Business Research Impacting Business Processes

2020 MMA Spring Conference Proceedings
Conference Cancelled Amid the COVID-19 Pandemic

Editors:
Rebecca Hochradel, Transylvania University
Tony Stovall, Indiana University
Jeanetta D. Sims, University of Central Oklahoma

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Dear MMA Colleagues:

On behalf of the MMA officers and Board of Directors, I extend deep regret to you for the conference that has been cancelled due to the coronavirus pandemic. We share this Proceedings with you as evidence and in appreciation for the 2020 MMA Spring conference that might have been. Primary concerns for member safety, institutional responses that forbade travel, and sudden shifts to online instruction have brought a bizarre set of unprecedented circumstances.

Whether you were to be a first-time conference attendee, curious undergraduate student, dedicated doctoral student, or seasoned MMA member, we greatly appreciate your investment of time and effort in preparation for this year’s conference. As an inaugural enhancement, a new track devoted to undergraduate student marketing research was to debut at this year’s conference. Thank you to Doreen Sams, who quickly agreed to partner on this enhancement. We were to welcome new undergraduate students and their faculty mentors through two poster presentation sessions. Along with these sessions featuring undergraduate student research, all available presentation sessions for the three-day conference were full.

Prior to the pandemic, so many individuals contributed to make the published conference program successful. Thank you to the team of track chairs for their wonderful work in managing the paper review process and for helping to ensure the quality of the program. Many thanks to the numerous reviewers for their feedback and service. This conference program is only possible because of the time and talents that many people provide in service to the MMA.

I am greatly indebted to Becky Hochradel and Tony Stovall for serving as co-editors of this conference proceedings. Thank you for your patient work with me and with the Proceedings, particularly as the timing for publication shifted. Thank you to Lyle Wetsch and Rebecca Dingus for their assistance with online publication and top paper award payments, respectively. Finally, thank you to Chad Milewicz and Gail Zank for always being available for consultation and for your steady guidance as I have navigated serving to chair this MMA conference. I greatly appreciate your wisdom and leadership examples.

MMA conferences have become known for warmth, collegiality, and connections. Our gatherings are spaces for scholar-to-scholar encouragement, research ideation, and teaching reflection. Colleagues have formed both professional relationships and deep friendships, while probing improvements in teaching and forging new paths in research. Despite the social distancing and cancelled conference, we will continue to build upon this rich tradition. I look forward to us gathering on the other side of the pandemic.

Be safe and well,
Jeanetta D. Sims, 2020 Spring Conference Program Chair
MARKETING MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION
EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

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Chad Milewicz, President, University of Southern Indiana
Gail Zank, Immediate Past President (2018 – 2019) – Texas State University
Jeanetta Sims, President Elect & 2020 Spring Conference Chair, University of Central Oklahoma
Leila Samii, Vice President Marketing – Southern New Hampshire University
Alex Milovic, Executive Director – Marquette University
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Lyle Wetsch, Communications Director – Memorial University of Newfoundland, Canada

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Leila Samii, Southern New Hampshire University, Ex-Officio, Proceedings Editor
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Debra Zahay-Blatz, St. Edward’s University (2019)
FELLOWS OF THE
MARKETING MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Fellow</th>
<th>University</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Pam Kennett-Hensel</td>
<td>New Orleans University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>John Cherry</td>
<td>Southeast Missouri State University</td>
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<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Julie Toner</td>
<td>Bellarmine University</td>
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<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>Brian Vander Schee</td>
<td>Aurora University</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Sue Petroshius</td>
<td>Bowling Green State University</td>
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<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Gene Wunder</td>
<td>Washburn University</td>
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<td>2017</td>
<td>Lyle Wetsch</td>
<td>Memorial University of Newfoundland</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Fred Hoyt</td>
<td>Illinois Wesleyan University</td>
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<td>2003</td>
<td>Ron Taylor</td>
<td>Mississippi State University</td>
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<td>2016</td>
<td>Michael Messina</td>
<td>Gannon University</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Judy Wiles</td>
<td>Southeast Missouri State University</td>
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<td>2002</td>
<td>Jim L. Grimm</td>
<td>Illinois State University</td>
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<td>2015</td>
<td>Tim Graeff</td>
<td>Middle Tennessee State University</td>
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<td>2008</td>
<td>Eleanor Maliche</td>
<td>West Virginia State University</td>
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<td>2001</td>
<td>Charles Pettijohn</td>
<td>Southwest Missouri University</td>
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<td>2014</td>
<td>Michelle Kunz</td>
<td>Morehead State University</td>
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<td>2007</td>
<td>Brian Engelland</td>
<td>Catholic University of America</td>
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<td>2001</td>
<td>John Summey</td>
<td>Southern Illinois University – Carbondale</td>
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<td>2013</td>
<td>Don Roy</td>
<td>Middle Tennessee State University</td>
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<td>2006</td>
<td>Bob Erffmeyer</td>
<td>University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire</td>
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<td>1999</td>
<td>Peter Gordon</td>
<td>Southeast Missouri State University</td>
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<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Mike d’Amico</td>
<td>University of Akron</td>
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<td>1999</td>
<td>Joyce Grahn</td>
<td>University of Minnesota – Duluth</td>
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<td>1999</td>
<td>Carol Anderson</td>
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<td>Bert Kellerman</td>
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<td>Paul Thistlethwaite</td>
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<td>Lyn Abercrombe</td>
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<td>Bud Spalding</td>
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<td>1995</td>
<td>Paul Arney</td>
<td>Bradley University</td>
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<td>John Berens</td>
<td>Indiana State University</td>
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<td>Don Muvihill</td>
<td>Kent State University</td>
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<td>Don Shawver</td>
<td>University of Missouri</td>
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SPRING 2020 CONFERENCE TRACK CHAIRS

Consumer Behavior and B2B
John McGrath
University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown

Marketing Education
Susan Geringer
Cal State University, Fresno

Services, Sales & Retailing
Hector R. Lozada
Seton Hall University

Sports, Events & Recreation Marketing
Chad Milewicz
University of Southern Indiana

Undergraduate Student Marketing Research
Doreen Sams
Georgia College & State University

Social Media & Digital Marketing
Carrie Trimble
Millikin University

Cross-Cultural, Ethics & Social Responsibility
Gail Zank
Texas State University

Advertising & Promotions
Sydney Chinchanachokchai
University of Akron

Branding, Strategy & Research
Zina Taran
Delta State University
SPRING 2020 CONFERENCE REVIEWERS

Les Hollingsworth          University of Wisconsin-Platteville
Philip Adekunle              University of Wisconsin Whitewater
Suzanne Altobello          Fayetteville State University
Eklou Amendah             Southern New Hampshire University
Sidney Anderson           Texas State University
JoAnn Atkin              Western Michigan University
Sharmin Attaran          Bryant University
Barb Barney-McNamara     Ferris State University
Enrique Becerra         Texas State University
Robert Boostrom         University of Wisconsin-Whitewater
Philip Boutin            Eastern Kentucky University
Vincent Carter          California State University, Bakersfield
Kevin Celuch            University of Southern Indiana
Punjaporn Chinchanachokchai  Chulalongkorn University
Sang Choe               University of Southern Indiana
Miri Chung              Walsh University
Miles Condon           St. Norbert College
Mary Conran            Temple University Rome
Lisa Cooley            Delta State University
Jane Cromartie         University of New Orleans
Nancy Curtin           Millikin University
Debbie DeLong         Chatham University
Jackie Eastman         Georgia Southern
Kendra Evans           Georgia College & State University
Jason Fertig           University of Southern Indiana
Douglas Friedman       East Stroudsburg University
Susan Geringer           California State University, Fresno
Whitney Ginder            Georgia College & State University
Skip Glenn               University of Pittsburgh Johnstown
Jim Harris                St. Norbert College
Tingting (Tina) He        Governors State University
Paul Hensel               University of New Orleans
Stacey Hills              Columbia-Greene Community College
Rebecca Hochradel         Transylvania University
Sajna Ibrahim             University of Illinois-Chicago
Susan Jones               Ferris State University
Tatia Jordan              University of Texas at Arlington
Pamela Kennett-Hensel     University of New Orleans
Sean Keyani               California State University Northridge
Kaeun Kim                 University of Scranton
Gary H. Kritz             Seton Hall University
Michelle Kunz             Morehead State University
Daniel Ladik              Seton Hall University
Jamie Lambert             Ohio University
Seung-Hee Lee             Southern Illinois University
Ada Leung                 Penn State Berks
Debbie Long               Chatham University
Hector Lozada             Seton Hall University
Grace Markum              University of Pittsburgh Johnstown
Geraldo Matos             Roger Williams University
Chris Menna               University of Pittsburgh Johnstown
Michael Messina           Gannon University
Chad Milewicz             University of Southern Indiana
Joseph Miller             St. Ambrose University
Masoud Moradi, Texas State University
Chinna Natean, Texas State University
Heather Philip, University of Texas at Arlington
Stephen Pirog, Seton Hall University
Maira Piscopo, Moorehouse
RJ Podeschi, Millikin University
McDowell Porter, California State University Fresno
Monika Rawal, Millsaps College
Steven Rayburn, Texas State University
Mary Rickard, Georgia College & State University
Minna Rollins, West Georgia
Steve Roussas, Ottawa University - Arizona
Leila Samii, Southern New Hampshire University
Doreen Sams, Georgia College & State University
Joanna Schwartz, Georgia College & State University
Nandan Shiva, Missouri Western State University
Karen Smith, Texas State University
Andreas Stratemeyer, California State University, Fresno
Taewon Suh, Texas State University
Ursula Sullivan, Northern Illinois University
Chanchal Tamrakar, Georgia Southern University
Carrie Trimble, Millikin University
Vasu Unnava, University of California Davis
Brian Vander Schee, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater
Hannah Walters, Northern State University
Jackie Wei, West Georgia
Alma Mintu Wimsatt, Texas A&M University - Commerce
Nikki Wingate, University of Bridgeport
Jinhee Yoo              Gannon University
Gail Zank              Texas State University
SPRING 2020 CONFERENCE BEST PAPER AWARDS

Donald Shawver Best Paper in Branding, Strategy & Research
*An Empirical Investigation of Pro-environmental Initiatives on Brand Equity*
Mahabubur Rahman and M. Ángeles Rodríguez-Serrano

Firooz Hekmat Consumer Behavior Best Paper Award
*Consumer Behavior and Image Analysis: A Student Customer Retention Model*
Oscar McKnight, Christopher Mahar, Ronald Paugh, Jonathan Meredith, and Josiah Moore

Sports, Events, & Recreation Marketing
*A Spatial and Temporal Replication of the Impact of Service Quality on Tourist Subjective Well-being*
Scott R. Swanson, Xuehuan He, and Lujun Su

John Berens Marketing Education Best Paper Award
*Moderating Role of Student Preference for Written and Online Feedback on the Relationship between Immediacy Behaviors and Satisfaction*
Pushkala Raman

Cross-Cultural Ethics & Social Responsibility
*Developing a Measure of Unethical Behavior for the Salespeople*
Luxi Chai, Sanjay Mishra, Surendra N. Singh, and Promothesh Chatterjee

Undergraduate Student Marketing Research
*Creativity and Novelty of Instagram Advertising*
Anthony Anselmo, Jack Grasser, Alex Zarrabian, and Alessio Sorano
Faculty Mentor: Vassilis Dalakas

MBAA International Distinguished Research Award
*A Spatial and Temporal Replication of the Impact of Service Quality on Tourist Subjective Well-being*
Scott R. Swanson, Xuehuan He, and Lujun Su
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SPRING 2020 ACCEPTED CONFERENCE
PRESENTATION SCHEDULE

Published Schedule Prior to Cancellation Amid the COVID-19 Pandemic

MMA Wednesday Program Sessions – March 25, 2020

(Wednesday)
Marketing Management Association
1:30-2:45 p.m. Salon 1, 3rd Floor

Theme: Consumer Behavior and B2B
Chair and Discussant: Miri Chung, Walsh University

Consumer Behavior and Image Analysis: A Student Customer Retention Model
Oscar McKnight, Ashland University
Christopher Mahar, Ashland University
Ronald Paugh, Ashland University
Jonathan Meredith, Ashland University
Josiah Moore, Ashland University

Optimal Financial Product Design for Consumers: Evidences from Thailand
Punjaporn Chinchanachokchhai, Chulalongkorn University
Pavitra Jindahra, Chulalongkorn University

The Influence of Place Attachment on Prosocial Behavior from Psychological Ownership of Green Space Perspective
Miri Chung, Walsh University

(Wednesday)
Marketing Management Association
1:30-2:45 p.m. Salon 2, 3rd Floor

Theme: Branding, Strategy, and Research
Chair and Discussant: Rob K. Larson, Luther College

An Analysis of the Higher Education Enrollment Patterns in Iowa from 2006-2017
Rob K. Larson, Luther College

Trendsetting, Brand Loyalty, Perceived Quality, and Word-of-Mouth
Seung-Hee Lee, Southern Illinois University
Jane Workman, Southern Illinois University
Kwangho Jung, Seoul National University, Korea
An Empirical Investigation of Pro-environmental Initiatives on Brand Equity
Mahabubur Rahman, Rennes School of Business, France
M. Ángeles Rodríguez-Serrano, University of Pablo de Olavide, Spain

(Wednesday)
Marketing Management Association
1:30-2:45 p.m. Salon 3, 3rd Floor

Theme: Panel: Becoming a Master Scholar
Panelists:
Tim Aurand, Northern Illinois University
Maxwell Hsu, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater
Judy Wiles, Southeast Missouri State University
Rama Yelkur, St. John Fisher College

(Wednesday)
Marketing Management Association
3:00-4:15 p.m. Salon 1, 3rd Floor

Theme: Social Media and Digital Marketing
Chair and Discussant: Tim Aurand, Northern Illinois University

Client Based Projects: Preparing Students for Real World Challenges in Digital Marketing
Sharmin Attaran, Bryant University

The Influence of Social Media Information Overload on Customer Equity and Brand Experience: The Case of Electronic Items
Eklou R. Amendah, Southern New Hampshire University, Manchester Campus

The Role of Digital Media in the Creation of Corporate Identity at Art by Africa
Angela Poulakidas, City University of New York

(Wednesday)
Marketing Management Association
3:00-4:15 p.m. Salon 2, 3rd Floor

Theme: Services, Sales, Retailing, and Sports
Chair and Discussant: Samantha C. Gibson, Northern Illinois University

A Theoretical Model Exploring How Omni-channel May Save the Convenience Store Industry
Samantha C. Gibson, Northern Illinois University
Denise D. Schoenbachler, Northern Illinois University
Interdepartmental Conflict, Management Emphasis on Market Orientation and Reward Structure Orientation as Antecedents of Employer Market Orientation within AACSB Member Schools
Kevin L. Hammond, The University of Tennessee at Martin
Robert L. Webster, Ouachita Baptist University

The Value of Archrivalry
Scott A. Jones, Stetson University

(Wednesday)
Marketing Management Association
3:00-4:15 p.m. Salon 3, 3rd Floor

Theme: Panel: Redefining Content Creation: Artificial Intelligence in Social Media Marketing
Panelists:
Regina Luttrell, Syracuse University
Adrienne Wallace, Grand Valley State University and BlackTruck Media + Marketing
Gini Dietrich, Arment Dietrich, Inc.
MMA Thursday Program Sessions – March 26, 2020

(Thursday)
Marketing Management Association
8:00-9:00 a.m. Salon 1, 3rd Floor

Theme: Branding and Marketing Education
Chair and Discussant: Miri Chung, Walsh University

Gen Z's Understanding of Marketing
Scott R. Swanson, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire
J. Charlene Davis, Trinity University

Antecedent and Consequent Conditions of Brand Boredom: Moderating Role of Brand Credibility
Miri Chung, Walsh University
Younghye Jang, Keimyung College University

Moderating Role of Student Preference for Written and Online Feedback on the Relationship between Immediacy Behaviors and Satisfaction
Pushkala Raman, Texas Woman’s University

(Thursday)
Marketing Management Association
8:00-9:00 a.m. Salon 2, 3rd Floor

Theme: Branding, Strategy, & Research
Chair and Discussant: Judy Wiles, Southeast Missouri State University

The Great Reveal: How Brands “Use,” “Promote,” & “Offer” Tactics through Social Media Engagement
Kristina Kaufman, North Park University
Peter Kaufman, Illinois State University

Student Indebtedness and Price Differences as Predictors of Student Enrollment at Iowa’s Private and Public Colleges and Universities
Rob K. Larson, Luther College

Should I Say Yes or Should I Say No? Personal Brand Identity and its Role in Service and Administrative Opportunity Considerations
David Aron, Dominican University
Timothy W. Aurand, Northern Illinois University
(Thursday)
Marketing Management Association
8:00-9:00 a.m. Salon 3, 3rd Floor

Theme: Panel: Gen Z Goes to Work: An Uneasy First Look
Chair and Discussant: Peg Murphy, Columbia College Chicago

(Thursday)
Marketing Management Association
8:00-9:00 a.m. Salon Foyer, 3rd Floor

Theme: Undergraduate Student Marketing Research Session One: Interactive Poster Presentations
Co-Chairs: Doreen Sams, Georgia College and State University and Council on Undergraduate Research Social Sciences Division
Jeanetta Sims, University of Central Oklahoma and Council on Undergraduate Research Social Sciences Division

Board 1: Service Quality Assessment of a Fitness Club using SERVQUAL Model
Abdul-Salam Lawal, Clarion University of Pennsylvania
Darius Barrett, Clarion University of Pennsylvania
Nripendra Singh (Faculty Mentor), Clarion University of Pennsylvania

Board 2: Determining Location and Key Marketing Strategies for Food Truck Business
Vonada Andrew, Clarion University of Pennsylvania
Khan Saif, Clarion University of Pennsylvania
Wallace Vaughn, Clarion University of Pennsylvania
Nripendra Singh (Faculty Mentor), Clarion University of Pennsylvania

Board 3: Effects of Cultural Thinking Styles on Evaluations of Products Endorsed by Social Media Influencers
Prerna Aishwarya Narayanan, University of Akron
Sydney Chinchanachokchhai (Faculty Mentor), University of Akron

Board 4: Conceptual Model of Nostalgia as a Predictor to Consume Heritage, Retro, or Vintage Brands
Montana McKnight, Otterbein University
Michael Levin (Faculty Mentor), Otterbein University

Board 5: Does Emotional Intelligence Influence Pro-Environmental Behavior?
Elise Benner, Northern State University
Ashley Meyer, Northern State University
Hannah Walters (Faculty Mentor), Northern State University
Board 6: Is it Personal? Skimming through Four Personal Characteristics Possibly Involved as Brand Experience Antecedents
Marie-Philippe Guimont, Université Laval
Frank Pons (Faculty Mentor), Université Laval

(Thursday)
Marketing Management Association
9:15-10:30 a.m. Salon 1, 3rd Floor

Theme: Advertising and Promotions
Chair and Discussant: Elisa Fredericks, Northern Illinois University

Gestalt Image Ads: A New Style of Advertising in the Digital Age
Praggyan (Pam) Mohanty, Governors State University

Does Generational Differences Influence Cooperation, Communication, and Coordination during the Development of New Products?
Elisa Fredericks, Northern Illinois University

Free or Enslaved: How the Use of Big Data Makes Consumers Feel
Joni R. Jackson, Chicago State University

(Thursday)
Marketing Management Association
9:15-10:30 a.m. Salon 2, 3rd Floor

Theme: Cross-Cultural, Ethics, & Social Responsibility
Chair and Discussant: Luxi Chai, Missouri Southern State University

Developing a Measure of Unethical Behavior for the Salespeople
Luxi Chai, Missouri Southern State University
Sanjay Mishra, University of Kansas
Surendra N. Singh, University of Kansas
Promothesh Chatterjee, University of Utah

Recognizing the Essential Dynamics of Food Waste Behavior
Zeynep Topaloglu, EZI Consulting
Omer Topaloglu, Fairleigh Dickinson University
(Thursday)
Marketing Management Association
9:15-10:30 a.m. Salon 3, 3rd Floor

Theme: Social Media & Digital Marketing
Chair and Discussant: Nora Ganim Barnes, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth

Social Media, Gen Z and Consumer Misbehavior: Instagram Made Me Do It
Stephanie L. Jacobsen, Bridgewater University
Nora Ganim Barnes, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth

Parasocial Interaction and Credibility Perceptions of YouTube Influencers in European and American Consumers
Suzanne Altobello, Fayetteville State University
Kiira Kiesilä, Aalto University

Sharing your Secrets with a Friend of a Friend: Consumer Perspectives on Third Party Privacy Policies of Online Retailers before and after GDPR
Debika Sihi, Southwestern University

(Thursday)
Marketing Management Association
9:15-10:30 a.m. Salon Foyer, 3rd Floor

Theme: Undergraduate Student Marketing Research Session Two: Interactive Poster Presentations
Co-Chairs: Doreen Sams, Georgia College and State University and Council on Undergraduate Research Social Sciences Division
Jeanetta Sims, University of Central Oklahoma and Council on Undergraduate Research Social Sciences Division

Board 1: Creativity and Novelty of Instagram Advertising
Anthony Anselmo, Cal State University San Marcos
Jack Grasser, Cal State University San Marcos
Alex Zarrabian, Cal State University San Marcos
Alessio Sorano, Cal State University San Marcos
Vassilis Dalakas (Faculty Mentor), Cal State University San Marcos

Board 2: Why Hire Us? Experienced Sales Practitioners’ Perceptions of Student Preparation
Alexa Hladick, Christopher Newport University
Lisa Spiller (Faculty Mentor), Christopher Newport University

Board 3: Marketing Observations: Product Placement – Sporting Events
Fagan Kennedy, Georgia College and State University
Board 4: Today’s Top Hits: Song Lyrics as an Effective Marketing Channel
Mary Bridget Gomes, Bryant University
Sharmin Attaran (Faculty Mentor), Bryant University

Board 5: Using Small Commitment and Social Proof to Help Cause-Related-Marketing: A Field Experiment
Victoria (Tori) Mynatt, Cal State University San Marcos
Jaymes Hebreo, Cal State University San Marcos
Lauren Anderson, Cal State University San Marcos
Joseph Kicko, Cal State University San Marcos
Vassilis Dalakas (Faculty Mentor), Cal State University San Marcos

Board 6: Identifiable Victim and Donations: A Field Experiment
Juliana Torres, Cal State University San Marcos
Kennedy Layne, Cal State University San Marcos
Haley Sapp, Cal State University San Marcos
Neil Cutkomp, Cal State University San Marcos
Vassilis Dalakas (Faculty Mentor), Cal State University San Marcos

Board 7: Preventing Food Waste at a Food Bank: A Field Experiment on Social Proof
Samantha Gomez, Cal State University San Marcos
Hannah O’Brien, Cal State University San Marcos
Anika Kline, Cal State University San Marcos
Gagan Nijjar, Cal State University San Marcos
Vassilis Dalakas (Faculty Mentor), Cal State University San Marcos

Board 8: Sugar Sweetened Drinks: A Marketing Placement Observational Study
Mary Alice Barrington, Georgia College and State University
Hank Von Ruden, Georgia College and State University
Doreen Sams (Faculty Mentor), Georgia College and State University

Board 9: Development of Social Media Campaigns and the Assessment of Its Influence on Consumer Decision Making
Isaac Holland, Clarion University of Pennsylvania
Jared Scott, Clarion University of Pennsylvania
Kayla Molzer, Clarion University of Pennsylvania
Nripendra Singh (Faculty Mentor), Clarion University of Pennsylvania

(Thursday)
Marketing Management Association
10:45 a.m. -12:00 p.m. Wabash Room, 3rd Floor
MMA Awards Brunch (Ticket Required)
Best Track Papers and MMA Undergraduate Student On-the-Spot Awards Presented
(Thursday)
Marketing Management Association
1:30-2:45 p.m. Salon 1, 3rd Floor

Theme: Sports Marketing and Service Quality
Chair and Discussant: Héctor R. Lozada, Seton Hall University

A Spatial and Temporal Replication of the Impact of Service Quality on Tourist Subjective Well-being
Scott R. Swanson, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire
Xuehuan He, Central South University
Lujun Su, Central South University

NCAA Student-Athletes: An Exploratory Study into Mental Health Concerns
Hulda G. Black, Illinois State University
Jeri M. Beggs, Illinois State University
Brent A. Beggs, Illinois State University

Does ServQual Work for Generation Y, Generation Z, and Generation Alpha?
Gary H. Kritz, Seton Hall University
Héctor R. Lozada, Seton Hall University

(Thursday)
Marketing Management Association
1:30-2:45 p.m. Salon 2, 3rd Floor

Theme: Panel: The Best is Yet to Come: A Preview of the 25th Annual MMA Fall Educator’s Conference
Panelists:
Pamela Kennett-Hensel, University of New Orleans
Don Roy, Middle Tennessee State University
Ursula Sullivan, Northern Illinois University

(Thursday)
Marketing Management Association
1:30-2:45 p.m. Salon 3, 3rd Floor

Theme: Marketing Education, Strategy, and Research
Chair and Discussant: Sangwon Lee, Ball State University
To Quiz or Not to Quiz in Principles of Marketing: The Effects of Retrieval Practice on Assessments of Learning  
Hannah Walters, Northern State University  
Michelle Lesnar, Northern State University  

The Interplay of Product Form Design, Function Innovativeness and Culture on New Product Evaluation  
Sangwon Lee, Ball State University  

Analyzing Third Wave Coffee Shops Business Strategies through Milwaukee Coffee Roasters  
Molly McQueeny, Carthage College  

(Thursday)  
Marketing Management Association  
3:00-4:15 p.m. Salon 1, 3rd Floor  

Theme: Services, Sales, and Retailing  
Chair and Discussant: Kendra Evans, Georgia College and State University  

The Case of the Florida Lemon: Options for the Buyer or Trap for the Consumer: The Florida Motor Vehicle Warranty Enforcement Act  
Richard J. Hunter, Jr., Seton Hall University  
John H. Shannon, Seton Hall University  
Henry J. Amoroso, Seton Hall University  

Marketing Strategies for Institutions of Higher Educations’ Career Services: An Empirical Study  
Kendra Evans, Georgia College and State University  
Doreen Sams, Georgia College and State University  

Business Student Perceptions of Sales Careers: Is Change on the Horizon?  
Lisa D. Spiller, Christopher Newport University  
Dae-Hee Kim, Christopher Newport University  

(Thursday)  
Marketing Management Association  
3:00-4:15 p.m. Salon 2, 3rd Floor  

Theme: Marketing Education  
Chair and Discussant: Ellen Campos Sousa, Florida International University
Exploring the Determinants of Student’s Learning Outcome through the Use of Eye-Tracking Technology as a Tool in a Marketing Research Course
Sydney Chinchanachokchai, University of Akron
William Hauser, University of Akron
James D. McKelvey, University of Akron

Student Personal Branding as Perceived by Employers: Comparisons of Importance and Performance of Student Branding Attributes
Danielle Sorrell, Valparaiso University
Kaitlin Christoun, Valparaiso University
Shannon Lahey, Valparaiso University
Musa Pinar, Valparaiso University

Stressed and Unhealthy College Students: The Role of Mindfulness and Regulatory Focus
Ellen Campos Sousa, Florida International University
Luciana Freire, Unchristus, Brazil
Patricia Gouveia, Florida International University
Alexandra Aguirre-Rodriguez, Florida International University

(Thursday)
Marketing Management Association
3:00-4:15 p.m. Salon 3, 3rd Floor

Theme: Consumer Behavior and B2B
Chair and Discussant: Kurt Pflughoeft, University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point

Determining Predictive Importance for Gasoline Station Sales using Augmented Mystery Shop Data
Kurt Pflughoeft, University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point
Sharon Alberg, MaritzCX

Toward a New Model of Consumer Temptation
Halimin Herjanto, Marist College
Pamela Harper, Marist College

Information Overload and Interaction Overload as Two Separate Attributes of the Information Overload Syndrome
Tingting He, Governors State University
MMA Friday Program Sessions – March 27, 2020

(Friday)
Marketing Management Association
8:00-9:15 a.m. Salon 1, 3rd Floor

Theme: Branding, Strategy, and Research
Chair and Discussant: Glyn Atwal, Burgundy School of Business

Understanding Brand Hate: A Case Example of Dolce & Gabbana
Glyn Atwal, Burgundy School of Business
Douglas Bryson, Rennes School of Business

An Integrated Review of First-mover Advantage
Junzhou Zhang, Montclair State University

Online Consumer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) and Customer Intentions to Patronize Local Businesses
Hyeong-Gyu Choi, Augustana College

(Friday)
Marketing Management Association
8:00-9:15 a.m. Salon 2, 3rd Floor

Theme: Cross-Cultural, Ethics, & Social Responsibility
Chair and Discussant: Zinaida Taran, Delta State University

Factors of Framing Nutritional Messages across National Borders: Russia vs US
Zinaida Taran, Delta State University
Rebecca Hochradel, Transylvania University

A Cross-Cultural Analysis of Consumer Ethnocentrism in the United States, Japan, China, South Korea, and Taiwan
Jeongsoo Park, Komazawa University
Haithem Zourrig, Kent State University

Technology Resistance Modeling: An Analysis in the Indian Market
Easwar Krishna Iyer, Great Lakes Institute of Management
Sriram Dorai, Great Lakes Institute of Management
Paul R. Prabhaker, Northern Illinois University

(Friday)
Marketing Management Association
8:00-9:15 a.m. Salon 3, 3rd Floor
Theme: Panel: Don’t Reinvent the Wheel: New and Unique Resources to Complement the Marketing and Sales Classrooms
Panelists:
Rebecca Dingus, Central Michigan University
Hulda Black, Illinois State University
Alexander Milovic, Marquette University

(Friday)
Marketing Management Association
9:30-10:45 a.m. Salon 1, 3rd Floor

Theme: Marketing Education
Chair and Discussant: Nripendra Singh, Clarion University of Pennsylvania

Hybrid High-Impact Pedagogy in Marketing: My Experiences & Learnings
Nripendra Singh, Clarion University of Pennsylvania

Marketing Research and Library Training in the Introduction to Marketing Course
Darrell E. Bartholomew, Penn State Harrisburg
Emily L. Mross, Penn State Harrisburg

The Effects of Classroom Atmospherics on Marketing Student Outcomes: Preliminary Results
Jane Lee Saber, Ryerson University

(Friday)
Marketing Management Association
9:30-10:45 a.m. Salon 2, 3rd Floor

Theme: Panel: Master of Science in Marketing Research (MSMR): Decreasing Enrollment in the Digital Era
Chair and Discussant: Chien Le, The University of Texas at Arlington
Panelists:
Scott Hanson, The University of Texas at Arlington
Kristin Branch, University of Wisconsin – Madison
Richard A. Spreng, Michigan State University

(Friday)
Marketing Management Association
9:30-10:45 a.m. Salon 3, 3rd Floor

Theme: Consumer Behavior and B2B
Chair and Discussant: Rebecca Hochradel, Transylvania University
The Influence of Product Involvement on Electronic Word of Mouth and Purchase Intention
Ahmed Sarhan, Business Development Director
Perry Haan, Tiffin University

The Impact of Split Surveys on Importance-Performance Analysis
Sharon Alberg, MaritzCX
Kurt Pflughoeft, University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point

(Friday)
Marketing Management Association
11:00 a.m. -12:15 p.m. Salon 1, 3rd Floor

Theme: Consumer Behavior and B2B
Chair and
Discussant: Alex Milovic, Marquette University

The Impact of Experience and Welcoming Nature on Revisit Intention to Jazz Festival
Chico Adhibaskara Ekananda Hindarto, Indonesia Banking School

Social Capital and Consumerism
Hassan Hussein, College of Saint Benedict and Saint John’s University

Would You Pay More to Feel at Home: Cost, Host Involvement and Personality Factors as
Determinants of Consumer Motivation for Using Sharing Economy Services
Sandip Roy, California State University, Fresno
McDowell Porter, California State University, Fresno

(Friday)
Marketing Management Association
11:00 a.m. -12:15 p.m. Salon 2, 3rd Floor

Theme: Branding, Strategy, and Research
Chair and
Discussant: Shiva Nandan, Missouri Western State University

The Renormalization of Smoking: Moving from Burning (Tobacco) to Heating (Vapor)
Cynthia Rodriguez Cano, McNeese State University
Md Al-Emran, McNeese State University

Strategic Planning with Human-Centered Design Thinking: Application in a Nonprofit
Organization (NPO) Context
Shiva Nandan, Missouri Western State University
(Friday)
Marketing Management Association
11:00 a.m. -12:15 p.m. Salon 3, 3rd Floor

Theme: Panel: Teaching Disasters and How We (Almost) Overcame Them
Chair and Discussant: Fred Hoyt, Illinois Wesleyan University
Panelists: Kimberly Folkers, Wartburg College
Lori Lohman, Augsburg University
Rebecca Hochradel, Transylvania University
David Wallace, Illinois Wesleyan University
Tara Gerstner, Illinois Wesleyan University

(Friday)
Marketing Management Association
1:45-3:00 p.m. Salon 1, 3rd Floor

Theme: Workshop – Facilitating a Positioning Statement and Student Approaches for Nailing Promotional Campaigns
Chair and Discussant: Lori S. Elias Reno, Penn State University

(Friday)
Marketing Management Association
1:45-3:00 p.m. Salon 2, 3rd Floor

Theme: Marketing Education and Research
Chair and Discussant: Nora Ganim Barnes, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth

Individual Characteristics and Research Attitudes, Intentions, and Behaviors: The Experience of a Private Business College
Nicholas J. Barnes, Nichols College
Nadia Khalil, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth
Nora Ganim Barnes, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth
Omar Khalil, Kuwait University

Get the Lead Out: Using a Community Project to Teach Social Responsibility
Stacie F. Waites, Marquette University
Alex Milovic, Marquette University

Faculty and Student Perspectives Regarding Academic Honesty in Online Classes: A Mixed Methods Study
Barbara Lyons, Morehead State University
Jonathan Nelson, Morehead State University

(Friday)
Marketing Management Association
1:45-3:00 p.m. Salon 3, 3rd Floor

Theme: Sales, Retailing and Sports Marketing
Chair and Discussant: Ursula Y. Sullivan, Northern Illinois University

Retail Complaint Analysis in an Emerging Market: The Case of the Club Store Format in Turkey
Bengü Sevil Oflaç, Izmir University of Economics
Ursula Y. Sullivan, Northern Illinois University
Zeynep Kaya, Izmir University of Economics

The Relevance of Organizations Utilizing Both Strategic Management and Strategic Selling Practices
Shawn Green, Aurora University

Utilizing a Job Demands-Resources Perspective to Examine Job Resourcefulness Effects: A Preliminary Investigation
Eric G. Harris, Florida Southern College
David E. Fleming, Indiana State University
DETERMINING PREDICTIVE IMPORTANCE FOR GASOLINE STATION SALES USING AUGMENTED MYSTERY SHOP DATA

Kurt Pflughoeft, University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point
Sharon Alberg, MaritzCX

ABSTRACT

The use of simple measures, such as Net Promoter Score, to predict business outcomes is common in market research. Although such measures are useful for company comparisons, they are too simplistic for predictive purposes. The persistence of these measures is due, in part, to the difficulties of data integration that would allow additional predictors. The advantages of data blending over data integration are discussed in the context of a mystery shop study. Data blending and a random forest are used to quickly identify the important predictors for gasoline station revenues. The results showed owners how important mystery shop programs are.

INTRODUCTION

Market researchers are under considerable pressure to provide insights from survey-based research in a timely and cost-effective manner. One of the more desired types of analysis is commonly known as “linkage analysis” where survey results are tied to a business outcome. However, such analysis can be difficult, costly and time-consuming, especially when factoring in other relevant predictors. Consequently, simpler ties to business outcomes have been adopted such as the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI, 2020), Net Promoter Score (Reichheld, 2003) and Wallet Allocation Rule (Keiningham et. al., 2015).

There are many possibilities of doing simple linkages for prediction as shown in Figure 1. Each one of these stages can be used to determine linkages from perceived quality, attitudes, intentions or behaviors directly to a business outcome. Alternatively, a simpler task might be to forecast between one stage and the next, for example, predicting intentions from attitudes and so on. However, there are several theories that address the difficulties of even predicting behaviors from intentions or attitudes such as Theory of Reasoned Actions (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) or Theories of Planned Behaviors (Ajzen, 1985). Consequently, if the correlations between previous stages with customer behaviors is minimal, trying to predict business outcomes from previous stages may be even more challenging.

The key for tying survey-based measures to business outcomes is to develop more comprehensive models of prediction. However, developing such models may extend analysis beyond acceptable cost and time constraints set by the client. In fact, for many analysis and data science projects, up to 80% of the project work may be involved on data preparation issues (Lohr, 2014). Technologies are needed to expedite data preparation and analysis.

In this research, the authors investigate the use of data blending and random forests (RFs: Breiman, 2001) for creating a linkage model for gasoline station revenues. First, data blending will be compared against a more traditional
data integration approach for a mystery shop study on gasoline stations. Second, RFs are advocated as they are one of the most successful general-purpose machine learning methods (Biau and Scornet, 2016). Also, RFs can alleviate the need for some potential data scrubbing and transformations. In combination, these two tools can greatly expand the market researchers’ toolbox and allow them to tackle more difficult problems.

A mystery shop study is chosen as there is relatively little empirical evidence to support that they are linked to customer satisfaction or sales (Blessing & Natter, 2019). Such results are a bit surprising as it is known that measures like perceived or objective quality can impact the health of firms (Mitra & Gold er, 2006). Establishing a short-term link for mystery shop surveys can increase the overall value of such studies with the clients.

MYSTERY SHOP SURVEYS

Mystery shop programs are an important tool used by headquarters to determine if their outlets are abiding by corporate policies and procedures (Blessing & Natter, 2019). For a gasoline station, the mystery shopper may purchase either a small item at the convenience store or a gallon of gas. While they are shopping, they are also filling out a survey, in secrecy, to note the condition of the outlet as well as their interaction with the employees. The survey is usually a large checklist of yes/no items. For a gasoline station, survey items may include the condition of the fuel area such as the availability of windshield washing fluid, paper towels, trash receptacles, etc. Other fuel area items may include the posting of prices and special advertisements, cleanliness, lighting, maintenance, etc. Likewise, a similar set of questions would be associated with the convenience store and finally questions about the employees. Latter questions would include: did the employees greet you?, were they wearing a uniform?, were they unkempt?, etc.

Many mystery shoppers are hired and deployed to most, if not all, of the stations. (Some stations may be exempt due to issues like renovation.) The data from the surveys are used to create report cards for each gasoline station. These reports show the percent of items in compliance for different aspects of the business. Measures would include Fuel Area Compliance, Convenience Store Compliance, Employee Compliance etc. Compliance measures are composite measures which may be weighted sums of related items. For example, a Fuel Area Compliance measure may consider cleanliness by pumps, condition of pumps, availability of windshield washer fluid, etc. An example section of a mystery shop report is shown in Figure 2. In this report card, the overall compliance was 88.5% in quarter 2, where 177 points out of a total of 200 points were achieved.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compliance</th>
<th>Quarter 2</th>
<th>Quarter 1</th>
<th>+/-</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>88.5%</td>
<td>177/200</td>
<td>84.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuel Area</td>
<td>91.1%</td>
<td>41/45</td>
<td>82.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exterior</td>
<td>85.7%</td>
<td>60/70</td>
<td>78.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interior</td>
<td>97.8%</td>
<td>44/45</td>
<td>93.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
<td>20/25</td>
<td>88.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleanliness</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
<td>12/15</td>
<td>86.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These report cards are shared with the gasoline station owners as well as headquarters. High scores may be used for awards and bonuses. Low scores may result in corrective actions issued from headquarters. Consequently, mystery shop programs can be viewed by some owners as a “hammer” to enforce compliance.

To change negative perceptions of mystery shop programs, a two-fold strategy may be needed. First, the reasons for the company’s policies and procedures may need to be re-explained. Some items are obvious, like cleanliness but other items like marketing materials may need to be emphasized that they can lead to loyalty within the brand and station. Second, the adherence to corporate policies could be increased by owners if the mystery shop measures can be linked to business outcomes. For example, low fuel area compliance scores could lead to a decrease in revenue.

For this study, a large gasoline chain contracted to do a mystery shop survey to determine station compliance. A majority of their gasoline stations have a similar size with a convenience store. Gasoline stations may have additional services like a carwash and they may even have a co-located restaurant.

The mystery shop survey was conducted over a period of two months. Shoppers noted compliance items and some gasoline station characteristics, such as the price for a gallon of gasoline and even their own satisfaction levels. Additional firmographic information, such as number of pumps and car wash availability were provided by
Headquarters also provided the total revenue (gasoline and convenience store sales) for each gasoline station.

**DATA AUGMENTATION**

Several types of variables can be used as predictors as shown in Figure 3. Internal variables were gleaned from the survey or provided from the client. External variables were made available through other sources. Although many external variables are possible, this study incorporated only a few additional types of variables which are marked with asterisks. First, median household income from a census tract was used as an indication of blight or affluence for the locality. Second, the number of competitive gas stations was determined from a Point of Interest (POI) discussed in the next section. Third, some tract demographics were used such as total population, median age and percent male which are all hypothesized to impact demand.

A major bottleneck for market researchers is to integrate external data with the survey. Integration efforts can require a fair amount of expertise to create a central data repository. One technology which can expedite these efforts is data blending. To show the importance of data blending, this approach is briefly compared to a traditional data integration effort, which is how the authors originally performed the research. By utilizing data blending technologies, market researchers may be able to tackle a range of problems for their clients without creating a much larger project team or incurring delay.

Traditional data integration involves many data preparation activities to create a central data repository such as a database. Although a database isn’t required per se, it certainly can support multiple research streams. A graphic of the initial database for the mystery shop program is shown in Figure 4.

**Figure 4: Data Integration via PostgreSQL Database**

Data sources include the survey as well as firmographics and business outcomes; the joining of this data to gas stations is quite easy via a unique id. However, joining external data such as census and point-of-interest (POI) data is not so easily accomplished. Census data often requires a fair amount of processing and the tracts associated with the gasoline stations need to be determined. An FCC API was used to identify census tracts for a specific
latitude/longitude coordinate. Finally, the competitive information was derived from a Web-based POI, named Factual.

Figure 5: Spatial Query via Factual Point of Interest

Factual is a type of digital yellow pages that allows one to obtain business information for a particular location. It is similar to the type of information one might see for a route displayed on Tom-Tom or a Garmin. In Figure 5, the gasoline stations within a 5k radius of a point were identified through Factual’s interface.

An important characteristic of the POI is to determine how complete and accurate their coverage is. For example, in the above query one gasoline station was missed since it was associated with a large retail outlet. Several manual checks were done to ensure that the number of gasoline stations within certain regions were reasonably accurate.

The above data integration efforts took at least 100 hours of work to create the database. The resources needed to achieve this research are well beyond the project's budget. However, it was desired to show the client enhanced research possibilities. To adhere to timeliness, the use of data blending was explored, important for future ad hoc research.

Data blending is a technology that is meant to quickly create an “integrated” data set for a specific research question (Wessler, 2015). A package named Alteryx was used to achieve the required data blending in about 8 hours, which was a fraction of the time for the traditional integration task. Alteryx is a drag and drop workflow application that already includes several datasets like the US census. The workflow for the data blending portion is shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6 – Alteryx Workflow for Data Blending

Briefly, the workflow starts on the left with a combined gasoline station file with addresses, firmographics, business outcomes and mystery shop results. Joining criteria, which for the prior fields, are simply the “inner” type specified in the parameters of the node. CASS (Coding Accuracy Support System) is a procedure used to ensure that
the snail-mail addresses are in a consistent format for geocoding. The D&B is the Dun & Bradstreet node to get competitive information, however, it was eventually replaced with the Factual data as many small gas stations do not apply for D&B identifiers. Eventually, the US census data is combined using the station's latitude/longitude values.

The determination of competitive gasoline stations was changed from a 5k radius to a 5 minute drive time for off-peak traffic hours. This more sophisticated method was possible due to a traffic count module, called Kalibrate, which is included in Alteryx. A picture contrasting the 5k radius versus a 5 minute drive time for a particular geo-coordinate is shown in Figure 7.

**Figure 7: Spatial Search of 5k Radius versus 5 minute Drive Time**

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**ANALYSIS**

Once the data was blended, the project’s goal was to determine the important predictors of gasoline sales. Due to the proprietary nature of the data it isn’t possible to release all the sales results. To partially control the effect of larger stations having more sales, the sales were normalized by dividing by the number of gas pumps.

Out-of-sample prediction performance was not considered since the mystery shop survey is a census and the mix of stations (due to station closings and openings) doesn’t change much. The client is mostly interested as to whether the quality measures of the mystery shop survey are still important in the context of other variables.

To determine importance, an RF was used to create a prediction model. RFs, unlike regression models, ensure that the shared explained variation amongst predictors is distributed. This distribution is achieved since only a subset of predictors is considered for each node split of the trees. Since RFs may have a bias towards continuous variables (due to the ability to achieve more splits), binning was used on continuous predictors to see if the results were significantly altered. The results did not significantly change with the introduction of binning.

The importance results of the RF model, which was an ensemble of 1000 trees (i.e. a black box), are shown in Figure 8. The RF was able to explain 47% of the variation in gasoline station sales. This represents a large improvement over a simple predictive model. For example, the use of only the overall compliance measure from the mystery shop survey predicted only 15% of the variation in sales - as determined by another RF model.

**Figure 8: Relative Importance for Gas Station Sales via Random Forest**

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The most important variable, as measured by sum of squares, is median household income (MHI). MHI was used as a proxy of blight versus affluence for the census tract that was associated with the gasoline station. This result is in line with the common retail mantra: location, location, location.

The second most important variable was the price of the gasoline. The price information was collected by the mystery shopper for a gallon of regular gasoline. Although price is important, a deeper model may adjust for cost of living or relative deviation from competitive gasoline prices. The latter information is not readily available and is expensive to purchase (OPIS, 2019).

The "M" variables, in Figure 8, are compliance measures associated with the mystery shop survey. Instead of using overall compliance, individual compliance measures were used: Fuel Area, Interior Quality, Exterior Quality, Staff Quality and Cleanliness. The importance of those items combined is about 18%.

Other important variables were number of competitive gasoline stations, car wash and rewards programs representing about 9%, 4% and 4% of the importance respectively. The latter two variables can help create more loyalty for the customers to have repeat visits. Additionally, the display of marketing materials, as recorded by the mystery shoppers, can advertise not only loyalty programs but other deals and specials.

IMPLICATIONS

The results of the research were shared with headquarters and a council of station owners. Both parties were encouraged to see that the mystery shop compliance measures were related to sales. These results provided more motivation for owners to achieve high compliance scores and the linkage analysis is now included as an annual deliverable. Management was also able to justify the costs of the mystery shop program.

The successful linkage of results to business outcomes also helps mystery shop research in general, given the current lack of empirical evidence in the literature. Mystery shop programs can measure quality issues with regards to both retail characteristics and employees. Although station attendees are not your typical salespersons, they are responsible, in part, to make sure that the station is stocked and cleaned. These aspects as well as their friendly demeanor can help increase sales.

CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This research has demonstrated that useful explanatory importance models can be developed from augmented mystery shop data. The overall fit of the RF model approximately tripled from a simple model that uses one overall compliance predictor. Results from the comprehensive model demonstrated to owners that the mystery shop results matter beyond just strict compliance issues.

The research process also shows that data blending and RFs are important tools for market researchers. The ability to empower market researchers to quickly integrate and analyze data expands research possibilities. This is similar to the grassroots analysis trend that has happened to end users with packages such as Tableau (Murray, 2013).

This study has a few limitations including not addressing cost issues for market researchers. Data blending technologies with auxiliary data are still pricey, however, as competition increases (e.g. StreamSets and Stitch), it’s just a matter of time until costs decrease. Additional limitations are the non-inclusion of potentially relevant variables (e.g. traffic flows) and further transformations of existing variables (e.g. deviation in gas prices). Those refinements would most likely increase the overall fit of the model.

REFERENCES


For further information contact:
Kurt Pflughoeft
University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point
2100 Main Street, Stevens Point, WI 54481
(715) 346-2078
kpflughoeft@uwsp.edu
CONSUMER BEHAVIOR AND IMAGE ANALYSIS: A STUDENT CUSTOMER RETENTION MODEL

Oscar McKnight, Ashland University
Christopher Mahar, Ashland University
Ronald Paugh, Ashland University
Jonathan Meredith, Ashland University
Josiah Moore, Ashland University

ABSTRACT

Customer retention is a critical strategic marketing concept, regardless of industry. This study examined customer defection within a postsecondary educational system, operationally defined as student retention-risk. The process involved utilizing image analysis of student ID cards by assessing facial micro-expressions with an artificial intelligence program developed by employing a series of machine learning algorithms. Discriminant findings suggest one sentiment, [Degree of Happiness] as expressed in a student’s university ID card, will identify students at-risk, potentially enhancing Return on Marketing Investment (ROMI) with strategic intervention. Results highlight an Intervention Table, as well as a Summary Table utilizing the acronym SMILE.

INTRODUCTION

Customer satisfaction and retention are well researched and critically important issues for both practitioners and academics. There are models and frameworks proposed that help explain the effects of satisfaction on retention (Rust & Zahorik 1993), the efficacy of customer relationship management tactics (Verhoef 2003), and other meaningful influences that may predict retention (Gustafsson, Johnson, & Roos 2005). Yet these challenges persist across industries, organizations, and institutions; principally with customer defection. Ultimately, this lost customer or client is concomitant with a company’s loss of revenue, which supports the organizational structure and function (Rust & Zahorik, 1993).

Also, there are ancillary problems associated with this customer defection, for example, the inability to generate future customer referrals (Ganesh, Arnold, & Reynolds, 2000; Verbeke, Dejaeger, Martens, Hur, & Baesens, 2012; McKnight, Paugh, Frey, & Song, 2019). Moreover, to sustain growth and profitability, a marketer must now create aggressive strategies for customer replacement. This replacement cost is expensive and time-consuming as previous market research indicates customer acquisition strategies typically cost more than customer retention strategies (Colgate & Danaher, 2000; East, Hammond, & Gendall, 2006).

Cook and Talluri (2004) suggested that marketers have been slow to leverage their ability to maximize their long-term outcomes, specifically what happens to a customer once they appear at an organization, institution, or shop. Cumming (2014) elaborated on this phenomenon by stressing that marketers should utilize the conceptual framework of Return on Marketing Investment (ROMI) – a comprehensive process that is as much a strategic challenge as it is a tactical one. This ROMI, as a strategic process, looks as much to customer attraction as it does to customer defection. As Powell (2008) demonstrates in the Marketing Calculator, it is common to waste or mismanage half your marketing and advertising resources since it is unknown which half of your customer base is likely to defect.

With this issue in mind, the current research aims to reveal methods of identifying potential antecedents to customer retention and defection at the onset of the customer relationship, and to utilize this knowledge in conjunction with existing literature to posit retention strategies and tactics to address customer satisfaction in a population that is more likely to need such efforts. Also, although there are debates regarding the student as a customer, there is a consensus that students demand superior customer treatment or else an institution can expect student departures resulting in retention issues (Gonzalez, 2016). This research examines if an institution of higher education can potentially improve ROMI by early identification of students at-risk for departure.
LITERATURE REVIEW

The marketing literature provides several relevant studies in many contexts that detail and classify the components of customer-risk (see Buckinx & Van den Poel, 2005; Lemmens & Croux, 2006; Risselada, Verhoef, & Bijmolt, 2010). Research threads on student retention have included examining the roles of strong advising (Nealy 2005), pre-entry interventions (Thomas 2011), developmental mathematics and English courses (Wood 2016), and the predictability of standardized tests in predicting successful outcomes (Williams, Smiley, Davis & Lamb 2018). However, a real limitation with retention research is the timeframe between customer identification and customer intervention strategies. This significant gap in time is true for all industries, including higher education institutions focused on the critical issue of student retention.

Effective marketers understand that customers require a quick resolution to their needs, or their institution will face a retention-risk (McLauchlin, 2010). However, there is a paucity of research addressing the timeframe between assessing needs and the intervention. For example, administering a student success or environmental climate survey in higher education is common, yet the timeframe between administration, scoring, distribution, and eventual intervention could take longer than a student’s decision to leave. However, officials do have a critical facet of student information instantly available to them, which requires minimal lag time between administration and distribution. This potentially valuable piece of information is the student Identification Card (ID) frequently taken weeks before university classes begin.

Photo Identification (ID) cards are ubiquitous in society and serve as a face-to-face authentication method. Public and private corporate entities, as well as primary, secondary, and postsecondary institutions, issue an array of photo ID cards. Photo IDs typically allow entrance or privilege, but there are other possible applications of this device that may be valuable to academic researchers and marketing managers.

A systematic and comprehensive review of research in the business, marketing, psychology, and higher education marketing journals uncovered no directly applicable research findings in the area of photo ID research. This dearth of research is an obvious area of need given the powerful capabilities and continued advancements of artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, neural networks, and clustering algorithms. Although in an interesting conceptual twist, Landwehr, McGill & Herrmann (2011) examined how people decode emotional “facial expressions” from product shapes, finding that people anthropomorphize objects, and this process affects the liking of design. Thus, in the auto industry, an upturned grille, like the smile it resembles, conveys a friendly behavioral predisposition, whereas a downturned one conveys an aggressive behavioral predisposition. Therefore, it is conceivable that examining human facial expressions by image analysis, if consistent and conceptually valid, may have the potential to increase ROMI. A recent application of AI models to facial image analysis demonstrated that machine learning has an error rate of less than five percent, lower than estimates given for the human eye (Kumar et al., 2019).

DERIVATION OF HYPOTHESES AND QUESTIONS OF INTEREST

Historically, the literature addressing retention in higher education marketing utilized descriptive summaries of why a student decides to leave (see Bean, 1980; Tinto, 1987; Braxton, Sullivan, & Johnson, 1997; and Bean & Eaton, 2000). This research examines if there are efficient and valid procedures to identify at-risk students by assessing the feasibility of image analysis. Specifically, the purpose of this research is to develop and test a prediction model that minimizes the timeframe between identification and intervention strategies for students deemed at-risk.

There are six research questions examined in this exploratory research.

Q1: Can image analysis discern an algorithm when examining Student ID micro-expressions that will predict retention-risk?

Q2: Can image analysis examining micro-expressions, identify by category, which emotional state(s) as expressed in a Student ID predict retention-risk?

Q3: Can image analysis detect a significant difference in the primary emotion expressed in a Student ID between Male and Female when predicting retention-risk?

Q4: Can a specific emotional state, as expressed in a Student ID, predict retention risk if quantified?

Q5: Can a curvilinear relationship between the emotional state expressed in a Student ID predict retention-risk over and above any linear relationship?

Q6: Can a hit-ratio (discriminant analysis) determine the validity of image analysis when predicting retention-risk?
METHODOLOGY

Facial expressions exhibit two operational classifications: 1. “Posed”; and 2. “Spontaneous” (Ekman & O’Sullivan, 1991). This study utilized the “Posed” Student-ID photo, based on the assumption that this type of photograph reflects a “student’s feelings/thoughts” about attending college. The N-size was 240, divided initially into two equivalent participant clusters of 120 for an A/B comparison. Group A contained sixty student photo IDs (n = 60) who left the university; and, sixty student photo IDs (n = 60) who remained at the university following their first-year college experience. This process resulted in a discriminant analysis yielding a prediction formula for empirical cross-validation with a holdout group (N = 120). This holdout or Group B also contained two equivalent participant clusters of student photo IDs: those who left (n = 60) and those who remained at the university (n = 60).

The researchers developed a facial recognition, sentiment analysis computer program utilizing ten thousand faces in a machine learning model, a form of artificial intelligence (AI), that, through “training,” recognized the probability of seven expressed emotional states: Happiness; Sadness; Surprise; Neutral; Anger; Disgust; and Fear. This image analysis by sentiment breakdown controlled for researcher bias since the algorithm scored all emotions. By process, the program uses OpenCV to perform facial recognition, and it uses a Convolutional Neural Network (CNN), trained on a modified version of the FerPlus emotion dataset from Microsoft. The image has transforms applied to it (such as brightness, rotation, etc.) before the CNN processes an image. The CNN then decides appropriate emotions expressed. As researched, assessing emotional content is possible with voice (El Ayadi, Kamel, and Karray, 2011), but as Davidson et al. (1990) introduced, using facial expression by microexpression analysis forms a simpler and more powerful technique of recognizing emotions (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. AI Image Analysis: Example of Emotional Range Detected

![Image Analysis Example]


The program assigned a probability rating regarding the type of emotion expressed on a one hundred-point scale, with 1 = lowest probability and 100 = highest probability. Researchers operationalized this probability as the “Degree of Happiness” expressed. Researchers set the Alpha level at .05.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first question determined if image analysis could discern an algorithm when examining Student ID micro-expressions to predict retention-risk. Results yielded no statistical significance (Df = 1, 9; F = .23; p = .64), likely a function of n-size. The population (N =120), when examined, expressed only four emotions of the seven possible [Happiness, Sadness, Neutral, Anger] occurring nine times; hence, there were 24 possible algorithms with nine images sharing the same algorithm. Therefore, there is insufficient power to detect significance if it exists; thus, no ability to discern an algorithm of best-fit.

The second question tested if image analysis examining micro-expressions could categorically identify which emotional state(s) as expressed in a Student ID would predict retention-risk. Results were statistically significant (Df = 1, 115; F = 11.06; p =.001) suggesting that expressed “Happiness” predicts retention-risk, that is, increasing the probability of detecting if a student plans (consciously or unconsciously) to depart or remain at the university. Thus,
an enrollment manager or market researcher can assess the degree of Happiness expressed in a Student ID card and develop a customer-retention plan as warranted, given the categorical assignment.

The third question investigated if image analysis could detect a significant difference in the primary emotion expressed in a Student ID between Male and Female, when predicting retention-risk – yielded no statistical significance (Df = 1, 115; F = 2.80; p = .09). The primary sentiment, as expressed by either Male or Female, does not differ significantly, implying no correction or adjustment is necessary. The researcher may reasonably assume the micro-expressions to be equivalent when predicting retention-risk between genders.

The fourth question focused on a specific emotional state, as expressed in a Student ID, could predict retention-risk if quantified (follow-up of question 2) – results were statistically significant (Df = 1, 115; F = 16.86; p = .0001). The degree of expressed Happiness (0 - 100%) could predict the level of retention-risk. For clarification, as expressed “Happiness” increases, so does the probability of retention. Thus, an enrollment manager or market researcher can assess Happiness expressed in a Student ID card and develop a customer-retention plan as warranted, given the categorical assignment. Furthermore, from the regression model and findings, a student/customer must express Happiness at a minimum level of 68%; below this level (cut-point), there is an increase in retention-risk. Therefore, the construction of a decision tree or intervention table is possible and can be a feasible/usable technique for screening retention-risk. Thus, a customer-retention plan, if strategic and timely, should improve the probability of enhancing ROMI.

The fifth question proposed that a curvilinear relationship between the emotional state expressed in a Student ID could predict retention-risk over and above any linear relationship. The curvilinear model did not account for a significant amount of variance over and above the variance accounted for by the linear relationship (p = .66). Thus, for marketers, utilizing the linear relationship to forecast student-risk, is both pragmatic and predictive.

The sixth question sought to confirm by discriminant analysis if a hit-ratio would establish the practical validity of using image analysis when predicting retention-risk. Operationally, the hit-ratio is the percentage of successes in prediction, to the total number of observations. The higher the hit ratio validates any prediction model. For example, if the model successfully predicts 34 customers are a retention risk out of the 50 who departed, the hit-ratio would be 68% for predicting those customers who leave. Likewise, if the model successfully predicts 44 customers that are no retention risk out of the 50 who remained, the hit-ratio would be 88%; for a combined hit-ratio of 78%.

For this study, findings suggest that the hit-ratio resulting from the discriminant analysis provides an acceptable level of validity when forecasting student retention-risk. These results indicate an overall successful hit-rate of 70% using a linear prediction model. Thus, results indicate that image analysis is a valid technique with wider application beyond a post-secondary student population (see Table 1).

Table 1. Discriminant Analysis: Hit-Ratio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predicting Customer Retention-Risk</th>
<th>Formula Development Group 1</th>
<th>Validity Test Group 2 (linear - Q4)</th>
<th>Validity Test (curvilinear, 3rd Degree Function - Q5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stay vs. Leave</td>
<td>Hit-Ratio: Group 1</td>
<td>Hit-Ratio: Group 2</td>
<td>Hit-Ratio: Group 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predicted &quot;No-risk&quot; - Stay</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predicted &quot;At-Risk&quot; - Leave</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall: Hit-Ratio</td>
<td><strong>0.68</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.72</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.64</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumulative Hit-Ratio</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>0.64</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Group 1, N = 115; with five IDs eliminated because the students never attended the university; used to develop the discriminant function, predicting stay or leave (retention-risk). Group 2, random selection, N = 120 (n = 5 randomly eliminated to match Group 1 n-size). Group 2 used to test the predictive validity of the risk assessment; results confirm using the linear over the non-linear function (Fourth Column).

An ancillary finding suggests that students failing or choosing not to take a photo ID were a retention risk – 11 of 11 withdrew; the statistical probability of this outcome occurring by chance is 0.0005.

There are five key findings of this research. First, a happy student (as expressed in their Student ID) has a high probability of retention. Second, students who miss or fail to take a photo are a high retention risk. Third, image analysis is an efficient method to assess the level of at-risk students. Fourth, losing a customer increases replacement cost with a lost opportunity for customer referrals. Fifth, to increase ROMI, using image analysis as a strategic marketing tool is reasonable. Table 2 summarizes the findings and implications of this exploratory research.
Table 2. Summary of Findings: ‘SMILE’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Smiling student = anticipated happiness = high probability of retention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing or failing to take the photo = a high probability of retention-risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Image analysis = quick identification method to determine at-risk students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost customer = increased replacement cost = lost opportunity for referral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrich ROMI = with at-risk intervention = a strategic marketing analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This research proffered several unique findings and important implications for student retention initiatives; however, the sample size was insufficient to test the feasibility of using or developing a comprehensive algorithm for prediction. Moreover, this study utilized a convenience sample, that is, a university student population possessing a Student ID. Therefore, the generalization of results without further replication is tenuous. Similarly, students can stop-out or transfer, only to return in a later semester; thus, the opportunity for initial misclassification exists.

Other potential limitations exist with the picture taking process itself; for example, did the picture take place pre- or post-university orientation? Did a student have an orientation at all? How did the photographer set-up or stage the picture? For clarification, some Student IDs had students looking at something other than the camera.

The assumption that image analysis may materially improve ROMI needs further testing across business sectors and industries. Since many diverse organizations in highly competitive markets like health clubs and warehouse retailers use identification cards, testing the ability to identify at-risk customers and assess strategic interventions appears warranted if revenue growth, profitability, and enhanced ROMI are strategic imperatives.

Finally, this research utilized computer software programming and machine learning with a discriminant function to predict retention-risk; however, is it possible for an individual marketing manager or team of researchers to discern visually, without computer assistance, the “degree of happiness” expressed in an ID card? This human type of factor intervention warrants further study, as well as innovative conceptual frameworks considering the student’s culture, race, religion, or cognitive profile regarding expressed emotions.

CONCLUSION

For clarification, image-analysis does not replace any conventional or institutional specific means of identifying students at-risk for leaving an institution. Image-analysis, as a process, offers an additional strategic marketing intervention to increase ROMI by developing mathematical algorithms to assist with student/customer retention. Future research may discern additional options that this research did not highlight, that is, given the ever-expanding role of artificial intelligence, machine learning, and micro-expression analysis.

REFERENCES


For further information contact
Oscar McKnight
Ashland University
401 College Avenue
Ashland, Ohio 44805
(419) 289-5065
omcknigh@ashland.edu
IMPORTANCE- PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

Kurt Pflughoeft, University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point
Sharon Alberg, MaritzCX

ABSTRACT

Importance-Performance Analysis is widely used for customer satisfaction studies. One difficulty in this analysis is measuring importance - leading many practitioners to rely on derived measures. However, derived importance usually requires a full survey of the relevant product or service attributes. Such surveys tend to be lengthy and customers may not be willing to spend the time to complete the survey, especially on smart phones. In this research, the importance derived from a split survey are compared against a full survey to see if the importance remain relatively similar.

INTRODUCTION

Customer satisfaction studies are used by many companies to see what areas of their business are excelling and what areas need improving. The results of these studies provide not only the overall satisfaction with the firm but also the satisfaction levels for various product and service attributes. Attribute importance may also be collected to help the client prioritize actions.

By using both attribute satisfaction and importance, researchers can produce Importance-Performance grids (Martilla & James, 1977) as shown in Figure 1. On the y axis are the importance values and on the x axis are the satisfaction scores. The upper right quadrant represents areas to promote, that is, attributes that are important and have high satisfaction such as Service. The upper left quadrant are attributes that the company needs to improve, i.e. they are important, but the satisfaction levels are lower such as Food Taste. The lower quadrants are similar to the upper quadrants except the importance are smaller.

Figure 1: Important Performance Analysis
Although Importance-Performance analysis is widely used (Lopes & Maia, 2012), there are several challenges with this technique, especially with regards to determining attribute importance (Sever, 2015). Initially, market researchers relied on asking customers for attribute importance but due to issues such as lengthier surveys, respondent confusion and poor discrimination (Naumann & Giel, 1995), practitioners have widely adopted derived importance measures (Gray, 2014). Derived measures may include correlations, partial correlations, regression coefficients and Average Over Ordering techniques (Deng & Pierskalla, 2018). Regression coefficients are especially appealing since if one adopts a linear compensatory model as shown in Figure 2, the importance can also be used for prediction.

Figure 2 – OSAT Linear Compensatory Equation

\[
OSAT = \sum_{k=1}^{n} I_{k} S_{k} \text{where } I \text{ is Importance, } S \text{ is Satisfaction, } k \text{ is an attribute}
\]

Unfortunately, high levels of multicollinearity are common in customer satisfaction studies (Rust & Oliver, 1994) which can make a regression coefficient an unreliable estimate of an attribute’s importance. Consequently, many market researchers turned to more advanced techniques, such as Average Over Ordering (AOO), to estimate importance (Brown, 2018). Several measures exist and are implemented in the R package Relaimpo (Groemping, 2006). One measure proposed by Theil and Chung (1988) has strong theoretical underpinnings in information theory where attribute importance is measured in bits. This measure is hereafter referred to as relative importance.

Many AOO techniques, just like regression, require fully populated survey records. Having a few missing values can usually be overcome by either case-wise deletion or imputation. However, missingness could dramatically increase if a split survey design is employed.

Split surveys came about several decades ago to address the need for short surveys (Shoemaker, 1973). In a split survey, several modules are created, and a different subset of modules is shown to each customer. Due to the increased use of mixed modes for survey completion (pc, tablet and smart phones), research into split surveys has taken on more urgency; see recent conference sessions on Split Questionnaire Design (ESRA, 2019).

This research will examine whether the relative importance values can be recovered from a split survey; i.e. are they similar to the importance from a full survey? There are a few issues that makes this research challenging. First, researchers often note differences in results obtained from mobile surveys versus those on a pc (Revilla, 2017). Second, full surveys may be subject to more common method biases, such as those that vary on survey length (Podsakoff et. al., 2003). Third, statistical tests for relative importance are elusive as there is no analytical formula for the standard error.

To calculate relative importance, a correlation matrix for the survey items is required. Three standard approaches are used to calculate the matrix: pairwise deletion (with and without cell weights) and multiple imputation. Cell weights are used to try to mitigate some of the differences in survey responses due to devices/demographics.

LITERATURE REVIEW

More and more people are using mobile devices to take online surveys (Couper et. al., 2017; Toepoel & Lugtig, 2015). Although mobile devices are quite convenient, the time to take a survey on a smart phone may be significantly longer than on a desktop device (Couper and Peterson, 2016). Consequently, shortened surveys have been advocated (McPeake et al., 2014) to reduce respondent fatigue and possibly higher dropout rates (Galesic & Bosnjak, 2009). Split surveys show promise as they can lead to lower rates of: missing information and satisficing (Toepoel and Lugtig, 2018).

Split survey design is an extension of multiple matrix sampling (Shoemaker, 1973, Munger & Lloyd, 1988). Matrix sampling is useful for estimating population means but the estimation of some bivariate statistics might not be possible since some combinations of questions are not present. Split surveys can impose constraints, such as assuring all module pairs are assigned to at least a few respondents (Raghunathan & Grizzle, 1995).

There hasn't been much research done in the past decades on split surveys and summaries of past research can be found in (Peytchev & Peytchev, 2017; Adigüzel & Wedel, 2008). Consequently, many market researchers have relied on ad hoc methods to split the survey (Vriens et. al., 2001, Adiguzel & Wedel, 2008). Furthermore, splitting the survey in an optimal way requires some prior information which is difficult to obtain for one-time studies, which may have multiple objectives.

SPLIT SURVEY
The survey used for this research was conducted via an online panel to determine the relative importance of attributes related to fast-food restaurants. The design of the survey supported several other research streams through additional survey questions, not reported here. Some of those aspects included: text to voice, portrait versus landscape displays and video responses to name a few.

The split survey had six modules which are listed in Table 1. Only the satisfaction questions were used from each module. Modules A and F are required, and the optional modules B through E are randomly chosen to build a full correlation matrix. This selection mechanism would hopefully lead to a situation known as Missing Completely at Random (MCAR). However, both common method biases and survey device/demographic dependencies could invalidate this assumption. For example, females (Cook, 2014; Lugtig et al., 2016) and younger people (Couper et al., 2017; de Bruijne & Wijnant, 2014; Lambert & Miller, 2015) are more likely to use a mobile device for surveys.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Satisfaction/Other Attributes</th>
<th>Required?</th>
<th>Total Nbr of Questions</th>
<th>Satisfaction Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>OSAT</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Menu/Drink Options</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Food Quality and Flavor</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Appearance, Clean, Noise</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Service, Timely</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Demographics, Survey Experience</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Optional module selection was determined by including all combinations of the Doublet (BC, BD, .. DE) and Triplet type (BCD, BCE, BDE, CDE). The Full Survey contains modules A through F. All survey versions except 11, used 150 completes for smart phones, 125 completes for PCs and 125 for tablets; as shown in Table 2. The Full Survey had more completes since it was used as a baseline for comparison purposes. Additionally, one Mixed type was evaluated which contained several Doublet and one Triplet versions. Although more surveys may be desirable to lower the margins of error, cost considerations limited the total number of surveys to 4,625.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version</th>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Mixed</th>
<th>Smart Phone</th>
<th>PC</th>
<th>Tablet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>ABCF</td>
<td>Doublet</td>
<td></td>
<td>150</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>ABDF</td>
<td>Doublet</td>
<td></td>
<td>150</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>ABEF</td>
<td>Doublet</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>ACDF</td>
<td>Doublet</td>
<td></td>
<td>150</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>ACEF</td>
<td>Doublet</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>ADEF</td>
<td>Doublet</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>ABCDF</td>
<td>Triplet</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>ABCEF</td>
<td>Triplet</td>
<td></td>
<td>150</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>ABDEF</td>
<td>Triplet</td>
<td></td>
<td>150</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>ACDEF</td>
<td>Triplet</td>
<td></td>
<td>150</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>ABCDEF</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td></td>
<td>225</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total Surveys</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,725</td>
<td>1,450</td>
<td>1,450</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**IMPORTANCE ESTIMATION - PAIRWISE DELETION**

The satisfaction scores have a negative skew as shown in the histogram for the seven-point OSAT responses (Figure 3). The scale ranged from Extremely Dissatisfied (1) to Extremely Satisfied (7). The nine satisfaction attributes used to predict OSAT had similar distributions and these attributes are correlated to one another. There are four condition indices which exceeded 30 and two variance inflation factors which exceeded 5 both of which indicates multicollinearity.
The algorithm to calculate relative importance is combinatorically explosive as all possible $n^{th}$ ordered partial correlations are used as an intermediate step (Retzer & Pflughoeft, 1997.) For the full survey, the relative importance can be directly estimated from the correlation matrix, however, the split surveys require the correlation matrix to be constructed from the various splits.

The first method to create the correlation matrix under split surveys is pairwise deletion. This method is popular in market research, but it is frowned upon by statisticians as it could lead to an invalid correlation matrix. A correlation matrix should be positive semi-definite and would not have any negative eigenvalues (Wicklin, 2012).

The completed surveys are combined for each device and the importance are shown in Table 3. The relative importance are converted from their raw bits into the ratio of an attribute's bits divided by total bits. For example, Food Quality for the Full Surveys contained 25.5% of the bits contributed by all attributes.

The top three attributes are Food Quality ($F\text{Qual}$), Food Taste ($F\text{Taste}$) and Service ($Serv$) except under the Triplet type. Clearly the first two attributes are related by definition but there is still a distinction. For example, you could have good quality food, but it could be served at the wrong temperature or be too salty.

The other satisfaction predictors are: Menu Selection ($Menu$) - items available on food menu, Restaurant Appearance ($Appear$) - the decor/layout of the establishment, Clean - the cleanliness of restaurant facilities, Drink Selection ($Drink$)- items available on drink menu, Time to Seat ($Seat$) - wait time until seated, Noise - acceptable noise levels.

Table 3: Attribute Importance in Percentages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>Full</th>
<th>Doublet</th>
<th>Triplet</th>
<th>Mixed</th>
<th>All Surveys</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food Quality</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Taste</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>19.2%</td>
<td>24.7%</td>
<td>19.3%</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
<td>19.8%</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
<td>19.9%</td>
<td>15.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menu Selection</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant Appearance</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drink Select</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time to Seat</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noise</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The importance values for the Full Survey are assumed to be the truth as it is how the importance values would traditionally be calculated. The rank of importance for the Full Survey is the same as All Surveys but some slight rank differences exist for service and food taste within the Doublet and Mixed types. (The All Surveys represents all completed surveys which number 4,625.)

Bootstrapping is used to calculate the percentile intervals for the relative importance of the Full Survey. The reason that the Full Survey was only considered is due to the computational time requirements needed for 1000 bootstraps. Figure 4 shows the bootstrap’s mean and 95% intervals for each attribute.
The percentile intervals are quite large for some attributes. For example, the service and food quality intervals are approximately ten percentage points. The percentile range may suggest that importance statistics should be calculated for larger sample sizes when possible.

The importance from the split surveys can be compared to the Full Survey by examining the differences with the other survey type importance as shown in Table 4. Asterisks indicate differences outside the 95% interval. There is only one value outside the interval under the Triplet type and two values under the Mixed type.

Little's MCAR test was employed to verify the randomness assumption of the survey types. Every survey type, except All Surveys, indicate that MCAR cannot be rejected. Since the All Surveys indicate a potential issue, Little's MCAR test is also done by stratifying All Surveys by device. Those results indicate that there may be a problem with the split survey design for smart phones as the null hypothesis is rejected (p=0.00). This will require further consideration and will be partially addressed by cell weights in a later section.

Table 4 - Differences from Full Importance Scores for Pairwise Deletion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>Full</th>
<th>Doublet</th>
<th>Triplet</th>
<th>Mixed</th>
<th>All Surveys</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food Quality</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
<td>+0.32</td>
<td>+1.00</td>
<td>-0.34</td>
<td>+1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Taste</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>-1.16</td>
<td>+4.31*</td>
<td>-1.12</td>
<td>+1.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
<td>+3.37</td>
<td>-4.05</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>-0.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menu Selection</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
<td>+1.16</td>
<td>+0.31</td>
<td>-2.91</td>
<td>+0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant Appearance</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>-0.20</td>
<td>+1.18</td>
<td>+3.26*</td>
<td>+0.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>-0.21</td>
<td>-0.87</td>
<td>+1.23</td>
<td>-0.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drink Select</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>-1.22</td>
<td>-0.53</td>
<td>-2.10*</td>
<td>-0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time to Seat</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>-1.15</td>
<td>-1.16</td>
<td>-0.71</td>
<td>-1.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noise</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>-0.92</td>
<td>-0.19</td>
<td>-0.79</td>
<td>-0.51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**IMPORTANCE ESTIMATION - MULTIPLE IMPUTATION**

Another approach to handle missingness is imputation; specifically, multiple imputation. Multiple imputation can be a bit challenging for a market researcher to implement in a timely fashion. However, there are several software packages that are simplifying this approach including SPSS. As of Version 17, SPSS has integrated multiple imputation in many types of analysis including the computation of the correlation matrix. Since SPSS is a widely used market research tool, this package is used to create the correlation matrix. The method used within multiple
imputation can be manually selected such as MCMC or SPSS can pick a technique based on the scan of the data. The latter approach was selected with five imputations.

Once the correlation matrices are calculated, they are used to determine the relative importance. One interesting observation is that a vast majority of the correlations seemed to be "dampened" but that didn't appear to have much of an impact on the importance. The differences of the Full importance from the other types are shown in Table 5. The results using imputed values show only two significant differences from the Triplet type, marked by asterisks, and two significant differences for the Mixed type.

Table 5 - Differences from Full Importance Scores for Imputed Cases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>Full</th>
<th>Doublet</th>
<th>Triplet</th>
<th>Mixed</th>
<th>All Surveys</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food Quality</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
<td>+0.18</td>
<td>+1.65</td>
<td>-1.77</td>
<td>+1.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Taste</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>-1.89</td>
<td>+4.34*</td>
<td>-1.91</td>
<td>+1.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
<td>+2.76</td>
<td>-4.08</td>
<td>+5.94*</td>
<td>-1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menu Selection</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
<td>+1.35</td>
<td>+0.68</td>
<td>-3.02</td>
<td>+0.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant Appearance</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>+0.27</td>
<td>+0.93</td>
<td>+3.86</td>
<td>+0.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>+0.24</td>
<td>-1.16</td>
<td>+0.69</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drink Select</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>-1.02</td>
<td>-0.25</td>
<td>-2.06*</td>
<td>-0.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time to Seat</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>-1.13</td>
<td>-1.64*</td>
<td>-0.93</td>
<td>-1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noise</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>-0.74</td>
<td>-0.48</td>
<td>-0.80</td>
<td>-0.47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**IMPORTANCE ESTIMATION - PAIRWISE DELETION FOR WEIGHTED CASES**

The last approach to estimate the relative importance measures was to utilize pairwise deletion with cell weighting. Although cell weighting is useful for adjusting simple statistics its impact on more advanced statistics is a little unknown (Gelman, 2007). Cell weights need to consider demographics which can impact satisfaction scores and vary by device. For example, older people may be more mellow in their ratings than younger people and older people may be more likely to complete the survey using a desktop/tablet. Panel companies may try to control for covariates that are pre-identified, but it is not always possible to satisfy those constraints, especially within a split survey.

The averages values for OSAT, age and percent female by device are shown in Table 6. The results show that females and younger persons are more likely to complete the survey with a mobile device, similar to past studies. There is also evidence to suggest that PC users are more likely to give higher scores. To compensate for these potential differences, cell weighting is employed.

Table 6: Device by Demographic and OSAT Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Device</th>
<th>Avg OSAT</th>
<th>Avg Age</th>
<th>% Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Smart Phone</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>38.7</td>
<td>71.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>50.6</td>
<td>57.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tablet</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>49.8</td>
<td>63.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cell weights are determined for each level of Device, Gender and Age Group. Cell weights can be calculated from the difference in percentages noted for the levels across module combinations. A portion of these percentages are shown in Table 7. To calculate the actual weight, the average percentage is divided by the cell percentage. For example, the cell with row labels Smart Phone, Male & 18-34 with ABCF modules would have a weight of 1.20 which is 3.0%/ 2.5%. Cell weights ranged from 0.48 to 2.45.

Table 7: Percentage of Surveys by Demographics/Devices by Survey Version

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Device</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>ABCF</th>
<th>ABDF</th>
<th>...</th>
<th>ACDEF</th>
<th>ABCDEF</th>
<th>Ave</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The weighted importance led to the greatest number of differences but it was mostly due to the Mixed type. Differences from the Full Survey are indicated again with asterisks being outside the 95 Percentile Interval in Table 8. Note: that the bootstrapped statistics for the Full Survey needed to be recalculated to account for the weights.

Table 8 - Differences from Full Importance for Pairwise Deletion using Cell Weights

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>Full</th>
<th>Doublet</th>
<th>Triplet</th>
<th>Mixed</th>
<th>All Surveys</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food Quality</td>
<td>24.7%</td>
<td>+1.39</td>
<td>+1.95</td>
<td>+0.72</td>
<td>+1.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Taste</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
<td>-0.66</td>
<td>+4.56*</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>+1.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>16.6%</td>
<td>+2.42</td>
<td>-4.36</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>-1.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menu Selection</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
<td>+0.81</td>
<td>-0.34</td>
<td>-3.49*</td>
<td>+0.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant Appear</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>-0.36</td>
<td>+1.13</td>
<td>+2.86*</td>
<td>+0.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>+0.20</td>
<td>-0.47</td>
<td>+1.72</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drink Select</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>-1.36</td>
<td>-0.78</td>
<td>-2.36*</td>
<td>-0.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time to Seat</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>-1.45</td>
<td>-1.33</td>
<td>-1.04</td>
<td>-1.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noise</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>-0.98*</td>
<td>-0.35</td>
<td>-1.02*</td>
<td>-0.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DISCUSSION

From this experiment, it is noted that there are not many significant differences in the importance values, especially the Doublet type under pairwise deletion or multiple imputation when compared to the Full Survey. This may suggest the practice of using pairwise deletion is ok as long as the correlation matrix is valid. Even with these small differences, the ranks of the top three importance are relatively stable which is beneficial for communication purposes. For example, managers tend to communicate the ranks, not values, of importance by saying: "The top three things we need to work on are ..."

The MCAR tests point to potential issues with missingness with regards to mobile devices. It could suggest that the survey length is actually impacting the scores since cell weighting did not lead to less differences in importance between the full and split surveys. However, the length pattern isn’t as clear as then the Triplet type should be more similar to the Full Survey than the Doublet type. Additionally, the mobile results need to be vetted a bit more when combined with other device types before attempting to calculate a complex measure such as relative importance.

In this study, panelists were required to complete the survey to receive compensation thus dropout or other sources of missingness were not applicable. However, care must be taken for regular satisfaction studies where survey completion can be problematic. In fact, users became less satisfied with the survey as more modules were displayed, especially for smart phones. Figure 5 shows some significant declines in the “reasonable time and effort” survey question as the survey gets longer. The five-point scale was 1= Disagree Completely and 5 = Agree Completely.
CONCLUSIONS AND LIMITATIONS

Split surveys, especially the doublet type, can be reliably used to estimate the importance. These surveys increase the likelihood of survey completion and it is a less frustrating experience for the respondents. By using the relative importance from the split survey, management can feel confident in the results.

The study indicates that a few areas of caution are needed. First, the standard errors are relatively large for the importance estimates. Second, common method biases may be the cause of the non-MCAR issues within mobile surveys. There are some existing guidelines (Podsakoff et. al., 2003) to mitigate these biases but statistical identification and correction can be difficult. Third, the use of weights for a split survey design could exasperate issues as the cell weights are based on a smaller number of observations.

There are some limitations to this study which require a bit more exploration. It is possible, but very time consuming, to look at differences in importance scores for all survey types using multiple bootstraps. This would provide a clearer picture of significant differences as the testing approach adopted in this paper is an approximation (i.e. only the percentile interval for the Full Survey was considered; no percentile intervals were calculated for other survey types.) Likewise, an adjustment for the overall alpha may be warranted due to the sheer number of comparisons. Finally, this research is a case study and repetition is needed; although the authors have noted similar results between the Doublet type and Full Survey for other customer satisfaction studies.

REFERENCES


For further information contact:
Kurt Pflughoeft
University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point
2100 Main Street, Stevens Point, WI 54481
(715) 346-2078
kpflugho@uwsp.edu
OPTIMAL FINANCIAL PRODUCT DESIGN FOR CONSUMERS: EVIDENCE FROM THAILAND

Punnaporn Chinchanachokchai, Sasin School of Management, Chulalongkorn University
Pavitra Jindahra, Sasin School of Management, Chulalongkorn University

ABSTRACT

Attractive financial products can increase saving rate by inducing consumers to invest. This research investigates consumer’s investment preferences. The focus is on the preferences towards the financial product attributes (e.g., risk and return, liquidity, and financial knowledge requirement) that dominate consumer’s investment choices. Conjoint choice design and mixed logit model were applied to the dataset of 624 Thai consumers. Consumers exhibited preferences towards low-risk products despite low rates of return. They preferred highly liquid products. The financial knowledge requirement attribute did not impact investment decisions. Moreover, socio-demographic characteristics were observed to moderate consumer’s preferences towards the risk-return and liquidity levels.

INTRODUCTION

The importance of financial inclusion for developing countries including Thailand has become much more evident in recent years (Kumar, 2018). The increase in financial inclusion can help people living in poverty to have the means to better allocate, save, and invest money in their futures (Kumar, 2018). Financial inclusion is defined by the World Bank Group (2018) as individuals’ and businesses’ ability to have access to useful and affordable financial products and services that meet their needs. The increase in financial inclusion is projected to partially solve the problems from insufficient savings among Thai citizens (Bank of Thailand, 2016a). Citizens who have access to financial products and services are more likely to invest and save more (Bank of Thailand, 2016b). As individuals’ savings are forms of internal capital accumulation in a country, allocation to investment in the capital market does not only contribute to personal financial well-being but also results in a large amount of resources for national development funds (Suppakitjarak & Krishnamra, 2015).

Thailand is indeed evident to have a high level of financial inclusion. Based on the 10,866 Thai households surveyed in 2016, 97.3% of these households reported having access to financial services (Bank of Thailand, 2016a). Despite the high level of accessibility to financial products, surprisingly Thai consumers have a very low saving and investment rate (Suppakitjarak & Krishnamra, 2015). This is because the main financial services used by these households are saving accounts (72.6%) and financial transactions (73.5%), which do not generate adequate return on investment (Bank of Thailand, 2016b).

The survey results revealed that around 11% of surveyed households chose to be self-excluded from the financial services, claiming that financial products offered by financial firms were either providing an unsatisfying rate of return or not matching their lifestyles (Bank of Thailand, 2016a). Due to these reasons, the financial firms should pay closer attention to designing products that can increase the potential of investment from consumers. Thus, the research question becomes “what are the attributes (or features) of a financial product that can increase investment probability among Thai consumers?”. This research examines the effects of financial product attributes on consumer’s investment utility. The product attributes in focus are risk-return level, liquidity level, and financial knowledge requirement. Furthermore, we also look at the moderating role of consumer’s socio-demographic (in short for socioeconomic-demographic) characteristics on investment preferences. With conjoint choice design and multinomial mixed logit model techniques, heterogeneity among Thai consumers are incorporated in the model estimation.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Preferences towards Financial Product Attributes

Although there are various financial product attributes that could affect consumer’s investment behaviors, in this research, we focus on the three main financial product attributes, which are (1) risk and return level, (2) liquidity level, and (3) financial knowledge requirement.

Financial risk refers to a different possibility of losing investment capital, trading for a different level of return rate (Jianakoplos & Bernasek, 2006). Consumers in developing countries exhibit preferences towards financial products that are perceived as having low risk (Geetha & Ramesh, 2011). Asset ownership among Thai consumers reveals their tendency to prefer low-risk products (Krishnamra, Chaipani, Wanikkul, Seelacharon, & Suppakitjarak, 2011; Suppakitjarak & Krishnamra, 2015). However, Krishnamra et al. (2011) reported that Thai consumers were not satisfied with the rates of return of financial products in the financial market. They opted-out from being involved in the financial system because the rates of return were lower than their expectations. Since investment risk is perceived to be positively correlated with the rate of return (Jianakoplos & Bernasek, 2006), it is crucial to find out the balance trade-off between the risk and return level. This research attempts to find out the level of risk and return that maximizes investment tendency among Thai consumers.

Liquidity is defined as the convenience of turning a form of asset into cash (Channing, 2010). Investors in developing countries, such as India and Thailand, tend to prefer products that are highly liquid (Geetha & Vimala, 2014; Suppakitjarak & Krishnamra, 2015). An evidence from asset ownership confirmed that Thais allocated a significant proportion of their investment to highly liquid assets such as savings accounts and gold (Suppakitjarak & Krishnamra, 2015). However, to date, there is no empirical evidence showing which level of liquidity can satisfy Thai consumers. In terms of investment motivations, research found that Thai consumers’ investment objectives varied from saving for emergency spending to saving for post-retirement expenses (Bank of Thailand, 2016b; Krishnamra et al., 2011; Phoohom 2018). A wide range of investment duration based on different investment objectives makes it challenging for financial firms to design suitable products to match the consumers’ needs. This research investigates various levels of liquidity and how they affect Thai consumers' preferences.

Financial knowledge requirement refers to the requirement of investment knowledge that can impact investment performance (Kamakura, Ramaswami, & Srivastava, 1991). This attribute captures the dimension of a financial product’s sophistication. Kamakura, Ramaswami, and Srivastava (1991) categorized financial products into 2 broad categories - simple and sophisticated products. Simple products are products that require a minimum level of financial knowledge from investors (Davar & Gill, 2009). The simple products mostly guarantee the investors fixed rates of return. Therefore, the investors’ investment experience and knowledge do not play a crucial role in investment performance. Savings accounts and fixed deposits are basic examples of the simple products. On the contrary, sophisticated products are the products that require higher resources, more complex, and riskier than the simple products (Kamakura et al., 1991). The investors need to make use of their investment skills to generate a higher probability of gaining a higher rate of return on the investment. Some examples of sophisticated products include equity shares, mutual funds, and derivatives.

From the observation of Thai consumers, researchers reported that Thais did not invest in sophisticated products due to the lack of financial knowledge (Suppakitjarak & Krishnamra, 2015). The product that requires financial knowledge from investors represents sophisticated products in the market. We aim to specify the impact of financial knowledge requirement on Thai investor’s choice of investment.

The Effects of Socio-demographic Characteristics on Investment

Existing research investigated the effects of socio-demographic factors on financial risk tolerance. The findings revealed that the increase in age causes decreases in risk tolerance (Jain & Mandot, 2012; Jianakoplos & Bernasek, 2006; Sadiq & Ishaq, 2014). As for gender, men tend to be more risk-tolerant, more confident, and have more investment knowledge than women (Barber & Odean, 2001; Graham, Harvey, & Huang, 2002). Income level and educational level were found to have positive relationships with investment risk-tolerance (Jain & Mandot, 2012; Lewellen, 1997; Riley & Chow, 1992). Educated investors with greater wealth are prone to prefer risky and sophisticated products (Davar & Gill, 2009; Grable, 2000).

However, a number of research showed contradicting findings. Korniotis and Kumar (2011) argued that older investors tend to have higher investment knowledge; hence, they can tolerate higher risk as compared to younger investors. Older investors’ portfolios are composed of higher proportions of risky assets as compared to their younger counterparts’ (Yoo, 1994). Previous literature observed no difference in investment avenues among investors from various income and educational background (Davar & Gill, 2009; Geetha & Ramesh, 2012). This research aims to
provide a more conclusive moderating role of socio-demographic characteristics on Thai consumers’ investment preferences.

METHODOLOGY

Conjoint Choice Design & Data Collection

Conjoint choice design was used to create product choices. The technique allows researchers to point out relevant attributes and their levels, which deliver the highest utility for consumers (Kamakura, Wedel, & Agrawal, 1994). The fractional factorial block design was applied to create conjoint choices to avoid exhaustion from questionnaire completion. Data were collected using personal interview survey from 708 Thai respondents in Bangkok, Thailand, from July to August in 2017. The efficient and orthogonal design resulted in 48 product profiles, which was segregated into 4 blocks. Each block, containing 4 product profile sets with 3 product choices, was presented to the respondent randomly. Lastly, the socio-demographic variables were collected. After eliminating incomplete questionnaires, 624 respondents successfully completed the questionnaires.

Initially, the risk-return and liquidity attributes were assigned to 4 levels for questionnaire design and data collection. However, for the parsimony of model estimation, the risk-return and liquidity levels were re-coded and assigned with 3 levels, as shown in Table 1. Effect coding was applied to allow interpretation of the reference levels (Bech & Gyrd-hansen, 2005). Table 1 presents the definition and coding scheme of the attribute variables used for model estimation.

Table 1. Effect Coding and Description of Attribute Levels for Model Estimation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Risk &amp; Return</th>
<th>Indicator Variables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Potential Loss and Return from Investment</td>
<td>riskreturn_med</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low*</td>
<td>No loss of capital investment</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The lowest return as compared to other products</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Up to 50% loss of capital investment</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medium to high return as compared to other products</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>More than 50% loss of capital investment</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The highest return as compared to other products</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Liquidity</th>
<th>Indicator Variables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Period of Time that Capital Investment can be Withdrawn</td>
<td>liq_med</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>5 years after investment</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Between 1 to 5 years of investment period</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High*</td>
<td>Anytime of investment period</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Financial Knowledge Requirement</th>
<th>Indicator Variables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No*</td>
<td>Financial knowledge is not required to manage investment</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Financial knowledge is required to manage investment</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Reference Level

Mixed Logit Model

Like any random utility model of the discrete choice family of models, we assume that consumer i faces a “choice set” among j alternatives in each financial product profile set t. The utility derived from consumer i from choosing financial product profile \( j = 1, \ldots, J \), which contains attributes \( k = 1, \ldots, K \) from each profile set \( t = 1, \ldots, T \), is defined as:

\[
U_{ijt} = \beta_j X_{ijt} + \alpha(Z_r X_{ijt}) + \varepsilon_{ijt},
\]
where $U_{ijt}$ is the utility derived from consumer $i$ when purchases product profile $j$ from profile set $t$. $X_{ijt}$ stands for the vector of the option. $\beta_i$ is the unknown parameters to be estimated for the weight of each attribute impacting utility from selecting product profile $j$.

For the variables explaining moderating effects, socio-demographic variables, denoted as vector $Z_i$, are assumed to moderate the preference of the consumer across all attribute levels. $\alpha$ is the parameter capturing the moderating role of socio-demographic variables on the key product attribute preference. Note that to improve the efficiency of the model estimation, income is coded as ‘mean-deviated income’, calculated from the difference between an individual’s monthly income and the average monthly income of the sample data.

Unobservable or random factors affecting decision to invest in the product are described by the error term $\epsilon_{ijt}$, that is assumed to follow a Type I extreme value distribution, leading to a multinomial logit model. With the multinomial logit framework (McFadden, 1974), the conditional probability of consumer $i$ choosing alternative $j$ in product profile set $t$ is given by the following:

$$P_{ijt}(\beta_i, \alpha) = \frac{\exp(\beta_i X_{ijt} + \alpha Z_{ijt})}{\sum_{j=1}^{3} \exp(\beta_i X_{ijt} + \alpha Z_{ijt})},$$

where consumers see alternative $l$ when facing profile set $t$.

To incorporate consumer heterogeneity, $\beta_i$ is assumed to follow normal distribution with mean $\bar{\beta}$ and variance $\sigma^2$, resulting in the density function $f(\bar{\beta}, \sigma^2)$. By assuming the density function of $\beta_i$, the model falls in the form of mixed logit model, where heterogeneity of consumers is already incorporated in the estimation. The unconditional choice probability may be written as in equation 3.

$$P_{ijt} = \int P_{ijt}(\beta_i, \alpha) f(\bar{\beta}, \sigma^2) d\beta_i. \quad (3)$$

Estimates of the parameters of the model are obtained via maximum likelihood. The likelihood function of an individual $i$ for model estimation is expressed as follow,

$$L_i = \prod_i \prod_j y_{ijt} P_{ijt}(\beta_i, \alpha) \prod_i f(\bar{\beta}, \sigma^2), \quad (4)$$

where $y_{ijt}$ is an indicator that has a value of 1 when consumer $i$ chooses alternative $j$ from product profile set $t$; otherwise, 0. Parameters estimation was conducted using GAUSS programming language. Table 2 presents the results of model estimation.

### Table 2. Mixed Logit Model Estimates and T-statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameters</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>T-statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Risk and Return Level</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low mean</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sd</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x Age</td>
<td>-0.071*</td>
<td>-0.107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x Male</td>
<td>-0.057*</td>
<td>-0.545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x Education</td>
<td><strong>-0.639c</strong>*</td>
<td><strong>-7.406</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x Mean-deviated Income</td>
<td>0.017*</td>
<td>0.157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sd</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x Age</td>
<td><strong>0.917a</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.928</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x Male</td>
<td>-0.108</td>
<td>-1.480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x Education</td>
<td><strong>0.366c</strong></td>
<td><strong>6.139</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x Mean-deviated Income</td>
<td>-0.032</td>
<td>-0.344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High mean</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sd</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>x Age</td>
<td><strong>-1.522c</strong></td>
<td><strong>-3.570</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x Mean-deviated Income</td>
<td>1.434c</td>
<td>9.895</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Marketing Management Association Spring 2020 Conference Proceedings
The results of estimated mean parameters reveal the baseline of financial product design that can attract Thai consumers. Heterogeneity exists among Thai people’s investment decisions as standard deviations of all attribute levels are significant to a certain degree.

**Main Effects of Attribute Variables**

Figure 1. Estimated Part-worths of Attribute Levels (Main Effects).

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**RESULTS**

The results of estimated mean parameters reveal the baseline of financial product design that can attract Thai consumers. Heterogeneity exists among Thai people’s investment decisions as standard deviations of all attribute levels are significant to a certain degree.
Figure 1 shows the estimated part-worths where the bars of significant parameters are highlighted in the darker shade. The positive value of an estimate signifies the preferred attribute levels that can increase investment probability. From its highest positive value (+2.441), Thai consumers most prefer the low risk-return financial product. The negative estimates of medium (-0.919) and high (-1.522) risk-return level reveal that consumers are not fond of risky assets. They prefer to select an investment avenue in which their capital investment is fully secured, even though it provides the lowest return compared to other investment choices.

The significant positive value of ‘high’ liquidity level (+0.988) shows that Thai people, in general, prefer highly liquid financial products. They are fond of investment avenue in which they are not committed to any period of the investment contract. On the other hand, a significant negative value of ‘low’ level of liquidity (-0.732) signifies that Thai consumers dislike products in which the investment needs to be fixed longer than 5 years. Liquid products such as cash and bank saving accounts are, therefore, popular across Thai investors.

In contrast to the intuitive beliefs that sophistication of financial product is an obstacle that holds Thai consumers back from investing in the financial market, the financial knowledge requirement variable was found to be insignificant.

Moderating Effects of Socio-demographic Variables

The moderating effects of socio-demographic variables on risk-return and liquidity are depicted in Figure 2a and Figure 2b. The darker shades represent significant interaction variables between attribute levels and socio-demographics of interest. Estimates of interaction between socio-demographics and financial knowledge requirement are not depicted due to their non-significance and space limit.

Education is a dominating factor that shifts consumers’ investment preferences from conventional financial products. The consumers who have higher levels of education can tolerate higher levels of risk. As depicted in Figure 2a, educated consumers prefer to invest in a medium risk-return product (+0.366), followed by the highest risk-return (+0.273). Education lowers the investment probability in safety assets with a low level of risk-return (-0.639). From Figure 2b, it also increases the preference towards medium liquid assets (+0.086), while decreasing the preference for highly liquid assets (-0.133).

Age and gender only play a role in altering preferences towards the risk-return level. According to the significant positive estimate (+0.165), male consumers tend to be more risk-takers compared to their female counterparts if they receive enough compensation through higher return on investment. The estimate of the interaction between age and medium level of risk-return is also significant and positive (+0.917). As consumers get older, the preference for risk and return changes. The ability to tolerate risk increases. The result shows that age has an effect on the level of risk tolerance among Thai consumers, as long as such risk is packaged with a better return. However, the interactions of mean-deviated income level with all attributes are not significant. There is no difference in preference towards financial product attributes across consumers from different income levels.
The findings contribute to the interdisciplinary research between marketing and finance by investigating preferences of Thai consumers towards financial product attributes while taking into account socio-demographic characteristics. We add to the existing literature in this research area (Frijns, Koellen, & Lehnert, 2008; Sahi, Dhameja, & Arora, 2012) by incorporating heterogeneity of individuals and essential attributes of the financial products. The results confirm that individuals exhibit variety in investment preferences across all financial product attributes. The study provides an empirical evidence explaining the popularity of conventional financial products, such as saving accounts, among Thai consumers. In general, Thai consumers are neither risk-takers nor long-term investors. A potential higher rate of return cannot outweigh the fear of losing the capital investment. Moreover, Thais prefer highly liquid products, which could be conveniently converted into cash anytime. Although existing research indicated that the sophistication of a financial product is an obstacle to Thai consumers’ tendency to invest (Suppakitjarak & Krishnamra, 2015), interestingly, we did not find any significant effect of financial knowledge requirement on investment preferences in this study. Drawing from our findings, a generic financial product design that has a potential to increase investment probability among Thais needs to be close to risk-free and easily converted into cash.

In addition, the relationship between specific attribute levels and a consumer’s socio-demographics is identified. We found that socio-demographics have an impact on the risk and liquidity preference among Thai consumers. This research contributes to behavioral finance and marketing field (Davar & Gill, 2009; Grable, 2000; Graham et al., 2009; Sadiq & Ishaq, 2014) by suggesting consumer’s traits (socio-demographic profiles) as moderating factors on consumer’s investment preference at different levels of risk-return and liquidity.

In terms of practical implications, financial service companies can design various financial products to target consumers depending on their product attribute preferences and socio-demographic profiles. For example, to increase investment probability, the firms need to approach highly educated older investors with a medium level of risk-and-return product. The firms should also avoid attracting educated consumers with highly liquid products, but rather with a 1-to-5-year contract package. High risk-return products can be offered to male consumers.

**LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH**

This study was conducted among individuals in Bangkok whose salaries and education are well above the national average. Future research could build upon this initial framework by covering broader population in Thailand. Due to the limitation in the numbers of parameters in the model, future research could look at other financial product attributes of interest, such as indirect benefits (e.g., tax deduction) from an investment, in choice design. In addition, other factors relating to consumer’s investment behaviors should be added to the analysis to gain more insights into Thai consumer’s investment behaviors. For example, investment objectives can possibly play a role in the popularity of...
tangible assets, such as gold and real estate, among Thai consumers. Further investigations are required to figure out relevant determinants that affect consumers’ investment preferences and decision-making.

In summary, the disclosure of the true preferences towards financial product attributes results in the ability to design an optimal financial product for Thais, hence, increase their tendency to save and invest. This could lead to higher financial inclusion as individuals would become more interested in the financial products and financial market. The findings from this research contribute to financial product development that is believed to increase the savings and financial inclusion in Thailand.

REFERENCES


For further information contact:
Punjaporn Chinchanachokchai
Sasin School of Management, Chulalongkorn University
Sasa Patasala Building, Soi Chula 12,
Phyathai Road, Pathumwan,
Bangkok 10330, Thailand
(+66) 2216-8833
punjaporn.chinchanachokchai@sasin.edu
NCAA STUDENT-ATHLETES: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY INTO MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS

Hulda G. Black, Illinois State University
Jeri M. Beggs, Illinois State University
Brent A. Beggs, Illinois State University

ABSTRACT

Mental health is an important matter on college campuses. Research suggests that student-athletes experience more mental health stressors than the traditional student. The goal of this study was to better understand mental health factors in student-athletes. This paper presents a preliminary review of an annual online survey administered to all student-athletes at a large Division I public university. Self-reported mental health items, including satisfaction with counseling services/sport psychologist, alcohol, drug and time pressures, were examined based on gender, individual versus team sport, team status (first team, second team, etc.) and class rank. Our findings indicated that satisfaction with student counseling services was high and all items related to awareness of mental health services were rated high. Self-reported team status also demonstrated significance with mental health indicators. The study was limited to existing data and was missing established measures of mental health such as anxiety, stress, etc. Future research is warranted for this student-athlete population.

INTRODUCTION

There is little doubt that mental health issues are on the rise in United States and across college campuses. According to the most recent data available from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), almost one in five adults (18.3%) have experienced some type of mental illness in a given year (SAMHSA, 2017). Further, young adults (ages 18-25) have the highest prevalence of mental illness (22.1%) compared to any other age group (SAMHSA, 2017). Given this, it is not surprising that the Center for Collegiate Mental Health (CCMH) reported that over 160,000 college students sought mental health treatment in 2017, up 10,000 from 2016 (CCMH, 2018). The good news is that the CCMH report demonstrates that counseling center treatment is effective in reducing symptoms. However, the downside is that these centers do not have adequate treatment capacity to address not only the number of students, but also the range of mental health illnesses (CCMH, 2018).

STUDENT-ATHLETES

Given the growing number of adults and young adults, who are facing mental health issues, it is no surprise that student-athletes are facing the same concerns, if not greater. One might expect that student-athletes would face an easier transition to college with the built-in family provided by college athletics and the “athletic bubble” in which student-athletes live. However, there’s evidence that student-athletes experience more anxiety and stress than traditional students. In addition to the normal life stressors of young adults transitioning from living at home to college, student-athletes face additional demands. Some of these reasons include, but are not limited to: extensive time demands, injuries, burnout, conflict with teammates/coaches, pressure to achieve on the court/field and pressure to achieve in the classroom.

Student-athletes describe being overwhelmed by the time demands placed on them and ill-prepared for the intensity of workouts, practice, etc. In 2015, Division I student-athletes reported spending an average of 32 hours per week on athletics in season and an average of 38.5 hours per week on academics in season for a total of 70.5 hours per week. The study by the NCAA highlights the problem with about 30 percent of student-athletes self-reporting that they have been intractably overwhelmed during the past month (NCAA Goals, 2015). The NCAA took action in this area by studying the time demands of student-athletes and enacting legislation in 2017 that required student-athletes be more accurately informed of the time commitment in being a Division I athlete and the creation a time management plan for each sport that would help student-athletes manage their time better. For example, this new legislation requires athletes to get a “true” day off per week during the season and a two week off period at the end of the season (New, 2017).
Another issue, unique to student-athletes, that exacerbates their anxiety and stress is that most student-athletes strongly identify as an athlete. In an NCAA study, 80% of males and 75% of females indicated “high” on identifying as an athlete (Do NCAA Student, 2014). This causes stress as student-athletes struggle with starting over at the “bottom of the food chain.” In the book, What Made Maddy Run, which is a story of a University of Pennsylvania track-athlete who committed suicide, Fagan (2017, p. 16) wrote, “The dramatic shift in status was triggering a crisis of self, since much of a young athlete’s ego is fueled by success on the field.” In addition, the pressure placed on the student-athletes by college coaches whose livelihood depends upon the success of their student-athletes is much greater than high school coaches who are usually teachers first and coaches second.

The pressure to achieve in the classroom has significantly grown for students athletes over the past decade and a half. In 2003, the NCAA launched a massive academic reform effort designed to increase the graduation rate for student-athletes. The Academic Progress Rate (APR) is a team-based metric that accounts for the eligibility and retention of each student-athlete for each academic term. Penalties for low APR team scores include loss of scholarships and practice time and even post-season ineligibility for the most persistent, egregious cases. The good news is that the changes have been successful. Graduation rates have risen by 13% resulting in an additional 22,350 graduates (Academic progress, 2015). The bad news is that the pressure to perform in the classroom has increased for student-athletes, adding to the list of stressors they experience.

The prevalence of mental health issues in student-athletes has not gone unnoticed by the NCAA and its member institutions. In 2013, the Sport Science Institute, the medical arm of the NCAA, assembled scientists, clinicians, policy experts, team physicians, administrators, coaches and student-athletes for a Mental Health Task Force to discuss mental health issues facing today’s college athletes. In 2017, the NCAA hosted the Task Force to Advance Mental Health Best Practices Strategies. Mental health experts along with university presidents, coaches, student-athletes and administrators worked to: 1: Develop tools to assist member schools; 2. Identify emerging issues; and 3. Engage additional stakeholders (Mental health, 2017).

Additionally, the NCAA Goals (growth, opportunities, aspirations and learning) survey confirms this is a hot topic among athletics departments, coaches and athletes (NCAA Goals, 2015). The study found that approximately one-third of student-athletes (higher in Division I and in certain sports like football; lower in Division III) noted struggling to find energy for other tasks because of the physical demands of their sport. Nearly one-quarter (same divisional and sport pattern as noted above) reported being exhausted from the mental demands of their sport. Further, 73% of student-athletes believe that their coach cares about their mental well-being. This figure is slightly higher in Division III and lower in some sports (e.g., 55 percent in Division I women’s basketball). Although many student-athletes say they would feel comfortable talking to coaches about mental health issues, such comfort is much lower among women. Last, about 40% of student-athletes who sought help for a mental health issue reported high levels of satisfaction with the care they received from team or college personnel.

Traditionally speaking, mental health issues have had a stigma attached. Past research has found that student-nonathletes were more willing to seek professional help than student-athletes (Watson, 2005); this could be particularly exacerbated in sports such as football which are known for toughness. However, this trend appears to be changing. Barnard (2016) found the opposite in his research in that student-athletes were more willing to seek help compared to nonathletes. Additionally, student-nonathletes had higher perceived devaluation and discrimination toward mental illness than student-athletes. This would indicate that the work on the NCAA and member institutions may be having a positive impact.

**RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

Given the increasing importance of mental health to not only adults, but particular to young adults and student-athletes, this study seeks to investigate student-athlete mental health based various factors presented below. The purpose of this research is to provide a preliminary look at various factors potentially correlated with student-athlete mental health. These preliminary results will provide the investigators with additional information as to how to proceed with next steps of their investigation. When looking at different types of sports and student-athletes, there are many different lenses the authors could examine mental health.

The most basic lens to examine mental health is through basic demographics, including gender and class rank. According to research, females are more willing to seek help than males (Barnard, 2016). Further, research also shows that class rank does impact mental health. Proctor and Boan-Lenzo (2010) found rates of depression for student-athletes ranged from 15.6% to 21%, with freshmen at a greater risk than upper classmen (Trojjan 2016). This research will explore gender and class rank across mental health indicators.

Next, investigating student-athletes by the type of sport they play is another common segmentation method. One common way to segment sports is based on a team vs. individual classification (e.g. Evans et al., 2012). Team sports
are based on athletes who are interdependent of each other, meaning they train together and interact together to achieve a group goal (e.g. to win; Widmeyer and Williams, 1991). Examples of team sports include soccer, basketball, football and hockey. On the other hand, individual sports are when athletes typically function independently in competition, yet still may contribute to a team score (e.g. Charron and Chelladurai, 1981). Examples of individual sports would include running, wrestling and golf. Another avenue to investigate would be sport specific issues. For example, compared to other sports, are football players less likely to seek help given the sports’ mental toughness image? Again, this research will take a preliminary look at some of these sport segmentation variables.

In addition to looking at demographics and sport-specific variables, it is also important to segment based on various behavioral components of the student-athlete. For example, is mental-health impacted by how often a student-athlete starts for his/her team? (e.g. 1st, 2nd, etc.). Further, it is important to look at other behaviors associated with mental health, such as drug use, alcohol use, and eating disorders (Mental Health, 2017).

**METHODS & RESULTS**

This study examined existing data collected on an annual basis from student-athletes at a Division I university with 19 sports. The purpose of these research is to provide initial insights into various factors related to student-athlete mental health. Specifically, this annual survey asked student athletes about the following mental health concerns: satisfaction with student counseling service, satisfaction with sports psychologist, awareness of student counseling services, importance felt for athlete well-being, perceived commitment to health and safety, pressures to maintain certain weight, and alcohol and drug use and its impact on performance.

There were 335 student-athletes that responded to this on-line survey, consisting of 159 women and 176 men. This represented a response rate of approximately 79% with all 19 sports represented. There were 114 freshmen, 83 sophomores, 83 juniors, and 50 seniors that participated in the study. Of the respondents, 155 participated in an individual sport and 175 were involved in a team sport. Student-athletes were also asked to identify their “team status” which asked them to classify their role on the team as a starter or reserve player. Team status responses indicated that 61% of student-athletes (n=203) classified themselves as first team, 21% of student-athletes (n=72) considered themselves on the second team, 10% as third team (n=35), and 4% as practice players (n=14).

Overall, mental health factors were viewed positively from student-athletes, with mental health satisfaction and agreement scores averaging above 4.0 on the five-point scale. The highest mean score was attributed to agreement that the student-athlete was aware of student counseling opportunities on campus (M=4.34, SD=0.79). Further analyses were conducted comparing mental health factors based on gender, individual/team sport, team status, and year in school.

T-test analysis of mental health factors based on gender indicated that men and women were similar in nearly all areas. However, men (M=4.28, SD=0.95) felt significantly stronger than women (M=4.18, SD=1.09) that drugs did not impact team performance (Table 1). T-test analysis were also performed on student-athletes participating in team sports versus those in individual sports (based on Evans et al., 2012). There were no significant differences between these groups.

ANOVA comparisons of team status indicated significant differences between groups on three mental health items. Post-hoc analysis determined that first team players (M=3.96, SD=1.21) felt less pressure to maintain weight when compared to third team players (M=3.29, SD=1.36) (Table 2). Third teamers (M=3.60, SD=1.27) also felt that alcohol and drugs were more of a problem on their team than first (M=4.15, SD=0.96) and second team players (M=4.19, SD=0.85) (Table 3). First team players (M=4.39, SD=0.93) were also more likely to agree that drugs did not impact team performance on the field or in the classroom when compared to third team players (M=3.82, SD=1.14) (Table 4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. T-test Analysis of Mental Health Factors and Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Female</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with student counseling services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with sports psychologists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of student counseling services</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Student athlete well-being is considered important 4.21 0.91 4.05 1.03 .603
I feel the athletic department is committed to my safety and well-being 4.32 0.87 4.20 0.89 .294
I have not felt pressure to maintain weight 3.76 1.39 3.89 1.26 .075
Alcohol and drug use is not a problem on my team 4.02 1.04 4.16 0.97 .236
Alcohol has not impacted the performance of my teammates in class or playing field 4.05 1.06 4.06 1.06 .831
Drug use has not impacted the performance of my teammates in class or playing field 4.18 1.09 4.28 0.95 .003*
I agree that I am aware of student counseling services available at the university 4.36 0.80 4.31 0.79 .131

*Significant at alpha < .05

Table 2. Analysis of Variance of Team Status and Pressure to Maintain Weight

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
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<td>16.262</td>
<td>5.421</td>
<td>3.166</td>
<td>.025*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Within groups</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>542.654</td>
<td>1.712</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>558.916</td>
<td>1.712</td>
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Table 3. Analysis of Variance of Team Status and Agreement that Alcohol and Drug were not a Problem on Team

<table>
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<th>Source</th>
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<th>MS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between groups</td>
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<td>9.884</td>
<td>3.295</td>
<td>3.390</td>
<td>.018*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within groups</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>310.956</td>
<td>0.972</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>323</td>
<td>320.840</td>
<td>0.972</td>
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</table>

In addition, ANOVA procedures were applied to mental health factors based on year in school. One significant difference was revealed in satisfaction of student counseling services available to student-athletes. Post-hoc tests indicated that freshmen (M=3.85, SD=0.94) had a lower level of satisfaction with student counseling services when compared to sophomores (M=4.26, SD=0.82) (Table 5).

Table 4. Analysis of Variance of Team Status and Agreement that Drugs did not Impact Team Performance in the Classroom or on the Playing Field

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>4.295</td>
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<td>Within groups</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>306.102</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<td>318.998</td>
<td>0.969</td>
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Table 5. Analysis of Variance of Year in School and Satisfaction with Student Counseling Services

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<tr>
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<td>Between groups</td>
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<tr>
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<td>275</td>
<td>231.598</td>
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DISCUSSION

Overall, looking at the data for these student-athletes, it is clear that mental health and well-being are an issue that should continue to be a priority for universities and athletics departments across the country. Our data revealed that student-athletes do feel common time demand pressures as indicated by previous research. Over two-thirds of the respondents indicated that if given the choice they would spend more time “relaxing by myself.” More than half responded that they would spend more time visiting family if they could. Both of these indicate that student-athletes greatest time need is simply time away from being a “student” or an “athlete.”

The purpose of this study was to provide initial insight into potential factors associated with mental health challenges in student-athletes. Given the exploratory nature of this study, the goal was to discover potential correlates that will guide future research. The initial research did provide some interesting findings. First, there were no significant differences between genders and class rank, except that men felt stronger that drug use had not impacted their team performance. Freshmen did indicate less satisfaction with student counseling services available to them, which could be an awareness issue of not knowing about services available.

Past research with mental health across demographics has shown that female student-athletes and freshmen have higher chance or experiencing symptoms related to depression (Yang et al., 2007). The difference in results is likely due to the pre-set nature of this study in that stress and anxiety were not directly measured. Future research will incorporate these measures to better understand the connections.

Similarly, no difference was found when comparing team sports versus individual sports. Again, this is likely a result of the data collection in that certain mental health measures were not directly assesses. Data did show some indication that student-athletes playing status (e.g. first-team vs. third-team) did impact mental health perceptions. Results showed that first teamers felt less pressure to maintain weight, as compared to third-team student-athletes. Further, third-team student-athletes felt that drugs played bigger role in impacting team performance. Again, these results are preliminary, but they do indicate that future research should continue to examine differences in student-athletes’ playing status as a factor related to mental health issues.

LIMITATIONS & FUTURE RESEARCH

As previously mentioned, the primary limitation of this research is that student-athlete data had already been collected prior to research objectives being set. Given this, the researchers were not able to directly assess some issues (e.g. stress and anxiety) they wished to measure. Future research in these areas should use established mental health assessment questions to further evaluate the impact of demographics, type of sport and playing status as they relate to established mental health variables.

Given the results on the impact of player status (e.g. first team, second team) on mental health, future research should examine the role that identity plays in mental health. Athletic identity can have many roles, including identifying with a sport, with a college, with their private identity or public identity (e.g. Lamont-Mills & Christensen, 2006; Symes, 2010; Van Lone et al., 2017). Student-athletes who identify more with the sport (as compared to college) are more likely to leave the institution to play somewhere else (Van Lone et al., 2017). Given that identity has a role in staying/leaving an institution, future research should look into how identity impacts mental health issues faced by student-athletes.

Additionally, future research should examine if player status is related to a student-athletes’ identity with a sport or institution. It may be that students’ athletic identity supersedes playing status in how student-athletes cope with mental health issues. Last, research has shown that student-athletes who invest the majority of their time into a particular team have a harder time with the idea of leaving that team. On the flip side, student-athletes who have a wide variety of interests have an easier time transition away from their sport. Given this, future research could examine student-athletes who may be faced with mental health issues (e.g. depression) as a result of disengaging with the team (e.g. due to injury, graduation, etc.)

Last, given the proliferation of social media in collegiate athletics today, research should examine the role of social media with respect to student-athletes’ mental health. Previous research has shown a strong correlation between social media usage and loneliness, particularly text-based social media (e.g. Twitter compared to Instagram; Pittman & Reich, 2016). This is particularly interesting as one survey showed that 95% of student athletes surveyed had a Twitter account, with almost two-thirds having a public account (DeShazo, 2017). Many student-athletes have personal highlight reels and social media snapshots that reflect a strong public identity of the athlete. Given the public nature of some NCAA athletics, these public personas may not reflect a student-athletes private identity. Future
research should investigate students’ public identity on social media and how it relates to the student-athletes’ mental health

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For further information contact:
Hulda G. Black
Illinois State University
Campus Box 5590
Normal, IL 61790
(309) 438-7147
hblack@ilstu.edu
THE GREAT REVEAL: HOW BRANDS “USE,” “PROMOTE,” AND “OFFER” THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT
Kristina Kaufman, North Park University
Peter Kaufman, Illinois State University

ABSTRACT
Consumer engagement is one of the most important components of a company’s marketing strategy. Motivating consumers to view, react and participate in marketing communications helps transition consumers from a transactional relationship to a more personal one. While marketers try to understand consumers more deeply and provide relevant and appealing content, consumers are less tolerant of irrelevant communications and expect revolving, interesting and tailored content without being overwhelmed. This study examines the social media postings of 45 brands across three industries: food retail, cosmetic and apparel. Findings reveal several marketing strategies and tactics employed to create brand-building interaction with consumers.

INTRODUCTION
Consumer engagement is one of the most important considerations of a company’s marketing strategy (Fulgoni, 2018; Gifford & Newmeyer, 2019; Hollebeek & Macky, 2019; Precourt, 2016). The concept of consumer engagement is far-reaching beyond a simple buy-and-use transaction and has led to sophisticated online and in-store strategies such as scavenger hunts (i.e. Captain Marvel; H&M; Jay-Z & Bing), experiential marketing (i.e. Benefit Browmobile; Chobani Cafe), contests (i.e. Mystery Oreo; L’Oréal NYX Face Awards), in-store and online games (i.e. Albertson’s Monopoly; Under Armour It Comes From Below online), promotions (i.e. IKEA Human Coupon), collaborations (i.e. Chiquita & Hasbro), and digital filters (i.e. Gatorade Superbowl Snapchat filter; Chicago Cubs World Series Champagne Filter).

While consumer engagement is dynamic and varied, marketing has become increasingly complex given the evermore fragmented channels to communicate with consumers (Arens & Weigold, 2017) and the power consumers have to control the messages that they receive. Brands are increasingly challenged with creating “content,” and “buzz” around their brand in diverse ways to keep consumers’ attention. A challenging task is to relentlessly generate valuable, relevant, and diverse communication strategies. Given the landscape that marketers encounter, it is helpful to understand and analyze how brands from different industries attempt to meet the challenges and expectations of consumers given the instant response and interaction many consumers want. Extant research on social media strategy has focused on case studies (Pacauskas, Rajala, Westerlund, & Mantymaki, 2018; Thompson, Martin, Gee, & Geurin, 2017) and on general marketing practice or industry strategy, but little research has examined the actual posting content of brands across multiple industries, over multiple platforms, over a specific time period which this paper does. In doing so, this paper addresses the call for further research from Schweidel & Moe (2014) to examine the content of social media on respective platforms. This study takes this call one step further by examining that of the brand and brand categories. Specifically, this paper examines the social media accounts of 45 brands from the food retail, cosmetic and apparel industries over a four-week time period to gain a better understanding of how brands interact with consumers and strive to engage them. Enhanced insights into brand strategy to increase engagement are also revealed.

This research explores the following research questions:
1) What type of content are brands posting on their social media platforms?
2) How are brands engaging with consumers as demonstrated through their social media platforms?

LITERATURE REVIEW
Despite the almost ubiquitous nature of social media, consumers and brands still have a complex relationship. Each is trying to figure the other out. Consumers ask “what’s the catch?,” or “what am I being sold?,” or “what can I
gain from this?,” and brands try to communicate their values, new products or share content marketing through entertaining videos, recipes and updates which they hope consumers will value (Charmaine, 2017).

The flood of social media messaging and accessibility has created opportunities for brands to target and engage consumers, especially young audiences (Dunlop, Freeman, & Jones, 2016) who are still forming opinions about brands. In marketing, consumer engagement can be defined as “an active relationship that a customer shares with a firm” (Palmatier, Kumar, & Harmeling, 2018, p. 3) as well as a “consumer’s psychological state that occurs in interactive, co-creative experiences with a focal brand” (Leckie, Nyadzayo, & Johnson, 2016, p. 558). This study examined brands’ abilities to initiate and deepen their relationships with consumers.

Social media offers brands “new media” advantages such as synchronic communication, timeliness to respond to news/changes and personalization (Thompson et al., 2017; Veeck & Hoger, 2014) through less costly and time-consuming traditional media vehicles such as print and radio. Oreo’s famous Superbowl XLVII almost real-time communication via Twitter after the stadium lights went out during the game made viewers feel like they were in-stadium with the brand and led to thousands of retweets and media attention for its cleverness (Watercutter, 2013)

The social media platforms of focus in this research are Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Facebook has approximately 1.5 billion users daily worldwide (Facebook, 2019). The presence of the Facebook Live feature and analytics in Facebook Business to target specific groups of individuals and create dynamic ads makes it a very broad and accessible tool for marketers.

Instagram has more than 100 million users in the U.S. (eMarketer, 2018c) and focuses on “visual sharing” (Moreau, 2017). Instagram was the first to offer wide-reaching filters for photos. The platform is well suited to feature fashion, food, sports travel and influencer marketing is leveraging the quick visual nature of the platform (eMarketer, 2019) whose alignment with brands may provide authenticity and credibility (De Veirman, Cauberghe, & Hudders, 2017).

Twitter has over 55 million users in the U.S. (eMarketer, 2018b) and is focused on rapid communication. Twitter’s CEO has outlined the platform’s goal of becoming the first source for live news and events including sports broadcasts (McCracken, 2016). “Millennials are more avid users of Twitter than their younger and older cohorts” (eMarketer, 2019, para 4).

By examining how brands from the food retail, cosmetic and apparel industries are using Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, marketers can understand what practices on these important communication platforms are used by industry peers and identify potential strategies for engaging consumers.

**METHODOLOGY**

To answer the research questions of focus, a transcript and analysis was employed for the social media postings from 45 brands over a four-week time period. Brands in each industry were chosen to provide a diverse representation of brand size, company type (public/private), and geographic headquarters. Brands were randomly selected to provide insight into category leaders and as well as brands with smaller visibility in the market to compare marketing efforts.

This study examined the Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts of the brands from three distinct, dynamic, and important industries which are food retail, cosmetic and apparel. The U.S. market for retail and food services sales constituted $6.02 trillion in 2018 (Conway, 2019). The industry is experiencing changes in both product and process with specific focus on organic, natural, local and plant-based foods and extreme convenience. Similarly, the cosmetic industry is influenced by the food and beverage world and is embracing natural, organic and plant-based products.

Some research suggests that the U.S. is the most valuable market for cosmetics globally generating $84 billion in annual sales (Statista, 2019). Further, while the cosmetic industry has been dominated by large multinational organizations there has been growth in smaller boutique businesses with niche product lines and subscription boxes (Beauty Business Journal, 2018) in addition to growth in focus for female entrepreneurs in this market (Sorvino, 2017).

Apparel is another industry currently experiencing rapid change. In the past few years, many brick and mortar retailers have closed. This has several repercussions for the apparel industry leading to focus of online sales and marketing and the strengthening and perpetuation of brand. Other changes to the market have led apparel retailers to lower prices driving fast fashion and immediate sales as well as some reshoring of big retailers leading to a positive outlook on the future of the industry in the U.S. (MarketLine, 2017).

**SOCIAL MEDIA MONITORING TOOL**

Marketers often practice social media “listening” across multiple social media platforms to collect data and examine consumer comments (Schweidel & Moe, 2014). This strategy was used in this study to examine the
marketing of brands through the social media monitoring dashboard, Hootsuite. The Hootsuite dashboard features real-time feeds and presents social media postings in easily viewable columns so all brand postings can be viewed collectively on one screen at the same time. This allows for central social media management and comparison across competitors and brand platforms.

Engagement can be viewed as responses to brand postings, a call to action from the brand, and activity noted (i.e. shares, likes, retweets, views and replies) (Moro, Rita, & Vala, 2016). The focus of this research is assessment of content of brand postings.

**FINDINGS**

The content brands post to their social media platforms was the central focus of this study. Upon analysis of 45 brands across the food retail, cosmetic and apparel industry, several social media strategies were documented that brands employed. Brand activity across all industries fell under three categorized themes: Use, Promote, and Offer. Documented brand postings highlighted strategies that brands used across the three industries, what and how they promoted, and what they offered consumers. These strategies are listed in the Appendix 1.

**Food Retailing**

Food retailing brands posted new brand-created content on at least one social media platform on average 0.79 times per day. All brands posted on average 22 posts during the four-week time period. New brand-created content posts included sales promotions, product highlights, in-store pictures/updates, recipes, tutorial videos, coupons, lifestyle activities (i.e. fitness, travel), articles (i.e. “These Are the Absolute Best Canned Rosés Money Can Buy” and “20 best snacks for people on the go”), attention to holidays and industry relevant days (i.e. National Cheese Day).

Sentiment often appeared in an informal tone. For example, “Rainier Cherries are back in season...& we have 'em!” while tutorial videos often took a more formal tone. Of the three industries, the food retailing industry was more likely to post the same content across multiple social media platforms (i.e. same picture and text posted on Facebook and Instagram).

Five of the fifteen brands evaluated posted modified content across each social media platform. For example, one brand posted a picture of several types of kale and an article about the different types of kale on Facebook, while their Instagram post just included an artsy photo of one type of kale and the hashtag #kaleyea, whereas the brand’s Twitter account included “So many greens so little time... #kaleyea.”

Food retail often presented a one-way conversation showcasing food products and video content of recipes and supply chain partners. Event marketing was also observed industry wide.

**Cosmetic**

Cosmetic brands in this study varied considerably in terms of tone and delivery method, but the content itself was quite similar. The cosmetic industry posted new content most frequently (1.1 times a day on average) and the type of content was more diversified than that of the apparel or food retailing brands. Content included: tutorial videos, editorial photographs of product and non-product shots, new product highlights, sales promotions, Facebook live chats, charity/community relations work, featured bloggers, celebrities, national and global advertisements, local events, information on how product is made, behind the scenes at a beauty event, and sponsorship.

Eight out of fifteen cosmetic brands created distinct content for each social media platform. For example, on one brand’s Facebook page a featured product asked viewers to “Tag someone who would love this minty fresh shower gel!” while the brand’s Twitter account presented an image of a different product and copy that was straightforward informative. While a different brand posted, for example, a video featuring two makeup artists across their Facebook and Twitter accounts with no update on Instagram.

Polls and retweets were a frequently used engagement tool used most notably by this industry. For example, a brand posed a question on Facebook asking which container they prefer for a specific product and asked for responses with an emoji ranging from a thumbs up, heart, smiley face or surprise face. Similarly, this cosmetic brand had questions posed on their Twitter platform, but the questions and content differed from that posted on Facebook. For example, one brand posted a bright photo of several of their pink bottles of shower cream on Twitter. The copy read, “This blackberry and vanilla concoction will lift your mood all the way up. RT (retweet) if you’ve given it a try!” This was followed by several clapping, heart and smiley emojis. The brand also posted, “Which soap are we pouring today? Reply with your guesses” on Facebook.
Apparel

Like food retail and cosmetic brands, apparel brands’ sentiment remained primarily an informal one including “PSA: Friends don’t let friends wear boring shorts” to more occasional formal posts such as “We're better together. Since 2014, we’ve been holding true to our commitment to build women-led businesses in underserved communities. Right now, we're doing it in Masoro, Rwanda where the women of ADC are experiencing economic independence and empowering each other to invest in their communities.”

Apparel brands posted new content to their social media platforms on average 0.6 times per day, the lowest posting rate of the three evaluated industries. Postings were product oriented (images of single products and copy describing the item) and often did not invite explicit action by viewers. Across the three industries, apparel was the most brand focused embracing the tone of a persona: “This is how we’re celebrating National pink day,” “Our new board shorts are anything but boring.” There were, however, two apparel brands that positioned vastly different from their apparel counterparts offering engaging content and very few product specific posts. These engagement strategies included entering a contest for a free trip and store gift card, a video about a Somali refugee turned model, loyalty program information, the brand’s presence at an arts festival, soliciting video creations by viewers to showcase their dance moves and posting with a designated hashtag for a new themed campaign.

DISCUSSION

There were four overriding characteristics of brands’ social media strategy. These include 1) the utilization of short video clips, 2) editorial photos, 3) consumer generated content, and 4) questions/voting posed to consumers. Brand content for the apparel industry often packaged communications with a “story” along with the item featured and all brands embraced seasonality in their messaging at some point. Consumer generated content was most prevalent and shared on brands’ Instagram accounts likely due to Instagram’s more informal brand presence. Photos or video of consumers using a product were featured often attempting to recreate the polished editorial aesthetic brands themselves employ. Based on the activity of these 45 brands, several brand-building and consumer engagement strategies could be deduced and are outlined in the Appendix 1 with examples in Appendix 2.

CONCLUSION

Just as individuals create an online presence, so do brands aim to create an image through social media platforms to communicate with viewers. Marketing has evolved to the relationship level and social media is a tool to further propel this. Given intense competition, marketers must create communications that engage consumers, provide value to them and are emotive in some way to spark interaction, interest and involvement with the brand which may lead to greater purchasing behavior. In review of the brand posted content in this research and summary in the Appendices, using a variety of these strategies may help brands to continue the dialogue with consumers, react with them and provide ongoing value to them.

Appendix 1
The “Use,” “Promote,” and “Offer” Social Media Patterns and Strategies Observed by Brands from the Food Retail, Cosmetic and Apparel Industries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use</th>
<th>Promote</th>
<th>Offer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seasonality to advantage for promotion</td>
<td>Brand sponsored events to which consumers can attend to and feel connected with the brand</td>
<td>Balance of direct and indirect “advertising”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspirational imagery in photo and video content to resonate with consumers’ aspirational selves and provide extraordinary, intriguing content</td>
<td>Message of fun where appropriate</td>
<td>Competitions in which consumers can create and contribute to the brand’s social media communications (i.e. t-shirt or packaging design content),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer generated content, ask consumers questions through quick polls</td>
<td>Other “voices” such as endorsers, bloggers or celebrities who can speak with the brand to consumers</td>
<td>Live events/posts to stimulate demand/intrigue participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media strategy of brands outside of respective industry for inspiration and benchmarking</td>
<td>Industry awards/recognition for credibility building</td>
<td>Content that can invite conversation and engagement – not just talk to consumers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
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<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company culture and innovations small and large and leverage them for communication purposes</td>
<td>Community and social cause involvement and encourage consumers to also participate</td>
<td>Varied content posted in timely ways to appear relevant and exciting and continue to innovate the products and image of the brand to naturally allow more opportunities to share content with consumers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix 2
Typology of Social Media Strategies Observed from Food Retail, Cosmetic and Apparel Brands

**Seasonality**
Description & Observation:
Seasonality takes many forms from simply acknowledging a new season with or without reference to any product to a more direct message of new products for a new season, like this posting from apparel retailer Zara.

**Example:**

![Zara Seasonal Post](image)

**Brand Identity**
Description & Observation:
Known for its bold and unique color combinations, cosmetic brand Urban Decay shares a post that points to their specialty – color. Brand Identity postings include references to the brand’s foundation, milestones, achievements, unique market offering, strengths and tone.

**Example:**

![Urban Decay Color Post](image)

**Promotions**
Description & Observation:
Promotions is a category that often overlaps with one or more categories to advertise a new product, special pricing, offer, event or giveaway.
In this example from Loft, a posting led to a video which led to a special in-store discount revealed at the end of the video.

**Example:**

![Loft Promotional Video](image)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credibility</th>
<th>Example: J. Crew's Color Library</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description &amp; Observation: Brands such as J. Crew and Whole Foods discuss the intricacies of their design and food sourcing processes to build credibility. Credibility is essential to brand building, justifying price and educating consumers about craftsmanship.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Marketing</th>
<th>Example: Kate Spade New York</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description &amp; Observation: Content marketing offers consumers valuable information or entertaining content, freely, and is not a direct ad, although directly supported by the brand. In this example, apparel brand Kate Spade provides a video regarding decorating tips.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consumer Engagement</th>
<th>Example: Lush NYKDSW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description &amp; Observation: Engaging consumers online through likes, posts, retweets, clicks and shares are measurements for consumer engagement through social media. Engaging consumers beyond the posting to visit the brand website, appear in store or participate in a sponsored event is also a goal. In this example, cosmetic brand Lush highlights the value of market research that social media can offer.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Community Engagement & Corporate Social Responsibility

Description & Observation:
It is now important that brands authentically gravitate to a cause of importance whether, for example, directly related to the brand through material sourcing or environmental impact to the disposal of their product. Community engagement and corporate social responsibility are drivers of goodwill, promotion, and can even change market practices.

Example:

Pricing Related

Description & Observation:
Pricing related posts may highlight value and savings by making consumers aware of promotions pertaining to pricing specifically including sales, BOGO, buy more save more, and one-time deals.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use of Spokespeople/Celebrity</th>
<th>Example:</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description &amp; Observation:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brands often elicit the excitement and help of a spokesperson or celebrity for a collection, particular product or as a general brand ambassador.</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="H&amp;M Example" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The secrets to an iconic Spring look - as defined by The Weeknd. Shop the full Spring Icons collection in store and online. <a href="http://h&amp;m.info/7kw3">http://h&amp;m.info/7kw3</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element of Fun &amp; Informality</th>
<th>Example:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description &amp; Observation:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many brands from all categories generate posts that include an element of fun, may be somewhat informal or funny and even unrelated to the brand or its products, but amusing content with which the brand feels may resonate with its consumers. These types of posts also help shape brand voice and act as conversational and relationship building content over more one-way product ad-to-consumer posts.</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Woodman's Example" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Did you know the first fries weren't cooked in France?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>They were cooked in Greece!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="FoodJokeFriday" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brand Image</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description &amp; Observation:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When brands try to position themselves in a particular way, they often using editorial-like imagery, exotic and beautiful landscape, people moving in unusual ways, special lighting and an artistic touch to the ad. Sometimes, words are not included or needed, a photo or video is all that is posted.</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Woodman's Example" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>#FoodJokeFriday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WOODMAN'S</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>zarause</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Limited Edition & Exclusivity

Description & Observation:
To generate urgency or prestige, brands share posts pertaining to products sold exclusively from the retailer or special products only available for a limited time. Sometimes these products may be a collaboration between the brand and another brand or celebrity.

Example:

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eMarketer. (2018a). Facebook is tops with everyone but teens. Retrieved from https://www.emarketer.com/content/facebook-is-tops-with-everyone-but-teens


_____________________________________________________________________________________________

For further information contact:
Kristina Kaufman
North Park University
3225 W. Foster Avenue
STUDENT INDEBTEDNESS AND PRICE DIFFERENCES AS PREDICTORS OF STUDENT ENROLLMENT AT IOWA’S PRIVATE AND PUBLIC COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Rob K. Larson, Luther College

ABSTRACT

Colleges and Universities are facing severe challenges in meeting enrollment and revenue objectives. The variables that contribute to these challenges are wide-ranging and include the presence of new types of competition in online and other non-traditional delivery models, demographic and population shifts and others. This paper examines the relationship between student cost, student indebtedness and enrollment patterns for undergraduate students. Data from 2006-2017 for each of the four-year public, and four-year private colleges and universities in Iowa are included in this study.

INTRODUCTION

In evaluating data gathered on average indebtedness of college graduates, enrollment numbers and the net price of enrollment there emerged a pattern that suggests a strong relationship between student debt and net price as independent variables and enrollment as a dependent variable. To evaluate these potential relationships, data gathering focused upon the time period of 2005 through 2017.

For a number of years, the population of high school graduates in Iowa has been flat or decreasing. From 2007-08 through 2018-19 the number of high school graduates in Iowa declined from 34,573 to 33,200 representing a decrease of 4.0%. Current K-12 enrollment levels in Iowa accurately predict the number of students who will graduate in future years. Projections through 2028-29 indicate a slow increase and a return to 2007-08 levels.

The states contiguous to Iowa are experiencing the same general pattern of no-growth or decline. This leads to a limited capacity for Iowa colleges and universities to mitigate declines in enrollment by recruiting across borders. Complicating the ability to attract out-of-state students is the absence of tuition reciprocity agreements between Iowa public universities and similar institutions in other states. Further, Iowa residents are eligible for in-state tuition under certain conditions at public institutions in other states. Each of these factors contribute to the intensity of competition for Iowa high school graduates.

The decline of high school graduates from Iowa and surrounding states is reflected in the number of Full-Time-Equivalent students enrolled in Iowa colleges and universities. While overall FTE enrollment has been either flat or decreasing, the number of students attending the public institutions has increased materially. From 2006 to 2017 the aggregate FTE undergraduate enrollment at Iowa’s public universities increased from 51,262 to 61,343 students or 19.7% percent. Iowa’s 33 private colleges and universities decreased during the same time from 40,877 to 39,764 or -2.7%. An obvious conclusion is that in the competition for new students, public institutions are winning the enrollment battle.

The question of what is behind this pattern may provide important insights into the basis of competition for students and be valuable as private college formulate their strategic enrollment and institutional plans.

DEBT AND AFFORDABILITY
Industry and mainstream media frequently publish content that focuses upon the increasing level of debt that college students incur as a means of financing their education. Headlines like “College Enrollment Declines Continue” from a May 2019 edition of Inside Higher Education are common. Public and consumer attention is increasingly directed to the range of issues that affect affordability and access for higher education.

During the same time period that public institutions in Iowa were increasing their undergraduate enrollments and private institutions were reporting decreases, there became a pronounced difference in the level of indebtedness graduates these respective groups were incurring. In 2006-07 the average debt of students who graduated with debt was very similar between graduates of public and private institutions with $26,763 and $27,457 respectively. Through 2016-17 the gap increased with debt for public and private institution graduates moving to $27,575 and 32,724 respectively. These increases amount to a 3.0% debt increase for graduates of public institutions and a 19.2% debt increase for graduates of private institutions.

An additional set of data considered in this research is the net price after grant aid paid by students. In 2011, the Department of Education required that each higher education institution that participated in federal loan or grant financial aid programs make available a net price calculator on the school’s website. These calculators consider college specific inputs on academic records and financial circumstances for prospective students and compute an estimate of what the cost of attendance will be and which portions can be paid with loans, work study or require cash payment.

Over the past four years this study has assembled net price data drawn from computations gathered from roughly 40 colleges and universities using the net price calculators on the schools’ respective websites. The scenarios used consistent assumptions for family size, income, assets and other inputs. The data was gathered using three different academic profiles and three different family-adjusted gross income levels. Thus, for each school nine scenarios were projected.
The broad result is that in Iowa the public universities offer a considerably lower price versus most privates in each of the nine scenarios. There are some limited exceptions, primarily for students with the very limited family economic resources, where schools like Grinnell College that meet full demonstrated need can be less costly than the public institutions. As an example, using the scenario of a student with an ACT of 26 and a family adjusted gross income of $120,000 shows the price at a representative sample of institutions from the cohort used in this research:

![Net Price of Attendance Calculation For Student With an ACT Score of 26 and Family Adjusted Gross Income of $120,000](image)

Potentially contributing to the enrollment impact of increasing debt and price disparities between college and university options for students are the pressure students and their families are placing on affordability and debt. This increased emphasis is reflected in the findings from the annual Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) report: The American Freshman: National Norms Fall 2016 conducted by the Higher Education Research Institution at UCLA. In this report survey “The majority of incoming first-year students in 2016 expressed some level of concern about their ability to finance their college education.” The report further details that the level of concern is increasing.

**CONCLUSIONS**

The college selection process for students and families is complicated. There are variables other than cost that are important considerations in decisions including programs of study, extra and co-curricular opportunities, geography, reputation and other factors individually important to prospective students. The data gathered in this research suggest a clear indication that economics and affordability predict macro enrollment trends. Student debt and undergraduate enrollment appear to the inversely correlated and overall affordability is significantly affecting enrollment decisions. These patterns are virtually certain to continue and intensify. Institutions that ignore or deny this do so at great risk to long-term economic sustainability.

There are significant, important ways that colleges can create favorable differentiations, but there is a limit to the extent consumers will value them and the extent to which they will pay a premium for them.
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 SOURCES FOR DATA

1. Data for high school graduate numbers is from the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE).
2. Data on higher education enrollment is provided by the National Center for Education Statistics.
3. Data on student debt is from The Institute for College Access and Success. Most college-level data are taken directly from U.S. Department of Education sources and the Common Data Set (CDS).
For further information contact:
Rob K. Larson
Luther College
700 College Drive
Decorah, IA 52101
563-387-2000
rob.larson@luther.edu
AN ANALYSIS OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION ENROLLMENT PATTERN IN IOWA FROM 2006-2017

Rob K. Larson, Luther College

ABSTRACT

Higher Education faces challenges stemming from reduced number of individuals enrolling in post-secondary education institutions. This paper focuses on this enrollment dynamic as it is occurring in Iowa. From 2006-2017 the number of full-time equivalent undergraduate students enrolled at private four-year colleges, four-year public universities and public two-year colleges in Iowa increased from 156,169 to 161,120. This represents an increase of 3.2%. However, from the peak enrollment during this period 2011-12 the total enrollments experienced through 2017 fell 17,959 from a high of 179,079; a 10.3% decrease. The impact of the reduction is not equally distributed between categories of institutions.

INTRODUCTION

In the lead sentence from an article published in July 2019 in the Cedar Rapids Gazette newspaper, the associate vice-president for enrollment at the University of Iowa said “The long-term outlook for higher education is bleak, and Iowa will be right in the crosshairs—requiring its institutions to take prompt action and investigate immediate planning to survive”. Population trends for high school graduate numbers are easy to predict. The number of students reported by state education departments accurately show the population of students who will graduate from high school based upon K-12 enrollments. These data show declines in the absolute number of high school students for both Iowa and other states in the Midwest which is a principle variable contributing to the overall decrease in college and university enrollment in Iowa from 2006 through 2019. These data also forecast continued enrollment declines.

This study examines market variables, population, and financial factors that affect the number of students enrolled in Iowa colleges and universities as well as affecting the shift of students from private colleges and universities to public universities.

MARKET VARIABLES

There are significant variables that affect the decrease in enrollment and the differences in how individual institutions’ actual enrollment data has trended over this period of time. These variables include:

- Cost and affordability. The published ‘sticker’ price at institutions for higher education have increased at a rate in excess of inflation over the time period this study covers. Schools, primarily private colleges and universities, commonly provide financial aid in the form of grants that significantly decrease true cost to students but the difference in this true cost varies significantly between institutions. Students have alternatives at a range of prices. Students also consider, even with a range of alternatives, if a post-secondary education is affordable given a student’s resources, their willingness to pay and their willingness to potentially need to finance some of the cost through debt.

- Financing. In Iowa the average amount of debt incurred by students that graduate with debt has increased from an average of $26,686 in 2006-07 to $29,859 in 2017-17 representing an increase of 11.9% There is considerable variation in average debt between graduates of four-year public and four-year private institutions. Public universities increased over the same period from $26,070 to $27,312 representing an increase of 4.8%. Private four-year institutions increased from $27,457 to $33,610 over the same period representing an increase of 22.4%. For private institutions there is a considerable range in the range of average debt.
Programs of study. Schools differ in majors, concentrations, pre-professional programs and other forms of programs of study. Changes and adaptations to market demand create opportunities to differentiate and affect enrollment.

Reputation. Value. Prestige. Whether it comes as a result of rankings like those done the U.S. News and World Report, Fortune or other organizations or by perceptions based upon cost, or other sources, these factors enter into consumer preference and thus demand as well as willingness to pay.

Economic. Regardless of consumer preferences, students deal with the affordability of their options. Financial aid packaging varies considerably with financial need, academic capability, and other factors entering into aid formulas. Affordability is related to financing and the willingness and capacity to borrow for education expenses.

Access and proximity to markets. Students tend to choose to stay relatively close to their homes when they go to college. Familiarity with schools that are closer is also generally greater. Finally, in some cases staying close to home allows students to live at home and in doing so reduce their overall cost of attending college.

MACRO POPULATION DATA

Demographics and population trends are extremely important as they largely determine the available number of potential traditional aged students that can become a part of the overall demand for post-secondary education. Traditional students are defined as those 24 and under.

From 2007-08 through 2018-19 the number of high school graduates in Iowa declined from 34,573 to 33,200 representing a decrease of 4.0%. Projections through 2028-29 indicate a slow increase and a return to 2007-08 levels. The states that are adjacent to Iowa are experiencing the same general pattern of no-growth or decline. This leads to a limited capacity for Iowa colleges and universities to mitigate declines in enrollment by recruiting across borders. Further complicating the ability to attract out-of-state students is the absence of tuition reciprocity agreements between Iowa public universities and those institutions in other states. However, Iowa residents may be eligible for in-state tuition under certain conditions at schools in other states.

ECONOMIC STRUCTURE

The economic structure of higher education further intensifies the rivalry between schools when enrollment declines and net tuition revenue decreases or experiences limited growth. There are two separate factors that have a particularly significant contribution to this intensification. First, colleges and universities typically have very high fixed costs as a portion of overall expenses. Facilities and infrastructure requirements are high for institutions with classrooms, libraries and other learning spaces, offices, recreation space, dining halls, residence halls and other capital investments being necessary in traditional delivery models.

Additionally, staff and faculty costs are significant necessary costs and are normally fixed within broad enrollment ranges. Even with large decreases of the student population size the costs in these areas are relatively unchanged. Reductions in human resource costs are difficult in part because positions are not easily interchangeable (e.g. a biology professor cannot be shifted to teach an accounting class and a human resource manager cannot become a residence hall director) and reductions are difficult and often require elimination of programs of study. Faculty tenure and institutional governance structure can make reductions difficult or slow. Programs of study have required elements so courses have to be taught in order to allow students to satisfy graduation requirements.

Variable costs for teaching individual students are very low. Increasing or decreasing student enrollment results in very small increases or decreases in the cost to teach these students. A section of 18 students has the same delivery cost if the enrollment is reduced to 16 or increased to 20. The result is a very high contribution margin for each incremental student enrolled. This, along with the assumption of high elasticity of demand, contributes to the significant increase in price competition and tuition discounting (unfunded scholarships or grants). However, the net tuition revenue generated needs to cover fixed institutional costs and at high discount rates schools are failing to do so and experience operating deficits.

Colleges and universities have experienced higher cost of operation increases than many other businesses due to the composition of what makes up their costs. The significant need for technology and technology support staff as
well as health care costs are two examples of why higher education costs of operation have increased faster than broader inflation indexes.

**IOWA DETAIL BY CATEGORY**

This study examined all non-proprietary Title IV eligible post-secondary institutions in Iowa. This includes public four and two-year, and private four-year institutions. The number of private two-year colleges is very small and enrolls an immaterial number of students and are not included in this study. Overall the number of schools by category are:

- Public, four-year: 3
- Public, two-year: 16
- Private, four-year: 34

There are 9 private institutions where data is not available from the National Center for Education Statistics. These schools tend to be very small with enrollment under 200 or in other cases there are some data for individual years that are not reported.

The decline of high school graduates from Iowa and surrounding states is reflected in the number of Full-Time-Equivalent students enrolled in Iowa colleges and universities. The pattern of enrollment mirrors high school graduates and shows the same overall decline within this timeframe. Striking is the contrast between what Iowa’s private institutions are experiencing and the undergraduate enrollment at the three public universities. While overall FTE enrollment has been either flat or decreasing, the number of students attending the public institutions has increased materially. From 2006 to 2017 the aggregate FTE undergraduate enrollment at the University of Iowa, Iowa State University and University of Northern Iowa increased from 51,262 to 61,343 students or 19.7% percent. Iowa’s 33 private colleges and universities decreased during the same time from 40,877 to 39,764 or -2.7%. Of note, the decrease from a peak of 44,259 in 2011 is -10.2%. An obvious conclusion is that in the competition for new students, public institutions are winning the enrollment battle.
COMPARISON TOOLS AVAILABLE FOR CONSUMERS

In this competitive environment consumers have more tools at their disposal to make comparisons between schools, especially with regard to economic comparisons. In 2011, the Department of Education required that higher education institutions that participated in federal loan or grant financial aid programs make available a net price calculator on the school’s website. These calculators consider college specific inputs on academic records and financial circumstances for prospective students and compute an estimate of what the cost of attendance will be and which portions can be paid with loans, work study or require cash. Additionally, broader institutional data on average net prices paid by students for recent past years is available at several sources including the NCES. To the extent a consumer is price sensitive they now have the ability to make easier, more accurate, and earlier comparisons between institutions.

Historical student debt information is also readily available. The Department of Education reports average federal student debt load for students who finance their educations using federal loans along with the percentage of the graduating class that participated in a federal loan program. While these figures are aggregated the data reveal several potentially significant findings. Most significant is that the amount of debt for colleges graduates is increasing rapidly. Average debt for Iowa students graduating with a baccalaureate degree in 2016-17 increased 28.6% from the amount reported for graduates in 2005-06 to $29,859.

CONCLUSION

Colleges and universities are facing considerable challenges dealing with enrollment factors including population and demographic shifts, cost, competition and heightened consumer awareness. These challenges are going to intensify rather than abate in the decade ahead. Responses to this challenge will need to include measures to increase cost competitiveness in the market place. Colleges and universities cannot assume that the affordability of their institutions cannot be addressed by students and their families simply taking on greater amounts of debt. For private colleges and universities, the price gap between them and public universities is growing and, if the gap is unaddressed, will continue to contribute to the shift of students from private to public institutions.

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4. Data for high school graduate numbers is from the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE).
5. Data on higher education enrollment is provided by the National Center for Education Statistics.
6. Data on student debt is from The Institute for College Access and Success. Most college-level data are taken directly from U.S. Department of Education sources and the Common Data Set (CDS).

For further information contact:
Rob K. Larson
Luther College
700 College Drive
Decorah, IA 52101
563-387-2000
rob.larson@luther.edu
TOWARD A NEW MODEL OF CUSTOMER TEMPTATION

Halimin Herjanto, Marist College
Pamela Harper, Marist College

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The American consumer market comprises twenty-nine percent of the total world consumer market, thus providing America with the world largest consumer market and attracting the attention of practitioners and academics alike. One key aspect of consumer behavior, loyalty, is purported to derive from consumers’ experience related to levels of temptation.

Psychologists have argued that customer temptation is an important subset of desire or an immediate need to become involved in a particular behavior. It is believed that a combination of external factors (i.e. advertising exposure, pricing strategies, product differentiation) and psychological factors (i.e. self-satisfaction and self-discourse) determine the level of consumer temptation.

Perugini and Bagozzi (2001) found that a combination of attitude, anticipated emotion and subjective norms are responsible for customer desire. Langdridge and colleagues (2007) suggest that attitude is bi-dimensional and can be categorized into affective and cognitive attitudes. Affective attitudes relate to emotional consequences and cognitive attitudes concern the practical consequences of the stimuli or behavior. Thus,

H1a: Cognitive attitude positively affects consumer temptation
H1b: Affective attitude positively affects consumer temptation

Model Goal Behavior (MGB) theory found that subjective norms, also known as ‘social pressure’, affect customer desire positively. Thus, this study assumes that customer temptation is affected by the degree of subjective norm. Thus,

H2: Subjective norms positively affect consumer temptation

Anticipated emotions refer to the expected feelings in response to a specific experience (Perugini and Bagozzi, 2001). Accordingly, different anticipated emotions (positive vs. negative) affect an individual’s desire differently. Thus,

P3a: The anticipated positive emotion positively affects consumer temptation
P3b: The anticipated negative emotion negatively affects consumer temptation

Psychologists argue that customer temptation is an important subset of desire and refers to an immediate need to become involved in a specific behavior (Holub, Hodgins and Peden, 2005). The degree of customer temptation determines a customer’s future behavior. Thus,

P4a: Consumer Temptation positively affects switching behavior
P4b: Consumer Temptation negatively affects switching behavior

Utilitarian aspects of an attitude toward a behavior relates to usefulness and value of the behavior as perceived by the consumer. In the utilitarian view, consumers are concerned with purchasing in an efficient and timely manner to achieve their goals with maximum efficiency. In fact, utilitarian consumer behavior has been described as task-related, and rational. Thus,

P5a: An Instrumental Motive negatively moderates the relationship between Consumer Temptation and Switching Behavior

In contrast to a consumer utilitarian view, a hedonic value is more subjective and personal and results more from a desire for fun and playfulness than from task completion. Thus,

P5b: A Hedonic Motive positively moderates the relationship between Consumer Temptation and Switching Behavior
This study aims to create a roadmap for future research by offering a new model of the customer temptation phenomenon by investigating the psychological antecedents to temptation and the moderating effect of the instrumental and hedonic motivations.

This present study is important to business practitioners as it offers a new understanding on how to improve customer faithfulness by tackling and reducing customer temptation and for academics, this study conceptualizes and introduces a new model of customer temptation. We have made a tentative step toward responding to the call for identification of the model capturing the consumer value attributes that will support consumer retention.

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For further information contact:

Pamela Harper
Marist College
3399 North Road
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601
Pamela.harper@marist.edu
INFORMATION OVERLOAD AND INTERACTION OVERLOAD AS TWO SEPARATE ATTRIBUTES OF THE INFORMATION OVERLOAD SYNDROME

Tingting He, Governors State University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Information overload syndrome, which is also called information fatigue syndrome (Wurman, 2001), seems to have been haunting people for a while. In most of the literature, information overload syndrome has been simply called “information overload”, though actually it may include symptoms such as fatigue about information, anxiety about information, distraction in decision making and similar kinds of symptoms, and its contributors may include various reasons such as excessive information (Eppler and Mengis, 2004), excessive interactions (Maier, et al, 2015), excessive communications (Meier, 1963) and excessive choices (Gourville and Soman, 2005). Information overload syndrome has been recognized as a widespread problem which may generate a lot of negative impacts mentally and physically. Due to The Economist (2011), information overload is one of the biggest irritations in modern life. Due to McKinsey Quarterly (Dean and Webb, 2011), information overload may cause symptoms such as focus problem, hampered creativity, anxiety, etc. Due to Harvard Business Review (Hemp, 2009), “information overload costs the U.S. economy $900 billion a year”. Information overload has often been used to describe the notion of receiving too much information (Eppler and Mengis, 2004). The term “information overload” has also evolved into other names such as “information glut”, “data smog” (Shenk, 1997), “choice overload” (Scheibehenne, Greifeneder and Todd, 2010), and “infoglut” (Andrejevic, 2013).

Our paper aims to look through the smog of the information overload syndrome to explore its different attributes and add information to its full picture. As mentioned earlier, in the literature about the information overload syndrome, many reasons such as excessive information or knowledge, excessive communications, excessive choices may all cause sensory and cognitive burden on individuals, and result in the information overload syndrome (Eppler and Mengis, 2004; Gourville and Soman, 2005; Maier, et al, 2015; Meier, 1963). Among the different reasons of the information overload syndrome, excessive information (knowledge) and excessive interactions (communications), seem to be two important attributes. Yet so far in the literature there has been little research about how information overload and interaction overload may be separately identified and measured, or how different factors contribute to them separately. It seems people often describe overload from interactions as an attribute to information overload (e.g. Dean & Webb, 2011; Hemp, 2009). Our paper, as an approach rarely taken in the literature, separately identifies and measures information overload and interaction overload, and investigates how different factors may contribute to them in different ways. Moreover, we conduct the analysis with survey data, which offer an empirical way to separately measure information overload and interaction overload.

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For further information contact:
Tingting He
Governors State University
1 University Pkwy
University Park, IL 60477
(708) 534-4952
the@govst.edu
THE INFLUENCE OF PLACE ATTACHMENT ON PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOR FROM PSYCHOLOGICAL OWNERSHIP OF GREEN SPACE PERSPECTIVE

Miri Chung, DeVille School of Business / Walsh University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The current study aims to expand this knowledge through the examination of sharing public green spaces as a form of collective consumption, which facilitates psychological ownership. Psychological ownership is the psychological experienced phenomenon where a user develops possessive feelings for a target, even though the object is not legally owned. The concept of psychological ownership was studied in terms of two distinct dimensions: Individual Psychological Ownership (“I feel this is mine”) and Collective Psychological Ownership (“I feel this is ours”). The current study extends research on sharing and consumption of public spaces from these two psychological ownership perspectives and explores how such feeling of possession provokes prosocial behavior. More specifically, the current study examines the influence of two sub components of place attachment on each psychological ownership (i.e., individual psychological ownership and collective psychological ownership). The author hypothesizes that the influence of place dependence will be stronger for the individual psychological ownership, whereas the influence of social bonding will be stronger for the collective psychological ownership. Because public spaces represent a community asset, the consumption of public spaces is both individual and collective action. Since the public context of consumption makes the role of other users in shaping the consumption experiences more prevalent in longitudinal access, the author expects that the influence of collective psychological ownership is stronger than individual psychological ownership in leading to a sense of community, which would positively influence a helping attitude towards community members.

The current study collected data from a total of 366 Rhode Island bike path users and measured their place attachment towards the bike path, psychological ownership of the bike path, sense of community, and helping attitudes within the Rhode Island community. Structural equation modeling was used to test the research model.

This study contributes to the emerging scholarship on collective consumption of public spaces and shared resources. The results of this study have implications for governing bodies that control funding and strategic planning for public goods. Knowing users of public goods have a stronger sense of community through collective psychological ownership and individual psychological ownership through social bonding, policymakers now have a road map to increase the sense of community among the members and devise initiatives that develop positive attitude to help other community members.

For further information contact:
Miri Chung
DeVille School of Business/ Walsh University
2020 East Maple Street, P.O. Box #1312
North Canton, OH  44720
(330)490-7055
mchung@walsh.edu
WOULD YOU PAY MORE TO FEEL AT HOME: PRICE, HOST INVOLVED AND PERSONALITY FACTORS AS DETERMINANTS OF CONSUMER MOTIVATION FOR USING SHARING ECONOMY SERVICES

Sandip Roy, California State University, Fresno
McDowell Porter III, California State University, Fresno

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Since the popularization of Sharing Economy services, such as Airbnb, Consumer Behavior literature has focused on theorizing and investigating the main motivators of participation in the Sharing Economy services. Based on the literature, two main categories emerged as the main motivators of participation in the Sharing Economy: financial drivers, and social drivers (Botsman and Rogers, 2010).

Botsman and Rogers (2010) cite the United States financial market crash of 2008, and the subsequent recession and unemployment that followed, as one of the events that have created the need for and have fueled the rise of the Sharing Economy. By one statistic, there were 1,400 rooms booked on New Year's Eve in 2009 on Airbnb, compared to 31,000 in 2011, and more than 3 million on New Year’s Eve in 2017 (Clifford, 2018). Airbnb, indeed, has seen a tremendous boost in its business in the aftermath of the struggling economy that followed the 2008 market crash. The Economist (2013) speculate that the cost of sharing/renting on an as needed basis like renting out a beachside villa for one week of the year, versus owning an asset, is much cheaper. Thus, in an economy lacking in disposable income, and with consumers who are more prone to saving costs in every step of their life (Botsman and Rogers, 2010), they are naturally prone to using cost-saving leaders in the Sharing Economy.

Social drivers are also cited as one of the main motivators of participating in the sharing economy. Botsman and Rogers (2010) cite the need for community and camaraderie in a lonely, postmodern world as one of the main drivers of the Sharing Economy. This disconnectedness and loneliness, fueled by technology, have created a need for social bonds and a community in millennials (Botsman and Rogers, 2010). Botsman and Rogers (2010) claim that the strong emphasis of Airbnb on creating a vacation experience that focuses on connecting the traveler to the local community has fueled its rise.

Consumer Behavior literature, indeed, is conflicted on whether the financial motivators such as the lower price of Sharing Economy offerings, or whether the social motivators such as a connection felt with the host and the locality take precedence when it comes to consumer decision making. Alexandra Samuels (2015) demonstrated that most customers would consider switching to Sharing Economy services such as Airbnb if it saved more than 25% or more money compared to their traditional counterparts, such as hotels. Matzler, Veider, and Kathan (2015) and Forgacs and Demanche (2016) also cite economic and cost-savings as one of the main motivators for individuals to participate in the Sharing Economy. Gilovich, Kumar, and Jampool (2015) on the other hand argue that engaging in sharing such as staying at an Airbnb builds more social connections and fulfills the inherent need for community in human beings. They argue that this social connection is the reason that consumers prefer Sharing Economy services when compared to their traditional counterparts.

In this study, we investigate the two main motivators of using Airbnb that have been established by numerous cited studies, the financial aspect (price) and the social aspect (host interaction).

The initial attraction of the Sharing Economy services, such as Airbnb, was a cheaper price tag compared to non-sharing servicers. However, contrary to the “cheaper alternative” stereotype, Airbnb offerings in large cities, are now, on average, more expensive than hotels (BusBud, n.d.). Thus, the continued success and growth of Airbnb cannot be chalked up to simply it being an inexpensive option compared to hotels. Consumers using Airbnb derive more than just the functional value of cost-saving.
In the context of Airbnb, the value one draws from the service can be either hedonic or utilitarian or both. Gilovich et al. (2015) argue that engaging in the Sharing Economy such as staying at an Airbnb provides experiential or hedonic value, whereas researcher such as Luts and Newlands (2018) argue that the main motivator of using a service like Airbnb is mainly functional or utilitarian such as the price of the service. Clearly, the consumer behavior literature regarding the Sharing Economy is often conflicting. The purpose of this study is to investigate under what conditions host involvement (hedonic value) and price (utilitarian value) influences consumers’ attitudes and consumer purchase intentions. We use the price of an Airbnb offering as an indicator of utilitarian value-seeking consumers and use host interaction as an indicator of hedonic value-seeking consumers.

Several studies have investigated the demographic make-up and consumer segmentation of Airbnb users. However, according to our knowledge, no such study has investigated whether the personality of the user affects their decision making. For the current study, we investigate whether Extraversion has any effect on consumer choice to stay at an Airbnb when considering the price of an Airbnb offering versus the level of interaction with the host of an Airbnb offering. This is important because the demographic data from Airbnb users show that individuals from varying sections of society use Airbnb. We believe that further investigating the motivations (i.e., hedonic vs. utilitarian value-seeking) on a segment within Airbnb users will provide further clarity about the marketspace.

Sharing Economy is a growing phenomenon, and the companies in the industry, such as Airbnb and Uber, are still disrupting the status quo. Thus, Consumer Behavior literature of the Sharing Economy is still developing. The purpose of this research is to add to the consumer behavior literature and improve the understanding of consumer motivation for using Sharing Economy services. This study will also serve as a guide for managers in the Sharing Economy by improving their understanding of the differing psychographic segments the Sharing Economy service users.

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For further information contact:
Sandip Roy
California State University, Fresno
5241 N Maple Ave
Fresno, CA 93740
(858) 262-3392
sroy@csufresno.edu
Effective teaching comes not simply from our mastery of content, but from also knowing the student. As we begin a semester, do we know what our students do or do not know about marketing and what their perceptions of marketing are? Just as a doctor conducts a baseline assessment of a new patient’s current health, health history, and expectations for professional interactions, professors with a greater understanding of students can provide more constructive and engaging pedagogy that addresses knowledge and perceptions (and misperceptions) to foster enhanced learning opportunities. Generational cohorts are a useful lens through which to study changes in attitudes and behaviors. Current traditional-age undergraduate students, Generation Z (aka, Gen Z), are digital natives. As a group, they have been surrounded by advertising and marketing all their lives and are accustomed to it. As the largest generational cohort, it essential to research and understand the unique attributes of this group and not treat them as Millennials 2.0.

The principles of marketing course is part of a school/college of business’ core curriculum and, as such, a course taken by all business majors. Understanding the perceptions of students in this course and working to refine or correct those perceptions to more accurately depict the discipline has the potential to create better understanding across functional areas, which would in turn enhance organizational interactions when students graduate and find professional employment. Generation Z undergraduate students (n = 1,027) were surveyed to ascertain their perceptions of marketing as a discipline. Content analysis of the provided definitions and the shared discussions of those definitions (10,248 discrete units) revealed 14 different perceived facets of marketing. Statistically significant distinctions between business and non-business majors and across six business majors are identified for the initial definitions, the provided discussions, and the definitions combined with the discussions.

For further information contact:
Scott R. Swanson
Management and Marketing Department
University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire
105 Garfield Avenue
Eau Claire, WI 54702-4004
(715) 836-5127
swansosr@uwec.edu
TO QUIZ OR NOT TO QUIZ
IN PRINCIPLES OF MARKETING

Hannah D. Walters, Northern State University
Michelle Lesnar, Northern State University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

According to Merriam-Webster, to learn is “to gain knowledge or skill by studying, practicing, being taught, or experiencing something; to cause (something) to be in your memory by studying it; and to hear or be told (something); to find out (something).” The number one study strategy of most people, including 80% of college students, is to reread the textbook (Brown et al., 2014). Students’ typical study strategies include reading the text, highlighting important parts of the text, and then rereading the highlighted material (Roediger III, Agarwal, McDaniel, & McDermott, 2011). Rereading is time consuming, does not result in durable memory, and often deceives students with familiarity versus mastery of the content (Brown et al., 2014). As a result, rereading is among the least productive of all study strategies right up there with cramming (Brown et al., 2014). A more effective learning strategy than rereading or cramming is retrieval practice. Retrieval practice involves recalling facts or concepts or events from memory and is. Essentially, retrieval practice means self-quizzing. Even though the brain is technically not a muscle, the neural pathways that make up a body of learning get stronger when memory is retrieved (Brown et al., 2014).

This purpose of the study was to evaluate the effect of quizzes as a study strategy for exams in Principles of Marketing. Undergraduate students enrolled in one section of Principles of Marketing took quizzes prior to exams 1 and 3 while the other section, the control group, did not take the quizzes prior to those exams and vice versa for exams 2 and 4. Students were also given questionnaires at the end of the spring semester to survey their attitudes regarding the quizzes. While all (100%) students reported that the quizzes in class increase their learning and nearly all (96%) thought the quizzes helped prepare them for exams, only one statistical analysis revealed a statistically significant positive effect of retrieval practice via quizzing in Principles of Marketing. As a result, the overall findings of this study are considered inconclusive, but lead the authors to question the value and actual learning experienced through pre-exam quizzes. Possible reasons for this include overconfidence of quizzed students, fluency, and course content.

The benefits of retrieval practice have received substantial academic support. In this study, however, the benefits of using retrieval practice as a study strategy for exams in Principles of Marketing were inconclusive. While different results were anticipated based on the existing literature on the subject, applied research in this area, particularly at the college level is still needed to help teachers and students overcome the challenges involved in teaching and learning. Marketing educators should assess the actual learning from quizzes in their own marketing courses, rather than the students’ perception of their learning.

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MODERATING ROLE OF STUDENT PREFERENCE
FOR WRITTEN AND ONLINE FEEDBACK ON THE
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN IMMEDIACY BEHAVIORS
AND SATISFACTION

Pushkala Raman, Texas Woman’s University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine how students’ preferences for feedback type (oral vs. written) influences the relationship between teacher immediacy behaviors and satisfaction. In this study, the effects of social presence, teacher immediacy behaviors and source credibility (of the teacher) on satisfaction with the course and teacher are examined. In addition to these main effects, student preference for verbal or written feedback is factored into the model. The working hypothesis was that for students who prefer oral feedback, perceptions of teacher immediacy behaviors in an online learning environment will be the strongest indicator of student satisfaction with the course and the instructor.

Two sections of an online graduate class were surveyed to examine the effects of verbal and written feedback on perceptions of teacher immediacy and satisfaction and the impact of student preferences for oral or written feedback. The instructor and the materials for both sections were identical. Two assignments were used. All students received oral feedback on one assignment and written feedback on the other. Students were randomly assigned to receive oral or written feedback first. Written feedback was typed out on the electronic document in the form of comments and an overall summary comment. Oral feedback was recorded as sound recordings. At the end of the course, students completed an anonymous web survey. A total of 70 students comprised the final sample. The survey was designed to assess student satisfaction with the course and the instructor. Social presence, source credibility and perceptions of teacher immediacy behaviors were measured. Source credibility was measured using the scale developed by McCroskey and Teven (1999). Respondents were asked whether they preferred oral or written feedback. The survey also contained an open-ended question which asked participants to describe why they preferred oral or written feedback. Due to the anonymous nature of the survey, student performance was not tracked. Satisfaction scores were regressed on social presence and immediacy behaviors separately for those who preferred oral and written feedback. Immediacy was measured using a 4 item scale that assessed the extent of facilitation provided by the instructor, use of humor, variety of expressions (vocal and written), and a creation of an online community.

The results showed that immediacy behaviors are the strongest indicators of student satisfaction. For students who prefer oral feedback, immediacy behaviors were the sole predictors of course and instructor satisfaction. For students who prefer written feedback, in addition to immediacy behaviors, social presence and source credibility also influence student satisfaction with the course and the instructor.

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Available upon request.

For further information contact:
Pushkala Raman
Texas Woman’s University
Denton, TX 76204
(940) 898-2755
praman@twu.edu
EXPLORING THE DETERMINANTS OF STUDENT’S LEARNING OUTCOMES THROUGH THE USE OF EYE-TRACKING TECHNOLOGY AS A TOOL IN A MARKETING RESEARCH COURSE

Sydney Chinchanchokchai, The University of Akron
William Hauser, The University of Akron
James McKelvey, The University of Akron

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Technology has been a transformational tool in the delivery of instructional strategy since the invention of the blackboard and offers many uses in a variety of applications in the educational setting (Cradler, McNabb, Freeman & Burchett, 2002). However, technology has not received as much attention in the literature as a task characteristic in an experientially learned assignment for later application on the job. The rapid adoption of technology in business has expanded the need for these skills thus making them an important task characteristic to incorporate into experiential pedagogy (Alam, 2014).

Successfully bridging learning outcomes in academia with job-ready performance skills is at the heart of AACSB (2013) Standard 13 where higher education is charged with creating a learning environment that offers “active involvement” in both classroom and field settings. The job market also drives demand for this pedagogical shift. Marketing research is one of the fastest-growing jobs leading to an increased need for students to acquire appropriate research skill sets, especially those using the latest technology (Bureau of Labor Statistics, n.d.).

Marketing researchers have increasingly been using eye-tracking technology to measure consumer’s responses to marketing messages, branding, web usability, and advertising (Wedel & Pieters, 2008). Therefore, learning about the in-demand technology will add to the skill sets of students, increasing their value as graduates of business schools. This research extends previous research by identifying motivation and attitudinal influences that affect student’s learning outcomes and satisfaction. Seventy-two undergraduate students in a marketing research course conducted a marketing research experiment as an experiential learning assignment using eye-tracking technology.

The results showed that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, perceived competence, and attitude toward technology have an impact on student’s learning, career preparation, and overall satisfaction, consistent with previous research on satisfaction, and extending our knowledge for other variables with this instructional strategy (Davis, Bagozzi & Warshaw, 1992; Deci & Ryan, 2019; Venkatesh, Morris, Davis & Davis, 2003). Students learned from and acquired significant knowledge from the experiential project, in part, by using the latest real-world equipment. Incorporating technology as part of an experiential learning task (as a pedagogical design strategy) may be a strong motivator and attitudinal influence on student learning, career preparation, and satisfaction. Moreover, students also saw the new set of skills acquired in the laboratory experience as being useful to them in their forthcoming careers, minimizing the learning curve a business needs to implement new tools such as eye-tracking and adapting the skills to clients’ needs.

REFERENCES


For further information contact:
Sydney Chinchanchokchai
The University of Akron
Department of Marketing
Akron, OH 44325-4808
(330) 972-5136
schinchana@uakron.edu
STUDENT PERSONAL BRANDING AS PERCEIVED BY EMPLOYERS: COMPARISONS OF IMPORTANCE AND PERFORMANCE OF STUDENT BRANDING ATTRIBUTES

Danielle Sorrell, College of Business/Valparaiso University
Kaitlin Christoun, College of Business/Valparaiso University
Shannon Lahey, College of Business/Valparaiso University
Musa Pinar, College of Business/Valparaiso University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Although personal branding is a new concept, it is becoming more important as a way for students to represent themselves, advertise their skills, and show what they have to offer to a company (Basfirinci et al., 2019). The main premise of personal branding is that everyone has a personal brand (Peters, 1997); however, people may not be aware of their personal brand and/or the skills required by employers, which indicates that they may not manage their personal brand effectively (Ramparsad, 2009). Conceptually, personal branding focuses on how an individual’s set of skills, motivations, and interests are arranged, and it offers a programmatic set of strategies for individuals to promote themselves and improve their chances for successful careers (Khedher, 2015; Manai & Holmlund, 2014). Personal brand, based on proper or desired attributes, serve as a differentiator for these attributes in a competitive job market that offers certain benefits (Taylor, 1988; Knouse et al., 1999; Gault et al., 2000). As college students enter the competitive job markets, prospective employers will evaluate them for given jobs. Therefore, students must also brand themselves to compete successfully against other peers in today’s dynamic, global business environment.

Prior research indicates that employers are seeking university graduates who can demonstrate skills such as creativity, critical and future-oriented thinking, technical expertise, and ability to adapt to change (Ackerman et al., 2003; Kerr & Proud, 2005). Also, several studies and reports have identified multiple factors or attributes considered important by firms and employers when evaluating the candidates for jobs. For example, recent NACE (2016) report, identified the attributes used by employers to evaluate candidates for an employment, which are (in decreasing order of importance): leadership, ability to work in a team, written communication skills, problem-solving skills, verbal communication skills, strong work ethic, initiative, analytical/quantitative skills, flexibility/adaptability, technical skills, interpersonal skills, computer skills, detail-oriented, organizational ability, friendly/outgoing personality, strategic planning skills, creativity, tactfulness, and entrepreneurial skills/risk-taker. This exploratory study identifies the attributes (i.e., brand associations) that employers perceive as important for creating a student brand. This study also determines how employers evaluate the students as brands on the same attributes or factors to establish the existence of any difference (gaps) between perceptions (expectations) and performance regarding the student personal branding attributes.

A survey instrument was developed to accomplish the above research objectives. The attributes or brand associations for student personal branding were compiled employers via exploratory research at the Valparaiso University college job fair and from the relevant literature. The survey instrument was pretested with recruiters at several companies who are the target population of the study. These pretests provided input for improving the survey questions and establishing face validity of the concepts. The final survey was administered online via Google Forms to recruiters and managers at companies in the Midwest region of the United States. The link containing the survey questions was sent by the Director of the Career Center with their cover letter requesting participants to voluntarily complete the survey. The survey was sent to all the companies on the list, and there was a reminder letter sent to encourage the companies to complete the survey. This surveying procedure produced 77 useable responses.

The results indicate that employers perceive almost all these attributes as important for creating their strong personal brand. Employers also evaluate student performances as being significantly higher than average for all but two attributes. The comparisons of importance and performance identified gaps for creating strong student brands, where the largest gaps are relevant to the attributes of self-motivation, work ethic, problem solving, professionalism,
critical thinking, oral communications, written communications, and teamwork. These gaps indicate that employers perceive student performances as not meeting the expectations on those attributes that are relevant for creating their strong personal brands. Finally, comparisons of these attributes by firm size found that both small size and medium/large size firms have similar perceptions on importance and performance for all but two attributes.

Given the growing importance of branding, these findings have some strategic implications. The existence of gaps points out the so-called deficient areas for both students and the university administrators to improve to meet employers’ expectations in becoming strong brands. The results support and confirm the role of university education on creating strong student brands. These gaps perceived by employers provide opportunity for students to improve these deficiency areas in order to build their student brands to take advantage of branding benefits of greater perceived attractiveness of the applicants (Taylor, 1988), obtaining a job more quickly and easily (Knouse et al., 1999), increased job satisfaction and higher salary levels (Gault et al., 2000). This exploratory study provides some insights about the attributes for creating strong (student) personal brands as perceived by employers. However, the study has some limitations and the findings must be interpreted with caution.

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For further information contact:
Musa Pinar
Valparaiso University
MARKETING RESEARCH AND LIBRARY TRAINING IN THE INTRODUCTION TO MARKETING COURSE

Darrell E. Bartholomew, Penn State Harrisburg
Emily Mross, Penn State Harrisburg

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Experiential learning is often used to teach marketing courses. Using library services enhances this learning by increasing student’s information literacy and their ability to use secondary data in conducting real-world research as part of a two-part semester-long research project covering many of the key concepts found in the marketing principles course. These concepts include the strategic focus and plan, industry analysis of the external marketing environment, the company’s mission statement, core competencies, situational analysis, industry analysis, SWOT analysis, and marketing mix strategies. Franchises are used as a way of creating a marketing plan that provides additional financial information for students as well as site analysis.

This course utilized a two-session library instruction model with optional group librarian consultations to introduce critical business intelligence gathering strategies and familiarize students with free and paid business data sources they may encounter in the workforce, including Mintel, and PolicyMap, as well as the Census and the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Student feedback indicates the project helped them think about how they will apply what they learn through course work in their future careers, though some students questioned the breakdown of the project into parts and the number of library sessions included in the course.

For further information contact:
Darrell E. Bartholomew
Penn State Harrisburg
777 W. Harrisburg Pike
Middletown, PA 17057
(717) 948-6166
deb62@psu.edu
STRESSED AND UNHEALTHY COLLEGE STUDENTS: THE ROLE OF MINDFULNESS AND REGULATORY FOCUS

Ellen Campos Sousa, Florida International University
Luciana Freire, Unichristus
Patricia T. Gouveia, Florida International University
Alexandra Aguirre-Rodriguez, Florida International University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The current research draws from Mindfulness and Regulatory Focus literatures, to provide a novel finding within the context of undergraduate students overeating. Our paper goes beyond replicating Bah et al. (2013) study showing that mindfulness is a helpful technique to improve college students eating habits by decreasing their stress level. We also provide evidence of how the individual regulatory focus impact the relationship between mindfulness and stress eating.

Stress plays a role within the impulsive eating habits of young adults. As an example, an individual can be hungry after a long day of work, and they have two options (Bahl et.al., 2016): (1) eat unconsciously – when one sees a bag of chips on the kitchen counter, open and consumes it completely, in an instinctive search to satisfy hunger; or (2) eat consciously – when one is able to observe the bodily sensations associated with hunger, observing hunger as a natural phenomenon, which eliminates any feeling of guilt, allowing the deliberate choice to satisfy the hunger with a healthier food, such as an apple.

The multidimensional nature of mindfulness involves awareness of the current moment, and acceptance of internal and external processes without judgements. Its benefits are achieved when a consumer can direct and sustain they consciousness during consumption (Bahl et.al., 2016). The present study follows Bahl et al. (2013), regarding the eating habits of college students.

Bahl et al. (2013) proposed mindfulness as an alternative to reduce the excessive consumption of food. Its practice extends the attention capacity by creating personal awareness, highlighting cognitive control. According to Van Der Veer; Herpen and Trijo (2016), mindfulness can be used to reduce food compulsion and emotional feeding through responsiveness to the internal hunger and satiety lanes, based on the state of improved attention.

In the present study, the traits of mindfulness are associated with physical and mental health. As such, the first hypothesis consists in: increasing the capacity of sustained attention (traits of mindfulness), it softens the stress, that is, attenuates the levels of anxiety and emotional reactivity, causing the individual to maintain the attention to your healthy eating (reducing skip meals and over eat), as well as enhances satisfaction.

H1a: Stress level is positively related to overeating and skipping meals.
H1b: Mindfulness trait is negatively related to overeating and skipping meals.
H1c: Mindfulness mediates the relationship between stress and eating habits.

Regulatory focus (RF), proposes two objectives-seeking orientations (Higgins, 1997). The first, promotion focus are linked to gains, achievements and aspirations, driving by need for growth and development and characterized by the establishment of ideal and expected goals (Johnson and Yang, 2010). The second, prevention focus, refers to duties, obligation and security, encouraged by the need to protect oneself from psychological harm and failure, which is by avoiding adverse circumstances and setting goals that must be feared (Johnson and Yang, 2010).

Accordingly, individuals with a focus on promotion are highly goal oriented and concerned with pleasure through self-regulating activities that allow them to fulfill their ambitions and their progress. This type of person is prone to maintain high standards for traditional measures of success, such as title, power and visibility, with higher levels of
stress (Zivnuska, Kacmar, and Valle, 2017). Furthermore, promotion focus’ individuals behave seeking to ensure gains, motivated by eagerness, and to ensure non errors (Higgins et al., 2001).

On the other hand, individuals with a focus on prevention aim to minimize pain, loss and misfortune by regulating their alignment with rules and responsibilities, in an attempt to establish security and stability (Zivnuska et al., 2017). From this perspective, an individual wants to minimize flaws, inaccuracies and errors. People focused on prevention are prone to meticulous work and prudence in relation to new ideas and methods (Zivnuska et al., 2017). These individuals behave seeking to use vigilance means, motivated to correct rejections and against errors of commission (Higgins et al., 2001).

Therefore, as promotion focused individuals are more anxious than their prevention focus counterparts, along with the assumption present on mindfulness studies (Bah et al. 2013), that undergraduate students have high levels of stress as a function of the changes in their lives (Bah et al. 2013), we argue that the orientation of the regulatory focus has important implications for decision making and problem solving. As such, regulatory focus should mediate the perception of stress and the traits of mindfulness, because stressful events are related to anxiety, and this is the motivation for promotion focus individuals to achieve goals.

H2: The promotion regulatory focus mediates the relationship between stress and mindfulness.

A survey administered in two countries (Brazil and USA) seek to confirm our hypotheses. As mentioned previously, one of the goals of this study is replicates Bah et al (2013) study, thus, the design and scales are consistent with their work. Participants answered an online questionnaire containing the measures for mindfulness, stress, satisfaction, eating habits, meditation practice, social desirability, regulatory focus and demographics.

We used correlation analysis to support H1a and H1b, demonstrating that there is a positive significant correlation between stress and eating habits (Americans .309; Brazilians .186, p<.05) and between mindfulness and satisfaction (Americans .362; Brazilians .318, p<.05); as well as a negative significant correlation between mindfulness and eating habits (Americans -.272; Brazilians -.209, p<.05) and between mindfulness and stress (Americans -.691; Brazilians -.637, p<.05).

We relied on regression analysis using PROCESS (Hayes, 2018) models 4 (H1c) and 6 (H2) to establish the mediational effect of mindfulness. We used stress as the independent variable, mindfulness as the mediator and eating habits as the dependent variable. Country, gender and social desirability were added to the model as covariates. The results revealed that mindfulness mediates the stress to eating habits relationship. The indirect effect was significant (.0212) with a 95% confidence interval excluding zero (LLCI .0004; ULCI .0425). To support H2, regulatory focus was inserted as the first mediator, in a series mediation analysis (PROCESS model 6). As hypothesized, the indirect effect was significant (.0008) with a 95% confidence interval excluding zero (LLCI .0001; ULCI .0020).

These results confirm that mindfulness can help in the reduction of stress and consequently improve eating habits. Since it is a simple technique and it is available to everyone, it is a good alternative for public policy.

Additionally, this research brings a novel finding and important theoretical contribution, that is: the role of regulatory focus within the stress to mindfulness relationship. Individual’s regulatory focus is an antecedent of the mindfulness trait. Although the initial evidence points to interesting findings regarding the role that regulatory focus plays within the relationship between stress and mindfulness, it is necessary to better understand these phenomena, thus we are designing follow up studies to shed light on this relationship.

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For further information contact:
Ellen Campos Sousa
Florida International University
esous003@fiu.edu
INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS AND RESEARCH ATTITUDES, INTENTIONS, AND BEHAVIORS: THE EXPERIENCE OF A PRIVATE BUSINESS COLLEGE

Nicholas J. Barnes, Nichols College
Nadia Khalil, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth
Nora Ganim Barnes, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth
Omar Khalil, Kuwait University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

This study investigates research attitude, intention and behavior as well as their influencing individual characteristics. The impetus of this study is to put forward empirically-based implications for research enhancing policies. The extant literature proposes a number of individual characteristics—e.g., gender, age, rank, tenure, innate scientific ability, motivation, communication skills, personality type, preference for research, and career stages—that could influence a faculty member's research productivity (Khalil, 2018; Hardré et al. 2007, 2011; Jackson 2004; Lee and Rhoads 2004; Sax et al. 2002; Creswell 1985). Yet, most, if not all, of the research productivity studies have explored the influence of individual characteristics on research behavior (productivity), and almost none have examined the influence of individual characteristics on research attitudes and intentions (Khalil, 2018). This study is designed to explore two main questions: (1) What are the research attitudes, behavioral intentions and behavior of the faculty in the investigated institution? And (2) What are the influence of the individual characteristics of gender, age, marital status, tenure, academic rank, experience, time spent on research, and time spent on teaching on the faculty's research attitudes, behavioral intention, and behavior?

The authors surveyed a private business college located in the northeast part of the United States. As a single case study, this approach provides the opportunity to understand the problem being investigated thoroughly as it applies to the faculty of this institution. The use of a survey enabled quantitative manipulation of the research variables and the discovery of relationships that are common across the organizational units in the research setting. Descriptive statistics were used to characterize the faculty's research productivity (behavior). Twenty four percent of the faculty reported having one or more funded research projects; 67% reported having one or more peer-reviewed publications, and a higher percentage (79%) reported having one or more conference papers. However, the faculty self-rated their research productivity compared to colleagues in the same academic field to be at least average.

To answer the first research question on the faculty's research attitudes (AT), intentions (BI), and behaviors (BA), the t-test procedure was performed. It tests the significance of the distance (difference) between the average score of each and the midpoint of the adapted measuring. Based on the means and the associated P-values, the faculty hold favorable attitudes toward doing research (mean = 4.31, P = .000) and have strong intentions to do research in the future (mean = 4.22, P = 0.000). However, their actual productivity in the last three years is low (mean = 1.13, P = 0.000).

To answer the second questions on the influence of the individual characteristics (gender, age, marital status, tenure, academic rank, experience in HE, time spent on research, and time spent on teaching) on AT, BI, and BA, the Mann Whitney U test, a non-parametric test, was applied. Among the individual characteristics, only age, marital status, time spent on research, and time spent on teaching had influence on one or more of the research-related variables. Age influenced BI (P = .051) and BA (P = .024). Marital status influenced BA (P = .027). Time spent on research influenced BI (P = .022) and BA (P = .0001), and time spent on teaching influenced BA (P = .011).

Practically, the findings of this study may serve as a foundation for adapting policies designed to enhance research productivity of the faculty at the college and other similar colleges. While the faculty hold favorable research attitudes and have strong intention to do future research, their research productivity is low. The faculty seemingly find it
difficult to translate their positive attitudes and strong intentions into research performance (behaviors). As such, faculty with high assurance in their capabilities can approach the perceived demanding research activities as challenges to be learned rather than as threats to be avoided. Actions aimed at strengthening the faculty's sense of research efficacy should therefore enhance their research performance (Khalil, 2018).

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For further information contact:
Nicholas J. Barnes
Nichols College
124 Center Road
Dudley, MA  01571
nicholas.barnes@nichols.edu
GET THE LEAD OUT: USING A COMMUNITY PROJECT TO TEACH SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Stacie F. Waites, Marquette University
Alex Milovic, Marquette University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

As educators seek to create new activities to teach concepts, much has been made of the use of experiential learning projects to deliver content that aids in learning while providing real-world experience to students (Greene, 2011). The project in this paper allows students to engage with area neighborhoods to develop a marketing strategy for a specific issue plaguing the local community. Having an opportunity to apply course concepts – in this case, corporate social responsibility – over the course of a semester enhances learning, provides consultative research to community leaders, and allows students to see the positive and tangible benefits that marketing can offer.

The course project was centered around nonprofits in the city working to raise awareness around the local area’s lead water problem. The skills that the project required included corporate social responsibility, marketing research, and advertising. Students were taught the core principles of social responsibility, a firm’s work within the framework of business ethics and an understanding of each of a company’s stakeholders – the firm, the customers, the greater world (Wang, 2015). They were then informed of a non-profit that provided resources to neighborhood residents that would filter city water to reduce the amount of lead contaminants that residents would be exposed to.

At the start of the project, the instructor had a representative come in and give the class an overview of the issues and nonprofits working on this issue. Student groups were split between 4 neighborhoods in a midwestern city and given research files for their specific neighborhood. This information included demographics on age, race, household characteristics, education, employment, as well as figures related to the average age of the houses in the neighborhood, which corresponds to the likelihood that lead would be present in the water supply.

The main goal of the project is to determine the best way to inform the community of the need to filter water for lead contaminants and to educate the community on the resources available through local non-profit organizations. Project deliverables included building two customer profiles for the assigned neighborhood, creating a targeted advertisement to one of the customer groups, and developing an advertising campaign with a four-thousand-dollar budget. Additionally, student teams would give a ten-minute presentation to the community leaders.

Feedback from the leaders was very positive. They found the student approaches to the problems to be unique and were impressed by their creativity. Overall, the leaders noted that this exercise proved to be a valuable idea generating session, mentioning that each group offered at least one thing that was unique and usable to them. They were also thankful to see that university students were actively involved and excited to participate in projects that affect the communities around their campus.

Student feedback was also positive. First, they were astounded to learn that lead water was a problem in the city. This is valuable to their understanding of the world beyond their campus. Having an opportunity to work on a project that could truly impact their community served as a tremendous motivator. Most of the students indicated their preference for working with real goals and real data rather than standard theoretical projects.

The discussed project was delivered in a Principles of Marketing classes, totaling 78 students across two classes. Given the various materials and deliverables – including data analysis and presentation skills – a similar project can be used in various marketing classes, including marketing research, consumer behavior, advertising, or a capstone course. Considerations must be made for the project timeline – from the initial presentation by the community leaders, to key check-ins at various points throughout the project, culminating in the final presentation. Ideally, partners would be found in the months leading up to the semester, allowing for time to develop the unique elements and finalize schedules. Neighborhood-specific data for this project came from Data You Can Use (www.datayoucanuse.org). For
similar projects, you can use information from ESRI (www.esri.com) or Claritas (www.claritas360.com/mybestsegments).

In order to meet the needs of the modern student, course projects in marketing have moved from the theoretical to the actual, allowing students to see how important the discipline of marketing can be for companies. The project discussed in this paper allowed students to work with non-profits on a tangible goal that directly impacts the communities around the university’s campus.

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For further information contact:
Alex Milovic
Marquette University
P.O.Box 1881
Milwaukee, WI 53233
(414) 315-1600
alexander.milovic@marquette.edu
THE EFFECTS OF CLASSROOM ATMOSPHERICS ON MARKETING STUDENT OUTCOMES: PRELIMINARY RESULTS

Jane Lee Saber, Ryerson University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

This study investigates the effects of selected classroom atmospherics on a variety of marketing student outcomes. Here, three marketing research classes were taught by the same experienced instructor using identical materials, pedagogical methods and student evaluations. Class One was held in an older, tiered, fixed-seat / fixed-table classroom with a front audio-visual podium on one side of the classroom, (the ‘old room’). In the old room, the audio system would regularly malfunction, emitting excruciatingly loud and random feedback for a 2-10 second duration on average three times per class and the video projection would also not display properly approximately two to three times per class. Class Two was held in an older non-tiered classroom with moveable chairs / desks arranged in long columns the entire length of the classroom (approximate room size: 80 ft x 50 ft) with a front audio-visual podium on one side of the classroom, (the ‘flat room’). In the flat room, the audio components would on, average, malfunction three times per session (2-10 seconds each) and emit excruciating and random feedback and the video display would also stop working approximately two-three times per class. Class Three was held in a tiered, relatively new movie theater which had been adapted into a classroom by using a front mobile audio-visual podium on one side of the theatre and cup-holder plastic desk inserts for students at each seat, (the ‘movie theatre’). In the movie theatre, the audio components would on average malfunction three times per session (2-10 seconds each) and emit excruciating and random feedback and the video display would also stop working approximately two-three times per class.

In order to ascertain whether or not there were any effects of the class conditions on a variety of preliminary student outcomes, focus groups of twelve volunteer students were held for each of the three room conditions with the same experienced and trained teaching assistant acting as the moderator for each group. In these focus groups, students were asked about their ability to concentrate on the lectures, their levels of engagement during the lectures, the enjoyment and effectiveness of their participation in experiential learning tasks and finally were asked for other general comments about the classroom environment, the instructor and their expected academic performance. At the time the focus groups were held, the students had completed one midterm examination which had not yet been graded. Actual performance results will be considered in a future publication. All class sections were given identical-content assignments and examinations (order-randomized for each section) throughout the semester.

The first focus group of twelve students from the old room provided a number of informative qualitative results. First, students stated that the noise interruptions noticeably interfered with their concentration during the lectures but in contrast, students did not find the video interruptions particularly distracting. Students said they felt very engaged in the lectures, that they enjoyed participating in the experiential exercises and generally felt that the exercises were a very effective technique to help prepare them for their upcoming examinations and assignments. Students found the instructor to be appealing and effective in her lectures and seemed otherwise satisfied with the classroom environment. Students also perceived that they were well prepared for the midterm exam that they had just written.

The second focus group was held with twelve students from the flat room. Similar to the results from the previous section, students here also reported that noise disruptions were very distracting to their concentration but they found that video interruptions did not have a discernable impact. Some students reported being very engaged in class however other students, who had sat towards the back of the room, reported difficulty seeing / interacting with the instructor and also felt less engaged than some of their front-of-room counterparts. Despite these issues, all students in this focus group reported that they very much enjoyed participating in experiential learning tasks and found that because they were able to move there desks together with other group members, they could be highly engaged in the assigned tasks, both on an individual and on a group basis. Students here also found the instructor appealing and effective in her instructional style and did not report any additional issues with the flat classroom. These students also felt that they were well prepared for the midterm examination that they had just written.
The final focus group consisted of twelve students attending the lectures in the movie theatre. Similar to the other class sections, noise disruptions were seen as extremely problematic for student concentration although again video interruptions were not seen as impactful. Here, students reported considerably lower levels of general concentration and engagement compared to the other sections. They also reported that the dark ceilings and reddish walls were distracting and that the dim lighting and overly comfortable seating in the movie room made them feel sluggish, tired and lacking alertness. Students also felt the seating spacing was crowded due to the adapted nature of the movie theatre and they also displayed a great dislike for the black plastic desk cup holder inserts which they had to pick up and return to a cart at the side of the room after the class was finished. Students seemed quite annoyed that their classes were being held in the movie theatre and also found instructor’s teaching style and effectiveness less interesting, helpful and appealing compared to the other two sections previously described. Students also commented that they found the experiential exercises difficult to participate in, both from an individual and group perspective, largely due to the seating arrangements in the classroom. Students typically did not find the experiential learning tasks particularly useful or enjoyable. Similar to the other sections, however, students in the movie theatre also reported being well-prepared for the midterm examination.

Based on these initial focus group results, it appears that differing classroom atmospherics may impact a number of student outcomes in marketing classes. These results will need to be quantitatively verified via additional student surveys with respect to relevant outcomes such as engagement, enjoyment, teaching evaluations, satisfaction and other measures including additional atmospheric factors. Actual and perceived experiential and lecture-based learning measures will also be compared for each of the three sections. And if the quantitative results confirm the focus groups results described above, these results would potentially have significant implications for students, instructors and university administrators alike. Specifically, if students want to maximize their academic course outcomes, they would try to attend a class with optimized classroom atmospherics. If instructors want to maximize their perceived effectiveness, they would also try to teach in classrooms with optimized atmospherics. Finally, hopefully university administrators would try to ensure any classroom modifications or new builds would be developed with regard to principles of effective atmospheric design in order to enhance both student and instructor outcomes. These issues will be more formally addressed in an extended version of this paper, once the quantitative data has been analyzed. Based on the results of this preliminary investigation, however, class atmospherics appear to be an important factor in the marketing classroom.

For further information contact:
Jane Lee Saber
Ryerson University
575 Bay Street, TRSM 1-086
Toronto, ON, L1J4W7
(416) 979-5000 x 4216
jsaber@ryerson.ca
STUDENT APPROACHES FOR NAILING PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGNS: USING STRUCTURE AND FLEXIBILITY IN CLIENT-BASED LEARNING

Lori S. Elias Reno, The Pennsylvania State University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The Director of Chester County Human Services (CCHS) had already been disappointed by the results of two professional creative campaign discussions when she joined forces with the Penn State Brandywine Campus Advertising and Sales Promotion students. In truth, her task was daunting: Find a way to build awareness for 14 barely-related assistance programs serving entirely different target segments within Chester County, PA. To add insult to injury, as a government agency, they offered students no promotional budget and strict guidelines regarding the existing promotions like brochures and the organization’s website. The client’s goal was to ease residents’ discomfort about seeking more information about CCHS’s discreet service offerings if and when individual needs arise.

This project had its educational challenges as well. This paper addresses the methodology used to overcome one specific challenge of client-based learning in marketing management classes: Providing an environment where students can flex their own creative problem-solving muscles while minimizing the risk that the campus/class/students/you will deliver subpar results. Emphasizing core promotional tools and discovery exercises can lead to the creation of effective deliverables--no matter what the focus of the students’ approaches.

With this project, two student teams approached the development of a promotional video for Chester County Human Services, but they embarked from drastically different starting points. One team built their foundation on the stark statistics emphasizing the need for services, and the other team sought to amplify the emotions of those in need. The end result: Two complementary campaigns about which the director of CCHS declared, “We’ve talked to professionals to do what you (the students) have done, and no one understood us like you.”

A successful component campaign is dependent upon discovering key insights about the brand, the target segment, and the category in which the brand operates. To unearth these insights, the course provided structure via numerous in-class tools and exercises. Each is intended to peel back the layers of four important factors: brand identity, a detailed consumer profile, a client-approved [visual] creative brief, and creative concepts. Each tool and exercise also allows flexibility for student exploration and decision-making. Equally important, each tool and exercise provided the necessary framework to guide students through the various stages of discovery, planning, and delivery that resulted in this success.

1. Brand identity was determined during in-class activities such as “What celebrity or animal best represents your brand and why?” (to discover personality traits) and “Create a headline 5 years from now for a national magazine like Forbes or Time that features your organization’s success. This vision exercise depicts a key difference in the starting points of the teams, with one team envisioning success as the number of persons helped by CCHS and the other team emphasizing the improvement in the quality of lives touched by CCHS.

2. Using in-class and take-home assignments, students profiled their target segment via research in databases like Proquest and Mintel. Additional in-class activities helped them turn the data into insights. The primary exercises included out-of-the-box questions like, “What does your target segment do for a living,” “What movies does your brand watch,” and so on. Another template brainstormed and wordsmithed three personality traits that describe the target segment, and a third tool helped them create a persona (give a name, face, and summary description) of the target segment. The intent is to help students burrow deeper and deeper into the target segment’s psyche. Both groups agreed to focus on the behavioral and demographic description of “unaware adult residents of Chester County” since other demographics and psychographics--including lifestyles--were not exempt from the needs serviced by the client’s 14 service programs. However, the teams differed in their psychological profiles with one selecting a more rational profile, and the other a more social
one. Both presented reasons to believe that their approach could overcome the stigma related to asking for help from CCHS.

3. Later, students created a visual representation of a creative brief with the following sections: Deadline, background, communication objective(s), target audience, brand personality, main message and proof points, mandatory components, and budget. Students shared and modified the brief in conjunction with the client. The main message depicts another key difference in approaches of the teams: One team asserted that when their neighbors need help, CCHS is here, and the other indicated that there CCHS offers help for the struggles life presents to all of us.

4. In-class concept development activities used the creative brief as a guideline. Students explored emotional, rational, and moral appeals and considered animation, people, symbols, and other outside-side-the-box approaches. They also explored the brand as “Behind the Scenes Enabler” and “Community Partner,” and the target segment as “Pride and Joy” and “It Could Happen to Me.” Each concept consisted of a concept name, a representative image, slogan, and a one-sentence description. Students presented their concepts in a pitch to the client and received feedback as to how to proceed. The “winning” concepts were: “Helping People Everyday: CCHS’s dedication to...support you when you need it” and “Step by Step: The road may be long and bumpy, but CCHS will get you where you want to go.”

During the exercises, students were often challenged to think in a non-linear fashion and to flex their creative and critical thinking muscles in ways they had not done before. Often students experienced frustration or discomfort during the activities. Using the tools and exercises in a classroom environment allowed the instructor to gently motivate and nudge them to stay on-track. The instructor did not show preference between the approaches and did not provide black-and-white answers as to which decisions to make. Instead, the reasons and importance of the questions and answers themselves were emphasized, and sometimes questions were answered with questions, like “How does this concept align with the key message,” “Why do you think that this concept will resonate with what you know about the target segment,” and “How does this concept reflect the brand’s identity?” The goal is to ask open-ended questions that require students to look at alternative decisions and to look at the alternatives from different perspectives.

By the end of the project, students created a 60-second video for CCHS to post on their existing Facebook page and on a recommended YouTube channel. Their recommendations also included changes to the messaging and visuals of existing print promotional pieces to align with the new concepts. Because of budget concerns, students recommended that the changes be made as supplies were depleted.

In the end, the tools and exercises were enough structure to assure the client’s satisfaction, but not so much structure to damper the students’ creative problem-solving abilities. The balance of structure and flexibility offered in this model is useful for marketing management faculty to successfully use client-based learning in their courses. The implications, however, are larger. Client-based learning presents unique opportunities for students in many disciplines to apply critical thinking and creativity in a meaningful experiential learning environment. Using the discipline’s core tools and faculty-developed templates in a classroom environment helps students recommend and implement effective solutions to clients’ challenges—no matter what the focus of the students’ approaches.

For further information contact:
Lori S. Elias Reno
The Pennsylvania State University Hazleton Campus
76 University Drive
Hazleton, PA 18202
(570) 313-4421
lxe9@psu.edu
RETAIL COMPLAINT ANALYSIS IN AN EMERGING MARKET: THE CASE OF THE CLUB STORE FORMAT IN TURKEY

Bengü Sevil Oflaç, Izmir University of Economics
Ursula Y. Sullivan, Northern Illinois University
Zeynep Kaya, Izmir University of Economics

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

In this study, we are interested in further examining the club store-wholesale/retail store by understanding the complaint behavior of their customers. Because these stores straddle both end-users (i.e. consumers) and resale (i.e. other businesses) customers, our desire is to learn more about the expectations that customers have from this type of store. Doing so will allow us to derive implications as to the management of relationships with these customers as complaint-handling strategies are particularly important in managing customer relationships in service businesses.

For this paper, we discuss the data collected--which are the complaints reported to one of the leading companies of the Warehouse Club/Cash & Carry sector in Turkey--and apply content analysis to categorize the customer complaints. We then follow-up with the best approaches that a company could take to resolve the problem situations and ultimately preserve and enhance the customer relationship.

For further information contact:
Ursula Y. Sullivan
Department of Marketing
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, IL 60115
815.753.6285
usullivan@niu.edu
MARKETING STRATEGIES FOR INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATIONS’ CAREER SERVICES: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

Kendra Evans, Georgia College & State University
Doreen (Dee) Sams, Georgia College & State University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

A quality college education does not originate from the classroom only. There are many services provided by an institution of higher education (IHE) that are key to a student’s success during and after college. Service providers on institutions of higher education (IHE) campuses have the opportunity to provide valuable educational services that have the potential to enhance the quality of a college education and influence retention and graduation rates. Graduating more students from IHEs does not mean that the best employment choices are made by those graduating unless they know how to prepare for, find, and secure the best employment opportunities. Internal IHE services such as career centers have the opportunity to be a vital part of the educational process by preparing students to compete for employment in the global workforce of the 21st Century. Unfortunately, as graduation rates increase, students taking advantage of IHE career center services have traditionally not increased proportionately. The build it, and they will come mindset is not the solution. IHE career centers must add value to the educational process and must be visible to their target markets. IHE career centers must offer a quality product which by its very nature will require staff trained to identify employment including internship opportunities, resume development, and in how to prepare students for job interviews, etc., and to employ and train at least one staff member dedicated to marketing the career center and its service offerings (Gosh, Chawla, & Mallott, 2012). The 21st Century IHE career services office is not a transactional service, but instead develops an authentic relationship with stakeholders, career services professionals transform their office into hubs of connectivity with detailed advice, strategy, and feedback for different stakeholder groups and constituents (Dey & Cruzvergara, 2014).

Few research studies exist that focus on effective marketing strategies for IHE’s internal services that examine the creation of awareness and movement of potential customers through the purchase funnel. A limited number of studies were found that explore effectiveness of marketing tools to reach incoming college students and communicate the value of different IHE services (Woodall, Hiller, & Resnick, 2014). IHEs, in general, are laggards (i.e., do not accept ideas or products until the majority has accepted them) in accepting market research and marketing principles originating from a business. In general, the reluctance may come from a poor understanding of the marketing discipline (Maringe and Mourad, 2012; Winter and O’Donhue, 2012; & Alnawas, 2015). The value of any service offering comes down to a trade-off between benefits and what is given up for the service (e.g., time) (Zeithaml, 1988).

Effective marketing creates a space where less selling of an IHE service is needed. The value of the 21st Century IHE must be delivered to multiple stakeholders. However, before a potential customer can move through the purchase funnel of the IHE’s Career Center, they must first be aware that the service exists. The type and quality of the message and how the message is delivered has the potential to bring customers to a level of awareness. It is then up to the IHE to make visible the service offerings in a way that the customer forms positive opinions of the service provider, gives consideration to the provider, and developing a preference for the provider; thus, resulting in its use. At the time of this study, the subject IHE’s Career Center used only outbound marketing strategies to bring awareness to potential customers. Although the subject organization has used market research in the past, it has been limited in scope as to how, where, and when to reach potential customers with what message. R1: To what extent are outbound the IHE’s Career Center marketing strategies successful in creating awareness?

This study explores the effectiveness of one IHE service provider located in the Southeastern United States Career Center’s outbound marketing strategies developed to create awareness and to increase attendance at career fairs. External secondary research is examined to identify best practices in marketing for an IHE’s internal services. The researchers also examined one IHE's internal secondary data reports of attendance at career fairs, emails, and in-person self-report survey responses of outbound marketing strategies from fall 2017 through fall 2019 semesters to
determine which, if any, of the subject IHE Career Center’s outbound marketing is effective in bringing awareness to career fairs. Data were also examined (e.g., follows and likes) from an in-direct observational methodology of the subject IHE Career Center’s social media strategies in order to determine which was effective in raising awareness of the IHE’s career fairs. Based on this research study, the researchers put forth recommendations for marketing research, inbound marketing strategies, and brand community marketing strategies.

The researchers conducted frequency analyses to measure responses to survey items that focused on means of awareness of IHE’s Career Center’s service offering (i.e., career fairs). The subject IHE Career Center’s Facebook page’s number of likes and followers were also examined. The IHE Career Center did not track other types of social media activity. Further, the attendance at each career fair was captured and compared to the number of emails sent to potential attendees. Findings of the current study showed that respondents surveyed in 2017, 2018, and 2019 reported that awareness primarily came from two marketing mediums (i.e., personal selling and email). Personal selling continually ranked the highest over the seven semesters in which data were gathered as being the reason students moved through the purchase funnel from awareness to the purchase (consumption - attending career fairs). However, personal selling to faculty who then sell opportunities to students is expensive in opportunity cost when it takes away staff time from counseling students, attending career functions, and working with new and existing clients. This finding aligns with Schroth (2019) article on Gen Z as to workplace coaching with "one-on-one, custom-tailored learning, and development process that uses a collaborative, reflective, goal-focused relationship to achieve professional outcomes that are valued by the coachee" (p. 12). It also reveals that email marketing may be an effective way of reaching students with the Career Center’s service offerings. As to email, there is no way to know from this study if the content within the outbound message was the issue/driver to the level of awareness or if the medium itself was the issue/driver as to attendance at career fairs, or if a lack of attendance was based on something other than the message or the medium. Research on nonparticipants is needed to better understand reasons behind low attendance. Nevertheless, the findings do reveal the personalization of the message through personal selling from the faculty and Career Center staff was useful.

The researchers recommend inbound marketing activities as a less costly and effective means of moving potential customers through the purchase funnel. Inbound marketing has been shown to have a positive influence on students’ preferences toward IHE’s brands. Based on secondary research, best practices are to use inbound marketing to increase the number of those taking advantage of the valuable educational services provided by IHE’s Career Center in order to build a lasting one-to-one relationship. To be successful today means breaking through the marketing clutter with targeted, relevant, and quality messages aligned with potential consumers’ interests that pull potential consumers in during their purchasing journey. Using inbound marketing platforms enable the marketer to monitor digital campaigns online, through email, or social media, and analyze the research. Platforms provide options to personalize messages, develop web and landing pages, implement A/B testing, search engine optimization, and set up an automated email that sends the right content to the right consumer at the right time (Hubspot, 2019).

Royo-Vela and Hunermud (2016) report that interactive communication services and platforms provided by IHEs create trust and generate benefits because students want to feel involved resulting in brand familiarity. Gai, Xu, & Pelton (2016) suggest that universities must engage in online virtual communities by co-creating brand meanings with current students and alumni to attract new students. Brand communities offer IHEs opportunities to connect socially, either face-to-face or online with students. Career services can participate in these types of communities by sharing job placement and career successes of alumni and by offering events in which brand community members participate on or off-campus. Today’s Career Center must employ a staff member who focuses on marketing who understands market research, marketing concepts such as market penetration, positioning, market audits, and both inbound and outbound marketing strategies (Ng and Forbes, 2009).

References available upon request.

For Information contact:
Doreen Sams
Georgia College & State University
CBX 011
Milledgeville, GA 31061
(478) 445-0966
Doreen.sams@gcsu.edu
BUSINESS STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF SALES CAREERS: IS CHANGE ON THE HORIZON?

Lisa Spiller, Christopher Newport University
Dae-Hee Kim, Christopher Newport University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Despite the abundance of sales position opportunities available in industry today, filling these positions with qualified candidates remains challenging. While college students have long been an attractive source of recruits for sales positions, previous research has found that many students are not interested in pursuing a career in sales. In addition, educators have faced a variety of challenges in their attempt to successfully motivate and prepare students for sales careers. One such challenge is the negative stereotyped images historically associated with a sales career. However, the field of sales is much different now than it was in the past. The modern sales field is based on relationship and consultative selling, with few companies practicing “traditional” transactional modes of selling. In academia, considerable progress to dispel the negative perceptions held by many college students regarding the sales field, salespeople and sales careers has been made over the past decade. Given the evolution of sales practice and the efforts in academia, it is worthwhile to examine the possible changes of college students’ feelings about sales careers.

To examine the current perceptions of sales careers held by business students, we analyzed the data obtained from a survey of 284 undergraduate business and pre-business students at an AACSB-accredited university located in southeastern U.S. The survey consisted of a series of questions asking students’ thoughts and feelings regarding careers in sales, along with the perceived value of taking a sales course.

The findings of the current empirical study support the anecdotal evidence that change is on the horizon in that college student perceptions of sales careers are becoming more positive. Specifically, student perceptions of careers in sales are more positive than they are negative. A majority of business students believe that sales education would be valuable to their career preparation. In fact, marketing students showed greater interest in pursuing a marketing concentration in sales versus an academic track in research and analytics. In addition, the survey revealed that student perceptions of sales were varied depending on their majors, genders, and academic years. The perceptions were more positive in management and marketing majors and male students. Freshmen and sophomores showed more positive perceptions than juniors and seniors. Furthermore, mediation analyses demonstrate the significant indirect effects of sales perception on the relationship between academic years and perceived value of sales courses.

The current empirical study suggests that the future seems very promising for college students pursuing careers in sales today. Lastly, this study calls for future investigation to uncover the underlying reasons why students possess their current perceptions of sales in order to determine what is causing or contributing to these perceptions.

For further information contact:
Lisa Spiller
Christopher Newport University
1 Avenue of the Arts
Newport News, VA 23606
(757) 594-7184
lspiller@cnu.edu
DO GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES INFLUENCE COOPERATION, COMMUNICATION, AND COORDINATION DURING NEW PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT?

Elisa Fredericks, Northern Illinois University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Product development activities are the pivotal point for enhancing market share, firm value, and achieving organizational goals. Successful new product development (NPD) is one critical process for maintaining and even increasing competitive strength. It is also the vehicle through which organizational members broaden their skills, adapt, reinvent, and reconfigure their firms to match changing marketplace needs and technological advancements.

New product development is the lifeblood of most firms, is risky business, and requires input from diverse team members. The academic and practitioner literature suggests that generational differences in work values influence the requirements for all aspects of people management (Charrier, 2000) including incentives and rewards, working arrangements (Carlson, 2004; Filipczak, 1994) and management style (Tulgan, 1996), but also have the potential to cause serious conflict within the workplace (Karp & Sirias, 2001). The individual-level research suggests an innovation project is likely perceived and evaluated differently by different individuals (Beverland, Micheli, & Farrelly, 2016; Leonardi, 2011; Mohan, Vos, & Jimenez, 2017, Schultz, Salomo, & Talke, 2013) and this should be of interest to the NPD literature as such differences may give rise to longer and more disruptive product development.

The three generational groups seem to differ in workplace characteristics and attitudes and this raises the potential for tension and disruptions. These categories including Baby Boomers, born between 1946 and 1964; Generation X born between 1965 and 1980, sometimes referred to as Gen Xers, Baby Bust or the Lost Generation; and Generation Y, born between 1981 and 2000 are also known as Millennials, Nexters or Echo Boomers (Trower, 2009). Differences occur based on communication style as Gen Y prefers more collaborative, participative work style, while Gen X leans towards an individualist approach, and Baby Boomers tend towards structure and consensus leadership. By 2016, Millennials represented 56 million workers, followed by Generation X, 53 million and Baby Boomers, 41 million. Understanding generational differences is important as it may decrease organizational effectiveness, especially during the development of new products (NP). The purpose of this research is to present a set of researchable propositions to determine if generational differences enhance or detract from cooperation, communication and coordination during NPD. The resource-based view (RBV) of the firm (Barney, 1991) is used as an organizing framework.

New products average 35% of firm sales (Griffin, 1997) and therefore contribute to long term profits and its viability. The Product Development and Management Association Task Force (Griffin & Page, 1993; Page & Yu, 1993; Crawford & DiBenedetto, 2015) reviewed the most common success measures used by firms and found five categories of interest: customer measures, financial measures process measures, firm-level measures, and program measures. However, a review of the literature shows failure rates for NP introductions range between 35%-45% (Page & Yu, 2003). The literature is replete with examples of conflict arising from marketing and R&D and other departments due to differences in personalities, discipline-related languages, cultural thought worlds, time orientation, and physical location (Griffin & Hauser, 1996, Malshe, Johnson & Vio, 2017). Thus it is important to understand the influence of team member difference and the impact on NPD. Firms are more interested in evaluating people and projects with a focus on measures that allow them to manage specific teams and projects which will eventually lead to success.

The RBV of the firm contends that firms obtain competitive advantage when resources are valuable, rare, difficult to replicate and non-substitutable. The academic literature provides evidence that cooperation leads to success. Cooperation occurs when NPD team members provide information, air differences and are willing to incorporate decisions during the process. Holding grudges and cuddling vested interests translates to uncommitted
members who are disinclined to work together (Malshe, Johnson & Viio, 2017). Such behaviors create delays which translate into missed opportunities, lost market share, and or financial mishaps (Eisenhardt, 1989).

Collaborative communication occurs with low levels of conflict when departments exchange and utilize it for the betterment of the NPD process. It is of value as it emanates from different departments and ties to the development of innovations. In addition, NPD team members analyze market opportunities, visit customers, share information, assess market trends, customer needs, competitors’ positioning which lessen uncertainty (Malshe, Johnson & Viio, 2017).

Coordination represents synchronization of schedules, budgets and resources to accomplish firm objectives (Malshe, Johnson & Viio, 2017). Damanpour (1991) reports a positive association between cross functional communication and coordination and organizational innovativeness. NPD teams can be considered as strategic assets when they cooperate, communicate and coordinate efforts in the sharing of information and create innovations.

Through the lens of RBV collaborative communication can be seen as a source of competitive advantage since it helps team members to combine distinctive resources in unique ways (Gesing, Antons, Piening, Rose & Salge, 2015) to develop new products. Thus, performance rests on team members’ ability to collaborate on project particular, integrate knowledge, develop strategies and produce innovations which are significantly different from competition. Resources in terms of time, knowledge, and assimilation of departmental resources are valuable, and difficult to replicate. The RBV of the firms would conclude that collaborative communication, innovation development, exemplifier strategies, and the introduction of profitable innovations accrue from valuable, hard-to-duplicate, and rare resources. However, generational differences at work in the areas of teamwork versus individualism, responsiveness to management styles, company loyalty and the lack thereof, and work life balance may hinder NPD effectiveness. This analysis formally translates to several testable propositions currently under investigation.

This research extends the marketing literature on cross functional cooperation, communication and coordination by taking into account generational differences within teams which may hamper NPD success. Research is needed to determine if this is so and what mechanisms might increase them. To the author’s knowledge this aspect has not been addressed in the literature. This research proposes varying values towards work, different work environments (structured vs formal), and management styles (consensus, coaching, participative) may contribute to less than optimal coordination, communication and coordination. Integrating mechanism such as personnel movement, informal social systems, organization structure, incentive and rewards and formal integrative management process have been found to increase communication and coordination among cross-functional team members. However, the sales marketing literature suggests while well intended and useful in some cases these mechanisms do not work and team conflict continues.

References are available upon request.

For further information contact:
Elisa Fredericks
Northern Illinois University
College of Business
Department of Marketing
DeKalb, IL 60115-2897
815-753-6217
elisa@niu.edu
A THEORETICAL MODEL EXPLORING HOW OMNICHANNEL MAY SAVE THE CONVENIENCE STORE INDUSTRY

Samantha C. Gibson, Northern Illinois University
Denise D. Schoenbachler, Northern Illinois University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The convenience store industry has experienced significant customer count losses over the past four years (CSP Daily News, 2018). Convenience store stimuli such as product quality, price, convenience, storescape and service quality affect customer decisions to patronage and revisit convenience stores (Baker, Levy, & Grewal, 1993; Jacoby, 2002; Turley & Milliman, 2000). Although convenience stores have worked to improve and manage these factors, customer counts continue to decline. We propose that adding omni-channel elements to the convenience store will improve the consumer experience, satisfaction, and repurchase intentions. We use stimulus-organism-response theory and the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Mehrabian & Russell, 1974) to explain why incorporating omni-channel components in the convenience store should affect the experience, satisfaction, and repurchase intentions.

Stimulus-organism-response (SOR) theory is useful in explaining how convenience store stimuli, including omni-channel elements, influence customer experience and satisfaction with the store. Originated by Mehrabian and Russell in 1974, this theory states that there are stimuli that support an organism’s emotions, whether positive or negative, that lead to a response, such as customer satisfaction, repurchase intentions and environmentally responsive behavior (Jacoby, 2002; Mehrabian & Russell, 1974; Peng & Kim, 2014; Turley & Milliman, 2000; Vieira, 2013; Zhang et al., 2018). SOR theory has been successfully applied in the retail industry (Turley & Milliman 2000). The theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991) explains a customer’s acceptance of and engagement in a behavior. The theory relies upon an emotional connection (attitude) the customer has and whether they perform the behavior. The implementation of omni-channel elements may influence attitudes and ultimately lead to revisit intentions. Parker and Hand (2009) found that with the introduction of omni-channel retailing, transaction size increased 15-35% and customer loyalty increased 5-10%. Recent research continues to support the notion that omni-channel retailing increases customer satisfaction, trust, and improves customer empowerment (Zhang et al., 2018).

In our proposed model, the stimulus from SOR theory is convenience store. We introduce omni-channel elements as a moderating variable, and include such stimuli as adding additional channels to the convenience store, adding delivery, app-based shopping, and seamless purchase or checkout options. By adding additional omni-channel stimuli, we propose that the convenience store customer experience will be heightened and the perceived hedonic control over the feeling to revisit the convenience store will increase. The customer experience is the organism variable and will serve as the customer feelings and control, important aspects of the SOR theory (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974. Experience is an organism; this is how a customer perceives their overall experience and it is an internal physiological assessment of how well the customer perceives the overall experience with the retailer. Finally, customer satisfaction and repurchase intentions are the response in our model. The theory of planned behavior leads us to predict that adding omni-channel preferences will improve the customer experience and therefore customer satisfaction. Customers would also experience higher levels of perceived control over the visit to the convenience store when omni-

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channel attributes are present. Increased perceived control will lead to increased store revisit intentions for customers.

P1 – Convenience store stimuli have a direct effect (positive or negative) on the customer experience

The perceptions of omni-channel integration are posited as stimulus and moderator in the SOR model and will enhance the customer experience in a convenience retail store. By integrating price, promotion, adding delivery, and seamless transactions, these stimuli would enhance the customer experience. The customer would perceive and internalize these channel integrations as an enhancement to the experience they encounter in the convenience store.

P2: Omni-channel integration will moderate the relationship between the convenience store stimuli and customer experience. The higher the perception of integration, the more positive the customer experience.

Using SOR theory, our model suggests that the customer experience affects the level of customer satisfaction.

P3: The more positive the convenience store customer experience, the higher the customer satisfaction.

Theory of Planned Behavior would suggest that a customer that has a good experience will return to the experience (Ajzen, 1991; I. Ajzen & Driver, 1992). Our model suggests that the positive customer experience affects repurchase intentions through the customer’s satisfaction. Thus, we would predict:

P4: The higher the level of customer satisfaction in a convenience store setting, the stronger the customer’s revisit intentions.

Although much work has been done to isolate stimulus variables affecting the customer experience in the retail setting, the introduction of omni-channel elements as a moderator is not only useful to the convenience store industry, but may provide evidence of how and why an omni-channel strategy can influence the customer experience, satisfaction and ultimately revisit and repurchase intentions across the retail environment.

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For further information contact:
Denise D. Schoenbachler
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, IL 60115
(815) 753-6225
denises@niu.edu
This manuscript reports the results of a national survey of AACSB business schools examining the hypothesized impact of selected antecedents (interdepartmental conflict, management emphasis on employer market orientation, reward structure orientation) on each of three components (customer orientation, competitor orientation, interfunctional coordination) of market orientation toward employers of the schools’ graduates. The study examines theory and propositions presented by Kohli and Jaworski (1990), and employs survey questions developed by Narver and Slater (1990), Jaworski and Kohli (1993), and Slater and Narver (1994), reworded in the context of university business schools (Hammond, Webster and Harmon 2006). Part of a larger effort, we extend previous research that demonstrated positive consequences of employer market orientation on business school performance. Department chairs serve as key informants in this limited portion of the overall study.

Research objectives are stated in terms of hypotheses that each focus on one of the three components of university business school employer market orientation. Theoretical support for the hypotheses is outlined in Kohli and Jaworski (1990) and Hammond, Webster and Harmon (2006).

(H1) The customer orientation component of employer market orientation is impacted (a) negatively by interdepartmental conflict within the university business school, (b) positively by emphasis by university administration on employer market orientation, and (c) positively by reward structure orientation within the university business school toward employers of their graduates.

(H2) The competitor orientation component of employer market orientation is impacted (a) negatively by interdepartmental conflict within the university business school, (b) positively by emphasis by university administration on employer market orientation, and (c) positively by reward structure orientation within the university business school toward employers of their graduates.

(H3) The interfunctional coordination component of employer market orientation is impacted (a) negatively by interdepartmental conflict within the university business school, (b) positively by emphasis by university administration on employer market orientation, and (c) positively by reward structure orientation within the university business school toward employers of their graduates.

Data for the study were collected by way of a mailed survey. Surveys were mailed to 1538 department chairs of AACSB member schools located in the United States. As key informants (Campbell 1955), the department chairs were asked to complete the surveys and return them in business reply envelopes that were provided. Of the total survey instruments mailed, 198 (13%) were completed and returned. All survey items were measured with a seven point response scale, ranging from one (1) “not at all” to seven (7) “to an extreme extent.” The scales were subjected to reliability analysis and exploratory factor analysis prior to further analysis (Churchill 1979; Peter 1979). All scales demonstrated strong Cronbach’s Alpha scores (ranging from .64 to .82). With two exceptions, the analyses demonstrated satisfactory factor loadings ranging from .40 to .87. The exceptions were the customer orientation component of employer market orientation (with one item demonstrating a loading of .32) and the competitor orientation component of employer market orientation (with one item demonstrating a factor loading of .36). In both cases, we opted to retain the items due largely to the satisfactory alpha scores of the scales.
We calculate and provide descriptive statistics for all variables (Table 1). Regression analyses are calculated and presented (Table 2) for each of the three hypotheses. All hypotheses are supported by results of the analyses. Specifically, results suggest that decreases in (a) interdepartmental conflict within the university business school, increases in (b) emphasis by university administration on employer market orientation and (c) reward structure orientation within the university business school toward employers all statistically significantly impact the (H1) customer orientation, (H2) competitor orientation and (H3) interfunctional coordination components of employer market orientation. University business schools should take note. Several actions (lowering interdepartmental conflict, increasing top management emphasis on the employer market, creating a reward structure that is attentive to staff/faculty relationships with employers) are indicated to impact market orientation toward employers in a variety of ways (improving employer “customer” orientation, improving awareness of competitor actions toward employers, improving interfunctional coordination regarding the identification and satisfaction of employer needs).

The findings of this study can be generalized to others within higher education and also outside of higher education. We urge caution, however, in applying the findings due to the limitations of the sampling frame (AACSB member schools, located in the United States). Also, we surveyed department chairs only. Employees at other levels (vice presidents or vice chancellors for academics, deans, faculty) may have different perceptions. Additionally, respondent demographics and school demographics may lead to differences in perceptions. These limitations present an opportunity for further research; the study could be repeated at other levels of the organization, or in other types of organizations. Additionally, future studies could allow for and examine the possible effect of gender, highest academic degree, major field of study, years of experience, or length of service at the university.

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For further information contact:
Kevin L. Hammond.
College of Business and Global Affairs
The University of Tennessee at Martin
(731) 881-7236
khammond@utm.edu
The mantra continues: “Do more with less!” As businesses weathered the storm of the great recession they quickly learned that the cutbacks that resulted from pressures to increase efficiencies only added to the expectation that managers can, and indeed must, do more with less. And now, practitioners face efficiency challenges daily. From small business management (Swanciger 2018), to health care (Sen 2018), to nonprofit marketing (Fulton and VanHuss 2019) to entrepreneurship (McGrath 2018), the phrase is found everywhere in the business press. In fact, a simple internet search of the phrase “do more with less” provides hundreds of examples of the pressures to be resourceful. Unfortunately, academic research continues to lag well behind practice on this important issue.

Of particular relevance today is how managers can accomplish more with less without overwhelming the workforce. Given that personal resources play an important role in service delivery (Bakker et al. 2014), a slow, but growing, stream of work has focused on the job resourcefulness [hereafter JR] construct (Harris et al. 2013; Ashill et al. 2009; Rod and Ashill 2009; Licata et al. 2003). This construct has been shown to be an important personal resource that aids in workplace performance, especially in service industries marked by cutbacks and efficiency pressures. Conceptualized as an individual-difference variable and defined as “an enduring disposition to garner scarce resources and overcome obstacles in the pursuit of job-related goals” (Licata et al. 2003, p. 257), JR essentially describes the FLE predisposition to succeed while doing more with less. Accordingly, JR is a critical variable for inquiry into FLE performance today.

While this steadily growing research stream matures, there remain two important issues regarding JR. First, and as noted, research lags well behind practice in today’s environment as merely a handful of studies have focused on JR. Second, the extant research has largely approached JR in piecemeal fashion, lacking attempts to fully integrate the construct into an established theory of occupational / workplace well-being and performance. The Job Demands-Resources approach [hereafter JD-R] is well-suited for such inquiry (Bakker et al. 2014; Crawford, LePine, and Rich 2010). However, while some JR works have utilized JD-R theory as an underpinning for investigation (e.g., Ashill et al. 2009; Rod and Ashill 2009), and while others have investigated social support influences on burnout and engagement (e.g., Oshio, Inoue, and Tsutumi 2018), there has yet to be an attempt to integrate the holistic approach comprised of all aspects of the model including both JR and social support influences, leading to the second research issue that has been noted. The current work seeks to incorporate such an approach to investigate the role of JR in today’s work environment, thereby addressing important managerial concerns regarding FLE performance and contributing to the services marketing literature. The work also seeks to add to the literature by examining workplace factors that influence JR, including perceived job fit.

In summary, the current work explores three research questions: What factors beyond personality influence JR? How do JR, personality, supervisor support, and perceived job fit play roles in a JD-R model that includes engagement, burnout, and work performance? Finally, how does customer workload, a job demand, influence job / personal resource effects? The following hypotheses are presented:

H1: Job Resourcefulness is positively influenced by (a) conscientiousness, (b) openness to experience, and (c) perceived job fit.
H2: JR negatively influences customer burnout.
H3: JR positively influences work engagement.
H4: Supervisor support positively influences FLE work engagement.
H5: Supervisor support negatively influences customer burnout.
H6: Customer workload moderates the effects of JR on (a) engagement and (b) customer burnout such that these effects are stronger as workload increases.
H7: Customer workload moderates the effects of supervisor support on (a) engagement and (b) customer burnout such that these effects are stronger as workload increases.
H8: Openness to experience positively influences engagement.
H9: Conscientiousness positively influences engagement
H11: Customer burnout negatively influences (a) engagement and (b) self-rated job performance.
H14a: Customer workload positively influences customer burnout.
H14b: Customer workload negatively influences engagement.

An online survey collection firm is utilized for this study. Two service settings were selected: retail banking and food service. The settings differed significantly in customer workload (p < .05) and amount spent serving customers per day (p < .05). In total, 201 surveys were collected from full-time bank employees (70% female) and 205 from full-time restaurant service employees (73% female), resulting in a balanced survey effort. All measures in the study were adapted from existing scales and revealed acceptable psychometric properties.

In total sixteen hypothesized effects were supported in at least one sample, and the model offered significant explanatory power; ranging from 18%-46% of the variance in the endogenous variables. In both models, support at p < .05 was found for H1[a-c] (conscientiousness, openness, and fit → JR), H9 (conscientiousness → engagement), H10 (JR → self-rated performance), H11a (customer burnout → engagement), H12 (engagement → self-rated performance), H13 (fit → engagement), H14a (workload → customer burnout).

Other hypothesized relationships supported in at least one context included H2 (JR → customer burnout [restaurant]), H5 (supervisor support → customer burnout [restaurant]), H6b (JR * workload → customer burnout [restaurant]), and H7b (supervisor support * Load → customer burnout [bank]), H8 (openness → engagement [restaurant], H11b (customer burnout → performance [bank]), and H14b (workload → engagement [bank]). After a Lindell and Whitney adjustment for potential CMV, the correlations and t-values for the significant, hypothesized relationships, omitting those with the interaction effects, remained significant.

The findings in both contexts support the assertion that person-job fit is a driver of JR in addition to personality traits established in previous research. It is further noted that JR has again been shown to influence job performance, adding further support to this well-established linkage. Also, JR lowers customer burnout at least in the higher customer workload setting (i.e., restaurant) and this effect is strengthened as workload increases. Beyond JR, supervisor support has been shown to consistently, and negatively, influence customer burnout. This was as predicted and follows from previous research. This is notable, given once again, the role that customer burnout plays in FLE engagement. It is also noteworthy, and not surprising, that customer workload directly impacts customer burnout.

References available upon request.

For further information contact:
Eric G. Harris
Florida Southern College
Barney Barnett School of Business and Free Enterprise
111 Lake Hollingsworth Drive
Lakeland, FL 33801
(863) 680-4281
eharris2@flsouthern.edu
THE RELEVANCE OF ORGANIZATIONS UTILIZING BOTH STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT AND STRATEGIC SELLING PRACTICES

Shawn Green, Dunham School of Business and Public Policy, Aurora University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The premise of the paper is that organizations that plan strategically and utilize a strategic sales approach will provide focused solutions to clients and develop key accounts. This should result in on-going revenue growth. Strategic planning generally includes components such as vision and mission. However, it can and arguably should address client-focused considerations. The effective execution of strategic selling approaches can lead to valuable insight into shaping long-term strategy. The use of sales enablement can equip sales professionals to productively sell strategically.

Tibergien (2013) maps out the four core elements of the strategic planning process that includes the strategic plan, focus, assessment, and operating plan. He makes the argument for developing a vision for what the individual would like to see the business become. The key aspect of this is the assessment and the monitoring of the execution of the vision and plan. This takes place with developing and measuring, specific and action-oriented objectives.

According to Michael Porter (2005), there are many things that strategy is not about. Strategy is not about developing aspirations or even a specific vision and mission for the organization. The larger aspects of strategy are not about organizational structure, operational choices or even best practices. Rather, Porter is very clear that strategy is about what makes an organization unique. Specifically, the focus of strategy should be about providing a “distinct competitive advantage.” He believes that a strategic focus on competitive advantage will also create a unique value proposition, market-based goals, a distinct market position, that leads to superior performance. The other aspect of strategy that Porter states is that determining which target customer base is to focus on and those not to focus on.

According to Quancard (2012), traditional sales processes are predominantly transactional. In contrast, strategic selling involves planning and understanding changes in overall client strategy. Strategic account management ideally should be organizational wide with a focus on customer driven innovation and customer loyalty. Results of growth and profitability are considered outcomes of customer focus. From the perspective of Lacoste (2018), there are two aspects of customer interface opportunities, traditional selling, and strategic account management. Lacoste believes that salespeople need to be coached to no longer make use of traditional selling practices and learn how to adapt to a more customer focused strategic account management approach.

Marcos Cuevas (2018) believes there is an increasing gap between the actions of transactional selling and strategic/consultative selling. Two of the long-term goals of strategic selling with forming sales partnerships with key accounts is to recruit and maintain sales partnerships with ideal clients (Graff-Radford, 2019). Specifically, Graff-Radford is recommending sales companies define the profile of an ideal sales partner and to have the tools in place that will better align the sales process to the clients’ buying process and enhance the working partnership.

One of the elements of developing a strategic relationship with a client is the greater amount of information that can be shared between both parties. Cui and Shin (2018) have identified that the sharing of ongoing inventory information provides the benefit for both buyer and seller of reduced supply-demand mismatches along with cross-selling opportunities. Independent manufacturer representatives are also in the midst of changing approaches from being sales-driven to a client or market-driven sales perspective. This would include developing channel market expertise and the utilization of more forward technological strategies including strong digital and CRM capabilities (O’Connor, 2010).

In a recent study by the Rain Group (2019), their research identifies key challenges and priorities that sales leaders anticipate over the coming year. These include recruiting/hiring, developing new salesforce skills as well as new sales
managers. Their identified priorities include enhanced sales communication value and increased productivity and enablement for salespeople and sales teams. The specific strategic aspects include increasing existing account sales and client retention. Sales enablement can be viewed as a strategic initiative in the sense that one of the purposes of sales enablement is to equip salespeople and sales management to work effectively with key accounts and prospects. Kada’s (2019) four core components are sales skills, sales knowledge, sales process, and sales enablement. Activities that are involved include; formal training such as customer success management, informal learning/coaching and, sales onboarding.

The following propositions to be tested further reflect the integration of organizational strategy and strategic selling and the use of sales enablement for improved client outcomes:

Proposition 1: Organizational strategy that is informed through strategic selling will lead to competitive advantages of providing client-focused solutions.

Proposition 2: The monitoring of changes in environmental forces can strategically help identify opportunities to the benefit of clients.

Proposition 3: A strategic selling approach will identify targeted prospects and key accounts with which to develop a sustained revenue growth strategy.

Proposition 4: Sales enablement will equip salespeople and sales managers to solve complex client challenges with long term solutions.

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For further information contact:
SOCIAL MEDIA, GEN Z AND CONSUMER MISBEHAVIOR: INSTAGRAM MADE ME DO IT

Stephanie L. Jacobsen, Bridgewater University
Nora Ganim Barnes, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to follow up on the early work on consumer misbehavior that culminated in 2004 with a comprehensive article by Fullerton that suggested possible motivations for consumer misbehavior and called for empirical research to help illuminate this dark side of the marketplace.

When asked to identify the primary source of pressure to buy the latest products, 50% of Generation Z respondents indicated that social media was their channel of influence. When asked specifically which social media platforms were most influential, Instagram was specified as far more influential than others at 52%. Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat and YouTube (in that order) were also identified. Other sources of pressure identified were family and friends (29%), print and broadcast media (14%), and external sources such as people at work (6%).

Signing up for a free trial and cancelling once the trial ends is the most common behavior with 81% of participants engaging in the behavior and 69% finding it acceptable. Creating multiple email addresses to get more coupons is also fairly common with more than half of participants using the con (51%) and finding that behavior acceptable (54%). Three-quarters of participants (75%) leave products randomly around a store instead of putting them back, despite only 31% finding that behavior acceptable. While only 11% admitted to returning used or worn items to a store, 25% of participants find that behavior acceptable.

Five of the misbehaviors are significantly different for males and females (p<.05). Men were more likely to take items without paying for them, cut other shoppers in line at checkout, use counterfeit coupons and purchase something online and return it for more money. Women were more likely than men to try to convince an employee that something was on the sale rack when it was not.

Our findings demonstrate that Generation Z consumers feel pressure from social media to have the latest products—especially the latest technology. The most pressure is coming from specific social media platforms, namely Instagram, but also Facebook, Twitter and Snapchat. These consumers were most likely to engage in specific misbehaviors including creating multiple email addresses to get samples/free products and leaving items in random places in a store after deciding not to purchase them. They view these as more acceptable, while behaviors like taking merchandise from other shoppers’ carts and taking items without paying are less acceptable behaviors to Generation Z.

The most common behavior was signing up for a free trial and canceling before you have to begin to pay. This is an important behavior to note, as the pressure to have the latest technology, may drive them to have items without paying. This might explain why many young people do not pay for their own Netflix and instead share passwords, or create multiple Spotify accounts in order to continue to get premium access for free during a trial. This has significant implications for technology companies as they offer free trials in the hopes use will be extended after the trial ends. This may not be a profitable strategy to use in order to target this generation. More research should be done in order to understand what marketing strategies lead to more adoption and less misbehavior.

In order to reduce the likelihood of Generation Z consumers engaging in misbehavior, it is important to reduce the pressures of social media. This is not an easy task and is an important avenue for future research. Instagram seems to be the dominant source for this pressure. Based on its highly visual nature, it is easy to see others on Instagram having things that you then want yourself. Instagram is fast becoming a go-to channel for brands to push messages to consumers in-stream, and even shop. Instagram expanded its Shopping tool and unveiled Shoppable Instagram Stories last year. Last month, the social app launched in-app check out with 20 major brands including Nike and Adidas — two of the most popular brands among Gen Z. The Stories format, which counts 500 million users, has been important to Instagram's ad growth.
Numerous studies have found that Instagram and YouTube are the most popular platforms for Gen Z (Hodak, 2018; Green, 2019; Anderson & Jiang, 2018), however there was a significant difference between the influence of these platforms, with Instagram being far more influential. This points to not only advertising pressure but more importantly peer influence being a major driver of pressure to misbehave. YouTube lacks the visual connection with a peer group that Instagram allows. If peers are driving this negative influence, research on social pressures offline might need to be adapted for use online.

Companies have tried to reduce consumer dependence on social media in general by tracking the amount of time spent on apps and allowing consumers to set time limits. Users should also be encouraged to engage in positive and realistic posts in order to encourage a sense of community and reduce pressures. Consumers have long been prone to misbehavior given the right circumstances. The current research emphasizes a new cause of misbehavior, social pressure from social media. In this study, the Generation Z affinity for Instagram and other platforms contributes to the propensity to engage in consumer misbehavior. More research is needed on how exactly social media is causing this pressure and what can be done to reduce its influence. This study was done using only Generation Z consumers and should be expanded to include all consumers. As Generation Z is the largest user of social media, it would be interesting to learn if older consumers are less likely to be influenced by these pressures, and whether they view some of these behaviors as more unacceptable.

In the end, companies should encourage more inclusiveness, emphasize the importance of being unique and attempt to reduce the need to fit in, or be like everyone else. It is possible that these pressures can be reduced in order to lead to less consumer misbehavior among young consumers.

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For further information contact:
Nora Ganim Barnes
University of Massachusetts Dartmouth
285 Old Westport Road
North Dartmouth, MA 02747
(508) 999-8756
nbarnes@umass.edu
PERCEPTIONS OF YOUTUBE INFLUENCERS IN EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN CONSUMERS

Suzanne Altobello, Fayetteville State University
Kiira Kiesilä, Aalto University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Many videos uploaded to YouTube today contain branded content, recommendations for specific brand purchases, and/or act as demonstrations for how to use certain brands. Thus, these videos serve as user-generated, or consumer-generated advertising content, also known as CGAs. CGAs are often perceived to be more credible (Lee et al., 2017) and more authentic (Ertimur & Gilly, 2012) than traditional, company-created advertisements. Research in the field of word-of-mouth (WOM) marketing has recognized different aspects of credibility, such as trustworthiness and expertise (Cheung & Thadani, 2010; Lim & Chung, 2014; Yoon et al., 1998). Xiao et al. (2018) found that trustworthiness is the most important component when assessing the credibility of YouTube creators. While YouTube creators may be seen as less expert than celebrity brand endorsers, these creators are often perceived as more trustworthy than experts (Lee et al., 2017). Xiao et al. (2018) also suggest that expertise, likeability and homophily (similarity) might be additional evidence of credibility for YouTube creators, suggesting that trustworthiness alone is not enough for the YouTuber to be seen as credible and an effective influencer.

The purpose of this project is to explore an additional relationship factor, namely parasocial interaction (Giles, 2002), in the effectiveness of YouTube creators who act as influencers for a company brand. Parasocial interaction (PSI) refers to the often one-sided interaction between a member of an audience and a celebrity, comedian, character, presenter, or media personality, where the viewer feels a connection to the person that is not far from having a real relationship with them (Ballantine & Martin, 2005; Giles, 2002; Kim, Kang, & Lee, 2018). We argue that it is this parasocial interaction that leads to higher levels of perceived credibility that we see in other studies. Because people evaluate celebrities using the same criteria that they use to evaluate people in real life, the relationships that emerge from PSI may feel like real-life friendships (Giles, 2002). Therefore, even though a YouTube watcher may never meet the creator in real life, the user feels connected to the influencer in many ways that mimic real-world relationships. PSI has a positive impact on “followers’ purchasing and eWOM intentions” (Hwang & Zhang, 2018, p. 164). Lee & Watkins (2016) found that PSI with a vlogger (i.e., a video blogger) enhanced consumers’ perceptions of the brand. Similarly, Labrecque (2014) found that PSI increases “feelings of loyalty intentions and willingness to provide information to the brand” (p. 134). Thus, advertisements created by YouTube influencers can enhance viewers’ attitudes towards a specific product in the advertisement, and when parasocial interaction exists between the consumer and the YouTuber, the consumer will also view the brand more positively.

The present project tests the mediation model in Figure 1, where PSI with a YouTube creator is hypothesized to increase perceptions of credibility (specifically, homophily (similarity), engagement, trustworthiness, and expertise), which then subsequently affect buyer behavior. The direct relationship between PSI and buyer behavior is also tested. Alternate models with and without mediation will be compared. The model will be compared across samples of European and American YouTube viewers to examine any geographic/cultural differences as a moderator.

All measures were assessed in an online survey using Webropol software. To measure PSI, the “Celebrity-Persona Parasocial Interaction Scale” (Bocarnea & Brown, 2007) was modified. The scale includes 20 items measured on a 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) Likert-type scale.

Figure 1: Parasocial Interaction as a predictor of credibility and buyer behavior.
Some of the 20 items were edited to fit the YouTube context of this study. To assess perceived credibility of the person’s favorite YouTube creator, four subscales of credibility were chosen from the credibility scale introduced by Xiao et al. (2018) because of their connection to PSI. The subscales were trustworthiness, engagement, homophily and expertise. Respondents were also asked about their YouTube usage, with a specific emphasis on whether they subscribed to certain YouTube influencers and to consider their favorite influencer when completing the survey (the name of their favorite YouTube influencer was then piped into questions creating a dynamic survey unique to each participant). Finally, behavioral measures regarding purchases made after watching YouTube influencers and demographic measures of the user were included.

Participants were screened to include individuals who frequently watch YouTube and show interest in watching branded content on social media. Respondents must to be able to name three YouTube creators that they subscribe to or watch in order to participate in the project. Two samples of respondents were selected. For the European sample, people who had attended a YouTube event called VidCon in London, UK in February 2019 were contacted in person at the conference and also on various social media sites to participate in the survey. Data from the American sample is currently being collected in order to test the model in Figure 1 and to allow for cross-continent comparisons to the European sample.

Results will help companies understand the process by which viewers become attached to influencers and how parasocial interaction affects perceived credibility of the influencer. Additionally, we plan to examine the relationship between age of the viewer and parasocial interaction with YouTube influencers, as we may find that younger viewers are more susceptible to forming virtual attachments to video creators. Practical applications of this work can not only identify more effective influencers, but also identify key factors in the relationship between YouTube creators and their subscribers that can be emphasized in videos or in interactions between creators and subscribers to increase PSI and subsequent buyer behavior.

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For further information contact:
Suzanne Altobello
Fayetteville State University
SHARING YOUR SECRETS WITH A FRIEND OF A FRIEND: CONSUMER PERSPECTIVES ON THIRD PARTY PRIVACY POLICIES OF ONLINE RETAILERS BEFORE AND AFTER GDPR

Debika Sihi, Southwestern University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The e-commerce sector is growing rapidly. In addition to the convenience of purchases through the click of a mouse and home delivery, e-commerce has made it easier than ever for consumer data to be collected, sold, and shared leading to rising privacy concerns. Online retailers include information about third party use of consumer data in their privacy policies, but these statements often provide consumers little to no information about the identity of the third parties receiving their information or how that information will be further used (Asay, 2012). With the 2018 passing of the far-reaching General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in Europe, consumers globally have more awareness about their data and data usage.

This early stage project extends the literature on online privacy by specifically examining consumers’ perspectives about third party use of their data, as addressed in a retailer’s privacy policy, before and after GDPR. Social exchange theory is used as a theoretical framework to analyze an exchange relationship between a consumer and a retailer which now also involves various third parties. The context of e-commerce is used due to its current and projected growth.

This project builds on literature which has examined consumers’ privacy concerns, their understanding of privacy policies, and the impact of privacy concerns on purchase and information sharing behaviors. It also answers the specific call for research on “consumer attitudes and preferences regarding privacy choices” (Ohlhausen, 2014, page 8). The findings have implications for online retailers who may be able to address some of the concerns through additional disclosures or modifications of existing information provided about third parties.

Consumers that engage in any type of business with a retailer, whether online or in a physical location, are participants in an exchange (Bagozzi, 1975). Consumers are likely to view that exchange as a restricted exchange between two parties, the consumer and the retailer. Social exchange theory posits that in such a relationship each party is trying to maximize his/her outcomes. Thus, in the context of e-commerce, consumers are providing their information in order to gain a product or service from the retailer, and the retailer is collecting sales revenue and information about the consumer. However, different elements of the exchange impact whether consumers view the exchange as fair. Consumers’ assessment of the fairness of the exchange can impact privacy concerns (Ashworth and Free, 2006).

The primary way online retailers provide notice to consumers about how they collect, use, and retain information about an individual is through the privacy policies listed in privacy notices on a retailer’s website. In addition to legal compliance, retailers use privacy notices to decrease informational asymmetries between consumers and the retailers (Martin, 2013). Privacy notices have become longer over time as organizations proactively try to address legal mandates and consumers’ concerns (Milne, Culnan, and Greene, 2006). However, these notices are not always easy to understand. Consumers often complain that privacy notices are written using terminology which is too complex or ambiguous (Bakos et al., 2014). It is posited that privacy concerns may have increased after passage of GDPR in 2018. In the months subsequent to passage, consumers received emails from many companies asking them to renew consent for any marketing communications (Hern, 2018). These communications are likely to have made data privacy a more salient issue in consumers’ minds during that period. However, it is unclear whether there is significant long-term impact on consumers’ privacy concerns.

Consumers’ awareness and affinity for a retailer brand may also affect their privacy concerns. Consumers who have affinity for a brand more frequently “like” content on a brand Facebook page or engage with the brand online (John et al., 2017). Further, users who actively engage (e.g., post comments) on social media are more likely to have
positive behavioral outcomes related to the brand (John et al., 2017). Extending this view to privacy, it is possible that individuals who engage with a retailer through online social networks will perceive their exchange relationship in terms less dictated by reciprocal exchange due to the familiarity gained through this online relationship. This familiarity may extend to third parties or “friends of friends.” Conversely, it is plausible that consumers who are connected to a brand on social media may feel a deeper relationship with the brand (Fournier, 1998) and have higher expectations for such brands. They may perceive a violation of privacy if they don’t feel adequately compensated in exchange for sharing their information (Ashworth and Free, 2006).

Consumers’ privacy concerns about third party use of their data before and after the passage of GDPR is explored through two surveys of U.S. based e-commerce consumers. Further, the impact of consumers’ social media engagement on privacy concerns is analyzed. Insights are also gathered from three data-privacy attorneys. This research offers implications for managers who are faced with balancing data centric marketing strategies with consumers’ needs and concerns related to their data usage.

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For further information contact:
Debika Sihi
Southwestern University
1001 E University Avenue
Georgetown, TX 78626
(512) 863-1996
sihid@southwestern.edu
MASTER OF SCIENCE IN MARKETING RESEARCH: DECREASING ENROLLMENT IN THE DIGITAL ERA. CAN MSMR PROGRAMS SURVIVE? HOW WILL THEY SURVIVE? PROGRAM SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS SHARE THEIR PERSPECTIVES AND RECRUITMENT BEST PRACTICES.

Chien Le, The University of Texas at Arlington
Scott Hanson, The University of Texas at Arlington
Kristin Branch, University of Wisconsin – Madison
Richard Spreng, Michigan State University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The purpose of this panel is to discuss the current state of Graduate programs (specifically Marketing Research) in Higher Education. The topics of discussion will focus on 1) program challenges due to drastic declines in student applications and 2) current best practices used to combat decreasing enrollment. The insight gathered from this panel session can be highly useful to other specialized programs facing similar recruiting/enrollment challenges.

Many graduate programs have experienced major declines in recent years. The M.B.A. crisis has become so significant that Andrew Ainslie (Dean of the University of Rochester's Simon School of Business) predicted that “10% to 20% of the top 100 M.B.A. programs in the U.S. will likely close in the next few years, with even greater fallout among second and third-tier schools.” Striking M.B.A. statistics in the 2018-2019 applications report include significant decreases at Duke (down 14.6%), Yale (down 15.6%), and Dartmouth (down 22.5%).

Master of Science in Marketing Research programs are facing a similar enrollment crisis in recent years. Based on early headcount reports for 2019, MSMR programs are down 15-50% in enrollment. If MSMR programs are forced to close down in the future, this would be unfortunate for both students and companies/employers. The benefits of getting the MSMR degree include high specialization in a field with great demand, great preparation in qualitative and quantitative marketing research, and excellent career advancement opportunities upon graduation.

Questions for the Panel will include: What are the challenges facing MSMR/Graduate programs today? What key factors have attributed to the decline of applications and enrollment? What are professionals/students telling you they need or want in the curriculum? What are MSMR/Graduate programs doing to improve enrollment? What is the current state of the MSMR program regarding online/distance education, dual-degree options, and other relevant program factors?

For further information contact:
Chien Le
The University of Texas at Arlington
701 S. Nedderman Dr
Arlington, TX 76019
(817) 975-4861
chien.le@uta.edu
ETHICS IN FOR-PROFIT HIGHER EDUCATION

Kenyatta N. Barber, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The rise in for-profit higher education institutions (HEIs) has highlighted an alternative form of higher education. Throughout, the last decade the increase in demand and enrollment has brought attention to the ethical business practices within the for-profit higher education industry. For-profit HEIs are reaching a growing market through their marketing practices and budgets that often times exceed nonprofit HEIs. As the demand for non-traditional higher education increases, questions surrounding for-profit higher education ethical climates increases. Scrutiny towards the industry has caused governmental agencies, non-profit institutions and the press to identify the for-profit higher education industry as self-serving, lacking the abilities to ethically and responsibly serve stakeholders, both internal and external. Therefore, this study focused on understanding the ethical climate of for-profit HEIs.

The theoretical framework entailed Organizational Ethical Climate, Denial of Injury, Stakeholder Pressure, Employee Engagement and Ethical Intentions. Organizational ethical climate entailed the summary of employee insights about the organization. Where Denial of injury focused on the association among delinquent acts and consequences ascribed to those acts. Often times in corporate settings denial of injury was easier to tolerate due to the avoidance of what defined harm. Stakeholder pressure deals with how pressure from the organizations affects both internal and external individuals. Internally, pressure from the organizations influenced employees’ intentions to act ethically. The social context within the organization affects employees’ intentions to abide by the rules of the organization as well as employees intentions to be truthful and honest. Employee engagement involved individuals’ actions of physically, cognitively, emotionally and mentally committing oneself to a job and or task. The constructs were tested utilizing two forms of methodology.

The study specifically entailed exploratory sequential mixed method design with in-depth interviews followed by surveys. Both forms of methodology focused on a sample population of current and former for-profit HEIs employees. The findings from the interviews indicated that neutralization techniques were utilized by salespeople within the for-profit higher education industry and those techniques resulted in unethical behavior. From a macro perspective common themes from the interviews suggested that stakeholders did have an impact on the organization’s ethical climates. Results from the quantitative analysis showed that four of the five techniques of neutralization were valid and significant measures (denial of responsibility, denial of victim, condemn the condemner and appeal to higher loyalties). Overall, the quantitative data proved that ethical climates had a significant impact on various moderating and independent variables. Ethical climate negatively impacted denial of injury and stakeholder pressure. Ethical climates positively impacted ethical intentions directly and employee engagement indirectly. The impact of internal and external stakeholders within the organization was a negative relationship on ethical intentions and employee engagement. Lastly, denial of injury had a positive indirect relationship with stakeholder pressure and a significant and negative effect on employee engagement indirectly.

For further information contact:
Kenyatta N. Barber
University of Wisconsin-Whitewater
800 W. Main Street
Whitewater, WI 53190
(262) 472-1206
Barberkn12@uww.edu
RECOGNIZING THE ESSENTIAL DYNAMICS OF FOOD WASTE BEHAVIOR

Zeynep Topaloglu, EZO Consulting
Omer Topaloglu, Fairleigh Dickinson University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Located on the tip of the global wealth pyramid, a small percentage of the population consumes, if not wastes, the highest amount of the food produced in the world. The wealthy have the financial means, that is, luxury to waste or overconsume to the point of obesity. On the other hand, faced with millions of people suffering from hunger, the conscience of the society is not mute. An effort to improve equal distribution of food implies reducing the overconsumption of the wealthy among other things. The food is stockpiled to comfort the needs for feeling its presence and accessibility (Porpino, 2016), and then thrown away when it decays. The question is whether there is an alternative way available where people respect and care for nature and the others, leaving aside their utilitarian aims; a shift from being the consumer with the sole intent of pursuing self-interest to the normative citizen-consumer (Chaudhury and Albinsson 2015) who practices consumption with an eye toward the greater good. Examples show, if dedicated, consumers can even legitimize a marginalized activity like dumpster-diving (Gollnhofer, 2017), and unite stakeholders around the sustainable behavior of food waste reduction.

A stable access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food, defined as food security is a government’s responsibility. According to Food and Agriculture Organization estimates, globally about 7955 million people were chronically undernourished between 2012 and 2014. (FAO 2014) In 2018, 37.2 million Americans lived in food insecure households. (Coleman-Jensen 2019) 56% of food-insecure households participated in one or more of the Federal food and nutrition assistance programs. (Coleman-Jensen 2019) The presence of food waste is at odds with these efforts. Accordingly government and non-governmental organizations initiate campaigns to reduce food waste at the consumer level mainly because food waste is recorded to be higher at the consumption stage compared to production stages in the US. According to the United States Department of Agriculture, 31% of the food was lost at the retail and consumer level, which is 133 billion pounds, $161 billion worth of food in 2010. (Buzby et al. 2014) Moreover, until the food reaches the fork, from production, to handling, to storage, to processing, to distribution it exploits the highest amount of resources of the supply chain. Therefore when food is wasted at the last stage, it marks the highest economic, social and environmental loss.

Food waste that occurs from consumer behavior has multiple drivers. It starts at retail point of sale when the consumer chooses to buy food based on its compliance with given beauty standards, based on a biased inventory estimate and impulse marketing strategies (Chandon and Wansink 2006). Suppliers focused on profit maximization and higher sales ignore the status of food after sale. After sale, food waste fluctuates with storage conditions, timely and properly cooking, and reusing leftovers.

In this study we tried to understand consumer’s food wasting behavior using an extended version of the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen 1991). It is a viable theoretical framework, well-documented with its capabilities and deficiencies in explaining behavior. Our focus in this study was consumer, his perceptions, attitudes, habits and behaviors. Multiple private and public stakeholders in food waste issue were incorporated into consumer’s perception, and analyzed through consumer’s lens. As an example, impulse buying strategies imposed by companies were incorporated in shopping habits of the consumer.

At the first stage of our model, “personal attitudes” towards food waste, a person’s “perceived control” over food wasting behavior of his own and of his household, “subjective norms” imposed by society, and “moral norms” of a person were defined to shape the intentions not to waste food. After consumer’s intentions were structured accordingly, alongside “intentions not to waste food”, “habits” around planning, financing, shopping, and cooking emerged to be critical. As a third indicator, we have identified “holidays” such as Thanksgiving which bring families together around the dinner table, in contradiction with its innate spirit of generosity and sharing, elevate food wasting behavior. (Aktas et al. 2018) Lastly, “practical benefits” of not trying to save food like freshness and aesthetic
expectations, sparing the time that can be dedicated to saving food emerge as another food waste indicator. According to the literature, research on consumer’s food waste behavior conducted especially in the US needed a theoretical approach to construct a comprehensive understanding of the issue. Our research aims to fill this gap by developing a model serving local needs exploiting global knowledge.

We conducted an online study with 322 participants. 298 respondents were left for analysis. Mean value for household size was 3.87, which made our sample much more extensive since food waste related questions were specified for the overall household. 67.1% of the participants were female. 75.2% of the respondents declared they do some sort of cooking at home and 80.5% stated they do some level of food shopping. One of the questions to measure food waste was to self-report the amount of weekly food waste in the house. 19.5% of the participants said there is hardly any food waste in the house; where hardly any was defined as a value less than 10% of overall food. The rest reported varying levels of food waste.

As a preliminary analysis we regressed background characteristics on the amount of wasted food. The amount of wasted food turned out to be negatively correlated with the level of education. As the respondent had higher level of education the amount of food wasted in the house was reduced. Similarly if the respondent had a higher responsibility at food shopping, the amount of food wasted was lower. These two results suit our expectations. Higher education can signal a higher awareness about the results of food waste and accordingly reduce the amount of wasted food. On the other hand, it is also expected that a person when responsible with food shopping can realize the cost of food waste and waste mindfully. However we could not find a significant relation of wasted food with age, gender, income or cooking responsibility variables.

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For further information contact:
Omer Topaloglu
FACTORS OF FRAMING NUTRITIONAL MESSAGES ACROSS NATIONAL BORDERS: RUSSIA vs US

Zina Taran, Delta State University
Becky Hochradel, Transylvania University

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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For further information contact:
Zinaida Taran
Delta State University
Box 3275
1003 West Sunflower Road
Cleveland, MS 38733
662-846-4190
ztaran@deltastate.edu
TECHNOLOGY RESISTANCE MODELING:
AN ANALYSIS IN THE INDIAN MARKET

Easwar Krishna Iyer, Great Lakes Institute of Management, Chennai, India
Sriram Dorai, Great Lakes Institute of Management, Chennai, India
Paul R. Prabhaker, Northern Illinois University,

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The concept of diffusion, especially in the context of innovation, by which new technologies redefine an existing marketplace has been studied extensively in the marketing literature. As such, the diffusion research in the technology domain has essentially focused on the readiness, adoption and acceptance of new products and technologies, since the nineteen eighties.

Resistance to such technologies, driven by consumer technology inhibitions, however, has rarely been investigated with academic rigor. The few studies on inhibition have always been in conjunction with acceptance studies.

In this study we propose a Technology Inhibition Model (TIM). Utilizing an extensive literature survey, we hypothesize Cost, Compatibility, Discomfort, Dissatisfaction and Risk as five Inhibitor constructs. Technology Resistance is an individual attribute driven by various technology inhibitor variables in the buyers’ environment. Inhibitors are distinct constructs that have evolved through independent investigations. They are not antonyms for driver constructs. We develop a conceptual model to derive specific testable hypotheses. Finally, we share some preliminary empirical findings for e-readers in India.

The proposed space, for the Technology Inhibition Model [TIM] research validation, needs to be a technology that is currently facing adoption resistance in the market under study. In this case, the Indian market for e-readers satisfy the requirement well. Products like laptops and smart phones are entrenched products in the Indian market and will not be that revealing. With the study being conducted in 2018-19, e-readers have been chosen as the target technology for study. In this study we study the ownership and usage of pure play e-readers like Kindle, Nook and Kobo and not smart phones in the market which can double up as e-readers. In the Indian context, the pure play e-reader is at its early stage in the product development life cycle and hence is facing a high Technology Inhibition. Of the 260 people who responded to this study, 241 do not currently own a pure play e-reader, indicating a single digit market penetration.

Most of the research on technology acceptance in the last three decades has focused on ‘what drives sales’ rather than on ‘what inhibits consumer purchase”. The acceptance studies started with the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) that hypothesized Perceived Usefulness and Perceived Ease of Use as the two determinants of user acceptance (Davis, 1989). The initial TAM modelling in the nineteen eighties, built on a simple combination of utilitarian value and freedom from effort was work-place driven. Measurement scales were developed keeping in mind functional aspects like productivity, cost-efficiency, time-saving, flexibility and performance.

The two key dimensions in the TAM model are Perceived Usefulness and Perceived Ease of Use. This basic parsimony of the TAM model, based on several subsequent studies, also mirrors its strength and weakness (Bagozzi, 2007). One consensus seems to be that TAM and its extensions do not consider Technology Inhibition constructs such as compatibility with user, varying user environments, discomfort with the newness of the technology, different cost-benefit tradeoffs, etc., which are critical to consumer buying decisions. There is also the key issue of multiple devices, platforms, etc., that may offer a spectrum of values across the different price points.

Baumeister, et al (2001) argue that customers are more affected by the negative outcomes of their purchase decisions than they are motivated by the positive and their tendency to avoid ‘bad’ is stronger than their initiative to pursue ‘good’. Also, when expected outcomes are coded as gains or losses relative to any referral point, the losses tend to loom larger than the gains (Kahneman and Tversky, 1979). Thus, negatively oriented antecedents (inhibitors)
tend to play a more important role than positively oriented antecedents (drivers) in determining the acceptance, adoption and usage of technology. This philosophy provides the foundation for the proposed Technology Inhibition Model (TIM) of this research paper.

Any strategic decision-making process involves a cost-benefit analysis and the consumer decision choice is contingent on the cost of the decision process (Johnson and Payne, 1985). Yang and Zhou (2011) have modelled perceived cost as an inhibitor for the acceptance of technology. Rawassizadeh and Petre (2015) conclude that early smart watch versions like Intel Microma digital did not find enough customers because the perceived cost of the technology was too strong an inhibitor for that time.

**H1a:** Cost of any specific technology has a positive direct effect on Technology Inhibition.

Many studies have extended the TAM model (Davis, 1989) by introducing new variables. Gahtani and King (1999) extend TAM by including compatibility. Their study affirms that compatibility with status quo is a critical criterion for new systems to gain market acceptance. Compatibility can be disaggregated into sub-constructs like work style, work practice, prior experience and values and each of them can be modelled as separate antecedents to technology acceptance (Karahanna et al, 2006). Studies have also examined the implications of compatibility in the context of adoption of open standard environments (Chau and Tam, 1997; Chen and Forman, 2006). Indian customers consider the e-reader as a replacement technology. A key deterrent for the large scale adoption of e-readers could be its perceived lack of compatibility with different types of e-books and e-platforms (Aaltonen et al, 2011).

**H1b:** Lack of compatibility of any specific technology has a positive direct effect on Technology Inhibition.

The Discomfort construct, defined as ‘a perceived lack of control over technology and a feeling of being overwhelmed by technology’, was first introduced in Technology Readiness Index (TRI) modeling (Parasuraman, 2000). Incidentally, TRI is one of the first models to offer a gestalt of driver and inhibitor constructs. Chen et al (2013) also use the Discomfort construct to explain user disinclination to adopt new technologies. It is also likely that e-Reader consumers are skeptical about full compatibility with e-books There are a few papers on the adoption of self-service technologies (Liljander et al 2006; Chen et al 2009) that have explored Discomfort as an inhibitor.

**H1c:** Discomfort with any specific technology has a positive direct effect on Technology Inhibition.

For testing the nomological model, the study utilized a cross-sectional time frame to map the inhibition behavior of individuals who have the ‘capability’ to adopt an e-reader device. The survey was administered to a respondent population in the age bracket of 25-35. The survey specifically targeted respondents who were currently working and earning well. Responses were collected through e-mail and social media. The study received complete responses from 241 non-users of e-readers from the total set of 260 respondents (the remaining 19 owned an e-reader).

The research constructs were measured using a 5-point Likert scale. The three inhibitor constructs were operationalized using 3-item to 5-item scales. There were no reverse coded items. The Cronbach-Alpha values for all the antecedent constructs were above 0.8 indicating good internal consistency for the scales proposed. All the mean values are above the 50% threshold value of 2.5 with the mean of means being 3.30. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted as a preparatory step before proceeding with a full-fledged Structural Equation Modeling in the next phase of this research. Tests for normality and multi-collinearity of data was done using SPSS Ver. 21. Similarly, Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values were less than 2.0, indicating no evidence of multi-collinearity. The variable-wise sampling adequacy given by the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) metric and the percentage variance extracted on a construct by construct basis is calculated.

The primary contribution of this study, when completed, will be the complete modelling of an interrelationship pattern between five inhibitor constructs, along with essential mediators, that enables a superior understanding of technology inhibition by individual consumers. The preliminary results provide promising support for the first three hypotheses, providing preliminary validation for the proposed Technology Inhibition Model. A key inference from the study is that each posited inhibitor stands alone as a separate dimension in independently explaining customer technology resistance.

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For further information contact:
Paul Prabhaker
College of Business, Northern Illinois university

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GESTALT IMAGE ADS: A NEW STYLE OF ADVERTISING IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Praggyan (Pam) Mohanty, Governors State University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Advancements in computational graphics has revolutionized the advertising world with the proliferation of highly sophisticated, digitally rendered images that defy imagination. Gestalt image ads are an increasingly popular style of communication, fueled by such technological advancements in graphic design. Consider a recent ad for World Wildlife Fund (WWF), with the slogan “save the world with a few coins.” The ad evokes the image of a giraffe, standing in a Savanna, constructed with coins stacked on the top of each other, nudging consumers to make small donations for wildlife protection. The visual is admittedly eye-catching, since in one perceptual view, one can recognize the coins, while in the other perceptual view, one can identify the composite image of a giraffe.

Gestalt psychologists have postulated theories that dictate how people perceive and organize information (Wagemans, Elder, et al., 2012). The dominant theory in Gestalt psychology is often summarized in the notion that the whole is different from the sum of its parts (Wertheimer, 1938a, 1938b). These theories on perceptual organization inform us about how we group smaller objects (the parts) to form larger objects (the whole). Interestingly, in the recent past, advertisers have made deliberate use of gestalt principles (such as, proximity, similarity, continuity, closure, figure and ground, etc.) in creating ads to relay brand messages. This intentional application of gestalt principles in brand communications, exemplifies the emergence of a distinctive style of communication—gestalt images ads, which utilize images that engender two percepts when viewing a visual, each percept prompting a different idea or concept in a person’s mind, for example, in the WWF ad, the ideas of a giraffe (the whole image) and coins (the parts).

Organizations, such as, the WWF (discussed above), need to make provocative and striking ads to catch consumer attention, increase public awareness, and elicit consumer participation. The use of gestalt image ads is perhaps predicated on the assumption that this style of communication enhances ad effectiveness. Nonetheless, there is no research evidence to validate this proposition. The current research postulates that viewing an image as two percepts is perceptually incongruous, and this incongruity in the stimuli makes the ad more interesting (Berlyne, 1971). Ad interestingness (Hagtvedt, 2011), pertains to the characteristic of a stimuli that arouses interest – an emotion often related to curiosity, exploration, and information seeking (Silvia, 2005). Therefore, the interest triggered by the ad, motivates the onlooker to figure out the meaning of the ad, a process that increases processing pleasure derived from the ad, thereby increasing ad liking and ad effectiveness. Processing pleasure is defined as the positive affect experienced by an individual from the comprehension of an initially incomprehensible message (Mohanty & Ratneshwar, 2016).

Despite the prevalence of gestalt images in marketing communications, there is lack of research on this topic area. Importantly, this is the first research paper that investigates the phenomenon of gestalt image ads as a distinctive style of communication. One might wonder whether gestalt image ads are merely another type of rhetorical figures (Corbett, 1990; McQuarrie & Mick, 1996; Phillips & McQuarrie, 2004). Notwithstanding, gestalt image ads are indirect forms of messaging, much like rhetorical figures, one would be hard-pressed to categorize these as any particular type of rhetorical figure. Moreover, gestalt images and rhetorical figures emerge from different theoretical paradigms. While theories on Gestalt psychology is rooted in perception and psychology (Wagemans, Elder, et al., 2012; Wertheimer, 1938a), the theories pertaining to rhetorical figures draws from the field of language and linguistics, and specifically, classical rhetoric (Corbett, 1990).

The current research arguably makes several significant contributions. First, the paper provides empirical evidence confirming the effectiveness of gestalt images in advertising by demonstrating that gestalt image ads (vs. control ads) lead to higher ad attitude; Experiment 1 (N = 120), (M\text{Gestalt} = 7.2 vs. M\text{Control} = 5.82, F (1, 117) = 4.68, p < .05, η² = .04). Second, it proposes and finds corroborating evidence for a serial multiple mediator process model to explain the effectiveness of gestalt image ads by way of increasing ad interestingness followed by processing pleasure [Coeff = -.13, SE=.07, 95% Confidence Interval: -.33 and -.02, PROCESS Model 6 (Preacher & Hayes, 2004)].

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ideas of processing pleasure and pleasure-of-the-text have been discussed in the context of rhetorical figures (Barthes, 1977; McQuarrie & Mick, 1996). However, the serial multiple mediation mechanism of ad type affecting ad interestingness leading to processing pleasure to explain ad effectiveness is novel.

Further, the paper investigates the effectiveness of an important and relevant variable in the context of gestalt image ads, i.e., visual complexity. Complexity has been defined as “the amount of variety or diversity in a stimulus pattern” (Berlyne, 1960, p. 38). Experiment 2 (N = 154) indicates that higher (vs. lower) visual complexity in gestalt image ads will lead to higher ad attitude (MHComplex = 7.50 vs. MLComplex = 6.21, F (1,154) = 8.23, p < .01, η² = .05). Additionally, this experiment finds support for a serial multiple mediator process model where visual complexity increases ad interestingness, which increases processing pleasure, thereby leading to higher ad attitude [Coeff = .08, SE=.07, 95% Confidence Interval: .0003 and .29, PROCESS Model 6 (Preacher & Hayes, 2004)].

Conclusively, this research advances our knowledge about the effectiveness of gestalt image ads and the processes underlying this phenomenon. The escalation in the usage of digital media, has placed enormous pressures on advertisers to create marketing communications that attract attention and stick in people’s minds. This paper demonstrates that gestalt image ads and visual complexity in gestalt image ads, enhance ad interestingness, which increases processing pleasure, thereby increasing ad effectiveness. In so doing, this research underscores the significance of this new and distinctive style of communication.

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For further information contact:
Pragyan (Pam) Mohanty
1 University Parkway
University Park, Illinois 60484
(573) 529-6782
pmohanty@govst.edu
AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION OF PRO-ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES ON BRAND EQUITY

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

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Extant studies examining the consequences of corporate environmentalism have predominantly investigated whether or not better environmental performance has any impact on the financial performance of the focal firm (Lucas & Noordewier, 2016). What is particularly noteworthy is that no study thus far has explored whether or not corporate environmentalism has any impact on the market-based assets of industrial firms such as brand value. This research attempted to fill this void in the pertinent literature. More specifically, the question the current study explored was whether or not corporate environmentalism affects brand value of industrial firms. Drawing upon the natural resource-based theory of the firm (NRBV), this study argued that industrial firms that engage in three key areas of corporate environmentalism, namely, environmental innovation, reduction of emission and effective utilization of natural resources, reap the benefit in the form of higher brand value.

Brand value of the sample firm was measured using brand valuation estimates reported by InterBrand, a New-York based brand consultancy firm. The Interbrand’s brand valuation measure encompasses both the financial and customers’ perspective. Data on corporate environmentalism were collected from Thomson Reuter’s Eikon database. Finally, data relating to control variables were collected from Compustat. The sample period of the study was from 2007 to 2016. This study used system generalized method of moments (GMM) to estimate the proposed model.

The findings of this study demonstrate the significance of pro-environmental initiatives of industrial firms. The results of this study show that it pays to be green for industrial firms. More specifically, this study showed that firms that intend to heighten the value of their corporate brand should engage in environmental innovative initiatives so as to design, develop and market eco-friendly products and services. Likewise, firms should also develop internal capabilities so as to be able to lessen utilization of natural resources. Finally, firms should also make endeavour to reduce emission of detrimental gas into the air. In essence, firms that outperform competing firms in these three key areas of corporate environmentalism consequently attain a higher brand value. Significant implications for theory arose from the findings of this study. Studies on corporate environmentalism have to date examined the nexus between corporate environmentalism and financial performance. This is the first study, to the best of our knowledge, exploring the nexus between corporate environmentalism and market-based assets of industrial firms, namely, brand value. This study provides empirical evidence for the natural resource-based theory propositions that firms that integrate pro-environmental initiatives into their strategy will gain an edge over the competing firms. This research showed that while all key areas of corporate environmentalism positively contribute to building strong brand, the contribution of emission reduction is the least. The contribution of environmental innovation and a firm’s ability of effective utilization of natural resources are fairly equal. From a theoretical perspective, this is an interesting finding in that it shed light on the relative contribution of three key areas of corporate environmentalism.

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Available upon request

Mahabubur Rahman
Associate Professor of Marketing
Rennes School of Business
2 Rue Robert d'Arbrissel, 35065 Rennes, France
Strategic Planning with Human-Centered Design Thinking: Application in a Nonprofit Organization (NPO) Context

Shiva Nandan, Missouri Western State University

Extended Abstract

Ethical board members, executives, managers and human service professionals need to regularly ask the following questions: “Are we making the difference we need to make or can make? Are we moving forward in a meaningful way?” If the answer is “not quite,” then the organization needs to revisit all existing strategies; they cannot continue doing the same things and expect different results; they also need to expand and include different stakeholders and consumers in understanding the current and future challenges, and co-creating strategies for the future - be responsive instead of reactive. New players and approaches are infiltrating the human services field to create sustainable impact for recalcitrant problems (Berzin & Camarena, 2018). Nonprofit organizations need to be proactive and creative.

Traditionally, NPOs have conducted strategic planning using SWOT analysis with board members and some key administrators and managers. We are proposing that Human Centered Design Thinking (HCDT) can be used as an alternative perspective, methodology, process and tool for strategic planning. The uniqueness of HCDT lies in identifying different stakeholders (including funders, policy makers, managers, board members, client groups, competitors etc.) who can influence, or are influenced by, the NPO’s decisions. Once the stakeholders are identified, using appropriate HCDT tools, they can respond to questions related to their understanding of the issues/challenges/problems being faced by the organization, or issues that they are facing related to the organization (e.g., financial sustainability, customer services, types of services, customer experience, managers’ experiences, funders experiences, image of the organization etc.). Using HCDT tool, stakeholders can also be invited to ideate as well as provide solutions and strategies to address the challenges. After collecting the necessary data, an interdisciplinary team of managers and board members can develop strategies that incorporate ideas from the perspective of the different stakeholders.

Developing strategies using such a methodology will not only make them more context sensitive, but innovative as well, given that many different perspectives and ideologies have been incorporated into the strategic planning process. Unlike traditional management approaches to developing strategies, in HCDT, decision makers “avoid making choices for as long as possible in order to maximize learning as an uncertainty reduction strategy” for addressing “wicked” problems that are characterized by conditions of high level of uncertainty (c.f., Liedka, 2015, pg. 926). Therefore “[i]t’s no accident that designers can be found in the boardrooms of some of the world’s most progressive companies” (Brown & Katz, 2011, p. 381).

This methodology draws upon logic, imagination, intuition and systematic reasoning to explore possibilities of what could be for the purpose of creating desired outcomes that benefit the end user. Brown and Wyatt (2010) highlight that design thinking is a continuum of three overlapping spaces, i.e., inspiration, ideation and implementation, rather than a linear process. These authors underscore the importance of visual thinking, brainstorming and prototyping as core activities of design thinking. HCDT and innovation can be used effectively with all types of consumers (regardless of whether they are clients of an organization, professionals, or board members) for addressing process, product, system level or strategy issues. This presentation describes the HCDT process and specific tools that can be used by NPO managers for strategic planning.

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For further information contact:
Shiva Nandan
Missouri Western State University
4525 Downs Drive
St. Joseph, Mo 64506
(816) 271 4320
snandan@missouriwestern.edu
THE INTERPLAY OF PRODUCT FORM DESIGN, FUNCTION INNOVATIVENESS AND CULTURE ON NEW PRODUCT EVALUATION

Sangwon Lee, Ball State University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

This study examines the interaction effect of the form and functional design on USA (low-context culture) and South Korean (high-context culture) consumer’s willingness to buy (WTB) the new products in the radically new product context using categorization theory and Hofstede’s cultural typology (Hofstede, 1980) as theoretical underpinnings. More specifically, this paper examines two major research questions First, does the relationship between form and willingness to buy vary depending upon the culture (low context vs. high context)? Second, how does the form and function interact in two different cultures? If so, how should radically new (RNP) products and incrementally new products (INP) be designed from a form perspective in two different cultures?

Hypotheses 1 states that in South Korea, technological innovation affects the WTB such that RNP leads to higher WTB than INP. Hypotheses 2 proposes that in South Korea, less typical form leads to higher WTB than more typical form for RNP. But there is no significant difference for INP. Further, categorization theory (Hoeffler 2003; Moreau et al. 2001) was applied to hypothesize the form design (e.g. more typical vs. less typical form) and function innovativeness (e.g. RNP vs. INP) on consumer’s willingness to buy (WTB). Hypotheses 3 proposes that in USA, form design affects the WTB such that more typical form design leads to higher WTB than less typical form design. Hypotheses 4 states that in USA, more typical form leads to higher WTB than less typical form for INP. But there is no significant difference for RNP.

To test the four hypotheses, three experiments were performed. The findings demonstrate that the degree of technological innovation moderates the relationship between product form and WTB both in USA and South Korea. In USA, more typical form leads to higher WTB than less typical form for INP and there is no significant difference between more typical form and less typical form for RNP. But, in South Korea, less typical form records higher WTB than more typical form for RNP and there is no significant difference of form in INP.

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For further information contact:
Sangwon Lee
Miller College of Business
Ball State University
2000 W. University Ave.
Muncie, IN 47306
(765) 285-5195
slee20@bsu.edu
AN INTEGRATED REVIEW OF FIRST MOVER ADVANTAGE

Junzhou Zhang, Montclair State University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The first-mover advantage concept was originally generated from anecdotal and empirical evidence rather than theoretical insights. The U.S. Federal Trade Commission funded several research projects in the 1970s, and the findings from these researches demonstrate that first movers tend to have a competitive advantage than later entrants (Suarez & Lanzolla, 2007). Later, this concept of “first mover advantage” gradually attracted academic researchers’ attention. More and more scholars involved to search for theory-based explanations for why first movers tend to have several advantages. However, the academic literature on first mover advantage was divided. Early empirical studies found that first movers had a larger long-run market share (Whitten, 1979), and following research generalized these effects across other industries. However, later studies suggested that the results on market share might not be well echoed in terms of profits. Lieberman and Montgomery (1988) reviewed the existing literature thus far and concluded that “pioneering carries both advantages and disadvantages. The net impact may be negative” (p. 53-54). Subsequent scholars continually criticized early studies. For example, Golder and Tellis (1993) pointed out that the databases used by previous research might mistakenly classify early market leaders as first movers. They showed that true market pioneers failed to survive at most time. Meanwhile, several researches pointed out existing empirical studies failed to account for some important variables such as firm’s capabilities (e.g., R&D). Also, other scholars pointed out that most empirical results concentrated primarily on market share or revenues and neglected to consider important dimensions such as profitability (Lieberman & Montgomery, 1998). Generally speaking, scholars in this topic believe there are both advantages and disadvantages of moving first, but it is not clear whether moving first provides an overall advantage over time. Literature reviews have generally expressed some schizophrenia about the overall “advantages” of moving first. Different with the academic field, the concept of “first mover advantage” has kept being extolled by managers and practitioners. This suggests that in the mainstream (versus academic) media, first movers are more likely to be associated with the idea of “first mover advantage.” Why this difference between academician and managers exists in terms of “first mover advantage”? What is the rationale behind this disparity? The present study attempts to unravel this myth and introduce several new directions.

This paper reviewed the development process of first mover advantage theory. The author delineated the originality of first mover advantage theory, the rationales of economics literature and consumer behavior literature that comprised current first mover advantage theory framework, and the current mainstream mechanisms of first mover advantage theory. Specifically, this paper covered political, cultural and technology aspects with a broader scope. After thorough reviews, several issues were identified. For example, the perceptual disparity of first mover advantage between managers and academicians mainly comes from the different understanding of the definition of first mover. First mover advantage beliefs could be different in different cultures, and non-analytic judgments based on exemplars produce “stickier” impression than analytic judgments. Although political perspective has been well studied in strategic area and political mechanism has been added into first mover advantage framework, few subsequent studies further investigate the relationship between political resources and first mover advantage especially in an international context. The author also brought up a strategy mechanism that borrowing from compound interest formula from finance field. If a company can both maintain the first-ness in the industry and get this first-ness penetrated into the final customers, first movers definitely have strong competitive advantages.

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For further information contact:
Junzhou Zhang
Feliciano School of Business
Montclair State University
Montclair, NJ 07043
973-655-3774
zhangju@montclair.edu
ONLINE CONSUMER-BASED BRAND EQUITY (CBBE) AND CUSTOMER INTENTIONS TO PATRONIZE LOCAL BUSINESSES

Hyeong-Gyu Choi, Augustana College, Rock Island

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Online search has become an integral part of the daily routine of modern-day customers. They use the internet for assistance in shopping, searching for information, and for entertainment with the latest YouTube clips (Clement, 2018; Nazlan et al., 2018). Previously, when people were introduced to a new living arrangement when they are relocated for college or job, they needed to be plugged into the local network—neighbors, colleagues, and new friends—to gain access to local intelligence, such as the best restaurants or banks in town. While customers can often recall nationally recognized brands during making purchase decisions, many local businesses and brands are not at the top of customers' minds. Hence, customers often gather information about local businesses exclusively through online research. Thus, online search is the first touchpoint where the consumer's potential new journey with a new brand begins, which can be extended to varying customer lifecycles and influences the consumers' evolving brand consideration (Hallikainen et al., 2019). Although the influence of online search and customer ratings is well researched, their influence on local businesses warrants further research as its influence can be more significant than nationally recognized brands since prospective customers may exclusively rely on online reviews to form valuation of companies, which can be defined as online consumer-based brand equity (CBBE)—defined as the degree to which a brand is valued by customers. Hence, this developing study conceptualizes the elements of the online CBBE of a local brand and the potential impacts of varying online CBBE on customers' patronage intentions.

The concept of attribute diagnosticity—the utilization of attributes in decision making—was initially proposed by Slovic and Lichtenstein (1971). The perceived diagnosticity of any attribute was argued to be a function of the degree that separates the available choices on perceived quality. Attributes differ in their usefulness (Yi and Gray 1996) and the interpretation of attributes for choice and judgments is based on context and purpose rather than being dictated by its use in decisions. The perceived diagnosticity of a relevant attribute is dependent on the moment (Watson et al., 2018). The notion of availability heuristic—individuals’ tendency of focusing on information that is readily available in their memory due to limited cognitive processing capacity (Kahneman, 2011)—supports the role of online review as a vital source of attribute diagnosticity. Hence, the concept of diagnosticity that infers overall quality based on attributes can be extended to customers' inferences about local brands via online reviews. As consumers often make inferences about product quality based on multiple product attributes while making a decision (Watson, 2018), prospect customers use other online reviews of other customers as their sources for attribute diagnosticity during the initial touchpoint where there is no brand awareness, loyalty, and even brand identification. Eventually, consumers form a perceived evaluation of the brand (Nazlan et al., 2018), which is online CBBE. Aaker (1991) conceptualizes brand equity as a set of assets and liabilities associated with a brand whereas Keller (1993) defines brand equity as consumer response to the marketing of the brand impacted by their brand knowledge. According to Aaker (1991), the CBBE model reflects the customers’ evaluation of a brand based on four dimensions—perceived quality, brand awareness, brand loyalty, and brand association.

Conceptualizations of brand equity by Aaker (1991) and Keller (1993) lead to further articulation of each dimension. Perceived quality is conceptualized as “a consumer’s judgment about the superiority or excellence of a product” (Konuk, 2018). Brand awareness refers to the recallability and recognition of a brand by consumers. Brand loyalty addresses customers’ attachment to a brand whereas brand association is pertinent to customers’ associative brand knowledge (Aaker, 1991). In addition, Nam and colleagues (2011) introduced an alternative CBBE model for assessing service dominant brands with five dimensions: physical quality, staff behavior, ideal self-congruence, brand identification, and lifestyle congruence. This author proposed an online CBBE model for a local brand in three dimensions: perceived offering quality, perceived customer treatment, and ideal self-congruence.
Physical quality is the customers’ perceived image of an establishment, projected by its design, equipment, facilities, and materials associated with it (Nam et al., 2011). Conversely, perceived customer treatment is the customers’ perceived image, projected by how customers are treated at an establishment. The dimension was modified from Nam and colleagues’ proposed dimension of staff behavior, which is based on the image of employee competence, helpfulness, friendliness, and responsiveness (Nam et al., 2011). In the context of online review, potential customers are only capable of inferring physical conditions, images of a business, and customer and brand interactions—not directly observing how staff treat customers. However, potential customers review the handling of customer complaints by an owner and construct their perception regarding store images and other customers, thereby inferring how customers can be potentially treated.

In the same vein, potential customers are only capable of making inferences about physical quality based on others’ reviews and visual images. Hence, the proposed modification of perceived offering quality was conceptualized from Nam and colleagues’ research (2011). Ideal self-congruence in the retail environment refers to the degree of match between one’s ideal self-image and a brand image (Zhu et al., 2019). Aligned with the concept of brand association (Aaker, 1991), a customer’s comprehensive evaluation of a fit between their individual images and the brand image can help them develop a passion for the brand (Asthakova et al., 2017). This lead to improve their attitude toward the brand (Zhu et al., 2019). Finally, the author proposes to exclude the dimensions of brand awareness and loyalty. In agreement with Nam and colleagues (2011), brand loyalty is an outcome of brand equity rather than an antecedent of it whereas brand awareness shares close conceptual proximity with the idea of self-congruence (Çifçi et al., 2016). Therefore, the exclusion of two dimensions is proposed.

This author hypothesizes that online CBBE can have extensive ramifications on local business can be quite extensive. The available online reviews of local businesses will likely shape the CBBE of prospective customers, which consequently affects their intentions to patronize the business, especially during the initial touchpoint of the consumer journey, which can potentially determine the length of customer lifetime value (Hallikainen et al., 2019). In 2015, it was reported that sixty-nine percent of consumers based their purchase decision on online consumer reviews (Nielson, 2015). Another report stated that roughly two-thirds of US netizens reference online review often prior to purchasing decision—nearly a quarter of respondents stated consistent references of online review, while 40.8 percent did so frequently, and 25.6 percent did so occasionally (Kats, 2018). As the trend suggests, the growing impact of online evaluations on consumer purchasing behavior (Gesennhues, 2013) continues to attract managerial and scholarly interests. As this author proposes, online customer reviews are sources for CBBE while online customer reviews significantly influence consumer behavior. Hence, it is imperative that local businesses become more mindful of their online reviews as the product of online review, which is the primary source of CBBE, can affect the firms’ financial well-being (Srivastava and Shocker, 1991), consumer perception of offering (Dodds et al., 1991), and consumer preference and purchase intention (Cobb et al., 1995).

REFERENCES


For further information contact:

Hyeong-Gyu Choi
Augustana College
639 38th Street
Rock Island, IL 61201
(309) 794-7780
Hyeong-gyuchoi@augustanae.edu
ANTECEDENT AND CONSEQUENT CONDITIONS OF BRAND BOREDOM: MODERATING ROLE OF BRAND CREDIBILITY

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

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The study on “boredom” was originated from Psychology and widely expanded to the other disciplines such as Psychoanalysis, Sociology, Leisure, Education, and Workplace management. Boredom is the experience of being disengaged from the object and the aversive experience of wanting it. As the state of boredom is highly relevant to the consumer behavior, the construct has been investigated in the field of advertising, product choice, and consumption. To our knowledge, however, the construct of boredom has not been studied in the context of brand experience. Hence, this study examines the various factors that influence the level of brand boredom and the negative impact of brand boredom on the intention related to brand use. The authors investigate the possible pathways in which the perception related to the brand attributes (Design attractiveness and Quality) and the individual consumer trait (Exploratory tendency and Materialism) might influence the brand boredom.

Specifically, as boredom occurs when sensory stimulation is interpreted as mentally monotonous, the current study hypothesized that the design attractiveness of the brand reduces the level of brand boredom. Boredom is an affective consequence of intentional attention to a stimulus situation. Hence, people feel bored when they must exert concerted effort to maintain their attention on a particular stimulus. The current study expects that if the perceived quality of the brand is not prominent and not intuitively observable so the consumers have to put the cognitive effort when they evaluate the reasons to maintain the relationship with the brand, they are likely to feel bored toward the brand. In addition, customers feel the excitement in their shopping experience with variety seeking and it offers customers to take a shift from boredom. Lastly, materialistic consumers would value the acquisition of a wide variety of brands, which leads to less attention of brands they already purchased, quickly growing bored with it.

When experiencing boredom, people try to improve their emotional state by avoiding the source of the negative situation. Similarly, brand boredom would drive brand avoidance. However, given that perceived value is the consumer’s perception of brand utility based on consideration of what is received (i.e., practical value) and what is given up (negative feeling, boredom) to receive it, this study also examines whether the brand credibility moderates the negative impact of the brand boredom on brand avoidance.

To test the hypotheses, a total of 310 respondents who have an experience of boredom and tedium with any brand were recruited through a professional research company. The findings of the current study contribute to the boredom in consumer behavior literature and beneficial to brand strategist who deal with the consumers’ emotional responses to brands.

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

Today’s consumers are continuously bombarded with point-of-sale (POS) fundraising campaigns. Companies who incorporate POS donations are implementing new strategies to extract more donations from their retail transactions. Many of the strategies are focused on influencing consumer behavior to see how they can convert more customers dollars into donations. A group of students from the College of Business at Cal State San Marcos were curious how small commitment funding (microdonations typically under $100) social proofing (the idea that people imitate the actions of the masses) could be applied to cause related marketing. A recent article in the Washington Post noted that, “the cost of organized sports for kids is prohibitively high” and that participation among youth in sports programs is rapidly declining. (Bogage, 2018). We chose to work with the fundraising campaign, Sports Matter, a charity that aims to help fund children’s sports programs in the United States. Sports Matter is a charity fundraiser that depends on donations from consumers at Dick’s Sporting Goods (DSG) locations. For this reason, our team partnered with Dick’s Sporting Goods Encinitas, CA location to test out an experiment to discover if influence tactics could improve results for the Sports Matter program.

Dick’s Sporting Goods currently has associates asks “would you like to donate” to the fundraiser during the checkout. After learning in class lectures about how both commitment and social proof tactics have helped improve charitable donations by other retailers, our team wanted to use these influence methods through the creation of a new pitch to see if we could generate a positive impact for Sports Matter. For our hypothesis, we believed that by exhibiting the tactic of commitment, Dick’s Sporting Goods would see an increasing number of donations and the amount donated from customers for the Sports Matter program. However, by incorporating tactics of commitment along with social proof, the results would prove to be even more successful through higher donation and donated amount totals.

The methods used for this research were centered around incorporating the influence tactics of commitment and social proof during three separate Fridays in October at the Dick’s Sporting Goods location in Encinitas. To ensure the results would be meaningful our experiment consisted of one trial run where the conditions were kept normal with no manipulations so that we could see if there were a positive or negative difference in the other two trial runs where influence tactics were added. Our first Friday test had DSG associates simply ask consumers at the register “would you like to donate” when at the register. This allowed our team to collect data that represented what the store would normally collect for the charity during a Friday business day. In our class lectures, we learned that making a commitment feel small, easier, and less stressful can result in much higher success. The second Friday test consisted of the associates adding the commitment tactic by asking customers a new phrase, “would you like to round up your purchase today for Sports Matter?”, making the donation process feel much smaller and more efficient. In this scenario, consumers had also had the option of donating a larger amount than just rounding up. Another topic in our lectures covered how social proof can help improve the donation amounts since people are more inclined to do what everyone else around them is doing since it feels like the correct behavior. We added this tactic along with the commitment tactic on the third and final test by ringing a bell and having the associates say “thank you” if there was a donation in addition to the pitch from test day two. This test allowed us to see if the tactics would complement each other during consumer transactions at the register. This scenario also allowed consumers the ability to donate more than just rounding up. Additionally, to further ensure our results would not just represent the small-time period of our
experiment we compared the data to the average of donations and amount donated from every previous Friday in the year to ensure any positive increase or negative decrease represented was valid.

We collected data and analyzed the results focusing on the total number of transactions, donations, amount donated, and percentage of people donating and used these measurements to compare if there were any types of positive or negative differences. During the first Friday, we discovered that the conversion rate of people that donated was 23%. Also, the average donation of those that donated was $1.44, there were 50 total donations, and the total amount donated for the day was $72. Our results for the second Friday showed that there was a significant increase in the number of donations, (107), and conversion rate of 39%, however there was a decrease in the amount donated per person which dropped to $.76. While the amount donated per consumer dropped, the overall amount donated for the day also increased to $81. Based on this data we confirmed our hypothesis that adding commitment would increase the total number of donations and the total amount donated. For the third Friday, the data showed that the total amount donated increased to $89 and the amount donated per consumer also increased to $1.00 when compared to the second day. However, the data did show that there was a decrease in the number of donations, 89, and a lower conversion rate of 31% for total transactions that day. This proves our hypothesis was right about adding commitment and social proof together since it resulted in the highest amount of money donated for each Friday. This data also reveals that our hypothesis was incorrect based on the total number of donations increasing with both tactics since the third Friday resulted in a decrease. We compared the second and third Friday’s total amount donated against the previous average for the year which was $61. In doing so there is a clear increase in both our manipulated test days and non-condition test versus the traditional average which tells us there is a valid increase in the total amount donated during the experiment.

Our findings clearly show a positive impact from the implementation of the influence tactics and give DSG a valid finding that shows how they can immediately help increase their donations and amount totals for Sports Matter. When comparing the average Friday to the third test Friday where we introduced both commitment and social proof there is a 46% jump in the total amount donated for the charity. Through the implementation of these tactics in DSG’s locations across the county, they could see an extremely valuable increase in the amount donated to their charity. Once the data analysis was conducted, we recommended to DSG that they implement both commitment and social proof tactics to their Sports Matter donation request. We also recommended to DSG to add more priming techniques, so customers are more exposed as to what Sports Matter is and why it’s important. Potential reasons why donations and conversions reduced during the third test day could result associates not always ringing the bell, associates who were unaware of the test, and consumers who felt pressure from the bell. The third day had the highest amount donated with less donations and conversions because commitment and social proof lead to consumers giving more per donation, meaning they likely donated more than just rounding up. We plan to further expand this research through more tests in different DSG locations and different times in the week and year. Post additional experimentation with similar outcomes will ensure that our experiment results are further validated and our data is affirmed.

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For further information contact:
Joseph Kicko
California State University of San Marcos
1321 Laurel Tree Lane apt. 240
Carlsbad, CA 92011
(760)-889-8346
Kicko001@cougars.csusm.edu
PREVENTING FOOD WASTE AT A FOOD BANK: A FIELD EXPERIMENT ON SOCIAL PROOF

Anika Kline, California State University San Marcos
Samantha Gomez, California State University San Marcos
Gagan Nijjar, California State University San Marcos
Hannah O’Brien, California State University San Marcos

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The Cougar Pantry is a food bank located on the California State University San Marcos campus. Its purpose is to reduce food insecurity on campus and provides students with a range of free food and drink items as well as free hygiene products. Students can visit once a week and take as much as they need within certain limits from each shelf.

Food waste is a widespread issue, even for food banks like the Cougar Pantry. We were interested in examining whether the Cougar Pantry could use social proof to reduce food waste while gaining insight on the behavior of students and their needs. The results of this field experiment reveal how food pantry employees can deploy signage as a tool to influence behavior and reduce food waste due to expiration dates and oversupply.

Our research focused on answering the following questions in regards to student behavior in the Cougar Pantry:
1. Can social proof prompt students to take more refrigerated drinks from the Cougar Pantry?
2. Can negative social proof discourage students from taking pasta from the Cougar Pantry?

We tested the effects of influence tactics on student behavior regarding the two items of interest - refrigerated drinks and pasta - with a simple experiment. We compared the results from an unaltered environment (control) to an altered environment with signs displaying social proof messages (treatment condition). Other than signs displaying the item limit per shelf, there are no signs or advertisements displayed in the Cougar Pantry. We expected the results from the positive social proof message to increase the number of items taken and expected the number of items taken by students to decrease with the negative social proof message due to the students’ likelihood to conform to the more popular behavior.

In the first experiment, the Cougar Pantry environment was not manipulated. One person was responsible for tallying the number of refrigerated drinks taken as well as pasta taken over the course of four days over two weeks, for 90 minutes each day, and the same days and times during both weeks. We also recorded the total number of students that visited the Cougar Pantry each of these days and times to get the proportion of the totals. We started the experiment on Tuesday, October 15th and Wednesday, October 16th, recording the number of items taken for both categories. In our second experiment, we manipulated the Cougar Pantry environment with social proof signs. A sign was placed on the refrigerator that stated “Cold beverages are one of the most popular items among students in the Cougar Pantry: (please take one!). This action was our positive social proof message, which was meant to help the pantry get rid of waste. We also put a sign by the pasta shelf that said “Most students don’t take pasta from the Cougar Pantry: (please take some!)”. This action was our negative social proof message, which was meant to test if the negative message would actually reduce the amount of supply taken. We conducted this second experiment two weeks later, starting on Tuesday, October 29th and again on Wednesday, October 30th, which was a day that had a fire conditions warning.

In this study, the independent variables are the signs indicating positive social proof on the refrigerator, the sign indicating negative social proof near the rack of pasta, and the absence of the signs altogether. The dependent variable is the number/percent of cold beverages and pasta taken during those two days.

During our control condition week, Tuesday, 11 visitors took pasta and 19 visitors took cold beverages. A total of 36 students visited the Pantry within 90 minutes, so approximately 30.56% of visitors took pasta and approximately...
52.78% of visitors took cold beverages. On Wednesday, 10 visitors took pasta and 17 visitors took cold beverages. A total of 33 students visited the Pantry within 90 minutes and approximately 30.30% of visitors took pasta and approximately 51.52% took cold beverages. During our manipulation week, we saw a significant increase in cold beverages and pasta taken both days. On Tuesday, 22 visitors took pasta and 25 visitors took cold beverages. A total of 38 students visited the Pantry within this time period, so approximately 57.89% of visitors took pasta and 65.79% of visitors took cold beverages. On Wednesday, 13 visitors took pasta and 20 visitors took cold beverages. A total of 38 students visited the Pantry within this time frame, so approximately 56.52% of visitors took pasta and approximately 89.96% of visitors took cold beverages.

Our hypothesis predicted that the positive social proof application towards the refrigerated drinks would increase the amount of drinks taken during the time period studied. Our hypothesis also predicted that the negative social proof application would decrease the amount of pasta taken during the time period studied. Although our hypothesis for the positive social proof application was confirmed, the results from the negative social proof application turned out to be completely opposite from our predictions. We believe that the general reason for these results was based on the lack of advertising in the Cougar Pantry. Apart from our experiment, the Pantry does not include signs that highlight certain products. We believe the inclusion of our signs drew attention to the pasta supply regardless of it highlighting a negative social proof influence, and that the time of our study could have also had an effect on the unexpected results. We conducted the experiments around noon, during lunchtime, and figured a large amount of students would be hungry, looking for food, or have free time. This way, we would be able to have the most amount of data collected. Conducting our experiment at this time could have had an effect on the types of products taken as well as quantity. At lunch time students could feel more encouraged to take items they don’t usually take based on their hunger level.

The Cougar Pantry can eliminate future waste in their supply by advertising their products with signs, such as we did in the study. Employees of the pantry can make signs advertising a product of the week, a new item, limited time offer, etc. to convey exposure to specific products that have a large supply. The employees do not have to be considerate of negative social proof when advertising, based on our experiment results.

For further information contact:
Anika Kline
1482 Brook Rd.
San Marcos, CA 92069
(760) 715-5265
kline012@cougars.csusm.edu
CREATIVITY AND NOVELTY OF INSTAGRAM ADVERTISING

Anthony Anselmo, Cal State University San Marcos
Jack Grasser, Cal State University San Marcos
Alex Zarrabian, Cal State University San Marcos
Alessio Sorano, Cal State University San Marcos

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Our study tested if novelty advertisements on Instagram garner higher user engagements than using traditional methods. According to Google, novelty is defined as the quality of being new original or unusual. We, thus, tested two advertisements, one with the principle of novelty and the other without, to see how empirical evidence would support the novelty advertisement to outperform the non-novelty advertisement.

The first ad we would post would be a control, simply showing a friend tossing a beer to another friend, with the caption reading, “The best way to enjoy a BNS brew is with your best buds. This ad served only to get an idea of how much engagement we can expect to see from a typical Instagram post/sponsored advertisement. The second ad we would post would be our novel ad. This post would combine two Instagram posts together by using a screenshot of Instagram’s user interface to separate the two videos. Then, when the video plays, the advertisement shows one person dropping a beer to another person across Instagram’s user interface, giving the illusion that our advertisement has crossed through multiple individual Instagram posts. (See image at end of paper for context).

Targeting: Before we posted the videos, we needed to decide who our target audience was going to be. We checked the analytics on BNS’s current Instagram page to find that 47% of BNS’s followers live within 25 miles of Santee, CA, 88% of their followers are aged 25-54, 61% of their followers are male and their followers are active most on Fridays every week. We used this to set our target audience which consisted of men and women aged 21-55 who live within 25 miles of Santee and are interested in alcohol, breweries, brewing, distillation, wine & spirits, and concerts (as BNS also hosts live music every weekend). The first audience we tested consisted of the target audience we previously mentioned. The second audience we tested consisted of those who already followed the BNS Instagram page. We did this to see what the difference is between engagements from people who already know about the brewery, vs people who have possibly never heard of it before.

Posting: The first ad was posted on Friday at 10:00 am and ran through Sunday at 10:00 am. We first posted the ad to the BNS Instagram page to see how it would perform with the audience who already follows the page. Then we boosted the post, using the target audience we preset, and ran the video as a sponsored ad from Friday through Sunday, hoping to do the same with our second advertisement. Exactly one week later, we posted the second video to the BNS Instagram page. We then attempted to boost the second advertisement as a sponsored ad to the same target audience we defined earlier, however Instagram rejected the advertisement. We were told that through Instagram advertising, you are not allowed to post a screenshot of any Facebook or Instagram interfaces, so we decided to compare the results from BNS’s personal Instagram page and monitor the engagements from our preset customer base as opposed to monitoring engagements from a wider audience. We did not want to give up, however, as we felt our idea was very promising. So, we decided to create a third ad.

Creating the third ad: We decided to create a “meme” of sorts, and then have our beer can drop over the caption of our meme, giving the video the same 3D effect, we had in our second advertisement. The meme shows Jack lying in bed above the caption and dropping a beer over the caption to Alessio as he is laying by the pool. The caption for the meme reads, “When you don’t want to go out, but your buddy wants a beer”. This was intended to be a funny meme that can be easily shared with friends through Instagram direct messages, while still having the novel aspect of the beer can falling over some form of writing or caption. (See image below for context). After discussing it with the BNS team, we decided not to post this video right now to not dilute the Instagram’s aesthetic with too many similar posts three weeks in a row, and to save it for a later date instead.
Results: Our results can help conclude that the novelty advertising gets higher engagement than non-novelty advertising. These results support our hypothesis as the novelty post had more interactions than the non-novelty post. Due to our inability to analyze the sponsored advertisement results, we decided to analyze the engagement results from BNS’s current follower base. Some of the statistics we wanted to analyze include reach, impressions, profile visits, follows, saves, direct messages, website clicks, and likes. One important distinction is the difference between impressions and reach. Impressions are the number of times the content has been displayed, while reach is the number of people who have seen your content. So, Instagram’s algorithm will display a good post more than a bad post, so it will automatically have higher impressions if it is a good post, however the number of times it is displayed in a feed doesn’t necessarily translate to higher reach, so we find reach to be more valuable than impressions. Our most valued metrics, however, were comments, shares, saves, profile visits, and website clicks. We wanted to see if novelty could increase engagement, and these are direct indicators of true engagement. We also wanted to compare how many people visited our profile vs how many people viewed our content (reach vs. profile visits). While it’s important for more people to see the ad, we find it more important to what percentage of people who viewed our content visited our profile.

Figure 1: Results of non-novelty post vs novelty post side by side.

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For further information contact:
Alexzander Zarrabian
California State University San Marcos
P.O. Box 675765
Rancho Santa Fe, CA 92067
(858) 922-2333
IDENTIFIABLE VICTIM AND DONATIONS: A FIELD EXPERIMENT

Neil Cutkomp, California State University San Marcos
Kennedy Layne, California State University San Marcos
Juliana Torres, California State University San Marcos
Haley Sapp, California State University San Marcos

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The Identifiable Victim Effect is a widely used and effective tactic to receive a greater amount of aid by directing attention to a specific identifiable “victim” under hardship. Will displaying an identifiable “victim” who has already received aid increase donations? It is important to know if this variation of the tactic still evokes an emotion that will increase the amount of aid.

Using an identifiable victim who needs aid has proven to increase donations in many cases. We will test if showing a past “victim” who has already received aid is still effective in increasing aid (donations) for the cause at hand. If we display an identifiable victim who has already received help, we expect to receive more aid (donations) than without one. This is because the image of a past victim still evokes emotion since people are able to see a specific person being helped. While this emotion may be different, we believe it will be effective in increasing donations. Potential donors will know that the money they give will help someone reach the level of happiness of the victim who has been helped.

Data Collection 1: For the control group, we observed a bake sale booth for the Delta Zeta Sorority at California State University San Marcos (CSUSM) in front of the University Student Union (USU) on Tuesday, November 12 from 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm. The sorority is partnered with the Starkey Hearing Foundation, a non-profit organization who provides hearing aids for those in need around the globe. The money raised at this bake sale goes directly to the foundation. At the booth, sorority members explained to students what cause the sale was for. As a group, we observed the booth for the entire hour. There was no sign or poster used in selling cookies.

Data Collection 2: For the manipulated group, we observed the same booth, time, and location on Thursday, November 14. On this day, we displayed a large sign depicting the identifiable victim in front of the booth. It was facing so bye passers where are able to clearly see the poster of the victim. This victim’s story and description was a patient helped by the Starkey Foundation. Underneath the picture of the victim, the sign read: “Every child wants to hear their own laugh”, “Help children like Joel hear”, and “For 6-year-old Joel, he has made tremendous improvements since first receiving his hearing aids at 4 years old. Help others like him with the purchase of a $2 cookie” (See images below). As students approached the booth, one group member who is apart of the sorority directed their attention to the sign and provided an explanation. The rest of the group observed and took pictures for the entire hour.

Figure 1: In this experiment, the independent variable was the identifiable victim sign and the dependent variable was the total amount of donations.
Figure 2: Students gather around the sign on Day 2 of the experiment which created more engagement with the booth than Day 1.

Control Group: For the control group without manipulation, the total amount of donations received in one hour was $15.

Manipulated Group: For the manipulated group with the identifiable victim sign, the total amount received in one hour was $41.50. The dependent variable (donations) increased as a result of the independent variable (sign). From the results of this experiment, it is easy to see that the manipulated group was more successful in obtaining donations. The booth received $26.50 more in donations when using the identifiable victim sign, a 176 percent increase.

Figure 3: A chart showing the comparison of the Day 1 of collecting donations and Day 2 collecting donations, with the increase using the Identifiable Victim signage.

The results of this experiment confirmed our hypothesis; displaying the sign increased the amount of donations received. It was interesting to see that the identifiable victim effect still worked even though this particular victim had already received aid. Prior to running the experiment, we thought that the effect of this victim may not work as well as the traditional identifiable victim. The 176 percent increase in donations proved that was not the case. We were surprised at the increase in the amount of donations. After running this experiment, it would be interesting to gather
the results of an experiment that ran a control without an identifiable victim, this variation of an identifiable victim, and a true identifiable victim and see the difference in donations between the three groups.

For further information contact:
Kennedy Layne
California State University San Marcos
342 Comstock Avenue
San Marcos, CA 92025
(760)805-7034
layne001@cougars.csusm.edu
EFFECTS OF CULTURAL THINKING STYLES ON EVALUATIONS OF PRODUCTS ENDORED BY SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS

Prerna Aishwarya Narayanan, University of Akron
Sydney Chinchanachokchai, University of Akron

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Due to the increase in usage of social media, social media influencer advertising has emerged as a new trend in marketing. Social media influencers are referred to as people who have built a sizeable network of people following them (De Veirman, Cauberghe & Hudders, 2019). Social media influencers try their best to endorse products that fit within their line of expertise since they want to retain their followers (Breves, Liebers, Abt & Kunze, 2019). However, the perceived fit between the influencers and the products may vary from country to country. Thus, it is important for global marketers to understand the effects of consumers’ different thinking styles on the perceived fit between social media influencers and the endorsed products. Cross cultural research has shown that people from different cultural backgrounds are different in their thinking styles (Nisbett et al., 2001). That is people from Eastern cultures (e.g., China, Japan, and India) are holistic thinkers and people from Western cultures (e.g., the US, Western Europe) are analytic thinkers. Holistic thinking is defined as “involving an orientation to the context or field as a whole, including attention to relationships between focal object and the field, and a preference for explaining and predicting events on the basis of such relationships”. On the other hand, analytic thinking involves “a detachment of the object from its context, a tendency to focus on attributes of the object to assign it to categories, and the preference of using rules about the categories to explain and predict the objects behavior (Nisbett et al., 2001 p. 293)”. Existing research showed that different thinking styles can affect product evaluations (Chinchanachokchai & Noel, 2015) and brand evaluations (Monga & John, 2007). Monga and John (2007) found that due to the holistic thinking style possessed by Easterners (Indians), they perceived higher brand extension fit and evaluated brand extensions more favorably compared to Westerners (Americans) who possessed the analytic thinking style. The purpose of this research is to understand how the fit between social media influencers and the products are perceived across cultures. We propose that there is no difference in between holistic (Eastern) thinking and analytic thinkers (Westerns) when they evaluate a product that is closely related to the social media influencer’s expertise. At the same time, Easterners (holistic thinkers) will rate a product higher than the Westerners (analytic thinkers) when the product is not closely related to the social media influencer’s expertise due to their ability to connect the relationship between the object and the context. The findings from this study will have marketing implications for global marketing strategy and international business.

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For further information contact:
Sydney ChinchanaChokchai
University of Akron
Akron, OH 44325-4804
330-972-5136
schinchana@uakron.edu
EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Due to extensive media attention in the United States (US), the health risks from consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages (SSBs) are on the minds of people of all ages. Much research today shows direct links between SSB consumption and diseases such as Type II Diabetes and heart disease. One team of researchers conducted a study that lasted approximately 12 weeks, where a controlled group of lab rats was given tap water, and an experimental group of lab rats enhanced water that was 30% sucrose solution. The findings showed that the rats who consumed the sucrose water had an increased insulin serum (Díaz-Aguila, Castelán, Cuevas, Zambrano, Martínez-Gómez, Muñoz, & Nicolás-Toledo, 2015). The Park, Lundeen, Pan, and Blanck (2018) cross-sectional online panel study of 4,163 US adults showed that most adults are aware of the link between consumption of SSBs and diabetes. However, their research found that 37.8% of adults report consuming SSBs at least two times a day. A significant number of respondents reported believing that weight gain (80.2%), diabetes (73.6%), and cavities (71.8%) are related to drinking SSB. Further, the study showed that knowing about SSB-related health conditions is not enough to change behavior. The Farley, Halper, Carlin, Emmerson, Foster, & Fertig (2017) survey studied subjects (18-45 years of age) who did not believe SSBs were a health risk. As part of the 15-week study, the subjects residing in the Tri-Cities region of Northeast Tennessee, Southwest Virginia, and Southeast Kentucky viewed a brief media campaign about the health risks associated with SSB consumption (heart disease and diabetes). The respondents reported that from their new knowledge that they intended to consume fewer SSBs.

The study subject campus has ads, promotions (e.g., free campus beverages in the student center), and product placement in nearly every location possible on campus. The current study examined the purchase behavior of college students subjected to extensive marketing promotions and product placement of SSBs at a medium-size public liberal arts university in the Southeastern US.

For the current study, incognito, covert, direct observations were conducted in multiple areas of the college campus. The researchers blended in with other students purchasing refreshments from vending machines at convenient locations on campus. The decision was made to only observe college students’ purchase decisions in a limited number of highly trafficked campus location for this pilot study. It was believed that due to media coverage of health risk and health courses are taken, college students would make healthy choices. Observations were conducted at high foot traffic times on a Monday. The first Monday’s observation was of 32 students in a snack area. Of the 32 in the snack area during the 11:50 to 12:10 p.m. break, 24 purchased an SSB with only eight purchasing water. On the second Monday of observations, the researchers were present within the same timeframe. This time seven students entered the vending area. Two purchased SSBs and five purchased bottles of water. On the third Monday, 27 students entered the snack area of which 16 purchased SSBs and 11 purchased bottled water. From these three observations, it was found that 63.6% of 66 students purchased SSBs, and 34.4% purchased water. Observations were also conducted at high foot traffic times on a Tuesday. A total of 15 students were observed with nine (9) students in the snack area between 9:15 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. purchasing SSBs and six purchasing water. On the second Tuesday of observations, the researchers were present within the same timeframe. This time seven (7) students entered the snack area. Two purchased SSBs and five purchased bottles of water. On this occasion, 11 students entered the snack machine area with one student purchasing a bottle of water and ten (10) students purchasing SSBs. On the fourth Tuesday of observations, 14 students were observed in the snack area. Of the 14, three purchased water, and 11 purchased SSBs. From these observations, it was found that 68.1% of 47 students purchased SSBs, and 31.9% purchased water.

Observational research has limits as the researcher is unable to ask participants questions to understand their behavior, it is conducted in a very short period of time, and researchers may be subject to faulty recall. It is hypothesized that the influence and convenience of the soft drink bottler’s product placement and promotions on
campus and possible lack of knowledge of health risk have a significant influence on drink choices by college students. Because this was an observational study, there is no way to determine if behaviors were a direct result of advertising and promotion. Therefore, a survey study will be conducted to determine if students’ purchases are related to the convenience of SSBs on campus, the prevalence of advertising and promotion by the SSB producer on campus, the influence of the vendor, and awareness of health risks from SSBs. From the findings of the forthcoming survey research study, social marketing recommendations will be offered.

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For Information contact:
Doreen Sams
Georgia College & State University
CBX 011
Milledgeville, GA 31061
(478) 445-0966
Doreen.sams@gcsu.edu
MARKETING OBSERVATIONS: PRODUCT PLACEMENT – SPORTING EVENTS

Leslie (Fagan) Kennedy, Georgia College & State University
Hadleigh Wilson, Georgia College & State University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Due to extensive advertising, health risks from consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages (SSBs) are prevalent in the United States (US). Recent research clearly shows that there are multiple health risks from the consumption of SSBs. A research study by Gardener, Moon, Rundek, Elkind, and Sacco (2018) found a correlation between sugar-sweetened beverage consumption and incidents of diabetes. Another research study conducted across 75 countries revealed that a relationship existed between obesity, diabetes, and purchase and consumption of SSBs (Basu, McKee, Galea & Stuckler, 2013). Knowledge about health risks from SSBs is not new news; yet, many college sporting events are sponsored by SSB producers.

A study conducted in 2008 examined the appropriateness of sponsors for events. Two studies (survey study n = 253 and focus groups n = 12) examined attitudes toward food and non-alcoholic beverage sponsorships compared to fast food, tobacco, and alcohol sponsorships at sporting events. The findings of the study showed that participants preferred non-alcoholic beverages to alcohol and were not in favor of fast food or tobacco sponsors. Foods and drinks that were recognized to be healthier were preferred over unhealthy choices such as SSBs. The findings also showed that when choosing sporting event sponsors, health issues should be strongly considered (Danylchuk and MacIntosh). The Danylchuk and MacIntosh (2008) study did not specifically examine attitudes toward SSB producer sponsorships. Therefore, the purpose of this current study is to gather preliminary data to inform research questions and hypotheses as to the influence of the SSB sponsorships at college athletic and wellness events.

At a medium-size public liberal arts university in the Southeastern United States (US), students a top US SSB producer sponsors sporting events and has product placements and promotions in the university’s wellness center. This observational study examines student choices for drinks from vending machines within the wellness center and at sporting events.

A covert, direct, incognito observation methodology was used to examine behaviors. This methodology was appropriate as behaviors were observed in a public setting; thus, affording the researchers the opportunity to collect data without changing behaviors that often occur in survey studies, interviews, or focus groups.

Across four different sporting events, a total of 90 individuals were observed. The researchers observed behaviors at a university volleyball game. The location of the event has multiple marketing touchpoints for the sponsoring SSB producer. When the researcher arrived at the event, only seven individuals were present. Three of the seven (7) in attendance had refillable water bottles. Once the game began, the audience grew in size to 23 members, at which time three (3) were drinking sports drinks, another had an energy drink, and the rest of the members were drinking from refillable water bottles. There was no one observed consuming SSBs. Observations were also conducted at a university basketball game. Of the 18 individuals present before the game began, none were observed to be consuming SSBs. At the end of the second quarter, 11 audience members went to the snack area, and three returned with SSBs. No other incidences of consumption of SSBs were observed at the basketball game. The researchers also attended a flag football game; there were 31 individuals in the audience. Of these 31, 18 had refillable water bottles. During this event, no SSBs were observed being purchased or consumed. At an ultimate frisbee competition on campus, there were 18 audience members with only three (3) consuming SSBs. In all, only 7% of the 90 being observed consumed SSBs at athletic events.

The sponsoring company also bottles sports drinks and water. Therefore, the influence on the choice to drink the healthier choices may have been driven by the type of activity, the location of the events, and the influence of the event sponsor’s marketing of healthier choices. It is not possible to know without conducting additional research. This current study was limited by the type of research and the small sample size. The study leaves questions that cannot be
answered through observations. Thus, future studies will examine attitudes toward drink choices at sporting events and wellness locations through interviews, a survey intercept, and focus groups. The study will examine why choices for drinks at university sporting events are made and whether the sponsor influences drink decisions. The research will also examine awareness of attendees at college athletic events and the wellness center of the health risk from SSBs. From the research, social marketing will be developed.

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For further information contact:
Doreen Sams
Georgia College & State University
CBX 011
Milledgeville, GA  31061
(478) 445-0966
Doreen.sams@gcsu.edu
WHY HIRE US? EXPERIENCED SALES PRACTITIONERS’ PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENT PREPARATION

Alexa Hladick, Christopher Newport University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The need for sales employees is growing at an all-time high pace, but the preparation of students for a position in the sales industry is lacking in the United States. Through sales literature and data collection, the undergraduate preparation for a sales position was examined and evaluated. The views and opinions of seasoned sales practitioners in the United States were obtained through in-depth interviews that were conducted specifically to determine their thoughts on undergraduate sales education and preparation of undergraduate students for a career in sales. This data was gathered to determine the need for improvement, and in some cases, the addition of undergraduate sales education in colleges and universities in the United States. The aggregate results of the interviews identified the types of knowledge and skills that college students should possess, undergraduate college course suggestions, the methods by which sales education should be delivered to students, and the prior preparation desired for the onboarding training programs of select companies. This exploratory research study aims to fill a gap since very few research studies investigating the views of experienced sales practitioners currently appear in the published literature. There are various studies that investigate sales education, but in most cases, they reflect the view from an academic perspective rather than from an industry point of view. It is relevant to use the suggestions of experienced practitioners who are currently employed in the sales industry because they thoroughly understand and comprehend the sales world from beginning to end.

The main focus of this research was to investigate the perspectives of sales practitioners who have current and past experience (more than five years) within the sales industry to uncover their perspectives on collegiate sales education. A total of 15 telephone interviews were conducted within a one-week span of time during the fall 2019 semester. Each telephone interview lasted anywhere from 13 to 30 minutes and prior consent was obtained to enable the telephone interview to be recorded in order to be later transcribed by the researcher. The responses were recorded in separate documents. For this study, the researcher created 13 questions, with one-half of the questions addressing content that may assist in improving current sales education based on the opinions and needs of current sales representatives. The second half of the questions served to classify responses and to categorize the interviewees’ sales experiences and relevant job functions. The purpose of these in-depth interviews was to gain knowledge on ways to better prepare college undergraduate students to be hired for a career in the sales industry.

Between all 15 interviewees their combined years of sales experience totaled 378 years. The average number of years was 25.2 years. Interestingly, only 20 percent, or two out of 15 participants, have completed an undergraduate college sales course, which supports the lack of sales programs in the country. One of the interview questions asked practitioners to identify the top five knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) they are looking for when hiring recent college graduates. Based on the in-depth interview findings, eight KSAs, were most commonly identified. Communication was the top skill that seasoned sales professionals determined was most important for undergraduate students to possess to be successful in a sales position. The work ethic of the candidate was deemed the second most important, followed by being coachable, having computer skills, the passion of the potential employee, his or her willingness to learn, his or her personality, and lastly, the soft skills the candidate held. Different types of sales courses were investigated, as well as the specific topics those courses should include. Although preferences for the select topics were very similar for all practitioners, with many participants mentioning that all topics should be addressed in sales courses, negotiating was the most commonly identified topic. The second most commonly identified topic was “other” which included items such as people skills, listening skills, leadership skills, and prospecting or how to find...
customer needs. Using sales technology was reported as a third topic to be sure to include in various college-level sales courses.

Understanding the growing need for sales education, the necessary skills needed to be successful in sales positions, and the most effective ways to teach those skills to students can improve the overall preparation of future job candidates for careers in sales. The proper topics, such as the sales process, could be taught through role playing and emphasized through guest speakers. Also, proactively teaching communication as a stronger skill in the classroom and emphasizing to college students how important their work ethic is for their future career in sales are desirable. In conclusion, this empirical study provides some insight regarding the importance of teaching the sales process, negotiation, and the use of sales technology to improve student preparation for a career in sales, which in turn, will make them a more attractive hire for a sales position.

For further information contact:
Alexa Hladick
Christopher Newport University
1 University Place
Newport News, VA 23606
(609)-752-1725
alexa.hladick.15@cnu.edu
DOES EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE INFLUENCE PRO-ENVIRONMENTAL BEHAVIOR?

Elise Benner, Northern State University  
Ashley Meyer, Northern State University  
Hannah Walters, Northern State University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

This research aimed to answer the question: Does emotional intelligence influence pro-environmental behavior? While existing studies have identified emotional intelligence as a predictor of a wide range of behaviors in a variety of contexts, there is little literature exploring the relationship between emotional intelligence and pro-environmental behavior. This research intended to fill that gap by exploring the relationships between emotional intelligence, environmental concern, green consumer values, and pro-environmental behavior.

Pro-environmental behavior is defined as, “behavior that consciously seeks to minimize the negative impact of one’s actions on the natural and built world” (Kollmuss and Agyeman, 2002, p. 240). Environmental concern is an individual’s general orientation toward the environment (Kim and Choi, 2005). Green consumption values are tendencies for one to express their value of environmental protection through their purchases and consumption behaviors (Haws, Winterich, and Naylor, 2014). Lastly, emotional intelligence is defined as “a part of social intelligence that includes the ability to control one’s own and others’ feelings, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide our thinking and actions” (Mayer, Salovey, Caruso, and Sitarenios, 2001, p. 239). Within emotional intelligence, there are four dimensions: self-emotions appraisals, other-emotions appraisals, use of emotions, and regulation of emotions.

The research was conducted using a sample of undergraduate students enrolled at a regional Midwest university. Three survey questionnaires were administered in a classroom setting. The collected data was analyzed using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). The first study assessed emotional intelligence and environmental concern, which was measured by a scale developed by Onel and Mukherjee (2017). The second study evaluated emotional intelligence and green consumer values, which was measured using the scale by Haws, Winterich, and Naylor (2014). In both studies, emotional intelligence was measured based on the sixteen-item scale developed by Law, Wong, and Song (2004).

A bivariate correlation analysis showed that environmental concern directly and positively relates to emotional intelligence, \( r(88) = .346, p = .001 \). Among the dimensions of emotional intelligence, the use of emotions and environmental concern were found to be correlated, \( r(88) = .422, p = .000 \). Also, green consumer values and emotional intelligence were found to be moderately correlated, \( r(75) = .436, p = .000 \). Among the dimensions of emotional intelligence, the use of emotions and green consumer values were found to be correlated, \( r(75) = .362, p = .001 \).

The information provided through this study is especially relevant to business’ who offer products or services that are pro-environmental. This information allows these business’ to better understand their target markets, and alter the methods being used to appeal to consumers through marketing tactics. Specifically, through the understanding that higher levels of emotional intelligence is directly and positively correlated to higher levels of environmental concern and green consumer values. This study dealt with only students from a Midwestern university. Therefore, limitations include exclusive demographics, limited representation of minorities, and self-reported behavior.

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For further information contact:  
Hannah Walters  
Northern State University  
1200 S. Jay St  
Aberdeen, SD 57401  
(605) 626-7721  
hannah.walters@northern.edu
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 Takeawys and Analysis that

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 was The Data Analytics Workshop and 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.

For further information contact:
Frederick B. Hoyt
Illinois Wesleyan University
PO Box 2900
Bloomington, Illinois 61701
fhoyt@iwu.edu
DON’T REINVENT THE WHEEL! NEW AND UNIQUE RESOURCES TO COMPLEMENT MARKETING AND SALES CLASSROOMS

Rebecca Dingus, Central Michigan University
Hulda Black, Illinois State University
Alex Milovic, Marquette University

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Students have a high expectation that marketing educators are on trend with the latest and greatest business and marketing developments to enter the marketplace. Similarly, faculty often want to share industry-relevant news with their students as a way of bringing course material to life. While both parties desire this, due to the ever-changing digital landscape, many faculty find it challenging to stay up to date with the newest resources they may bring into their classroom to enhance learning outcomes. The proposed special session seeks to address this, providing ideas for marketing faculty to “practice what they preach” by offering students curricula they desire: courses where communication is well-branded, theory is put into practice with relevant examples, and the latest technologies are showcased. In particular, this session will focus on an assortment of resources that are free, easily implementable into a variety of classrooms, and relevant for 2020.

The authors identify resources of three types: resources to improve course communications, resources to supplement core course content, and resources that provide access to new-age technologies. For each resource presented, the authors will identify and explain the resource, provide best practices for using it, and give evidence of its effectiveness. Most resources will be adaptable for a variety of marketing classrooms, including several that can assist course content for digital marketing and professional sales. Beyond specific resources, some unique lesson topic ideas and professional development experiences will be recommended.

For increasing course communications, Yammer, Slack, and Salesforce will be discussed. For adding relevance to course content in a variety of marketing courses, overviews will be provided for Salesforce Trailhead, HubSpot, Google certifications, LinkedIn, and IBM Watson Sentiment Analyzer. For courses in sales, the session will highlight tools such as the RNMKRS role-play mobile app, LinkedIn Social Selling Index and Sales Navigator, and the Chally Career Development Assessment. With respect to digital marketing, Canva, Hootsuite, and an assortment of Adobe tools (i.e., Spark, Illustrator, XD, Photoshop, InDesign, and Rush) will be presented with teaching recommendations. Additionally, some unique filler-lesson ideas will be provided such as professionalism tips, cultivating an attitude of gratitude, relationship building, and personal branding. Modern popular press books that marketing students find beneficial will also be presented, and unique developmental opportunities for faculty that are offered by industry groups (e.g., the NRF’s Academic Summit, Marketing EDGE conferences, IRTS Media Summit, Chally Career Development Certification, AEF Visiting Professor Program) will be shared. In brief, this session will overview many ideas and generate a rich discussion about them, so faculty in attendance will have fresh ideas to take back to their classrooms. The authors have a variety of experience teaching with these tools, and the sharing of their experiences may reduce the learning curve and ease another faculty member’s implementation of the tools. Additionally, the dialogue that is likely to result from this proposed session will benefit a wide variety of faculty.

For further information contact:
Rebecca Dingus
Central Michigan University
100 Smith Hall
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48859
(989) 774-3649
rebecca.dingus@cmich.edu