social media companies are able to provide each user their very personalized experience based on their evolving user DNA on the social media platform.

The concept of who controls the next click opens new considerations for digital marketing. Over the past decade, there have been standardized digital advertising models based on the number of impressions and click through rates that drive the digital advertising costs on social media platforms. These industry models are well defined and have effectively met the needs of advertisers on social media platforms (Bruce, Murthi, & Rao, 2017). With the control of the next click, social media companies could provide a more targeted service to digital advertisers. The current social media advertising models cast a large/broad net to users (Tran, 2017) who may click and generates a significant number of advertisements. Users are increasingly overwhelmed by the amount of online marketing they encounter and, like they do in offline media, utilize numerous means to avoid such messages (Chinchanachokchai & de Gregorio, 2020). With AI, social media companies can reduce the volume of ads and instead match the user to advertising that is relevant based on their user DNA. This is a basis of the concept of the who controls the next click.

There is a growing branch of contemporary literature on current user social media interactions with AI content feeds and the new challenge for digital advertising. The need to market to generations differently further highlights the importance of the next click concept. The younger generation of social media users (GenZ) appear to rely more on testimonials from other platform users for product purchases. Further this group scrolls past the general feed ads because it is an advertisement (Munsch, 2021). Another problem discovered with the general ads in the content feed is not knowing if the product ad is legitimate or is a scam. There are considerable examples of users having clicked on an ad to make a purchase of a product that appears to be from a legitimate US retailer and learning after the purchase that it is a front to a foreign scammer (Chow, 2020). This bad ad-clicking experience can sour the user to trusting the ads presented are worth clicking. It is time for digital marketers to initiate a change in the social media marketing models and the next click provides a foundation of this change.

The Next Click is a concept idea that needs more research. It is still in a concept and is based on experiences and idea formation driven from current topics in daily news. Its purpose is to provide digital advertisers an underlying model to more effectively reach their target social media user. While it is not backed with full research yet, the intent is to continue to explore the concept and look to develop a proper theory supported by literature and data. There are other major areas which exist in this topic that also would need explored. The use of User DNA data and AI introduces ethical questions regarding personal data and social behavior modeling. There are further questions of social behavior and are users recognizing the need to disconnect from these social media platforms. As noted above, the area of social media is very fluid and is like a shape shifter that aligns with the social norming that continues within the platforms. Finally, as this concept would move forward, there is a difference in user groups on different social media platforms. Each platform offers the user a different experience and further there is a swarming effect to different platforms by user groups which flock together. All of these considerations must be considered in the long-term modeling of the next click.

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FACTORS AFFECTING THE RETENTION OF ADJUNCT FACULTY

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Job satisfaction is critically important to higher learning institution effectiveness and performance (Amos et al., 2015; Pan et al., 2015), and job satisfaction requires monitoring by the administration to ensure adjunct faculty are satisfied with their job (Al-Smadi & Qbian, 2015). Low levels of adjunct job satisfaction increase both direct and indirect university costs (Bockerman & Ilmakunnas, 2012; Caruth & Caruth, 2013). Job satisfaction of adjunct faculty primarily relates to challenges of the job itself as opposed to a commitment to the university, age, experience, or intrinsic factors (Amzat & Idris, 2012 & Barnett, 2017). Chong and Monroe (2013) found adjunct faculty job satisfaction is negatively affected by stress, long working hours, lack of balance between work and life, and the ambiguous nature of their role at the university itself—all of which lead to higher levels of turnover among adjunct faculty. Job challenges for adjunct faculty include feeling satisfied with the occupation resulting from working long hours, achieving a work/life balance (Barnett, 2017; Chong & Monroe, 2013), and the lack of student readiness as it relates to meeting basic academic requirements. Adjunct faculty are valuable university resources, and their importance cannot be overlooked. The overarching research question in this study was to identify which factors—positively or negatively affect the retention of adjunct at higher learning institutions.

Adjunct faculty are critical in the operations of many higher education institutions, and their retention equally important. Costs are significant to recruit, hire, and train adjunct faculty, making it critical for higher learning institutions to retain current adjunct faculty (Betts & Sikorski, 2008). Effectiveness in higher education institutions relates to goal and task attainment, the ability to exploit the environment, as well as leadership ability to mobilize for action (Mott, 1972). Through high quality, high quantity, information seeking initiatives, and inventiveness, higher education learning institutions can increase effectiveness and efficiency. When higher education institutions face change and challenges, resilient responses include coping, accepting, adjusting, and doing so quickly and appropriately with flexibility and adaptability (Guthrie, 2019; Hoy, 2009). Research suggests adjunct faculty may be one factor alleviating these challenges.

As of 2019, adjunct faculty represented about 76% of faculty among all higher education institutions in the U.S, up from the 2018 figure of 73% of all faculty positions (AAUP, 2018, 2019). Full-time tenure-track positions approximated 436,403; full-time adjunct positions 331,313, and part-time adjunct positions at 767,565 (GAO, 2018). The AAUP (2018) defined adjunct faculty as non-tenured, part-time adjunct professors and faculty with yearly contracts, working on a course basis, without any true job security or benefits. Many are legally considered at-will-employees (AAUP, 2019; Elder & Ryan, 2016; GAO, 2018). The retention of adjunct faculty is also essential as they provide highly qualified, experienced faculty supporting the achievement of student learning outcomes, enhancement of student success, and an overall positive student experience (AAUP, 2018; Caruth & Caruth, 2013, Kuvakas, 2018).

The study followed a qualitative interpretative methodology using a phenomenological design. Interpretative phenomenology seeks to understand the lived experiences to make meaning of those experiences. The researcher plays a central role through the in-depth exploration to determine themes common to the participants (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Leedy & Ormrod, 2019; Smith, 2011) glean and make meaning of experiences to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon. The population for this study was ten adjunct faculty in higher learning institutions.

The interview instrument contained semi-structured, open-ended questions with probes as needed to the research question. The sample included experienced part-time teaching adjunct faculty with at least 5 to 10 years of experience. The average experience of participants was 19.5 years from the five universities selected. The location of participants ranged across two time zones. The interviews focused on experiences in their current role at the university. The interview length was between 30 minutes to 1 hour and 10 minutes.

Six themes emerged from the data analysis: (a) career direction, (b) a number of students in the class, (c)

satisfaction with the college, (d) enjoyment of higher education, (e) work for a servant leader, and (f) leadership styles of the boss.

Theme 1: Career direction included adjunct professor satisfaction with their current position, desire to continue teaching, obtain a doctorate. The theme of career direction was mentioned several times during data analysis. This theme was not explicitly stated as a career direction, and the theme of career direction did not align with the literature review. Theme 2: Number of students in a class. Too many students represented a disadvantage, as seen by participants. Students were perceived as not college-ready, and faculty thought the university could do a better job of screening applicants. This theme aligned with the literature review. Theme 3: Satisfaction with the college. This theme entailed satisfaction with the college administration, including deans, managers, and supervisors of adjunct faculty. The theme of satisfaction with the college did not align directly with the literature review.

Theme 4: Enjoyment of higher education. This theme was mentioned or implied by all ten participants. This theme aligned with the literature review. Theme 5: Work for a servant leader. In this theme, participants were referencing deans, chairs, or supervisors with a preference towards this leader type. This theme aligned with the literature review. Theme 6: Leadership style of the boss. This theme overlapped with theme 5 (work for a servant leader). Most of the participants stated transformational, transactional, and servant leaders as the style of the boss. This theme was in alignment with the literature review.

Adjunct faculty would like to advance to full-time faculty status and earn doctorates in their field when possible. These are indicators of adjunct faculty seeking careers as a satisfaction motivator. More research is needed on leadership styles of deans, administrators, and managers of adjunct faculty with attention to variables that influence the understanding of the institution's mission, participation in university events and committees, professional training, and benefits packages.

Additional qualitative and quantitative studies are needed. Studies of job satisfaction and retention that separately study nonprofit institutions and for-profit institutions using a phenomenological design may determine if differences exist. A larger participant sample closer to 25 might yield undetected differences in satisfaction. In addition, three focus groups per region might also capture potential regional variations. Consideration might be given to participants with 5-9 years of experience to detect retention possibilities. It is the hope of the researchers that these avenues spark interest, excitement, and research in adjunct faculty retention in higher learning institutions.

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MARKETING STRATEGIES FOR INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATIONS' CAREER SERVICES: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

A quality education is the sum of Institutions of Higher Education's (IHE) parts, including classroom instruction and internal services, which are key to students' success during and after college. IHE internal service providers offer valuable educational services that enhance the quality of a college education and increase retention and graduation rates (Makela et al., 2014). Although career services (CS) are vital in preparing students to compete for employment; as graduation rates increase, students who take advantage of IHE CS have not increased proportionately. To be effective, IHE CS must add value by offering quality products that require staff trained in identifying employment, internships, resume development, and interview preparation (Ghosh et al., 2012), but first students must know services exist and what is offered. Securing a position aligned with students' career goals makes attending a quality CS center an asset for students and employers. The current study addresses an understudied sector in the nonprofit marketing literature by examining the effectiveness of the subject IHE's CS in increasing awareness and participation in its career fairs (CFs).

Although research exists on how students respond to marketing strategies when selecting IHEs, there is an absence of research of best practices for marketing to currently enrolled students (Royo-Vela & Hünermund, 2016). When students commit to an IHE, in order to enhance their college experience, personal growth, and future opportunities, internal IHE organizations' marketing efforts must be targeted and continuously inform and engage students (Hessel, 2013). This study explores Institutions of Higher Education's (IHE) (i.e., nonprofits) on-campus service providers, specifically career services' communication with students to bring awareness of CF's. This study extends Dakouan, et al. (2019) conceptual work by examining effectiveness of outbound marketing practices of an IHE's career services.

The subject's CS office is a quality service provider offering valuable CS with appointments ranging from one-on-one assistance in selecting a major to tailoring resumes for a specific job. As with Makela et al. (2014), the subject IHE CS ensure students have a competitive edge in the job market. Whether students know what career they want to pursue, the subject CS provides resources needed to compete. The subject's CS offer individual counseling, CF's, networking events, and graduate school preparation. However, outbound marketing has not led to the level of attendance expected for the subject IHE's CS or CFs. This study explores the IHE's internal services of CS marketing strategies' effectiveness in creating awareness and increasing participation. This study examines the research question, t*o what extent are the subject IHE's CS' outbound marketing strategies successfully creating awareness and increasing attendance at CFs?*

Marketing data were collected through a student survey provided at a CF at a medium-sized university located in the Southeastern United States. Data were collected across three academic years.The following were analyzed: 1) The researchers analyzed CF intercept self-report survey data using frequency analyses identifying the marketing strategies most frequently elicited students' attendance (i.e., effectiveness of outbound strategies). Thus, the higher the percentage of attendance, the more successful the strategy in bringing students to the CF; 2) The subject IHE CS' Facebook page data of likes and followers as to CF were examined for changes in effectiveness from 2010-2019 using frequency analysis. Facebook data were not collected prior to 2010; 3) The researchers compared attendance data (i.e., number of attendees) to survey data about which medium was mentioned to see how the respondent became aware of the CF; and 4) a comparison analysis of the effectiveness of email strategy, the number of emails sent compared to the number of responses from attendees' self-report surveys who attended because of email.

Frequency analysis of 2017-2019 data was used to determine the communication strategy that elicited the most

attendance by students. CF attendees reported gaining awareness from personal selling and emails. Perrin and Anderson (2019) state that Facebook is one of the most widely used social media platforms. However, a content analysis of the subject Facebook data shows that since the Facebook page's creation (Nov. 2010), the page received only 2,140 likes and 2,227 followers. This study's findings are not surprising based on the Pew Research Report, which shows the number of those using Facebook has remained nearly constant since 2016, but in a 2018 report Facebook usage among US teens began dropping- the same age group that makes up the target market for the IHE (Perrin & Anderson, 2019). This finding brings into question the value of the IHE's Facebook page.

Findings demonstrate the need for ongoing market research to determine the best way to deliver valuable messages through mediums students use. This study did not reveal clear directions for marketing strategies, but external data from a 2019 Pew Research study, showed that among 18-29 years old, 67% use Instagram and 62% use Snapchat as their primary social media choice. Because inbound marketing does not return results immediately, and IHE campuses have many different generations of students, *outbound marketing* (e.g., advertising and promotions) should be combined with inbound marketing. Both are beneficial for CS in reaching different target markets. It is recommended a team is dedicated full time to implement, manage, and analyze social media platforms. With a staff member dedicated to marketing they can in real-time identify patterns and make changes in strategies and messages. Although this research study examined one IHE CFs, findings may also apply to other on-campus services.

Monteiro, et al. (2016) stated, one of the university's goals is for CS staff to prepare students for the 21st-century workforce. In the Makela et al., (2014) study, researchers state IHE's are observing increased retention and graduation rates based partly on quality CS. An essential role of quality CS is to offer services enhancing IHE's product offering. Staff must utilize appropriate marketing strategies for their target markets to communicate services and show how they add value for stakeholders by bringing students and recruiters into the CF. Ghosh, et al. (2012) shows that dedicated personnel for marketing improves the ability to effectively market service offerings to students. The findings show, there is value using both inbound and outbound marketing to move students through the purchase funnel, thus, addressing the research question as to effectiveness in increasing awareness and attendance at IHEs CS events. The use of outbound marketing strategies (e.g., personal selling) supports the Dey and Cruzvergera (2014) study as to Gen-Z's preference for individual attention and lends use of inbound marketing (opt-in personal selling). Personal selling (relationship marketing) and marketing training of CS staff are too costly (e.g., opportunity cost) and should not be considered the primary CF medium. There is no way to know from the data analyzed if the content within the outbound messages or the mediums were the cause of low levels of awareness because this was not part of the current study. Nevertheless, findings revealed personalizing the message through opt-in personal selling was useful, which aligns with the Schroth (2019) article on Gen-Z. These findings suggest inbound email marketing (opt-in) is an effective way of reaching students with CS offerings.

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EXAMINING DRINK-GENDER STEREOTYPING AND CONSUMPTION INTENTIONS: A STUDY WITH THE U.S. MILLENNIALS

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

In modern consumption culture, the categories of products serve as a reference point for consumers in creating a gendered identity. Gender-based food meaning serves as an important signal for gender identity (Basfirinci and Cilingir Uk, 2017), such that certain food items are associated with specific genders and the genders of the consumers influence their food consumption preferences (Counihan and Kaplan 2004). Similar to gender-based food items, there can be gendered-based drink stereotypes, and drinks can be perceived as masculine, feminine, or gender-neutral, which may influence the consumption intentions of the consumer. To the best of our knowledge, there are no specific studies regarding the gendered meaning of drinks. This study intends to fill this void by examining the gendered-based drink stereotypes among millennials in the U.S., the influence of the stereotyped drinks on consumption intentions, and if these consumption intentions differ by millennials' gender.

The self-congruity theory serving as the foundation for this study links the gender-based stereotype perceptions of an individual with the consumption tendency. The self-congruity theory predicts that, in seeking self-consistency, individuals would prefer some specific products that are congruent with gender perceptions of their self-concepts (Basfirinci and Cilingir Uk, 2017). Prior research shows widespread gender-based stereotypes about food items, for example, meat being masculine food in almost every culture (Sobal 2005). A recent study by Ekebas-Turedi et al. (2020) found that respondents perceive certain foods as masculine and feminine, but the degree of masculinity or femininity and food consumption intentions differs by gender and country. Several studies dealing with gender-based drink stereotyping mainly focus on alcohol consumption and their gender relationships (e.g., George et al., 1988; McDonald, 1994; Ely et al., 1999; Wilsnack et al., 2000; Murphy et al., 2005). However, to the best of our knowledge, there is no comprehensive research examining gender-based drink stereotyping covering different drink categories, such as alcoholic or non-alcoholic, let alone among millennials. Therefore, this study intends to investigate the perceptions of gender-based stereotypes of various drinks as masculine or feminine among the U.S. millennials (students) and their consumption intentions of the gender-stereotyped drinks. The specific objectives are 1) to examine the gender-based drink stereotype to determine if drinks are perceived as feminine, masculine, or gender-neutral by millennials in the U.S., 2) to investigate the consumption intention of the gender-drink stereotypes for male and female millennials, and 3) to discuss managerial implications of the findings.

To accomplish our objectives, the study includes different alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks to determine if millennials perceive them as masculine or feminine. Based on pretest results, we identified 14 drink items (both alcoholic and non-alcoholic) that represented masculine, feminine and gender-neutral categories. College students were selected as subjects because they represent the millennials from two universities in the U.S. Gender-drink stereotyping and consumption tendencies are measured with a 5 scale, the stereotyping scale ranged from -2=definitely feminine, 0=gender neutral, and 2=definitely masculine, whereas consumption tendency ranged from -2=very unlikely to +2=very likely**.** The survey also included demographic questions. The final sample size was 418 respondents (52.4% male, 47.6% female, average age: 21.3 years).

The results of this study offer presence of gender-based stereotyping of the drinks, such that some alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks are perceived as feminine or masculine for all respondents, as well as male and female respondents. The comparisons showed significant differences between perceptions of male and female respondents for some of the masculine or feminine drinks, where females have stronger perceptions of gender identity of the drinks that are consistent with their gender. In addition, the study found that the millennials, collectively or by each gender, indicate that they are likely to consume certain drinks, will not consume some drinks, and indifferent in their

consumption intentions for some other drinks. The findings suggest that gender-based stereotypes of drinks influence the consumption intentions of some drinks and not others, which is also supported by the comparisons of gender-based drink stereotypes and consumption intentions for male and female millennials. With some exceptions, the results indicate that males are more likely to consume masculine drinks and females are more likely to consume feminine drinks, which is consistent with the predictions of congruity theory.

The findings of the study sheds light on the gender-based drink stereotypes, which can be an important determinant on drink selections and buying behavior. The findings of this study can be used to identify and effectively segment the potential target markets to develop more appealing drinks for each gender. Accordingly, marketers in the beverage sector can effectively position their products and develop advertising and promotional strategies for each gender. While this is the first comprehensive study that has empirically identified the gender-based drink stereotypes for both alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks and the potential effects of our gender-based stereotyped drinks on consumption intentions among millennials in the U.S.

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WHEN CAN THE OLYMPIC SPONSORSHIP ADVERSELY AFFECT THE PURCHASE INTENTION OF ATHLETIC SPORTS FOOTWEAR?

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Olympic sponsorship, a form of commercial sponsorship marketing activity has been known as an effective way to communicate with many customers and influence attitude, image, involvement, and thus sales. For example, the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi generated the 5.7 billion USD, and the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio stimulated worldwide spending at a rate of 3.4 million USD per day with the intention of developing sport and assisting athletes across the globe. In addition, during the 2016 Rio Olympic, there were about 187 million tweets, 75 billion impressions on Twitter, and 1.5 billion interactions on Facebook by 277 million people.

However, companies sponsoring the Olympic events concerned about its reverse effect on sales, which is often called ambush marketing. In marketing, research about the sponsorship effect on purchase intention is still unclear. A stream of studies argue that the sponsorship is an important source of establishing brand attachment while others indicate that there is no direct relationship between sponsorship and brand attachment. The purpose of this research is to contribute to this debate by introducing the evaluability bias in the context of evaluating an athletic sports footwear. More specifically, this paper explores the adverse effect of the Olympic sponsorship in the athletic sports footwear market for the purpose of enhancing our understanding of the co-branding strategy.

Approximately, 256 responses were collected and analyzed in two studies. The results showed that when a well-known brand was strengthened by the Olympic sponsorship, the purchase intention for the athletic sports footwear was surprisingly lower than when the well-known brand was evaluated alone. This adverse effect of the Olympic sponsorship on the purchase intention, however, was minimized when consumers simultaneously considered the brand's quality and differentiation. It suggests that the brand attachment can be either coupled or de-coupled depending on what an evaluation mode either separate evaluation or joint evaluation mode is used when evaluating the Olympic sponsorship brands. We conclude that the effect of Olympic sponsorship on the purchase intention can increase when marketers help customers experience the Olympic sponsorship brands with brand quality and differentiation jointly.

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WHAT ARE THE BEST PRACTICES FOR KEEPING CURRICULUM RELEVANT?

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

It is commonly accepted that there are numerous factors that influence success in student learning as well as the purpose of that learning. A preliminary list of contributing factors include, but are not limited to, quality of instruction, student motivation, delivery platform of instruction, timely instructor feedback on assessments, and relevance of curriculum.

As marketing educators, we face internal and external pressures to craft, deliver, maintain, and raise the standards in curriculum. They include institutional pressures for those in charge of curriculum to scale popular programs across many delivery platforms using interchangeable facilitators. Teachers also hear from students that learning objects that are five years or older should no longer be included in the course. Could you image recommending a marketing course that does not integrate mobile marketing technology as part of its curriculum plan? Dynamic world events place urgency to changing curriculum. Would it be fair to students to offer a contemporary international marketing course that did not address the latest global trade agreements of the past three years? Finally, leaders of industry want to hire college graduates who are versed in the latest marketing trends (not fads). Thus, it can be a balancing act between encouraging Creative Thinking while maintaining time-tested approaches that still have a place in student learning. Therefore, it is imperative for marketing educators to get curriculum revision right.

How often should curriculum be revised? The revision cycle is as varied as the number of marketing departments on college campuses. To what extent should every course be reviewed and updated? Is there a rotation or a schedule to when the next course will be reviewed and updated? Still others suggest that some topics are more critical than others. The practical time constraints of variable faculty workloads, conflicting goals, and even office politics can cause the most well-meaning marketing educator to push curriculum revisions further out on the time horizon. How do the best curriculum development leaders overcome these real challenges and attain a successful curriculum revision strategy?

A different question to consider is how deep and how wide should the breadth of the curriculum change be? This continuum of change may range from the cosmetics of the course to refreshing key learning objects to overhauling the whole course to ensuring that strategies like backward design enhance learning skill outcomes of the entire program. In essence, is the rising rigor of the curriculum consistent with all shareholders' goals?

There are many acceptable approaches to curriculum development to select from. An educator led approach is a traditional as well as a safe method of managing change. While a learner led approach to curriculum revision may be more in touch with what the student desires but may not be practical to manage. Yet, another option may be a hybrid combination of the two prior approaches. For this exploratory research, the educator led approach will be used.

Next, the research focus shifts to which educator will assume the leadership role. Is it the Dean, Assistant Dean, Program Director, senior instructors, or even adjunct instructors with extensive subject matter expertise that are best suited for this important task? Will any supporting role be offered to other educators to contribute to curriculum revision? Do course designers, staff members, and other interested individuals join in the process? This is one of several questions that we hope to gain more insight into as the research journey continues.

Marketing educators appreciate and embrace the challenge of managing innovative curriculum. This presentation will provide a preliminary framework of the challenges of keeping curriculum relevant. Next, a brief introduction into how some educators approach marketing curriculum improvement at Bellevue University. Finally, it may be pragmatic

to suggest that the pandemic has hastened the pace of change for curriculum development. Please consider prior to January 2020, distant learning was thought to be a luxury; now distant learning is considered a staple of delivering a course to learners. Consequently, the external variable of access to technology further impacts the ability of the student to be a successful learner. Thus, future research will be driven by many forces including those that are known and unknown.

In closing, the purpose of this exploratory research is to identify “best practices” to enhancing curriculum. More specifically, how often, to what extent, and who should be leading curriculum relevance strategy?

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WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME? – EXPLORING INTRUSIVENESS FOR ONLINE ADS WHEN INTENDING TO SELL VERSUS WHEN INTENDING TO BUY

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

"Don't push people to where you want to be; meet them where they are"
- Meghan Keaney Anderson, VP Marketing, HubSpot

A large body of research has explored how online customized ads can drive the perception of intrusiveness and result in customer behavioral intentions when the intention is to purchase a new product. However, little is known about how the perception of intrusiveness differs when the intention is to sell used products and the resultant behavioral intentions, like clickthrough and intent to sell. This is an issue of significant importance as more and more retailers from various product segments are offering customers options of selling their used products along with the options of buying their new products. This trend has shown an upward trajectory in many segments such as apparel, electronics, and furniture as well, besides being a well-established business model for cars already. Recently, IKEA launched its first refurbished store in Sweden, taking advantage of this trend. Also, as more and more companies face the pressure of presenting themselves as a "sustainable" brand, and adding the current crisis faced by all due to the pandemic, this issue will only gain momentum.

Our daily lives are replete with examples of times when we are faced with the option of letting go of something that has been sitting idle or not being used for a long time. What about that crib lying in the garage now that the kid is all grown up? Or that expensive Calvin Klein dress that is hanging in your closet with the hope of someday fitting you like it once did? Apps like Letgo and platforms like eBay provided great opportunities to people wanting to get rid of such stuff, that someone else might be interested in buying. Given the widespread use of the internet by all age groups, how receptive are customers when they are faced with a customized ad for a product they have been deliberating to sell online? Our research takes the first step towards attempting to answer such questions by linking the perception of intrusiveness associated with such customized ads, with a concrete established measure like Clickthrough.

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FACTORS OF FRAMING NUTRITIONAL MESSAGES ACROSS NATIONAL BORDERS: RUSSIA VS. US

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Growing obesity rates and health concerns in the US has led to increasing interest in nutritional labels. Ever since the 1990s, laws mandating and regulating nutritional labeling were introduced and continue to be debated and updated. Researchers investigated the factors behind the consumer's use of the nutritional labels (see Balasubramanian & Cole 2002), yet this research primary focuses on the use of nutrition labels when shopping for foods for home consumption. Less attention is devoted to the consumer use of nutritional information when eating out (Droms Hatch 2016). Connecting consumer preferences for the framing of nutritional information and consumer traits, in particular, health consciousness, health preventative behaviors, self-efficacy, perceived nutrition knowledge, and body image when using nutrition labels for eating out in the US has been studied (Hochradel & Taran 2018). This research found that for US consumers, health consciousness, preventive health behaviors, self-efficacy, and perceived nutrition knowledge were indicators for those consumers who would seek and use specific nutrition information on a menu when eating out.

While research regarding the US consumer restaurant behavior is limited, there is an extreme dearth of knowledge regarding the behaviors across the globe. Do consumers in other countries want nutritional information when eating out? What are their preferences? Are factors driving such preferences similar to those for the US consumer? As health and obesity concerns spread across the world, including the developing countries, it seems reasonable to assume that consumers may have some similarities, yet also some differences, when seeking nutrition information when eating out.

There has been limited research regarding the comparison between US and Russian consumers. Recently, research has focused on food and eating behavior of Russian consumers (see, for example, Bruschi, Teuber, & Dolgopolova 2015), yet this research focused solely on the Russian consumer and not a cross-cultural comparison. This research investigates Russian consumers and compares their attitude toward, and their desire for, nutrition information when eating out. Thus, this investigation aims to compare the preferences and use of the nutritional labeling in a restaurant setting and the personal factors of health consciousness, preventive health behaviors, perceived nutrition knowledge, self-efficacy, and body image between the US and Russian consumers.

Prior research postulated the driving factors regarding consumer preferences for nutrition labeling were health consciousness, engagement in preventive health behaviors, self-efficacy, perceived nutrition knowledge and body image (Hochradel & Taran 2018). These constructs are also posited to be influencing the Russian consumer. Health consciousness is "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). It reasonable to expect higher health consciousness to correlate with health prevention behaviors and both to correlate affect the preferences for nutritional information. Self-efficacy is a person's perception regarding the ability to complete a task (Peterson & Arnn, 2005). Self-efficacy is more than self-esteem; it is the belief people have in themselves that they are able to control and produce desired results which impact personal goals. Body image is hypothesized to be affecting the person's choices including nutrition (Cash, Santos & Williams, 2005). Insofar as at least some of the body image problems may be associated with poor dietary choices, one could expect some relationship between the body image and the preferences regarding nutritional information in a restaurant. Body image could prove of higher significance as far as the Russian consumer goes, since their vanity index (the importance of looking good in front of others) is very high (Weingartner, 2014).

Preference for nutritional framing will serve as the dependent variable. Consumers will either prefer to see more information or less; and when they want the information, they may want it as information on calories and nutritional contents straight-up (for example, 1560 kcal, 20 g of fat, etc.) or in an expressive form ("heart healthy" or "low fat").

We expect the same set of hypotheses to hold for the Russian consumer as for the US consumer: health consciousness and health prevention measures correlate with higher use of the available nutrition information on the menu, and body image will influence choices of preferred nutritional information. However, we expect the Russian consumer to have higher body image (due to vanity), higher preference for specific information, lower health consciousness, and lower health preventative behaviors (due to less affluent society and higher fatalism).

Existing, previously validated scales have been chosen for the health consciousness, health preventative behaviors, self-efficacy, perceived nutrition knowledge, and body image. The scales were translated into Russian. Demographic questions have been adjusted to reflect the differences in Russia.

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EFFECT OF EWOM REVIEW ON FACEBOOK BEAUTY FAN PAGES

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

This study developed a new interpretation of the attitude contagion theory, with the information adoption model as the theoretical basis. A consumer's attitude is usually shaped by the maximization of benefit from the perceived community information, product characteristics, or even brand characteristics, according to the consumers' personal preferences. However, no study has clearly identified the factors influencing the formation of online members' attitude (Bartikowski & Walsh, 2014). In this study, relevant literature was reviewed and "informational determinants" (Cheung, Luo, Sia & Chen, 2009; Martin & Lueg, 2011) and "personal determinants" (Bearden, Netemeyer & Teel, 1989; Taylor & Todd, 1995) were integrated to determine the important antecedents for attitude formation. Therefore, a review of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) studies was conducted from a macroscopic perspective by using informational and individual determinants to develop an integrated empirical model that identified the antecedents and consequences of consumer attitude toward online reviews.

This study used the list of top 50 Facebook fan pages in Taiwan (ranked according to the number of fans of Taiwan-based pages) published by Socialbakers.com as the basis for selecting the target research group. The researchers ultimately chose the category of cosmetics, as it is one of the most-liked and most-followed fan page categories; under this category included Small Three Parity Beauty, FashionGuide Trending News, and ButyBox Cosmetics Experience Website. Data were obtained from 750 members of Facebook fan pages. The study participants were consumers who had the experience of using products from the selected test brand communities and were members of these brand communities. Respondents were collected using purposive sampling technique in beauty fan pages in Taiwan. In this study, these measures for each construct were mostly higher than 0.7 and 0.5, respectively. Therefore, data analysis indicates that the convergent validity of each construct is acceptable.

This study employed structural equation modeling to test the proposed theoretical model. The goodness-of-fit of the research model was as follows: χ^2/df = 3.579, GFI = 0.847, AGFI = 0.821, nonnormed fit index (NFI) = 0.926, CFI = 0.945, incremental fit index (IFI) = 0.946, and RMSEA = 0.059. According to Hu and Bentler (1999), the structural model and observed data in the present study has satisfactory goodness-of-fit.

Results revealed that perceived "eWOM credibility of online reviews" and "product involvement" could be used to explain the effects of attitude toward online reviews. Attitude contagion factors partially mediate its antecedents and the eWOM adoption of brand fans. Regarding the attitude contagion effect, the effect of "attitude toward online review" on both "attitude toward a product" and "attitude toward a brand" is stronger than that on "eWOM adoption." H1 and H3 are rejected, whereas the rest of the hypotheses are accepted. This paper provides valuable insights into the antecedents, consequences, and transformation mechanisms that determine consumer attitude toward online reviews.

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MODERATING ROLE OF CSR INITIATIVES AND TEAM NET WORTH ON CONSUMER AUTHENTICITY PERCEPTIONS OF PROFESSIONAL SPORTS LEAGUE

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is the management practice of balancing an organization's economic, social, and environmental imperatives (What Is CSR? | UNIDO, 2020). CSR is important because it creates more connections between an organization and its stakeholders. Stakeholders for CSR are customers, shareholders, employees, communities, competitors, customers, and in the sports industry it can be nontraditional employees, like coaches, players, and training staff. These groups are essential to any organization's core operations, but even more so in sport due to the deep connections between organizations and their biggest stakeholders, the consumer and community (Babiak & Kihl, 2018).

Sport is commonly referred to as a microcosm of society and consequently, problems in society (i.e. inequality among genders/races) are often reflected in sport (i.e. Title IX and Colin Kaepernick's protest in 2016). Because of this direct connection and relevance to everyday life as well as high levels of national exposure, sport is historically held to a higher standard of CSR (Joo et al., 2019). Sport teams, in particular, are unique in that they are integral to the community in which they do business; in fact, they can create a sense of identity for people in their communities (Sartore-Baldwin & Walker, 2011). Three main CSR efforts that most teams and leagues engage with are geared towards community outreach, environmentalism, and diversity (Erikson, 2009).

There has been research into the effect of corporate competence on consumer responses to CSR efforts based on promotional, philanthropic, and value-creating CSR activations (Chen et al., 2018). Corporate competence has been previously defined in many ways that ultimately boil down to the ability of an organization to sustainably utilize resources to achieve the goals of the firm (Chen et al., 2018). These resources are typically attained through financial means, which justifies the use of net worth to define high and low corporate competence for sport teams.

There is substantial cause to look into which types of CSR are perceived as most authentic dependent on net income and league, as these are not easily alterable factors for a team, whereas their CSR foci are. By implementing CSR initiatives that consumers will perceive as the most authentic, teams can drive more intense brand love as defined in "Extreme brand love: measuring and modelling the intensity of sports team love" due to the desire of sport consumers to feel intimately connected to their teams (Daniels et al., 2020).

For the purpose of this study, accommodating time and resource constraints, two professional sport leagues in the United States will be explored. The top four professional sports leagues in the United States are the NFL, MLB, NBA, and NHL (Gough, 2019). Of these, the NFL, most popular league, and the NBA, third most popular were selected for review due to their distinct governing structures, marketing and branding strategies, growth tactics and revenue stream.

The NBA features a player-first hierarchical structure, whereas the NFL has a top-down hierarchy. Secondly, the NBA promotes its players and has a player as the logo while the NFL promotes its teams and games themselves and has a shield as the logo. Another point of contrast can be seen in the NBA's international growth while the NFL has mainly remained national. As for revenue, each league has a dramatically different stream: about \$7 billion and \$14 billion for the NBA and NFL respectively (Branch, 2018).

In order to observe consumer perceptions of authenticity for NBA and NFL teams, three empirical studies will be conducted. Study 1 will feature a between-subjects survey design testing the three foci of CSR (community outreach, environmentalism, and diversity) for both the NBA and NFL. Study 2 and Study 3 will be the same format as one another; however, Study 2 will focus on the NFL and Study 3 will focus on the NBA. Each study will be a 2 (low vs

high net worth)*3(CSR types) between subjects design. These surveys will test for the same dependent variables as the survey in Study 1, the initiative's community link, reliability, commitment, congruence, benevolence, transparency, and the broad impact of the initiative. Respondents will be presented with statements based on the three CSR foci, adapted from real businesses, applied to the high and low net worth teams for the NBA or NFL. Information regarding high and low net worth for teams will be provided in the surveys prior to responding to any statements.

Responses will be analyzed to determine differences between perceived authenticity , based on the seven scales, within the context of high and low team net worth. Any observable differences will be used in the interpretation to determine the most authentic forms of CSR for teams depending on their league and net worth. This information will then aid in making a recommendation for sport marketing and communication professionals concerning types of CSR efforts to capitalize on.

The purpose of this research is to fill in a gap within sport marketing research regarding authenticity of CSR efforts and consumer perceptions. This research will build on prior knowledge of the importance of CSR within sport, the idea of corporate competence, and how these combine to affect consumer perceptions of authenticity. Consumer perceptions of authenticity is important to any corporation, but sport teams, in particular, due to high stakeholder expectations (Babiak & Kihl, 2018). By knowing which CSR efforts are seen as most authentic by consumers, teams and leagues can strategically implement and promote the efforts that are truer to their mission and vision.

The stances of organizations on social issues are progressively more impactful on consumers and what goods, services, and brands they choose to associate with. By staying true to the core values of their organizations and highlighting CSR efforts related to these values, companies improve their perception among consumers. Bringing this knowledge to the sport industry can bring to light key differences between leagues, team net worth, and how it impacts consumer perception in order to inform marketing and communications professionals.

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AN ASSESSMENT OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND JOB SATISFACTION IN TOURISM

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The tourism industry's top priority is making sure the customer is satisfied. If the customer is not satisfied, the customer will leave the establishment unhappy and unlikely to return. In the tourism industry, if the customer is not satisfied, that customer may communicate his or her dissatisfaction to friends and family through word of mouth; in addition, that dissatisfied customer may communicate with strangers through online mediums such as Trip Advisor. There are many ways in which tourism organizations can satisfy customers. One of the biggest factors the organization has control over is the employees who are in direct contact with the customers. A single employee can "make or break" an experience by how the employee handles the encounter with the customer. Studies of job satisfaction cite many factors that influence an employee's level of satisfaction from personal factors to organizational factors. In addition to the factors of job satisfaction identified in previous research, the researchers posit that it is important for employees to have high emotional intelligence (EI). This research proposes to answer the question, can higher levels of EI lead to higher levels of job satisfaction in the tourism industry and, ultimately, customer satisfaction?

Tourism is the practice of traveling for recreation, the guidance or management of tourists, the promotion of touring, and the accommodation of tourists (Tourism, 2017). Tourism is a big business, making it an important economic activity in most places around the world. In the United States, travel generated $2.3 trillion for the U.S. economy, supporting 15.3 million American jobs in 2016 (U.S. Travel Association, 2017). With all the money and jobs at stake, tourism organizations should strive to offer the services customers seek. The services offered by service-oriented businesses, like those in the tourism industry, are often marketed and produced at the front line between employees and customers directly. According to Evanschitzky, Groening, Mittal, & Wunderlich (2011) key success factors for a service organization include "…satisfying and retaining high-quality employees while growing the firms' customer base." (p. 136). Thus, given the key relationship between customers and frontline employees, determining the role of EI is essential for frontline employees' job satisfaction.

The idea of emotional intelligence was first introduced in the 1920's; however, it was not conceptualized as a construct until the 1980's (Carmeli, 2003). Mayer and Salovey (1997) define EI as "the ability to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotion; the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge; and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth." (p. 10). Bar-On (1997) explain EI as "an array of non-cognitive capabilities, competencies and skills that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures" (p. 14). Goleman (1995) describes EI as a person's ability to understand and manage his/her own emotions, motivate one's self, identify emotions in others, and manage the relationships.

As research on EI developed, Mayer and Salovey's model became the most generally recognized model with empirical support (Zeidner, Matthews, & Roberts, 2004; Kernback & Schutte, 2005). Mayer and Salovey (1997) developed their model based on the idea that emotional abilities are indicators about relationships (Mayer & Cobb, 2000). Each of the four branches in the model contain low and high level emotional abilities (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2008; Mayer & Salovey, 1997). The lowest branch of Mayer and Salovey's (1997) EI model, Perception, Appraisal, and Expression of Emotion, is accurately perceiving emotions in oneself and others. The second branch, Emotional Facilitation of Thinking, uses emotions to facilitate thought (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). The third branch, Understanding and Analyzing Emotions: Employing Emotional Knowledge, entails an individual trying to understand how their individual emotions may react with the emotions of the others involved. The final branch of the model, Reflective Regulation of Emotions to Promote Emotional and Intellectual Growth, encompasses managing emotions of all individuals involved.

Job satisfaction is a highly publicized construct in literature. According to Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes (2002),

7,855 articles were published between 1976 and 2000 on job satisfaction. Job satisfaction represents how happy a worker is about his/her job (Mrayyan, 2005). Karatas and Gules (2010) identify personal factors and organizational factors as key influencers of job satisfaction. Personal factors include personality, standard of judgement, beliefs, expectations, socio-cultural environment's influence on the individual, experience age, duration of service, gender, education level, and intelligence. The organizational factors are comprised of the difficulty level of the job, the importance of the job in society, nature of the job, culture and climate of the organization, fees, promotion, status, reward system, social opportunities, and working conditions.

In their 2014 study, Yirik and Oren found a positive relationship between empathy and job satisfaction of hotel employees. Empathy tries to understand the feelings and thoughts from another person's perspective, and to behave in a caring manner (Yirik & Oren, 2014). Empathy has been linked to job satisfaction and is recognized within the third branch of Mayer and Salovey's 1997 EI model. Empathy is an important factor in a hospitality business' success (Yirik & Oren, 2014). It is crucial for a frontline employee to determine what is important to the customer and to focus on that during the sale (Abbey, 1993).

Locke defines job satisfaction as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences." (1976, p. 1300). Since emotional states play a role in job satisfaction, employees with higher levels of EI will experience greater levels of job satisfaction (Sy, et al. 2006).

Drawing from the four branches Mayer and Salovey's (1997) EI model, an employee who has higher levels of EI will experience higher levels of job satisfaction because the employee will identify emotions in him and others (Sy, et al., 2006). For instance, imagine a situation where a hotel frontline employee is checking in a guest, and the employee learns that the guest has experienced travel delays and lost their luggage in route to the hotel. The frontline employee analyzes the situation to determine the customer's emotional state and knows that while the hotel cannot replace the lost luggage; the hotel can provide some temporary toiletries in the meantime. This analysis and recognition of the customer's emotional state represents Branch 1. The employee moves to Branch 2 after he recognizes the emotion and then interprets what change is occurring in the environment (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). He can tell that his customer is frustrated and asks the customer what they might need in the short term until the luggage is found and delivered. The employee with high levels of EI begins to understand the emotions of the customer and how his own feelings are related. This empathy represents Branch 3. The employee concludes the conversation by reassuring the customer that as soon as the luggage arrives, he will deliver it to their room. This step represents Branch 4 because the employee properly manages the emotions of the situation by listening and distancing himself from his own emotions. (Mayer, et al., 2008). Front line tourism employees should have emotional intelligence represented by Branch 4.

There are interpersonal and intrapersonal reasons why EI may affect job satisfaction (Kafetsios & Zampetakis, 2008). An emotionally intelligent employee can benefit interpersonally because he is able to assess and regulate emotions. This will help social relationships by decreasing stress levels (Kafetsios & Zampetakis, 2008). This decrease ties directly with intrapersonal benefits. If the employee is better able to manage his emotions and control stress, the employee will be able to better perform his job (Kafetsios & Zampetakis, 2008). The following proposition tests whether higher levels of EI lead to higher levels of job satisfaction in the tourism industry:

Proposition 1. Emotional Intelligence is positively related to job satisfaction in front line tourism employees.

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The Effect of Background Music at Store on Customers' Preference

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The competition in retailing requires attention from management to influence customers' favorable shopping experience during their visit. Background music is one of the servicescape elements that influence customers' moods. In some condition, the stores need to consider playing their signature music as an identifier that can differentiate their offer from the competitors.

The previous studies found that music had influenced on customers' behavior. Background music had an influence on taste of wine (Hsu and Chen, 2020; De Luca *et al.*, 2019) and cookies (Ziv, 2018); it made children quieter during shopping (Hulten, 2015); it was enhanced quality when matched with plate color (Cho *et al.*, 2020); and its tempo caused intertemporal decisions (Kim and Zauberman, 2019). The language also had an impact when consumers were congruent with the lyrics (Toldos *et al.*, 2019). Previously, the distinct effect between instrumental and lyric-based music was not commonly discussed, especially in the consumer behavior research. It is worth exploring how people got influenced by different kind of music, in this case a music with and without lyrics.

The discussion about music in the servicescape was presented by Oakes (2000); Herrington and Capella (1994). It caused a happy feeling (Kemp *et al.*, 2019) which could influence consumers' cognitive, emotional, and behavioral level regarding their attitudes and perceptions, money and time spend, and moods and feelings (Jain and Bagdare, 2011). The study that relates to the type of music as a part of store characters might provide insights for marketing practitioners in enhancing visitors' positive experience toward the servicescape. This favorable feeling will increase a customers' chance in spending more time at the store, and possibly raising the purchase probabilities.

A sonic logo or "sogo" is a term of typical branding element, which is similar with a visual logo (Krishnan *et al.*, 2012). It is common to employ it in conveying a specific brand through the auditory media. It is a part of brand identity. The background music is exactly the same with "sogo" which consists of limited tones. In the context of servicescape, the curated background music can build the store character. Since audio is a part of experience, the visitors will have a different immersing experience in each store. When arranging the background music playlist, the marketer needs to consider the store image, product assortment, and target customers. The matched background music and customers' preference were likely to improve mood, to build better evaluations of the service, and to enhance the quality of the establishment. This study will discuss about the effect of music background on customers' preference toward the store. Specifically, it examines the effect of background music and store category at the store.

The study will be based on scenarios where the participants will be divided into four experiment groups, which each group has a specific condition. In this work-in-progress research, the independent variables are the types of background music (i.e. "instrumental" versus "music with lyrics"), and the store category (i.e. "emotional-based" versus "rational-based"). The dependent variables are intention to spend more time at the store, and intention to revisit. It is predicted that each type of background music has a different intensity to customers in each store category. The findings from the study will indicate whether that store category and types of background music congruency can enhance customers' pleasant experience.

The result of these studies can be sharpened by identifying the type of music as the component of store atmospherics. The contextual between product assortments and customers, the specific background music might have influence in strengthening their congruity. Instead of using a genre as the variable, the types can be categorized as an instrumental and a music with lyrics. It is expected to have different impacts on customers. The research will examine the advantage of using the congruent background music for enhancing customers' positive experience in the stores, which increase the visit time and the intention to revisit in the future.

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IDENTITY MARKETING SIGNAGE: INCLUSIVE CONSUMERS SUPPORT SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS' DISPLAYED SOCIAL IDENTITIES

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Recent news stories have brought about an increased awareness in social justice movements. How does this translate for the individual consumer? Are they seeking to support black-owned businesses, woman-owned businesses, LGBTQ-owned businesses, etc. to a greater extent? Thus, this research seeks to consider the role of identity marketing by small business owners. Do consumers want to support the individual during a challenging time? Is this amplified when the consumer considers the importance of shopping locally versus nationally?

Marketers understand the role of effective storytelling (Woodside, 2010). Discussing differences among social identities is important identity work however does the small business owner risk alienating potential customers by informing them of their minority status and or group by a sign placed in the window of the store or does the identity amplification lead to increased sales? From our findings, people do care about shopping local. They want to support members of their local community, specifically members of their community of similar social identities.

Undergraduate students enrolled at a midwestern University all created the same survey in Qualtrics and sent the link through social media, text, and email to a convenience sample of family and friends. The survey was opened on September 20, 2020 and closed on October 4, 2020. Respondents included 304 respondents identifying as a cisgender woman, 150 respondents as a cisgender man, and 5 respondents identifying as non-binary or a third gender. All respondents were volunteers and chose to opt-in to participate in this survey.

Of the respondents, 62.9% (293 respondents) are White, 12.7% (59 respondents) are Hispanic, Latino or Spanish, 9% (42 respondents) said they were of Asian ethnicity, 5.8% (27 respondents) are Black or African American, 5.4% (25 respondents) picked more than 1 response for their ethnicity, 1.7% (8 respondents) replied Prefer to Self-describe (Not on predetermined list), 1.3% (6 respondents) preferred not to answer and we did not collect this information for 1.1% (5 respondents), 0.2% (1 respondent) identified as Middle Eastern or North African.

Consumers who identify as Non-binary are more likely to support a store with a woman-owned sign displayed more than any other gender identity (3.4 on a 4.0 scale). Women were the second highest (2.9 on a 4.0 scale). Men reported they would shop a woman-owned store at a 2.2 on a 4-point scale. This follows the assumed traction of individuals supporting stores whose owners identify as a member of a community they identify with.

We can see that the support of small business owner identity signage is high for most races; it is highest for Black or African Americans. Due to the increased focus on social injustices against the Black community highlighted in the news in June 2020, there may be an overall increased awareness of identity of shop owners and this community currently.

Black or African American members have very high willingness to shop a Black-owned store and a Latinx-owned business, over 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. It is important to note for BIPOC-owned stores this number is not as high, 2.8 on a 4.0 scale. The willingness to shop a store with a BIPOC-owned sign is still higher than average but not as high as Black-owned and Latinx-owned business signage. This may be due to the definition of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) terminology that it is "newly" popularized or used term. There has been some discussion around this term being introduced to be inclusive, but it minimizes the individual lived experiences lumping groups into one umbrella term in a handy acronym.

While there is an increase in Hispanic, Latino or Spanish identified members to shop Latinx-owned stores, it is

not as high or that much higher than the willingness to shop other social identified stores. Hispanic, Latino or Spanish reported willingness to shop at a Latinx-owned store at a 2.8 on a 4.0 scale. They reported a 2.6 on a 4.0 scale for Black-owned business and a 2.4 on a 4.0 scale for BIPOC-owned businesses. There is some controversy over the term Latinx as well. It has been put forth as a nonbinary alternative to Latino or Latina however it also removes the individuals' lived experiences in the pursuit of simplicity of terms.

The overall support for importance of evaluating the small business owner (3.4 on a 4.0 scale) is an important evaluating criterion for respondents who identity as White. However, when you look at support for BIPOC-owned, Black-owned and Latinx-owned small businesses, the willingness to support is much lower. Further research is needed to understand and explore shopping in social identity alignment (where the consumer and small business owner identities are aligned) and divergence (purposeful support by a consumer to support a small business owner different than their social identities).

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DO WINDOW DISPLAYS STILL HAVE A PLACE IN RETAIL SHOPPING? A REVIEW AND RESEARCH AGENDA

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Window shopping is a pastime in many cultures and sectors. Window display merchandising can end up being a costly endeavor for retailers. It is assumed that attractive displays promote awareness and attract passers-by in the store. However, the research confirms the actual effects of window displays on consumer behavior and on overall shopping experience remains scant (De Nisco & Warnaby, 2014; Turley & Milliman, 2000). This paper therefore aims to provide a review of the existing literature on storefront window displays in order to better understand the role and effectiveness of these displays. In order to determine what research already exists, the authors conducted a systematic review of the literature, which is a method that is used in services management (Mari & Poggesi, 2013) as well as in marketing (Sanchez-Fernandez & Iniesta-Bonillo, 2007).

The results show less than 35 papers studying storefront window displays and that can be divided into themes associated with window display components such as architectural characteristics, window displays props, interactive window displays, and window display design. Results show a lack of overall theoretical framework for explaining efficient window display design. The studies show storefronts' ability to attract attention (Lange et al., 2016) or facilitate information processing (Sen et al., 2002). Studies have also sought to explain window display efficiency by examining these displays as advertisements. Only one study has sought to seek window displays' role in shopping experience (Lecointre-Erickson et al., 2018).

This paper argues that the primary agenda for examining window displays is examining their role in the context of shopping experience. Using a shopping experience (Roederer, 2013) and customer journey (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016) approach will lead retailers and researchers to better understand how customers perceive and use displays when shopping, especially in a omnichannel context. Finally, the role and the purpose of window displays need to be examined in the current context of COVID-19 and post-COVID-19 shopping and retail shopping behaviors (Sheth, 2020). Future research could examine how displays can be used in post-COVID strategies and protocol, including smart distancing (Shankar et al., 2020).

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THE INFLUENCE OF INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS' CULTURE ON THE CONSUMERS' BEHAVIORS

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

This paper examines the effects of internal communication strategies and internal organizational culture on multinational companies' consumers' behaviors; through evaluating three different international firms from three different industries (Netflix, Amazon and Starbucks) to build a conceptual framework that might help scholars and practitioners to assess their internal strategies and adapt new techniques to enhance their overall performance; by analyzing external effects which are essential for marketers when establishing the appropriate marketing strategy, evaluating the internal cultural type and internal communication systems.

The better the internal communication policy is, the healthier the work environment is and the better performance the employees would be willing to give to present a brand that they are willing to not only market to others but to also use on the long run even after retiring or moving on to a different employer (Moseley, n.d.). International firms must pay close attention to how they market their products and services internally before externally, in order to succeed on a global level and gain the trust and loyalty of their customers (Mitchell, 2002). Internal communication is a group of procedures that would result in an efficient flow of information between members within a firm on all different levels, in order to guarantee this efficiency; different organization tools and technologies must be used to be capable of facing different challenges when globalizing through offering a productive environment which normally reflects on the clients' positive attitude towards the offered products and services (Jouany, 2019; Wiewiora, Glen , Trigunarsyah, & Coffey, 2012).

One of the most important parts that affect how employees trust their firms and the products or services they advertise could be attributed to their relationship with their leaders (Link & Guo, 2020). The proximity to the leadership team and trust has an effect on the employees' motivation. Moreover, research shows that employee satisfaction can have an impact on consumer behavior since the internal communication mechanism reflects both directly and indirectly on the perception of the company through their willingness to contribute in buying their products or in using their services (Ling & Guo, 2020)

Mikkelson and Hesse in 2020 created a scale of communication designs within a structural context, the authors performed three studies which resulted in a positive outcome where there was positive correspondence within the firm, and in the opposite results were shown when negative communications were involved. The results reflect the importance of having a positive and an efficient internal communication system in order to have positive outcomes which in turn will reflect on the overall performance of the firm (Mikkelson & Hesse, 2020).

Internal company culture can impact the policies applied by the organization, it also effects the responsiveness of the employees and the consumers. It is very important to apply the appropriate culture in accordance with disciplines they would like to apply and what messages they need to relate to their consumers. (McClellan, 2020)
Surely the extent of which the employees are engaged and professionally related to their companies, the more positive outcomes reflect on the consumers' experience and the employees' productivity. Thus, internal communications can have a very important role in choosing the marketing strategy and its applicability. (Mishra, Boynton, & Mishra, 2014). The focus of this research is to develop a framework for internal communication and takes the following into consideration: 1) The company's internal culture. 2) The company's internal communication system. 3) How does the company's internal culture and its connection to the internal communication system reflect on the customers' buying behavior? And their willingness to recommend the company's products and services to other customers.

To start the analysis, a PESTLE analysis for each company will be performed to give a good framework to

examine the macro-environmental factors that impact each firm which is the same tool that marketers normally use to monitor the external features that normally affect a certain organization. The original Hofstede model is a good start to characterize a specific organizational culture, but in this paper the organizational culture assessment instrument (OCAI) is used to describe each firm's culture (CLAN, Adhocracy, Hierarchy and Market). The next stage analysis is the focus will be on evaluating each company's consumers' buying behaviors based on the most common four types consumer behavior model; the complex buying; dissonance-reducing buying; habitual buying and the variety seeking buying behavior. As for the internal communication influence, this study will focus on assessing both formal and informal internal communication theories that are used by leaders and their effects on the company's culture and consumer behavior.

Informal internal communication theories and methods such as social media tend to have an influence on consumer behavior, which is true in the influencer theory (Callaway, 2017). Plus, the EKB model has mentioned and explained how important it is for the consumer to make the buying decision after collecting enough information and that's easily accessed from social media routes in our world today and it holds more credibility when it comes from an employee (Ohio University, 2020); as the employee holds additional power through informal internal communication and becoming more engaged which leads to better understanding the consumer's buying behavior (Men, 2017).

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DESIRE TO LEARN MORE, KNOWLEDGE ABOUT FOREIGN CULTURES, AND INTERCULTURAL SENSITIVITY AMONG BUSINESS STUDENTS

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Today's world is shrinking because of globalization, improved transportation, and new means of communication. Parallelly, there has been a steep increase in people from different cultures coming into contact with each other, diversity among employees of organizations, intercultural exchanges, and so on. Due to globalization, MNCs have expanded their operations to many countries and their employees are routinely posted in foreign countries. The number of students studying in American universities has been steadily increasing year after year, and so with immigration. All these factors have generated immense interest in understanding intercultural differences, including intercultural sensitivity.

Business schools have also recognized the importance of imparting skills that help students interact with people from different cultures, develop a desire to learn about foreign cultures. There is also growing expectation from companies that their employees need to be culturally sensitive and have awareness about cultural differences. Those who have high intercultural sensitivity can successfully interact with a different culture in their interactions. This paper aims to investigate the relationship between students' intercultural sensitivity, desire to learn more, and knowledge about the foreign cultures. This paper also investigates the gender differences in intercultural sensitivity.

According to Chen and Starosta (1996), there are several factors that have brought the world closer such as the development of communication and transportation, globalization, migration of population among nations, diversification of workforce and regional alliances. This has led to the importance of cultural intelligence competencies. According to the SAGE Encyclopedia of Intercultural Competence there are four important factors that contribute to the cultural intelligence of individuals (Bennett 2015). These four factors, which can be learned, measured and improved are: intercultural sensitivity, interculture communication skills, the ability to build commitment, and the ability to manage uncertainty.

Intercultural sensitivity is conceptualized as "an individual's ability to develop a positive emotion towards understanding and appreciating cultural differences that promotes appropriate and effective behavior in intercultural communication (Chen and Starosta, 1997, p.5)" Chen and Starosta (1996, 2000) proposed a conceptual model of intercultural sensitivity and developed an instrument to measure the concept. Intercultural sensitivity is crucial for the success in business negotiations (Bennett 2015). Intercultural sensitivity training is provided in many workplaces as it is an essential skill for managing and building teams in a multicultural environment and for expatriate employees (Sheran 2019).

Based on a literature review, we have advanced the following hypotheses:

H1: Intercultural sensitivity is positively correlated with desire to learn more about foreign cultures.
H2: Intercultural sensitivity is positively correlated with knowledge about foreign cultures.
H3: The mean score of females will be higher than the male scores on the intercultural sensitivity scale.

161 undergraduate business students from a mid-west university in the US participated in the survey for an extra credit. There were 92 females (57%), and 67 males (42%). Mean age was 23.7 years (std: 5.6; range: 19-49 years). All measures used in this study were taken from extant literature and adopted for the study where necessary. Intercultural Sensitivity was measured with a 24-item scale developed by Chen and Starosta (2000) (Cronbach's alpha = .87). Desire to learn more about foreign cultures was measured with three items (Jones and Reynolds, 2006). (Cronbach's alpha = .64). Knowledge about foreign cultures was measured with three items and measures the extent to which a person expresses having knowledge about foreign cultures (Gurhan-Canli, 2003). (Cronbach's alpha = .91).

Respondents were asked to indicate their agreement (1 = Strongly Disagree and 5 = Strongly Agree). Items were coded so that higher ratings indicated strong blind/constructive patriotism, higher intercultural sensitivity, and higher consumer ethnocentrism.

All three hypotheses were supported. A significant, positive relationship was found between Intercultural Sensitivity and desire to learn more about foreign cultures ($p < .01$). A significant, positive relationship was found between the Intercultural Sensitivity and knowledge about foreign cultures ($p < .01$). Females are more interculturally sensitive than males (t (157) = – 2.671, p (.008) <.01).

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HOW PERMANENT IS THE CHANGE? COMPARING CONSUMER HABITS BEFORE AND AFTER COVID-19

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

World Health Organization (WHO) declared that the world is faced with COVID-19 pandemic on March 12, 2020. Since then, there have been profound changes in consumers' shopping habits and patterns. Seth (2020) asks "Will the consumers permanently change their consumption habits due to lockdown and social distancing or will they go back to their old habits once the global crisis is over?" and adds that at least some permanence of changed habits will occur because consumers have discovered alternatives to old habits that are "more convenient, affordable and accessible."

A Nielsen (2020) research study identified six key thresholds levels of consumer behavior in the pandemic environment. These thresholds signal shifts in spending patterns and hold across many countries. Detection of these (evolving) patterns is useful to manufacturers and retailers that have been scrambling to respond to demand shifts and changing purchase habits during the pandemic. The six consumer behavior thresholds Nielsen (2020) identified are: Proactive Health Minded Buying, Reactive Health Management, Pantry Preparation, Quarantined Living Preparation, Restricted Living, Living a New Normal.

In the Proactive Health Minded Buying stage, local COVID-19 cases are minimal. Although there is heightened interest in health and wellness products such as vitamins and supplements, the changes in purchase patterns are minor. In the Reactive Health Management stage, there is local transmission of COVID-19 and a few COVID-19 related deaths. Consumers begin to stock up essential health and safety products such as masks and hand sanitizers. In the Pantry Preparation stage, consumers are quite fearful. Some quarantines and border closings happen due to increasing COVID-19 infections and deaths. Consumers stockpile food and emergency supplies such as disinfectant cleaners, over-the-counter medicine, etc. In the Quarantined Living Preparation stage, COVID-19 cases continue to increase, schools and some public places close, large gatherings are restricted. Consumers increasingly turn to online shopping, and avoid store visits. Many products are out-of-stock, there are delivery issues due to supply chain strains. In the Restricted Living stage, COVID-19 cases are in massive numbers and there are many lives lost due to COVID-19. Restaurants close, even small gatherings are restricted, and there are lockdowns. This is the stage where online shopping is going strong but there are fulfillment problems. Prices of some products may increase due to limited supply coupled with high demand. In the last stage (Living A New Normal), COVID-19 restrictions ease. Life starts to return to normal, schools and workplaces open. However, this is a new normal. Consumers are cautious. There are permanent shifts in consumer behavior in terms of hygiene practices and online shopping.

Given the conditions dictated by COVID-19 pandemic, many countries around the world are in the Restricted Living stage. As predicted there has been a big boost in ecommerce (Nielsen, 2020 and Columbus, 2020). In response to lockdowns, social distancing requirements, and anxiety of being around people during a pandemic, consumers have turned to online shopping with delivery or contactless pick-up. Their product choices that changed as a result of anxiety and caution earlier changed again as they adapted to new routines in their daily lives. For example, consumers are increasingly shopping from new websites, changing primary grocery stores due to availability of delivery/pick up services, supporting restaurants via ordering food pick up, utilizing video conferences for professional or personal purposes, streaming video games and movies, setting up mini gyms at home etc. which they will most likely continue even after the pandemic is over (McKinsey and Company, 2020).

The importance of knowing what the consumers' intentions regarding online shopping for goods and services once the pandemic is over comes from the insights businesses can utilize for strategic purposes. That is why, in this research, we are interested in finding out which buying habits consumers are likely to continue after the restrictions

related to COVID-19 are removed. Businesses already had to adapt the new environment in creative ways. Those that have been observant of their social responsibilities in the highly risky pandemic environment are especially rewarded by the consumers (Westbrook and Angus, 2021). It goes beyond offering convenience, consumers pay close attention to how they can maximize the value they receive through sustainable consumption. In fact, consumers have been providing feedback to others to stop purchasing from a company they perceived as behaving inadequately or to switch to a company they perceive behaving responsibly during these tough times (World Trade Mark Review, 2020). In the uncertainties created by the COVID-19 pandemic, firms should focus on value-to-money propositions tying the value of the product or service to health and wellness and emphasize their socially and environmentally responsible actions (Westbrook and Angus, 2021). Doing so will contribute to improve their market performance down the line.

Data for this research will be collected in the US and Turkey. US is a developed economy and Turkey is a most dynamic Emerging Market. Identifying the differences between them in terms of likely consumer behavior in the post-pandemic era can be useful for firms that do international trade between the two countries.

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INTEGRATING MARKETING CONCEPTS IN COMPETITIVE DECISION MAKING – A CASE STUDY

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Students experienced applying Marketing concepts while making decisions in multiple disciplines (including Marketing, R&D, and Production) in a Competitive Decision-Making course Marketing students competed to achieve desired performance outcomes (such as, Market Share, ROS, and Cumulative Profit) in a realistic business simulation. Marketing students applied an array of ten traditional Marketing concepts in this experiential course: 1. Market Scaling; 2. Market Segmentation; 3. Product Pricing; 4. Product Ageing; 5. Product Positioning; 6. Product Reliability; 7. Promotions Budgets and Media Selection; 8. Sales Staffing and Channel Selection; 9. Market Research; and 10. Sales Forecasting.

The Professor's Competitive Decision-Making course was based on a widely-used business simulation ("Sim"), which was regarded as the most mature and robust business simulation available. In the Sim, up to three competitions ("industries") were established, each with six small teams ("companies") of 3 or 4 marketing students ("members"). Each company managed a portfolio of as many as eight products ("sensors") in order to fulfill the distinct needs of five discrete market segments in a simulated electronics sector. Teams made as many as eighty entries ("decisions") in each of a series of up to eight rounds ("years"). The Sim maintained an objective realism by requiring that each of a company's decisions be expressed and entered in precise quantitative terms. For example, annual sales forecasts for each product were expressed in thousands of units. Decisions that were saved by the published deadline were automatically uploaded into the simulation software for processing. After the processing deadline, student teams immediately viewed their performance results, presented in analytic financial and marketing reports. (Marketing students often waited anxiously for the processing deadline to pass, so that they could view their team performance outcomes.)

Perhaps more significantly, Marketing students became acutely aware that they were making decisions in a highly competitive industry, and that the decisions made by the five other competing teams affected their own team's performance outcomes.

Among the most difficult concepts for Marketing students to grasp during their Simulation experience were related to the integration of Marketing decisions with their company's overall business strategy. Early in the Simulation, student teams were encouraged to adopt a single business strategy. Six general business strategies were offered as models. Teams were encouraged to decide whether to adopt either a "Differentiator" orientation, which implied they would provide Customers in their target market segments with "premium, lasting" products, or a "Cost Leadership" orientation, which implied that they would deliver products that represented "low cost and solid value" to their target customers. This choice between these two strategic orientations had a significant impact on the decisions that Marketing students made in the Sim.

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REFINING SOFT SKILLS IN THE CLASSROOM: A PROFESSIONAL SELLING APPROACH

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Today's employers, perhaps even more than technical knowledge, seek graduates who possess soft skills such as communication, collaboration, critical thinking, problem-solving, strong work ethic, initiative, and leadership (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2020). However, employers report that many institutions of higher education are graduating students who lack these fundamental soft skills to be successful in the workplace (Wilkie, 2019). Though many graduates leave higher education institutions proficient in their respective major's content area, many lack the soft skills employers seek to succeed in a dynamic business environment.

The University of Findlay's College of Business has recently revised its curriculum, now requiring Professional Selling for all marketing majors. As students take this upper-level course just prior to graduation, this course provides a natural pathway for the refinement of some of these soft skills that employers value, thereby producing more well-rounded graduates ready for the workplace.

The topic of professional selling lends itself to a more interactive, hand-on course delivery. Over the course of the past several years, the instructor has mapped out this course to more intentionally develop these desired soft skills through interactive, engaging learning opportunities embedded in the course. Guest speakers are intentionally aligned with student interest areas and reinforcement of the key skill sets required of sales professionals. Additionally, students engage in a semester-long sales challenge with locally-owned small businesses. This involves direct, professional interaction over the course of the semester with business professionals, and provides students with hands-on experience at solving real, specific business problems for these partner organizations. Finally, role plays over the course of the semester allow students to practice the soft skills they are developing in a safe learning environment.

The following outlines the core learning experiences and corresponding soft skills development:

- Sales guest speakers: communication, building relationships
- Sales challenge: problem-solving, collaboration, communication, critical thinking, time management, organization, building relationships
- Role plays/in-course activities: communication, public speaking, negotiation, time management

This interactive session will include:

- A breakout discussion
- Course map with corresponding soft skills development
- Primary instructional and assessment methods, and
- A reflection on the evolution of course design and delivery

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TRADITIONAL VS. NON-TRADITIONAL STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF E-TEXTS: A SEMANTIC NETWORK ANALYSIS

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Non-traditional students (NTS) have one or more of the following characteristics (NCES, 2015): financial independence from their parents, having a child or other dependent, being a single caregiver, lacking a traditional high school diploma, delaying postsecondary enrollment, attending school part-time, and being employed full-time. These students often struggle to integrate into college life compared to traditional students (TS), who are 18–24 years old, enroll directly from high school, attend full-time, and do not have significant life or work responsibilities. With the continuous development of new learning platforms, adjustment to college courses has become especially challenging for NTS. They typically return to school after a period of working or staying at home. Electronic textbooks, or e-texts, are one of many learning technologies that are widely used in higher education. In terms of affordability, convenience, and enhanced features, e-texts seem to be beneficial for students (Ross et al., 2017). However, few studies have examined how e-texts are perceived by students and particularly by NTS, who may be more comfortable working in non-digital environments (Thompson et al., 2013). A semantic network analysis was performed on open-ended, verbatim student comments from a survey to address this gap in the literature. Students were asked to explain what they liked or disliked about the e-texts they had used in previous courses.

The present study used aggregated text obtained from a survey of undergraduate students studying business and economics at a regional university in the Midwestern United States. A total of 212 students completed this survey (age: M = 25.8 years, SD = 7.73). The majority of these students were white/Caucasian (84.3%). Most of these students were NTS (72.2%) who were working full-time (54.7%), financially independent from their parents (37.3%), attending school part-time (29.7%), or delaying postsecondary enrollment (17.9%). A total of 413 comments were collected from NTS (n = 298) and TS (n = 115). The WORDIJ software package, UCINET, and GEPHI were used for content analysis and visualization. The semantic network approach relies on highly automated text analysis using qualitative procedures that allow researchers to explore the meaning embedded in a text-based on the frequencies, co-occurrences, and distances attributed to word pairs (Slantcheva-Durst, 2018). Each node represents a certain concept, and each edge represents a particular relationship between two nodes, such as similarity or a semantic connection (Shi et al., 2020). The relationships between nodes are visualized through the different link line thicknesses, colors, and sizes of the nodes to exhibit the entire semantic structure of the analyzed text.

This analysis revealed that the ten words most frequently used by respondents to describe their perceptions of e-texts (with high centrality) were "e-texts" (e.g., "e-textbook" and "e-books"), "p-texts" (e.g., "physical texts," "traditional textbooks," and "printed text"), "search," "read," "access," "easi" (e.g., "easy," "easier," and "ease," applying the Porter stemming algorithm), "find," "time," "dislike," and "need." Certain words were more commonly used by each group, such as "information" for the TS group and "prefer" for the NTS group. In the semantic networks, nodes were labeled with words, and undirected edges were weighted to reflect the frequency of co-occurrence (Shi et al., 2020). Modularity was calculated to detect the subnetworks in the network, identifying five clusters in the TS group and three in the NTS group; Figures 1 and 2 show these clusters in different colors. The network was filed by a degree rate and a giant component to remove nodes that were not connected to the main network and to attain a clear visualization of all the networks.

In the social network of the TS group, the most distinctive theme was that e-texts were perceived by TS to have the benefit of allowing them to keep all the information they needed in a computer without having to physically carry heavy books (purple: 50.68%). Moreover, the TS group also indicated that e-texts allowed them to search for specific content with keywords (green: 9.59%), easily access information (blue: 5.48%), and look through chapters to find information (yellow: 4.11%). The TS group also pointed out the difficulties involved in taking notes on e-texts relative

to the paper, such as the difficulties that arise when e-texts do not fit to the page or require a split-screen to read and type at the same time (orange: 2.74%). While the NTS group generally understood that e-texts were convenient and allowed them to access and search for specific information quickly, many of the NTS reported that reading on-screen was not how they usually read and was not compatible with their individual learning styles (purple: 57.98%). Compared to reading printed books, reading on-screen was not easy for these NTS. Overall, the NTS clearly preferred printed books over e-texts (green: 9.57%). Note-taking and highlighting are essential features for NTS. Students who utilized these features commonly liked the note-taking features of e-texts, such as the ability to copy, paste, and make annotations. However, some students had difficulty using these features and felt frustrated by the lack of instructions pertaining to these features. Thus, these NTS preferred using physical sticky notes and highlighters to personalize their print textbooks according to their individual learning styles (yellow: 1.06%).

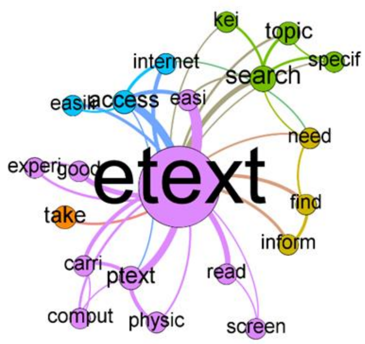

Figure 1. TS group

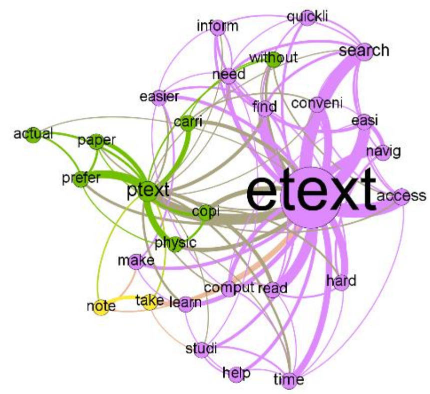

Figure 2. NTS group

The results of the semantic network analysis shed light on the different perceptions of e-texts held by TS and NTS. Students perceived the convenience and accessibility of e-texts have distinct advantages, but they also perceived the difficulties of taking notes and highlighting on-screen. In the NTS group, the incompatibility of e-texts with their individual reading and learning styles arose as a unique theme. The NTS had mixed feelings toward e-texts; while they both liked and disliked certain aspects of e-texts, the NTS generally expressed a preference for print textbooks. The population of NTS is highly diverse, consisting of students with diverse characteristics, needs, skills, and experiences (NCES, 2015). Therefore, providing adequate instructions and personalized support based on their familiarity and proficiency with e text usage would likely be an effective means of promoting positive perceptions of e-texts.

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MAKING SENSE OF STUDENT PANIC BEHAVIOR DURING COVID-19 CRISIS

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Although we all saw it with our own eyes, it was difficult to discern exactly what we were seeing. Today's academicians were not alive during the era of the "world plagues." Some of us learned in history about the plagues brought by the Europeans to the new world which decimated 90% of the Native population of the Western Hemisphere. Most of vaguely remember several 16th, 17th, and 18th century plagues in England, Russia, Spain… The most recent "plague" in the United States was the Bubonic Plague, over 100 years ago. In recent times, the planet has been beset by several, less invasive "pandemics." Looking back at H1N1, Ebola, and even HIV/AIDS, we long for even those days of relative normalcy.

For those of us in the classrooms of Spring 2020, we saw student behavioral artifacts that were congruent with this once in a lifetime traumatic situation borne of panic, and fear of the known and unknown. Some students seemed to flourish under the chaos while others precariously stayed afloat. Still others sank instantly under the pressure, never to re-emerge. This presentation is an attempt to empirically assess a well-known behavioral theoretical framework of panic behavior utilized to cope with threatening situations.

Strahle and Bonfield (1989) proposed a comprehensive model of decision-making in panic situations most relevant for application to the current study. The Strahle and Bonfield study factors interact with the individual's social situation, expectations, goals, and perceptions motivate decision-making based on cost-reward calculations. The 1989 model has three necessary but not sufficient components; danger stimulus, inability to cope with the threatening situation and the existence of potential escape routes which are closing. These antecedents logically tie into the causal behavior posited by Mullainathan and Shafir's 2013 study concentrates on three panic coping mechanisms. Tunneling is focusing on the dire situation (scarcity) while neglecting everything else. Goal inhibition is their term for focusing on the immediate problem while neglecting more important, less but urgent issues. The study advances positive and negative outcomes of these two behaviors. The tunneling tax and the focus dividend and describe the costs associated with neglecting to attend to the outside of the tunnel and the rewards of focusing on alleviating the panic situation, respectively.

Of course, myriad socioeconomic, student activities, IQ, and other individual and environmental factors are also proven covariates with academic achievement and resilience. To control for these differences, students' pre-COVID-19 grade point averages, course loads, achievement levels, and health issues are controlled for, leaving only differences in achievement due to online learning modalities and COVID-19 related factors.

Operationalizing the aforementioned models, this study empirically examines the antecedent variables, relationships, and outcomes of the resulting model of student conduct and achievement measured during the panic/crisis situation in the marketing education context.

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OPPORTUNITITES WITH COVID-19

Paul M. Lane, Grand Valley State University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Colleagues struggle with the challenges of Covid-19. There is another way to look at this, Covid-19 provides a whole range of opportunities to faculty, students, and universities. Looking at it in this way has made the year one of fun, change, and learning. Following are a few of the opportunities that have either forced or provided the opportunity to change. Covid-19 has been and intellectual playing field.

The opportunity to innovate: in pre COVID-19 times, the idea of experimenting with moving your class outside to a tent or trying a hot dog roast to see its impact on your class might have been considered less than academic. Suddenly, the few left teaching face-to-face could try all kinds of things to deliver better class experiences. The door was open to innovation in delivery and class organization. Wonderful idea to remove required attendance. Now you must make the class so interesting that the students want to engage. If you fail it is not on your evals it is in the number of students who show up. Students challenge the faculty as well. In one class, students were full of challenges, that this was their only face-to face class, and they wanted it to be engaging, meaningful, and fun. In short, they wanted it to be their college experience. As marketers it is important to listen to our customers and empathize with them? It was easy to forget that these Freshmen had missed the last part of their Senior year and now were struggling with an online Freshman experience. Suddenly, the delivery became as important as the content, and if you did not have the delivery, they were not likely to get the content. This is exactly what is taught in basic marketing Awareness, Interest, Desire and Action (Grewal and Levy page 405). It is important that the faculty think about getting the awareness, interest, and desire to learn before expecting the students to take an action and engage.

The opportunity to understand the importance of food: the professors in one class quickly learned that food could ease the tension at of the class. On occasion they invited entrepreneurs to bring in food, from India came Samosas, from Texas came TexMex refried tortillas and a special recipe bean dip. These surprises at the beginning of class really helped the attitude. The first week of class the two faculty members meandered outside to find a place for their supper break and discovered a large tent. Quickly the students were invited to share their meals, and soon meals were prepared that all could share. In the sharing comes a time for distanced conversation about life, feelings, etc. There is a kind of caring communication in planning and preparing a meal as most parents know. These shared meals became a rich time of communication. Communication and connection really help with the desire for education. In the coming semester the author has scheduled voluntary workshops next to a kitchen so those who attend can share in the food to aid the communication through interest and desire.

The opportunity to rethink what we are doing: one of the great joys has been to explore new tools, new ways of working with students. Is dragging people to a common room necessarily the best way to communicate in the university class. Is it potentially better to have students have more flexibility and online classes, with great internships, and good job experiences or is better to have them in class? Is this an opportunity to rethink what education might be like in the third decade of the 21st century? Most universities have given some thought to new markets as the traditional cohorts are decreasing. Many colleges have tried to get more revenue dollars through market penetration strategies by requiring more classes. Some schools have been experimenting with online classes, the use of Moocs (Massive open online courses), certificates, badges, and other forms of new products for students. What COVID-19 has done is to nudge many faculty members into the area of rethinking their product and developing new product for the existing student market. To some this is a terrifying experience. To others this is a real opportunity to come up with new things. Zoom, other similar software, What's App, Panopto, and so many more allow us to innovate in education. Is lecture the way students will learn best online? How can these technologies be used in creative ways is the question present every day? How can we best communicate with the students? How can we be truly engaging on Zoom, etc.?

During this time of Covid-19, with so much personal stress and depression, students have taught the author the importance of movement. Students need to move and with movement often comes interest excitement and action. In thinking about how to create movement you often come up with some entirely new pedagogical ideas. The situation provides the opportunity to change and rethink delivery methods.

Two major challenges that the author has tried and is still refining include: bundles and equal assignments. Bundles is the gathering of multiple weeks of assignments so that students may only have a few due dates in semester. Equal assignments are organizing your assignments. Students need a consistent form and regular assignments so that they are not lost online or in a hybrid. In the winter of 2021, the students will have seven due dates and on each due date the same four things will be due:

- Smartphone/in use assignment
- Task assignment – developing skills.
- Peer to Peer assignment – research, writing and discussion on relevant topics.
- A major application assignment that is either written or a presentation of an application of course materials

The opportunity to use empathy or human factors with students: this helps to make them the focus again. The good and excellent students have always been fun to spend time with. Suddenly in this pandemic it was clear that many students were suffering:

- COVID-19 fears: theirs, family, friends, community, and nation
- Chaotic election
- Depression
- Stress (academic impairment)
- Isolation
- Physical illness
- Struggles with understanding

It became evident that more time needed to be spent empathizing with and understanding students. The author spent hours reaching out to students who were not present in fact or online, to try to engage them as people and understand how they were experiencing life. This has been and is a very tough time for young people. These conversations provided a lot of information about the confusion of online learning across classes, about the lack of understanding of what was due, about the need for human interaction. You can save students for your university one student at a time.

The opportunity and need to create entirely new syllabi: if the product, the distribution (online), and the price in terms of time and energy used to complete are different; maybe the promotion in the form of the syllabus needs to be different as well. In a recent faculty learning community, faculty looked at how to make a syllabus engaging. Have you redesigned your syllabus to be fun to look at on a screen? This is in part your product and in part your promotion.

Opportunities for Faculty: there are a lot of opportunities for change for marketing faculty in these times. Most of them are relevant to marketing concepts. Many of us are fortunate in that due to the restrictions on Covid-19 and the reactions by schools, colleges, and universities at least three things have happened to potentially provide the time to do these things.

First, many universities have relieved the pressure on research and writing for a short while. At the author's case this is expected to be 40% of your time and getting that 800 hours a year back or 67 hours a month gives some time to empathize with students, to redesign classes, and to learn from and with other colleagues in faculty learning groups.

Second, because most meetings are now online, a wonderful innovation, there is no commutation time, greatly reduced social time, and in many cases much clearer transfer of information. This means there is greater control over your own time, or flexible time use. If a faculty meeting which use to require a trip to campus is now online – it just saved two hours. If that same meeting is more efficient as no one likes to Zoom for to long you may save another hour. It is amazing to me how things can happen that used to take a years' worth of meetings. Hopefully, faculty will not regress post Covid-19. It is only fair to say that the author who lives alone gets all the time back, and all the time flexibility. My son and his wife with four children and three under five never seem to have enough time even when working at home.

Third, Faculty Learning Groups outside of the business school have become very accessible in our multi-campus university. There is a lot to learn from a French professor, an anatomist, a physical therapist, a statistician, and so forth. Our silos of colleges and our accrediting organizations could be really hindering our learning. COVID-19 has provided real opportunities for change and growth. While it is hoped that the illness and its devastating impact on many will soon be in the rearview mirror, there may be much to learn from this time. It is the hope of the author that there is not a return to the old normal but that the academy moves forward to some new normal that can more quickly adapt to change, and better understand and empathize with our students, and can provide our faculty with better ways to use their time.

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TEACHING DISASTERS: HOW I AVOIDED ONE TEACHING SALES (AT LEAST I THINK I DID)

Frederick Hoyt, Illinois Wesleyan University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The most dreaded words in the English language to a senior faculty member (at least to me; as I like to say, "I hate routine, and I hate people who disrupt mine") are "You need to do a new prep." That was my situation for last semester. It wasn't that there weren't classes my department needed taught. Marketing Analytics, for example. I was (over) confident I could bring my slide rule skills more up to date with online learning and deliver it. Then there was the day of reckoning, when I sought the Coursera course on data analytics. It started with, "Of course you know Pivot Tables." Although I persevered and actually completed half the modules (after having taken a 13 hour Excel certification), I realized that any questions students had would reveal the depth (or shallowness) of my knowledge. Consoled by knowing my slide rule never lost electric power (only the bamboo one, caught in the rain once, swelled and could not slide), I moved on to the next need in our department. Digital marketing. I dutifully looked for resources. I did learn that Instagram is not a lesser quantity than a kilogram; and that a "Tweet" is not something Sylvester chases in cartoons. But, again, I realized the depth (or shallowness) of my knowledge.

The third choice was sales. I was emboldened because 35 years ago, I taught a sales class. How much could it have changed? Would my yellowing notes stand me in good stead? It would be arguably the first time sales had been taught in the 170 year history of the institution. Good thing our late liberal arts president was no longer at the helm; his comment, "If you can get a job in the field without a Ph.D., we shouldn't be teaching it" would have doomed the course, even though most of our business students left here with a job in sales. Nope. But that was the best of the three choices. The question was how to keep the course from becoming a "teaching disaster." Here's how I escaped, mostly unscathed.

I tried my MMA friends. None of my academic support group had ever taught a sales class, but wished me well. When you're in business, I preach, and need help, turn to LinkedIn or YouTube. What a wonderful opportunity to practice what I preached. "Outsource" as Homer Simpson famously advised in "Kiss, Kiss Bangalore". For the main "sales" pitch, I decided to work with our admissions staff, in order to tap into an area that uses sales, and might provide a win-win situation. It was a pleasure working with our VP Admissions (although he probably has a much more contemporary title, like Engagement Management, he's still, to my mind, the VP Sales). Having settled the "final," all I had to do was supply the 15 weeks leading up to it.

In August, out went a plea, mostly to our alumni: "Help. I've got a class in sales. You're in the trenches. 1) What should I have students read—what are YOU reading? 2) Would you speak to my classes about what life is like in the trenches? 3) Would you look at resumes and cover letters? 4) Would you be willing to facilitate a one day externship if need be? and 5) Would you be willing to help evaluate the presentation to the alumni association. The results:

- Text: Although I started by assigning a low-priced version of a traditional text, I soon abandoned it, borrowing from it the idea of sending resumes to practitioners.
- When I sent out an email to our alumni who were in the sales trenches, they recommended Matthew Dixon, *The Challenger Sale*. . For good reason. It contradicts much of the conventional wisdom in *Power of Selling.* Furthermore, if you are a prime unlimited Amazon member, there were free summaries of the Key Takeaways and
- Analysis that might be as useful: https://www.amazon.com/s?k=challenge+sales+book&crid= 2XW9TI5EWEY9Y&sprefix=challenge+sal%2Caps%2C138&ref=nb_sb_ss_i_1_13.I liked *the Challenger Customer* too.
- Certifications: Course content was delivered from Coursera and other Certifications. Some were free. Others were free to take unless you wanted to obtain the certification. These online programs were done mostly on their own, but sometimes filled in class time when I could not get a speaker or one canceled at the last minute. These were critical:

- Coursera (with Hubspot) a 4 module introduction to Sales Training for High Performing Teams Specialization. One week trial was free; the modules could be done in a week.
- Role of Sales: Hubspot Inbound Marketing Certification
- Social selling: Hootsuite Certification
- CRM: Salesforce and/or Zoho.com certification
- Measuring Results: Salesforce e.g., https://www.udemy.com/salesforcecom-new-user-training/
- Also suggested: The Data Analytics workshop
- Cold Calling. After the MMA meeting in Santa Fe, one of the audience members mentioned his university had a Cold Call Kit. The introduction was free—and quite useful.
- Speakers: it was gratifying to get the response I did (mostly) from our alumni. I cashed in many IOUs. What I think I realized about sales was that there is no such thing as "sales," but there are a variety of sales jobs, and that certainly came through in the roughly 12 weeks of outside speakers. They ranged from industrial sales in Australia to sale of body-replacement parts to part-time sales gigs to logistics to commercial sales to sports.
- One other addition: The Big interview critiqued by a theater professor and a sales person. Feedback, feedback, feedback—as much as possible from the "trenches."

What didn't work? The one day externships. And having a sales panel for the final presentation. For the final presentation, though, the class got scenarios from the admissions folks, who role played students and parents. I think they really relished the opportunity to do unto others as had been done unto them. Had I known what I know, I think we would have done less with the "come to beautiful IWU in beautiful Bloomington Normal" and focused exclusively on the interchange between customers and sales person. We did the interviews as 10-12 minute videos and watched, graded, and commented individually on each presentation.

Here's what students had to say in their evaluations:

> "refreshing to get 100% real world/job application"
> "great meeting/connections with alumni"
> "It was great. He gave us the ability to actually take something away from school."
> "I was challenged mostly with the online work because it was material previously unknown; however, we had great in-class discussions that were very effective:"
> "More than a textbook, he showed us the inside of the business world."
> "Class is worth the value"
> "Helped me sharpen and 'show off' the skills I learned from my summer internship. It also gave a lot of value to finding ways of sales that worked from me individually. …truly great."

Evaluation? The course had 16 enrollees (all senior males, mostly athletes) but the numbers, I stressed to my colleagues, indicate the need for a class like this. I'm not sure, in retrospect, that the methodology could have been put in place without someone who had many years of alumni to contact (I had more than I could use!), but what had potentially been lemon, became lemonade.

Results: In the past year, COVID interposed more serious "dreaded words." However, I survived the sales class, and former students are still talking to me. At least two of them benefitted from the course; one because he found his calling, and another because he realized the offer he had was not one he wanted. Long term, what the course demonstrated was the need for a course in sales, although Illinois Wesleyan University is a liberal arts college; some of the faculty believe one should not get a degree that leads to a job. Adding sales to the curriculum because of this class, however, turned out to be a successful sale!

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A PREVIEW OF THE 2021 MMA FALL EDUCATORS' CONFERENCE: DIVERSITY FOR A NEW DECADE

Ursula Sullivan, Northern Illinois University
Takisha Toler, Stevenson University
Brian Vander Schee, Indiana University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

In this session, the Fall Conference organizers will discuss the theme of the conference as noted below:

The world has begun rapid progression and change over the last two years, and 2021 is a year in which the expectations of new perspectives are essential. Not only do we have to look at a "new normal" in academia, we must also begin to investigate how diversity impacts all facets of the new decade. Faculty are teaching using diverse methods in classrooms of diverse student populations. Our students come from a range of backgrounds: from age, gender, race, religion, to marital status, children, military experience, learning approaches, etc. Research is now looking at diverse perspectives and companies are seeking new ways to engage a diverse world. At the Marketing Management Association, we want to explore diversity in all its forms and share our combined knowledge to ensure that the marketing discipline continues to lead during the new decade. Join us as we go virtual for the Fall 2021 MMA Educators' Conference to find understanding in these diverse times!

The 2021 conference promises to be as comprehensive as previous fall conferences, including:

1. Three pre-conference sessions:
    a. The Annual Jacobs & Clevenger Case Writers' Workshop led by Susan Jones and Steve Kelly;
    b. Digital Marketing: Engaged and Active Learning Workshop led by Debra Zahay-Blatz; and,
    c. Diversity for a New Decade Workshop led by Brian Vander Schee.
2. Four competitions:
    a. Master Teacher Competition coordinated by Don Roy;
    b. Outstanding Teacher-Scholar Doctoral Student Competition coordinated by Lauren Beitelspacher;
    c. Teaching Innovation Competition coordinated by Barbara Wooldridge; and,
    d. The Best Research Paper Award.
3. And, our many and varied paper and panel presentations with ways to help participants change and improve their teaching and research.

Along with elaborating on the conference theme, the panelists will discuss ways to get involved in the fall conference. Another point we'll touch upon is the shift of conferences to online delivery; much like many of our classes. We'll provide some insights for managing through the shift along with our own thoughts about academic conference delivery for the future.

For more information about the 2021 Fall Educators' Conference, contact either Program Co-chair, Takisha Toler (takisha@mmaglobal.org) or Ursula Sullivan (FallConference@mmaglobal.org).

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ENHANCING DIGITAL SKILLS IN MARKETING EDUCATION

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Jessica Rogers, Southern New Hampshire University
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SPECIAL SESSION EXTENDED ABSTRACT

COVID-19 and the impact of social distancing became the ultimate technology disruptor, driving digitalization innovations that likely will outlast the pandemic. Many classrooms transitioned from face to face classrooms to some kind of virtual or digital education. Educators are challenged to prepare students for a world of work that is increasingly more remote (Brynjolfsson et al., 2020) and require skills in technology, creativity, analytics, problem-solving, and innovation (NACE, 2020). Marketing courses offer the opportunity to add digital skills into the classroom experience to better prepare students for employment when they graduate (Crittenden & Peterson, 2019). Yet at the same time, the ever-changing digital landscape makes it difficult for students and faculty to stay up-to-date with the latest technology trends in the marketplace (Richmond, 2014). This special session will demonstrate how educators in the classroom can engage in digital learning activities while providing hands-on experience for students.

The best way for students and faculty to become more digitally savvy is to include a variety of technology tools into their classroom experience. The special session will provide marketing faculty with technology tools and ideas for marketing classes that focus on marketing management, personal branding, sales, entrepreneurship, e-commerce, and social media. These digital tools are free and easy to implement in the classroom, and grounded in specific pedagogical and case examples.

Specifically, four different digital skills will be the focus of this session: (1) communication & collaboration (2) website development (3) social media management and (4) emerging technology. A variety of technology tools will be presented, such as Evernote, Kahoot, Asana, Google Workspaces, Wix.com, Google Analytics, Canva, Hootsuite, and Hubspot. Case study examples from marketing classes, including social media posts, digital certificates, videos, and websites, will be included in the discussion.

The panel discussion is an interactive session, designed to evaluate and discuss digital tools for a variety of courses both at the graduate and undergraduate level. The presenters have a variety of experience teaching with these tools and will open up the session for questions and dialogue. There will be an opportunity for attendees to share their own digital experiences and to ask questions during this special session. The attendees will leave this session with an online handout that provides a mixture of digital tools and resources to better prepare students and faculty for a digital world.

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EXAMINING DISPARAGING HUMOR IN ADVERTISING USING BIOMETRIC AND SELF-REPORTED MEASURES

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Everywhere consumers look they are bombarded with ads for products and services. However, advertising is said to sell more than just products it also sells values, images, and concepts. Violence in the media has been an issue of debate for many years (Gulas, et al., 2010). Ads have reached far beyond the primary effect of sharing company or brand-related information. Today, it has become acceptable to portray men as victims of violence in situations that are thought to be humorous through invoking more smiles and laughter. This form of violence portrays men as animals, childish, lazy, incompetent, and having an inflated view of their worth which deserves scorn. Advertisements containing this patronizing behavior toward men have become widespread and acceptable (Gulas, et al., 2010). The purpose of this study is to examine how violence against males in advertising affects consumers' reactions toward the ads by comparing biometric facial expressions and self-reported measures. Additionally, we examine how consumers with different genders react to the ads.

Humor is said to reduce the negative effects of advertising by distracting consumers from unfavorably evaluated content by leading them to focus on the humorous part. When presented with humor, consumers do not evaluate the message with the standard serious mode of information processing. Instead, consumers apply a less critical mind-set and a higher tolerance toward offensive content (Eisend, et al., 2014). Ads that are perceived as humorous are also seen as more entertaining, useful, novel, not annoying, and from a "good brand". There is empirical evidence to support the idea that men are more likely than women to enjoy violent humor. Boys are found to prefer videos with violence significantly more than girls do (Swani, et al., 2013). Ads that belittle males may be considered funnier, produce more smiles, and have a higher liking rating by other males since males are known to enjoy watching aggressive content more than females (Chan, 2016).

It is predicted that ads high in belittling males will be perceived as funnier compared to ads low in belittling even if participants are not willing to admit they "liked the ad". However, jokes and humor may still be hurtful and prejudiced (LaFrance & Woodzicka, 1998). Therefore, we predicted individuals would be reluctant to admit they liked an ad that contained offensive content.

H1a: The proportion of laughter will be higher in ads that belittle males compared to ads that do not.

H1b: The funniness rating will be higher in ads that belittle males compared to ads that do not belittle males.

H1c: The liking rating will be lower in ads that belittle males compared to ads that do not belittle males.

Additionally, the following research question has been generated:

RQ: Are there gender differences in consumers' reactions toward advertisements that belittle males?

Participants (N=73) were recruited by undergraduate students in a marketing research course to take part in the experiment. Students in the class completed pretesting to ensure the experiment would run smoothly. After data cleaning, 69 usable records remained. Data collection was done remotely due to COVID restrictions in place in April, 2020. Participants were asked to use a laptop computer and were informed their webcam would record a video of them while watching some advertisements. Participants were directed to watch six randomly mixed advertisements. Three humorous advertisements served as the control condition (did not belittle the male character) and three humorous advertisements served as the experiment condition (did belittle the male character). Each participant's facial expressions were recorded while watching six ads and continued for five seconds after their completion. Then, participants were asked to complete a questionnaire in Qualtrics before being fully debriefed. After watching the ads, participants were asked to rate the funniness and liking of each ad using a Likert scale from strongly disagree (1) to

strongly agree (7). Facial expression data, measured as the proportion of laughter recorded, was collected through iMotions software using the computer webcam.

Hypothesis 1a was supported because the belittling condition (M=8.71%) received a higher percentage of laughter compared to the non-belittling condition (M=6.17%), $F(1, 65) = 4.5554$, $p = 0.0366$. Regarding the research question, we found that males did not show a significantly greater proportion of laughter (M=7.45%) while watching the belittling advertisements than females (M=7.42%), $F(1, 65) = 0.9678$, $p = 0.3289$. Hypothesis 1b was supported because the belittling condition (M=4.76) received a higher self-reported humor rating compared to the non-belittling condition (M=4.23), $F(1, 65) = 12.8121$, $p = 0.0007$. Additionally, we found that males did not have a higher average self-reported humor rating (M=4.61) than females of advertisements that contained belittling content towards males (M=4.37), $F(1, 65) = 0.0329$, $p = 0.8566$. Hypothesis 1c was not supported because the belittling condition (M=4.65) did not receive a statistically significant lower self-reported liking rating compared to the non-belittling rating condition (M=4.61), $F(1, 65) = 0.0652$, $p = 0.7992$. Additionally, we found that males did not like advertisements that contained belittling content towards males (M=4.84) more than females (M=4.42), $F(1, 65) = 0.2789$, $p = 0.5992$.

Our results found that belittling males in advertisements does result in a higher proportion of biometric measures of laughter from both males and females. Additionally, individuals in our study self-reported that advertisements belittling males were more humorous compared to non-belittling ads. We originally predicted the liking rating for advertisements that belittled males would be lower than those that do not belittle males. However, individuals were not reluctant to admit they liked such an aggressive ad.

Previous research has shown that males would not outwardly express their laughter as much as females (Chan, 2016). Our results support this notion. The gender difference was not significant. Males do not seem to be offended by the content as they did not rate the ads differently from the female participants. These advertisements against males are not meant to be malicious but are seen as acceptable. In fact, males are the only group male copyrighters are given the license to mock (Gulas, et al., 2010). Given this longstanding trend and the findings from our study, we would not be surprised to see these belittling ads continue in the future since consumers view these advertisements as funnier than non-belittling advertisements and humorous ads are known to lead to positive advertising outcomes (Swani, et al., 2013). However, more research needs to be done in order to discover the long-term effects as well as the effect on gender roles in society. Will males reach a breaking point and no longer enjoy watching advertisements poking fun at them? As our data only used those 18 years and older, do these ads affect how young boys view themselves or affect how they behave?

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NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS: THE ROLE OF GREEN ENVIRONMENT AFFECTING THE TOURISTS' WELL-BEING AND MENTAL HEALTH

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Nature-based Solutions (NBS) are part of sustainable management by implementing nature in urban areas where nature hardly exists. By providing a physical green environment as NBS, including indoors and outdoors, plays a critical role in consumer behavior by improving one's mental and emotional health. These nature-based solutions have been successful for customer retention strategies in the form of brand loyalty from the beneficial emotions that it delivers to customers. This study will focus on the role of image through NBS that affects the tourists' retention process. The purpose of this research is to understand the influence of images and the presence of nature-based solutions in tourists' memory. Since nature-based solutions provide tourists perceptions with positive mental-health and an overall well-being, this study proposes to assess the causes of these perceptions by developing a conceptual model. The three key research questions that will be answered by this project include:

- What attributes of NBS have a positive effect on tourists retention process?
- What's the imagery process inside the tourists' mind that motivates him or her from the green environment?
- What emotions do a majority of tourists feel when they are surrounded by or are part of a nature-filled environment?

It is hypothesized that bringing NBS to tourism, tourists will more likely be loyal to that particular attraction opposed to other tourist attractions that don't provide NBS.

Society and the environment as a whole, are facing various challenges. There are many issues that are affecting our environment in a negative way, which is why it is important to consider NBS to reduce the impact. NBS aim to use green infrastructure to improve the overall health of the environment and the well-being of society. The proposed study will find the attributes of the green environment as NBS that play a significant role in providing positive experiences to individuals.

To uncover how NBS are the answer to improving the climate and an individuals' health and well-being, this study will take on a qualitative approach. A review of literature will help conceptualize the framework that is needed in order to conduct a quantitative research using surveys. There are empirical evidence of how nature ties directly to our life satisfaction, health and well-being. With the proposed research study, providing NBS is only going to impact the climate positively. NBS is critical to uphold sustainability and to increase the quality of life in every aspect.

This research will be extremely helpful to State Park as it directly affects their revenue and thus economy of the region. State park authorities will be able to use the outcomes of this study to understand the tourists' behavior especially the role of NBS in retention and well-being. They will develop better marketing strategies and necessary policies to retain tourists thereby increasing the revenue and economic development in the region.

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