

Management for Professionals

Xuehua Wang

Cultural and Social Influences on Consumer Behavior

Uncertainty Avoidance, Rituals, and
External Threats

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External Threats

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This book would not have been completed without the support from colleagues, corporate partners, friends, family, and the National Natural Science Foundation of China. In this book, I reviewed relevant literature and real-world practices. Due to the limited book size, only some of the important research findings on uncertainty avoidance, rituals, health threats, economic threats, informational threats, green consumption and inter-client conflicts, were included, with tough choices. I want to thank great scholars and practitioners who produce innovative ideas and insights about consumers. Any remaining errors are my sole responsibility.

I would like to thank all the participants in all the surveys and experiments. Your input of time and insight sharing is greatly appreciated. I would also like to thank all my colleagues, especially Profs. Cheris Wing Chi Chow and Isabel Siu Fong Fu from University of Macau, Prof. Thomas Kramer from University of California, Riverside, Prof. Yixia Sun from Zhejiang University, and Prof. Mike Chen-Ho Chao from William Paterson

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*Xuehua Wang
Shanghai, China*

Preface

When drinking a tequila shot lick the meeting point of the base of your thumb and index finger, pour some salt on this area you just licked, hold a wedge of lemon/lime between that same thumb and index finger, gulp down your tequila shot, lick the salt from your hand and suck on the lemon wedge or squeeze it out the juice into your mouth.

One Prolific Survey Participant on Rituals

The year 2020 brought about significant changes to my lifestyle due to the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. As I reflect on that time, I can't help but acknowledge the profound impact it had on various aspects of my life, including my mental health and work environment. The sudden shift to remote work was both a blessing and a challenge. On one hand, it offered the flexibility to work from the comfort of my home. However, the blurred boundaries between work and personal life sometimes took a toll on my well-being. It became essential to establish a healthy work-life balance and prioritize self-care to maintain my mental health during these unprecedented times....

One Prolific Survey Participant on Health Threats

In my experience working at a movie theater, I have witnessed instances of inter-client conflicts among customers. One particular incident involved a situation where a customer was talking loudly on their phone during a movie screening, causing disruption and annoyance to others in the theater. Another customer approached me, requesting assistance in addressing the issue. As a customer service representative, I promptly intervened by politely approaching the individual and requesting them to lower their voice or take their conversation outside the theater. While I understand the importance of maintaining a peaceful and enjoyable environment for all customers, dealing with such conflicts can sometimes be challenging.

One Prolific Survey Participant on Inter-Client Conflicts

Why can rituals affect consumption experience? How did the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic influence consumption? How do inter-client conflicts affect service employees and how to deal with inter-client conflicts? Do people engage in more superstitious buying if they are high in uncertainty avoidance and why? These are some of the research questions that are important in the marketing field and also my research interests. As the above quotes from participants from Prolific.com illustrate (more descriptions from participants are offered in the book), consumers have their own perceptions on the focal relationships. It is desirable to understand how consumers perceive in order to offer more insights for both research and practice.

Firms could benefit from the propositions and findings of this book via understanding more on the above real-world consumption phenomena. By developing conceptual frameworks on the focal relationships, this book can enrich the relevant marketing literature. This book is organized in eleven chapters by first introducing relevant phenomena, followed by an extensive literature review and preliminary evidence as well as experiments and surveys. In the end, I will conclude with discussion on the theoretical and practical implications as well as limitations and directions for future.

I hope that this book, built on the findings of previous research, could offer some insights and directions for future research. Firms could also benefit from its findings. Overall, I hope that this book will offer useful information and knowledge for both academics and firm practices.

Shanghai, China

Xuehua Wang

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Introduction

1

“Social systems can exist only because human behavior is not random, but to some extent predictable. ... We assume that each person carries a certain amount of mental programming that is stable over time and leads to the same person’s showing more or less the same behavior in similar situations.”

Hofstede (2001, pp. 1–2)

1.1 Motivation

As consumers, we are living in a culturally constituted world. We encounter various brands and consume goods each day that have meaning beyond their utilitarian character (McCracken, 1986). Hofstede (2011) defined culture as “the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others” (p. 3). Culture consists of both abstract values such as ethics and material objects such as clothes (Solomon, 2011). We cannot really understand consumer behavior until we take culture’s influence into consideration.

To understand culture’s impact on our consumption behavior, Hofstede (2011) proposed six major cultural dimensions. They are power distance, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity versus femininity, individualism versus collectivism, long term versus short term orientation, and indulgence versus restraint. Power distance refers to the “different solutions to the basic problems of human inequality” (Hofstede, 2011, p. 8). Uncertainty avoidance describes “the level of stress in a society in the face of an unknown future” (Hofstede, 2011, p. 8). Masculinity versus femininity describes “the division of emotional roles between women and men” (Hofstede, 2011, p. 8). Individualism versus collectivism relates to the “integration of individuals into primary groups” (Hofstede, 2011, p. 8). Long

term versus short term orientation is “the choice of focus for people’s efforts: The future or the present and past” (Hofstede, 2011, p. 8). The newly added sixth dimension is indulgence versus restraint, which relates to “the gratification versus control of basic human desires related to enjoying life” (Hofstede, 2011, p. 8).

Most prior research in this stream has focused primarily on individualism versus collectivism or independent/interdependent self-construals to understand culture’s impact on consumption behavior. For example, Escalas and Bettman (2005) found that consumers, regardless of independents or interdependents, had high self-brand connections towards ingroup brands; however, for outgroup brands, interdependents would show more self-brand connections than independents. Recently, more and more research attention has been paid to how power distance belief, the secondly most important cultural dimension, affects consumer behavior. For instance, Wang et al. (2018) observed that power distance belief could polarize brand personality evaluations; Qin and Wang (2023) found that consumers with high power distance belief tended to desire more for unique products than their counterparts. However, scant research attention has been paid to how uncertainty avoidance, the thirdly most important cultural dimension, influences consumption behavior. This book aims to examine how uncertainty avoidance, as an important cultural dimension, affects superstitious consumption as well as its underlying mechanism and boundary condition.

As previously stated, culture consists of shared symbolic meanings, rituals, and norms within an organization or society (Solomon, 2011). Compared to rituals, norms and shared symbolic meanings have attracted great attention from researchers (e.g., Lee et al., 2009; Nicosia & Mayer, 1976). It is desirable to understand how rituals can affect consumer behavior. Rituals can be defined as “a type of behavior, provided by marketers or created by consumers, made up of several steps performed in a fixed sequence with formality, rigidity, and repetition and imbued with a sense of meaning” (Wang et al., 2021, p. 284). There are different rituals in different cultures. Even within the same culture, consumers may develop their own rituals. Erikson (1982) observed that from childhood to adulthood, people often failed to successfully deal with developmental crises, resulting in feelings of isolation and motivating them to use personal grooming rituals in everyday life. However, no causal research has been conducted to examine the impact of repeating rituals on willingness to use the product involved in the ritual. To fill this gap, this book aims to examine if consumption rituals can increase goal progress illusion, consequently resulting in a high degree of willingness to use the product involved in the ritual as well as the boundary condition.

Consumers are affected not only by culture, but also by different societal factors, such as risks and conflicts. Indeed, we are encountering external threats every day. Common external threats include health, economic, informational, social, and environmental threats (Campbell et al., 2020). Health threats, such as getting sick from a contagious flu, can negatively affect one’s physical health. Economic threats, such as losing one’s job, can damage one’s financial situation. Informational threats, such as reading two pieces of conflicting news, may cause confusion. Social threats, such as reduced connection with friends and families, may result in

loneliness. Environmental threats, such as water pollution and climate deterioration, could lead to short supply of clean water, food, etc. Green consumption has attracted more and more research attention in the past several decades. Although various antecedents of green consumption have been identified (e.g., Wang & Chao, 2020; Yang et al., 2015), seldom does research investigate green consumption from the perspectives of external threats. This book focuses on health, economic, and informational threats, which are less studied, compared to social and environmental threats, to examine how these three types of external threats influence green consumption behavior.

There is a special type of threats in terms of informational threats, that is, inter-client conflicts during service encounters. From the perspective of frontline service employees, they are faced with two contrary pieces of information, or two consumer parties with contrary opinions or behaviors. For example, during service encounters, two clients may hold opposite views, which can be viewed as one type of informational threats, and if not dealt with well, would lead to a low level of satisfaction for both parties. However, scant research has been done to solve such inter-client conflicts. Therefore, this book also aims to investigate how to solve inter-client conflicts during service encounters.

1.2 Research Questions

The first research question is to examine how uncertainty avoidance affects superstitious consumption with state anxiety proposed as the mediator and locus of control proposed as the moderator. The second research question is to investigate how repeating rituals can affect willingness to use the product involved in the ritual with goal achievement illusion proposed as the mediator and goal importance as the moderator.

The third set of research questions is to examine how health, economic, and informational threats affect green consumption. Specifically, health threats would negatively influence green consumption via ontological insecurity. Mortality salience is proposed moderate the effect of health threats on green consumption. Economic threats are proposed to affect green consumption via anxiety. Uncertainty avoidance is proposed to moderate the focal relationship. Informational threats could negatively influence green consumption via loss of control and uncertainty avoidance is proposed to moderate the focal effect.

Regarding how to solve inter-client conflicts during service encounters, it seems impossible for the firm to satisfy both parties. Based on the Interpersonal Circumplex Model (ICM), complementarity, and justice theory, this research, however, proposes that it is possible to satisfy both parties if right measures are taken for the right consumers. Experimental results reveal that firms, instead of consumers, should take the initiative in making decisions about how to solve such conflicts and further, firms should differentiate between process- and outcome-beneficial measures according to which measures that consumers prefer. Specifically, process-beneficial measures can only induce consumer satisfaction

for those consumers who prefer process-related solutions while for consumers who prefer outcome-related resolutions, it would be better to offer outcome-related measures. Furthermore, time constraint is identified as a moderator for the above relationship.

1.3 Theoretical Contributions

As previously stated, prior research on how culture impacts consumption behavior has primarily focused on individualism/collectivism or independent/interdependent self-construals. Seldom does research examine the impact of uncertainty avoidance on superstitious consumption. To address this research gap, this book will investigate how uncertainty avoidance affects superstitious consumption as well as its underlying mechanism and boundary condition.

Rituals, which are important cultural components in people's lives, exert a great impact on consumption behavior. However, only a handful of research articles examine consumption rituals (e.g., Wang et al., 2021). This book will study how repeating rituals affects consumers' willingness to use the product involved in the ritual as well as its underlying mechanism and boundary condition.

Experiencing the Covid-19 pandemic leads consumers to be especially careful of health threats such as contagious diseases. However, seldom does research examine how health threats affect green consumption. Facing economic insecurity after the pandemic, would consumers worry about the financial situation and therefore may reduce green consumption? Consumers are living in a world with conflicting information. Do such informational threats influence their green consumption tendency? To address these unanswered questions, this book aims to examine how health, economic, and informational threats, as three important external threats, affect green consumption as well as their underlying mechanisms and boundary conditions.

Regarding inter-client conflicts, it seems impossible to achieve both consumer parties' satisfaction during service encounters (e.g., Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007). This book shows that if the firm takes the initiative to propose solutions, it is possible that both parties can be satisfied. Though Smith et al. (1999) pointed out that a recovery initiated by the organization will positively affect consumers' perception of interactional justice, it is desirable to establish a direct link between an organization-initiated recovery and consumer satisfaction during inter-client conflicts.

1.4 Practical Implications

Practitioners can benefit from the findings of this book. First, global firms, especially those firms in the industry producing superstitious products, could use their consumers' uncertainty avoidance background or prime different extent of uncertainty avoidance to shape consumption behavior, because uncertainty avoidance is positively associated with superstitious consumption.

Second, marketers need to understand that rituals play an important role in consumers' life. Repeating rituals could make consumers more likely use the products involved in the ritual. In this sense, marketers can teach consumers their rituals or encourage consumers to develop their own rituals to use the products.

Third, facing health, economic, and informational threats, consumers may respond differently on their likelihood to engage in green consumption. Firms in the green industry thus need to understand how these different threats influence consumers psychologically and use different priming strategies to reduce or enhance these threats.

Finally, the mechanism uncovered by this book on how to solve inter-client conflicts in service encounters offers important managerial implications. Insights on why the firm should take the initiative allow managers to understand the importance to pre-specified procedures for the firm to solve inter-client conflicts, whereas knowledge on how to solve such conflicts is helpful for assessing the effect of the pre-specified procedures on consumer satisfaction.

1.5 Organization of the Book

This book contains eleven chapters. The first chapter is the introduction to the motivation, research questions, theoretical contributions, and practical implications. The second chapter relates to relevant literature on uncertainty avoidance, rituals, and external threats as well as inter-client conflicts. The third chapter is on the theory and hypotheses development for uncertainty avoidance and superstitious consumption. The fourth chapter elaborates on the theory and proposition development for repeating rituals and willingness to use the product involved in the ritual. The fifth chapter explains the theory and proposition development for health, economic, and informational threats and green consumption. The sixth chapter is on the methodology and results for the study of uncertainty avoidance and superstitious consumption. The seventh and eighth chapters presents the preliminary evidence on health threats and green consumption as well as economic threats and green consumption, respectively. The ninth chapter is on the methodology and results for the study on how to solve inter-client conflicts. The tenth chapter discusses theoretical and practical implications of each study, as well as limitations and directions for future research. The last chapter concludes the whole book by providing major conclusions.

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This chapter aims to review relevant literature on cultural values with a focus on uncertainty avoidance, rituals, external threats including health, economic and informational threats as well as superstitious consumption, green consumption and inter-client conflicts.

2.1 Culture and Values

Culture represents the values of a group of people. Values, as the most basic component of culture, are defined as “broad tendencies to prefer a certain state of affairs over others” (Hofstede, 1980, p.19). We unconsciously learn values in our childhood, through socialization (Reimann et al., 2008). Values are hard to change due to its implicit nature (Rokeach, 1973). As previously stated, Hofstede (1980) conducted a comprehensive study on cultural differences in values. The initial four dimensions developed by Hofstede (1980) are power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity. Power distance measures the extent to which people accepts and expects that power is distributed unequally within a society. Wang and Lalwani (2019) further divided power distance belief into power distance perception and power distance values. Power distance perception refers to the degree to which people in a society perceive and feel the existence of power disparities, whereas power distance values indicate the extent to which people endorse such power disparities.

Indeed, power perception could affect people’s behavior. Imagine that you are having a meeting with your boss. Your boss tells you that if you cannot complete your assigned task within 3 days, he/she will punish you. After the meeting, you feel so pressured and so you eat a rich-chocolate cake for relief. Subsequently you

have a meeting with your subordinates, after busily assigning tasks that you want them to do, you feel you deserve a cup of ice cream.

In the above scenario, you have less subjective power than your boss, whereas you have more subjective power than your subordinates. Why different subjective power states can elicit the same hedonic product craving for a rich-chocolate cake or a cup of ice cream in the above scenario? It might be because the underlying mechanisms are different. This book proposes that when others' perceived power is high, an individual would have a higher extent of perceived disadvantage, resulting in more preference for hedonic consumption as a way of compensation. In contrast, when others' perceived power is low, an individual would choose hedonic products because of self-licensing motive.

As Lokshin and Ravallion (2005) pointed out, different people have different capabilities that can influence others, resulting in different power states. Power is defined as "the ability to provide or withhold valued resources or administer punishments" (Anderson & Berdahl, 2002, p. 1362). Subjective power is the perceived power state. Given the evidence that one's power state can influence behavior and decision making (e.g., Anderson & Berdahl, 2002; Greitemeyer & Sagioglou, 2016), it remains not adequately examined on the effect of subjective power in consumer research.

Hedonic consumption refers to those emotional and affective experiences, fantasy, sensual pleasure, and fun (e.g., Kivetz & Simonson, 2002). People desire hedonic consumption regardless of their subjective power is high or low. However, the related mechanisms are different. Prior research suggests that people having power tend to express their true attitudes, are less likely to perceive threats, and are more likely to perceive rewards (Anderson & Berdahl, 2002). Therefore, this book proposes when one perceives him-/herself as having more power than others, they tend to self-license themselves or rely on reasons to justify their indulgence for hedonic consumption. In contrast, when one regards him-/herself as having less power than others, they should perceive disadvantage from a social comparison perspective and then use hedonic consumption as a way of compensation.

In this vein, this book proposes a causal link between subjective power and hedonic consumption, thus adding to the literature on the effect of power in consumer research. Specifically, when others' power is perceived high, the underlying mechanism might be perceived disadvantage while when others' power is perceived low, then self-licensing motive might interpret the effect (see Fig. 2.1). It is desirable for future research to empirically examine these propositions.

As previously stated, the second cultural dimension is uncertainty avoidance, which refers to the extent to which cultures are intolerant of uncertain situations or try to avoid such situations (Hofstede, 2001). The third dimension is masculinity versus femininity, which measures the degree to which individuals value "masculine" values such as wealth and achievement or "feminine" values such as relationships and quality of life. Individualism versus collectivism, as the fourth dimension, indicates the degree to which relationships are considered whether as loose social connections or as tight groups. Hofstede and Bond (1988) further found a fifth dimension labeled long term versus short term orientation, based on their research findings

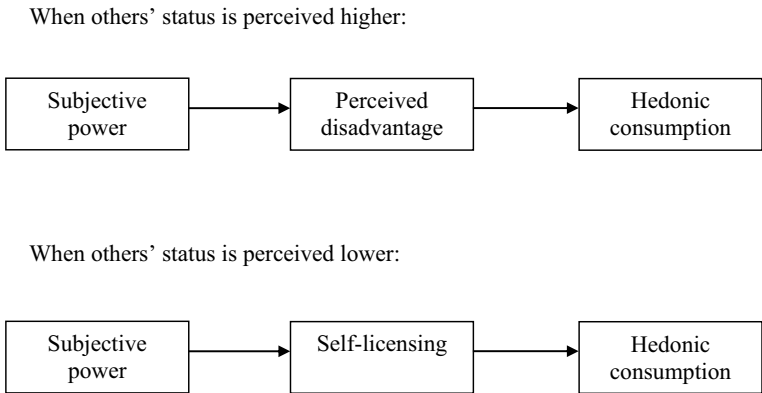


Fig. 2.1 The effect of subjective power on hedonic consumption

in Asia. This fifth dimension relates to the extent to which the values exhibited by a society are future-oriented or a short-time perspective. Hofstede and colleagues (2010) added a sixth dimension, that is, indulgence versus restraint. This dimension reflects the tendency to allow or curb people's natural desires and enjoyment in life. Compared to people in restraint-oriented culture, people in indulgence-oriented cultures are more interested in fun and entertainment (Hofstede et al., 2010).

The past several decades have witnessed the growth of research on cultural difference and consumption behaviors. For instance, power distance belief is found to impact impulsive buying (Zhang et al., 2010), Charitable donations (Winterich & Zhang, 2011), brand personality evaluations (Wang et al., 2018), status consumption (Gao et al., 2016), and the desire for unique products (Qin and Wang, 2023).

2.2 Uncertainty Avoidance and Its Impact

2.2.1 Uncertainty Avoidance and Its Impact on Individuals

Rapp et al. (2010) offered a framework to examine the way how the uncertainty avoidance construct has been studied in international research. They found that uncertainty avoidance could be utilized to develop hypotheses or regarded as independent or control variable. In a similar vein, Davis et al. (2012) identified research in *Journal of Business Ethics* that either used uncertainty avoidance to develop hypotheses or treated it as an independent variable or used it to construct an independent variable. Recent research also shows that uncertainty avoidance could play a role of mediator or moderator variable (e.g., Astvansh et al., in press). Following is a complex literature review on uncertainty avoidance and its impact on individual consumption in various areas.

In the context of service encounter failures, Reimann et al. (2008) conducted a study with 303 German, Spanish, and Swedish business-to-business consumers and found that, when service recovery efforts did not reach expectations in a service defect, clients low in uncertainty avoidance were more likely to be satisfied than those high in uncertainty avoidance. This may be because high-uncertainty avoidance cultures tend to have a narrower range of tolerance zone than low-uncertainty avoidance ones. Ghantous and Maher (2018) further examined the influence of uncertainty avoidance on intercultural service encounters. They found that compared with when national identification was high, expatriate individuals, whose national identification was low, would engage more in uncertainty management, resulting in a more cosmopolitan stance and positively affecting their approach strategy of service environments patronized by local consumers.

Lee et al. (2007) suggested an interaction between product uncertainty and cultural uncertainty avoidance on product quality perceptions and behavioral consequences. In studying consumer facebook strategies culturally in an embarrassing situation, Merkin (2006) analyzed survey data in six countries: Hong Kong, Israel, Chile, Sweden, the United States, and Japan, and found that uncertainty avoidance significantly impacted ritualistic, aggressive, and harmonious facebook communication strategies.

Money and Crotts (2003) examined how uncertainty avoidance affected consumption pattern in the travel and tourism industry. By studying both German and Japanese consumers, they found that consumers from cultures high in uncertainty avoidance tended to more frequently bought prepackaged tours, stayed a shorter time on average, travelled in larger groups and visited fewer travel spots, more likely to use information sources related to the channel such as the travel agent rather than personal or mass media sources than their counterparts from cultures low in uncertainty avoidance. Later, Litvin et al. (2004) replicated and extended Money and Crotts (2003)'s research by studying a representative sample of leisure visitors who came to the United States for the first time. They found that for visitors from cultures high in uncertainty avoidance, their consumption pattern was consistent with Money and Crotts (2003)'s findings. However, those from cultures low in uncertainty avoidance showed similar behaviors with Money and Crotts (2003)'s Germany participants, thus increasing generalizability of their research findings. In a similar vein, Quintal et al. (2010) also found that uncertainty avoidance was positively associated with information search efforts across China, Japan, and Australia while risk avoidance was not, thus differentiating the two constructs of risk avoidance and uncertainty avoidance.

Hwang and Lee (2012) found that uncertain avoidance played a moderating role in the relationship between subjective norms and multidimensional online trust which consisted of three dimensions (i.e., integrity, ability, and benevolence) as well as purchase intention. By analyzing publicly available data, Lim et al. (2004) showed that both individualism versus collectivism and uncertainty avoidance as well as their interaction could influence internet shopping rates. Specifically, for cultures low in uncertainty avoidance, those high on individualism values

would exhibit higher internet shopping rates than those high on collectivism values. Kailani and Kumar (2011) collected data from the United States, India, and Jordan and found that individuals from cultures with high uncertainty avoidance would perceive high risk associated with internet buying, thus resulting in a lower likelihood to engage in internet buying.

About how uncertainty avoidance affects consumer well-being, Lawrie et al. (2020) observed the moderating effect of uncertainty avoidance in the relationship between age and well-being. They proposed that age was negatively associated with well-being in cultures with high uncertainty avoidance rather than in low uncertainty-avoidance cultures. This cultural difference could be explained by the mediation effect of a sense of control. They found that in the United States, age was not negatively correlated with well-being; however, in Romania, this effect was significant.

Does uncertainty avoidance influence people's choices for potential gains versus losses? Ladbury and Hinsz (2009) proposed that uncertainty avoidance could influence people's choices for potential gains rather than losses. In a similar vein, Chatterjee et al. (2014) found that uncertainty avoidance moderated the reflection effect of Prospect Theory (i.e., choosing a sure gain and a risky loss simultaneously) such that consumers with high uncertainty avoidance would evade risk no matter it was gains or losses. Hardisty and Pfeffer (2017) further conducted three studies to examine the effect of uncertainty avoidance on individuals' time preference for monetary gains and losses. They found that under situations of intertemporal choice, people intended to avoid uncertainty. Specifically, if the expected value of costs is held constant, then when the present was uncertain, people would prefer future gains and losses; however, when the future was uncertain, people would prefer immediate gains and losses.

For e-commerce adoption, Belkhamza and Wafa (2014) found that uncertainty avoidance was an important factor that affected e-commerce adoption in two different cultures, i.e., Malaysia and Algeria. Merhi and Ahluwalia (2017) further proposed that uncertainty avoidance could reduce trust in the perceived efficacy of institutional safety nets, thus lowering e-commerce adoption rates. Guo and Wang (in press) studied how online (versus offline) shopping affected brand loyalty by investigating the role of uncertainty avoidance. They proposed that when consumers shop online rather than offline, those with high uncertainty avoidance showed more brand loyalty than those with low uncertainty avoidance. This was because the online shopping experience was less predictable than offline shopping.

Debus et al. (2012) proposed that uncertainty avoidance and social safety net at a country level could buffer the negative effect of job insecurity on job satisfaction and affective organizational commitment. By conducting two empirical studies in Korea and the United States, Ko et al. (2015) observed that culturally customized websites were more effective for Korean consumers with high uncertainty avoidance while less effective for U.S. consumers with low uncertainty avoidance. Studying a Belgian and Irish sample, De Meulenaer et al. (2015) proposed that individual differences in uncertainty avoidance, anxiety, and chance belief could significantly impact the processing of health risk messages. They found that

for low-uncertainty-avoidance and low-anxiety groups, perceived efficacy had a stronger influence on message outcomes.

About the effectiveness of advertising messages, in a meta-analysis, Velasco et al. (2021) observed that when consumers were from cultures with high uncertainty avoidance, they would exhibit more positive product evaluations for anthropomorphic appeals than for non-anthropomorphic appeals. Astvansh et al. (in press) observed that a prevention-focused message was more persuasive for consumers from cultures with low uncertainty avoidance than for those from cultures with high uncertainty avoidance.

More recently, by leveraging two daily surveys, one about more than 900 million individuals across 67 cultures and the other one about over 11 million individuals across 244 cultures, Lu (2023) found that those from cultures with higher uncertainty avoidance initially showed higher hesitancy towards Covid-19 vaccine due to concerns towards its side effects. However, people would gradually decrease such vaccine hesitancy with time going on as uptake of Covid-19 vaccine became prevalent.

2.2.2 Uncertainty Avoidance and Its Impact on Businesses

Zhang and Zhou (2014) proposed an interaction effect between uncertainty avoidance, empowering leadership, and trust on creativity such that the positive relationship between empowering leadership and creativity would be the strongest for those with high uncertainty avoidance and trust in their supervisors. Using data from 24 countries, Qu and Yang (2015) found that uncertainty avoidance and social trust could exert a direct effect on supply chain collaboration. Furthermore, uncertainty avoidance was found to moderate the effect of inter-organizational systems on supply chain collaboration at a firm level. Barr and Glynn (2004) found that the cultural value of uncertainty avoidance was positively related to sensitivity to controllability in strategic issue perceptions whereas individualism, power distance, and masculinity were not.

To understand the influence of uncertainty avoidance in innovations, Shane (1995) found that uncertainty acceptance was associated with preference for innovation championship. In a meta-analysis, Watts et al. (2019) found that uncertainty avoidance moderated the effect of transformational leadership on innovation. Analyzing a large panel of firms across fifty countries, Ramírez and Tadesse (2009) found that firms from cultures with high uncertainty avoidance tended to hold more cash than those from low uncertainty-avoidance cultures.

Kong (2012) found that uncertainty avoidance, instead of individualism versus collectivism, power distance, and masculinity versus femininity, mediated the interaction effect of thermal climates and wealth on generalized social trust. Using data from high- (France) versus low-context (the United States) cultures, Jung and Kellaris (2004) found that the scarcity effect was moderated by uncertainty avoidance as well as product familiarity and need for cognitive closure. Using a sample of both Chinese and Caucasian Canadian participants, Adair and Xiong (2018)

studied the mediating effect of uncertainty avoidance, rather than individualism versus collectivism or power distance, mediated the effect of cultural variation and the creativity dimension of novelty versus usefulness.

Analyzing data from U.S. Software Security Industry trademarks across 11 countries, Broekhuizen et al. (2017) found that uncertainty avoidance could produce an exploration–exploitation trade-off by reducing product innovation while at the same time helping firms protect their brands so as to appropriate more value. Bova and Vance (2019) found that uncertainty avoidance could impact employee stock option exercise behavior. Specifically, they showed that employees from cultures with higher uncertainty avoidance would exercise their stock options earlier than those from lower uncertainty-avoidance cultures.

In sum, prior literature has extensively examined the role of uncertainty avoidance in various areas such as service encounters, financial stock option exercise, and message effectiveness. However, there are only a handful of research articles on how uncertainty avoidance at an individual level affects consumption behavior (e.g., Guo and Wang, *in press*; Litvin et al., 2004). This book intends to address this gap by examining how uncertainty avoidance influences superstitious buying as well as its mechanism and boundary condition.

2.2.3 Extended Reading

An individual is often an employee in an organization. Therefore, his or her attitudes and behaviors should be influenced not only by cultural values, but also by the culture of the organization that he or she belongs to. Other than organizational culture, the regional economic level and management level should also play a role on his/her work-related attitudes and behaviors. Therefore, this book also provides an extended reading on how regional economic level, management level, and organizational culture affect the person-organization fit of employees. Please refer to Appendix A for it.

2.3 Rituals

2.3.1 The Definition of Rituals

Recently, more and more research attention has been paid to ritualistic consumption in marketing. Researchers have developed different ritual definitions. Rook (1985) defined rituals as “a type of expressive, symbolic activity constructed of multiple behaviors that occur in a fixed, episodic sequence, and that tend to be repeated over time.” (p. 252). Hobson et al. (2018) described rituals as “(a) pre-defined sequences characterized by rigidity, formality, and repetition that are (b) embedded in a larger system of symbolism and meaning, but (c) contain elements that lack direct instrumental purpose.” (p. 261). Differing from Rook (1985) and

Hobson et al. (2018), Wang et al. (2021) defined rituals as “a type of behavior, provided by marketers or created by consumers, made up of several steps performed in a fixed sequence with formality, rigidity, and repetition and imbued with a sense of meaning.” (p. 284). This book adopted Wang et al. (2021)’s definition of rituals because this book focuses on minimal rituals rather than rituals imbued with symbolic value.

Rituals consist of a fixed sequence of steps that is characterized by formality, rigidity, and repetition. Ritual action needs to conform to prescribed script and involves repetition of the event sequence over time so as to elicit specific thoughts and sentiments from the individual every time he or she conducts the ritual (Mead, 1956). In addition, there is no causal link between rituals and their effects. People may use repetition of the ritual, the number of steps, and the presence of transcendental icons (i.e., religious icons) to evaluate ritual efficacy (Legare & Souza, 2012).

Although rituals share similarities with behavioral habits in that some rituals (e.g., personal grooming) can be conducted habitually, they are different (Rook, 1985). First, ritual steps are characterized by script involving plural repetition (casual or formal) while habits are often singular behaviors (e.g., stamping one’s feet after wearing shoes) and less personally meaningful than rituals. Second, rituals are often associated with intense emotions while habits are not. Third, rituals are followed by immediate behavioral or emotional response because they symbol specific meanings, but habits do not. For instance, making friends with Chinese merchants before doing business symbols kindness and can facilitate trust. Fourth, rituals often involve artifacts such as logos, colors, or products contained in the ritual while habits do not. Finally, when doing unfamiliar rituals, individuals may feel uncertainty or even anxiety or embarrassment while habits do not incur these feelings.

Rituals differ in terms of synchronous actions, time and efforts (Whitehouse & Lanman, 2014). For example, some rituals include synchronic movement, but others do not. Rituals can be classified into public and private rituals. Public rituals include formal rites of passages such as marriage, graduation, and funeral, involving large audiences (Rook, 1985), which occur infrequently in consumers’ lives. On the other hand, private rituals, which this book focuses on, are often related to the individual him/herself. An individual’s private ritual may be more important than a one-time public ritual. For instance, an individual’s transition rite may signal one’s status from childhood to adulthood. However, this rite by itself cannot accomplish the instantaneous transformation, rather, it is through everyday grooming individual ritual activities such as wearing make-up or formal clothes that really help to enacting the new social status.

2.3.2 Rituals and Their Impact on Behavior

Rituals exist in our everyday life. For instance, grooming rituals transform a person from bedroom to office; gift-giving is often associated with exchange rituals; and

food preparation is often part of a family gathering ritual. However, the effect of individual rituals is often neglected to the extent that only a handful of studies have investigated its effect on consumer emotions and behavior, which is surprising, given that such rituals can have significant positive influence on one's individuation (Jung, 1958) and ego development (Erikson, 1982). Recently, Wang et al. (2021) found that rituals can decrease loneliness by increasing meaning in life. Even consumption itself is regarded as a ritual of modern life (Wright & Snow, 1980). This surprising neglect may be due to the notion that rituals are religious or primitive, as pointed out by Rook (1985).

Collective rituals could enhance group building and imbue a sense of fusion with the group (Whitehouse & Lanman, 2014). Bossard and Boll (1949) conducted research on 400 case records of family rituals and found that ritual was an integral part in family life. Fiese and Kline (1993) found that family rituals' symbolic significance was highly positively associated with self-esteem while negatively associated with anxiety. Ruffle and Sosis (2007) showed that engaging in religious rituals could enhance cooperation. Konvalinka et al. (2011) showed the effect of collective rituals by studying the physiological effects of synchronized arousal in a Spanish fire-walking ritual. They demonstrated that a collective ritual could induce synchronized arousal within active participants and bystanders.

By investigating nine naturally occurring rituals related to prosociality, Fischer et al. (2013) found that collective rituals such as rituals with synchronous body movements could boost prosocial attitudes and cooperation. Whitehouse and Lanman (2014) were also interested in collective rituals. They proposed that collective rituals could enhance two forms of social cohesion, that is, group identification and identity fusion. Using data from the Zablocki-Bradley-Aidala national sample, Carlton-ford (1992) found that the interaction effects between a charismatic leader and group rituals as well as group size significantly impacted group members' self-esteem. Liberman et al. (2017) pointed out that engaging in a group's stipulated rituals signaled group membership. Wen et al. (2016) also found that ritual participation could increase children's in-group affiliation. By involving children 4–11 years old, they found that the experience of ritual activity participation led to more in-group affiliation than just group activities.

Public holidays may be another form for collective rituals. For example, on a Thanksgiving Day, people would celebrate material abundance via feasting. Wallendorf and Arnould (1991) examined the consumption rituals of Thanksgiving Day and found that Thanksgiving Day was interpreted as collective actions orchestrated semiotically and symbolically by means of consumption. The authors used multiple perspectives and sources of data to shed light on the emic and etic meanings of Thanksgiving Day.

Family rituals may include public holidays such as Christmas, Easter, New Year's Eve, and Thanksgiving. However, others special days of the week, if repeatedly conducted and expected by family members, can become rituals (Rosenthal & Marshall, 1988). For example, if a family get together and climb a mountain near home every Saturday and afterwards go dinner together. Then this may become a

collective ritual for this family that all family members would expect such event would happen every Saturday.

Marshall (2002) observed that rituals could activate multiple social-psychological processes, leading to altered subjective states as well as a sense of belief and belonging in people. Marshall (2005) further studied food consumption in terms of rituals and concluded that meal rituals were an important part of eating. Kapitány and Nielsen (2015) conducted two experiments to investigate how people understood ritual significance. In the first experiment, participants watched videos of either novel rituals (i.e., causally opaque actions) or control activities (i.e., causally transparent actions). In the second experiment, negative and aversive written context was added to the same video stimuli that participants watched. Results showed that ritualized objects were evaluated as more special and more desirable than the counterparts in the control condition while the manipulated context augmented the above effect.

To shed light on how rituals affect institutional maintenance, Dacin et al. (2010) conducted an in-depth qualitative study by investigating formal dining at Cambridge college. They found that rituals were important for institutional maintenance through a powerful influence on the participants. In a similar vein, Rossano (2012) demonstrated that rituals were essential to the social norm transmission and reinforcement.

More recently, Wang et al. (2021) conducted five studies to examine the effect of consumption rituals with consumer products involved on loneliness. They found that for lonely consumers, the consumption rituals could add meaning to their lives through perceived product meaningfulness, which further reduced loneliness. Their investigation had important implications for both research and practice. They offered an important way, that is, engaging in ritual activities, to reduce loneliness. Simply framing a behavior as ritual seems to affect perceived meaning and loneliness as well as purchase intentions. In this sense, their findings could benefit brand communities in that brands could produce rituals involving brands for consumers to engage in to stimulate interest in brand purchase and use. Engaging in rituals could help to reduce loneliness, thus providing a way to increase consumer well-being. Their findings are also beneficial for governmental actors in designing public policy so as to add meaning to consumers' lives.

2.3.3 Types of Consumption Rituals

To understand what consumption rituals are familiar to consumers, an online survey ($N = 202$; $M_{\text{age}} = 41.37$, $SD = 14.10$; 48.3% female) was conducted to ask participants to write down consumption rituals that they were familiar with. They were also asked to rate the rituals they wrote down on the extent to which they perceived what they wrote down as rituals on three items: "How much does the described consumption behavior sound like a ritual?" "How much does the described consumption behavior sound ritualized?" and "How much does the described consumption behavior sound like random actions? (reverse-coded)" on

a 7-point likert scale (1 = “not at all” and 7 = “very much”; Wang et al., 2021). They were also asked to rate the following items on ritual characteristics: “To what degree does this consumption behavior consist of predefined sequences that are rigid, formal, and repetitive?” “To what degree can this consumption behavior be interpreted as having meaning to you?” “To what degree can this consumption behavior be interpreted as having symbolic value to you?” and “To what degree does this consumption behavior contain elements that have no direct instrumental purpose?” (1 = “not at all” and 7 = “very much”; Wang et al., 2021). Table 2.1 presents the findings.

2.4 External Threats

The past several years have witnessed the breakout of the Covid-19 pandemic as well as an economic downturn coming after it (Campbell et al., 2020). As a result, consumers’ life has been significantly impacted by these health and economic threats. During the pandemic, consumers had to stay at home and keep social distance even from their families. These health, economic, and social threats have, to a certain extent, changed consumers’ lifestyle and consumption pattern. Therefore, it is desirable to understand how external threats influence consumption behavior.

As Campbell et al. (2020) pointed out, consumers face various external threats. They classified external threats into five categories, that is, health, economic, social, informational and environmental threats. Health threats, such as a contagious disease like Covid-19, can endanger one’s or a close other’s physical health. Economic threats such as getting unemployed due to the economic downturn can worsen consumers’ financial situation. Social threats, such as losing connection to one’s family or social unrest, can damage consumers’ social role in society. Informational threats, such as two pieces of news providing conflicting information, can make consumer confused and thus negatively affect consumers’ ability to understand and judge. Environmental threats occur when the environment such as climate change negatively affects consumers’ life and welfare. This book focuses on the effects of health, economic, and environmental threats on green consumption.

2.4.1 Health Threats

Health threats exist everywhere, from a contagious disease such as Covid-19 to a diagnosed disease such as high blood pressure. Health threats could affect people’s normal life and work. For example, Boles et al. (2004) pointed out that health risks were highly associated with productivity loss at work. Prior research has extensively examined how health threats affect consumer behavior. Terry et al. (2013) conducted four studies to examine the relationship between self-compassion and reactions to illness. They found that people who were more self-compassionate were more likely to seek medical attention sooner when they had the symptoms

Table 2.1 Consumer Rituals and Their Evaluations in order of Rituality Ratings

Descriptions of rituals	Ritualistic ratings	Ratings of ritual characteristics			
		Rigidity, formality, repetition	Meaning	Symbolic value	No purpose
Pouring cereal in a bowl first and then adding milk	6.33	5	6	3	3
I break the edges off my poparts first. then I eat the middle	5.67	6	2	4	5
Pringles... Once you pop, you can't stop	5.33	4	5	5	2
The only one I can think of is swirling wine a few times before taking a sip	3	2	1	1	3
You are supposed to dip a graham cracker in milk three times before you eat it	5.33	5	4	4	3
Eating pizza and dipping the pizza with ranch salad dressing	6	1	5	2	5
Wash, rinse, repeat	5	5	3	3	3
When eating a crawfish tail, you bite the top, squeeze the tail, and push the meat into your mouth	7	7	4	1	1
Pringles: pop, crunch... once you pop you can't stop	4.67	7	7	6	4
Breaking a kit kat bar	2.67	1	1	1	4
Rubbing chopsticks together before eating sushi	6.33	5	5	6	6
Tequila salt and lime	2.33	5	1	1	7

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Descriptions of rituals	Ritualistic ratings	Ratings of ritual characteristics			
		Rigidity, formality, repetition	Meaning	Symbolic value	No purpose
You dunk your oreos in milk	5	5	4	4	4
Open bag, peel them apart, enjoy ritual for eating cherry peel twizzlers	7	6	6	6	2
Dip your cookie in milk before eating it	5	4	2	2	5
Dunking an Oreo cookie in milk	5	7	7	7	7
The twist lick dunk ritual is the only one I can even think of when it comes to a consumption ritual. And I wouldn't have even thought of that had it not been the example given	3.67	3	3	3	3
Dunking chocolate chip cookies in milk	6.67	7	7	7	4
Counting the licks to get to the center of a tootsie-pop	5.33	7	3	3	5

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Descriptions of rituals	Ritualistic ratings	Ratings of ritual characteristics			
		Rigidity, formality, repetition	Meaning	Symbolic value	No purpose
I've never heard anything described like this that I can think of. The closest things I can think of that I do are organizing the packaging and sometimes taking photos of an item I might want to return before using it, or configuring the settings of a new electronic device at the start, however I'm not sure if these count	3.67	2	4	2	1
Eating the chocolate around a peanut butter cup	4	3	5	4	3
Making duck lips with pringles	3.33	1	5	6	2
Using Oreos again, I take the Oreos and put them in a cup then pour milk over the top submerging them. I then eat them using a spoon, after all Oreos are gone I drink the milk	4	4	4	5	4
Perfectly peeling a reese's cup	6.67	6	6	7	4

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Descriptions of rituals	Ritualistic ratings	Ratings of ritual characteristics			
		Rigidity, formality, repetition	Meaning	Symbolic value	No purpose
If I were eating a Oreo for example, I always split the two half's apart and eat the cookie side of the oreo first (the side without the filling) Then I eat the filling and then lastly the other cookie side of the oreo. The thin oreo's are the only ones I will just eat the whole cookie. I prefer eating the double stuff or the regular	4.33	5	1	1	7
A consumption ritual that I'm familiar with are the steps in a skincare routine. Washing your face, toning, then moisturizing. These are the most BASIC three steps that you must follow and brands tend to advertise around that. Everything extra is a bonus that your skin is thankful for	7	7	7	7	1

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Descriptions of rituals	Ritualistic ratings	Ratings of ritual characteristics			
		Rigidity, formality, repetition	Meaning	Symbolic value	No purpose
Drinking Folgers coffee during the holidays with your family that's been away for a while. The commercials during Christmas show a loved one that comes home for Christmas and they enjoy smelling and drinking a cup of coffee together	6	3	7	6	2
In the Christian faith it is common to pray over your food before eating and to give thanks to the creator for what he has provided for you and your family	5.33	3	4	4	2
The only consumption ritual that I'm familiar with is the one stated above. The oreo ritual of twisting off the top, licking the cream center, then dunking the cookie in milk to eat	5.67	6	6	7	1
I don't have any. Does that make me weird?	7	7	4	7	4
Using marshmallows to make smores	5	5	5	4	4

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Descriptions of rituals	Ritualistic ratings	Ratings of ritual characteristics			
		Rigidity, formality, repetition	Meaning	Symbolic value	No purpose
I don't know of any. I just eat or drink what I want	3	1	1	1	1
Yelling about how much you dislike wine before consuming a Dudesy Hard Hard Seltzer	5	5	6	7	5
Dipping oreos in milk before eating	4	4	4	5	5
Dunking chocolate chip cookies in milk	2.67	2	4	4	5
Dipping pizza bones in butter or ranch after finishing the main portion of the pizza	2.67	2	3	1	5
Eating crawfish. Pinch the head, suck the tail	7	7	4	4	1
Eating fries with a Frosty from Wendys for the salty and sweet element of eating both at the same time	6.33	6	4	4	1
Breaking off a kit kat bar	4.67	6	4	4	4
Making coffee and adding cream and sugar	5.33	6	4	5	3
Trying to cut back on bread, when eating a sandwich I usually just eat the middle portion and leave all the crusts	4.33	5	4	3	3

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Descriptions of rituals	Ritualistic ratings	Ratings of ritual characteristics			
		Rigidity, formality, repetition	Meaning	Symbolic value	No purpose
I cannot think of any	4	4	4	4	4
I always break off a piece of the KitKat bar before eating it because of the commercial jingle	5.67	5	5	5	6
Christmas or Diwali is a consumption ritual because it commemorates an important cultural time; includes people who are typically not present at everyday gatherings; features foods, objects, and activities reserved for the occasion; and involves performance roles distinct from	4.67	5	4	5	4
Kitkat bars and snapping them in half	5	5	5	5	5
Putting a napkin on my lap, holding a fork in my left hand while a knife is in my right	2.67	5	2	3	4
Dunking cookies in milk	4.67	3	2	2	2
People pinch the head off crawfish and suck the tails	4.67	6	3	6	5
Saying Ahh after taking a sip of Coca Cola	5.33	5	4	5	6

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Descriptions of rituals	Ritualistic ratings	Ratings of ritual characteristics			
		Rigidity, formality, repetition	Meaning	Symbolic value	No purpose
I am familiar with the concept of folding a slice of pizza. This ritual has become so normalized that I find the idea of not folding pizza to be strange	6.67	6	6	6	4
Good and delicious	4.33	6	5	5	5
Breaking apart a kit kat along the lines before eating, rather than taking a big bite of all the wafers	7	7	5	5	2
Eating the filling of an oreo first	6.33	6	1	1	4
Have a break have a kit kat hungry, why wait	5	5	5	6	5
The way a Guinness beer is “properly” poured when you order on draft at a bar	5.67	6	4	4	3
I am familiar with this Oreo cookie ritual	6.33	5	5	6	4
I just dunk my oreo	4.67	5	4	6	4
Tea preparation: Heat water to 186 degrees, set time for 3:33 on microwave. Steep, add i teaspoon sugar, stir 12 times	5	7	1	1	1

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Descriptions of rituals	Ritualistic ratings	Ratings of ritual characteristics			
		Rigidity, formality, repetition	Meaning	Symbolic value	No purpose
When eating a piece of pie some people eat the inside first then the crust	3.67	3	1	1	6
I am familiar with the ritual of selecting favorite m&m colors from a random bowl and eating all of those first, then going on to the next favorite color, and so on until all that are left are the consumer's least favorite colors	6.33	6	7	7	7
The only one that comes to mind are found during the holiday season. Many companies push eating certain foods like turkey, stuffing, gravy etc. Same goes for eating chips and pizza when watching sporting events	5.33	7	4	4	3
Corona beer lime wedge	4	2	1	2	4
Drinking yogurt drinks. Shaking it up. Ripping the top off. Chugging it down	6.33	6	6	6	1

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Descriptions of rituals	Ritualistic ratings	Ratings of ritual characteristics			
		Rigidity, formality, repetition	Meaning	Symbolic value	No purpose
I can't think of the brand that it is, I think it may be dawn powerspray. The consumption ritual is "just spray and wipe."	4.67	3	5	1	7
Twix always has commercials about splitting their bars in half and deciding which side of the bar you like best	6.33	5	4	5	7
When eating a fine chocolate confectionary, to be sitting in a relaxing chair and setting and when biting into the candy to close your eyes and slowly savor the flavor	5.67	3	6	6	5
Pringles, you have to take the lid off, squeeze your hand in, and pull the pringle out	4.33	5	3	3	4

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Descriptions of rituals	Ritualistic ratings	Ratings of ritual characteristics			
		Rigidity, formality, repetition	Meaning	Symbolic value	No purpose
Pop popcorn in the microwave, pour popped popcorn into a bowl. Bring bowl over to TV/dvd player/laptop. Press play on movie. Pass the bowl to share popcorn with friends/family, or if watching alone, eat alone while watching	5.67	4	5	5	4
Cutting the bottom off of the near empty toothpaste tube	5.67	5	5	4	4
The only one I can think of, hopefully it falls under the category is a tootsie roll pop. Lick, lick, bite	4.33	5	2	1	1
A consumption ritual that I am familiar with is dunking a cookie in milk	5.33	7	4	7	7

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Descriptions of rituals	Ritualistic ratings	Ratings of ritual characteristics			
		Rigidity, formality, repetition	Meaning	Symbolic value	No purpose
Consumerism is defined by the never-ending pursuit to shop and consume. Examples including shopping sprees, especially those that engage a large number of people, such as Black Friday sales on the day after Thanksgiving	5	7	7	7	7
Offering a toast before beginning a holiday meal	5.67	3	6	6	4
Eating stuffed crusted pizza from the crusted end first?	4	1	4	2	1
Breaking apart a kitkat bar piece by piece	5.67	5	5	4	3
Always making that slurping sound at the end of a soda	5.33	5	6	6	7
Pringles- pop the top and eat more than one	5.33	3	3	2	6
I don't think I am familiar with any major consumption rituals. Maybe eating tortilla chips with guacomole	4	4	4	4	4

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Descriptions of rituals	Ritualistic ratings	Ratings of ritual characteristics			
		Rigidity, formality, repetition	Meaning	Symbolic value	No purpose
I know some people like to dip their Wendy's fries in a frosty. Not really my thing but I have heard that a lot of people do it	5.67	7	4	5	3
Dipping the side of a mozzarella stick that you haven't already chewed in marinara	3	7	7	7	1
The one about Oreo cookies is the only one that I'm familiar with	3.67	4	2	2	6
You take a pack of cigarettes and hit it to bring the tobacco back to the front before smoking	5.67	5	3	4	2

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Descriptions of rituals	Ritualistic ratings	Ratings of ritual characteristics			
		Rigidity, formality, repetition	Meaning	Symbolic value	No purpose
Cracking open the can, followed by the release of carbonation. People may then take a moment to observe the bubbles rising and the fizzing sound. Afterward, they take their first sip, often allowing the flavor to linger on their palate before continuing to drink at their desired pace. This ritual of opening and enjoying a can of soda has become ingrained in many people’s habits and is often associated with a sense of refreshment and enjoyment	4.67	4	5	4	4
Skincare steps	6.33	6	6	4	4
When eating marshmallow peep candies you have to bite the head and eat it first before the body	5.33	7	7	7	6

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Descriptions of rituals	Ritualistic ratings	Ratings of ritual characteristics			
		Rigidity, formality, repetition	Meaning	Symbolic value	No purpose
When I consume peanut M&Ms, I separate the candy shell and chocolate from the peanut in my mouth and then finish the shell/ chocolate before I eat the peanut	6.67	7	2	3	6
When taking a shot of tequila, I have seen like, shake, shot and lick again	5.67	4	3	3	3
I can't remember off the top of my head but for KitKat I'm pretty sure it's as follows: Take it, Break it, share it	5	7	7	7	5
3-step twist-lick-dunk oreo ritual	2.33	3	3	1	3
When I eat hard boiled eggs, I add salt and pepper first. Then, I split the egg in half and begin eating it with the yolk. Once that's done, I eat the white part in layers	5.33	7	3	2	5
When I eat starburst, I unwrap two at a time, smash them together, and then bite it in half	4.33	5	5	5	5
Eat this not that	3.67	3	5	4	5

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Descriptions of rituals	Ritualistic ratings	Ratings of ritual characteristics			
		Rigidity, formality, repetition	Meaning	Symbolic value	No purpose
Dipping chocolate chip cookies in milk then eating them	5.67	6	4	5	2
Bourbon: Sip, hold, roll around in mouth, swallow	5.67	3	5	4	2
I like to suck the hard candy coating from a jelly bean until it dissolves, then I eat the chewy center	5.33	5	3	2	7
There is also Pringles where people would have the can laying down and having a paper pull it out	5	4	3	4	5
Before bed i go to the bathroom wash my hands and face and brush my teeth	7	7	7	7	1
I do not do this	3	1	1	1	1
String-cheese must be eaten by gently peeling it. Taking a bite out of the cheese is forboden!	7	6	1	5	7
Dipping my french fries in mayonnaise	5.67	6	3	3	2
Timing how long a tea bag is in the hot water	6	6	6	5	2

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Descriptions of rituals	Ritualistic ratings	Ratings of ritual characteristics			
		Rigidity, formality, repetition	Meaning	Symbolic value	No purpose
Taking a shot of tequila. Put a line of salt on your hand, lick it, take a shot of tequila and then suck on a lime	7	7	6	6	2
I can't think of any	3	1	1	1	1
A consumption ritual that I am familiar with is one that has to do with a beauty product. I like to use eye masks under my eyes to help with inflammation and dryness. When I use these eye masks, I like to enjoy the experience, relaxing and doing something quiet while the masks are on my eyes. When the mask is done, I enjoy using the leftover moisturizer under my eyes. It's a relaxing and rejuvenating experience	5	3	6	5	7

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Descriptions of rituals	Ritualistic ratings	Ratings of ritual characteristics			
		Rigidity, formality, repetition	Meaning	Symbolic value	No purpose
When eating pop rocks the packets are poured into our mouths, the packet is then licked inside, and then the wrappers are split opened and licked again until all pop rock is gone	6	7	7	2	2
When I'm eating flower seeds I like to add a bunch to my mouth and open them one by one	3.67	6	4	6	5
Eating nachos—I take a chip, make sure I have all the ingredients on it, then I add salsa	1.67	1	1	1	7
Lick it, slam it, suck it. Tequila	3	3	5	5	2
Putting reeses peanut butter cups in the refrigerator or freezer. They are even better cold	5.67	5	5	5	3
I know that a lot of people like to dip their french fries into their milkshake when they eat at McDonald's or other fast food places	5	4	4	3	4
Eating the cherry before drinking the milk shake	4.67	4	4	5	6

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Descriptions of rituals	Ritualistic ratings	Ratings of ritual characteristics			
		Rigidity, formality, repetition	Meaning	Symbolic value	No purpose
Dipping biscotti in coffee	6.33	6	4	4	2
Breaking off a piece of that kit kat bar	4.67	5	5	5	3
I love to eat Twinkies by the brand Hostess and I love to dip the Twinkies in milk. The pastries are very sweet and this just makes them that much better as I love cake and whip cream. I always do this when I eat Twinkies	6.33	3	5	6	2
I am going to talk about my skincare ritual. In order to use my facial serum properly and effectively. First, I need to have a clean face meaning I always have to wash my face as my first step. Then, I apply serum to my face	5.67	2	2	2	5

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Descriptions of rituals	Ritualistic ratings	Ratings of ritual characteristics			
		Rigidity, formality, repetition	Meaning	Symbolic value	No purpose
I always like to place a slice of orange when enjoying a Blue Moon beer. I understand the orange slice was part of the initial marketing of the beer to garnish with an orange slice, but I like it and think it enhances the taste of the beer. I also like to eat the orange after the beer is consumed	5	4	2	2	4
The only thing I can think of is putting sugar and milk into coffee before drinking it	5.67	6	4	2	1
The peanut cracking technique. Peanut in mouth, crack lengthwise, and eat	3.67	4	4	3	4
Dipping cookies into milk before eating them	5.33	6	5	4	3
I would only be familiar with the example provided for oreos	7	7	1	1	1

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Descriptions of rituals	Ritualistic ratings	Ratings of ritual characteristics			
		Rigidity, formality, repetition	Meaning	Symbolic value	No purpose
The only one I can think of is something I do, not sure if others do it. When I eat lucky charms I eat all the grain cereal bits by themselves and leave the marshmallows for last	6	7	4	2	7
The Australian cookie Tim Tams has a similar ritual. You bite off both ends, then dip one end into milk and suck milk up through it like a straw until the entire cookie becomes soggy. Then you eat it	7	7	4	4	1
A consumption ritual I'm familiar with is slicing a buttermilk biscuit and putting something inside it like butter or jam or honey	5.33	5	4	3	2
Cipping chips ahoy cookies in milk	6	3	5	2	2
I like to drunk things in nutella before eating them	3	1	1	1	1

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Descriptions of rituals	Ritualistic ratings	Ratings of ritual characteristics			
		Rigidity, formality, repetition	Meaning	Symbolic value	No purpose
With stuffed crust pizza there were commercials about eating the pizza from the crust end first	3.67	4	3	2	6
Before opening a bottle of soda, hit the bottom of the bottle	5.67	4	4	4	2
Oreo cookie is the only one I'm familiar with as you described. I don't adhere to any rituals, so I'm not inclined to follow them	7	7	1	1	7
Dipping fries into a wendy's Frosty	2.67	2	2	2	2
I have seen some people tap their bags of chips before eating	5	2	5	5	3
I like to make French toast with Sara Lee bread and dunk it in maple syrup	5	5	4	4	4
KitKat: They use the snip-snap-break ritual to tell consumers how to consume their product	6	4	5	5	4
The doritos get your own bag ritual	4.67	5	4	5	4

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Descriptions of rituals	Ritualistic ratings	Ratings of ritual characteristics			
		Rigidity, formality, repetition	Meaning	Symbolic value	No purpose
I am familiar with eating red pepper jelly and cream cheese on crackers. You put the cream cheese on first and then a second layer of the red pepper jelly and it is quite delicious	5.67	6	6	6	3
Tootise roll you lick till you get to the center of the lollipop	2.33	3	4	4	3
I know a consumption ritual with soju, a Korean alcoholic drink. Before opening and drinking, you have to shake the bottle upside down and create a mini tornado in the bottle. This evenly distributes all alcohol in the bottle and you flick off the cap before drink	7	1	4	4	4
Dipping a Hershey Bar in chocolate to make your own Reese's	2.33	1	2	2	5

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Descriptions of rituals	Ritualistic ratings	Ratings of ritual characteristics			
		Rigidity, formality, repetition	Meaning	Symbolic value	No purpose
Separating out the individual marshmallows in lucky charms and eating all the cheerios first, then the individual marshmallows by type	6.33	4	2	1	5
Eating the coating of an m&m before eating the chocolate	4.33	5	5	5	5
I tap the top of a soda can two or three times before opening it	7	7	4	5	7
Let the chocolate coating on chocolate covered peanuts melt in your mouth	4	2	6	4	3
Most people when they eat a kit kat break it into separate pieces before they eat it	1.67	5	1	1	6
Toasting a marshmallow to a perfect golden brown before eating it	5	5	5	5	3
Dorito and bananas	5	4	4	5	3
I have a red bull every morning, its the first thing I do after I wake up	4.67	4	5	4	4

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Descriptions of rituals	Ritualistic ratings	Ratings of ritual characteristics			
		Rigidity, formality, repetition	Meaning	Symbolic value	No purpose
I take my burgers apart to eat them. I eat the bun first, then the toppings, then the burger itself and finally the last bun. I've always eaten it in piece, i am unclear as to why. I enjoy it better this way	7	1	4	6	6
TWIST CAP DRINK	4.33	5	4	4	5
I am familiar with the ritual of putting peanuts in Cola. I do not believe it is a ritual that has been established by any particular company, but people in the South have put peanuts into cans of cola for a long time	3	2	3	2	3
A ritual I have is always separating an nutter butter cookie, eating the filling, then eating the cookie	5.33	5	5	5	5
Drink coke, say "ahhhh."	4	3	3	5	6
Charleston Chews write on the side of their chocolate bars that you should try freezing them	4	5	4	4	1

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Descriptions of rituals	Ritualistic ratings	Ratings of ritual characteristics			
		Rigidity, formality, repetition	Meaning	Symbolic value	No purpose
Seeing how many licks it takes to get to the center of a tootsie pop sucker	4.67	7	6	5	3
One example of a consumption ritual is always adding whip cream to the mochas I make. Another example is making popcorn, and always adding salt and butter	6	6	5	6	3
I don't have any that I use, not terribly familiar. I guess maybe wine with a bath for some people? Often times women are portrayed in commercials taking a bath, enjoying a glass of wine	5.67	5	3	2	6
Washing my face 3-step face soap-face mask-moisture cream	5.33	2	4	4	2
Open a twinkie and stick a straw in it to suck out the cream	5.33	5	5	5	6
Giving thanks before eating a meal	6	6	6	6	4
Shake it and drink it when drinking chocolate milk	5	4	3	4	4

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Descriptions of rituals	Ritualistic ratings	Ratings of ritual characteristics			
		Rigidity, formality, repetition	Meaning	Symbolic value	No purpose
A consumption ritual that I am familiar with is eating cream cheese with crackers. I put crackers and some cream cheese on a plate. I spread the cream cheese on the crackers with a knife	4.67	3	3	3	4
A ritual I am familiar with is to make a duck mouth with two upside down Pringles chips, very funny	4.67	5	5	4	3
Given to a specific ritual, I have only seen, it is recommending a product and how it works, since to convince me they give it to me as a gift and then if I like it I can buy it	4	3	5	4	5
When eating peanut m&ms, I eat all of the chocolate before eating the peanut part of the candy. You'd have to be a savage to eat the m&m pieces in one full bite	5.67	5	1	1	7
Consumers roll the toothpaste tube and squeeze the last bit of paste from it	5.67	2	6	4	2

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Descriptions of rituals	Ritualistic ratings	Ratings of ritual characteristics			
		Rigidity, formality, repetition	Meaning	Symbolic value	No purpose
No idea	3	1	1	1	1
Dipping an Oreo in milk	4.67	1	5	5	6
There is an eating ritual for Kit-Kats that was made popular by the Kardashians. First, you eat the chocolate off both ends. Then you eat the chocolate along the rim. Next, you break apart the kit kat, and eat it slowly	6.33	7	7	3	1
With oreos, I typically twist them apart, lick the cream out of the middle, then dip the two sides in milk and consume them individually	6	4	5	5	4
I have no rituals other than checking my checking account balance before I shop so I don't overspend	3.33	2	3	4	1
Popsicle—take it, break it, share it	7	5	5	4	2
I am only really familiar with the oreo one, along with the kit kat break it off ritual?	5	4	3	2	5
Drinking tequila. lick salt, slam tequila, suck lime	7	7	6	4	3

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Descriptions of rituals	Ritualistic ratings	Ratings of ritual characteristics			
		Rigidity, formality, repetition	Meaning	Symbolic value	No purpose
Using digestive biscuits with tea. As in dunking them in the tea before eating them	5.33	5	4	4	4
Whenever I eat mashed potatoes, I buy a loaf of bread and take out the middle and stuff the mashed potatoes in the bread. It sounds weird, but it is great dipped in gravy	6.67	5	7	7	6
I like to buy one slice of cake once in a while. I must have vanilla ice cream on the side, in the same dish	6	6	4	4	6
I eat one color of M&Ms at a time	6	6	5	3	6
Eating Hostess Ho-Ho's where you peel off the chocolate coating, unroll the chocolate cream roll and eat it like a piece of pizza!	6.33	6	5	5	6
Reese Peanut Butter Cups and their bite-size, to share or not to share	7	7	4	4	1
I eat all of the green skittles before the other color	7	7	7	7	7

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Descriptions of rituals	Ritualistic ratings	Ratings of ritual characteristics			
		Rigidity, formality, repetition	Meaning	Symbolic value	No purpose
When drinking a Pepsi or Pepsi Zero: The bottle is ice cold. Twist the top off. Put it up to your mouth and throw your head back. Take two swallows. AAAAhhhhh! Then burp! Now that's good!!	7	7	4	7	2
When eating pizza I alternate bites between the pizza part and the crust	3.33	6	1	1	5
I don't know any	3	1	1	1	1
One example of a consumption ritual is the act of brewing and savoring coffee in the morning, involving steps like selecting the beans, brewing the coffee, and enjoying it in a preferred manner	6.33	7	5	5	3
Tostitos chips and dipping it with sauce	4.67	5	5	4	3
Holding your pinkie out when drinking coffee	4.67	2	3	3	5

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Descriptions of rituals	Ritualistic ratings	Ratings of ritual characteristics			
		Rigidity, formality, repetition	Meaning	Symbolic value	No purpose
Only as a recommendation, I have not seen more strange acts or I have done things more than a recommendation or suggest	3.33	4	3	3	4
A ritual I am familiar with is saying grace or praying before eating a meal	5.67	2	6	5	2
Dipping your cookies into vanilla milk	5	4	5	5	3
Swish and savor (wine)	6	5	4	4	3
Turning a DQ Blizzard upside down to show how thick it is	5.67	4	4	4	3
When I put on slacks, it's always the right leg first, then second leg left, and then pull them up	6	6	5	3	5
Licking the lid of a yogurt before throwing it away	5.33	5	5	5	5
Don't know any	3	1	1	1	1
Putting catsup and mustard on my hot dog	5.33	1	4	5	3

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Descriptions of rituals	Ritualistic ratings	Ratings of ritual characteristics			
		Rigidity, formality, repetition	Meaning	Symbolic value	No purpose
I eat my pizza slices sideways, so I bite an even amount of the crust and the rest of the pizza to balance the flavors	4	6	1	1	1
I would always separate the caramel and peanuts, from the nougat on a Snickers bar	5.33	6	4	4	4
One ritual that I can think of is when making/drinking tea, we let the tea bag sit in the cup to steep. Periodically, we take the tea bag and dip it repeatedly in the water	6.33	7	1	1	5
I like to put potato chips on the inside of my lunch sandwich from time to time. BBQ potato chips work the best with ham, mayo and a toasted bun. Delicious	4.67	5	6	6	4

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Descriptions of rituals	Ritualistic ratings	Ratings of ritual characteristics			
		Rigidity, formality, repetition	Meaning	Symbolic value	No purpose
When drinking a tequila shot lick the meeting point of the base of your thumb and index finger, pour some salt on this area you just licked, hold a wedge of lemon/ lime between that same thumb and index finger, gulp down your tequila shot, lick the salt from your hand and suck on the lemon wedge or squeeze it out the juice into your mouth	7	7	6	6	6
With ice cream, particularly Haagen-Dazs, I eat it in straight out of the container and stir the ice cream until it becomes very soft before consuming it	7	7	4	4	5
A KitKat bar! The commercials show them breaking the bar before eating it	4	4	2	2	4

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Descriptions of rituals	Ritualistic ratings	Ratings of ritual characteristics			
		Rigidity, formality, repetition	Meaning	Symbolic value	No purpose
Kit-kat.bite challenge	4	4	4	4	4
When I purchase a bag of skittles, I look at the colors/ flavors in each bag and each time I eat some, I would take out one of each color and eat them from lightest to darkest	6	6	1	1	7

than those who were less self-compassionate. Smith et al. (2021) investigated how consumers responded to health threats, which could further affected their own health. They found that people used different cognitive strategies to manage their emotions, such as using reappraisal to reduce fear. Fear could also induce behavior to protect health, therefore reducing fear may also decrease health-protection behaviors. They tracked two diverse U.S. samples for 3 months and showed that using reappraisal could lower fear about Covid-19, an ongoing health threat, as well as better mental health, whereas with fewer health behaviors.

Weinstein (1982) proposed that unrealistic optimism about one's health would reduce his/her interest in risk reduction because of less worry. Aspinwall and Brunhart (1996) observed that optimistic beliefs about one's own health could predict more attention paid to risk information than to benefit or neutral information. Such optimistic beliefs were also positively associated with greater levels of memory recall.

Reed and Aspinwall (1998) further examined the relationship between self-affirmation and biased processing of self-relevant health-risk information. They found that the frequent caffeine drinking participants who were in the affirmation of kindness condition showed more open and less biased attitudes towards risk-related information than those in the control condition. Compared to the frequent caffeine drinkers who did not affirm their kindness, those who were in the affirmation of kindness condition responded more quickly to the risk-confirming information than to the risk-disconfirming information and also rated the risk-confirming information more convincing as well as recalling more risk-confirming information than otherwise. In a similar vein, Harris and Napper (2005) found that while reading the experimental leaflet, compared to low-risk participants, high-risk and self-affirmed participants rated risk more highly, experienced

greater negative feelings such as fear, and had stronger intentions to reduce alcohol consumption.

In a similar vein, Sherman et al. (2000) conducted two studies and demonstrated that self-image maintenance processes can influence the persuasiveness of personally relevant health messages. Specifically, They found that the participants who received self-affirmation became less defensive and perceived the health information more convincing. Their findings showed that health risk messages may threaten people's self-image, whereas using self-affirming strategies could make people less defensive and more accepting of the health information, thus resulting in more positive health behaviors.

Gibbons et al. (1998) found that adolescent health-risk behavior, to a large extent, was not planned. They also pointed out that although willingness and intention could both predict risk behavior, they were two different and independent constructs. Rippetoe and Rogers (1987) explored the effects of information about a health threat on adaptive (e.g., wishful thinking) and maladaptive (e.g., avoidant thinking) coping strategies. They demonstrated that both adaptive and maladaptive coping strategies were activated in a high-threat condition. They further showed that both the high-response-efficacy and the high-self-efficacy conditions could enhance adaptive coping but not for maladaptive coping. They also observed that avoidant thinking was the most maladaptive strategy and could reduce fear towards the health threat as well as decreasing intentions to adopt adaptive coping.

Across different health domains, Chandran and Menon (2004) found that framing health hazards as taking place every day versus every year has differential effects in that every day framing would make the health risks appear more concrete and near than every year framing. The downstream consequences included increased self-risk perceptions, concern and anxiety towards the hazard, enhanced intentions to engage in precautionary behavior, and risk communication effectiveness. Beck and Lund (1981) observed that the participants in the high seriousness condition had more feelings of fear, concern, and threat and showed a high probability to comply with the recommended behavior. They also found that perceived personal efficacy could predict the probability of performing the recommended behavior.

Regarding the antecedents of health-risk behaviors, Eisler et al. (1988) found that masculine gender-role stress could predict increased anger, anxiety, and more health-risk behaviors. By conducting four experiments and using two large empirical datasets, Galoni et al. (2020) found that contagious disease cues, such as someone sneezing on the train, cause not only disgust, but also fear. These emotions would lead consumer to show preference for products more familiar rather than less familiar to them. Huang and Sengupta (2020) observed that disease salience would reduce consumers' relative preference for typical versus atypical products. This was because typical products were perceived to be related to a lot of people, hence eliciting the people-avoidance motive. However, when the disease was described as noncontagious, the effect would disappear. By conducting four experiments in different health domains, Achar et al. (2020) investigated the psychological factors that influenced illness-detection versus illness-prevention

behaviors. They found that detection of illness would elicit fear, which then further reduced involvement in illness-detection behaviors. They also showed that self-efficacy perceptions could drive illness prevention.

In sum, prior research has extensively studied the effect of health threats on behaviors. However, seldom does research examine how health threats affect green consumption. This book aims to examine the influence of health threats on green consumption and its mechanism as well as the boundary condition.

2.4.2 Economic Threats

Economic threats such as low socio-economic status or getting unemployed because of economic downturn may damage one's financial situation and motivate people to seek for the restoration of a sense of control and self-esteem (Campbell et al., 2020; Fritsche & Jugert, 2017). Consumers may engage in various consumption activities to regain their sense of control to cope with economic threats. For example, Padgett and Jorgenson (1982) found that during the turbulent years between 1918 and 1940, economic threats were highly associated with German consumers' superstitious behavior.

Filindra et al. (2022) found that both cultural and economic threats together resulted in lower levels of refugee acceptance. Bigman et al. (2021) found that the threats of racial and economic inequality could increase preference to use artificial intelligence algorithm for decision-making. Tartaglia et al. (2018) examined the influence of various coping strategies to maintain quality of life in a community when people faced economic and environmental threats. They found that living in the environmentally-contaminated area could exert a direct negative effect on quality of life and would elicit lower place attachment as well as increased avoidance coping. Prior research also offers important findings on how to address threats economically. For example, by conducting three lab experiments in two different countries, Rousseau and Garcia-Retamero (2007) found that shared identity could reduce intergroup threat perception while power may be negatively associated with threat perception. In addition, shared identity could enhance cooperation for economic policy.

However, seldom does research investigate the effect of economic threats on green consumption. This book aims to explore the effect of economic threats on green consumption as well as its mechanism and boundary condition.

2.4.3 Informational Threats

When an individual is exposed to two pieces of conflicting news, then informational threats occur. Real information threats may also occur, for example, if a local newspaper is closed. This book focuses primarily on news conflicts about the same issue. Jensen and Hurley (2010) suggested that when individuals were

exposed to scientific news controversies, they would show uncertainty about the focal issue.

Researchers are interested in understanding which type of conflicting news that people believe more. Through conducting a telephone interview of more than 1,500 people from three Chinese major metropolises, Zhou et al. (2014) found that when people encountered conflicting news or reports, as to the sources of the news or reports, they trusted more in television. Furthermore, people trusted more in national Chinese media than other media outlets. van der Meer and Brosius (in press) showed that participants did not use negativity as a cue to judge which news to believe when they encountered conflicting news.

Northup (2017) investigated the effect of reading contradictory news related to health information on people's attitudes towards eating well. It was found that conflicting messages in the news would induce confusion among participants, resulting in fatalistic views toward eating well. Participants would see themselves as unable to understand correct nutrition information, which was found to highly correlate with unhealthy food consumption. That is, conflicting health information would cause people to develop both general negative affect as well as fatalistic views towards eating well. This may partially explain the phenomenon that the number of overweight people has greatly increased during the past few decades. In a similar vein, Nagler et al. (2023) observed that people were vulnerable to exposure to conflicting health information, no matter they trusted the news media or not and this effect was independent of research literacy.

Conflicting information may cause uncertainty and thus influence an individual's behavior. For example, in conducting research on influenza in Turkey, Kasapoglu (2017) pointed out that people confronting conflicting information were in a dilemma and because the situation was normless and characterized by uncertainty, they stopped following norms, resulting in negative responses.

Conflicting news can cause undesirable communication effect. It was found that not only offline, but also online, such as via online chatting, people encountered conflicting information. For example, Meinert et al. (2018) pointed out that fake news through social media platforms could spread very fast, even within a few seconds while reach a large audience. Such fake news could produce negative effect on consumers, businesses, and society. In addressing this point, this book also examines online chatting behavior by applying communication theories. Please refer to Appendix B for the application of diffusion theory and uses & gratifications to online chatting behavior.

Although there are research studies on informational threats, seldom does research examine the effect of informational threats on green consumption. This book intends to conceptually investigate the effect of informational threats on green consumption as well as its mechanism and boundary condition.

2.5 Inter-Client Conflicts During Service Encounters

The major roles that service employees need to perform are to satisfy consumers while deliver productivity and generate sales (Wirtz & Jerger, 2016). These roles often lead to conflicts and stress, further resulting in job dissatisfaction (e.g., Ellway, 2014) and burnout (e.g., Jasmand et al., 2012). According to Wirtz and Jerger (2016), there are three types of main sources to role conflicts and role stress, that is, organization/client, person/role, and inter-client conflicts. When frontline service employees have to manage frequently goals such as consumer satisfaction, sales, and productivity and efficiency. If frontline service employees perceive conflicts between what the firm or the job requires them to do and their own personality or beliefs, then person/role conflicts occur. For example, if the service employee is required to smile or be friendly even to very rude consumers demanded by the firm, then s/he might feel conflicts. As Mahesh and Kasturi (2006) observed, the most frequent phrases that frontline employees often used to describe consumers were negative words such as unreasonable and arrogant. Wirtz and Lovelock (2016) further pointed out that such personality traits as being warm, independent, and friendly could help service employees to offer high-quality service, especially for those with higher self-esteem.

Clashes between consumers could lead to inter-client conflicts (Wirtz & Jerger, 2016). Frontline service employees have to mediate such misbehaving consumers (Grandey et al., 2004). For instance, conflicts between consumers in a movie theater are common and are often caused by free talking and chatting with friends. In such a situation, it is often the service employee who will be called to deal. Apparently, it is unpleasant and stressful for the frontline service employee do deal with such a situation. This book focuses on the third type of role conflicts, that is, inter-client conflicts.

To more deeply understand inter-client conflicts as well as their impacts, a survey was conducted. In exchange for monetary compensation, a total of 201 participants ($M_{age} = 39.55$, $SD = 13.52$; 45.3% female) from the industries of Finance and Insurance, Food Processing and Services, Grocery, Hotel and Food Services, and Retail, were recruited from Prolific.com. One response to two description questions were identical and therefore excluded from further analysis, leaving a final sample of 200 responses ($M_{age} = 39.54$, $SD = 13.55$; 45.5% female). Participants first read: "Working in services industries, you might have observed that some of the conflicts occur between consumers. For example, at a movie theater, you may be called by one consumer to deal with another consumer who talks on the phone very loudly. This kind of conflict is called inter-client conflict. Such conflicts happen frequently. Please write down your experiences on inter-client conflicts and your feelings below." Afterwards, they would rate the following items: "Did you feel happy in the experience that you previously wrote down?" "Did you feel angry in the experience that you previously wrote down?" and "Did you feel uncomfortable in the experience that you previously wrote down?" on a seven-point likert scale (1 = "not at all" and 7 = "very much"). They were also asked to rate the experience that they previously wrote down on

a seven-point likert scale (1 = “very dissatisfied” and 7 = “very satisfied”). Next they were asked to write down how they dealt with the inter-client conflicts that they previously wrote down and whether there were any better solutions. Subsequently they were asked “Have such kind of experiences negatively affected you?” on a seven-point likert scale (1 = “absolutely no” and 7 = “absolutely yes”). Please see Table 2.2 for participants’ descriptions of the inter-client conflicts they encountered as well as the solutions and negative impact score.

We next conducted a simple regression analysis with happiness, anger, and uncomfortableness as the independent variables and satisfaction as the dependent variable ($F(3, 196) = 57.07, p < 0.001$). Results showed that happiness exerted a significantly positive impact on service employee satisfaction towards the inter-client conflict experience ($\beta = 0.63, t(196) = 11.09, p < 0.001$). Uncomfortableness was marginally significant ($\beta = -0.11, t(196) = -1.81, p = 0.07$). Anger was not significant ($p = 0.50$).

The mean value of negative impact was 3.80 (SD = 1.89). Results of a one sample t-test showed that the mean value of negative impact did not significantly differ from the scale median point of 4 ($t(200) = -1.53, p = 0.13$), indicating that there was negative impact on service employees. Indeed, it is very common for inter-client conflicts to occur. For example, someone smokes in non-smoking areas or talks very loud in a public place. It is stressful to deal with such inter-client conflicts since service employees can not satisfy both parties. However, rarely does research investigate how to solve inter-client conflicts. By borrowing the interpersonal circumplex model, this book aims to recommend a way to solve inter-client conflicts.

2.6 Green Consumption

Nowadays, more and more consumers and companies become aware of issues concerned with environmental fragility and protection. An increasing number of consumers have turned to green consumption. An environmentally conscious consumer would consume only the products and services that have less or no negative impact on the environment (Roberts, 1996). However, due to cost reasons, consumers also show reluctance to purchase green products and services. Indeed, environmentally friendly products are expensive and might account for a small ratio of the global market demand (Gleim et al., 2013). It is important to understand why consumers, although concerning the environment, are not willing to purchase green products beyond monetary costs. Green consumption is not limited to buying economically friendly products, it can also include producing less food waste or refraining from over consumption. Next, a thorough literature review on the antecedents of green consumption will be conducted.

Environmentally conscious behaviors can be explained from three perspectives, that is, demographics such as age, gender, and income, personality characteristics, and psychographic factors such as values, attitudes, and locus of control (e.g.,

Table 2.2 Inter-client conflicts and their impact on service employees

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
Working overnight in hospitality I get the usual complaints of people being loud in the hallways and the room next door is being loud or their TV volume is up. I can usually take care of these inconveniences easily myself, but I have had some guests take it upon their self to handle the situation. I do not understand why some guests do that knowing how people are nowadays. It is not safe for them	I have had to call the police to breakup guests before when they do not listen to reason. I don't like doing it but when they don't listen I don't have any other choice but to have them removed which is a really uncomfortable feeling	7
I enjoy inter-client conflicts, they make yourself grow as well and others and learn to adapt on the fly	By being open-minded and respectful to all parties	2
These types of situations happen frequently and you typically look at someone from management to take the authoritative role to deal with the situation as to avoid any conflict for yourself. These make me very uncomfortable as you would hope that people could behave in public and just make things peaceful	Well dealing with situations like this you don't know what the right or wrong answer is until you engage with the customer and go based on their reaction, some people may be receptive to it and makes the situation fine but others can get defensive and then you have to go based off how they are reacting in hopes you can de-escalate the situation and not cause a bigger scene	7
I am not a fan of it but in some situations it's necessary	Handling it head on	3
I have seen inter-client conflicts often at all of my jobs. Some days it bothers me especially if we are very busy that day, but other days I find it amusing	I would either solve the conflict myself, or ask a coworker/manager to help the situation	3
I don't work in the service industry, so I haven't seen it first-hand from an employee perspective	As I mentioned, I do not work in the service industry. I work in IT, in the Financial Services industry	1
When I was a waitress, I was called from customers to deal with other customers and their children being wild and unruly. It made me feel helpless in a way because although I can say something, I really didn't feel comfortable to be in that position	I just gently said something to the other family and hope they would leave soon	4
A customer was upset about another patient playing their music loudly in the store. I wasn't bothered but still asked the customer to turn down the volume	I just spoke to both customers calmly and they understood	1

(continued)

Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
My work had a bus stop outside the store. This bus stop would frequently let off drunk or otherwise intoxicated customers. The customers went into the nearest door they could find to get water, borrow a phone, or just stumble around and look at things. On St Patrick's Day, a woman came in extremely drunk and was following me and a group of customers around the store with a cart. She eventually ended up falling over ONTO the customers I was with and I had to deal with the aftermath of that	I took my customers away from the product we were looking at and I called a manager to come and deal with the woman on the ground. The manager called law enforcement and they eventually came to deal with her. They had to get her off the ground but she was belligerent. I wish we had people looking out for us so that I wasn't the one to deal with people I didn't have the training or resources to deal with	6
I have personally never dealt with inter-client conflicts but I have witnessed it. Most of the time, it just leads to a bigger issue than it already was	I've seen it be handled very well	1
I've seen these conflicts when working in the restaurant industry. One customer may complain about another customer sitting at a different table	Sometimes you cannot do anything in these situations. You simply cannot make everyone happy	7
I had two people arguing next to another couple...they were very loud and using profanity...I had to call the manager to deal with it	Told them to either refrain from using that profanity or to leave	5
I've been working with one customer and it's confidential information when another customer approached my desk where she could see my computer screen and I had to ask her to leave and wait her turn	I had to walk the customer out of my office. I could have called security but what I wish would have happened was that the front desk employee would have stopped her before she entered my office	5
I have had multiple dealings with inter-client conflict. From lines at Black Friday Sales to people wanting to purchase the last steak in the meat case, I have often had to mediate customer conflict. I hate inter-client conflict, as it is disruptive. However, it is better than conflict between workers and staff	In almost all cases, it is a matter of enforcing rules. First come first serve, or the reliance on lines. Clear and concise communication followed by action if things spiral out of control	5
I recently witnessed a flight attendant have to tell people to stop being so loud on a plane. it was cringey to witness and i felt bad for the flight attendant because thet must be uncomfortable	It is best to be honest and straightforward with the person in conflicts	1

(continued)

Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
The worst of it was during Covid, when we had product scarcity and proximity fears. My store was pretty chill, so the one I remember most was between two guys. We'd put arrows up and down each aisle, to minimize people coming face to face. And this one guy was literally zigzagging in the other direction, every aisle, and crossing paths with this other guy each time—so the other guy finally says “do you have to walk the wrong way down every aisle?” Dumb guy just gets defensive with “yes I do” and it was dropped, which was mostly funny to me, minus the safety concerns. How hard is it to follow the arrows? On the whole, I find it irritating, but it's nice when somethings happening and my employees aren't involved, because the stakes are much lower for us. It's just about neutralizing the situation and getting everyone else out the door, without the same stresses	I just stood back and let it play out. If it had escalated, at some point I probably would have stepped in, but non-confrontation is generally the best strategy, let them move on out the door. What I could have done was run across the guy who was in the right, and commiserated, but was also minimizing interactions in general because of Covid fears	1
I have had many of the issues in the service industry as I worked in hotels for 7 years. While they can be difficult to deal with, typically this type of interaction is just a mis communication between the groups and can be solved by listening to both parties and expressing what the two parties are feeling. Attempting to have one client try to put them selves in the other clients shoes is a good way to potentially solve and issues	I kind of stated this in the previous answer. But typically speaking, listening to both sides concerns with out interruption is a huge part of it. doing your best to understand is as well. Then trying to convey both groups concerns to eachother are the steps I have taken in the past that have worked time and time again	5
I dont like these interactions it feels a lot like confrontations and i never like doing that i just like to get to the point in a gentle but firm way so i dont get too anxious	Firm and gentle and respectful so you don't make the situation worse	4

(continued)

Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
I have experienced this where a customer complained to me about another customer and wanted me to do something about it. I felt like it really wasn't part of my job and didn't want to get involved since people can react badly and I wasn't paid enough to take abuse if it went poorly in the interaction	I apologetically talked to the other customer. They could tell I was uncomfortable	4
People have become more and more rude and these conflicts are becoming more frequent. The amount of times some minimum wage worker has to tell someone in the theater to get off their phone is way too frequent. I almost exclusively go to the drive in to avoid this type of anti-social behavior	I retrieved an usher to get the person to stop. Really short of petitioning the theater to act like Alamo Drafthouse and aggressively police their cinema, there's not a solution	7

(continued)

Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
As a barista at a busy downtown coffee shop, I've dealt with my fair share of inter-client conflicts. I distinctly remember one incident that happened during the morning rush. Our shop offers limited seating, and it's a first-come, first-serve arrangement. That day, a customer, let's call him Customer A, took a large table meant for four but was alone. As more customers streamed in, the seating area quickly filled up. A group of three customers came in and found no place to sit. They noticed the lone customer at the large table, and one of them, Customer B, approached him, asking if they could share the table. Customer A flatly refused, saying he needed the space for his work. Tensions escalated quickly as voices were raised. As a barista, I was torn. It was not my place to dictate where customers sat, but it was also vital to maintain a pleasant atmosphere in the shop. I approached both parties, suggesting a compromise where Customer A could keep two seats for his work while the group of three could occupy the other two. It was a delicate situation that left me feeling slightly stressed but also enlightened on the intricacies of managing a public space. Inter-client conflicts, as I've learned, are an integral part of the service industry that requires tact and diplomacy	After the incident, I realized that there might be better ways to handle such inter-client conflicts. Although the compromise solution worked that day, it was clear that it might not work every time. To prevent such instances in the future, I brought the matter up with the management team. We discussed implementing clear policies for table sharing, especially during peak hours. Policies like these could help customers understand the expectations when the coffee shop is busy. I suggested signs that read, "Please share tables during peak hours," and "Please limit table use to 30 min when the shop is full." In addition, I suggested we could offer alternatives such as a communal table for customers working alone. This way, customers who need more space for their work can use these communal areas, leaving the smaller tables for groups of customers. Looking back, I feel these changes could help not only manage these types of conflicts better but also provide a fair and pleasant experience for all our customers	4
I have not encountered this situation	As previously stated, i have not experienced this	1
At a bar there is a disagreement regarding the type of music a jukebox should play. Should the bar allow songs with explicit and offensive lyrics if some of the patrons want that or not? I think people should be as flexible and understanding as possible	I reasoned with the patrons and they agreed to compromise	2

(continued)

Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
I think it has to do with some time ago when I went to buy a product and the kind noise that was going on I was very disturbed	The best thing I did was to calm them and hanged up	2
I have experienced an interclient conflict at work as a caterer. I had two clients who could not agree on the menu for the assigned job. As a result, I felt that I was able to help the clients resolve the conflict and come to a compromise although the situation was complex	I detailed out two menus for the clients and had them both pick a few options from the menu they wanted and combined it into one menu. This way allowed both clients to have some items from the menu they wanted and allowed for them to peacefully come to an agreement	2
People were in the story and it was quite crowded. A lady had her kid running around the shop quite wildly and hitting people. It was frustrating and it hit a boiling plate where I had to tell her to get her child or leave the shop	I was respectful, but stern regarding the matter	2
I feel as though alot of people like to start conflict and then have someone re affirm it for the. I really wish people would abstain from doing this because it makes it awkward for the worker	I would tend to walk away from them and let the customers deal with it	6
I deal with these all the time. Customers are always complaining about each other. One of the ones I hear most often is she skipped in line. I am used to dealing with them so they do not bother me much	I calmed the situation down. I was able to help both by opening another register for the unhappy person	5
I've seen customers argue over who should be served next. They are uncomfortable to watch	I tried to calm everyone down and let them come to some kind of understanding that fighting won't help the situation	4
I don't deal with inter-client conflicts	n/a	1

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Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
I had to deal with a customer who complained to me about another customer skipping the line to get closer to paying for her products. That was really unfair. I was forced to speak to this person and politely ask her to go to the back of the line. I don't like getting involved in inter-client conflicts because sometimes you end up having 2 customers angry at you. That is very stressful and is also not a good environment for the workplace	I asked the customer to politely return to the back of the line. If you talk in a loud voice, the person might argue back and yell at you. Calming down customers is the best thing you can do in the customer service industry, especially retail. Everybody seems to be stressed out. You talk to people calmly to come to a solution between the customers. The goal is to solve the problem quickly and smoothly by calming emotions	5
We had a fight with one of the theater guy when we were trying to find our seats	They should try to be accomodating	6
I have once had to tell one customer to stop honking a bike horn by another customer. I was then scolded by the customer I asked to stop	I politely asked the customer to stop. I cannot think of any better way	3
I see people that cause these kinds of issues irresponsibles and lack of respect for others. People who behave rudely in a area were others are gathered are disconsidarate people	I ask them to consider the people around and if they still act in a rude way i ask them to leave	4
Once when I worked retail I witnessed two customers arguing over the same shirt. It was the last one of that style/size. I thought the argument was very petty. We offered online shopping, it could have been easily fixed. They did not want to budge, they both wanted it that very moment. Even though the one that would have ordered would have had it in three days or less. I think adults arguing over nonsense is childish and petty and their time could be spent on better things	One bought in store, one ordered online. All problems solved. People are petty and greedy and we live it in "right now" world	7
I have experienced a customer complaining about another customer being too loud at a hotel i worked at. everyone in the hotel pays for the service they expect so they have every right to complain	I think dealing with the problem head on and talking to the person face-to-face is the best solution	2

(continued)

Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
Customers have disagreements over payment methods, discounts, or product availability. I try to remain calm, listen attentively to the customers	Communication techniques and patience	6
There was a lady who threw a fit about everything in paper and plastic in the ten items or less lane	I was annoyed	2
I have worked in a grocery store where customers want a speedy checkout until they want to take a lot of time to dispute prices at the register, requiring the bagger to go to the back of the store to verify the claim and for management to sign off on any price adjustments. There is an inherent conflict between this type of customer and the customers that just want to leave the store with their groceries in a timely manner. Juggling these interests was an annoyance of the job, though these cases usually didn't stick with me for very long	I would usually try to expedite any verification processes by being very detailed with the bagger/runner so that they could locate the item faster. I would try to reason with the customer or immediately defer to management, calling them over sooner rather than later	3
At a casino a customer was slowing down the playing table because they were throwing their cards	Unless it's effecting me in a direct big way, I'll let everything play out according to the establishments rules	5
I often have the issue of customers arguing over low-stock items. Should they split the inventory? Should it be first come, first serve?	I try to explain splitting the inventory is the better option, bringing their understanding side	2
I would share a solution regarding to similar situations, in this case, I will have a short discussion with the client	The solution is follow the protocol	5
We had a party of 10 dining in our restaurant. Two people at the table got into a literal fistfight. We asked them to leave. They asked for their food to go, so we said sure. Then one guy asked if it was free because of the disruption. I was dumbfounded	Packed up their food and sent them on their way. Someone did pay for all of it	4

(continued)

Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
I have had a customer report to me that they thought another customer was shoplifting and thought it necessary that I confront the other customer. Technically in my company I am not allowed to confront a customer about shoplifting but I can go to them and ask them if they need any help to deter them. I don't like getting in the middle of these things and it made me uncomfortable to do so	I don't know of a better solution because the other customer seemed so insistent on me confronting the shoplifter when in reality it was none of their business and it was something our company needed to deal with	7
Someone talking on the phone loudly. I don't understand why people do this	I walked away	6
I don't interact with strangers in public, unless it is absolutely unavoidable. People are way too unstable these days, and it is not worth it. It doesn't help, people that are behaving awful know they are and just don't care. I remove myself from the situation	I walked away. It is the only suitable response	7
Clients are very demanding and they all want to get their way. If one client sees another client getting something that they aren't getting, they complain until they get it or are given something to placate them too	I would usually give the client something almost as good, or in most cases explain that the other client shelled out a few extra bucks and they could get the same treatment if they did the same	3
A customer had slapped me before just because I was trying to explain out terms to her. It was an intense moment for me and I was very surprised at the turn of the event	I calmed her down and she later apologized after I'd schooled her	5
On airplanes, this happens all the time. People are stressed from the cramped conditions and all it takes is one little incident to set them off	Sometimes, one or both parties will calm down and relax. Other times, it can spiral out of control and occasionally police assistance is even needed	5
As a retail sales person, I often notice inter-client conflict. We may have numerous people in the store at one time and all of them want my assistance. Some can be very rude and ask for my assistance while I am working with another customer. It really infuriates me that someone feels that they are more important than another	I simply told the 2nd customer that I would assist them as soon as I was done with the customer I was currently assisted and I would give them the same attention	5

(continued)

Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
Inter-client conflicts can be difficult to navigate, especially when it comes to feelings. It's important to take the time to practice self-care and work through any negative emotions associated with inter-client conflicts. gain insight into how you reacted to the situation and how you can approach similar conflicts more effectively in future	When dealing with inter-client conflicts, communication is key. It is important to encourage open and honest dialogue between all the parties involved to ensure that everyone's perspectives are taken into consideration	3
I don't have much experience with inter-client conflicts, and even if there was a scenario in which I could potentially be involved, I would actively avoid these types of situations unless I was directly affected	Again, in a hypothetical situation, I would actively avoid these situations unless I or someone I was with was directly affected	1
Two customers fighting over an appointment time, had to distance them. It was a tense moment	Physically distanced the two customers by coming between them. No other solution except to let them fight it out	1
When I worked at a hotel I often had customers complain that other customers were being too loud. You have to try to appease both parties with still maintaining authority. It can be really difficult and challenging to do	I spoke to them kindly and reminded them that there were others in the hotel. I reminded them they could not be refunded if I had to call the authorities over the noise	4
My experiences on inter-client conflicts has been mostly positive because I am usually able to resolve the problem quickly, as the center-store manager of the grocery store I work for. If a customer comes to me and has a question or complaint about another customer, it is always handled quickly and efficiently by me, whether it is a rowdy customer or why a customer got a certain deal on an item. My feelings about this is always positive because I take no negativity in my work and maintain a strict professional positive tone in all of my customer interactions	I deal with such inter-client conflicts by immediately pausing any tasks I currently have going on, and making the customer complaint or inquiry my top priority until customer satisfaction is maximized. I do this by attentively and actively listening to the customer's words and doing everything in my power to resolve things	1

(continued)

Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
The other day I had to solve a problem with someone's boss, because they were complaining to their boss that I never delivered their package and won't give it to them. I was extremely frustrated because the customer was lying and their boss wasn't too helpful during the situation either	I explained to their manager that I did not have their package and showed the tracking log and who signed for it. There are no other solutions, because I scanned and delivered the package to who it belonged to	5
I work in a restaurant and had a woman complain and berate me because the group next to her table were too loud. I spoke to the other table they apologized and quieted. The first woman was still not happy and walked out because the table next to her were "animals."	I spoke to both groups. the loud table was very accommodating and responsive. the first woman was a bit absurd and i don't think she could have been made happy. I tried and she walked out on a \$400 bill	6
I think that an employee is put in a difficult position when this happens. They are made to deny the comfort of one customer for another. If it goes against the business policy, then the employee can step in. Hotels are a great example of this. Someone is being loud after quiet hours, the hotel can then step in but if they are being loud during the day, the employee is put in a difficult position	I think that while at a hotel, I should assume that it is going to be loud. There is no reason to demand that it be quiet all night with many people staying in a small space. A better solution might be to ask for the employee to move your room to a quieter area	5
That sometimes things have to be done that you may not want to do	No you just have to deal with it the best you can and least problematic	4
It can be very stressful. One customer was in a hurry and the man at the register was taking a long while. The one man charged at the other one and we had to call the police, I get agitated when customers have a conflict and always worry it will escalate	I just called the police and checked on the man who was punched	5
People in our society are impatient and inconsiderate of others, in general. I see it all the time. People mad because they have to wait a little bit to get checked out. People acting like they own the store, blocking aisles and cutting people off with their shopping cart. It is generally a problem of being in a self-centered narcissistic society	There's not much that can be done. You can try to mediate conflicts. You can't make the people that are the problem become emotionally mature though	5

(continued)

Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
When I worked at Domino's, I had an inter-client conflict related to two orders waiting for carry-out. Once one of the customers received their pizza, the other one started complaining about how it was taking too long. This conflict somehow escalated to a discussion between themselves, about rudeness and respect for others in the service industry. In the end I was feeling down as no one likes to be disrespected at work	I didn't have to interfere much as things eventually calmed down, but I'm not sure about a better solution. All you can do is remain calm and focus on what could make the situation better, which is this case was just deliver the 2nd pizza order as quickly as possible	4
I have witnessed inter-client conflicts in my career on multiple occasions. Most times, it is when a client is requesting to skip in front of another client because the other person is taking too long. I understand their reasoning for the request and I am happy to help	I acknowledged their frustration and tried to accommodate to their needs by seeking another employee to help assist them quickly so that we could give the customer who needed more attention more time	3
I have not experienced inter-client conflict as I only deal with one customer at a time and there is never any interaction between customers	No solutions as there was never such a problem	4
Its annoying when that happens because most of the time its the customer who is not attentive on what he/she is doing	As far as I know, there isn't anything else to handle it	5
A family of 4 (2 parents 2 kids) came to dine at a restaurant. While waiting for their food to be served, one of the kid was using chopsticks as drumsticks and kept banging it on the table, making loud noises and disturbing guests who were eating. A couple told me that it was a problem and that I should handle it. The family said that the kids is only 2 and if they take away the chopsticks the kid will cry so they did nothing about the situation. The family was upset because the couple was complaining about them and the couple was upset because the kid would not stop making loud noises. I felt uncomfortable because I did not know how to satisfy BOTH customers or how to solve the conflict	I tried telling the family that their kid was disrupting other people trying to eat	4

(continued)

Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
Mostly inter-client conflict happens when a customer is trying to buy a product and has to wait for several hours to get the item. It is very sad and appalling for me	You can talk to the client to let the client know the actual problem or give a time duration to the client	6
I have had a customer complain that another customer was being too loud on her phone. The best I could do to remedy the situation was to give the customer a different table to sit at	I separated the two by giving one a different table	2
I don't experience this too often, even though I work in a customer-facing role. The last time I had to deal with it was when a customer needed the motorized scooter we have available, stating that the customer who was using it currently did not have a reason to need to use it. I observed the customer who was using the scooter as a young man but he did have a cast on one leg, so I had to tell the complaining customer that the young man had every right to be using the scooter first, and that they would have to wait until he was done shopping if they wanted to use it	I made sure both customers' needs were attended to in the order of which they were expressed. I ensured fair and equal treatment of both	2
We had a guest here who was literally attempting to eat everything at the breakfast buffet. They were taking and consuming an incredible amount of food, which irked the guests who were left with none until the kitchen could catch up. We ended up conversing with the gentleman who was actually quite nice, and gave him a \$25 voucher for a local restaurant	I think it was handled expertly	1
It's an occasional problem at my work. We often have customers who are "fighting" over the items we have for sale at our estate sales. It can get testy sometimes. Never violent but we've had customers get confrontational with each other. I hate it. Just be respectful towards each other	We typically have to tell customers we'll ask them to leave if they don't resolve the issue without behaving themselves	2

(continued)

Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
I reject your premise above and have never witnessed this. And were are you getting this working in the service industry from? That was not listed anywhere as a prerequisite. Anyway I have nothing to say and no examples of what you're asking for	I didn't and wouldn't do anything if I had had such an experience. I don't care what other people do and they can go ahead and kill each other if they want. More room for me	1
It has happened quite a bit dealing in retail. Dealing with people who feel that they are more important than they actually are. And somehow think that they should get a better price	There is really no complete solution to this issue. Retail will die. Everyone will buy stuff online and have it delivered. No more face to face	3
I do not have any inter-client conflicts. I sometimes see customers fighting but its anger inside them. I feel uncomfortable and embarrassed for them	I called over managers. There is no better solutions	1
I had an experience where another client was complaining to another because they wanted a seat another one was in but they had already been sitting there first	I simply told them they could either find another place to sit or just leave	7
In the hotel industry, we will frequently get an inter-client conflict when noise is involved in the hotel. One customer believes a neighboring guest is making too much noise. They may knock on the door or wall asking them to quiet down, then they call the front desk. They can be very tense, especially if one family is trying to rest or has children. These are the worst to deal with in a hotel	Other than trying to get the noisy party to quiet down, you can move the guest who is disturbed but then you lose revenue on that previous room as another customer is not going to want to be in that room. You can offer them points to compensate for the noise	5
I feel that as an owner of a public establishment, it is my duty to handle some inter-client conflicts, but not all inter-client conflicts. My main objective is to run a successful business and if I feel that my livelihood, reputation, or business is threatened by certain customers, I will intervene	I handled the situation as I saw fit as I have the final say in such scenarios	5
It's annoying. Sometimes it's hard to figure out who's right and who's wrong in these conflicts. You just try to keep everyone calm and stop them from making a scene	If it gets really bad, just call the cops	4

(continued)

Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
Two people were waiting to speak with an employee but since there was only two of them they weren't in a line. The employee spoke to the person who showed up second, since they didn't know exactly who had been first. The first employee made a snarky comment and the second started arguing with them	I said nothing. I simply kept my distance. Maybe it would have been better if I had tried to calm them down, but who know if that would have been seen as offensive or not	2
When I was a waitress, one customer did not like how there was a messier/ disheveled looking customer sitting next to them which started a conflict. I thought it was a petty and stupid argument and told both customers to leave or take it outside	I told them to leave the restaurant. It worked for everyone involved	1
I have experienced customers arguing in front of me because one person cut in front of the other. I overall felt stressed because I did not know how to solve the issue	I just called my manager to solve it. I don't know any better solution. I was quite younger than the people arguing and they probably would not have listened to me because of that fact. My manager was a much older individual	4
I've had lots of experience with inter client conflicts. Honestly, it's really annoying because everyone thinks they're right all of the time, and usually one person ends up unsatisfied. I know it's unavoidable generally, but I really wish it was something I didn't have to deal with	I listen to both sides, try to do my best to sort it out fairly, and if all else fails I elevate it to a supervisor. I always try to remain calm and neutral until the facts of the conflict are properly laid out. I wish I had a better solution, but unfortunately I do not	5
I had a situation about a month ago where 2 customers were fighting over the same product, there was only one left and the 2 customers were determined to end up with it. Finally one customer gave up and ordered another one	I really did not get involved much, the customers decided what to do after a couple of minutes, which was good because I was busy with other customers. Next time I will make sure we have plenty of product on hand	3
One day i was at starbucks and a client was being rude to the barista, so another client intervened letting her know she needed to stop and leave the store	I told the person defending the barista that it was good whatshe did and i will start cting like her fromn now on	4

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Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
My experiences have been few and far between, actually (and thankfully) but I have always tried to handle them with finesse and understanding. One day we had a drunk customer for instance and he tried to say I didn't give him enough change. I knew I did and there was proof. Another time a homeless looking man came in and said he didn't have any money to pay for his food. I had to tell him that we can't accept customers that way. Eventually he left without much fight but it could have gotten worse if I didn't seem more understanding. I told him he could go to the local food bank for free food. My feelings are that I am somewhat conditioned to expect it everyday but although it doesn't happen that often it is always in the back of my mind. Never letting my guard down is key I think. I have seen others handle people like this poorly and would never do such things and others who have handled things better too	I think we should have a manager handle them more often than us but it is what it is. We can always get adequate help though too	4
I worked as a waiter and I remember my co-worker waiter accidentally helping a group of people before a different group of people that were there first and waiting longer. The group that were there first and waiting longer got my attention and complained about the other group getting help first	I apologized and told my co-worker what they did wrong. There wasn't much to do other than apologize so that is what we did. A better solution would probably be having more waiter staff working at the same time so that there is not as much confusion and everyone gets helped quickly without waiting	7
I have had customers yellowing at each other when someone takes the last of a particular product. I have had a customer jump in front of someone so that they could get the last free sample of a dessert that we are handing out. This is definitely not an easy situation to handle. One of the customers always ends up being upset	I apologized to the one the that did not receive the last cake of a certain flavor. I told them that they can always order in advance the next time so they are certain to get their favorite flavor. (I could have spent more time with the customer going over other flavors they might enjoy but they were already aggravated so I didn't). As far as the free sample and the line cutting I didn't get involved. I could not think of anything that I could have done to make the situation right	6

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Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
Haha. Well, every single day there is SOMETHING that goes wrong. Most of the time it is a very, very minimal issue, such as an item scanning in the wrong price, or that we are out of paper bags. However, while the issue may not change, the general public does. I have had people react extremely hostile over the same issue that someone else might have waved away. Very strange	I dealt with them by being overly kind. Kind of to the point where I was being sarcastic/condescending depending on whom you ask. I found this to be the best way for ME to deal with these issues without getting upset. It isn't normal to act like a robot all of the time when these conflicts arise	2

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Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
<p>In my experience working in the services industry, I have often encountered inter-client conflicts between customers. For instance, while working at a movie theater, I recall instances where I was approached by one customer to address another customer who was talking loudly on their phone. These types of conflicts seem to occur frequently and can be quite challenging to manage. I have observed that inter-client conflicts arise due to differences in behavior, preferences, or misunderstandings between customers. Handling inter-client conflicts requires a delicate approach. It is crucial to remain calm, neutral, and attentive when dealing with these situations. Actively listening to both parties involved allows them to express their concerns and frustrations. I have found that showing empathy and understanding towards their perspectives helps to de-escalate tensions and build rapport. To resolve inter-client conflicts, I have employed various strategies. Mediation plays a vital role, as I attempt to find a mutually agreeable solution that addresses the concerns of both customers. This may involve suggesting compromises or providing alternative options. In cases where conflicts stem from rule violations, enforcing established policies and guidelines in a fair and consistent manner is important. Sometimes, conflicts may escalate beyond my ability to handle. In such situations, it becomes necessary to involve appropriate authorities or management, particularly if the safety or well-being of customers is at risk. Managing inter-client conflicts effectively is essential for ensuring a positive customer experience and fostering a harmonious environment for all. It is an ongoing learning experience, as each conflict situation is unique and may require adapting strategies based on the circumstances</p>	<p>In dealing with inter-client conflicts, I have found various strategies to be effective. One approach I have taken is to proactively communicate with customers by implementing clear guidelines, signage, and announcements. This helps to set expectations and minimize potential conflicts by addressing issues like noise levels and appropriate behavior. Having a visible staff presence has also proven helpful in managing inter-client conflicts. By ensuring sufficient staff members are available, we can promptly address any disruptive behavior and provide a sense of security to other customers. Another strategy I have employed is to consider seating arrangements. By assigning or separating seating areas based on preferences, we can cater to different customer needs, such as designated quiet zones or areas for socializing. To better handle conflicts when they arise, I have provided conflict resolution training to our staff. This equips them with the necessary skills in effective communication, de-escalation techniques, and finding mutually agreeable solutions. Creating feedback channels for customers to report conflicts or provide feedback has been instrumental as well. This helps us identify recurring issues and implement appropriate solutions based on customer input. As a mediator between conflicting parties, I have actively listened to their concerns and facilitated compromises that satisfy both sides. Encouraging open dialogue and assisting in finding common ground has been key in resolving inter-client conflicts. Lastly, exploring technological solutions has proven beneficial. For instance, implementing noise-cancelling systems in theaters or providing interactive displays with alternative entertainment options can help manage conflicts more effectively. By adapting these strategies to our specific service industry context and continuously evaluating their effectiveness, we strive to improve our approach to handling inter-client conflicts</p>	<p>4</p>

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Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
I have had a client want to leave our business because they had personal negative feelings towards another client. We handled the situation by making sure there was no contact between the clients	We separated the clients and made sure that no contact stayed true	2
I have handled a very abusive client as he was irritated for some no obvious reason. I think he was simply having a bad time so I tried to manage him and ended up sending him out of our office with the help of security personnel	Handled it in a calm, cool and collected manner as it was much needed because of the situation. There was no other solution but to send that abusive person off of our office	6
I find it uncomfortable. I think that people should try to be on their best behavior when in public and try to solve their issues amongst themselves	I would probably ignore them and try to address their issues separately	2
It's annoying to deal with because no matter what someone is going to be unhappy with you, if not both of them	You just have to go with whatever the policy is and whatever feels right. I can't think of any better solutions, it's often a no-win situation	4
The only thing I can think of that is worth 0.30 cents worth of writing is. Conflict on the city bus. A person is loud in their music, cell or well. The mouth can be louder than the bus and that is just ok. Not. The bus driver says ' hey you. bla bla bla...	I let it ride and let mgt deal with it	3
I have had several of these in my time in retail. It used to make me really angry...now I just think it is more of a reflection of the other person and not me	Listening is always best and then helping the customer to a resolution that they agree with that is best for both parties	5
I worked in retail and faced it daily. It usually did not bother me as I knew they just wanted the best deal	I just listened to what they had to say and try to provide the best service I could	2
This inter-client conflict puts me on the spot. Both are customers/clients so you do not want to alienate either; yet you must address whatever the conflict is and resolve it. the goal is not to put either customer off and retain your respect as well. my experiences have shown me to address the situation by asking the customer who is doing the complaining to put himself/herself in the shoes of the other	I would try to be neutral and ask each to consider the tables turned. This usually results in a good outcome as sometimes one did not even realize what they were doing was offensive	4

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Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
I've seen customers argue over who was next in line to be helped. I find it fun to tell the person who is being rude that they were incorrect and that they weren't next	I informed the person they were incorrect, which is the only way to fix the situation	1
I used to work at a counter service restaurant where clients often complained of other customers making a mess. Typically there was minimal that I could do. I usually navigated the situation by offering to clean it for them. If there were rowdy customers typically I got a more senior member to handle the situation or did whatever was in my power to please the party who made the complaint. It is often an uncomfortable position to be in and the customer takes their anger out on you rather than whoever is the actual cause of the problem	I usually did my best to calm the client down, or got a more senior member of my team to handle the conflict. The best way to calm a client down is often offering them some sort of free item or discount for the future, but I was not at liberty to offer those things	3
I work in retail so this is a daily occurrence. Someone is always unhappy with something but usually easily resolved. Its annoying but its part of the job	Stay calm and be as nice as possible and most of the time you can resolve the conflict	3
I feel this situation can be very overwhelming because some clients can be very rude and others can be calm and understanding	I made sure I kept calm throughout the whole issue and try as much not to be disrespectful	5
I have been told that a customer was hogging a self-checkout register and ordered to make them hurry up by another customer. I just find these kinds of complaint kind of entertaining, because there is nothing to be done if someone is taking a long time checking things out. It's a reminder of how some customers can act like children at times	I told the complaining customer to wait because they will be done soon and to head to another register if it opens. I did not bother the person checking their things out. I don't think there was any better solution here	1
Inter-client conflicts are usually immature. I don't think that the company/business should have to deal with those problems frequently. Customers should respect businesses a bit more and deal with the issue themselves	I think it is best to talk to the other client (if you are involved) in a kind, considerate manner. If it needs further conversation, I would take it outside of the business and into a public area	5

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Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
Usually, customers who argue with each other walk into the establishment and bring an argumentative attitude to everyone they talk to, sometimes customers can be disruptive and maybe even physical. The most common problem was customers being outright disrespectful to staff. The most important thing to do in this situations is try to remain calm and control breathing and think logically	The best solution is the understand all parties involved are human and have the potential to be emotional and that everyone just wants their problem solved and doesn't want to start problems. Being professional and understanding when you need more help to intervene in the situation	3
I have had a couple times when there were customers that felt like other families in the restaurant were not handling their kids correctly. I had one evening when a family was letting their kids run all over the restaurant, even behind the counter. And I had 2 other families complain to me about it. I felt like they were in the right. The kids needed to be controlled better, but when I told my boss about it she didn't care	I told the customers that were complaining that I was very sorry. And I told the owner, my boss, but she did not care. She is a rude person and she just snapped at me and told me they need to deal with it. I wish I had been able to do something more but my hands were tied	3
I have indeed encountered inter-client conflicts on several occasions. Whether it's disputes over seating arrangements or noisy disruptions, it can be challenging to address such conflicts promptly and diplomatically. I strive to remain calm and empathetic, aiming to find fair resolutions while ensuring a positive experience for all involved parties. It's a reminder of the importance of effective communication and conflict resolution skills in providing exceptional customer service	I just calmly and politely talked to them, trying to calm them down. Fortunately, they were quite understanding and eventually calmed down. I think staying calm myself was the best solution in that situation	4
It makes me upset that people will go out in public and not behave. These people are taking out their frustrations for personal matters in public. There needs to be more decorum	The best thing is to be polite and respectful. Speak calmly and slowly	5
I usually incur a customer complaining about another customer getting refills on their drinks without paying for it	I told the customer that was doing the act that our store policy is you have to pay for refills. The other customer I told them that I would take care of that	1

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Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
Inter-client conflicts are usually easy to settle by trying to make both parties happy. I encourage getting along when conflicts arise in the workplace and see no need for bickering	I tried to make both customers happy so that no one felt slighted or wronged. I feel that is the best way to handle those situations	5
One time one Guest has very loud music at the pool. The other Guests complained, so I have to go and talk to the one playing music. Is very stressful situation because you never know how they are going to react at you	In my situation can be easy because if they do not complaint I can call security and they can get a trespassing order	7
We had a quarrel with a waiter	We had a common ground	7
I would try to handle the issue efficiently by being kind to both customers to find a solution	I dealt with the issue quite nicely and both customers agree that the issue was resolved	2
I once had to tell a customer to leave because they were vaping in my store	No	1
I remember these customers talking loud or cutting the line you have to deal with it and hold your cool	Mediatide relax just be calm	2
I don't like when I have to be the middle man in situations like these. I feel as though, we are all grown adults, and we should behave as such	I just handle them the best I can. I try to side with both parties, as to not upset anyone. I just wish they would handle it between themselves	7
I have had some inter-client conflicts when I used to work within the fast food industry between customer's who verbally assaulted one another. I feel often it is better to not get involved as the workers and call authorities if needed	The restaurant within which I worked usually called authorities if things continued to escalate. I feel this is the best safest/solution	5
The one time that comes to mind the most recent was when we were short staffed and lines got a bit long. A customer started getting angry about the wait and another customer started yelling at them about yelling at us. Trying to defend that we had no control over the situation. And it made me uncomfortable that they were causing a scene but a bit happy that the one person would stick up for us	I do not think we could have handled it much differently as we just tried to calm them down and keep them away from each other	5

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Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
People trying to return things they have destroyed and getting upset we wont take it back. Its annoying and I pray they dont turn violent	Made sure I wasnt alone in dealing with the person. They are less likely to lash out if there is a group of us	6
I had to tell someone to be quiet because they were talking loudly	I think that was the best solution	5
I stopped by a client job-site and the husband and wife were fighting with each other. It was awkward and I valued both of them as clients	I tried to diffuse the situation and expedited my departure	2
I didnt have this experience	I didnt have this experience	1
I have had people get into verbal fights about lines at the self checkout line. People weren't sure about who was cutting in line and started yelling at each other. I feel like clients are a herd of cats to wrangle	I helped calm people down and pointed out who was in the right. Also two checkstands opened up at the time so both people got to go ahead. Just try to keep people calm	2
I think people complain too much and feel entitled too much. They complain about other peoples actions while ignoring similar annoying actions they take	I tried to be nice and go along with whatever complaint the person had, and appear to agree with them until they left	5
I experienced it once, between 2 customers who thought they were "in line" to check out. I personally did not care who got rung out first, as long as they stopped fighting	I, and another coworker just took each customer	1
As a barista, I would have multiple people at once wanting to know where/ how long/status of their order	Sometimes, I would just glare at whoever was giving me a hard time. A better way to deal with it is just to smile and say it'll be a moment	5
Someone outside is playing music too loud. I feel uneasy saying anything to them because in this day and age you never know who has a gun and who is crazy	I let one of my bolder neighbors take care of the problem. I don't have the skills needed to confront possible thugs	7
I usually only deal with one customer at a time but I do encounter customer envy where one customer hears about service provided to another customer and is seeking the same treatment or service. Sometimes this is not possible and it needs to be managed	You have to make sure every customer feels important and that their needs are being addressed. That is what I strive to do even if each customer may need a unique or different solution	4

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Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
My experience with inter-client conflicts have always been between someone who isn't self aware or aware of their surroundings and others. It's like the other people have no sense of awareness when they block grocery aisles or talk loud in a movie theater. My thoughts are if you walk down the grocery aisles, that means other people do, too so move	It depends on my mood or what theyre doing. If i'm walking by them I say something sarcastic "oh, no excuse me, since I'm the one in the way."	2
We went on a romantic dinner, by we I mean myself and my wife went to have dinner, whilst seated, one man kept stealing glances at my wife which was making her uncomfortable and me as well. I called the waitress to talk to the man or we leave the restaurant, after all the warning, he kept doing it and was sacked from the restaurant. this made me feel bad and uncomfortable	We contacted the waiter to advise the man and the man was sacked. A better solution would have been walking out	7

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Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
<p>One day when I was doing some maintenance work on the parking lot; more specifically, sweeping and disposing of trash...two customers were in the middle of a heated argument over a parking space. A much younger man, probably no more than 20 years old, parked in a reserved parking spot for those that are disabled. A much older man pulled onto the non-parking area with dashed lines and inspected to see if the younger guy in the car had a disability placard. When he realized he didn't have the placard required to park there, the older man started shouting profanity at the younger guy. The younger guy started shouting at the older man and threatening to punch his "lights" out. I got called over by the older man and was asked to tell the younger guy to move his car. It was a very awkward situation as I am neither a member of management nor am I law enforcement. They both seem aggravated with me because I was unable to take a stand on the issue. I had to go inside and get salaried management and loss prevention to deal with it. My feelings regarding this particular incident were that of embarrassment. I am not a particularly confrontational person. Sadly, this is almost an every day occurrence at my work because of people trying to bend the rules. My feelings in this situation were embarrassment but overall, my feelings toward this recurring problem is a bit of frustration because people could be a little more considerate amongst each other</p>	<p>As previously stated, I notified salaried management and loss prevention/ security to deal with the issue as I do not have the power to mediate such matters. It was probably the best possible solution for that particular problem. I believe me intervening would have not improved the issue</p>	5

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Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
I have had inter-client conflicts when a customer at a restaurant I used to work at was behaving rudely to other customers and they had complained about him. I decided to remove him because he was the problem and to satisfy the customers. Inter-client conflicts make me nervous	I got rid of the man who was causing problems and disrupting the peace of the other customers, I can not think of any better solutions	1
Usually when these conflicts happen, it's due to misunderstanding so I always try to be patient and let the customer express themselves before politely responding and trying to resolve the issue. However, it can be stressful	When such conflicts occur, like if service is slower than usual because we are understaffed, I will try to explain to customers the situation and hope that they will be understanding	4
I've experienced inter-client conflict in a restaurant setting. Sometimes people disregard the wait time and go seat themselves in the dining room which upsets customers that have been patiently waiting. Sometimes a customer, or their children, are disruptive and another customer comes to alert management	We did what we could. For customers that sat themselves despite a wait time, there wasn't really anything that we could do past asking them to get up and return to the waiting line. And for disruptive guests, we would ask them politely to be considerate of other customers and change their behavior. If they continued, management would ask them to leave	6
A woman came on my cash register express line with too many items and another customer told her that she was being rude. I feel that customers should contact a store employee with issues and not take it upon themselves	I dealt with it like a typical 18 year old and did not bag her groceries. She complained about me, but the manager blamed her	4
I think they are annoying and frustrating when they happen but are often short-lived and can be resolved fairly quickly. They do happen commonly and can feel like they are overwhelming	The best way to deal with an inter-client conflict is to listen to the person and try to find common ground. I think that usually people will calm down over time and listening to someone is the best way to calm them down	4
Well, from my perspective, I own a financial planning and tax office. The most times that we have conflict is during tax season, for Jan. thru April. Usually, it is because the client expected more money in a refund than what they are getting back. They think that we are doing our jobs incorrectly, but in reality it's because they didn't have their withholding set up properly	I just try to explain to them, why it worked out like it did, and what we can do to correct it from ever happening again. Once I explain it to them, it is almost always resolved	5

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Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
Inter-client conflicts are very awkward in our retail shop. We run a shop where people bring in items to frame to hang on their walls. Conflicts can arise when one person does not like another person's item, usually because it could be political, and is vocal about it. One time a person brought in a poster of Che Guevara to frame. Other customers walked in and one said "Oh look! People don't know this but he killed more innocent people than Hitler!" and the fun broke out from that point. Managing this without alienating one customer or the other is very challenging but luckily there were enough of us there at the time to pull each customer to a different area to help them	Our ability to engage each customer with different employees and distract them from one another is the best way, but when there aren't enough employees vs. customers this can be very difficult and you have to hope the people stay civil	3
I was once told by a customer that another customer had smeared poop all over the walls in the womens bathroom. I thought that was disgusting and I told the customer thanks for letting me know and I immediatly told the janitor. I felt bad for the janitor who has to deal with disgusting peoples messes all the time	I told the customer thank youf or bringing it to someones attention and I called the janitor right away. That I feel was the best solution	4
Handling inter-client conflicts requires a delicate balance of maintaining a positive customer experience for all parties involved. Service providers or staff members play a crucial role in addressing such conflicts by mediating and finding solutions that satisfy both the complainant and the customer causing the disruption. In these situations, it's essential for service providers to remain calm, empathetic, and neutral. They should actively listen to both parties involved and acknowledge their concerns. Finding a fair and practical resolution, such as asking the disruptive customer to lower their voice or move to a designated phone-use area, can help alleviate the conflict and restore a pleasant atmosphere for everyone	I assessed the Situation: I Listened to both parties involved and try to understand the nature of the conflict. I then gathered information about the specific issue and any potential impact on other customers. I remain Calm and Neutral: I maintain a composed and professional demeanor throughout the interaction. Avoid taking sides or displaying favoritism towards any customer involved in the conflict	2

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Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
I have not experienced this before. But if it were to happen, I would not get involved. Instead, I'd tell the person who asked me to intervene to do it themselves. I don't understand why they would ask someone else to do that for them	In the previous experience that I wrote about I don't have any better solutions. Although I do think that if someone wants a job to be done, then they should do it themselves	1
When a nurse was called because someone was acting hostile in a room next to my grandmothers	I closed the door to her room	4
I think that having a responsible relationship is comfortable for the both of you is smart	I went to my supervisor about the situation and they fixed it hands on	6
I haven't had any inter-client conflicts myself, but I would definitely feel uncomfortable having to deal with it and the possibility of upsetting someone, even if they're in the wrong	I was focused on how I would handle an inter-client conflict among movie theater patrons as described. I can't think of anything other than just asking the loud person to please be quieter	7
Mostly it's someone being flippant or rude, because of a technical issue that slows everything down. We try to be gracious and polite. But I have had to call the manager on	Patience and firmness. And with great back up	4
I feel like a lot of people blame the wrong individuals for price hikes and inflation. Makes me very sad, but at the end of the day it is what it is so I don't let it bother me on a personal level	I usually let it go, I don't let it get the best of me. I feel like the best thing to do in that case would be to acknowledge that inflation is a problem. Nothing else I can do!	6
Conflicts are not uncommon but thank goodness i have a high tolerance level and do not get easily annoyed by such things.... i ask myself is the problem worth the conflict...	I determined if the problem was worth the conflict ...focus on not judging who knows what one is going through	3
It is one time that two customers are arguing about one item to who got it first. I wanted to laugh at that moment because they are like kids but i hide it and gave them one piece each of the same item	I gave them both a piece of the same item	1
I have experienced someone cutting in front of me in line at the store a few times. It feels awkward and gets people angry	I try to remain calm and polite	5

(continued)

Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
I have had customers arguing with each other before in the store I worked at, and it is very stressful because you want to calm everyone down but not alienate the customers arguing or scare any other customers who might be there	I just asked the two customers to step outside to continue their argument, and to come back in when they were done	3
This does not happen in my current career, but I have experienced it in my previous jobs when I was younger. I worked as a taxi driver in my early twenties, and passengers would often share rides with strangers. This often led to conflict and arguments about who would get dropped off first, and it was very frustrating to me	Sometimes I tried to intervene, other times I let them work it out for themselves. It really was situationally dependent	1
I think inter-client conflicts are bound to happen in such places. I deal with them as they come. You analyze the conflict that you're in and solve it to the best of your abilities. It is about making people happy and solving the problem with the tools that you have learned	I didn't really share a specific example. I just talked about dealing with the best possible outcome that makes both customers happy and relying on the tools that you already know. Use solutions that help you correct the situation	2
At a retail store and someone skips in front of you at the checkout. I would feel anxious to call someone over for someone skipping me but would not want to be disrespected	I ignored it even though I wanted to get someone to handle it. I felt it wasn't worth the hassle	7
I think that it is a shame that it happens. It just happen to me in London. It was only because someone was cutting in line which upset others. It is a matter of courtesy	The people in charge of the show dealt with it but I felt uncomfortable for them	4
We have has this happen regularly in the restaurant. There will often be a group that is too loud or obnoxious and they get complaints. We have had to escort some groups out before because they just wouldn't stop. My feelings is that the customer is always right, so there needs to be give/take on both customer's sides-as long as both are following the written and unwritten rules of the establishment	I asked offending party to tone it down as we have guests that are ready for bed. I also pointed out that "quiet" hours had already started and if they would like to continue their conversations, they could take them outside by the hot tub/pool area. They did so, and problem for indoor guests was solved	2

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Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
While working as a barista I was asked by one customer to deal with a group of loud teenagers. I have also myself gone to staff when I am a customer about another customer. I think it is better for a customer to talk to staff than to directly address or scold another customer	In this particular situation I talked to the group of teenagers and asked them to quiet down or to sit outside on our chairs there. I could see which customer was in the wrong however if the teenagers weren't rowdy and were instead acting appropriately I would not have approached them and instead would have kindly spoken to the one complaining	3
I haven't had many inter client conflicts especially since I work at home. I don't go out much often so I rarely interact with people. For those that do have to deal with it, I feel for them and agree that the customer is always right	I did not deal with any conflicts because I avoid them at all cost. If I had to deal with it, I would avoid the parent company that allowed the employee to act that way	2
I work at a drive-thru liquor store, checking out customers who order both at the window and at the inside counter. Oftentimes, while I am going back and forth between customers at the two locations, a third one will just walk in the store and state their order. I tell them I will be with them when it is their turn and they usually get very angry	I tell them that I am helping others right now and will get to them after that. There is no better solution since I am doing it in a nice tone when how I really feel is pissed off that I have to teach an adult who is behaving like a spoiled child how they need to act in society	7
Being a baseball game and someone was in my seat. I contacted member of the stadium to please have fan moved to their assigned seat	In this day and age, asking fan to move myself was not a option I wanted to do	4
If I have an inter-client conflict I'll try to talk to the customer who is the leading cause of the conflict. If someone talks loudly on a cell phone in a movie theater, I would ask him to stop	The only solution I see is by talking, convincing, and negotiating. People respect good reasons	1
Some occur through customers	It is okay	6
I was responding to a complaint about another table had people speaking too loud	I requested the table to quiet down a bit	3
I haven't experienced much inter-client conflicts. However it sounds quiet stressful and a lot to deal with	I would feel with inter-client conflicts by trying to fix the situation and make sure everyone remains calm	3

(continued)

Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
I worry about inter-client conflicts, but I enjoy when I am able to solve the conflict and come to a solution that everyone is happy with	I would attempt to make the client happier than they were when the conflict began. I could attempt to make more ways to ensure they were happy, by offering things to them	7
I've had to deal with customers conflicting over things they think are unfair. Customers have complained to me that another customer has more items than they're supposed to in an express checkout line. It happens a lot actually. It makes me stressed because I don't want either customer to have a negative shopping experience	I told the customer who complained that I was sorry that happened and offered to check them out next	3
I feel like inter-client conflicts are very awkward and can sometimes sour a relationship	I try to use very friendly language and inject humor	4
Can be rough depending on the day and conflict that leaves me anxious and worried about the outcome	Just talk to them when they were loud in the store and helping them find what they needed	5
I had a table call me over because the table next to them had really loud kids. They wanted us to move them or have the other table move. We ended up relocating their table to the patio and all was well	I dealt with it in a calm manner and did what was in the realm of what I could personally do for the situation	2
When I was a waiter years ago, I had to deal with rude customers. I recall dealing with a rude drunk customer. I was tiresome. I felt stressed	I had to call the police	3
I tend to have these kind of things happen on a daily basis. Every customer wants to feel like they are special and appreciated and respected by the business they are using. I tend to take into account all sides of the customers complaints, wishes, and work logically to make them both happy with the outcome	I make sure the customer knows that they are being heard and that I am actively trying to find a resolution that keeps both sides happy in the end. I think the best approach is actively listening to the customer	2
I typically stay out if it and let them punch it out	Didn't get paid enough to intervene, so let them deal with it or called manager	1

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Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
I think it can be tricky. you don't want to lose a customer due to another customer but you also don't want to drive away business. Sometimes these conflicts show loyalty and sometimes it makes people angry	It is always best to let clients have their way. I am always kind to both clients who are in conflict	3
In my experience working at a movie theater, I have witnessed instances of inter-client conflicts among customers. One particular incident involved a situation where a customer was talking loudly on their phone during a movie screening, causing disruption and annoyance to others in the theater. Another customer approached me, requesting assistance in addressing the issue. As a customer service representative, I promptly intervened by politely approaching the individual and requesting them to lower their voice or take their conversation outside the theater. While I understand the importance of maintaining a peaceful and enjoyable environment for all customers, dealing with such conflicts can sometimes be challenging	Preemptive Communication: To minimize the occurrence of inter-client conflicts, it could be beneficial for the movie theater to have clear guidelines regarding cell phone usage and disruptive behavior prominently displayed or communicated to customers before entering the theater. This could help set expectations and reduce the likelihood of conflicts arising. Ushers or Staff Monitoring: Employing ushers or staff members to periodically monitor the theater during screenings can be proactive in identifying potential conflicts or disruptive behavior. By promptly addressing any issues, such as reminding customers of theater etiquette or politely requesting them to lower their voices, conflicts may be minimized or resolved before they escalate	5
I've had experiences with customers much like the example in this question. I worked at a movie theater, and people complained about other customers all the time while watching a movie. It was mostly my manager that dealt with it, so I don't have any strong feelings toward it	As I said, the manager was the one who dealt with it, so I would just call him over	3
A customer says that the food he ordered isn't cooked right and compares it to the food his friend is eating	I gave the client food that was just cooked and made sure it was done right	4
I have had a woman confront another woman about a shirt she was wearing. It was a very overwhelming situation for me	I asked the woman to stop and when she refused I asked her to leave	7

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Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
It is important to make neither client feel attacked. It can be challenging to confront a client when they are doing something that negatively affects another client. Word choice and tone are very important	I dealt with them in a professional matter. There's not much you can do to predict how someone will react, you can only know how yourself will	2
Someone cut in line	I talked to the person	1
I've had many of these conflicts arise and they are super annoying because most of the time it is over something stupid. As a small girl too, some individuals do not take me serious to handle conflicts	I make both parties quiet down and I ask them each their side	4
I have rarely had to deal with inter-client conflict but usually what happens is someone will say weird things to me (not inappropriate, just weird) as a cashier and the next person will mention how weird it is. I try to make a joke out of the situation. I usually talk about it with the 2nd customer after the 1st leaves	I just made light of them in front of customers. I think that's how my manager would handle it so I think it's the best solution at my work	2
I work in a bar. So alot of the times I have to deal with a drunk person trying to fight people. I always have to get in the middle of it	I made them close their tab, gave them water, called an uber for them to go home	3
The day after Thanksgiving, we have a big sale and arrive very early in the morning to open the doors. The customers make a mad dash inside and it is very dangerous for us associates. Sometimes we have limited supplies, however, and more than one customer wants the same item with only one left and they begin arguing over it. Most of the time we have to handle this ourselves, resolving the dispute only if another store carries the item or has any left to give	Although customers don't always receive the items during that visit to our location, they received the intended discount that was only available on that day and the product was shipped or picked up at a later date, usually within a day, as the sale was not able to receive a rain check	1

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Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
Inter-client conflicts can be very difficult to deal with because the customers involved have very different perspectives on the situation. As a service worker, it can be hard to know how to address the situation without alienating either customer. My experience with inter-client conflicts has taught me the importance of being understanding and empathetic while still addressing the problem at hand. For example, I once had a situation where two customers were arguing over a misunderstanding about an item's price. To resolve the situation, I explained the price in detail and offered a small discount to show that I was trying to help	I once had a situation where two customers were arguing over a misunderstanding about an item's price. To resolve the situation, I explained the price in detail and offered a small discount to show that I was trying to help. This allowed me to address the problem while showing that I was empathetic to both parties and trying to come up with a solution that would benefit them both. This ultimately led to a resolution and both customers left the store satisfied	1
I haven't had any experiences with inter-client conflicts, but I have seen that with other employees at work and they look awful to be in. I wouldn't feel great to be in one of those	Haven't dealt with one, but for what I've seen. A solution would be to get a manager or someone who is in a higher position to get into because you want it resolved as quick and smooth as possible	1
Luckily my experiences with inter-client conflicts are few and far between. If we ever have a dispute with our clients, we get it resolved quickly because we value them deeply	We always put the client first. We want them to be satisfied so we do our best to achieve that whenever possible	4
Working in healthcare I've experience a lot of interclient conflict, but generally people respect being asked by a nurse to calm down. I do always worry that someone might be armed though	Usually by talking to them. And then calling for assistance if needed, but that was rare	7
I have experienced customers cutting in line while waiting at the register. This has caused actual fist fights or carts shoved into backs of people. We have called police in many of these instances	Called police to remove people from a store	2
I don't really deal with inter-client conflicts in my job or havnt really ever in previous jobs. Closed thing is my coworker having me help of assist with one of their clients	I obviously help but I hate it	2

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Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
It can be hard when customers have problems with other customers. I have had to deal with people who are annoyed with what someone else is doing close to them. Its uncomfortable, and hard to have that type of conversation with someone where they might get upset or offended and get angry. Its not my favorite thing to deal with, but you have to do something if someone has pointed it out. Otherwise they think you don't care, or they will just complain about you and the company to someone else, and then you might get in trouble	The better solution would direct someone who has a complaint like that to someone like a manager or boss, who has the power and ability to deal with these conflicts and more than likely solve them. Instead of just being put in an embarrassing situation where an employee is dealing with it and has little power	5
I've dealt with a customer at my dad's store who's had issues with another customer. In all honesty, these kinds of conflicts are incredibly annoying	I ended up asking both the people to leave, because it was obvious nothing was going to get solved	5
I think this types of conflict is difficult to control since it happens mostly on phone, this sometimes is caused by misunderstanding between two people refusing to agree on the solutions they need	I have to talk to this client patiently and give him or her some advice	5
Inter-client disputes frequently occur in the service sector, for example, when patrons are irritated by someone speaking loudly on their phone at a movie theater. The resolution of these disputes demands expertise. I sympathize with the consumer who has a complaint and assure them that it will be resolved quickly. I approach the inconsiderate patron, explain my issue, and politely ask them to be quiet or put their phones away while we are watching a movie. Finding a solution that guarantees consumer comfort and happiness is my aim. I maintain my composure, empathy, and serenity in the face of possible tension by concentrating on clear communication and problem-solving. These incidents demonstrate how crucial it is to keep the service sector's atmosphere upbeat	In the past, I dealt with client disputes by showing sympathy for the aggrieved party and assured them of a speedy resolution. I addressed the obnoxious customer calmly, outlining my grievance and demanding a change in conduct. Additional options might be taken into account to enhance solutions. These consist of asking a management or supervisor for assistance, or providing substitutes such moving seats or designating specific locations for using cell phones. It is essential to modify the strategy to account for the unique aspects of each dispute. Finding the best solution with the least amount of disturbance and the assurance of a great client experience is the main goal	5

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Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
I worked at a food pantry and clients would complain that other clients were taking too many free items. I understand their concern because it is not fair that some people take more advantage of a free resource when there are guidelines to ensure equitable distribution	I apologized to the upset client and spoke to the client taking more free items than allowed. I explained to them our policies and kindly asked them to return the items	3
I have seen customers get upset about children running around in a restaurant disturbing other patrons. I have also seen patrons in a restaurant want so much personal attention that other patrons are suffering and getting the service they deserve and complaining about it. Often wanting to move into a different section of the restaurant and getting a new server which hurts the original server. It is stressful because I am trying to do my best for everyone and I can't really say anything to the customers being extra needy and bothers the others. I have to give my attention to all the best I can. It stresses me out when it is made hard for me to do that. It upsets me	I just keep trying my hardest to make everyone happy the best I can. Often apologizing to the one suffering. I will also try to do something special by either offering discount if I can approval or bringing something extra special to the table	7
It feels bad to see two customers having some misunderstanding it makes work slow down since they need attention	Calling both customers together and having their issues solved	6
Those conflicts are always uncomfortable to have to deal with. I have limited experience in this area but it's never fun when it does come up	I handed it to my manager because I don't get paid enough	5
I used to work in a coffee house and one customer complained about the noise made by a group at a neighboring table	I asked the neighboring table to please try to be quieter	4
My experiences havent been fun. most people willing to make a scene are just dicks. it pisses me off and makes service jobs harder	I just try to give the customer what they want so they go away	6

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Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
An experience I had with inter-client conflict was while working in the food service industry. One of the customers eating at the restaurant I was working with at the time was allowing their young children to run around their table and while doing this the children were disturbing the people seated at the table behind them. The children were being loud and running into the chairs of the people sitting there. Before any from the restaurant was able to go over and say something the people at the table being disturb ask if the other people could have their children sit down and remain seated because they were being disruptive. Watching this unfold was uncomfortable because you want to go over and say something but you don't want to get in the middle of something that is happening because the parties involved are usually already heated because of what was going on. I always like to give it a few seconds before going over to see if they parties involved can resolved the issue on their own and if it appears as though its only getting worse I will interfere and see what I can do to help defuse the situation. It just makes you feel uncomfortable and unsure of yourself because you questions yourself and what you should be doing	After seeing that the parties involved I went over and tried to get the situation under control because I did not want the other customers to start noticing what was going on. I always ask what is going on and see what I can do to help bring the conflict to an end. I always try and deal with the person that was affected by the behavior of the others and after making sure they are ok and then give my attention to the other party but by this time they usually have fixed the problem because they realize that they are in the wrong	4

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Table 2.2 (continued)

Inter-client conflicts	Solutions	Negative impact
I do work in retail, so I experience these situations frequently and I find them highly stressful and annoying. So often, these problems occur because people have extremely little regard for the people around them. We've become an intensely selfish country and it's resulting in more and more displays of outright rudeness between people. As the employee in the scenario who has to diffuse the situation, it's exhausting knowing that the stress of the moment falls on me	I realize I didn't describe one specific scenario, but my tactic has always been to be as calm as possible. People can always get angrier, but I find they're less inclined to do so if you're remaining at one even emotional level the entire time. When needed, I seek support from authorities above my pay grade. I think the better solution is one that we aren't ever going to employ widely in society—telling the customer they're wrong and being willing to kick them out regardless of how it hurts the business	7
I have observed behavior between two customers arguing about who should be helped first. One customer was complaining that she was overlooked because of her race and that the other customer who came to the counter after she did was offered help right away. It was a difficult situation to diffuse and I did my best to assure both customers we value everyone's business	The only thing you could do at the moment is to apologize to the customer who felt slighted and reassure her that her business is appreciated. Obviously, the associates need some sort of training to prevent this situation from occurring again	4

Straughan & Roberts, 1999). In the past several decades, researchers have contributed to all three areas in terms of the effects of the above factors on green consumption.

Regarding values, Haws et al. (2014: p. 337) proposed the concept of green consumption value which was defined as “the tendency to express the value of environmental protection through one’s purchases and consumption behaviors.” Consumers with a high degree of green consumption values, or called “green” consumers, are more oriented towards protecting the environment and more likely to engage in green consumption. The scale of green consumption values consists items such as “It is important to me that the products I use do not harm the environment,” “I consider the potential environmental impact of my actions when making many of my decisions,” and “My purchase habits are affected by my concern for our environment” (Haws et al., 2014: p. 339).

Green consumption can be affected by advertising appeals. For example, Yang et al. (2015) found that when the green product benefit association was other rather than self, abstract appeals worked better in eliciting higher green purchase intentions than concrete appeals. Abstract appeal refers to a vague way to describe the green product features and concrete appeal, in contrast, is a more specific way in

description. They also found that public self-awareness and identity salience acted as boundary conditions for the above effect.

Pagiaslis and Krontalis (2014) observed that environmental concern could positively and directly affect consumer environmental knowledge, beliefs about biofuels, and willingness to use and pay. Emekci (2019) found that compared with environmental concern and environmental knowledge, perceived consumer effectiveness exerted a strong influence on green buying behavior in Turkey. By conducting 21 photo-elicited, in-depth interviews with young participants who were environmentalists, Perera et al. (2018) found that green consumption had symbolic meanings such as empowerment to consumers, thus motivating consumers to engage more in green consumption. Indeed, as previously stated, psychological factors exert a significant influence on green consumption.

By conducting four studies, Wang and Chao (2020) found that nostalgia, a sentimental longing for the past, could show a negative influence on green consumption. This is because nostalgia could elicit past orientation, which would lower preference for future-looking green products. It is common for people to think of the past and experience nostalgia. Nostalgia is an everyday experience in our life (Wildschut et al., 2010) and can evoke fondness and yearning for the past (Havlena and Holak, 1991). Hence, consumers with high nostalgia feelings would probably have a stronger orientation towards the past than low-nostalgia consumers. In this sense, nostalgia was proposed to lower purchase intentions towards green products. Wang and Chao (2020) also observed that mortality salience played a moderating role in the relationship between nostalgia and green consumption. Terror management theory points out that mortality salience describes the state that a person realizes that death is inevitable in the future (Rosenblatt et al., 1989). A high extent of mortality salience would lead people to indulge more, save less, and engage in over consumption towards luxury brands (Mandel & Heine, 1999) as well as more entertainment consumption (Kasser & Sheldon, 2000) and consumption of large quantities of foods (Mandel & Smeesters, 2008). These effects may be because mortality salience reminds people that they will die some day and thus encourage them to enjoy life as much as possible.

Wang and Chao (2020) suggested that when an individual became aware of his or her impending death, then s/he would be more concerned about enjoying their life and thus less worried about green sustainability. On the contrary, if an individual is low in mortality salience, they would exhibit an orientation towards future, because overcoming an equally painful experience implies looking at the future. Therefore, the authors proposed that low mortality salience could reduce the negative effect of nostalgia on green consumption. In this way, Wang and Chao (2020) proposed that mortality salience moderated the effect of nostalgia on green consumption.

Although green consumption has been extensively studied, seldom does research examine how external threats affect green consumption. This book intends to investigate how environmental, economic, and informational threats impact green consumption as well as their mechanisms and boundary conditions.

2.7 Summary

This chapter reviews relevant literature on culture and values, uncertainty avoidance, rituals, external threats, and inter-client conflicts as well as green consumption. Two surveys were conducted to provide examples of consumption rituals and inter-client conflicts, respectively. In all, literature review on relevant theories and research findings offers a theoretical basis for the subsequent hypothesis and proposition development as well as for future research.

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Theory and Hypothesis Development for Uncertainty Avoidance and Superstitious Consumption

3

In this chapter, hypotheses are developed regarding the relationship between uncertainty avoidance and superstitious buying. Specifically, consumers with high uncertainty avoidance are proposed to display more superstitious buying tendency than those with low uncertainty avoidance. This effect is driven by state anxiety. Furthermore, the effect of uncertainty avoidance on superstitious buying would be stronger for consumers when their locus of control is external rather than internal.

3.1 Research Question

Uncertainty avoidance (hereafter UA), as an important cultural dimension proposed by Hofstede (1991), is the national culture's capability to tolerate ambiguity. Can such a tendency to avoid uncertainty affect people's superstitious behavior? If yes, how and why? Superstitious consumption has been recognized as an important research stream in marketing and exerts a large impact on the marketplace (e.g., Kramer & Block, 2008). More and more esteemed companies such as Morgan Stanley and Smith Barney are using feng shui principles to build or redecorate their offices (Tsang, 2004) and feng shui is part of superstition (Tsang, 2004). Block and Kramer (2009) suggest that superstition has been playing a stronger role in companies' promotional campaigns than before. For example, the number 8 is regarded as lucky in China; many restaurants use this number a lot in their menus (e.g., 88 yuan, 98 yuan, and 128 yuan). However, though prior research recognizes the impact of superstition in various cultures, less is found to dig into the effect of cultural orientation on superstitious behavior, whereas cultural orientation may play a vital role in superstitious consumption.

Culture is a system of shared beliefs and values that represent a "set of likely reactions of citizens with a common mental programming.....reactions need not be found within the same persons, but only statistically more often in the same

society” (Hofstede, 1991: p. 112). Hence, UA reflects a society’s collective willingness to tolerate ambiguity. Concerning culture’s impact on consumption, prior research focuses primarily on the effects of individualism-collectivism and power distance belief with few on the impact of UA. As Rap, Bernardi, and Bosco (2011) pointed out, UA-related articles were mainly found in the field of international business. Yet, UA, as an important cultural factor identified by Hofstede (1991), plays a crucial role in affecting people’s consumption decisions and thus deserves further research attention. This article extends the cross-cultural consumer research to include UA at both the cultural and the individual level as well as develop measures and manipulations of UA for consumer behavior researchers.

Superstition differs from religion in that religion is a faith that people abide and live by through sticking to a moral code or worshipping whereas superstition is not created by a higher power and does not involve a moral code. Instead, people perform superstitious acts to avoid “bad luck” (Hogan, 2004). This book examines the effect of UA on superstitious consumption.

Theoretically, an associative mechanism is proposed that high UA is associated with a higher level of anxiety. Activating UA can trigger the concept of anxiety. This effect occurs not only among participants from high UA cultures but also among those whose UA is activated through priming. When anxiety level is heightened through salient high UA, an individual is more likely to engage in superstitious consumption. In the same way, people with low UA tend to engage in less superstitious consumption than those with high UA.

3.2 Superstitious Belief and Behavior

Superstitions are beliefs that are contrary to rationality or not consistent with the known laws of nature (American Heritage Dictionary, 1985). People holding superstitious beliefs irrationally believe that an object, action, or circumstance which is not logically related to an event affects its outcome, that is, a causal relationship while objectively they are not (Langer, 1975). Superstition reflects an illusion of control of outcomes such as luck. Superstitious beliefs are either cultural or personal that are invoked to bring good luck or fend off bad luck (Block & Kramer, 2009). For example, in China, the number 8 is believed to be able to bring fortune and good luck while the number 4 is considered to bring bad luck; in the US, the number 7 is associated with good luck whereas the number 13 is related to bad luck. Personal superstitions include using lucky colors and wearing lucky accessories such as energetic stones. A retail chain named Lucky Village sells good luck objects from all around the world.

Anxiety, as a type of fearlike emotions, is induced by high uncertainty about an impending outcome as well as low control over a situation (e.g., Frida, Kuipers, & ter Shure 1989). According to Spielberger, Gorsuch, and Lushene (1970), there are two different but related constructs concerning with anxiety, that is, trait anxiety and state anxiety. Trait anxiety is a relatively stable individual disposition to consider a wide range of situations as threatening and thus respond anxiously.

State anxiety refers to a transitory emotional state arousal to perceived threatening stimuli and is characterized by feelings of tension and heightened nervous system activity. This research focuses on state anxiety which should be accessible in experiments.

3.3 Uncertainty Avoidance and Superstitious Behavior

UA measures a culture's ability to tolerate ambiguity. Different cultures have different extents of ability to tolerate uncertainty. However, even within the same culture, consumers can learn associations between high versus low UA, its related concepts such as anxiety, and expected behavior through various channels (e.g., TV, broadcasting and internet; Oyserman & Lee, 2007). That is, even people reside in different cultures which have different degrees of UA, they can be aware of how to respond to stimuli which aim to induce a different level of UA other than their own. For example, Japanese score quite high on the UA dimension (92; <http://geert-hofstede.com>); but observing innovative behaviors in high-tech companies such as Canon, in which UA is low, people can learn about this association. Exposure to high UA cultures (such as Greece and Japan) or situations via various media channels also enables consumers to get familiar with the association between UA and anxiety.

UA deals with the way that a culture treats ambiguity, which brings with it anxiety (Hofstede, 1991). High UA individuals are more likely to feel threatened by ambiguous or unknown situations and thus tend to have a greater extent of anxiety. To avoid or reduce such anxiety, different individuals seek different ways including superstitious beliefs and behavior. When people feel unable or uncertain to control the outcome of a personally relevant event, they may turn to superstition for help and guidance (Carlson et al., 2009). Superstition can provide them a sense of control or certainty although it does not relate to the outcome at all (Johoda, 1969). For example, to ensure a successful fishing trip, fishermen in Fujian, China, often perform elaborate rituals to show their respect to Mazu, a world-renowned goddess of the sea ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mazu_\(goddess\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mazu_(goddess))).

In contrast, low-UA individuals are more comfortable with ambiguous situations and thus generate less anxiety or stress towards life than their high-UA counterparts. Therefore, low-UA individuals are less likely to seek other ways (e.g., superstition) to reduce anxiety, if any (see Fig. 3.1).

H1: Consumers with high UA (either chronic or activated through situational priming) tend to engage in more superstitious consumption than consumers with low UA.

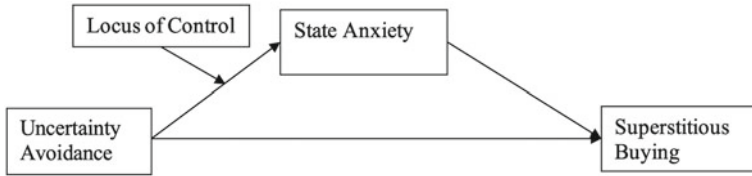


Fig. 3.1 The impact of UA on superstitious buying

3.4 The Mediating Effect of State Anxiety

As previously stated, people can learn the associations between certain cultural dimensions (e.g., UA) and related concepts (e.g., anxiety) so that this associated link becomes salient when the cultural dimension is primed (Hong et al., 2000; Kramer and Block, 2008). Therefore, when high UA is activated, consumers' anxiety level should also be heightened; whereas when low UA is primed, their anxiety feelings should be less accessible. Therefore, the following hypotheses are developed:

H2: Consumer with high UA will display greater anxiety than those with low UA.

H3: State anxiety mediates the effect between UA and superstitious buying.

3.5 The Moderating Effect of Locus of Control

UA is associated with anxiety so that people with high UA (either chronical or through priming) experience greater anxiety and thus display more superstitious buying tendency, and vice versa. However, this effect should depend on locus of control. If an individual believes that he or she cannot control their own lives and all what happens depends on outside influences such as fate (i.e., external locus of control; Wang et al., 2010), then they would turn more to outside sources for help and thus engage in more superstitious buying for good luck or fortune. In contrast, if an individual believes that they can, to a great extent, control their lives (i.e., internal locus of control), then they would depend more on their own inner resources such as strength and thus use less of outside resources because they believe their fate is in their own hands; therefore, they should engage in less superstitious buying. This book focuses on general locus of control. Therefore:

H4: Locus of control moderates the effect of UA on superstitious buying. Specifically, consumers with high (versus low) UA engage in relatively higher (versus lower) levels of superstitious buying when their locus of control is external rather than internal.

3.6 Summary

This chapter proposes the novel impact of UA on superstitious buying. Specifically, consumers with high UA are proposed to display more superstitious buying tendency than those with low UA. This effect is driven by state anxiety. Furthermore, the effect of UA on superstitious buying would be stronger for consumers when their locus of control is external rather than internal.

3.7 Reading: Superstitious Consumption Behaviors in Different Cultures

Superstitious consumption is almost everywhere. People might engage in different types of superstitious behaviors to bring them good luck. For example, before playing basketball, you might want to wear a certain pair of “lucky” shoes because it is this pair of shoes that you wore to win a match last time. So you believe that wearing them again could help you win again. Wearing the shoes could produce positive thoughts and imbue you with confidence.

In China, the number 8 is associated with luck and wealth because its pronunciation resembles the word “发” in Chinese (i.e., getting wealthy; Huang & Teng, 2009). Many of the retail prices also end with the number 8 in China (Simmons & Schindler, 2003). For example, a T-shirt is sold at 98RMB. The number 4 in China is related to death, and people avoid using the number 4 as the end number of product price.

In Russia, an apartment on the 7th floor can charge a price premium because Russian consumers associate the number 7 with good luck. The number 13 may represent bad luck and thus Russian consumers would like to dissociate themselves with the number 13 (Antipov & Pokryshevskaya, 2015). For example, they might avoid buying an apartment on the 13th floor.

In a survey conducted in the United States in the year of 2019 with more than 1,000 participants, it was found that 27% of the participants believed finding a four-leaf clover was lucky, 23% of the participants perceived that breaking a mirror was bad luck, 22% of the participants thought knocking on wood could bring good luck while walking under a ladder was bad luck (Statista.com, 2023). About specific numbers, the number 13 was perceived to be unlucky by 13% of the participants in the above survey. These perceptions could affect people’s purchase behaviors and the market place is full of various ways to reflect superstition (Vyse, 2018). For example, Amazon.com offers lots of four-leaf clovers, healing crystals, and lucky horse shoes, etc. Services industry is also influenced by such irrational beliefs. For instance, some casino owners use superstition-based strategies to enhance consumer loyalty (Guttentag & Havitz, 2010).

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Theory and Proposition

Development for Repeating Rituals and Willingness to Use the Product

4

In this chapter, propositions are developed on the relationship between repeating the youth ritual and willingness to use the product involved in the ritual. Specifically, goal progress illusion is proposed as the mediator and goal importance is proposed to moderate the above relationship.

4.1 Introduction

In our life, plenty of rituals exist. For example, an individual may experience various rituals such as birthday, graduation, and wedding. Each ritual has specific and clear steps. For example, in a birthday ritual, an individual may light the candles first and then make wishes. Each individual has his or her own ritual. Companies also design rituals for consumers to follow. For example, the famous Oreo “Twist, Lick, Dunk” ritual is well known across the world. The question is: Why do companies design such rituals for consumers to follow? Wang et al. (2021) found that rituals could decrease loneliness by increasing meaning in life. They also found rituals could increase purchase intentions towards products involved in the ritual. As previously stated, rituals are defined as “a type of behavior, provided by marketers or created by consumers, made up of several steps performed in a fixed sequence with formality, rigidity, and repetition and imbued with a sense of meaning” (Wang et al., 2021: p. 284). This book adopted this definition of rituals. Rituals consist of a fixed sequence of steps that is characterized by formality, rigidity, and repetition. This book focuses on repetition of ritual steps and aims to examine how the repetition of steps could influence willingness to use the product involved in the ritual. Specifically, this book proposes that repetition of steps could

elicit a feeling of goal progress illusion, leading to a higher extent of willingness to use the product involved in the ritual. Goal importance is proposed to moderate this effect.

4.2 Development of Propositions

Indeed, compared to rituals with more steps, when meaning is imbued with rituals, people would like to engage in rituals with fewer steps. In contrast, when meaning is absent, people would be more willing to adopt rituals with more steps and their involvement would be higher. This is because the number of steps could also bring meaning to consumers. The more the number of ritual steps, the more meaning there probably is, leading people to consumer products with more ritual steps. The ritual steps are a series of actions that people need to perform and can be called procedural knowledge. Procedural knowledge refers to the scripts, knowledge and skills necessary to complete a task (Lewicki et al., 1987). Brunsø et al. (2004) further pointed out that from a top-down perspective, procedural knowledge could guide actions towards goal completion. When clear symbolic meaning is imbued into the rituals, to gain meaning more quickly, consumers would prefer rituals with fewer steps. In contrast, when no meaning is imbued into the rituals, the more the steps are, the more meaningful that consumers may perceive.

Meaning is an appraisal about whether one's life has purpose and value (Baumeister et al., 2013). Generally, people would hope that what they do is meaningful (van Tilburg & Igou, 2011). Compared to fewer steps, when there are more steps involved in a ritual, the implicit hypothesis is that there must be a certain extent of meaning in more steps, otherwise why there so many of them? Therefore, more steps could produce more meaning. Hence, meaning in life should play a role in the effect of repeating ritual steps on willingness to use the product involved in the ritual. In all, compared to more steps, when meaning is imbued into the ritual, people are more willing to use products with fewer steps. However, when no meaning is imbued into the ritual, people are more willing to engage in rituals with more steps.

If an individual repeatedly engage in rituals that aims to keep consumers young, then an illusion that one is near the youth maintaining goal would appear, leading to a higher likelihood to consume the ritualized products. As known, maintaining youth is the goal for the society. Maintaining youth is an abstract goal which reflects one's values (Brunsø et al., 2004), therefore cannot be quantified and can never be accomplished. What those successful skin products companies offer in the market is an illusion that consumers are near the goal, motivating them to make repeated purchases and usage. For example, if consumers perceive that the ritual actions (e.g., smearing lotion onto the skin) could help to maintain youth or become younger, then each time that consumers conduct the ritual, they would have the illusion that they are approaching the youth goal. In this way, consumers would be more willing to use the ritualized products. Goal progress illusion is the feeling that one mistakenly believes that he or she is approaching the completion

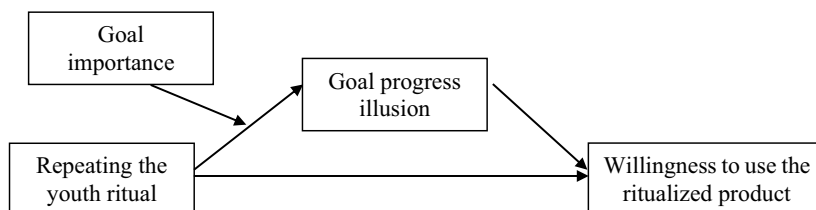


Fig. 4.1 Conceptual framework of repeating the youth ritual and willingness to use the ritualized product

of the goal and perceives reduced psychological distance with what is desired (Fishbach et al., 2009). This book proposes that goal progress illusion acts as a mediator between the repetition of youth ritual and willingness to use the ritualized products. In addition, goal importance is proposed to moderate the relationship. That is, if maintaining youth is not that important to some consumers, then the effect of repeating youth ritual on willingness to use the ritualized product would get attenuated. In contrast, if maintaining youth is very important to an individual, then the above effect would get stronger (see Fig. 4.1).

P1: Repeating the youth ritual would enhance willingness to use the ritualized product.

P2: Goal progress illusion is proposed to mediate the above relationship.

P3: Goal importance is proposed to moderate the effect of repeating youth ritual on willingness to use the ritualized product.

4.3 Summary

This chapter develops propositions on the effect of repeating the youth ritual on willingness to use the ritualized product. It is proposed that repeating the youth ritual would enhance willingness to use the ritualized product. Goal progress illusion is proposed to mediate the above relationship and goal importance is suggested to act as a moderator in the focal relationship. Implications for both research and practice will be discussed in the last chapter.

4.4 Reading: Examples of Consumption Rituals Across the World

Consumption rituals may relate to holidays or special occasions as well as other sacred events. In these situations, people would consume goods, services or experiences (Otnes & McGrath, 1994). Consumption rituals can also be rituals designed by consumers themselves and conducted in private. For example, one could design his or her own morning coffee ritual. There are different consumption rituals across

the world. For example, a family may have its dinner ritual by saying grace first, eating next, and finally saying thank you to each other. This ritual could happen every day. In holidays such as Christmas and Thanksgiving, people also gather together to celebrate. At Christmas, for example, people may buy Christmas trees, cars, stockings and decorations as well as gifts for exchange. Such gift exchange may represent reciprocity. Indeed, rituals often have symbolic meanings.

We could find the presence of rituals in many consumption situations, and especially in eating and drinking. For example, eating birthday cakes and drinking coffee with colleagues may be more functional. Rather, rituals convey symbolic meanings to people involved in the ritual. A good example is the preparation of Turkish coffee ritual (UNESO, 2023). It is more than coffee, rather, it is an important cultural heritage. First, to prepare Turkish coffee, one need to grind freshly roasted coffee beans finely, followed by adding ground coffee, cold water, and sugar to a coffee pot. Then all should be brewed slowly for the desired form to be produced. Finally, small cups are used to serve the coffee.

How to pour a perfect cup of beer? Stella Artois has a 9-step ritual to pour a cup of Stella Artois beer. The nine steps are: The Purification, The Sacrifice, The Liquid Alchemy, The Crown, The Removal, The Beheading, The Judgement, The Bestowal, and The Cleansing (PWRnews media, 2023). Each step contains specific clarifications on how to engage in that step.

In delivering their glowing skin ritual as the product name, the beautychef.com website tells consumers that if consumers could combine a certain amount of their product with water, yogurt, or a smoothie, and drink immediately, then by conducting this ritual every day, they would get healthy skin (Thebeautychef.com, 2023). The beautychef.com also provides a combination of healthy hair & skin ritual as their product with the instruction that consumers take two capsules daily with water and mix a certain amount of their product with water or a smoothie or their favorite drink.

Chefs also have their rituals. For example, one chef would always shine his shoes every day to start work, another chef always turns a pot clockwise on the stove, while another one always offer food in odd numbers (Food & Wine, 2023). Hockey players have unique rituals to themselves. For example, one hockey player would always put on his clothes left to right, that is, left leg first, then left sleeve, sock, et al. (Food & Wine, 2023).

Indeed, each one can have his or her own rituals. Why do people engage in the rituals they develop? One reason may be that through these rituals, everyday life might become more meaningful (Wang et al., 2021).

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Theory and Proposition Development for External Threats and Green Consumption

There are two major types of threats in our life. One is real threats and the other type is symbolic threats (Campbell et al., 2020). Based on Campbell and colleagues (2020), real threats refer to those threats that could affect human existence, including health threats (e.g., contagious diseases), economic threats (e.g., reduced salary), and environmental threats (e.g., climate change). Symbolic threats describe threats that could affect one's values, including social threats (e.g., isolation from friends and family) and informational threats (e.g., conflicting news).

The outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 even worsened the influences of the above threats on consumer life and consumption pattern. The pandemic not only exacerbated health threats, but also brought economic, environmental, social and informational threats. The post-pandemic era has witnessed difficulties in dealing with all the threats such as high inflation and slow economic recovery. Up to now, only scant research has been conducted to investigate how these different types of external threats affect green consumption as well as their mechanisms and boundary conditions. This chapter intends to examine how health, economic, and environmental threats affect green consumption. In addition, a series of hypotheses would be developed on how to solve inter-client conflicts.

5.1 Theory and Proposition Development for Health Threats and Green Consumption

Health threats are prevalent. For example, influenza comes every winter. Covid-19, as one type of contagious disease, may aggravate health threats. Facing such threats, people may experience psychological and behavioral changes. Consumers' ontological security, which refers to the extent that they feel their world

safe and predictable (Campbell et al., 2020), would decrease, possibly motivating them to engage in environmentally friendly behaviors. That is, health threats would negatively affect ontological security. In order to restore security, consumers may engage in behaviors beneficial to the environment. Next this chapter would elaborate on these propositions and proposes the conceptual framework.

As previously stated, health threats are the major and foremost threats to consumers, which has become more evident during and after the Covid-19 pandemic. Prior research suggests that when people face contagious diseases, they tend to buy environmentally friendly products (Wang, Wang, and Wang, 2021). This is because under the threats of contagious diseases such as Covid-19, people would have a stronger perception of unsafety, leading them to engage in pro-social behaviors, while green consumption could make people feel more moral and prosocial (Brough et al., 2016). Therefore it is proposed that health threats could enhance green consumption behavior.

Ontological security reflects feelings that consumers have towards the world and the extent of predictability of their roles in the world (Cannon et al., 2019). Health threats make consumers break their routine habits and beliefs, while these routines could offer protection for consumers and help them to maintain their everyday life even if in a chaotic external situation (Giddens, 1991). Under the pandemic, consumers had to work at home, thus breaking their routine type. At the same time, it is hard to predict future changes, making people perceive a lot of changes in their life, thus leading to a feeling of ontological insecurity. Ontological insecurity is a gradual process of losing security (Banham, 2020). Health threats, such as Covid-19, can negatively affect people's health, resulting in the loss of ontological security. When consumers perceive such loss, they tend to engage in prosocial behaviors (Semmann et al., 2005). Green consumption is one kind of prosocial behavior, that could benefit the environment and future generations, thus helping consumers to establish ontological security. Therefore, this book proposes that ontological insecurity mediates the relationship between health threats and green consumption.

Mortality salience is proposed to moderate the above relationship. Mortality salience, as one of the core concepts in terror management theory, refers to that when people are reminded of their impending mortality, they would more strongly safeguard their own world views or are more motivated to seek for self-realization (Pyszczynski et al., 2006). Health threats increase the possibility of death. When consumers' mortality is salient, they would be more aware of the negative influence of health threats, thus decreasing ontological security more and thus leading to a higher purchase likelihood towards green products (see Fig. 5.1). Therefore, the following propositions are suggested:

P1: Health Threats Can Enhance Consumers' Green Consumption.

P2: Ontological Insecurity Mediates the Above Relationship.

P3: Mortality salience is proposed to moderate the above relationship. Specifically, in the presence of mortality salience, health threats can induce stronger ontological

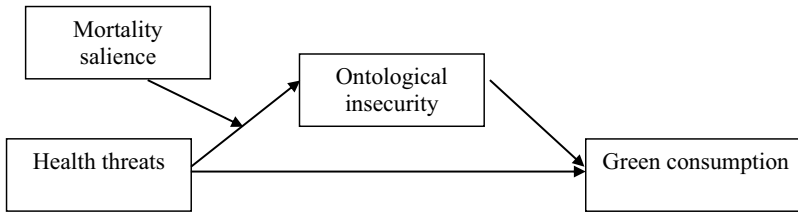


Fig. 5.1 Conceptual framework of health threats and green consumption

insecurity, leading consumers to have a higher likelihood towards green consumption, whereas in the absence of mortality salience, the effect of health threats would get attenuated.

5.2 Theory and Proposition Development for Economic Threats and Green Consumption

Economic threats are threats caused by reduced economic income. With reduced income, an individual will decrease spending, leading to feelings of anxiety due to the possible material shortage. Green products are expensive. Therefore, anxious consumers would decrease green consumption. This book proposes that economic threats can induce anxiety, leading to a lower likelihood to purchase green products. When consumers perceive that economic threats are psychologically near, the above effect would get strengthened. That is, psychological distance may play a moderating role in the above effect. Following is a discussion on the relationship between economic threats and green consumption.

Indeed, when consumer's income decreases, their spending will correspondingly decrease. Green products are costly and more expensive than non-green products. Hence, consumers would be more unwilling to purchase green products (Hartmann & Apaolaza-Ibáñez, 2012). Therefore, this book proposes that economic threats would decrease consumers' green consumption.

Uncertainty towards the future and society could produce anxiety, which is a negative emotion making people feel their life is threatened (Omar et al., 2021). Income decrease would produce feelings of uncertainty for the future, thus inducing feelings of anxiety. Such feelings of anxiety would lead to a lower likelihood to engage in green consumption. Therefore, this book proposes that anxiety would mediate the relationship between economic threats and green consumption.

Psychological distance describes an individual's subjective perception about the distance between self and outside world (Thomas & Tsai, 2012). The psychological distance that consumers perceive would affect an individual's judgment and further influence decision-making and behaviors. The far the psychological distance, the more abstract construal-level that an individual would engage in, resulting in a high likelihood to make decisions that do not reflect the reality (Trope & Liberman, 2010). In contrast, the near the psychological distance, the

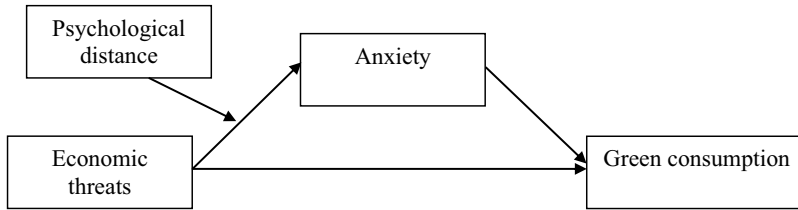


Fig. 5.2 Conceptual framework of economic threats and green consumption

more concrete construal-level that an individual tend to use for decision-making, thus leading to a high likelihood to take the specific situations into consideration (Trope & Liberman, 2010). Therefore, when consumers' psychological distance is near, that is, they perceive the economic threats are near, consumers would produce a larger extent of anxiety, leading to a low likelihood to engage in green consumption. In contrast, when their psychological distance is far, that is, they perceive that the economic threats would happen in a distant future and do not affect their current life, the effect of economic threats on consumers would decrease. Therefore, this book proposes that psychological distance would moderate the relationship between economic threats and green consumption (see Fig. 5.2). The following propositions are developed:

P1: Economic Threats Can Decrease Consumers' Green Consumption.

P2: Anxiety Mediates the Above Relationship.

P3: Psychological distance is proposed to moderate the above relationship. Specifically, when psychological distance is near, economic threats can induce stronger anxiety, leading consumers to have a lower likelihood towards green consumption; however, when psychological distance is far, the effect of economic threats on green consumption would get attenuated.

5.3 Theory and Proposition Development for Informational Threats and Green Consumption

Consumers often receive various information in their daily life, and some of the information may be at conflict to each other. This is referred to as informational threats. Informational threats can negatively affect consumers' judgment. Facing conflicting information, it is hard for consumers to make correct decision-making, thus reducing their feelings of control. Restraining consumption can bring a sense of self-control (Nepomuceno & Laroche, 2017). Therefore, to regain the feelings of control, consumers may be more likely to refrain consumption and reduce wastes. Hence, this book proposes that informational threats can induce a feeling of loss of control, leading consumers to be more likely to refrain consumption. Conflicting information represents uncertainty. When consumers are high in

uncertainty avoidance, the effect of informational threats on refraining consumption should be stronger. Therefore, this book proposes that uncertainty avoidance would moderate the above relationship. Following is a section on development of these propositions.

Because informational threats could produce difficulty for consumers to understand the information and make judgment, it is inevitable that confusion would result from conflicting public information. Confusion may lead to uncertainty towards the situation. To reduce such uncertainty and regain the feelings of control, consumers might refrain from unnecessary consumption (Albinsson et al., 2010) and reduce possible waste. Therefore, this book proposes that informational threats would show a positive effect on consumers' tendency to refrain from excessive consumption.

Conflicting information would confuse consumers, and thus they would become less capable of making the correct decisions, leading to a sense of loss of control. Loss of control describes that it is hard for an individual to predict or influence the occurrence of an event (Beisswingert et al., 2015). Conflicting information leads an individual to be less confident in predicting accurately, resulting in a sense of loss of control. People desire control. In order to reduce the feelings of loss of control, people would choose products or behaviors that could help them to regain control, thus would be more likely to refrain from excessive consumption. Therefore, this book proposes that loss of control would mediate the relationship between informational threats and the tendency to refrain from excessive consumption.

People have various extent of preference towards uncertainty in different cultures. Even within the same culture, the aversion tendency towards uncertainty may vary (Lee et al., 2007). Uncertainty avoidance is the extent to which that an individual feels threatened by the unknown or uncertainty situation (Hofstede, 1991). The higher the uncertainty avoidance, the lower the tolerance level that people are towards vagueness and diversification (Hofstede, 2001). Therefore, when consumers are high in uncertainty avoidance, they would be less tolerant towards vague or conflicting information, leading to a higher extent of feelings of loss of control induced by informational threats. To regain control, people would be more likely to refrain from excessive consumption. In contrast, when consumers are low in uncertainty avoidance, they tend to be more tolerant towards conflicting information. Then the feelings of loss of control would decrease, thus exerting a less powerful impact on the tendency to refrain from excessive consumption (see Fig. 5.3). The following propositions are therefore developed:

P1: Informational Threats Can Increase Consumers' Tendency to Refrain from Excessive Consumption.

P2: Loss of Control Mediates the Above Relationship.

P3: Uncertainty avoidance is proposed to moderate the above relationship. Specifically, when consumers are high in uncertainty avoidance, informational threats can induce stronger feelings of loss of control, leading consumers to have a higher tendency to refrain from excessive consumption; however, when consumers are low in

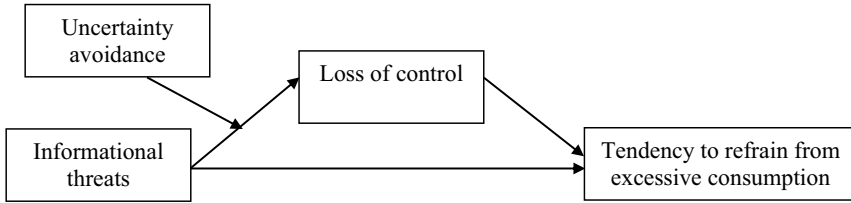


Fig. 5.3 Conceptual framework of informational threats and green consumption

uncertainty avoidance, the effect of informational threats on the tendency to refrain from excessive consumption would get attenuated.

5.4 Theory and Hypothesis Development for How to Solve Inter-Client Conflicts During Service Encounters

5.4.1 Research Questions

Managing conflicts efficiently and effectively in service encounters is critical to recover consumer satisfaction. Conflicts can be described as “an interactive state manifested in incompatibility, disagreement, or difference within or between social entities” (Rahim, 1986, p: 13). Based on nature of the parties involved, conflicts can be divided into two types, i.e., consumer-firm conflicts and consumer-consumer (i.e., inter-client) conflicts. Consumer-firm conflicts exist between the consumer and the firm while inter-client conflicts take place when contradictory interests exist between two consumer groups during service encounters. A group can contain one or more than one individual. Prior research has focused mainly on consumer-firm conflicts (e.g., Beverland et al., 2010) without paying sufficient attention to inter-client conflicts. In this research, inter-client conflicts occur in the core service, which is the primary reason for consumers to purchase. This research focuses on inter-client conflicts during service encounters.

Consumers respond to conflicts differently (Bonifiled & Cole, 2007). A large majority of consumers choose to remain silent instead of taking public or private actions for various reasons such as concerns of uncertainty, feelings of unworthiness, or avoiding unhappiness induced by direct confrontation (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007: p. 392). In this sense, conflicts can be manifested verbally or nonverbally. Nonverbal conflicts may only exist in people’s minds with or without overt facial or body expression. Likewise, inter-client conflicts can also be reflected verbally or nonverbally.

Inter-client conflicts are not uncommon during service encounters. For example, in a movie theater, one consumer may speak loudly on a phone, which is in conflict with others who desire to quietly enjoy the movie. Firms could benefit from the findings of this research regarding how to better understand inter-client conflicts

and thus can more effectively handle them. Therefore, this research can provide insightful theoretical as well as managerial implications.

Prior relevant research suggests that it is impossible to satisfy both sides when inter-client conflicts occur (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007, p. 314). This research, however, proposes that it is possible to satisfy both sides if right measures are taken for the right consumers. Indeed, although each of the two consumer groups has initial expectations about what should be done to achieve satisfaction, they are not certain whether their expectations could be reached because of existing contradictory interests. That is, being aware of such a conflicting situation make both consumer parties not so affirmative about the outcomes and whether their prior expectations could be confirmed. Hamer et al. (1999) pointed out that expectations continuously changed in a service encounter. That is, one or both consumer groups would show a certain extent of flexibility in adjusting their initial expectations due to uncertainty about the outcomes in inter-client conflicts. Considering that satisfaction is a positively disconfirmative state of prior expectations (Oliver, 1977), it is possible for the firm to have a chance to satisfy both sides when no certain expectations exist in consumers' minds. The question is how to satisfy the two conflicting consumer groups under such a situation, which has not been shed light on by prior research and thus becomes the primary objective of this research.

To solve inter-client conflicts, the first question to ask is who should take the initiative in providing solutions? That is, should the firm let consumers make the decision (i.e., consumer-initiated solution) or should the firm make decisions for consumers based on their understanding of both sides (i.e., firm-initiated solution)? Intuitively, it is impossible to satisfy both sides if firms let the two consumer parties take the initiative to resolve conflicts, because their interests are contradictory. Yet, it may be possible to find a reasonable solution to satisfy both sides if a third party (i.e., the service firm) takes the initiative due to its objectivity. We focus only on the service firm as the third party in this research. The Interpersonal Circumplex Model (ICM) and complementarity theory lends us the theoretical base for proposing that a firm should initiate a solution to solve inter-client conflicts so as to achieve satisfaction from both parties (Ma & Dubé, 2011).

The second question is what type of measures should be taken to solve inter-client conflicts. We propose that the type of measures should depend on whether consumers involved emphasize process or outcome, based upon principles of justice theory. This research proposes that firms should take right measures for the right consumers so as to solve inter-client conflicts and achieve satisfaction from both sides.

Therefore, the objectives of this work are twofold: First to address the question regarding which one, the firm or the two consumer parties, should take the initiative in offering solutions to achieve satisfaction from both parties; second to examine what type of measures should be taken to solve inter-client conflicts during service encounters.

5.4.2 Conceptual Background and Hypothesis Development

It has been recognized that service encounters involve both process and outcome components (e.g., Mohr & Bitner, 1995). Service process can be described as the manner that the service transactions are completed (Parasuraman et al., 1985) and contains operational procedures as well as interpersonal interactions. This research focuses on interpersonal interactions in service process. Service outcome refers to consequences concerning with the service encounter and refers to functional terms such as successful e-transactions of money or experiential states such as satisfaction and/or subjective judgment (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2007). This research focuses on satisfaction as an outcome incurred by the service encounter.

ICM, a parsimonious framework for examining interpersonal behaviors, suggests that interpersonal behaviors can be conceptualized based on two fundamental dimensions, that is, agency (reflecting one's need for control and mastery) and communion (reflecting one's need for affiliation with others; Wiggins, 1991), and thus organizes interpersonal behaviors into a circle (see Fig. 5.4 for a simplified version; Ma & Dubé, 2011). On the agency dimension, behaviors vary from submissiveness to dominance while on the communion dimension, behaviors range from quarrelsomeness to agreeableness.

ICM proposes that the two parties' behaviors are inter-dependent, which can be further explained by the principle of complementarity. This principle points out that one's behavior communicates expectations on how others should act. Hence, complementarity on the communal dimension features similarity, implying that agreeableness/quarrelsomeness is prone to invite agreeable/quarrelsome behavior.

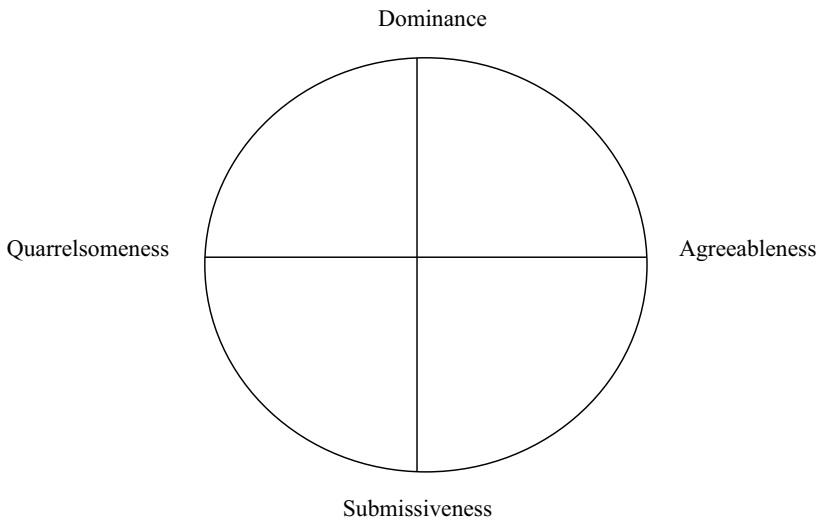


Fig. 5.4 The Interpersonal Circumplex Model (ICM): A simplified version (Ma & Dubé, 2011)

Whereas complementarity on the agency dimension indicates reciprocity, implying that dominant behavior asks for submissive response and at the same time constrains dominant response and vice versa (Ma & Dubé, 2011). Complementarity can enhance both parties' satisfaction level. Yet, anticomplementarity featuring that two parties' behaviors are opposite to the principle of complementarity frequently occurs. Anticomplementary behaviors would decrease satisfaction levels (Tracey, 1994).

This research applies the agency dimension of the ICM framework to a three-party interaction situation. The two conflicting customer parties form one side of the interaction and the firm stands on the other side. In inter-client conflicts, the two consumer parties' interests are at conflict. Both intend to be dominant in such a situation to protect their own benefits, but neither can practically prevail, which means that the consumer side is non-dominant. According to the principle of complementarity on the agency dimension, non-dominant behavior invites dominant response and constrains submissive response so as to achieve higher satisfaction. Thus, if the firm, as the other side, can take a dominant position to initiate policies about how to resolve the inter-client conflicts, then satisfaction from both consumer sides can possibly result. In contrast, if the firm takes submissive attitudes and invites the two consumer parties to suggest solutions, then anticomplementarity would occur. Because neither consumer party dominates, their non-dominant behaviors with the firm's submissive attitudes would result in dissatisfaction. Ma and Dubé (2011) observed that the co-occurrence of provider submissive behavior and client submissive behavior negatively impacts the client's satisfaction. In addition, justice theory also points out that consumers expect the firm to take responsibility to start a fair procedure in dealing service failures (McColl-Kennedy & Sparks, 2003). Therefore:

H1: Satisfaction from Both Consumer Parties is Higher if the Firm Takes the Initiative to Resolve Inter-Client Conflicts Than When Either Consumer Party Initiates Solutions.

The next question is what type of solutions that the firm should propose to solve such inter-client conflicts. Service failure occurs when service performance falls below consumers' expectations (Hoffman and Bateson, 1997). Inter-client conflicts are one reason for service failures, because consumers come to the service provider with expectations and yet, the occurrence of inter-client conflicts make them unable to reach their prior expectations. In this sense, consumer loyalty, satisfaction, and repurchase intentions depend primarily on how they perceive that they are treated fairly in terms of process and/or outcome during service recovery of inter-client conflicts.

Justice theories have been recognized as a useful theoretical framework for guiding service recovery (e.g., Smith et al., 1999). The three major components are distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice. Distributive justice concerns with the outcome that customers receive as a consequence of the service recovery process. For instance, consumers may get a free dessert for

slow restaurant service. Procedural justice relates to the process in resolving conflicts, including formal policies and/or process control (e.g., Folger & Cropanzano, 1998). Interactional justice is defined as the way how the service provider deals with the problem and the interactions between the consumer and the provider. For example, the service provider offers polite and reasonable explanations for delayed flight. The latter two dimensions of justice relate more to how the outcome is received while distributive justice is more concerned with what is received.

Based on the two components of service encounters (i.e., process and outcome), consumers can be broadly divided into two segments, namely those who prefer more of process-beneficial measures and those who value more of outcome-beneficial solutions. This research focuses only on consumers who either value procedures or outcomes. According to justice theories, for consumers who prefer more of process-beneficial measures, procedural and interactional justice should play a greater role in affecting their satisfaction toward service recovery, whereas for consumers who value more of outcome-beneficial measures, distributive justice should be more influential on satisfaction. In this sense, it is proposed that the firm should differentiate the two conflicting consumer parties based on their preference of procedure or outcome and accordingly provide solutions. Therefore:

H2. Consumers who value process-beneficial measures are more satisfied if they are provided with process-beneficial measures than otherwise and consumers who prefer outcome-beneficial measures are more satisfied if they are offered with outcome-beneficial measures than otherwise during inter-client conflicts.

Since the interests of the two conflicting consumer parties are contradictory during inter-client conflicts, the process—and outcome—beneficial measures provided by the firm may be at cost of each other. That is, choosing one option may tamper the benefits of those who select the other option. In this case, the firm should impose an appropriate time constraint on the option that would harm the benefits of the other party. Beyond the time limit, the option will be invalid. Equity theory suggests that parties involved in a transaction would feel equitably treated and hence satisfied if their amount of input to the transaction is, to a certain extent, in balance with their output of the transaction (e.g., Walster et al., 1978). Furthermore, the interaction outcome depends not only on the interaction input but also on the outcome of the other party in the interaction. Equity judgment during inter-client conflicts is thus determined by the process that consumers compare their output to input and subsequently use this as a comparison with that of the other party (e.g., Jasso, 1980). That is, consumer satisfaction with service recovery is affected by the equity/inequity of one's outcome compared to the other party's outcome, given a certain amount of input.

During inter-client conflicts, the two consumer parties compare their outcomes with each other. If choosing one solution can harm the interests of those selecting the other option, then not putting a time constraint on the duration of validity of the harmful option would make those selecting the other option feel frustrated or even angry, and thus result in feelings of inequity and dissatisfaction. In contrast, specifying the time constraint enables both consumer parties to know better

about the solutions and thus reduces feelings of inequity. Equity would result in satisfaction (Hess Jr., Ganesan, and Klein 2003). Therefore:

H3. Total Consumer Satisfaction Would Be Higher if the Firm Puts a Time Constraint on the Option that Would Harm the Other party's Benefits Than Without Such a Constraint.

To test these hypotheses, three experiments were conducted. Experiment 1 attempts to test H1 that during inter-client conflicts, participants in the condition featuring that the firm takes the initiative to propose solutions would be more satisfied than those in the condition that the two consumer parties take the initiative to resolve the conflicts. In Experiment 2, participants' value perceptions on either process- or outcome- beneficial measures are measured. This experiment aims to test that participants emphasizing process-beneficial measures would be more satisfied if they are provided with such measures, while those attaching more importance to outcome-beneficial measures would be more satisfied if they are offered with such measures. Experiment 3 uses a scenario to test that total consumer satisfaction would be higher if the firm puts a time constraint on the option that harms the other party's benefits than without such a constraint. Experiments and results would be reported in Chap. 9.

5.5 Summary

This chapter reviews relevant literature on external threats with an emphasis on health, economic, and informational threats, their relationships with green consumption by proposing possible mediation processes and boundary conditions. Specifically, it is proposed that health threats can enhance green consumption via ontological insecurity and mortality salience is proposed to moderate the focal relationship. Economic threats are suggested to negatively affect green consumption via anxiety with psychological distance as a potential moderator. Informational threats could enhance consumers' tendency to refrain from excessive consumption through loss of control with uncertainty avoidance as a potential moderator.

Literature on inter-client conflicts are also reviewed. This research proposes that satisfaction from both consumer parties would be higher if the firm takes the initiative to resolve inter-client conflicts than when either consumer party initiates solutions. Consumers who value process-beneficial measures would be more satisfied if they are provided with process-beneficial measures than otherwise and consumers who prefer outcome-beneficial measures would be more satisfied if they are offered with outcome-beneficial measures than otherwise during inter-client conflicts. Total consumer satisfaction would be higher if the firm puts a time constraint on the option that would harm the other party's benefits than without such a constraint. The subsequent chapters would offer evidence on some of the propositions and hypotheses.

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Methodology and Results for Uncertainty Avoidance and Superstitious Consumption

6

In this chapter, a total of six studies were conducted to test the hypotheses on the relationship between uncertainty avoidance and superstitious consumption. Studies 1A and 1B aim to test the positive relationship between uncertainty avoidance and superstitious consumption (i.e., H1), using different operationalizations of UA and different measures of superstitious buying.

6.1 Study 1A: Chronic Uncertainty Avoidance and Superstitious Consumption

Participants were 122 undergraduate students who were asked to finish three seemingly unrelated tasks: an UA scale, a perceived gender scale, and superstitious buying task. They were debriefed and were asked to guess the purpose of the study. No one was found to make correct guess of the research purpose.

6.1.1 Methods

Yoo and Donthu's (2002) five-item scale was used to measure UA which is based on Hofstede (1980)'s UA scale and has achieved satisfactory measurement properties (see Appendix C; $\alpha = 0.90$). This scale is distinct from individualism/collectivism, power distance belief, and need for cognition (Hofstede, 1991). Superstitious buying tendency was measured by asking participants to imagine two scenarios. The first scenario asked them to imagine that they would go to the supermarket to buy an electric kettle. They found two kettles; one was red and the other was green. The instruction showed that this kettle has overheating protection, self-control functions and cuts off power after the water temperature reaches

the setting. Participants subsequently indicated the likelihood that they would purchase the red kettle on a seven-point likert scale (1 = “very unlikely” and 7 = “very likely”).

In the second scenario, they were asked to imagine that they went to a restaurant to have dinner with their friends and found two set meals very attractive. Set meal A had seven dishes at RMB74.4 (around USD12) and set meal B had eight dishes at the price of RMB88.8 (around USD14). Each set is enough for two individuals. The taste of the two sets were both attractive to you and your friend and you could freely choose each dish for the two sets. Participants were asked to indicate the likelihood that they would purchase set meal B on a seven-point likert scale (1 = “very unlikely” and 7 = “very likely”). The average of the purchase likelihood items in the two scenarios was used for further analysis.

Because optimism may also influence people’s tendency to engage in superstitious behavior, Scheier and Carver (1985)’s eight-item scale (plus four filler items) was used. The perceived gender scale was adapted from Archer et al. (1995) with two items (i.e., “I like to do things that girls and women do” and “I like to do things that boys and men do” [reverse coded]). The average of the two items ($r = 0.73$; 1 = “strongly disagree” and 7 = “strongly agree”) was used for further analysis. Individualism/collectivism and power distance belief were included to examine other cultural dimensions’ influences. Because prior research has indicated influences of general self-efficacy (i.e., an individual’s perceived personal control over events within a certain area; Bandura, 1997) and incremental theory of fate (i.e., whether one believes that personal attributes are changeable; Chiu et al., 1997) can also influence people’s superstitious behavior, these two constructs were also included as control variables. Other control variables included gender, age, monthly spending, involvement, and moods. They were also asked to indicate their perceptions on whether number 4, 7, or 8 was considered lucky and whether color green or red was considered lucky on a bipolar scale (0 = “no” and 1 = “yes”).

6.1.2 Results

As expected, participants perceived the number 8 ($M = 6.22$) as significantly luckier as compared to the numbers 4 ($M = 1.51$, $t = 3.86$, $p < 0.01$) and 7 ($M = 3.49$, $t = 2.34$, $p < 0.05$). Superstitious buying tendency and UA were positively correlated ($r = 0.59$, $p < 0.05$). Next, a regression analysis on superstitious buying with UA, Individualism/collectivism, power distance belief, optimism, age, gender, monthly spending, moods, involvement, and perceived gender as predictors (all VIFs < 4). UA was found to be a significant predictor of superstitious buying tendency ($\beta = 0.34$, $t = 3.01$, $p < 0.05$), thus in support of H1. Involvement ($\beta = 0.13$, $t = 1.99$, $p < 0.05$), general self-efficacy ($\beta = 0.18$, $t = 2.23$, $p < 0.05$), and incremental theory of fate ($\beta = 0.16$, $t = 2.09$, $p < 0.05$) were also significant in affecting superstitious buying. Other control variables including Individualism/Collectivism, power distance belief, optimism, gender, age, monthly

spending, moods, and perceived gender were not significant ($ts < 0.02$, n.s. [not significant]). These control variables had no effects on our focal relationship here or in the following studies; therefore, no further discussion would be made about them.

Study 1A showed that chronic UA can predict superstitious buying behavior. However, the relationship between chronic UA and superstitious buying behavior was still correlational. To address this issue, in the next study, UA will be primed to establish causality between UA and superstitious buying.

6.2 Study 1B: Primed Uncertainty Avoidance and Superstitious Consumption

Participants were 106 undergraduates from a Northern China university. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the four conditions in a 2 (UA prime: high versus low) $\times 2$ (package size: lucky eight versus neutral ten) between-subjects design.

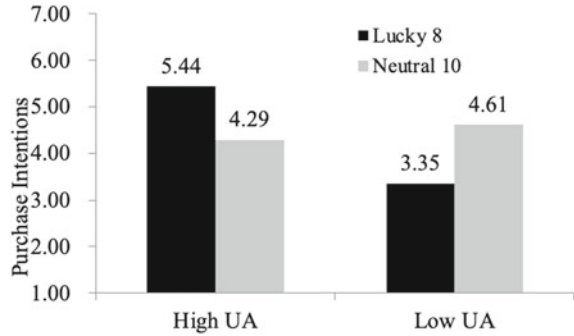
6.2.1 Methods

Regardless of the culture an individual resides in, he or she can learn associations between UA and its related thoughts and behaviors through various media vehicles such as TV, internet, and Broadcast. Therefore, researchers can activate accessibility of high- (versus low-)UA belief in high- or low-UA cultures. In this study, students first read a statement adapted from Hofstede (1991)'s definition of UA that people in a society should be governed by rules and laws and believe in certainty and clarity. In the low- (versus high-)UA condition, they listed three reasons to argue against (versus support) this statement.

A pretest was conducted with another 52 undergraduates from the same university to examine the effectiveness of the UA prime. Participants first finished the priming task and subsequently responded to three items of manipulation check: "At this moment, I feel that ..."; "For the time being, I mainly think that..."; and "On top of my mind right now are thoughts in agreement with saying that..." ($\alpha = 0.89$; Zhang et al., 2010). They rated each item on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = "Rules are important" and 7 = "Rules are not important"). A higher score indicates lower UA. Participants in the high- (versus low-)UA condition reported greater momentarily accessible UA ($M_{\text{high}} = 3.22$, $M_{\text{low}} = 5.17$; $t = 2.08$, $p < 0.05$).

In the scenario, participants were told to imagine that they were going to buy tennis balls and had come across a package by the same brand with either eight or ten tennis balls per package. No information about the price of the tennis balls was offered. Subsequently, they indicated their purchase likelihood towards the tennis

Fig. 6.1 The interaction effect of UA prime and package size manipulation on purchase intentions



balls. The same set of control variables was used as in Study 1A except individualism/collectivism, power distance belief, optimism, gender, age, monthly spending, moods, and perceived gender since Study 1A has ruled out their influences.

6.2.2 Results

Participants in the high- (versus low-) UA condition reported greater momentarily accessible UA ($M_{\text{high}} = 3.62$, $M_{\text{low}} = 4.35$; $t = -3.01$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that the priming was successful.

Participants perceived the number 8 ($M = 6.11$) as significantly luckier than the number 10 ($M = 4.37$, $t = 2.58$, $p < 0.05$). As expected, a 2 (UA prime: high versus low) \times 2 (package size: lucky eight versus neutral ten) between-subject ANCOVA on the purchase likelihood index did not yield significant main effects of UA belief or package size. However, participants showed higher purchase likelihood with the lucky (vs. neutral) package size ($M_s = 4.55$ vs. 4.40, respectively; $p < 0.05$). Importantly, the UA by package size interaction was significant ($F(1, 94) = 5.87$, $p < 0.05$). In line with H1, those in the high- (versus low-) UA condition associated with the number 8 reported a higher purchase likelihood ($M_{\text{high}} = 5.44$ vs. $M_{\text{low}} = 3.35$; $F(1, 94) = 6.01$, $p < 0.01$; see Fig. 6.1). However, in the buying of ten tennis balls condition, no significant differences were found ($M_{\text{high}} = 4.29$ vs. $M_{\text{low}} = 4.61$; $F < 1$, $p > 0.05$). In this study, Involvement, general self-efficacy, and incremental theory of fate were not significant in influencing purchase intentions ($F_s < 1$, $p_s > 0.05$) and therefore were excluded from further analysis in the current and subsequent studies.

6.2.3 Discussion

Studies 1A and 1B showed convergent support for H1 using different operationalizations of UA and different measures of superstitious buying, indicating the robustness of the results. The next study aimed to establish the link between UA and anxiety by using different measures of anxiety.

6.3 Study 2: Uncertainty Avoidance and State Anxiety

As previously stated, people can learn the associations between certain cultural dimensions (e.g., UA) and related concepts (e.g., anxiety) so that this associated link becomes salient when the cultural dimension is primed (Hong et al., 2003). Therefore, when high UA is activated, consumers' anxiety level should also be heightened; whereas when low UA is primed, their anxiety feelings should be less accessible. Studies 2A and 2B attempt to test whether high UA will trigger a high level of state anxiety by using direct measurement and indirect anxiety symptoms, respectively. Study 2A used Spielberger and colleagues (1970)'s state anxiety scale to measure anxiety. Study 2B used anxiety symptoms such as "Was afraid I was losing control," "Felt like I was going crazy," and "Easily startled" (Watson et al., 1995). Study 2C aimed to test the whole relationship among primed UA, anxiety, and superstitious consumption by using two scenarios.

H2: Consumer with high UA will display greater anxiety than those with low UA.

H3: Anxiety mediates the effect between UA and superstitious Consumption.

6.3.1 Study 2A

A total of 88 undergraduate students participated in this study. They first completed the UA priming procedure followed by the measure of state anxiety. The same UA priming technique was used as in Study 1B. State anxiety, which is transitory in nature and can be affected by priming anxiety-related concepts, was measured by employing Spielberger and colleagues (1970)'s 20-items scale such as "Right now, I feel calm," "Right now, I feel strained," and "Right now, I am relaxed" (1 = "not at all" and 7 = "very much so").

Participants in the high-UA condition reported greater momentarily accessible UA than those in the low-UA condition ($M_{\text{high}} = 3.09$, $M_{\text{low}} = 5.88$; $F(1, 78) = 11.57$, $p < 0.05$), thus indicating the effectiveness of UA priming.

H2 predicted that consumers with high UA would display greater anxiety tendency than those with low UA. The ANOVA results showed that UA significantly affected anxiety ($F(1, 84) = 43.81$, $p < 0.001$). In line with H2, participants with high UA experienced greater anxiety feelings than those with low UA ($M_{\text{high}} = 5.52$ vs. $M_{\text{low}} = 3.40$).

Results from study 2A showed that individuals with high UA had greater anxiety than those with low UA. To enhance robustness of our findings, study 2B was conducted by using a different measure of anxiety.

6.3.2 Study 2B

As discussed previously, people can learn associations between a certain cultural dimension and related concepts (e.g., Oyserman & Lee, 2007; Zhang et al., 2010),

so priming UA should activate anxiety-related associations which include anxiety symptoms such as feeling dizzy, lightheaded or dry mouth. Therefore, study 2B used anxiety symptoms as indicators or proxy for the measure of anxiety. In addition, anxiety-related associations also include negative self-views such as negative self-esteem and accessibility of negative memory (Glashouwer et al., 2011). When high UA is activated, anxiety-related associations should be activated and accessible, so the measure of self-esteem was also included to see whether high UA could temporarily elicit negative self-esteem as an indicator for the measure of anxiety. To test whether high UA could activate more negative memories, participants were asked to write negative experiences of the past three years.

Participants were 66 undergraduate students from a Mainland China university. The experimental procedure and measures were the same as in study 2A with a few exceptions. After completing the priming task, participants were told to rate two scales, one was anxiety-symptoms scale (Watson et al., 1995) including such items as “feeling dizzy, lightheaded,” “shaky hands,” or “short of breath,” and the other was self-esteem measure (Rosenberg, 1965) which consisted of ten items such as “I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others,” “I am able to do things as well as most other people,” and “I wish I could have more respect for myself.” Subsequently, participants were asked to briefly list negative or unhappy memories in the last three years, which were subsequently coded by two trained coders. Inter-coder reliability ranged from 91 to 99%. All disagreements and inconsistencies were resolved via further discussion.

Participants in the high-UA condition reported greater momentarily accessible UA than those in the low-UA condition ($M_{\text{high}} = 3.13$, $M_{\text{low}} = 5.92$; $F(1, 64) = 12.04$, $p < 0.05$), thus indicating the effectiveness of UA priming.

It is expected that the higher the UA, the stronger the anxiety symptoms, the more negative their self-esteem should be, and the more negative memories that they write down. Anxiety symptoms, self-esteem and the number of negative memories were treated as dependent variables in the ANOVA, respectively. UA was found to significantly affect anxiety symptoms ($F(1, 64) = 15.77$, $p < 0.01$) and the number of negative memories ($F(1, 64) = 10.49$, $p < 0.05$). The higher one's UA tendency, the more the anxiety symptoms they had and the greater the number of negative memories. UA was found to only marginally influence one's self-esteem ($F(1, 64) = 5.02$, $p < 0.10$). This may be because that compared to anxiety, self-esteem was more resistant to outside influences (Kropp et al., 2005) and hard to change once formed even under temporary UA-priming measures.

Study 2B provided further support for H2 that UA was associated with anxiety. Specifically, the higher the UA, the greater the anxiety level. Studies 2A and 2B established a causal relationship between UA and superstitious buying. To test whether anxiety mediates UA and superstitious buying (i.e., H3), study 2C was conducted subsequently.

6.3.3 Study 2C

One hundred and two students were asked to complete UA priming, anxiety measure, and two superstitious buying tasks. Participants were randomly assigned to the high- and low-UA conditions. The same procedure was used as in the previous studies to prime UA. After participants completed the UA priming task, they were asked to finish the anxiety measure and the two superstitious buying tasks used in study 1A. Then they indicated whether they perceived green and red as the lucky color and whether 4, 7, and 8 was the lucky number.

Participants in the high- (versus low-)UA condition reported greater momentarily accessible UA ($M_{\text{high}} = 3.55$, $M_{\text{low}} = 4.41$; $F(1, 100) = 7.62$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that the priming was successful.

As expected, participants perceived the number 8 ($M = 6.14$) as significantly luckier as compared to the numbers 4 ($M = 1.29$, $t = 4.11$, $p < 0.01$) and 7 ($M = 3.58$, $t = 2.56$, $p < 0.05$). To test H3, a one-way ANOVA with UA as an independent variable and superstitious buying as the dependent variable was conducted. Results showed a significant main effect of UA on superstitious buying ($F(1, 100) = 15.22$, $p < 0.001$). Specifically, individuals with high UA displayed more superstitious buying tendency than those with low UA ($M_{\text{high}} = 4.26$ vs. $M_{\text{low}} = 2.08$; $F(1, 100) = 17.03$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H1.

Next, an ANOVA with anxiety as the dependent variable was conducted. Results showed that anxiety level was greater for participants in the high-UA condition than for those in the low-UA condition ($M_{\text{high}} = 5.66$ vs. $M_{\text{low}} = 3.89$; $F(1, 100) = 55.73$, $p < 0.001$), in support of H2.

To test H3, which proposes that anxiety mediates the effect of UA on superstitious buying, a bootstrapping procedure was followed to test the significance of the indirect (i.e., mediation) effect. A total of 5,000 bootstrap resamples were performed using Hayes (2013, Model 4)'s PROCESS for SPSS and the 95% bias-corrected bootstrap confidence intervals were obtained. The result showed that the upper and lower confidence intervals did not include zero (0.2187–1.5106), indicating that the mediation was significant. Therefore, H3 was supported.

Results from studies 2A, 2B, and 2C offer further evidence on the association between UA and anxiety as well as its mediating role between UA and superstitious buying. Study 3 was conducted to test the moderating role of locus of control next.

6.4 Study 3: The Moderating Role of Locus of Control

UA is associated with anxiety so that people with high UA (either chronical or through priming) experience greater anxiety and thus display more superstitious buying tendency, and vice versa. However, this effect should depend on locus of control. If an individual believes that he or she cannot control their own lives and all what happens depends on outside influences such as fate (i.e., external locus of control; Wang et al., 2010), then they would turn more to outside sources for

help and thus engage in more superstitious buying for good luck or fortune. In contrast, if an individual believes that they can, to a great extent, control their lives (i.e., internal locus of control), then they would depend more on their own inner resources such as strength and thus use less of outside resources because they believe their fate is in their own hands; therefore, they should engage in less superstitious buying. This article focuses on general locus of control in this study. Therefore:

H4: Locus of control moderates the effect of UA on superstitious buying. Specifically, consumers with high (versus low) UA engage in relatively higher levels of superstitious buying when their locus of control is external than internal.

6.4.1 Methods

A total of one hundred and two undergraduate students from a large Chinese university participated in this experiment. This study employs a 2 (UA: high vs. low) \times 2 (locus of control: external vs. internal) between-subjects design. After they completed the UA priming task, they rated the locus of control items from Rotter (1966)'s internal-external (I-E) scale ($\alpha = 0.95$) which measured the extent to which an individual believes that what happens to him or her is a result of their own actions and not factors outside their own control such as fate, luck or powerful others. Higher score represents more externality. Superstitious buying task was the same as in study 1B (i.e., buying tennis balls). They were also asked to indicate their perceptions on whether number 8 or 10 was considered lucky.

6.4.2 Results

Participants in the high-UA condition reported greater momentarily accessible UA than those in the low-UA condition ($M_{\text{high}} = 3.11$, $M_{\text{low}} = 5.65$; $F(1, 98) = 10.49$, $p < 0.05$), thus indicating the effectiveness of UA priming.

In H4, it was proposed that the effect of UA on superstitious buying would be more significant for people who display external locus of control. The main effect of UA ($F(1, 98) = 6.08$, $p < 0.05$) was significant while the main effect of locus of control ($F(1, 90) = 2.12$, $p > 0.05$) was not significant. Their interaction was significant ($F(1, 98) = 7.75$, $p < 0.05$). For participants with external locus of control, those with high- (versus low-)UA reported less superstitious buying ($M_{\text{high}} = 4.99$, $SE = 0.24$, versus $M_{\text{low}} = 2.87$, $SE = 0.21$; $t = 3.26$, $p < 0.05$). In contrast, for participants with internal locus of control, those with high (versus low) did not display significantly more superstitious buying tendency ($M_{\text{high}} = 3.52$, $SE = 0.19$, versus $M_{\text{low}} = 3.44$, $SE = 0.16$; $t = 1.02$, $p > 0.05$; see Fig. 6.2). Therefore, H4 was supported.

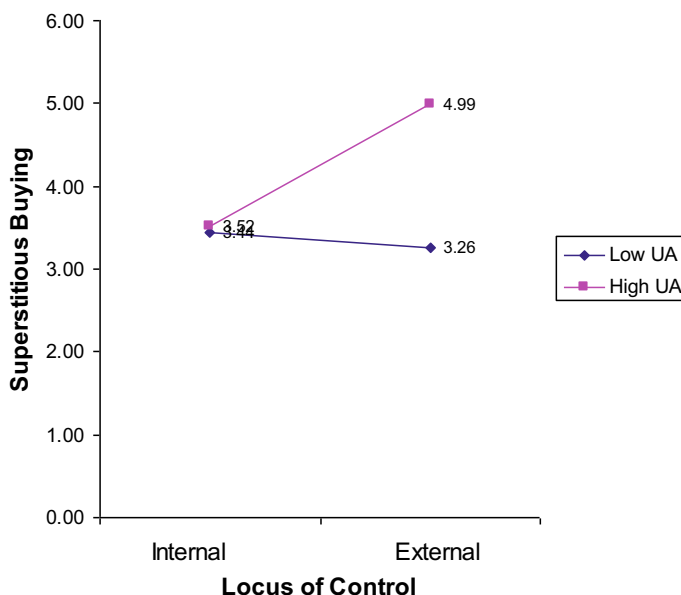


Fig. 6.2 Study 3: the effects of UA and locus of control on superstitious buying

6.5 Summary

Through a series of 6 studies, this chapter offers empirical evidence on the relationship between uncertainty avoidance and superstitious buying. Specifically, it is found that uncertainty avoidance exerts a positive influence on superstitious buying. State anxiety mediates the proposed relationship and locus of control acts as a moderator in the focal relationship. Implications for both research and practice will be discussed in the last chapter.

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Preliminary Evidence on Health Threats and Green Consumption

7

To understand more about how consumers perceive health threats and their impact on green consumption, a survey was conducted asking participants to describe how their health was or will be affected by Covid-19 virus and rated purchase intention towards green products and green product buying behavior as well as writing down their thoughts on how health threats impacted their purchase of green products.

7.1 Methods

In exchange for monetary compensation, a total of 202 participants ($M_{age} = 41.96$, $SD = 14.33$; 50.0% female) from Prolific.com were recruited. Participants first read: “The year of 2020 has witnessed the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic. This contagious disease caused millions to die and negatively affected our health. Please recall the year of 2020 during the Covid-19 pandemic and write down how you think that this virus have affected or will affect your health below.” Then participants wrote down their thoughts. After that, they rated how serious they perceived that Covid-19 was (1 = “not at all serious” and 7 = “very serious”), the extent to which they were afraid and worried that they may contract disease (1 = “not at all” and 7 = “very much”; $\alpha = 0.85$). A composite score was calculated to represent health threats.

Next, participants rated purchase intention (hereafter, PI) towards green products on three items, which were “I will consider buying green products because they are less polluting in coming times,” “I will consider switching to environmentally friendly brands for ecological reasons,” and “I plan to spend more on environmentally friendly products rather than conventional ones” (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree; Emekci, 2019; $\alpha = 0.95$). Then participants rated their green product buying behavior on four items. They were “I have switched

products for ecological reasons,” “I make a special effort to buy household chemicals such as detergent and cleansing solutions that are environmentally friendly,” “I have avoided buying a product because it had potentially harmful environmental effects,” and “When I have a choice between two equal products, I purchase the one less harmful to other people and the environment” (1 = “strongly disagree” and 7 = “strongly agree”; Emekci, 2019; $\alpha = 0.93$). Subsequently, participants were asked to write about their thoughts on how health threats impacted their purchase of green products.

7.2 Results

Two Regression analyses were conducted with health threats as the independent variable and purchase intention towards green consumption ($F(1, 200) = 5.94$, $p = 0.02$) as well as green buying behavior ($F(1, 200) = 1.65$, $p = 0.20$) as the dependent variables, separately. Results showed that health threats exerted a significantly positive influence on purchase intention towards green consumption ($\beta = 0.17$, $t(200) = 2.44$, $p = 0.02$). However, health threats did not significantly affect green buying behavior ($\beta = 0.09$, $t(200) = 1.29$, $p = 0.20$). Table 7.1 presents what participants wrote down on their perceptions towards Covid-19 and their impact on green consumption. Another regression analysis with purchase intention towards green products as the independent variable and green buying behavior as the dependent variable revealed that purchase intention towards green products significantly and positively affected green buying behavior ($F(1, 200) = 336.86$, $p < 0.001$; $\beta = 0.79$, $t(200) = 18.35$, $p < 0.001$).

Bootstrapping using 5,000 resamples with replacement (Hayes, 2013; Model 4) indicated that purchase intention towards green products mediated the relationship between health threats and green buying behavior (95% bias-corrected confidence interval [CI]: [0.02, 0.25]). Following is a table on how consumer perceptions of the health threats as well as their thoughts on their impact on green consumption.

From the above table, it could be noted that some participants did not think that health threats could really impact their green consumption while others believed that health threats could exert a significant influence on green consumption. As previously stated, statistical analysis showed that health threats did significantly impact purchase intention towards green products. However, health threats did not directly affect green buying behaviors. Instead, health threats positively affected purchase intention towards green products, leading to more green buying behavior. Indeed, Jian and colleagues (2020) also observed that the interplay of fear and uncertainty of Covid-19 increased consumers’ environmental concerns and trust in green hotels, leading them to be willing to pay more to stay at green hotels. Future research could examine the underlying mechanism on the relationship between health threats and green consumption as well as its boundary condition using experiments to establish causal effects.

Table 7.1 Consumer perceptions towards Covid-19 and their impact on green consumption

Consumer perceptions towards Covid-19	Health threats score	PI towards green products	Green buying behavior	Thoughts about how Covid-19 affected own green consumption
It can affect your lung function and your heart rate	4	7	7	I believe environmental factors are responsible for the world
It had absolutely no affect on my health and it will not affect me in the future	1.33	5	5	It wouldnt. I will keep doing how I do. I will always but the best environmentally friendly option when possible
I feel that it has affected my health in a positive way due to being more cautious and making sure that I disinfect everything now	3	5.33	5.5	I don't feel that there is any effect on my consumption other than I am more aware of what I am buying
Affected my mental health for a while. First lockdown and isolation experience. Wasn't until 2021 when I actually caught it. My health certainly took a hit at that time but doesn't appear to be lasting damages. That I know of yet	5	4.67	4	Honestly, it wouldn't
I got double pneumonia when the pandemic was about a week away from being a state-closing event. I have to have two inhalers and a breathing pill in order to breathe even 3 years later	4.33	4.67	4.5	I don't think the two are going to be heavily related to each other, but missing work for COVID will make me less able to afford the better products
I thought that it would never end and that I would never get back to normal life. I also thought that I wouldn't get it and ended up getting it 2 years into the pandemic	5	7	7	I used green products before the pandemic, during the pandemic and now after the pandemic
The virus didn't have any affect on my health in the past, but there's always a possibility that I can contract Covid and get sick in the future	5.67	5	2.25	My previous description on Covid-19 has absolutely no bearing on whether or not I would use green or environmentally friendly products
It will cause me to have to get vaccines that are relatively new to the medical world, and it will cause people to have to wear masks in public/around other people in order to try to avoid getting COVID or spreading it to others	4.33	4.67	4	I am not sure how my response about COVID-19 could affect my views of those products

(continued)

Table 7.1 (continued)

Consumer perceptions towards Covid-19	Health threats score	PI towards green products	Green buying behavior	Thoughts about how Covid-19 affected own green consumption
I believe that it affected my health both mentally and physically. In my head it makes more cautions over sicknesses and makes me wear a mask more often. And, it stunted me socially as well. I also think it weakened my immune system physically	5	5	5	It is because I do not know if they are chemically strong enough to kill those germs
During the year 2020, i was furloughed from my job. At this point, i had just gotten offered a new position that would give me a lot more money, and i was very excited. However, with the furlough, it made my sense of anxiety and my self loathing grow, and it also opened my eyes to just how much i hated my job, even with the thought of the new position dangling in front of me	5.33	6.33	5.25	Due to covid and my anxiety, i didn't really leave the house that often due to the fact that i take the bus as my main mode of transportation. Because of this, i had to purchase things from online, and not everywhere has the most environmentally friendly product available
I think that this virus has affected my health in ways we don't typically think about—esp. mental health and loneliness. I also think that we cannot yet tell how it will affect us long-term but that there is a lot of evidence to suggest it will negatively impact all of us in all aspects of health in the further	5	6	5	I would want more natural chemicals and ingredients to help with the health that had declined due to Covid
It never affected my physical health but it took a toll on my mental health	4.67	4	5.25	I am not sure there was any correlation between the two
There may be lingering neurological and immune system damage. Also potential lung damage	7	6	4.5	The green or environmentally friendly products might not clean as well to disinfect the exposure to the virus
Not very impactful as I consider myself healthy and take actions to maintain	3.33	3	3.25	It would not impact it whatsoever
I did not get as much exercise because I stayed inside more	3.33	3.67	2.75	It has not affected my consumption
This virus will most likely have a negative affect on my health	5	4.33	2	If my health is severely affected by Covid-19, then I would not be able to work. Green or environmentally friendly products tend to be more expensive than other products so I might not be able to afford them

(continued)

Table 7.1 (continued)

Consumer perceptions towards Covid-19	Health threats score	PI towards green products	Green buying behavior	Thoughts about how Covid-19 affected own green consumption
I got COVID once and I'm sure that it will adversely affect my health many years down the line. I'm pretty sure that COVID has slightly damaged my lungs but I won't feel those effects until I'm much older	7	4	4.25	It wouldn't affect my consumption habits
It has cause an uproar of fear and distrust among people. People fear of the what if's because they don't know what to believe and many don't trust doctors. I was boosted because I know what it's like to not be able to breath and didn't want to risk ending up in a hospital knowing that I would probably never leave. Knowing what I now know it's a virus that can cause lots of other medical issues. For me I'm glad I took the risk and got booted	5	3.67	3.25	I don't believe that going green has an impact on Covid but a bigger problem on the environment. I would like to go green but it isn't cheap and costs twice as much as other nongreen products. Covid could have been and is prevented if people would just get vaccinated and the government scientist too a bigger approach in making sure we were ready
I was never infected by the virus nor do I think I ever will	3.67	5.33	4.25	It will not affect my decisions ever
I caught Covid-19 and was sick for two weeks, my sense of smell went away and I was very sick with a runny nose and cough	7	5.33	5	Knowing our time here is short, may as well make a better impact on the planet while we are here
I think that virus could potentially affect my health in the future if I were to contract it. Long covid is something I worry about, I don't fear it and it doesn't affect my daily life, I just worry if I were to contract the virus in the future I would suffer from long covid	3.67	4	3.75	It may cause me to buy products that are safer with less chemicals in them because I want my immune system and my body to be functioning at optimal levels
It makes me cautious and to take prevented steps to avoid getting sick	5	6.33	5.25	I guess it makes me want to buy more environmentally friendly products because Covid prove life is short and we should do all we can to protect the planet while we are here
During the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the virus had a significant impact on people's health worldwide. Many people experienced increased levels of stress, anxiety, depression, and other mental health disorders due to the uncertainty, fear, and social disruption caused by the pandemic	5	5	3	The pandemic has heightened people's awareness of health and well-being. As individuals prioritize their health, they may also extend this mindset to the environment. I might be more inclined to choose products that are environmentally friendly, sustainable, and contribute to a healthier planet overall

(continued)

Table 7.1 (continued)

Consumer perceptions towards Covid-19	Health threats score	PI towards green products	Green buying behavior	Thoughts about how Covid-19 affected own green consumption
During the pandemic it did not affect my health too much luckily but long term it makes me nervous that pandemics will occur more often and affect more people each time including friends and family	4	6	5.75	As much as I want to protect the environment, my only concern is that green/ environmentally friendly products will not be able to disinfect the virus. If they do not, I would have to go back to products that may not be green
I DID NOT CONTRACT COVID -19, I HAVE BEEN HEALTHY. I DO NOT THINK COVID-19 HAS AFFECTED ME OR WILL AFFECT ME IN THE FUTURE	3	3.67	4.5	I USE MORE NATURAL CLEANING PRODUCTS NOW
Covid didn't affect my health in 2020. I didn't get Covid until late 2021 and i recovered alright	4.67	1.67	2.5	It might make me more aware of the importance of life
I do not want to speak to that since it's private	4	3.67	4.5	Again, no thank you!
Mental health over physical health has been a big takeaway from 2020, for the society as a whole. In the western world anyway, North America. While the society seemed quite divided on the actions to take to protect our physical health, we all pulled the mask down to say that we were not okay and it is time to get rid of the stigma of saying we don't feel comfortable with any of this	3	5.67	7	Choices about buying environmental products comes after life or death situations. Covid was a matter of life or death so when it comes down to it, that is a more important decision. Once that is decided then you can choose environmental products if the choice is still there
Ever since the virus outbreak, my life changed a lot as a student both in good and bad ways. In a good way, I did not have to commute to school everyday. Instead all the school work was moved online. This saved me a lot of time to do other things and spend more time with my family. In a bad way, it forced me to become introverted and shy. I forgot how to act in social places	7	6	4.75	To be frank, I didn't see the virus have any affect on my consumption of green or environmentally friendly products. I bought whatever was available and affordable. I During the outbreak, I did not gave much mind to green or environmentally friendly products, because I was more worried about me and my family's health than anything else. It was the least of my worries

(continued)

Table 7.1 (continued)

Consumer perceptions towards Covid-19	Health threats score	PI towards green products	Green buying behavior	Thoughts about how Covid-19 affected own green consumption
This virus was the best thing that ever happened to me. It caused my job to shut down and forced them to allow me to work remotely. Now that the pandemic has largely ended, I am still working from home, and likely will be permanently. This has had an immeasurable positive impact on my physical, mental and emotional help. I am healthier and happier in every way than I was before 2020	4	4	6	Now that I telework, I have much more time and energy to make the best choices for my family and the environment. I am much more likely to take the time to research the best product before making a purchase
Physical health, it has not effected; mental health, it has made me slow down my life and not hang out with people so much	5.33	5	4.75	Not at all
The covid virus had virtually no affect on my life nor health. Both my wife and I worked from home, enjoyed outdoor visits from friends and family. Ordered stuff on line for delivery. We enjoyed long uninterrupted walks about the block. We managed to be covid free until very recently. I imagine covid will become an annual immunization along with flu	3	5	6.75	There will be no effect unless I get the virus and die
The pandemic and global response made me lose some faith in humanity. I experienced negative mental health effects	3	6	5.75	I suppose I'm trying to compensate for what I found disappointing in the world and consumer bounce-back to "normal"
I think my health actually improved because I was forced to find things to do with my free time and I took up running	4	5	6.25	I don't necessarily think it changed. I was always aware of the environmental effects of products we use
I don't know if COVID will effect my health but I did get the vaccine and who knows what sort of effects that might have on me in the future. COVID could also have effected my mental health, as I have noticed that I do get little microaggressions now that I didn't get before the pandemic. I seem to have a short fuse when it comes to mundane tasks and things that obstruct that	1.67	4	3.25	It really hasn't effected my consumption habits. I generally buy products that aren't harmful to the environment anyways, but some products advertise themselves as being green when in reality its just a marketing gimmick to increase price and trick consumers into purchasing something thats not a superior product

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Table 7.1 (continued)

Consumer perceptions towards Covid-19	Health threats score	PI towards green products	Green buying behavior	Thoughts about how Covid-19 affected own green consumption
My family lost member to Covid-19. It was a scary time for me because of my immune system status and other health issue that put me in the high risk category. As soon as the vaccines and boosters became available I received them. I stayed home a lot and away from family which caused sadness and loneliness. I was always worried I might get Covid-19. I feel because of the vaccines and booster I feel better protected from catching any version of the disease	5.67	6	5.75	I now on a regularly basis pay more attention to products and services I look for more value in all things. Household products I put more thought into the purchase looking for value, effectiveness and worthiness long term. I also got better about spending so much has changed since Covid-19, I use plastic less and less, use natural OTC products more than ever before
I didn't get it till recently, I did receive all the vaccinations needed and feel this helped with the quickness of the cold not affecting me and was able to beat it with no problem	4.67	5.33	4.75	I'm not really sure
I think this virus has affected my mental health because I spent considerable time without contact with others. I still rarely make contact with others because this has increased my anxiety around social interactions	4.67	2.67	4.25	I don't think covid would affect whether I buy environmentally friendly products or not
It affected my mental health a lot as I didn't leave my house for a long time. My physical health is fine though	2.67	7	6.75	It made me more aware of everything, so yes it did change my consumption habits as I've gone meatless and am more environmentally friendly
I caught it. Luckily, not all that bad. As the virus continues to mutate, I could catch it again...	6.33	6.67	6.75	Despite covid, I'm a strong proponent for buying / using products to help protect our planet...
I never had covid until earlier this year. I've had common colds that were much worse	2.67	7	7	Covid doesn't have any effect on my purchasing preferences
I stayed home every day even after the orders were given to be allowed to leave home. I developed more fear of leaving home than I had before. My mental health suffered and my physical health suffered by weight gain which caused my arthritis in my knees to bother me more	7	7	6.5	I feel these products would be better for my health issues
It didn't affect me at all really. Maybe it will in the future	5	3.33	2.5	I feel that the two things are unrelated. So it would have little affect

(continued)

Table 7.1 (continued)

Consumer perceptions towards Covid-19	Health threats score	PI towards green products	Green buying behavior	Thoughts about how Covid-19 affected own green consumption
Covid-19 did not affect my health in 2020 because I was isolated and did not get sick that year. However I got sick with the virus in early 2023, but fortunately I am vaccinated so I did not get very sick	5.67	6.67	6.75	I don't see how Covid-19 could affect my consumption of green or environmentally friendly products. However my concern about the environmental health of the planet does affect my consumption very much
The virus did not affect my health as far as I am aware. I doubt that it will affect my health in the future, but understand that there is a possibility it could affect me later on	3.67	3.67	3.5	I'm not sure I see the correlation between Covid-19 and purchasing "green" products besides they both somewhat have something to do with one's health. While I don't think I'm invincible, I think someone who is extremely health-conscious would take all precautions to prevent being infected by Covid-19 and buy "green" products to help the environment as well
Had no effect upon my health and probably never will	1.33	4.67	4	Green products can improve your health and help prevent viruses
I contracted Covid twice, the first time at the very beginning of the pandemic when there were no vaccines available. I had a rough go of it then, though not rough enough to send me to the hospital. When I contracted it again in 2022, I was fully vaccinated, and my experience was much more mild. As far as I know, I have not had any long term effects from the virus, but I do know that I do not want to experience it again	5.33	7	6.75	I don't think one has anything to do with the other
It affected us by being on lockdown and crazy people still went out and made it worse	5	4.33	3	Basically it was not enough green products left on shelf. Don't clean as good
It affected me badly and with me already having another illness, it caused certain problems for me. This contagious disease also could be sent to another person I lived with without me knowing	7	7	5.25	It could because I would be in search of the most effective products

(continued)

Table 7.1 (continued)

Consumer perceptions towards Covid-19	Health threats score	PI towards green products	Green buying behavior	Thoughts about how Covid-19 affected own green consumption
I think my mental health took a big hit during COVID. I didn't mind the isolating as much as a lot of people, but the amplification of societal issues and distrust between people had a negative effect on me. Physically, I used the opportunity to exercise outside a lot once restrictions allowed it, so it wasn't as tough on me as others. However, when I did catch COVID more recently, it was extremely difficult to get over despite the fact that I had taken the vaccines and boosters	5	4	5.5	I think part of the societal distrust has made me more skeptical of corporate efforts to greenwash products. It's impossible to see an advertisement for a green product without thinking of the minuscule impact that I actually have on impending ecological disasters compared to the small number of corporations that are driving the problem. I would assume that cynicism was exacerbated by COVID
Luckily, I did not suffer from Covid-19 directly. However, my health was affected due to the fact that other medical appointments were either postponed or canceled. Even today, there are delays because of the remaining backlog	5.67	5.33	6	Since the pandemic, I have become more aware of products that could be harmful to my immune system. I make every effort to avoid harsh chemicals that could negatively affect my health or others around me
I think it is likely that it, or an associated side effect shortened my life by some amount. If nothing else, the level of stress that accompanied that experience (worry about children, older family, spouse and finally self)	5.67	6.67	6.25	I don't know that it has. We were a fairly environmentally-conscious family before COVID. I think if there was any influence it had, it would be to make us more environmentally aware and cause us to redouble our efforts to be environmentally responsible
It has not affected my health. I had Covid once but recovered quickly	4	5.67	4.75	I don't believe Covid has had any affect on my consumption of Green products
May be impacted by covid—unsure how	5.33	2	4	Not related
I am not sure about personal affects. I did not get Covid. On a mental health basis it has been very impactful in a negative way. It is not healthy to live with insecurity about catching, or in the ways we had to adapt	5.67	6.67	3.75	I don't associate green products with covid. I have bought products to mitigate risk of covid, but not all were environmentally good
I didn't get Covid during the outbreak, but when we went into lockdown that really affected me because I had to take care of 3 kids by myself and not leave my house. It had alot of strain on my mental health	4.33	4.33	5.5	Makes me respect my body and health more, so I turned to eating healthier and treating the environment better as well

(continued)

Table 7.1 (continued)

Consumer perceptions towards Covid-19	Health threats score	PI towards green products	Green buying behavior	Thoughts about how Covid-19 affected own green consumption
I am unsure of the long term effects. However, i think it compromised my immune system making me more susceptible to getting sick	3	7	7	No impact
I was lucky enough to not have gotten Covid-19 even when several others in my household did. While there is still a chance that I could get it, it's not something I think about often these days	5.67	4.33	2.25	I don't see how the two correlate honestly
During the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, the virus had a significant impact on public health worldwide. I had to adhere to strict hygiene measures, wear masks, and maintain social distancing to reduce the risk of infection. The pandemic led to increased stress levels, disrupted routines, and limited access to healthcare services, which indirectly affected my overall well-being. It highlighted the importance of prioritizing physical and mental health while adapting to the challenges posed by the virus	5	1	1	The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on my health wouldn't necessarily affect my consumption of green or environmentally friendly products. My primary concern would be personal well-being and mitigating the risk of infection, rather than considering the environmental implications of my choices. I would prioritize convenience and affordability over sustainable options, as long as they fulfill my immediate needs. Environmental consciousness may take a backseat in this scenario, as my focus would be solely on personal health and safety
I am not 100% sure but I believe that we will have long time effects. I feel the isolation and consequences of the social contact, divided society and booming conspiracy theories popping up and linked while also dictating, ruling and changing political climate	5.33	6.33	4.25	I don't see any correlation at this time. I was worried about the environment before Covid pandemic and I am still worried about the future of the planet, how wasteful, aggressive and disturbing, self-distractive humans are. Also, it is hard to purchase "green" products, because 1. affordability 2. accessibility
I really don't know how it has affected my health. Outwardly, I feel ok, but I don't think that we really know internally how we all were affected. It affected so many people so differently	4.33	6.33	5.5	By not protecting our environment, I think we will have more Covid-19 like outbreaks

(continued)

Table 7.1 (continued)

Consumer perceptions towards Covid-19	Health threats score	PI towards green products	Green buying behavior	Thoughts about how Covid-19 affected own green consumption
This affected my brain heavily; had to isolate myself because I got sick and I think I developed depression because of the isolation	5.67	4	3.75	I would consider buying green products like vegetables because they are healthy, but would be hesitant in buying environmentally friendly products because of the price
It has not affected my health and at this point I don't think it will. IMO, Covid was just another form of flu that was overhyped and lied about	2.67	1	2.75	Not at all. I don't see any relationship
The virus didn't affect me health wise. The virus affected me mental. I am so much more anxious now than I use to be. It will continue to affect my mental health. I am much more cautious when out and about now about keeping things sanitary	5.67	3.67	1	It didn't affect anything. I want the strongest product that will kill all the germs. Environmentally friendly or not
It has not affected my health in any long-term way. I got COVID this year, but once it passed I was fine, no lingering effects	4.33	3.67	3.25	My feelings about COVID have nothing to do with my attitudes toward environmentally friendly products
It hasn't affected me directly but it has encouraged me to live a healthier life and exercise more	3.33	5.67	5	Covid-19 would increase my consumption of green products because I'm more concerned about the health and welfare of our society at large now
Mentally left me more cautious and exhausted. Physically has caused permanent breathing issues	5.67	5	4	It has not affect my purchasing decision. It has left me to purchase better pricing
I made it more likely to get sick with other viruses after the lockdown was over	7	4	1.75	It might be harder to get
The virus managed ot get me sick for a while and I have hadd a weaker immune system since then	2.67	3.67	4	It will not
Contacted Covid-19 in October of 2020 and other then acting like a bad case of the flu, had no adverse reaction to it. Had no respiratory symptoms and made a full recovery. Do not expect to have long term problems from having the virus, but only years to come will tell if the virus will cause other problems if reactivated in the body	2.67	4	4.25	Really doubt that my previous description of Covid-19 will have any impact on my consumption of environmentally friendly products. Most of what I eat and use is produced on my ranch in an organic matter already

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Table 7.1 (continued)

Consumer perceptions towards Covid-19	Health threats score	PI towards green products	Green buying behavior	Thoughts about how Covid-19 affected own green consumption
I don't anticipate any direct negative affect on my health in the near future. I'm relatively young with no respiratory complications, am vaccinated, and take sensible precautions. The risk of transmission is also much lower than it was at the peak of the pandemic. However, the stress of the pandemic very well may have caused health problems that won't manifest for several years. And, there's no way to predict what future form the virus will take, and whether I'll be in a more compromised health situation by then	3.33	5.67	5.75	I can't imagine how it could. My previous description was about the health effects of COVID-19. Certainly I have adopted behavior and lifestyle changes as a result of the pandemic that are more environmentally friendly. But those changes weren't related to the health impact of the pandemic - more a response to the economic and cultural impacts of it
The virus did not affect my health until later on. I think I got it a few years later. But I recovered. It was like the flu./ Now it is a common sickness like the rest of them. Hope nobody ever gets it and that it goes away but oh well it's here now!	1	5.33	3.75	Well COVID-19 was used by the power elite as a means of shifting all of society into certain directions that they please. I can see how this societal shifting could relate to green economy as well. I think there are ulterior motives though, I don't have a problem with green products I just mean I think it is like psuedo or astro-turf green and they are going to pretend to be green but be as bad or more destructive to the environment. I hope not but that's my pessimistic view of the world speaking
I never tested positive for COVID, but sometimes I suspect that I have long-haul COVID because I can get brain fog and fatigue. And sometimes I suspect my adult son may have that too. Also, I ended up getting one vaccine and I worry about the long-term health effects of such an untested vaccine. Finally, in terms of mental health, feeling so isolated and realizing that literally no one cared about me or reached out in any way to see if I was okay was depressing	1.33	4	3.75	I cannot even imagine how the two are related. I can't think of a reason how COVID is in any way related to the consumption of green products. If I have to put an answer down, I suppose I'll say that COVID got me into the habit of washing my hands more often and using wipes, and maybe that in turn has led to me buying more cleaning products, which in turns means I maybe have bought more green products

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Table 7.1 (continued)

Consumer perceptions towards Covid-19	Health threats score	PI towards green products	Green buying behavior	Thoughts about how Covid-19 affected own green consumption
<p>The year 2020 brought about significant changes to my lifestyle due to the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. As I reflect on that time, I can't help but acknowledge the profound impact it had on various aspects of my life, including my mental health and work environment. The sudden shift to remote work was both a blessing and a challenge. On one hand, it offered the flexibility to work from the comfort of my home. However, the blurred boundaries between work and personal life sometimes took a toll on my well-being. It became essential to establish a healthy work-life balance and prioritize self-care to maintain my mental health during these unprecedented times. The restrictions and precautions necessary to prevent the spread of the virus significantly altered my daily routines and social interactions. Physical distancing measures made it challenging to stay connected with loved ones, which affected my emotional well-being. However, I adapted by embracing technology and finding creative ways to foster virtual connections, helping to alleviate feelings of isolation. In terms of my physical health, the pandemic heightened my awareness of the importance of hygiene and overall wellness. Adhering to safety protocols and practicing good hygiene became ingrained habits. While there were moments of concern and anxiety, I remained vigilant and prioritized taking care of my health through proper nutrition, exercise, and following expert guidelines. In conclusion, the Covid-19 pandemic had a profound impact on my lifestyle, mental health, and work dynamics. It prompted necessary adjustments and taught me valuable lessons about resilience, adaptability, and prioritizing self-care. Though challenging, it also provided an opportunity for personal growth and a renewed appreciation for the importance of health and well-being</p>	4.33	5	4.75	<p>The previous description of the Covid-19 pandemic and its impact on my life could potentially influence my consumption of green or environmentally friendly products. The reason for this lies in the heightened awareness and consciousness that the pandemic brought regarding the fragility of our world and the importance of sustainability. The pandemic served as a wake-up call, reminding us of the interconnectedness between human health and the health of the planet. It highlighted the urgent need to protect and preserve the environment for the well-being of present and future generations. As a result, I have become more mindful of my consumption habits and their environmental implications. The pandemic's disruptions to daily life allowed for reflection and reevaluation of personal choices and behaviors. It has made me more conscious of the environmental impact of my actions, including the products I use and consume. I now prioritize selecting products that align with my values of sustainability, opting for those that are eco-friendly, responsibly sourced, and have minimal negative impact on the environment</p>

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Table 7.1 (continued)

Consumer perceptions towards Covid-19	Health threats score	PI towards green products	Green buying behavior	Thoughts about how Covid-19 affected own green consumption
I never had the virus but I was afraid it would affect me a lot. I thought maybe I would have been the ones hospitalized	6.33	4.33	2.75	The green products might not be available. I bought whatever was available and whatever I can afford
Although I did not get COVID-19, nor did anyone in my household, we all became vaccinated easily and willingly. I think that this vaccination will likely be recommended for everyone once yearly, just as the flu shot is. I plan to continue to receive this vaccination as recommended by health professionals	5.67	6.67	5	I think that COVID-19 tests (the home kind) are not recyclable, so that is a consideration in environmental friendliness. Also, I don't know if the syringes they use for vaccinations are recyclable or not. These items are plastic, I think, and they could affect environmental friendliness
This virus truthfully did not seem to affect my health and I don't expect it to in the future. I did get Covid once, but it was in 2022 & 2023, after the "height" of the pandemic. It was just like any other sickness. Your out of work and tired for a week, and then you go about your life as normal afterwards	2.33	5	3	My feelings towards covid have no correlation with my consumption of green products
It will affect my health by making me be more cautious. I feel the need to wear a mask indoors or crowded places, not just because of covid but for other respiratory diseases. I hope to never get covid or its symptoms	4.33	4.67	4.25	Covid is a disease and a giant disaster. Climate change is similar in that it's a looming disaster waiting to happen. We can take preventative measures to reduce or eliminate this catastrophe like vaccines or masks
I was more concerned about my family than me	5	4	3.25	I'm not sure it can
I think the virus will kill me or cause great harm to me and those around me	7	1.67	2.5	I think if I'm worried about covid so much the environment will be less important because of how imminent the issue is

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Table 7.1 (continued)

Consumer perceptions towards Covid-19	Health threats score	PI towards green products	Green buying behavior	Thoughts about how Covid-19 affected own green consumption
The things I worry about currently concerning Covid and my health are the vaccine side-effects that may pop up later on. Secondary to that are the side -effects of having Covid that may pop up later	2.67	4	4.25	I don't see much of a connection. Both could be health related. I will buy more environmentally friendly items when the prices are comparable and when they are as effective as the non-environmentally-friendly. Since my groceries, gas, and services all cost wayyy more now, I am less willing to spend twice as much because something says environmentally friendly. Although I still do my part of recycling, saving water and household electricity
The Covid-19 virus has not affected my physical health at all as I have not had a confirmed case. If I were to catch the virus, I would likely suffer mild symptoms for awhile, and possibly experience long-term effects as well	3.33	4	4.25	I don't think it would affect it very much
I did have COVID. It was mild; I should be OK	5.33	6	6	It will not impact it
It has not affected my health and it will not affect my health because I don't get out much and am very careful	3.67	4	2.5	It does not affect my consumption
Fortunately I received two vaccines against COVID-19 and did not have any symptoms of the virus thereafter or before. It has not affected my health as it did with so many others	6	2.33	5.25	I don't believe COVID-19 had any impact on my consumption of ggreen or environmentally friendly products
People have been getting sick and dying from the covid virus. If people do not get vaccinated people will continue to get sick and die	6.67	5.67	5.75	I think that I will continue to eat green and environmentally friendly products which I think will help me fight the covid virus
I haven't had any negative consequences of the virus. My family and I did have it one time but there were no lasting issues	1.67	4	3.25	I don't think it will cause any change to my consumption behavior

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Table 7.1 (continued)

Consumer perceptions towards Covid-19	Health threats score	PI towards green products	Green buying behavior	Thoughts about how Covid-19 affected own green consumption
During the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, Saudi Arabia implemented strict measures and travel restrictions to curb the spread of the virus. These measures had a significant impact on me who are in the middle of a family visit to Saudi Arabia. Many people, including me found unable to leave the country due to the imposed restrictions. Being caught in the middle of a family visit during a pandemic presented several challenges. Firstly, individuals faced uncertainty and anxiety about their health and the health of their loved ones. The rapidly evolving situation and the lack of information about the virus added to the overall concern. The extended stay in Saudi Arabia also had implications for my mental health. Being away from home for an indefinite period, combined with the fear and uncertainty surrounding the pandemic, have led to feelings of isolation, stress, and anxiety. These factors have had a negative impact on my overall well-being	7	7	6	The pandemic has highlighted the importance of resilience at both the personal and societal levels. As individuals seek ways to build resilience and adapt to challenging circumstances, there is an increasing recognition of the need for sustainable practices and products that promote the long-term health and resilience of the planet
So far this virus didn't effect my healthy. I was lucky to never get it. I was careful, washed hands, wore a mask, stayed at home. Got all the vaccines I could get, totally updated. Learned to use zoom as much as I could, took many classes and stayed emotional fine too	3	6	5.25	Covid had no effect on my environmental baying decisions. I always was aware of toxicity of many commercial materials. I am aware of it and tend to check what less toxic is available
I got covid and now I can't smell	3.67	3.67	3.75	I don't think COVID had any effect
I think it affected my health by making me sick a few times but I am not sure what it has done long term yet	5	5.67	4.75	It makes me more likely to think about our health and future so I buy better products for the environment
It made me scared. I am a nurse and I had to work in the frontlines and I was so scared I was going to die if I caught it, especially in the beginning. It was scary. I gained weight from the stress	6.67	2	2.25	It had no impact on my decision

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Consumer perceptions towards Covid-19	Health threats score	PI towards green products	Green buying behavior	Thoughts about how Covid-19 affected own green consumption
Although I never got Covid-19, the stress of the year 2020 has caused me to develop fibromyalgia and worsened my depression	5.67	5	3.75	I honestly don't think it would impact my decision at all
I think it has probably made a lot of people's immune systems a bit weaker. I'm not really that knowledgeable about health and viruses, so I'm not really sure how it affected my health. Overall, I don't think a pandemic helped at all	4.67	2.33	1	I don't think it affects it at all. I don't buy products because they are green, I focus on the price. With all of the green washing, it's hard to know if something is actually eco friendly. I don't know if they're a correlation between buying green products and COVID
The virus caused a lot of stress and the vaccination had bad side effects for me	5.67	3.67	2	It does not affect my consumption
I think being forced to take the vaccine negatively affected my health and I will see a long-term negative decline in my body	3.67	1.33	1	It made me more negative than I would be otherwise
I did not contract Covid. I have had no ill effects from this event. I do not expect to have an issue with it in the future	2.67	1	1.5	I see no relationship between Covid and the environment. I have no need to make a decision for one or the other based on a perceived relationship
I think that this virus has affected me in one big way. I feel that I have been effected by long covid. I don't remember ever having covid, but I do feel more tired and less energized than ever before	6.67	5.33	5.25	I would say that my previous description of covid 19 would effect my consumption of green products in that I will be more cautious to make sure that my health is not effected negatively by regular consumer products. I will not stand for the bad chemicals and the harmful chemicals that are in our products
I don't know what to say about it. I had some family members who had COVID but they recovered; one had it several times (???) and was vaxxed. I think I may have had a touch of it, but I never tested for it. Everyone seems okay for the present	3.33	2	1.25	I can't quite see the connection

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Table 7.1 (continued)

Consumer perceptions towards Covid-19	Health threats score	PI towards green products	Green buying behavior	Thoughts about how Covid-19 affected own green consumption
The virus would damage one's health and might have long-lasting consequences, such as being unable to breathe correctly	4.67	4	4	It would be important to use environmentally friendly products to reduce pollution and improve air quality, especially for those with breathing problems due to covid 19
I was fortunate to avoid contracting Covid thus far, so personally the net effect has been to make me more aware of my health and appreciative of having decent health conditions. So, I have been taking a little better care of myself since the pandemic started, which should impact my health positively	5	5.67	5	When the lockdown started in earnest, air quality got better in my area due to people driving and using machines less. It made me think that if we can reach a critical mass of people being environmentally conscious and aware of effects, we can give nature a chance to heal itself from the heavy damage industry and consumerism has taken. So, I have been trying to be more conscious of products I buy, but it's difficult when purchasing things off the shelf because there's a long supply chain for a lot of products, some brands taking advantage of catch phrases like "green," "eco," or "organic." So, it's hard to know if they're actually contributing to environmentally friendly production practices or not
The year of 2020 was the Covid-19 pandemic and I recall that year being hard to deal with and where no one could really go anywhere. The virus will affect my health now, not in any way whatsoever. I do not believe in the Covid-19 Vaccines and also believe that the disease or virus itself is nothing more than a harsh cold. This will in NO way affect my health or life anymore and I do not buy into this Covid-19 virus nonsense, never have	1.33	5.33	5.75	I will simply use products that do not harm the environment. The whole Covid-19 nonsense put out by the Government/ WHO has not affected my buying habits in any way other than the large shift in prices to consumer manipulation by larger groups profiting off the exploitation of the law-of-supply-and-demand in relation to worldwide events or social movements, of this fraudulent Covid-19 claim. I still buy the same goods that do not harm the environment

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Consumer perceptions towards Covid-19	Health threats score	PI towards green products	Green buying behavior	Thoughts about how Covid-19 affected own green consumption
The virus had no affect on my health	6	5.67	5.25	Covid didn't affect my consumption of green or environmentally friendly products
It has definitely affected my mental health, because now I have to live with the fact that we're all doomed. Nobody comes together for anything, not even when millions of humans are dying; and stupid, stubborn people ignore evidence and dig in their heels even in the face of the truth	6.33	4.33	3.5	Because I've lost all hope in humanity, it doesn't really matter what I use. I am seeking to maximize the comfort and pleasure I experience in life since I only have a few short years. I will use whatever I feel like using at the moment
I managed to avoid contracting Covid-19 until 2023. I had received multiple vaccination and booster shots prior to that, but still caught it from my husband who had traveled on a crowded flight to and from Florida. The virus was very hard on me, but I immediately sought treatment with Paxlovid, which helped enormously. Fortunately, I don't believe I'm suffering from "long COVID," but it did take a long time for me to fully feel well again (nearly a month)	7	4	5.5	Having Covid-19 has made no difference in how I think about my consumption of green or environmentally friendly products. If at all, I've only noticed the enormous amount of waste generated by the pandemic—masks, single-use plastics, hand sanitizer, paper towels, etc. Clearly there's a need for generating products that are made from sustainable and biodegradable resources, but that was there before the pandemic, too
It has in the sense that if I'm sick I make sure to keep to myself to avoid getting others sick. In addition, I'm more conscious of about my health like eating more and exercising	2	3	3	Being that I might make me believe those are better products
I think the long term health effects are unknown. But the pandemic has changed the way I look at life and how fragile it is	5.67	5.67	5.75	If we all became environmentally conscious, then may be we can prevent life threatening diseases
I am a lot more conscious of germs and viruses now. I still wash my hands frequently and am concerned about the possibility of spreading something to other people, especially those who are higher risk	7	5	4.75	How the product has been made, like whether or not it has been exposed to harmful germs/ viruses, is now a concern to me. So I have to be more careful about picking brands based on that

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Table 7.1 (continued)

Consumer perceptions towards Covid-19	Health threats score	PI towards green products	Green buying behavior	Thoughts about how Covid-19 affected own green consumption
I have only experienced positive effects from the pandemic. My work life is way more flexible, my mental health is better. I have more time to exercise and be active. I have more time to spend with my family. All in all, it was extremely positive for me personally	1.67	1	1	I don't see the connection at all. Maybe want stronger disinfectants? But I don't see a correlation, no impact on consumption
I didn't get covid. I was one out of everyone I knew who didn't. I was even around people who had it and didn't know and still didn't get it. I am concerned though about what will happen if I do get it. Everyone I know who had covid some had it one some twice are having health issues now. Long covid symptoms some severe. I worry about the variants. Either way this virus impacted everyone	7	4	5.5	Covid caused job loss. I try to save more money now for I was one who was unemployed in a non essential job at the time. Inflation is horrible right now prices are so high for groceries, gas, taxes, etc.that I don't have the extra money to buy all environmentally friendly products due to their high cost
This virus has not affected my health. I don't think it will affect me, since I have not gotten covid. If I did get it, it would probably make me feel like I have the flu	5	6	5	I tend to recycle more since covid, I want to help the planet as much as I can
My health is destroyed, the virus killed it	7	1	1	Not at all
The Covid 19 virus can cause some weakening of internal organs that can become a problem later down the line	4.67	5	5.5	I don't think my previous description on Covid 19 will affect my consumption of green or environmentally friendly products. I will continue to purchase them if they are available
I spent a lot of time at home and it negatively affected me because I was eating more and not exercising as much	5	4.33	4.5	I did not care
I didn't contract Covid-19 but I believe the quarantine, isolation and hygiene practices made me healthier in general	7	7	7	I don't connect the two. I already make the greenest choices I can
I think that the Covid virus will affect my health very poorly if I catch the disease. It is a very scary time as there is no virus yet	7	7	7	Covid could affect my consumption of green products by reducing the amount due to the need of antiseptic chemicals

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Table 7.1 (continued)

Consumer perceptions towards Covid-19	Health threats score	PI towards green products	Green buying behavior	Thoughts about how Covid-19 affected own green consumption
I don't feel like COVID really affected my health. I did have it once, and only had minor symptoms. the pandemic did make me more careful about being in public and more proactive overall	3.33	7	4.75	I don't think my thoughts and opinions of Covid have anything to do with my consumption of eco-friendly products. i feel that my concern for the environment has nothing to do with covid. if anything, i may purchase a few items here and there to help protect my health that are eco-friendly.. Like elderberry supplements, vitamin c
I'm broke I lost my brother life is just bad and hard	6.67	5	4.25	I don't mind about greens or the environment
To my knowledge, I have never had Covid or tested positive for Covid. I think if I got Covid at this point, it would not negatively affect my health. I am a very healthy younger person who does not even usually get colds. I think it might make me sick for a couple of weeks and that I would recover fully	2.67	3	2.5	I think maybe if I don't care much about Covid that maybe I don't care as much about the environment or other people. If I was highly concerned about Covid, maybe I would also be highly concerned for the future and the planet
To my knowledge I have never had Covid. I am much more worried about germs and handwashing though then before Covid. I no longer want to eat from a buffet. I wear gloves to the store for shopping, have wipes and spray in my car. I don't plan to go back to the way I did things before covid. Just wearing a pair of gloves at the store and looking at them, has made me aware of how dirty things we touch are	5	4.67	4.25	The only way it may affect what I buy is that i prefer packaged items rather than bulk products everyone touches
2020 changed my life and ruined my life! I'm still trying to adjust and fix things	3.33	3.67	4.25	It doesn't at all
I never tested positive for Covid-19 but was sick several times during the 18 month period. I think I became much more cognizant of using my hands, touching my face and other contact that has helped me avoid getting sick since through better recognition of potential issues	3.67	6.33	6.75	I think I was using a lot less goods overall and this helped to identify what was truly essential to me. I tried to become a better consumer by purchasing only what was needed and trying to ensure that was more sustainable

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Table 7.1 (continued)

Consumer perceptions towards Covid-19	Health threats score	PI towards green products	Green buying behavior	Thoughts about how Covid-19 affected own green consumption
It really hasn't affected my health at all, in any way. I am as physically and psychologically healthy as I was, and assuming I do not get COVID, it will not affect my health going forward. It just has not changed much for me, as I am disabled and am in my home most of the time, and I don't like people that much, so distancing is irrelevant. My nurses have had to really suit up in the past, but that never affected my health	2.67	7	6.25	It would have no effect whatsoever, so there is no reason to describe. They are, in my opinion, two unrelated topics: I have always gotten environmentally friendly products, COVID has not changed any of that. The only relation I can think on is how our air quality increased due to less vehicles, but I am unsure if that is a "product" you are talking about. In that case, if I were looking for a vehicle, then I would try to get a hybrid or a pure electric vehicle, to maintain that COVID air quality. But other products such as soaps, papers, food... all that has not changed, as I have been getting environmentally friendly products like that long before COVID
It made me tired and really sluggish. I felt tired and achy for several days. It like like I was hit by a truck	7	6	6	In order to improve the world, I think we need to start by taking care of our world. We should do away with chemicals that are harmful to the earth and our health. This will prepare us better for future events similar to COVID
It caused a lot of stress which could affect your health longterm. Plus they still dont know the longterm effects of having covid	4.67	4	4.75	I dont think covid affects my purchase of products
I think the biggest effect that it had was on my mental health. It highlighted the importance of connecting with others and doing your part to keep your community healthy (e.g., wearing masks)	3.33	4.33	4.5	Seeing how the virus has affected the planet would make me want to protect the planet, and thus, consume more green products
I contracted Covid once slightly after things started to open back up. I immediately contacted my doctor and asked for the medication as I have underlying conditions. I took the medicine for 5 days and quarantined for the full recommended time. I felt better after 2 days. I do not think I have any lingering symptoms	3.67	5.67	4.75	The pandemic was a wake up call that we need to protect the environment. I have been recycling and trying to do more for the environment

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Table 7.1 (continued)

Consumer perceptions towards Covid-19	Health threats score	PI towards green products	Green buying behavior	Thoughts about how Covid-19 affected own green consumption
While I can't exactly say how I think this virus has or will affect my health directly, I do think it has taught me to be more cautious and careful when dealing with sickness and illness	4.67	5.33	4.25	I think I might pay more attention to the abilities of the products I purchase, making sure that they are able to clean and disinfect in the ways I need them to
The year 2020mwas very deadly because of the outbreak of the pandemic and i lost a relative due to the pandemic, so it really taught me alot about things	4.33	4	4.5	It has affected it in a good way
The virus did not affect my life in a direct way. I have never been diagnosed with covid, nor have my family members. However, I am aware that it is a deadly illness. I don't think it is likely that I myself would get seriously ill from covid, but I could see in the future getting the infection and having symptoms that are similar to a bad flu	4	6	6.5	At the height of covid, I was probably less likely to buy green products because it seemed very important to completely rid the virus from every surface. I would have wanted to buy the strongest products that there were on the market, green or not
The virus had zero impact on my health. I rarely go outside of my home and rarely associate with anyone in person, so there was nearly no chance that I could have caught the virus	1.67	1	1.75	There is no influence of COVID at all on my purchasing decisions
I caught it just before vaccines were available for my age group. I lost my sense of smell and taste. otherwise it was just a bad cold. I have only been sick once since with a chest cold but otherwise fine	1.67	7	7	Well it really didn't and doesn't. the disposable masks were a nightmare
I'm a stay-at-home parent so it didn't really affect my health because my family was able to isolate. Mentally left me in a bad place	5	4.33	5	They might be hard to find because of how crazy people went
The virus has affected majority of businesses and has slowed down business growth over the past days. I don't even have enough to take care of myself and it has affected my health	5	5.33	5	Because of the virus, I have to limit the way I spend on certain products
I think it affected my mental health by feeling isolated from others. I believe it affected my physical health in that I wasn't getting other sicknesses during that time, the flu, the common cold because of the social distancing and hand washing	4.33	6	6.25	It was really hard to get cleaning supplies because everyone was buying them out, so I was just buying what was available at that point

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Table 7.1 (continued)

Consumer perceptions towards Covid-19	Health threats score	PI towards green products	Green buying behavior	Thoughts about how Covid-19 affected own green consumption
Well I did end up catching it but it was after getting both vaccinations. It was a scary year for me. I have emphysema so I stayed pretty much home for almost two years. If I hadn't been vaccinated I'm scared by what possibly could have happened to me	7	5.67	5.25	I think I came out of the experience with a belief of just how fragile the earth is and the environment all around us. It has made me think twice that we need to do something starting now to keep our great grandkids healthy and safe
The virus has not affected me and I do not see it affecting me in the future	2	4	2.5	COVID 19 has no effect on my consumption of green or environmentally friendly products
As far as my health I never caught it so I didn't have any adverse effects of the disease. I don't think I'll have any either	5.67	5	3	I'm not exactly sure how the two would coincide. Maybe I would want to keep surfaces around the house cleaner
It didn't affect my physical health. I stayed indoors for an entire year	4.33	5.67	5.75	Well it made it so I needed to consume more so why not try green?
Think the COVID-19 pandemic has had a negative impact on my health. I am more stressed, I am sleeping less, I am less active, and I am more likely to experience depression and anxiety. I am hopeful that things will improve as the pandemic subsides, but I know that it will take time to fully recover from the physical and mental health challenges that the pandemic has caused	5.67	7	7	I believe that the COVID-19 pandemic has made me more environmentally conscious and more likely to choose green or environmentally friendly products. I hope that this trend will continue as we emerge from the pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic has made me more concerned about my health. I am now more likely to choose products that are made with natural ingredients and products that are free of harmful chemicals. The COVID-19 pandemic has made me more aware of the environmental impact of my actions. I am now more likely to choose products that are environmentally friendly, such as products made from recycled materials or products that are produced in a sustainable manner
I had covid but it hasn't affected my health in any way other than I think it made me stronger and built up my immunity	2	5	5.75	I don't think Covid 19 has any affect on my consumption of green or environmentally friendly products

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Table 7.1 (continued)

Consumer perceptions towards Covid-19	Health threats score	PI towards green products	Green buying behavior	Thoughts about how Covid-19 affected own green consumption
It had little effect on my health. I got the vaccine. I never had the virus	2.33	3	1.5	It doesn't affect it at all. I don't really get the correlation between the two. It might make me want to buy fewer products from China, but unfortunately that is almost impossible since the US is in bed with China and doesn't care that China started the pandemic
I think that the virus has not affected my health. I have had the virus but I feel it's long term effects are not quantifiable. I have had the vaccine and boosters. I am not sure if there will be any negative long term effects of the vaccine	3	4.67	5.5	I don't see any correlation
As far as I know, I was never infected with the COVID-19 virus. Thus, I do not feel that I will be negatively affected in any way	2.67	4.67	4.75	I do not see the connection between COVID-19 and the consumption of green or environmentally friendly products. I apologize if I missed something:-)
I don't believe that Covid will have any long term health effect on me. With that being said I have contracted Covid, and it was very unpleasant. For a few weeks afterwards I didn't feel like myself, but over time I got back to normal	3.67	3.33	3.25	I don't believe my views on Covid would change my consumption of green products at all. I would like to change to more green products because of my worries for the future of the world
It attacks the lungs and makes breathing extremely difficult and labored. Many had to go on ventilators to breath for them	5.33	5	5	I would want something effective in killing germs or a virus that is present on surfaces that I may touch. As long as the environmentally friendly product does the job I would buy it, if not I don't care if it is better for the environment
I had it very badly and was checked for permanent lung damage, but I am fine. I am hoping that I experience no long term affects, but I am mostly concerned about long term brain issues	3.33	5.67	6	It hasn't. I buy mostly environmentally friendly products but still have antibacterial properties

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Table 7.1 (continued)

Consumer perceptions towards Covid-19	Health threats score	PI towards green products	Green buying behavior	Thoughts about how Covid-19 affected own green consumption
Thankfully, I've never had Covid-19, even in 2020 and being susceptible to lung issues. I think it will impact my health significantly if I do get it though. I have the vaccine plus boosters, but it would probably impact my taste, my breathing abilities, and exacerbate any preexisting issues I have with my respiratory system	5.67	5	4.5	Based on my previous response, I think that it'll compel me to look closer at the ingredient lists for products and consider how harmful they are, not just to the environment but also to me as a person
It wasn't too bad for me. I didn't get infected by the virus but having to go through the vaccine shots and boosters were not fun	7	1	1	I don't plan to change due to Covid-19. I don't really see any reason why it would affect my consumption of green or environmentally friendly products. I do not plan to let it factor my purchasing
I was lucky enough to never get the virus and I was never vaccinated. It did effect my mental health because I lost loved ones from the virus. Also, I was unable to see people in the hospital that I knew because of the virus. If we have another pandemic I think the hospitals and staff will be better equipped to handle the situation	3.33	5.67	5.5	I guess you wouldn't be able to be picky about the products if covid 19 happened again. People would just buy what they needed without thinking of the environment. Personally, I would still consume green products and wouldn't effect my purchases unless there was a stock shortage
COVID negatively affected my health in 2020 when I caught the disease. I was quite sick for a period of about two weeks	3	1.67	2	There's no connection for me between green products and COVID. At least, I see no connection
I have had Covid, at least one time. It was a very mild case. I'm not overly concerned about the long-term effects at this point	4.33	5	5	I don't really see a connection between the two
I think a lot of people, myself included, may have some sort of form of long Covid. I think there is some sort of damage from the original strains of Covid that have caused permanent damage that are affecting a lot major organs that are going to be misdiagnosed as other things	6.33	4	4	It did not affect it. I was much more concerned about product effectiveness and cost

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Table 7.1 (continued)

Consumer perceptions towards Covid-19	Health threats score	PI towards green products	Green buying behavior	Thoughts about how Covid-19 affected own green consumption
I think that the most affect that the covid 19 pandemic could have on my health now is any possible negative affects that could hurt me in the future from taking the vaccine. I had covid twice and was vaccinated several times and am more worried about negative affects in the future from the vaccine I took than from actually having covid twice	2	5	3.5	I don't think there is any correlation between them
I feel that the isolation from people has raised my anxiety levels now that we are back to in-person activities	3.67	4.67	4.5	I feel that I will choose the cleaning products that will be most effective at fighting viruses regardless of how they affect the environment
It hasn't affected my health and I doubt it ever will	2.33	4	3.75	The only possible correlation would be the effectiveness of green products vs. man-made in killing the covid virus
It has not permanently affected my personal health but it has changed the way I wash my hands and view interacting with people in public spaces	3	3	5.25	Covid has not impacted my consumption of green products directly. However because of the economy and inflation i have purchased more of cheaper products which are generally less environmentally friendly
I got Covid in 2021. It affected me a great deal. I still suffer from long Covid side effects. It seems like they will not go away	6.33	5.67	5.5	I hope to be healthy enough to go shopping for these products on my own soon
My kids both tested positive at different points. But the severity of the sickness was no more than a typical cold or flu. I don't think the virus will affect me negatively now or in the future	2	4	3	I don't think it will affect my consumption. I will keep doing things the same way until I am forced to change
I don't think this virus has affected my health at all but I believe that the COVID vaccine has affected my health and will continue to affect it. I had really bad side effects and have never been more sick since than	1.33	6.33	7	For some reason products that aren't "green" or "environmentally friendly" seem to clean germs better. It seems that the other products are made from more organic substances and I would question rather they would truly get rid of the virus on countertops or other surfaces

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Table 7.1 (continued)

Consumer perceptions towards Covid-19	Health threats score	PI towards green products	Green buying behavior	Thoughts about how Covid-19 affected own green consumption
I saw a lot of people being effected during the covid time, but my body for some reason the effects of covid (maybe I never got it, I'm not sure) didn't effect me like anyone else. I didn't have any sick periods or anything	3.67	4	4	Didn't have any effect
The lockdown because of the virus initially had a very bad impact on my mental health. I also contracted COVID at one point and was very sick for about 3 weeks.. Right now, though, I am completely healthy and don't have long COVID, so my health has not been permanently affected	5.67	5.67	6.25	I'm really not sure. Maybe if i were more afraid of getting COVID, I would use more disposable masks than reusable ones, and would create more waste?
It resulted in me getting significantly less exercise as I have left my apartment less for fear of going into public spaces	7	5	5	I'm honestly not seeing the connection
I believe the virus is real however I believe it has been altered by humans intentionally and released on purpose so the cronies running the world could make a profit off the vaccines while causing societies across the globe to break down, furthering the need for more government control	4	1	1	i believe that the "global warming crisis" is man made to create fear so that governments and regain more control and make money selling fake "green products"
Will affect lungs of those who got Covid 19	6	5.33	4	I would use green/ environmentally friendly products if the same price. If price is a lot more, I may not be able to afford green/ environmentally friendly products
I believe I may get sick a time or two, but there will be no long term impacts	4	4	4	It won't affect it, I try to be green when reasonable

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Table 7.1 (continued)

Consumer perceptions towards Covid-19	Health threats score	PI towards green products	Green buying behavior	Thoughts about how Covid-19 affected own green consumption
With precautions, the virus would not affect my health. I could not be sure in the future, but planned to be as safe as possible to minimize the chances of it affecting me	2.67	6.33	2	It could affect me in terms of going more green and environmentally friendly so as to better the environment to help keep the spread down. Cleaner environment, better air quality, plus overall healthier for the individual can make for a better defense against Covid-19
It won't its just a cold with extras they added	1	4	4	it dodesnt. I dont want cancer at 50 so I will use the green product but I dont fuck with recycled things because they prob cause cancer too
The virus affects the respiratory system. Probably when you do any activities that requires usage of the lungs like running, you will have a decrease in air absorption quality. You may get tired a lot more easily. It may not be easy to run or compete in sports like you have before	7	3.67	1	Suffering those symptoms, I might be more sympathetic to the cause. I might want to help the environment out so that my lungs could be in more relief. I might want the air quality to be much more better for my lungs. Thus, I would probably want the environment to be more cleaner and buy green products that promote things like tree growth!
It has affected my health I'm the sense that I have felt weaker than normal since I got the virus and seem to get sick easily now. I feel like it will affect my health more in the future as in my immune system is weaker	7	6	5.25	It could affect it because it might not be able to get rid of the virus as easily

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Table 7.1 (continued)

Consumer perceptions towards Covid-19	Health threats score	PI towards green products	Green buying behavior	Thoughts about how Covid-19 affected own green consumption
I think I have yet to really see what Covid did to my sense of health and mentality. I think I will reap those rewards in the coming years, and I don't whether to embrace or fear this future holdings. But, for the moment I haven't a strong sense of smell nor taste, something I took for granted when I had	5.33	3	3.25	Well, realistically, I don't take into consideration the amount of greenery I am putting back into this earth, because I won't live long enough to see its effect. Though, this doesn't stop me from thinking green
Covid-19 affected our family by isolating us from other family members for about a year until the vaccines became available. The kids were home schooled, which added extra stress and depression on everyone	4	4.33	4.25	The two really had no affect on each other
I am worried that I have gotten sick at some point and that it will have lasting effects on my health	5	4.67	4.5	None
Covid didn't really affect my health since I don't think I caught it, but it did change my lifestyle because I wore masks, practiced social distancing, used hand sanitizer a lot more, etc	4	1	1.5	Covid-19 wouldn't/didn't have an effect on my consumption of green products. The only connection I see between the two is Covid leading to job loss/ economic insecurity, leading to less income, leading to being unable to afford green products
This virus has negatively affected my health. I have suffered severely. I have felt terrible health issues because of this virus	3.67	6	5	I want to sustain the environment
I think what it affects most is my mental health. I am afraid to go anywhere, and afraid to take off my mask when I do go places. This has meant that I am extremely isolated	7	6.67	4.25	Climate change adds to my anxiety, so it would make sense that because I have new and worsening anxiety due to Covid 19 then I would want to alleviate further anxiety about climate change. So I would try to consume more green products

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Table 7.1 (continued)

Consumer perceptions towards Covid-19	Health threats score	PI towards green products	Green buying behavior	Thoughts about how Covid-19 affected own green consumption
I don't know if it has directly effected my health. I have not had it. I have, however become more aware of some health issues. I have changed some of my daily habits and have become more aware of disease prevention methods	4	6.33	6	I want to know if a product is effective at disinfecting. I worry that some environmentally friendly products might not be that good. I do try to find out if they actually work. I try to use things that are reusable more than in the past just so that I don't need to buy them as often
The Covid-19 pandemic had a significant impact on global health, causing millions of deaths and affecting physical and mental well-being. Overburdened healthcare systems, delayed medical treatments, and public health measures added to the challenges faced by individuals and communities worldwide. Efforts are ongoing to address these consequences	3.67	5.67	5	The Covid-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on global health, resulting in millions of deaths and causing physical, mental, and healthcare system challenges. It has led to direct health impacts, mental health challenges, overburdened healthcare systems, delayed medical treatments, and the implementation of public health measures to control the spread of the virus
Well I think it will affect because I am way more cautious while being out in public. I wash my hands more and use sanitizer way more often than I had. I also constantly wear a mask. I have not gotten a cold or the Covid-19 virus because I am extremely cautious	5	6.67	7	I am just more aware than I was. Realizing that people's choice's really do affect those around you and the future
It was a difficult year, emotionally, one difficult to process. We learned a new way to live. Even though now life is a bit back to "normal," things will never be the same. The impact of the virus will always be lurking in the background of my life	7	7	7	Even before Covid-19, I purchased and used environmentally friendly products for years. My household is chemical-free. I don't use and personal products unless they're environmentally friendly and also not harmful to me personally

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Table 7.1 (continued)

Consumer perceptions towards Covid-19	Health threats score	PI towards green products	Green buying behavior	Thoughts about how Covid-19 affected own green consumption
For me personally? No. 2020 was a horrible year for so many worldwide. Perhaps globally it will be viewed as a "marker year" for the rest of our lives - a point in time that we will recall events as either being before or after the pandemic. But for me personally, it was not the worst year of my life. I realize I've been lucky in that being fully retired and living where I do, I have been relatively unaffected by the pandemic. For me, it has been mostly just inconveniences. The worst year - or rather, the worst year and a half - of my life began in the spring of 2010 when my otherwise very healthy and active wife was diagnosed with an aggressive brain tumor. Even though she faced this without fear and was very active and living life as best she could, we both knew what the outcome would likely be. And even while doing well at the start of the year and we were hopeful, 2011 became the worst year of our lives. That was the year this insidious disease relentlessly took away her life. She passed away that New Years Eve nine years ago. I think we were closer than we had ever been during that time, and knew that we had done all that we could, but that did not bring much comfort. We have to make the best of whatever time we have ... and that is uncertain	4	4.33	4.25	It is setting up the world for the biggest ecological disaster in all history. The halting of what is now 45% of all fossil fuel use will destroy the food supply of 1/2 of the world's population. When it does the people will eat out every living thing on the planet and life from the oceans and land will be in grave danger. That isn't what the environmentalists will tell you but hide and watch 5 to 6 months from now the terror I speak of here will be profoundly real. It is already starting in Africa! If we do not go back to using fossil fuels the economy of every nation in the world will be profoundly destroyed. Destitution disease, poverty and war will happen. We must stop this right away. There is absolutely nothing good in the concept of stopping fossil fuels by just stopping. Not one positive thing comes from that. The biggest issue is that the only way to stop such is to invent new ways and that doesn't come from shutting it down, it comes from being the best most productive and wonderful smartest person you can be. Update: as of 4/10/2020. I just got word from Ghana that a single sweet potato cost \$20 because of this Lockdown insanity. This is what has happened when you stop using oil and gas. These poor people are starving and soon to die! Nutty Environmentalists are celebrating this nonsense! Reader please think about what they are saying and the results of their actions

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Table 7.1 (continued)

Consumer perceptions towards Covid-19	Health threats score	PI towards green products	Green buying behavior	Thoughts about how Covid-19 affected own green consumption
The year of 2020 was nothing short of mass pandemonium, in my opinion. Many were passing away daily from a virus that seemed to come from out of nowhere, and even those who weren't passing away were left with scary symptoms that were persisting for weeks, or even months. Some even still claim they have lingering effects from COVID still to this day. I was actually lucky and never caught COVID at any point between 2020 and now, so my health has not really been impacted. However, I know I am at risk every day of catching it and I think my health could seriously be in jeopardy if this happened. I am an 'at risk' individual, which means that COVID could be exceptionally hard on my body if I were to catch it, due to my preexisting conditions	7	4.67	4.25	I never really considered that there could be a relationship between COVID and buying 'green' products, but perhaps I would buy more to be as safe as possible from the disease
I definitely believe I caught covid 19 but never got tested and stayed inside for 2 weeks, i believe as long as you don't get a vaccine for covid you will be ok. I think the vaccine lowers your immune system, people still get covid with the vaccine	2.33	5.67	5.25	It did not affect my consumption on green products one bit
I think that this virus will affect my health by causing damage to my lungs and heart and also cause damage to my brain, which would make it hard for me to live a normal life, if I make it through the virus and not die of it	7	1.67	1	My previous description on Covid-19 would not affect my consumption of green or environmentally friendly products because I do not care about being green or environmentally friendly in the first place as most of the world's population is caused by corporate and businesses and companies and I can't realistically make an effect so I rather enjoy my life and unless somehow my brain gets damaged to the point I go green, which I doubt, it won't affect my view of going green or being environmentally friendly

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Table 7.1 (continued)

Consumer perceptions towards Covid-19	Health threats score	PI towards green products	Green buying behavior	Thoughts about how Covid-19 affected own green consumption
No impact on my health unless the mrna vaccine turns out to have long term negative consequences	2.33	4.67	4.5	No relationship
The virus itself has had no direct affect on my health. I am fully vaccinated and boosted, am wary of social interactions by nature and always generally follow the guidelines for sanitation that were advocated during the pandemic. I am almost never ill, and do not anticipate contracting COVID-19 in the future. Indirectly, the social distancing imposed as a result of the virus has probably made me more healthy	4.33	5.67	4.75	COVID-19 has no effect on my consumption of products; they are separate, unrelated things to my mind
This has not impacted my health	4	4	3.5	I'm not sure
I know that with the diseases I already have that I would not do well with respiratory illness as my body cannot fight those. So, I self isolated to be safe. I found creative ways to get the things I needed accomplished so that going out in public with unknown people was not a risk I was willing to take	5	4	2	Covid 19 did not effect my potential consumption. Prices and effectiveness generally do. "Green" products, if priced comparably would entice me
I have not encountered any bad run-ins with the virus and think the chances of me getting it are very low. I've had family members that have gotten it despite having multiple booster shots so I really have no idea what to think. I do not think I am at much of a risk of getting it though	2.33	3	2.25	It may be difficult to access these goods and services because of shortages etc
It has made me be more cautious about hygiene and what goes on around me. I have been more disciplined actually	5.33	5.67	6.25	I want to spend more time buying eco friendly products that are actually good for the Earth
I think it will affect the way we handle how we get colds and how concerned we are when we get them. It will make us want to wear masks in the winter seasons. I also think that the long term effects are much harder on our bodies than we could ever expect	7	5.67	4.5	Covid 19 has affected my consumption of green products due to lack of work has caused and inability of income to pay for the better quality products

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Table 7.1 (continued)

Consumer perceptions towards Covid-19	Health threats score	PI towards green products	Green buying behavior	Thoughts about how Covid-19 affected own green consumption
I don't know how it will affect my health longterm. At the time, it affected my perception of health, worrying that I would catch it	5	7	6	I'm not really sure, possibly I would look for products that would be safer
I've been lucky so far to not get Covid-19 but it has definitely made me a lot more careful. I have chronic illness and a bout of Covid-19 would probably kill me so for the last few years I have been super duper careful	7	7	5.5	I wouldn't say those two are related for me. I've been trying to switch to green products for some time, when I can afford to. The presence of Covid-19 hasn't increased that process or decreased it
Your question has a mix of past and present tense, but I will assume you meant how I thought the virus would affect my health. I have family in Asia, so I was very tuned in to what was going on even before it became a news item in the United States. From the number of people who had gotten sick from taking care of patient zero in the Chinese hospital, I had a strung hunch that this was an airborne disease and that it would soon spread out of control. I was very, very concerned that it would affect me and my family at some point. How much was still uncertain	7	5.67	6.5	I think I get the connection you are trying to make, but Covid-19 has the ability to cause a rapid death. Barring unusual circumstances, most consumer products will not cause a rapid death. Environmental decisions are made collectively over the long haul in an effort to make lives better for us and our children. Covid-19 was much, much more immediate life-threatening situation than buying a product with recycled packaging
I think that it was a real wake up call for me, it helped me clarify what I did and did not want in the world. I am less worried about my own physical health than I am about people who are more susceptible to the disease	4.33	4.33	4.75	I think if it made me realize what I was about in this world, it would help me realize that being green is the way to go for the future
The year 2020 has been a difficult one, marked by the global COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to the disruption to our daily lives, this virus has had a serious impact on our physical and mental health. The uncertainty of the virus has caused anxiety and stress, while social distancing has caused feelings of loneliness and disconnection	7	6.33	6	Consumers are now more aware of the need to purchase products that are sustainable and ethically produced. with an increased understanding of the fragility of our natural environment, and the importance of looking after it

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Table 7.1 (continued)

Consumer perceptions towards Covid-19	Health threats score	PI towards green products	Green buying behavior	Thoughts about how Covid-19 affected own green consumption
The year 2020 was difficult for me. I had just had hip replacement surgery and was recovering. That's when the country was shut down due to the Covid pandemic. I stayed home for many months and had my groceries delivered and only went out when I had to go to doctor appointments. I am still concerned today that I may catch the Covid virus. I have had all of the Covid vaccines but still wear a mask when I leave the house. So far, I've been lucky and have not caught the virus. I do keep the rapid antigen Covid tests on hand in case I feel ill and need to take a test to confirm whether it is Covid or not	5.67	6.33	7	One thing is I have been concerned about is my consumption of face masks that I have continued to wear. The face masks are not green or environmentally friendly and I have thrown many masks away in the trash that will be filling up the landfills. Perhaps in the future, there will be environmentally friendly face masks that are available to purchase
This virus is a threat like the flu. It could have effects on people as time goes on because we don't know what the long term effects of the virus or the vaccine will be	3.67	5	5.5	My previous experience with covid makes me want to live better and safe and that means taking care of our environment
People are more prepared if we need a lockdown again	5.67	5	6	I think people are cleaner and therefor greener
I think the covid pandemic is more witnessed in the outbreak. This disease caused millions of the people to die and negatively affected the health	5.33	4.67	5	I think that people would consume green food and products environmentally friendly
The physical impact of Covid-19 can range made me feel symptoms, such as fever, cough, and fatigue, to more severe complications like pneumonia, acute respiratory distress syndrome. the pandemic has had direct effects on my health overall well-being	7	5	3.75	The pandemic highlighted the importance of health and hygiene practices, creating a greater emphasis on personal well-being. This realization could lead individuals to recognize the importance of sustainable practices and products that contribute to long-term environmental stability
I have not experienced any health related side effects from the virus itself. I do think it has made me more conscious of being cautious around sick people	4.33	7	6.75	I do not see a correlation between the two, so no affect

7.3 Summary

This chapter offers preliminary evidence on the relationship between health threats and green consumption. Survey results indicated that health threats exerted a significantly positive influence on green consumption. It is desirable for future research to further establish the causal effect of health threats on green consumption and examine the processes as well as the boundary condition.

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Preliminary Evidence on Economic Threats and Green Consumption

8

To understand how consumers perceive economic threats and their impact on green consumption, a survey was conducted, in which it asked participants to describe how they perceived the economic situation and how that perception affected green consumption.

8.1 Methods and Results

In exchange for monetary compensation, a total of 201 participants ($M_{\text{age}} = 41.66$, $SD = 14.38$; 54.7% female) from Prolific.com were recruited. Participants first read: “The year of 2020 has witnessed the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic. This contagious disease not only caused millions to die, but also negatively affected the economic situation. Please describe what you feel about the current economic situation and write down the negative impact on your economic status (e.g., income reduction) below.” Next, participants were asked to write about their thoughts on how economic threats impacted their purchase of green products. Table 8.1 presents what participants wrote down on how they perceived the economic threats as well as their thoughts on the impact of economic threats on green consumption.

Table 8.1 Consumer perceptions towards economic threats and their impact on green consumption

Perceptions towards current economic situation	Thoughts about how green consumption is impacted
I feel that the current economic status is poor since covid and it has made it harder for me to get money and/or a stable job	The current economic situation could effect my consumption of green products because I would not have the funds to purchase them
Things are going higher, everything seems more expensive which just means a tighter budget and a more difficult time saving	Seems like things are trying to be more green and better, but there's still a lot of work to do. Though green products can be expensive, if things get tighter I might have to use more normal products
The current economic situation is extremely stressful for many people. I have been negatively impact by inflation of groceries, gas, and rent. I'm struggling to get by	The current economic situation could affect my consumption of green or environmentally friendly products by purchasing other options if they are significantly cheaper despite being worse for the environment
Covid-19 pandemic impacted the economy in a negative way because so many small businesses were forced to shut down and/or lay off workers. I, along with so many others, was unable to spend money as I did before because of the uncertainty of the economy and not knowing how much worse it was going to get. Some people have yet to find gainful employment. I am worried so I spend less money	I would prefer to purchase environmentally friendly products but will only do so if they are somewhat affordable. I can't afford to waste my money
There is no doubt that many are suffering and the damage Covid has caused will still take some time to fully come to light. I myself lost a job and went into my own venture. Finances were tough and had to borrow money to keep making payments	I am not willing to pay a premium if my finances are tight so need to conserve cash. But if I had the extra income I would consider being responsible
The economy is pretty bad right now and inflation is quite bad. It made it harder for me to earn money and as a result I am more reclusive now	It might make it harder to purchase those, since green products are more expensive
There is no place to live. A FLOOD of immigrants in academia, the workforce, trades, is cramming up every single space. Housing is incredibly priced, even in the country	I can't afford to pay 2.5X as much for soap
It's dire and everything is expensive, causing more spending and less saving	Its honestly not, unless it's cheaper I won't be buying

(continued)

Table 8.1 (continued)

Perceptions towards current economic situation	Thoughts about how green consumption is impacted
Due to the pandemic, we have not fully recovered financially. A reduction in available work, with an increase in prices makes it very hard to stay afloat	I was always conscious of more environmentally friendly products, however the increased prices makes it difficult to make the purchases I feel most comfortable with. Now, unfortunately, it is about what is most affordable
The cost of inflation has made me partake in different ways of savings ... not drive my car as much, buy different foods, etc. I did get laid off due to covid so my savings suffered	I don't want to harm the environment further so if it's not too much pricier than other items I will purchase
I have never felt more stressed or downtrodden about my money situation. Just to have food and pay my basic bills has increased dramatically and changed my lifestyle	I may not always have the extra money it takes to buy these products rather than regular ones
I feel ok about the current situation. The pandemic decimated my spouse's 20-year freelance career but we now have other revenue streams that pretty much take care of us	Doesn't. I make the same decisions now as I did before
Currently it feels like our economy is doing better than it was a few months ago, however, this has caused our current pay to not be enough to afford things. Basic necessities such as groceries, mortgage, etc.	Due to the cost of goods going up, I choose what fits into my budget as opposed to what is environmentally friendly
They closed down so many businesses especially ma and pa stores. You cut down the small man then you destroy the economy. The world screwed up on this big time and no ramifications of actions to those responsible	If I can afford a better option I will use that. Though making homemade is more economically stable
I feel that the economic situation is more a byproduct of corporate greed than anything else. I've been fortunate enough to not suffer the worst of inflation, but I haven't been able to save as much as I'd like, and money always seems to fly out of my hands more quickly than ever	I try to buy environmentally products when I can, but if corporations keep trying to squeeze more money out of the working class, I might have to go back to buying less environmentally friendly products
Inflation is making it harder for many people to make it. My daughter is having a hard time starting her "adult" life. However, my personal finances have not been impacted too much	I'd assume that if my income takes a hit, I may look for less expensive alternatives

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Table 8.1 (continued)

Perceptions towards current economic situation	Thoughts about how green consumption is impacted
Covid brought about huge inflation and this inflation does not seem to be going back down. So in the long run it will have huge effects on peoples lives. My salary did not decrease and I worked through the entire pandemic but the inflation is what has increased the cost to live	The price of things impacts my ability to buy them. So if the environmentally friendly products are much more expensive than it is harder for me to buy them
The current economic situation is bleak. Too much inflation. Getting harder and harder to pay expenses	If green or environmentally friendly are move expensive then they won't be purchased by me
All part of a plan for the elites to take over the world	Could make them more expensive to eat clean
I think the outbreak affected the economy most, at least in my perception by the cost of living increasing faster than usual. The prices I see in stores and restaurants has steadily increased at a greater rate than normal	I think the purchase of green products has always been more expensive than normal products. The increase in overall cost of products, in general, will further put these green products at a higher price point and make them harder to maintain
I can definitely feel the inflation. My wages have not increased enough to cover the rising costs of food, fuel, etc.	It definitely makes me want to save money ... and since green/enviro-friendly products are typically more expensive, I could find myself looking for less expensive alternatives
The current economic situation is the worst I have experienced as an adult. I have been laid off and even interviewed to so many jobs with no job offer	Consumption of green or environmentally friendly products are super expensive and makes it hard for me to purchase it
We were excited because my husband received a substantial raise right after the pandemic. Unfortunately, because of inflation, we are basically in the same place financially we were before. We've had to increase our budget for all of our bills and necessities and cut back on unnecessary spending	Usually, more environmentally friendly products are also more expensive. In these times of inflation, we need to purchase the cheaper traditional products to stay within budget
The current economic situation has high inflation that brings stress and causes me to second guess my spending. My needs cost more, so I have less money to spend on wants. This has made my economic status more vulnerable	I would buy less environmentally friendly products because they usually cost more. I am trying to save money, so I don't want to buy the more expensive products
Economically the whole world is fairly messed up from the pandemic. My finances have been changed a decent amount. From higher interest and larger monthly payments	I may decrease my use of them as 'green' products typically cost more then traditional

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Table 8.1 (continued)

Perceptions towards current economic situation	Thoughts about how green consumption is impacted
I think the economy is falling due to greed of corporations after the pandemic. I personally have lost my job and am struggling to get a new one	Green products usually cost more; can't be green if I can't afford it
The current economy is on the mend after high inflation has set in a year ago. Inflation has made it challenging to save for retirement since everything has become expensive without corresponding increases of wages	I will continue to support the environment even under high inflation. I will adjust by buying fewer things and stretching the use of my purchases
The pandemic has caused a lot. It has increase unemployment in the country, it has brought about the rise in prices of goods and has affected the growth of the economy	The cost of products has gone up so basically I have to limit my spending
The current economic situation is unsustainable. Because of inflation paying day to day bills has become almost impossible	I will buy what is cheaper, not what is better
I feel like the economy is starting to fully recover and that is why we are seeing inflation. People are out spending money	I feel that it wouldn't really affect my consumption of green products
It has gotten better since the peak of the pandemic but there are still some labor shortages which lead to product shortages in some places. It has not really negatively impacted my economic status	These environmentally friendly products could be more expensive but they are still worth buying because they help the planet
The current economic situation disgusts and worries me. I am a single woman who literally has to work three jobs and still don't have money for food sometimes	I try to be conscious of it but if it's too expensive I literally just can't
The poor economic situation has happened ... While I have not personally lost out economically, my life was thrown into an uproar. It will take me years to recover	I based a lot of my purchases of environmentally friendly products on information from scientific studies...
My income was not badly affected, but the prices at the grocery store certainly have affected me, as well as the price of gas and just about everything else. Because most places had to shut down, some went out of business. Some re opened but have to raise their prices. Help is impossible to come by	They will be in shorter supply and more expensive
I feel that my current economic situation would be better if there had not been such a great decline in the economy in 2021. Specifically, my savings was reduced by approximately \$30,000.00 during this decline	Green products may be more expensive but less effective. I do not want and cannot afford to buy less effective products that are more expensive

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Table 8.1 (continued)

Perceptions towards current economic situation	Thoughts about how green consumption is impacted
I feel like it is trying to normalize into our new “norm” and businesses are trying to rebuild	It would make me more mindful of what I am supporting and purchasing
Things are a bit challenging for many today. Prices went up during the pandemic and don’t show any signs of decreasing. It was greatly impacted my weekly grocery shopping	It has to fit my budget. I’m willing to cut corners in other areas to make sure I purchase green products but in cases where it can’t be avoided, my bank account funds take priority
The current economic situation is dire. With grocery prices and gas prices continuously going up, people are struggling just to survive day to day. It has negatively impacted my economic status because jobs were lost due to Covid and trying to find a new job has become quite difficult	I’m afraid that I won’t be able to afford more environmentally friendly products in the future due to income restraints
I feel worried about the current situation. Inflation is going up, we are in a recession, the job market is going down. Personally, inflation has affected my finances, and also COVID directly caused me to have to take one more semester of college, which cost me thousands	I am less willing to spend extra money on these types of products
The current economic situation is stressful because prices for everything are so high	No extra money to make a lot of choices, often go with cheaper products
The stock market has really gone down and affected my investments	It really will not affect my buying of these products
My economic situation is very bad, I am having a hard time with the situation. I feel like I will never get my head above water again	It can affect it due to some products cost more
The current economic situation is more a result of the handling of COVID than the disease itself. Over all, the current economic situation is within the range of normal over time. There has been no negative impact on our family’s economic status, We have always lived within our means, whatever they are, we have saved and invested wisely and are very adaptable. COVID had NO IMPACT on our lives	Green products often cost more, and since I have no idea what other “environmental” costs are at play far previous to the “green” end product, I do not buy for “green” reasons. I have always been low on consumption, low on impact (i.e. I want to take up as little space (waste) as possible) and I prefer the adage: Use it up, Wear it out. Make do, Do without
Covid made everything worse. Health, job situations. I had to quit a job because of the lax Covid precautions. Currently, things are okay, but people have changed for the worse	Less expendable income overall
I had a blast during lockdown. Started buying silver and more crypto. Decentralized finances do not care about the fiat printer turning on and devaluing money via inflation	The economic situation has no impact on my environmental beliefs

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Table 8.1 (continued)

Perceptions towards current economic situation	Thoughts about how green consumption is impacted
During the pandemic my financial situation changed but didn't impact me. I did have to move in with my son who is a single father to help with his kid. Now, my finances are greatly hindered because I have downsized my work situation and struggle to help my son with his financial situation that was greatly diminished because of covid	I have to be concerned with my spending. If environmentally products are more expensive, it may cause me to buy the less expensive but not eco-friendly products
After the covid pandemic my economic condition was affected	After the pandemic I through out from my company. So my economic condition was bad
My feelings about the current economic situation are very, very negative. ... The negative impact all of this has had on me caused me to lose work in the independent contractor field, thus severely reducing my income, since I've worked from home for many years. As of now, I cannot afford even dental help that I desperately need due to inflation, higher bills, and higher taxes	Typically, green or environmentally friendly products are much more expensive than typically made ones. This is due to environmentally friendly products being much more expensive to produce, thus having an impact on their consumption due to economical statuses
Not making enough money to deal with inflation and prices constantly increasing but wages not increasing	It won't because they are to expensive to buy right now
The cost of groceries have gone up, making it harder to buy things	The cost will prevent me buying the environmentally friendly product. They are already more expensive than the alternatives
PRICES HAVE INCREASED CAUSING IT HARD FOR THOSE ON SOCIAL SECURITY TO SURVIVE	I WOULD BUY WHAT IS CHEAPEST
I feel very negatively about the current economic situation. Although income hasn't decreased for us, there has been a raise in prices of goods and housing which has strongly impacted my family as well as many others	It is hard to afford green products when it is hard enough to afford regular ones
I feel that inflation is wildly out of control and the poor are facing dire times	Price will need to be the overriding factor in purchases more and more
It is harder to find a job	I want to help the planet
The economic situation now is not so good. A lot of businesses closed down ... The ones that have remained opened are either struggling or trying to get by somehow by raising their prices and passing the burden down to the customer. It is hard as inflation is affecting the people	Green products are more expensive than conventional one and since inflation is at an all time high it affects how much I buy green products

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Table 8.1 (continued)

Perceptions towards current economic situation	Thoughts about how green consumption is impacted
The economic situation made it difficult to live life normally, so I would have to make alternatives to enjoy life the way it has to be adapted from the negative affects. What negatively impacted my economic status is the not only the income reduced, but the struggle to pay for gas and groceries	Considering how more pricey green or environmentally friendly products are, I would be forced to break down on products that are the antithesis of anything green or environmentally friendly due to income reduction
MENTAL STABILITY	The current economic situation can indeed have an impact on the consumption of green or environmentally friendly products. Here are a few ways in which the economic situation can influence consumer behavior in this regard: Cost Considerations: Green or environmentally friendly products are often priced higher than their conventional counterparts due to factors like sustainable sourcing, production processes, and certifications. In a challenging economic climate, consumers may be more price-conscious and prioritize cost savings over environmentally friendly options. This can lead to a decrease in the demand for green products. Disposable Income: Economic downturns can lead to reduced disposable income for many individuals and families. When faced with financial constraints, people may opt for cheaper alternatives, even if they are less environmentally friendly. The affordability factor may overshadow the desire to make sustainable choices. Awareness and Education: The level of awareness and education about environmental issues can also be influenced by the economic situation. During periods of economic instability, people may be more focused on immediate financial concerns rather than long-term sustainability. As a result, the demand for green products may decrease if consumers do not fully understand the long-term benefits of these choices. Corporate Sustainability Efforts: Companies may adjust their priorities during economic downturns, potentially impacting the availability and promotion of green products. If businesses are struggling financially, they may reduce investments in sustainability initiatives, leading to a limited range of environmentally friendly options in the market

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Table 8.1 (continued)

Perceptions towards current economic situation	Thoughts about how green consumption is impacted
	However, it's important to note that consumer preferences and behaviors are multifaceted and can vary greatly depending on individual values, priorities, and circumstances. Some consumers may continue to prioritize environmentally friendly products regardless of the economic situation
The economy is struggling, and the people are paying the price. The price of groceries is ridiculous and the fact that the stores can't keep stocked is sad. The amount of factories that are closing permanently is heartbreaking and everyone has less money	If the economy stays the same or gets worse, I will be spending less on environmentally friendly products because they usually cost more
I feel the current economic situation is terrible. It's hard out there right now for everyone due to economic uncertainty, high interest rates, inflation, and rising cost of living. My economic status is that raises have been frozen, so we are at the current wage we had last year. It's hard to survive because inflation has raised the price of so many goods, especially groceries	I may not purchase green or environmentally friendly products if the price is too high compared to conventional products. If the products are within about \$2–3, I would buy the green product. However, if the products are \$5 or more, I am going to purchase the conventional product
My current economic situation has significantly improved since the onset of the pandemic. I have been promoted and given raises that have allowed my income to keep up with the rate of inflation	In some situations, the cost of the environmental product is too high—or its too hard to obtain. In that situation, i find myself opting for the next best option
The COVID-19 pandemic greatly affected the country's economy, causing many businesses to close and many to be out of a job. It actually didn't affect my work negatively, as I'm a freelance writer and my work was always from home. I had the same amount, or more, work during the pandemic as I usually have. Now, however, my work has dried up and my economic status has declined greatly. I am concerned about my economic future	My economic situation is declining, which means that it will be more difficult for me to afford green or environmentally friendly products. I will likely choose the cheaper generic brands over the green brands to save money
One can elaborate the economic conditions based on the unemployment rate, growth rate of GDP, extent of current account, surplus or deficit in budget, rate of inflation, etc. In general terms, one can divide economic indicators in three categories: leading, coincident, or lagging	The environmental impact of economic growth includes the increased consumption of non-renewable resources, higher levels of pollution, global warming and the potential loss of environmental habitats. However, not all forms of economic growth cause damage to the environment

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Table 8.1 (continued)

Perceptions towards current economic situation	Thoughts about how green consumption is impacted
I feel distressed and concerned about the current economic situation. Not only did the pandemic impact my employment which caused my income to drop, but now with this inflation of the prices of virtually everything, it is so expensive just to get by and live day to day. It is incredibly stressful	Because I feel so financially constrained, I would tend to place price as the most important factor and be less inclined to buy a more expensive item even if it does impact less negatively on the environment
I feel like my income has not gone up much and I see the effects more now of inflation and cost of living going up	It makes me not want to spend extra for green or environmentally friendly products
I work in marketing, which is one of the first cuts that a company makes in economic downturns. I've had a lot less work. With all of the tech layoffs, the competition has gotten even crazier, and getting a call back after applying to new jobs feels like a needle in a haystack	Fortunately, I don't have kids. We're a married couple so our consumption rate isn't that crazy to begin with. It won't make or break our budget to continue to splurge on costlier but more environmentally friendly products. At most, we're only buying things like detergent or cleaning products once every few months
I was laid off for 14 months during the Covid-19 pandemic. The government money really helped to during this time. My husband was not laid off and continued to work throughout the pandemic. Therefore, our financial situation did not take much of a hit	I am not struggling financially due to COVID-19. I will continue to buy green and environmentally-friendly products as I see fit
The pandemic had an impact on my economic status by cutting my hours back and not making as much money as I had	I find that more environmentally friendly products cost more so I tend to buy whatever is cheapest
I believe the current administration is striving, successfully, to pull us out of the economic situation that Covid created. I have not, personally, experienced any reduction in income, but the increase in prices, on everything, made my household reduce spending on non-essential items	Green products, like organic food choices, are too expensive for the average household to afford. I would love to purchase all organic, all green, but I can't afford it
It does feel like the economic situation has gotten increasingly worse since the pandemic—as if it has gotten tighter. In my own life, a website I've worked with cut out additional revenue opportunities for its creators because of lower income to maintain the website itself. Eventually there were new opportunities for the creators, but there was nothing for a long while	This depends on the cost of these products. I would always favor an environmentally friendly product, but it would be harder to purchase if it's more expensive than an alternative. The decision is made more difficult because of the economic situation
I luckily did not have any income reduction during covid pandemic	If I were to have a reduction in income i would consider buying products that were more affordable

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Table 8.1 (continued)

Perceptions towards current economic situation	Thoughts about how green consumption is impacted
I believe the Covid-19 outbreak didn't affect my income directly but my familys because my mom was given less work compared to pre-pandemic	I feel like buying more economically friendly items would help me save more money
I think inflation is still impacting all of us. My company has done multiple rounds of layoffs even this year. I have kept my job, for now	In some cases, environmentally friendly products are pricier than the alternative. Over time, those price increases add up
I think because of all the money we handed out during the pandemic we are now in a recession due to inflation. Everything is now more expensive	I am already paying more for nomral products ... probably not going to go out of my way to buy more expensive stuff
The pandemic cause an inflation when it came to grocey items and just everyday products that people need. Cases of water for going for \$10 and simple items like bread and soups were increasing by the day. One thing that went lower however were gas prices. Some going as low as \$1.75 per gallon	With the state of the economy, it is important to provide for yourself and your family by going green and conserving as much energy as we can
It has gotten harder to buy "luxury" items and I mainly focus on buying groceries and needed things	The environmental option is usually more expensive. It feels like the companies are pushing the cost to the customer so the whole eco thing does nothing for me personally
I feel like the current economic situation has gotten bad and our dollars don't stretch as far as they did before	I won't buy as many green products because they are more expensive
It did not have any negative impact on my economic status	Because my income hasn't changed I won't start buying green products
I feel the current economic situation has gotten better since Covid-19 has slowed down. There really wasn't a negative impact on my economic status personally	Green or environmentally friendly products are usually more expensive, therefore they are hard for me to afford
It was very scary to me cause I'm a heart patient. We just started our business when Covid-19 started. We done pretty good with it through all this. But then we could not delivery our tires to customer. Thats when it started being hard to make money cause of the stay at home order from higher authority	I really don't buy environmentally friendly products. Most of the time I buy what is cheaper

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Table 8.1 (continued)

Perceptions towards current economic situation	Thoughts about how green consumption is impacted
The current economy is on the edge of recession. The cost of everything is rising, groceries, homes, interest rates, rent, gas, etc. and people are not being paid adequately to meet these new prices. It has negatively impacted me because now more of my budget goes to gas and groceries instead of savings, debt repayment, and home improvements. Also, when student loans come back, I'm sure we'll see some awful repercussions of that because people haven't had to pay them for 3 years, and now they have to build several hundreds of dollars a month back into their budget on top of increase every day expenses, myself included	If they are exponentially more expensive than the name brand, then I will just get the cheaper of the two, even though I want to get the environmentally better one
Everything is more expensive, I have huge debt after my hours being cut. I have to work to jobs to barely get by	I have to buy whatever is the cheapest
The whole Covid pandemic really changed the working landscape. Things are different than before, with companies assuming people will take awful jobs for little pay with no benefits. I see this all around me and people then have to go on social assistance programs to take up the slack in the name of company profits. I work in a "right to work" state	Now that I have less funds to spend I make sure the impact I make is a positive one. I would rather spend a bit more to have less plastic waste. I also always use recyclable shopping bags
My income has not been reduced, but prices have gone up so much that it might as well have been. Also, my mother has investments that have dropped in value, and she was going to leave them to me in her will. So overall I have been affected, but I'm not sure how it could have been avoided. Supply chain issues have made the cost of goods go up, but also I believe many companies have taken advantage of the pandemic in order to make more profit. The pandemic has been a terrible event that should have brought people together to fight the virus, but it has been divisive	I would have to do more research to determine which of my current products could be replaced. It depends on how much more expensive they are than the ones I use now as well. I just need to look into it more, but I am willing to do so. It might be a short-term hardship to buy green products, but the gains should be long term
I think that Covid impacted many people terrible when it comes to economic. For me personally I was not impacted too badly but i did try to limit my expenses to save more money	I don't think i will switch to a green brand since they typically are more expensive
I feel we are about to go into a recession. I see a big impact on my income and money	I might not be able to buy the environmentally friendly products due to the cost

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Table 8.1 (continued)

Perceptions towards current economic situation	Thoughts about how green consumption is impacted
Inflation is too high and its making it hard to justify spending money on certain groceries that you used to buy before pandemic	Green and environmental products are more expensive. With inflation high i will choose the cheapest option avail even if it is not environmentally friendly
The current economic situation is unattainable. Inflation is out of control, housing is too expensive, salaries are stagnant and Republicans are more interesting in hurting people than effective governance	My purchase of green products has mostly to do with the perceived value overall of the item in question. If it does not seem like a good value, then I pass on it. Certain products, however, are so harmful, that I will not purchase them no matter what (Roundup, disposable K-cups)
My current economic situation is good. Covid did not have a financial impact on me personally as I was able to continue to work remotely during the height of the pandemic. We do have some difficulty completing home projects planned before the pandemic as resources (physical and human) are more expensive/scarce	Green products are often more expensive or exclusive
It is bad. Prices are so high. I can't get everything I use to	Can't afford them
The current economic situation has nothing to do with covid as much as it has to do with failed, horrid presidential decisions of Joe Biden. Joe Biden was handed an economy that was doing extremely well and destroyed it. It has cost everyone dearly including me	I prefer to go the route of using solar for my environmentally friendly help
Life is hard right now. My husband lost hours due to overtime being stopped until further notice. Also supply chain issues are happening so there is not a lot of food at the stores and the stores that are opened, the prices for food are insanely high	Green products are more expensive thus I will choose the cheaper option
The COVID-19 pandemic hit my family fairly hard due to the price increases on products and the unavailability of certain items. The biggest blow came from the volatility of the stock market and the large amount of money we lost and are still trying to recoup at this time	The purchasing of green products has some bearing on my economic situation because green products are usually more expensive and the government needs to do something about this if they want us to contribute. This is just another sacrifice that we have to make
Supplies moved much more slowly when Covid-19 hit us. Inflation reportedly went higher because of the effects of Covid. Inflation is still effecting my situation. I have seen prices on food going up over time, making me uptight about paying more than i was used to. I also believe many companies took advantage of this economy and raised their prices to make a bigger profit. This circumstance makes me angry and concerned	Both the environment and my budget will effect my purchasing choices. I will have to make individual decisions on when to favor one vs the other, when there is a conflict. It would be wonderful if the Government can find a way to get inflation under better control. I don't know how difficult that would be

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Table 8.1 (continued)

Perceptions towards current economic situation	Thoughts about how green consumption is impacted
I am retired and my income has remained relatively the same. The prices of things, on the other hand has gone up drastically. I think inflation will remain a serious problem for the near future. This has resulted in me being more careful where I spend my money	I do not think it will change my purchase habits of environmentally friendly products. They are not that much more expensive. I often look at the packaging and see if it is recyclable or made in a good way. I don't purchase cleaning products that often so it does not effect that purchase at all
Inflation is higher. I have to be in debt to survive and no more government assistance	I hardly buy any green products. Too expensive
Everything is a lot more expensive. Biden has ruined our economy and the USA	Everything is too expensive
I had to use my savings to make ends meet	I wouldn't be able to afford green products or i would not have the time to recycle properly
Prices for goods like food are extremely high. It's even more expensive to be poor these days	I will consume less due to prices being too high
The current economic situation is still recovering from Covid. Many businesses shut down or had their profits severely reduced. Although I wasn't laid off from my position during the height of the pandemic, I was laid off as businesses started to reopen. This caused a brief problem with income, but the economy improved and I secured a new position	As my income was reduced for a short period of time, we cut back on the products that we bought. We switched to cheaper, conventional brands for things to save money
I mean, it wasn't great. What else is there really to say about it? I didn't lose my job though and for the most part, my economic situation remained fairly stable throughout the outbreak and aftermath. Obviously essentials getting more expensive required reworking parts of my budget but seeing as I was saving by completely wiping out certain elements (going out to eat, entertainment), it was completely manageable	I suppose in a vacuum, it could cause me to be less stringent about purchasing them if they're the more expensive option. In reality, I just rework my budget to include them because they're important to me. I can always cut out unnecessary spending in other domains to accommodate higher prices in another. It's all about being on top of your budget
I feel like prices have become very inflated and the salaries of most workers have not kept up with the inflation	Eco products are usually more expensive but it depends on the brand
I've experienced a loss of income. I am self-employed and do design, and it seemed like a lot more people started doing the same and it ate into my client base. Also the cost of pretty much everything went up, so combined with loss of income it was very hard to pay for things. I had to reduce in every aspect of my life	Sometimes eco friendly products cost more, so if it comes down to it I have to skip out on buying them because I can't afford them. But if its only a little bit more I'll buy them

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Table 8.1 (continued)

Perceptions towards current economic situation	Thoughts about how green consumption is impacted
In itself, that whole year of the pandemic as such, was where I learned to pay money and know how to save. Given that way of learning, it was something that helped me mature in my expenses	In a positive way, as long as the whole global disaster improves
I feel frustrated by the current economic situation. I also feel a little worried. The negative impact is I am having a hard time buying all the groceries that I am used to buying so I can see myself beginning to eat less healthy due to cost	I think that it will cause me to buy less of them. They are usually more expensive and right now I have to really watch the budget
I live on a fixed income. Since the pandemic, my power bill has gone up 100.00, my cable has gone up about 50.00. Food has gone up so much that grocery shopping is tough. Buying decent, healthy food is really expensive when an apple is 1.00. When we buy meat at all, it is chicken and it is expensive so we have to plan for it to last beyond 1 meal. Eating out is really expensive and it was a luxury before this. So, I have to be really careful with spending anything at all	It is the money. Being on a fixed income is tough at the best of times. The products that are eco friendly are usually more expensive. If I find something on sale or at the dollar store, I will get it. I have to really look at prices
My income was decimated and I am still struggling on the edge of homelessness. I feel abandoned and concerned about the future	It will probably prevent me from buying green products as they tend to cost more and work less
My husband and I retired early because of the pandemic. We are now on a fixed income. Inflation has taken a bite out of our savings	I make a real effort to use environmentally friendly products. However, I cannot afford to pay substantially more for environmentally friendly products. If the price is close to the same, I will always pick the environmentally friendly products
I feel the economic situation is improving since the end of the pandemic. Restaurants are coming back, public events are being held, jobs are being resumed	I do not think it will affect my consumption of green or environmentally friendly products
I feel uneasy because the price of things has increased tremendously like gas and food. I was a fulltime student, so I didn't have the opportunity to make a lot of money while being in school. The economy and my situation made it difficult to get the things that I need. I had to rely on a lot of people during the pandemic	I would likely purchase more environmentally friendly products with the intention of reducing waste and making things last longer
Individual economic loss, economic hardship, or economic threat was significantly associated with mental health	Increased consumption of non renewable resources higher levels of pollution, global warming and the potential loss of environmental habitats

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Table 8.1 (continued)

Perceptions towards current economic situation	Thoughts about how green consumption is impacted
I feel indifferent about it. I am unaffected by it in a negative way. My economic status has not been negatively impacted and will never be. Sorry	It will not and has not impacted my consumption of green or environmentally friendly products at all
The current economic situation is very bad, partially due to COVID-19 and partially due to the bad decisions of politicians. For myself personally as a freelancer, my income and opportunities are down and there is no sign that things will get better soon. In short, I struggle to survive	If green products are more expensive it is difficult for me to afford them
The current economic situation looks rather bleak. The price of items and services are higher than ever. It has caused my family to use credit cards more often than we usually do just to get by. Unfortunately, salaries are not increasing at the same rate as costs	At this time I am more focused on buying products that benefit me financially. If a green product has a more favorable cost than something else, I will consider purchasing it. This also works in reverse
The economy is garbage. I have not been able to get a job in my field	If the environmentally friendly products cost less, I would buy them
I feel that there is a direct relationship to the state of the economy today and the lingering effects of covid 19. We are impacted by a loss of industry and businesses, incomes for families and government spending. I feel that although we are through the pandemic part, we still have a ways to go before we are able to rebound from the issues caused by covid	There is no relationship. Usually these products are more expensive by nature. i try to buy what is sustainable and within my budget
The current economic situation feels impossible to escape from at times. During 2020, I was paying rent and able to get by through my partner's unemployment money since his job was directly affected by the 2020 quarantine. However, since then, we have been struggling to earn enough to live on our own. We actually had to move back in with my family to save money so we can one day move out on our own again. We're not sure when this will actually happen since rent has skyrocketed in our area and the pay has not increased in line with rent	I may not be able to buy more environmentally friendly product because of cost. Ultimately, I often pay attention to the cost the most when I'm shopping because I don't have a lot of money to spare
Truly and honestly the pandemic has really had no influence on my economic situation. Really, I'm making more money now than I was before the pandemic. The inflation over the last 2 years sucks, but otherwise I really haven't felt an impact	Well like I said, it really hasn't impacted me at all, so I don't really think it's going to change my consumption of "green" products

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Table 8.1 (continued)

Perceptions towards current economic situation	Thoughts about how green consumption is impacted
The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a global economic downturn. I have personally been affected by the economic downturn, losing my job and having to cut back on my spending. I am worried about how I will make ends meet in the long term	I may be less likely to buy green products if they are more expensive than traditional products. I may be less willing to make changes to my lifestyle in order to reduce my environmental impact. I may be more likely to focus on saving money in the short term, even if it means making choices that are not environmentally friendly. The reason for this is that I am worried about how I will make ends meet in the long term. I am also concerned about the uncertainty of the future. As a result, I may be less willing to spend money on green products, even if I believe that they are important
I think the current economic status is not good. I however have not seen much of a change in my economic status as I have kept my same job and job hours	Since I am a bit weary about my economic stand point, I am less likely to buy more green products as they are often more expensive
I do feel more isolated and the increase in prices around us makes everybody more stressed. I work at a hospital, and I was constantly sick, exhausted. The economy is not improving even though supposed job growth/increase is reported monthly	Be honest, to purchase green or environmentally friendly products in the current economic situation is not easy, because those products are more expensive
The COVID-19 pandemic has indeed had a significant negative impact on the global economy. Lockdown measures, travel restrictions, and social distancing protocols implemented to control the spread of the virus disrupted businesses and industries across the world. The economy suffered but has rebounded	I would be less likeley to go green if it was more expensive
I think we are entering a recession as prices keep rising and rent keeps rising. This results in less of my income available to me, and I am cutting out all unneeded services	In the current economy I am more likely to buy the cheapest option rather than the green option as they are usually marked up
The situation is worse these days. High cost of living, shortage of food supply and no regulation of money	Reduction in income means less spending on environmentally friendly products
I feel like the US still hasn't fully recovered from COVID. Our household has suffered as we only have one person working and the loss of income during the pandemic snowballed our finances and we barely make it between paychecks	If green products continue to cost significantly more, I have to make the choice based on my financial situation. Cheaper will always be the go to choice

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Table 8.1 (continued)

Perceptions towards current economic situation	Thoughts about how green consumption is impacted
The current economic situation seems pretty good. There are Now Hiring signs everywhere. For me, it's too late, though. I had retired and was a substitute teacher when Covid hit and the schools all closed and went virtual so there was no need for subs. Schools were closed for two years and I never went back to subbing. Now I'm just living on my small pension	I tend to buy economically friendly products unless the cost is too great. Living on a small pension, I do have to watch my money, but the environment is a serious problem and everyone should do all they can to help
After the pandemic there seems to be less service people i.e. waiters, people staffing grocery stores, etc. There was no negative impact on my income but prices have gone up and impacts how much I can purchase with my income	Green or environmentally friendly products do cost more. I would prefer to purchase them but I would have to balance the costs with my income. I can cut some costs so that I could purchase green products which I would prefer to use
I feel that the current economic situation has a lot do with the lingering economic impacts of the pandemic. Layoffs, inflation, and office workspaces are all, in my opinion, direct effects of what was exposed in the pandemic. Me personally, the biggest impact has been inflation. Grocery and gas prices continue to remain high, and with the threat of a recession continuously looming, I am always worried about my job security. To this day I still have friends and peers losing their jobs	Because consumer goods are already at higher than normal prices, I may not be able to viably purchase green products if they are outside of my budget range
People left their job to feel safe at home. This took it's toll on our economy people have not been able to get back to work and so business suffers and the economy cannot improve	If these products cost more we cannot afford them because of inflation
All of the prices of everything going up due to "supply chain" issues has affected my spending power greatly. Funny how the prices didn't really go back down afterwards	The downside to environmentally-friendly products is that they typically cost significantly more. If companies really want people to switch, the prices need to be more comparable
The current economic situation is bad, I feel like I'm drowning to just to pay bills and can't do anything else. Inflation is through the roof, and gas prices are also so it's hard to even leave the house	I never really bought green things before my current economic situation, I usually right now just goes with what's cheaper and does the job. Green products are usually higher in price from what I've seen
Covid had a huge impact on the economy and the health of millions of people. People were required to work from home, and some people lost jobs and businesses	People should invest in environmentally friendly products to support a more clean, healthy environment for all, including humans and animals

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Table 8.1 (continued)

Perceptions towards current economic situation	Thoughts about how green consumption is impacted
My economic situation is bad. Inflation has caused my grocery bill to go up so high it is hard to afford to feed all of my kids and I have to spend so much more time trying to make extra money	I can not afford to spend more on products that are environmentally friendly. Right now I am focused on making ends meet and I have 7 kids so eco friendly products unfortunately have to get looked over for cheaper but still functional products
While our economy has recovered slightly since the pandemic, we still have a long way to go. The pandemic hasn't really effected me personally when it comes to income, I know many people who have been negatively impacted	I do not see how buying environmentally friendly products will help my economic situation. In fact, considering how much more expensive these green products are, it is not something I am considering
I feel really worries about a recession and how we will recover from this. I'm going to have to cut back dramatically on spending and focus on saving any money I can in the event I fall into economic hardship for some reason during this time	These products are more expensive unfortunately, so in order to not go broke, I may have to resort to less green products periodically, or at least scour for coupons
The current economic crises has really impacted me. I feel that income does not withstand a chance against the inflation and the increasing price changes on things such as food and gas. I often have to choose between necessities because I can't afford to purchase all of what I need at once	The current economic crisis gets in the way of me purchasing more 'greener' products. These products are often even more expensive and sophisticated so I don't bother buying them
The current economic situation is not good mostly because the prices of gas and groceries has gone up so much that it has negated any increase in our income over the last few years	Green products are often more expensive and when people are already struggling financially they will often choose what is cheapest to buy, not what is most environmentally friendly
The current economic situation has fallen and continues to get worse and worse as more people are falling into the debt and I am facing increased prices of food which makes it harder to eat	My current economic situation would lead to me buying cheaper products versus green products because I just do not have the money for it
The current economic situation is very poor given very high inflation. Living on a fixed income is very hard as everything keeps costing more. If it continues I will have to go back to work, and at my age that is not easy	I may have to switch to less expensive products in spite of environmental concerns
I feel that corporations are still using Covid as an excuse to gouge those already hurting. How come prairie farms milk is almost 7 yet generic milk is 2.50. I feel the situation isn't getting better because the rich are taking advantage of it	Green stuff is always more expensive. I try to still buy but wait for a sale

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Table 8.1 (continued)

Perceptions towards current economic situation	Thoughts about how green consumption is impacted
I witnessed the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic. This contagious disease not only caused millions to die, but also negatively affected the economic situation	Not at all
I believe that there should be consequences for the release of the virus. The economic situation was/is devastating and will continue to be. It has affected my and many others economic status	Inflation
Many businesses were forced to shut down or scale back their operations during lockdowns, leading to widespread job losses and reduced income for individuals and households. Sectors such as tourism, hospitality, retail, and entertainment were particularly affected. This has resulted in increased unemployment rates and decreased purchasing power for many people	Positively affect my consumption of green or environmentally friendly products
I spend a lot more money on groceries and household items now that inflation is so high. I am building a house and interest rates are really high	My main focus is saving money right now because I am making all that I can. I have to save in areas that are practical and at this time I can not afford to spend extra money on eco friendly products
I think that inflation is very negatively affecting the US economy right now. Because of this, the money I earn doesn't go as far	Because of increased inflation, I have less money to spend on green products
I feel like the economic situation has gotten a lot worse from the pandemic. Grocery prices have gone up a lot and and its very expensive to live on a minimum wage job these days	I won't be able to afford the environmentally friendly products since they usually cost more than other products
Covid 19 pushed the cost of household goods, housing and energy costs to soar. They eat up a good chunk of my family's money. The dollar does not buy what it used to buy	I will not purchase them because they are more expensive than the traditional brands. I need to get the most for my money
I felt bad since there was reduced income, unstable income, people were scared, people were dying	Since I am in better economic situation I have more buying power to buy more green or environmentally friendly products
The current economic situation is horrible. I am thousands of dollars in debt, inflation is making it to where I cannot afford basic needs, I am unable to find a good paying job	Green products are always more expensive, and with inflation I cannot afford to buy them anymore
I have been feeling the sting of inflation. They laid off my entire department and I had to get a new job. This job pays less, but I am saving on gas. Prices just keep going and up and up for everything	I am not trying to harm the environment, and would rather purchase green or environmentally friendly products, but if it comes down to cost, I will choose the cheaper option

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Table 8.1 (continued)

Perceptions towards current economic situation	Thoughts about how green consumption is impacted
I was lucky enough to keep my job during the lockdown but since I was and am in sales I did see a reduction in overall compensation. I was spending less as I was staying inside and not doing anything. Luckily that has bounced back to normal levels at this time	I tend to buy products that are not harmful to the environment, whether that is how they are made or their packaging
The current economy is terrible. Inflation has caused a big increase in COL causing me to have less expendable income	I may give more leeway in buying traditional products over green products due to cost
The economy has not recovered yet. Many people don't want to go back to work. Food and other items are hard to get in the country. People have lost wages and trying to find jobs	Pollution and people throwing stuff away and just buying new. I grow what I eat and reuse everything I can. I try to do my best in this part
The current economic situation has caused prices of everyday items to increase. Because of this, I am spending more money on necessities and I have less money for saving/leisure. While I have not experienced an income reduction, I overall have less extra money than I used to	Green or environmentally friendly products tend to cost more. Since prices in general are increasing, these products cost more than ever before. I may not be able to afford to purchase or use these products as often as I'd like
The economy is definitely skewed right now to favor businesses and corporations over normal people. There is inflation that is truly artificial on part of the businesses due to their greed. I am making more money than I was prior to the pandemic, but this is only because I graduated college and graduate school and began my full-time career during this period. My cost of living has increased while working this career though due to inflation and rental increases	If my normal cost of living continues going up it will be more difficult to be able to spend on environmentally-friendly products, or I will have to make sacrifices in other areas to be able to justify the additional cost of these products
The Pandemic forced me to work from home and has put me on a stricter budget due to high rising cost of groceries and other resources	The rising costs it takes to purchase them
I feel that a lot of the economic problems are a result of government overreach and reactions to covid that were taken too far since it wasn't that bad. The cost of many items has increased which has hurt me some	It would have no affect for me personally
The current economic situation is not that good because of the inflation but I don't think it's worrying. There are a lot of employment opportunities currently and economy seems to be getting well on track. Personally I was not affected economically during the pandemic because i was working as a medic	I think I'm more likely to switch my spending habits and focus more on investing so that in economic disaster will strike i will something to keep me going as i figure out what's next. I'm also considering going green in almost every purchase i make

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Table 8.1 (continued)

Perceptions towards current economic situation	Thoughts about how green consumption is impacted
I feel negatively about the current economic situation. Out-of-control inflation is making it very difficult to budget effectively for necessities like groceries and gas. Making things even harder, I rely on income from sites like Prolific to help combat that inflation, but Prolific continually malfunctions and takes no responsibility, making them unreliable and making me unsure of whether I can afford to eat every week	The survey is clearly trying to prime me to think of money over the environment, but money doesn't matter after the world burns down, so whenever it is within my means, I will always buy the eco-friendly product, especially if I can rely on sites like Prolific functioning properly, which lately I cannot
I believe that there were supply constraints on the part of manufacturers and other consumer products. But I also believe that some chose to raise prices without increased supply side problems. It was a way to increase profit at consumer expense. I noticed the price of things rise and it has made me an even more careful shopper. Less impulsive buys, more sale buys	Green products are more expensive than their counterparts without increased efficiency. They need to be equivalent in price and efficacy for me to buy as I am on a fixed income
Not available	Own opinion of thoughts
Nothing negative for me. Continued to work remotely, less spending helped budget	My economic situation should not change my attitude toward using environmentally friendly products
I lost my old job due to the pandemic when it first hit and quarantine orders were in place. It extremely impacted me negatively and put a strain on my finances that I am still feeling to this day	I do not have the extra discretionary income to pay the premium price that ecological and green products are sold at
The economic situation is not great. The cost of everything has gone up. In regards to myself, my income has not been impacted but my buying power definitely has been impacted	It will not affect my consumption. I will make cuts in other areas. I believe that using environmentally friendly products is important
I feel the economy has stagnated and has laid off more workers. It has raised the cost of goods because of inflation. The price of the dollar has plummeted	The green product could be more expensive because of inflation. This could affect my buying behavior
The COVID pandemic caused a large economic impact, however the greater impact was to divide the country. The economy would have recovered, and it is in my opinion essentially recovered at this point in 2023. There was no negative impact on my economic status, although of course I refrained, not always by choice, from buying things, including groceries	If the economic situation deteriorates, I would thus have less discretionary income, and would be forced to make the choice between spending less and purchasing "regular" products, or spending more to continue to purchase environmentally friendly products. I would attempt to keep purchasing the environmentally friendly products, but reduce my consumption to offset the additional price. I actually do something like that now with Orange Juice. Natalie's OJ is the best, but much more than the regular brands, so I buy Natalie's and dilute it by about 3% or so with water, which it doesn't sound like much but 3% is about \$0.40/gallon at \$14/gallon

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Table 8.1 (continued)

Perceptions towards current economic situation	Thoughts about how green consumption is impacted
I think our current economic situation is extremely terrible as the majority of citizens are struggling to meet their financial needs yet prices are still inflating. I was affected by losing a job	Since these products are typically higher prices, it's harder to manage a light carbon footprint when you can't afford to
I think the situation in the economy is making a downward spiral and although my income has increased so have everyday things such as gas, groceries etc. making it harder to get by financially	I try to purchase things that are environmentally friendly only if they are cost efficient
The problem of the pandemic was really terrible, I really would not want that again, the family economy has been terrible, and without forgetting that it is something collective or we could say that it is a global effect, where millions of people were affected and that in these times they are still suffering a lot in the economic aspect caused by this pandemic	If we do not have the money we need to cover our expenses, this can have a negative impact on families who are unable to purchase basic household products
COVID hit everybody pretty hard. We were pretty secure for that year though and had been preparing for the unthinkable for a few years at that point. Our finances were mostly taken care of and we really didn't have to worry. It definitely meant that there was no more money than usual coming in and it made it hard for me to get odd jobs. Prolific became very important to me as a source of income	I might not buy the same green products that I usually do if I don't have the money for them. I have bought less environmentally friendly products in the past because they were cheaper, on sale or came in a buy one get one free pack. It's hard enough to make ends meet sometimes food-wise, so I would much rather skimp on quality when it comes to things like cleaners, detergents, etc. than food
I feel as though the economic situation of the United States has declined rapidly since COVID-19. Many people lost jobs or were not able to go into work anymore. My financial situation has not changed since COVID, but I was working at home all the time then	It will not affect my purchasing of products at all
The current economic situation is dire and dreadful. I believe that the cause is less COVID-19 and more ineptitude and bad bets of global leaders and financiers. The current situation has made everything in my life more expensive, especially food and medical costs (both in terms of raw cost and time). I also think that housing prices for renters have dramatically risen and it has made the prospect of moving or owning a home much worse as well	I try to balance my budget and buy what I want, while making cuts as needed. As such, I still try to buy environmentally safe products such as cleaners and detergent even if they cost more because it is important to my beliefs. To accommodate the current economic situation, I simply buy less of other things or substitute some less essential items for cheaper alternatives. Sometimes just doing without one thing in favor of something more expensive, worth it, higher quality, or simply morally superior is worth the added cost and balanced easily elsewhere

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Table 8.1 (continued)

Perceptions towards current economic situation	Thoughts about how green consumption is impacted
I know that prices of groceries have risen which has negatively impacted me each month. As one single person, I have been spending anywhere from \$50–80 each week on groceries and necessary household items which is ridiculous! My income has stayed the same but my monthly expenses have really increased	Sometimes green or environmentally friendly products are more expensive than regular ones. I try to buy eco-friendly products but sometimes I really can't afford it based on the rising prices of most items
The economy is a not well. We are in a recession. People have lost their jobs and prices just keep going up on normal staple items (eggs, milk, chicken, beef). In CA, the number of homeless people has dramatically increased	I don't believe the economic situation really affects consuming green friendly environmental products. If the prices were similar, I think most everyone would opt to buy the green item
The pandemic has changed my family's life for the worst. A certain family member got corona and hasn't been the same since. It made a very active man into a person that can't put a simple puzzle together anymore. There have been so many changes for the worst for our family	If I find two similar products, and the environmentally friendly one is a bit more expensive, then since I probably don't have the cash flow that I once had, I'd have to pick the more environmentally unfriendly one because it would be a bit cheaper
The economy is causing me economic hardship. My grocery bill has doubled as well as my utilities. My electric bill last year was in the \$200 s which I live in Florida so okay this year it is over \$400. Its getting harder and harder to survive	I can't afford to buy green products. I mean I can't afford to buy anything. When I buy things it is the cheapest and most generic item there is
As a member of the middle class, I was fortunate enough to work remotely during the worst parts of the pandemic, however, I'm now being pressed to work in a hybrid situation despite not needing to. This has put an excessive weight on my finances having to commute around 200 miles each week and not receiving raises that match inflation or the financial success that I know my current company is having	I've found that while eco-friendly products tend to be more expensive, by shopping around and reading reviews, it's possible to find ones that last longer and perform just as well, if not better. Meaning you have a slightly higher upfront cost, but overall you're saving money. For instance, purchasing dish rags rather than sponges to do dishes with. Dish rags can be washed over and over again, while sponges are only good for a couple of weeks before they need to be thrown in the trash
I think it sucks for people who lost their jobs. I wasn't impacted though I actually got more money because of the stimulus	It wouldn't affect them at all because my situation hasn't gotten worse
The current economic situation is pretty bad. Inflation has gone up but wages have not. Some people can not even afford to eat. The current economic situation has caused me to lose my job and my car	Typically products that are more green friendly cost more. With the current economic situation this would make me choose whichever product costs less
My money didn't change and my habits didn't change. No negative impact. All is fine	No effect. I buy what I want when I want untill the crazies force me to do different

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Table 8.1 (continued)

Perceptions towards current economic situation	Thoughts about how green consumption is impacted
I feel that many businesses had to close down due to mandates from Covid and the economy has not recovered. Many workers found remote jobs and are now comfortable working remotely so many businesses are finding it very difficult to hire people	Generally speaking, green and environmentally products are more expensive so during this current economic situation I would lean toward choosing products by price
Economic conditions seem uncertain as the world works to figure out what the “new normal” looks like. As gig and remote work become more prevalent, both employers and employees seem to have growing doubts, and concepts like loyalty and trust are in question	It may slow my adoption of green products if they are substantially (really an emotional determination in the moment) more expensive
Well, I wish I could have gotten PPP loans like everyone else, that would have definitely helped my economic status. As it is, my status didn’t change much as I teach at an online school and we saw no disruption	As long as billionaires are flying private, spewing as much pollution into the environment in 1 h as 1,000 people do over the course of a YEAR, I’m not going to worry much. The top 10 polluting corporations in the world give off like 60% of the world’s pollution ... me sorting cans and plastic isn’t going to make any difference at all
I think the current economy is still trying to recover. Many people are still out of the job, and other industries can no longer find enough workers for what they can offer. While I did lose my job, I was able to find another, so I was not fully impacted economically	If I am concerned about employment and future recession, I am looking to save on money instead of spend it
I feel that my budget is squeezed to the point that I am consistently running short in my monthly budget. Groceries prices have skyrocketed because of inflation. In an effort to curb inflation, the Feds raised interest rates so high that it’s hard to keep up even with the minimum payments on my credit cards. By the way, these cards were not used for frivolous spending. They’re the residual of medical and educational expenses	Obviously the overall price point would need to be very similar. I can’t afford to pay too much more for green. I do look at the size and anticipate how long it will last. I have had some green cleaning products actually last longer and be cheaper in the long run than a conventional name brand
I feel the current situation is very unstable and everyone of all classes will be negatively impacted. Prices have rose on everything and it is becoming hard to afford even basic needs, especially since wages aren’t rising	Green products are more expensive than non-green products. In the current economical situation every dollar matters and many people won’t prioritize the environment over affordable prices
I feel sad about the current economic situation. As a recent college grad I feel like it’s more difficult to get a job and a lot of places are doing lay offs	It may be harder for me to purchase green or environmentally friendly products because they cost more

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Table 8.1 (continued)

Perceptions towards current economic situation	Thoughts about how green consumption is impacted
I think the economy suffered a lot due to the pandemic and it affected many people around the world, at home my income dropped a little more but I was fortunate that my job is in systems and I could do home office and I continued working but even so it was a difficult time	I think it would stay pretty much the same as before, maybe a little more to use different products that favor the environment
The Covid-19 pandemic has had a profound and far-reaching impact on the global economy. The measures taken to contain the spread of the virus, such as lockdowns, travel restrictions, and social distancing, have disrupted businesses, industries, and supply chains worldwide. The economic situation has been challenging for many individuals and businesses. The pandemic led to widespread job losses, reduced working hours, and income reductions for numerous people across various sectors. Many businesses had to close down temporarily or permanently, leading to financial instability and uncertainty. For me, the negative impact on my economic status can manifest in various ways. Such as experiencing layoffs or furloughs, resulting in a sudden loss of income. I also ace reduced hours or pay cuts, making it difficult to meet my financial obligations and maintain my standard of living	Because of the current economic situation I will not be able to purchase enough green or environmental friendly products because of my financial issues. I will rather go for the cheaper ones which may not be environmental friendly
It was a very difficult time for everyone in general, although I can say that my income remained pretty much the same because my job is in computer systems, so I was not affected as much	I think I would be a little more conscious in my consumption to help the environment to be much better
During the first year of the pandemic i was laid off work for about a month and i had a severe income reduction as i was the sole income earner for my family	The current economic situation does not affect my consumption of green or environmentally friendly products
Goods and services became very inflated because of the pandemic, which has reduced income. Wages have not gone up, but things are more expensive	It's up to the government and corporations to make products environmentally friendly. I am burned out having the burden put onto me to recycle and worry about pollution. I do what I can affording myself minimal stress. It's obvious that profits are more important to corporations and the general public has been shamed into paying more and/or taking precious time, home space and resources to essentially do nothing

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Table 8.1 (continued)

Perceptions towards current economic situation	Thoughts about how green consumption is impacted
The current economic situation has affected many American lives. The negative impact upon my life has been quite large as I have lost a well paying job due to most businesses shutting down	The current economic situation will affect me in a way where I will be less likely to consume green or environmentally friendly products as they are a bit more expensive
I am less than thrilled with inflation and the prices of many things that are essential. It is affecting my ability to save and to purchase some items that I would like as I have no desire to overpay for anything. Prices on goods and borrowing costs have forced me to delay some plans and I make a considerable amount of effort to stretch household money. It is timeconsuming and exhausting	With the cost of certain goods being higher than in the past it makes me very sensitive to price and reluctant to choose the higher priced option even if it is a greener choice as I need to make my budget stretch
I have had income reduction and my business has suffered revenue loss. This made it tough to enjoy my work and pay myself/staff. I was annoyed and still am upset about this	Green products are more expensive, so it might cost me more to buy these products
The pandemic has had a negative impact on the economy, including my personal financial situation. As a middle class worker with a family, it has been challenging to make ends meet, especially with the rising cost of living and job insecurity. However, I am grateful for my job and the ability to provide for my family during these difficult times	As a middle class worker with a family I am concerned about the negative impact of the pandemic on my finances. This may affect my consumption of green or environmentally friendly products, as I may need to prioritize my spending on essential items
Covid has reshaped the economy. Generally, it seems we are in a recession or depression. So many people have been laid off, including me. And after 20+ interviews in two months, I still haven't received a job offer. I am considering working at a local Target because I can't find a job in my field. Speaking of stores like Target, they all are understaffed and have signs saying they are hiring. Hours have been reduced. Store services aren't as available as they used to be. I am a little bit afraid to go work at a store, especially at night, because after COVID, life seems to have gotten more dangerous too. People aren't patient or empathetic—they are quick to anger and quick to come to violence. Today, I don't feel safe closing a store at night at age 38, when I used to all the time when I was a teenager working 20 years ago	I won't spend money on eco-friendly products unless it's already on sale, or very reasonable for me to consider. Colgate has a brand of toothpaste that is recyclable. It has a cute design that encourages users to recycle the container. I buy that brand instead of more expensive toothpaste it makes me feel good to recycle. But if I have to spend more money to recycle, at this time I cannot. I am on a strict budget

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Table 8.1 (continued)

Perceptions towards current economic situation	Thoughts about how green consumption is impacted
I think that the current economic situation in the United States is not good because of how badly inflation has gotten and how high prices have gotten for everyday goods and services because of that. The negative impact that the Covid-19 pandemic has had on my economic status is that it has made nearly everything more expensive for me to purchase with the amount of money that I currently make/earn and makes it much harder for me to afford because of the amount of excessive money printing that occurred during the pandemic	The current economic situation with inflation affects my personal consumption of green and environmentally friendly products by making it more difficult for me to be able to afford them because of how high the prices have gotten for these types of products
I am angered by the cost of living since the COVID-19 pandemic. I feel companies are price-gouging consumers, especially in the line of groceries. Something needs to be done to stop this. While my income has not reduced the cost of my weekly grocery shopping has almost doubled thanks to price increases	They are more expensive to buy. And admittedly I have considered going back to buying non-environmentally friendly products. But so far I have not as I truly believe we have an obligation to do so
The Covid-19 pandemic had a significant and widespread negative impact on the global economy in 2020 and beyond. The implementation of lockdowns, travel restrictions, and social distancing measures aimed at containing the spread of the virus resulted in severe disruptions to various industries and economic activities. One of the most visible consequences of the pandemic was a sharp decline in economic growth. Many countries experienced recessions as businesses faced closures, supply chains were disrupted, and consumer spending decreased significantly. Industries such as travel, tourism, hospitality, and retail were particularly hard-hit as people stayed at home and limited their discretionary spending. The pandemic also led to a significant increase in unemployment rates worldwide. Businesses, especially small and medium-sized enterprises, faced financial difficulties and were forced to lay off employees or shut down altogether. This, in turn, affected individuals and families who lost their jobs, leading to reduced income and financial instability	Reduced disposable income: Economic downturns often result in reduced income or financial instability for individuals. In such situations, people may be more inclined to cut back on discretionary spending, including environmentally friendly products, which are often perceived as more expensive than conventional alternatives. The shift in consumer priorities: During times of economic uncertainty, consumers may prioritize essential goods and services, such as food, housing, and healthcare, over environmentally friendly products. The focus may shift more toward affordability and necessity rather than sustainability. Perception of green products as a luxury: In challenging economic times, some individuals may perceive green or environmentally friendly products as a luxury they cannot afford. They may opt for cheaper alternatives, even if they are less eco-friendly. The decline in consumer demand: Economic recessions can lead to a decline in overall consumer demand, affecting businesses across various sectors. This may result in reduced production or availability of green products in the market

(continued)

Table 8.1 (continued)

Perceptions towards current economic situation	Thoughts about how green consumption is impacted
While the pandemic didn’t negatively impact my household, it wreaked havoc on small business owners. The current econonic situation is dire, but the mainstream media ignore the impact on low and middle class families	I would have to trust the results of the studies performed to demonstrate that the product is actually environmentally friendly before deciding whether to purchase it. I am not willing to pay more simply because the environmentally friendly label appears on the product. Sometimes these products are ineffective at killing germs. I will stick with Lysol
In December 2020 the company I used to work to went out of business because of pandemic. I was forced to take retirement. So it made big impact on my life stile and my income, I lost about \$10 K monthly. Lot’s of my coworkers were younger then me but some still unemployed or working for smaller salary	Lesser income makes people think less about environment and healthy eating and concentrate on survival

8.2 Summary

This chapter offers preliminary evidence on how economic threats affected green consumption. Specifically, through a survey, participants were asked to write down about their perceptions of the current economic threats and how those perceptions impacted their green consumption. Future research should further investigate the causal relationship between economic threats and green consumption as well as the underlying mechanism and boundary condition proposed in Chap. 5.

Methodology and Results for How to Solve Inter-Client Conflicts During Service Encounters

9

In this chapter, a total of 3 experiments were conducted to test the hypotheses previously developed on inter-client conflicts. Specifically, the hypotheses are:

H1: Satisfaction from both consumer parties is higher if the firm takes the initiative to resolve inter-client conflicts than when either consumer party initiates solutions.

H2: Consumers who value process-beneficial measures are more satisfied if they are provided with process-beneficial measures than otherwise and consumers who prefer outcome-beneficial measures are more satisfied if they are offered with outcome-beneficial measures than otherwise during inter-client conflicts.

H3: Total consumer satisfaction would be higher if the firm put a time constraint on the option that would harm the other party's benefits than without such a constraint.

9.1 Study 1

The purpose of study 1 was to test H1 by using observation of audiences in watching a movie episode. This experiment consisted of a pretest followed by the main study.

9.1.1 Sample and Design

A total of 200 MBA students in Mainland China participated for a payment of RMB50.0 (approximately USD8.0). Of the sample, 54% were female with an average age of 36.2 and a mean personal income of RMB6,300 (approximately US\$984) per month. Participants had a median education of four years of college.

We used a three-level (initiator type: firm vs. client or none) between-subjects design. Participants were randomly assigned to any of these three scenarios.

9.1.2 Procedure and Measures

Participants were told that they would watch a popular movie episode for half an hour. To stimulate greater involvement, participants were informed that the film maker wanted to listen to their suggestions about the movie and that some of them would be invited to meet the movie maker and/or the movie star. Generally movie viewers would like to quietly watch and enjoy the movie. Some viewers, however, would like to chat with each other, which may disturb others. Each time, only ten participants were seated in the room for movie watching to ensure that all participants would be affected by the conflict if it occurred. The observer was mixed in them. Participants did not know that their behaviors were under observation.

The verbal and nonverbal behaviors of participants were observed and coded by trained observers over the half hour observation intervals. For the situation featuring that the provider took the initiative to solve inter-client conflict, one experimenter would show up and stop the party who made noises. For the situations featuring that the client took the initiative in resolving conflict or no one tried to stop the noisy party, the experimenter did nothing.

Two observers were present for each session. As previously stated, inter-client conflict is defined as “an interactive state manifested in incompatibility, disagreement, or difference within or between social entities” (Rahim, 1986: p. 13). Hence, the observers coded the session as containing inter-client conflicts if one or more than one participants showed verbal discontent to the other participants. Each observer received 15 h of training that involved extensive coding practice using real-world videos of inter-client interactions. Inter-coder reliability ranged from 89 to 97% when the training ended. To strengthen the robustness of inter-observer reliability, the two observers double-coded another 10 episodes and the average inter-observer reliability ranged from 88 to 93% across all interactions.

Of the 20 episodes, only 11 of them were found to contain inter-client conflicts. The experimenter showed up to stop the noise-making participants in five sessions. The other six sessions were not intervened by the experimenter; in two of these sessions, the other participants did nothing, while it was observed that other participants tried to stop the noise-maker(s) in the remaining four sessions. These eleven groups of participants were subsequently required to fill out the survey. Satisfaction was measured by using a three-item scale from 1 (“not at all”) to 7 (“very much”) ($\alpha = 0.88$; Ma & Dubé, 2011). Participants were required to indicate that, during movie watching, the extent to which (1) they were satisfied with the overall experience, (2) they liked the atmosphere around, and (3) were satisfied with the personal experience with other movie viewers. All three items relate to the attitudinal dimension of service recovery outcome. The first item reflects participants’ overall satisfaction with service recovery and the remaining two items focus on customer satisfaction with the outcome of service recovery. Participants’

moods on that day were also measured on a seven-point scale (1 = “extremely good,” and 7 = “extremely bad”) and their involvement level using a seven-point item (1 = “extremely high,” and 7 = “extremely low”). Finally they reported their gender, age, and income. These variables were found to have no effects on the results reported here or in the following studies and therefore were excluded from further analysis.

9.1.3 Results and Discussion

A one-way three-level (initiator: firm vs. client or none) analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted. It was found that satisfaction level of those in the condition featuring that the provider took the initiative to solve inter-client conflict was significantly higher ($M = 6.12$) than that of those in the situation that the client took the initiative ($M = 4.77$, $F(2, 108) = 7.63$, $p < 0.05$), in support of H1. In addition, when both the firm and the other consumers did nothing to solve conflicts, consumers’ satisfaction level was lowest ($M = 3.65$), compared to that of firm- ($M = 6.12$, $F(2, 108) = 11.29$, $p < 0.01$) or consumer-initiated ($M = 4.77$, $F(2, 108) = 7.75$, $p < 0.05$) situations. Since firm-initiated solution leads to higher satisfaction than consumer- or nobody-initiated conditions, the subsequent experimental designs did not differentiate between these two solutions.

Next, study 2 was conducted with two purposes. The first purpose was to enhance generalizability of study 1’s results by using a field study. Secondly, it aimed to examine whether participants who preferred process-beneficial measures would be more satisfied if they were provided with such measures than otherwise, and those who valued outcome-beneficial measures were more satisfied if they were offered with such measures than otherwise.

9.2 Study 2

9.2.1 Sample and Design

A total of 302 consumers in Mainland China participated for a payment of RMB50 (approximately USD8). The sample was 65% female with a mean age of 43.2 and a mean personal income of RMB5, 400 (approximately US\$794) per month. Participants had a median education of high school. A 2 (initiator type: firm vs. non-firm) \times 2 (measure type: process- vs. outcome-beneficial) \times 2 (measure preference: process- vs. outcome-beneficial) between-subjects design was employed in this study.

9.2.2 Procedure

The field study was conducted in a high-scale local restaurant. The experiment took about three weeks. When the study was finished, a consultation report was offered to its managers. In real life, inter-client conflicts are often manifested by non-verbal behaviors. Inter-client conflicts in a high-scale restaurant often occur when consumers show non-verbal but discontented attitudes toward other consumers, such as an aversive eye or negative face expression towards another table of consumers. For example, a table of consumers who intends to quietly talk with each other and enjoy the meal is at conflict with another table of consumers who are very noisy and disturbing; but the former may do nothing to stop the latter, though they may show aversive eye towards the latter. Inter-client conflicts were measured by direct observation, whereas self-reports were used to reflect consumer satisfaction.

Observers were dressed like welcoming waiters but did not serve consumers directly. On average, two observers monitored the same two tables. The observers were instructed to be as careful as possible not to appear obtrusive. Each observer received 35 h of training containing coding practice by using videos of actual inter-client behaviors. Conflicts might be expressed by direct verbal expression or through non-verbal body language such as angry look towards others or negatively surprising face expressions. Inter-observer reliability reached 86–97% when the training was finished. To offer additional evidence on inter-coder reliability, two observers were randomly selected and required to code 20 service episodes involving inter-client conflicts and the average inter-observer agreement ranged from 88 to 92% across all episodes, indicating confident inter-coder reliability.

Subsequently, if observers detected inter-client conflicts in the restaurant, they would ask for permission from the experimenter about how to deal with it. The experimenter would randomly choose either one of the following solutions. The first option is that the restaurant took the initiative to stop those consumers who caused the conflicts (i.e., jayconsumers) and provided process-beneficial measures to those affected (i.e., condition 1). Here, process-beneficial measures refer to interpersonal interactions in a positive way. For instance, the waiter comes up to sincerely apologize to those consumers affected by noisy others. The second option is that the firm took the initiative and offered outcome-beneficial solutions (i.e., condition 2). Since the main purpose that consumers go to a restaurant is to eat, outcome-beneficial solutions include giving free desserts and/or even a main dish. In such an instance, the waiter would directly present the complimentary desserts or main dishes to the affected consumers but no apology was offered. The third solution involves that the firm did nothing to stop those jaycustomers but offered an apology to those affected (i.e., condition 3). The fourth option involves that the firm provided free desserts and/or a main dish to those affected with no apology offered, and did nothing to prevent those jaycustomers (i.e., condition 4). One hundred and sixty-four consumers were in the first two situations with seventy in condition 1; one hundred and thirty-eight consumers were in the latter two situations with sixty-two consumers in the third condition. Most consumers who

were negatively affected by other jaycustomers chose not to confront with them; only 98 consumers take their initiative to ask the jayconsumers to stop. A consumer was coded as taking the initiative only if he/she asked the waiter and/or dealt with the situation him/herself. Interviewers stationed at the payment counter asked diners in any of the four above situations to fill out the subsequent survey questionnaire and offered them a gift.

In total, the sample comprised 302 consumers. Six copies of the questionnaire were incomplete and therefore excluded from further analysis. For the conditions featuring that the firm takes the initiative to solve conflicts, 70 consumers were in the situation in which process-beneficial measures were offered while 90 consumers were offered outcome-beneficial measures. For the conditions characterized by that the firm does nothing about or let consumers handle the conflict, 62 consumers were provided with process-beneficial measures and 74 consumers were offered outcome-beneficial measures.

Consumer satisfaction was measured by using the same scale as in study 1. Participants were also asked to rate which type of measures (process- vs. outcome-beneficial) they preferred by indicating the extent to which they liked to receive apology or material gift if they were in conflict with others on a scale from 1 (not at all) to 7 (very much). By using the median split, a total of 172 consumers were found to prefer apology while 124 consumers would like to receive a gift. In addition, participants were asked to indicate their attitudes toward the restaurant on a scale from 1 (very negative) to 7 (very positive). They also reported their prior consumption experience at the restaurant on a scale from 1 (very unhappy) to 7 (very happy). Finally, they reported their demographic information including education and income levels.

9.2.3 Results and Discussion

A one-way analysis of covariance (ANCOVA), controlling for attitudes toward the restaurant, prior consumption experience, education, and income (we used the same set of covariates for conducting ANCOVA in the same study) was conducted. A 2 (initiator type: firm vs. non-firm) $\times 2$ (measure type: process- vs. outcome-beneficial) $\times 2$ (measure preference: process- vs. outcome-beneficial) ANCOVA yielded a significant main initiator effect ($F(1, 284) = 11.02, p < 0.01$). Specifically, consumers were more satisfied when the firm took the initiative to stop jayconsumers than when the firm did nothing ($M_s = 4.66$ vs. 2.15), thus providing further support for H1. Data containing 98 consumers taking the initiative to deal with the conflicts was combined with that comprising no measures being taken by either the firm or consumers.

The $2 \times 2 \times 2$ ANCOVA produced a significant three-way interaction effect ($F(1, 284) = 18.22, p < 0.01$; partial $\eta^2 = 0.17$). Subsequently, we conducted a two-way ANCOVA separately for participants who were either in the condition featuring the firm took the initiative or in the situation that the firm did

nothing. Specifically, for consumers in the condition with the firm being the initiator to solve inter-client conflicts, satisfaction level of participants who preferred process-related measures was greater than that of those who valued outcome-related measures when provided with process-beneficial solutions ($M_s = 4.88$ vs. 2.52 , $t(295) = 2.19$, $p < 0.05$). Likewise, satisfaction level of participants who preferred outcome-related measures was greater than that of those who valued process-related measures when offered with outcome-beneficial solutions ($M_s = 4.75$ vs. 2.38 , $t(295) = 2.20$, $p < 0.05$). For participants in the condition featuring that firm did nothing, satisfaction level of participants who preferred process-related measures was also greater than that of those who valued outcome-related measures when provided with process-beneficial solutions ($M_s = 3.41$ vs. 2.01 , $t(295) = 2.13$, $p < 0.05$). Similarly, satisfaction level of participants who preferred outcome-related measures was also greater than that of those who valued process-related measures when offered with outcome-beneficial solutions ($M_s = 3.57$ vs. 2.05 , $t(295) = 2.08$, $p < 0.05$; see Fig. 9.1). Therefore, H2 was supported.

Tables 9.1 and 9.2 presents the results of a moderated regression analysis to test H2. Initiator type was dummy-coded with “firm as initiator” as 1 and “firm did nothing” as 0. In Table 9.1, process-beneficial measure was coded as 0 whereas outcome-beneficial measure was coded as 1. Of particular interest is the term involving the three-way interaction (initiator type, measure type, and measure preference). This term (IT x MT x MP) represents how much the relationship between satisfaction in the condition of firm as initiator and measure type has been changed due to measure preference. The three-way interaction term was

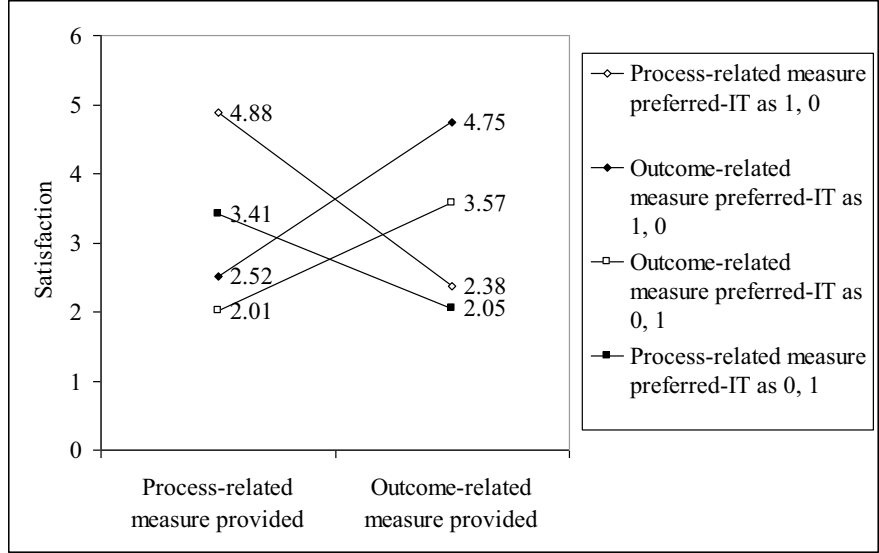


Fig. 9.1 Standardized simple slopes for the regression of initiator type (i.e., IT), measure type and measure preference on satisfaction

Table 9.1 Study 2: Results of moderated regression analysis on satisfaction in the firm-taking-initiative condition

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
Constant	5.19*	4.87*	4.66*	5.22*	5.13*	4.94*	4.91*
IT	0.10*	0.06	0.09*	0.07	0.06	0.09*	0.08
MT		0.11*	0.10*	0.08	0.09*	0.08	0.10*
MP			0.09*	0.05	0.07	0.07	0.08
IT × MT				0.13*	0.10*	0.10*	0.09*
IT × MP					0.09*	0.07	0.06
MT × MP						0.10*	0.09*
IT × MT × MP							0.16*
<i>Model statistics</i>							
R^2 of equation	0.04	0.07*	0.12*	0.16*	0.17*	0.21*	0.27*
ΔR^2	0.04	0.03*	0.05*	0.04*	0.01	0.04*	0.06**
ΔF	1.77	3.94*	4.18	4.03*	0.98	4.09*	5.64**

Notes IT = Initiator Type (Firm as initiator = 1; Firm did nothing = 0); MT = Measure type; MP = Measure preference; Numbers shown are regression coefficients; * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

statistically significant ($\Delta R^2 = 0.06$, $p < 0.01$). Satisfaction level in the condition that firm took the initiative to solve inter-client conflicts was significantly greater in the process-related measure preferred condition ($M = 4.88$) than in the outcome-related measure preferred condition ($M = 2.52$) when provided with process-related measures; whereas satisfaction level was greater in the outcome-related measure preferred condition ($M = 4.75$) than in the process-related measure preferred condition ($M = 2.38$) when offered with outcome-related measures.

The regression equation to be estimated is as follows:

$$\text{Satisfaction} = a + b_1\text{IT} + b_2\text{MT} + b_3\text{MP} + b_4(\text{IT} \times \text{MT}) + b_5(\text{IT} \times \text{MP}) \\ + b_6(\text{MT} \times \text{MP}) + b_7(\text{IT} \times \text{MT} \times \text{MP}) + e$$

In Table 9.2, the initiator type was recoded with “firm as initiator” as 0 and “firm did nothing” as 1. The same procedure was used. The three-way interaction term (IT × MT × MP) was statistically significant ($\Delta R^2 = 0.05$, $p < 0.05$). Figure 9.1 indicated that satisfaction in the condition that firm did nothing was significantly higher in the outcome-related measure preferred condition ($M = 3.57$) than in the process-related measure preferred condition ($M = 2.05$) when provided with outcome-related measures; whereas satisfaction level was greater in the process-related measure preferred condition ($M = 3.41$) than in the outcome-related measured preferred condition ($M = 2.01$) when offered with process-related measures. Thus, H2 was supported.

Table 9.2 Study 2: Results of moderated regression analysis on satisfaction in the firm-doing-nothing condition

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
Constant	4.62*	4.53*	4.91*	5.02*	4.33*	4.81*	4.73*
IT	0.07	0.03	0.05	0.09*	0.05	0.06	0.04
MT		0.10*	0.09*	0.04	0.06	0.05	.0.06
MP			.0.07	0.04	0.05	0.04	0.05
IT × MT				0.11*	0.08	0.07	0.09*
IT × MP					0.10*	0.09	0.08
MT × MP						0.09*	0.09*
IT × MT × MP							0.18*
<i>Model statistics</i>							
R^2 of equation	0.02	0.07*	0.09*	0.12*	0.16*	0.19*	0.24*
ΔR^2	0.02	0.05*	0.02	0.03*	0.04*	0.03*	0.05*
ΔF	1.34	4.22*	1.19	3.85*	4.57	3.67*	5.21*

Notes IT = Initiator Type (Firm as initiator = 0; Firm did nothing = 1); MT = Measure type; MP = Measure preference; Numbers shown are regression coefficients; * $p < 0.05$

The regression equation to be estimated is as follows:

$$\text{Satisfaction} = a + b_1\text{IT} + b_2\text{MT} + b_3\text{MP} + b_4(\text{IT} \times \text{MT}) + b_5(\text{IT} \times \text{MP}) \\ + b_6(\text{MT} \times \text{MP}) + b_7(\text{IT} \times \text{MT} \times \text{MP}) + e$$

Next, this research investigated the extent to which consumers were satisfied if the firm put a time constraint on the option that would harm the other party's benefits than without such a constraint.

9.3 Study 3

Based on the prior two studies, it was found that consumer satisfaction was higher if the firm, rather than the two consumer parties, took the initiative to solve inter-client conflicts. Therefore, study 3 investigated only the firm-initiated situation. Study 3 had two purposes. The first was to enhance generalizability of the results from the previous experiments by using a different study setting. Secondly, we aimed to test H3 by putting a time constraint on the validity of the option that can harm the other party's benefits. This study intended to investigate how consumer satisfaction varied across conditions with or without a time constraint.

9.3.1 Procedure

Participants were 192 MBA students in an advanced marketing course. Of the sample, 51% were female with a mean age of 32.5 and a mean personal monthly income of RMB6,600 (approximately US\$1,031). Participants had a median education of four years of college. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the six conditions in a 2 (measure type: process- vs. outcome-beneficial measures) $\times 2$ (measure preference: process- vs. outcome-beneficial measures) $\times 2$ (time constraint: present vs. absent) design.

All participants were regular air travelers. They were required to imagine that they were already seated in an airplane. To simulate reality, participants were told that they could have various purposes in taking the plane, such as on business, travelling, or going home. Participants were told to role-play the passengers. Observers used in the previous study were dressed like crew to increase realness. Participants were told that due to bad weather condition and air traffic control, the plane had been delayed for hours. The crew did not have similar experience in dealing with such a long-wait situation and hence could not provide the specific time for take-off. Participants were told in advance that the airplane must withdraw from the list of being prepared to take off if someone in the plane was leaving. The average time for one passenger to leave was estimated as 5 min. That meant if one chose to stay in the airplane, he or she must wait for those passengers to leave and only after that, the plane could re-enter the list for take-off. Because the delay was too long, some passengers began to seem impatient.

After this debriefing, participants were told that the airline company told them that they could choose to leave with full compensation. They were also told that once there was a passenger who chose to leave, there would be a 5-min delay. They were told that for either case (i.e., leaving or staying), there would be gifts. They did not know what kind of gifts there would be, but what they did know was that gifts related to one decision were much more expensive than the other so as to simulate the uncertainty in real life experience. In reality, passengers also needed to make a trade-off between the advantages and disadvantages concerning whether they should leave or stay. Further, curiosity about the gifts and their possible benefits could help to prevent our participants from choosing leaving due to impatience caused by the experiment. Inter-client conflicts were measured by direct observation, whereas self-reports were used to reflect customer satisfaction.

Subsequently, four conditions were manipulated. The first condition was that the crew provided a process-beneficial measure, namely to offer an apology about the situation, while at the same time, putting a time constraint of 10 min on those participants who chose to leave. That is, if they choose to leave, they must leave within 10 min. According to the pretest with another 45 MBA students, 10 min was considered as appropriate for such an experimental setting. The second condition featured that the crew offered an apology but did not impose a time constraint on those participants who chose to leave. That is, participants who chose to stay had to wait until no one chose to leave. Without a time limit, participants would postpone their decisions, which, in turn, deferred the take-off time. The third condition was

that the crew offered an outcome-beneficial measure, namely to tell passengers that the plane would take off soon but without an apology, although take-off time was not specified. At the same time, the crew put a time constraint of 10 min on those participants who chose to leave. The fourth condition was characterized by the same outcome-related measure but without a time constraint.

In this experiment, inter-client conflicts occurred when one or a group of consumers who chose to stay expressed discontent verbally or nonverbally towards those who chose to leave. Consumer satisfaction and measure type preference were measured using the same scale as used in the prior two studies. By using the median split, a total of 86 participants were found to prefer apology while 106 participants preferred outcome-beneficial measures. Other variables including education, income, and involvement were the same as the prior two studies.

9.3.2 Results and Discussion

Data was analyzed by using a one-way analysis of covariance (ANCOVA), controlling for education, income, and involvement (the same set of covariates was used for conducting ANCOVA in the same study). A 2 (measure type: process- vs. outcome-beneficial) \times 2 (measure preference: process- vs. outcome-beneficial) \times 2 (time constraint: present vs. absent) ANCOVA yielded a significant three-way interaction effect ($F(1, 181) = 13.17, p < 0.01$; partial $\eta^2 = 0.19$). Subsequently, a two-way ANCOVA was conducted separately for participants who were either in the condition with a time constraint or without such a constraint. Specifically, for participants in the condition with a time constraint, satisfaction level for those who preferred process-beneficial measures was greater than for those who valued outcome-beneficial measures when provided with process-beneficial measures ($M_s = 4.61$ vs. $2.35, t(95) = 2.16, p < 0.05$). Similarly, satisfaction level for participants who preferred outcome-beneficial measures was greater than for those who valued process-beneficial measures when offered with outcome-beneficial measures ($M_s = 4.77$ vs. $2.61, t(95) = 2.02, p < 0.05$). For participants in the condition without a time constraint, satisfaction level for those who preferred process-beneficial measures was also greater than for those who valued outcome-beneficial measures when provided with process-beneficial measures ($M_s = 3.88$ vs. $1.64, t(95) = 2.20, p < 0.05$). Likewise, satisfaction level for participants who preferred outcome-beneficial measures was also greater for those who valued process-beneficial measures when offered with outcome-beneficial measures ($M_s = 3.72$ vs. $1.59, t(95) = 2.14, p < 0.05$). Therefore, H2 was supported. Total consumer satisfaction for participants in the condition featuring a time constraint was significantly higher than for those in the situation without a time constraint ($M_s = 3.59$ vs. $2.71, t(191) = 2.31, p < 0.05$), thus in support of H3.

9.4 Summary

This chapter offers empirical evidence on how to solve inter-client conflicts. Specifically, satisfaction from both consumer parties would be higher if the firm takes the initiative to resolve inter-client conflicts than when either consumer party initiates solutions. Furthermore, consumers who value process-beneficial measures would be more satisfied if they are provided with process-beneficial measures than otherwise and consumers who prefer outcome-beneficial measures would be more satisfied if they are offered with outcome-beneficial measures than otherwise during inter-client conflicts. Total consumer satisfaction would be higher if the firm put a time constraint on the option that would harm the other party's benefits than without such a constraint.

References

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The goal of this book is to shed light on the effect of certain cultural and social influences on consumer behavior. Specifically, the investigation centers on uncertainty avoidance and superstitious consumption, repeating rituals and willingness to use the ritualized product, and external threats and green consumption as well as how to solve inter-client conflicts. This chapter would discuss the implications of the hypotheses, propositions, results and findings for both research and practice.

10.1 Uncertainty Avoidance and Superstitious Consumption

This book demonstrates the novel impact of UA on superstitious consumption. Studies 1A and 1B shows that consumers with high UA would display more superstitious consumption than those with low UA, using different operationalizations of UA and different measures of superstitious consumption. The second set of studies (2A–2C) offers strong evidence about why high UA leads to more superstitious buying by introducing the mediating role of anxiety. Direct as well as indirect measures of anxiety were used to prove that high UA could elicit higher levels of anxiety, which, in turn, would affect superstitious buying. In study 3, it was found that the effect of UA on superstitious buying was stronger for people with external locus of control than for those with internal locus of control.

Hofstede (1991) found that uncertainty avoidance was related to many concepts such as intolerance of ambiguity, rigidity, traditionalism, and ethnocentrism with superstition being one of them. In an effort to further offer insights on how UA affects superstitious buying, this research demonstrates that high UA elicits superstitious buying through anxiety by using a series of experiments.

Indeed, superstitious behavior varies across culture. Therefore, it is desirable to investigate how cultural dimensions impact superstitious buying. This research

approaches this issue from the uncertainty avoidance perspective with other relevant cultural dimensions taken into consideration. For example, in study 1A, it was found that other cultural dimensions including individualism/collectivism and power distance belief exerted little influence on superstitious buying. Further research should also include other cultural dimensions such as masculinity/femininity and long- versus short- term orientation, etc.

Findings of this book offers managerial implications as well. First, before entering new cultural markets, global companies need to examine consumers' cultural background information of uncertainty avoidance for localized marketing campaigns. Second, firms selling superstitious products such as lucky rings or bracelets might realize that their sales may be higher in areas of high uncertainty avoidance. To boost their sales in low uncertainty avoidance cultures, they may use customized advertising to prime high uncertainty avoidance tendencies.

Third, marketers should differentiate their segments particularly on the dimension of external versus internal locus of control, because UA exerts a stronger influence on superstitious buying for consumers with an external locus of control than for those with an internal locus of control. Managers can assess external/internal locus of control by conducting surveys in a specific area or ask consumers who visit their stores to fill out surveys. By using this new segmenting basis, managers can create more effective promotional campaigns for targeted consumers.

Finally, superstitious buying is popular especially among people living in a chronically high-UA culture (e.g., China). Yet, according to our results, the extent of UA can be primed to high versus low levels. Therefore, even among people living in a chronically low-UA culture (e.g., United States), superstitious buying can also be affected by UA. This finding is particularly important for advertisers in managing ad appeals to stimulate superstitious buying.

Limitations of this research should be noted to provide future research directions. First, it is desirable to investigate the effect of UA on superstitious consumption in a real shopping setting so as to provide more insights. Second, different cultures have different superstitious consumption practices; therefore, future research should investigate more such practices in more cultures. For example, in the US, the number of 13 may be considered unlucky while in China, this number does not have such meaning. Finally, other boundary conditions may exist. For example, if one often engages in superstitious consumption, then he/she should show a strong tendency to continue with superstitious consumption. These all merit further investigation.

10.2 Repeating Rituals and Willingness to Use the Product in the Rituals

There are plenty of rituals in the marketplace. For example, the beautychef.com website even uses glowing skin ritual as their product name and by conducting these rituals, consumers would get healthy skin (Thebeautychef.com, 2023).

Indeed, maintaining youth is desirable in society. To further understand how youth rituals impact willingness to use the ritualized product, this book proposes that repeating the youth ritual could enhance willingness to use the ritualized product and goal progress is proposed to mediate this relationship. In addition, goal importance is proposed to moderate the effect of repeating youth ritual on willingness to use the ritualized product.

Future research could conduct experiments to test these propositions. It is possible that repeating rituals could elicit a high level of meaning in life (Wang et al., 2021), thus inducing consumers to repeat the rituals and a high likelihood to use the ritualized product. Future research could include these alternative explanations when examining the focal relationship.

10.3 External Threats and Green Consumption

In our life, we have to face different types of external threats. It is important to understand how these external threats influence consumer behavior. This book examines how health, economic, and informational threats affect green consumption and their underlying mechanisms as well as boundary conditions. This book also investigates how to solve inter-client conflicts, as a special type of external threats.

10.3.1 Health Threats and Green Consumption

This book proposes that health threats, as a major type of threats to consumers, could enhance green consumption via ontological insecurity. Mortality salience is proposed to moderate the above relationship. Using a survey, this book provides preliminary evidence on the relationship between health threats and green consumption. It is desirable for future research to further examine the proposed relationships using experiments. Other factors, such as contagion sensitivity, may also influence the focal relationship. Future research could take these factors into consideration.

10.3.2 Economic Threats and Green Consumption

The Covid-19 pandemic has not only caused millions to die, but also negatively influence the economic situation. Economic threats are caused by reduced economic income. Green products are more costly than non-green products. Therefore, consumers with reduced income would naturally decrease their likelihood to buy green products. This book proposes that economic threats could induce anxiety, leading to a low likelihood to engage in green consumption. Psychological distance is proposed to moderate this relationship. By conducting a survey, this

book offers preliminary evidence on the relationship between economic threats and green consumption.

Future research could further test the developed propositions using experiments. It is possible that other factors such as green consumption belief could affect the focal relationship so that regardless of the income level, people would still engage in green consumption if they hold a strong green consumption belief. Therefore, more factors could be taken into consideration when examining the relationship between economic threats and green consumption.

10.3.3 Informational Threats and Green Consumption

Consumers are surrounded by numerous information every day. Sometimes, information about the same event may be conflicting, thus causing confusion. This book proposes that informational threats could induce a sense of loss of control. As a way to regain control, consumers would be more likely to refrain from excessive consumption. That is, loss of control is proposed to mediate the relationship between informational threats and the tendency to refrain from excessive consumption. Uncertainty avoidance is proposed to moderate the focal relationship. A high level of uncertainty avoidance would strengthen the focal effect.

It is desirable for future research to dig further into the propositions using surveys and experiments. Risk aversion might also play a role in the focal relationship such that compared to consumers with a low level of risk aversion, those with a high level of risk aversion might dislike informational threats more and thus produce a stronger feeling of loss of control, hence eliciting a higher likelihood to refrain from excessive consumption. Future research could take such potential factors into consideration when investigating the relationship between informational threats and the tendency to refrain from excessive consumption.

10.3.4 How to Solve Inter-client Conflicts?

This research uncovered the mechanism about how to solve inter-client conflicts during service encounters through two experiments and a field study. Based upon ICM, complementarity concept, and justice theories, this book found that during inter-client conflicts, the firm, rather than the two consumer parties, should initiate solutions so as to achieve satisfaction from both consumer parties. Specifically, consumers who preferred process-beneficial measures were more satisfied if they were provided with process-beneficial measures than otherwise and consumers who valued outcome-beneficial measures were more satisfied if they were offered with outcome-beneficial measures than otherwise. In addition, total consumer satisfaction was higher if the firm put a time constraint on the validity of the option harming the other party's benefits than when there was no such a constraint.

This work enriches our understanding on recovery of service failure by providing insights on a specific cause of service failure, namely inter-client conflicts.

First, this book shows that if the firm takes the initiative to propose solutions, it is possible that both consumer parties can be satisfied. Consistent with Smith et al. (1999)'s finding that a recovery initiated by the organization would positively affect customers' perception of interactional justice, this book further examines whether an organization-initiated recovery would also result in customer satisfaction in inter-client conflicts. In this way, this book offers insights in services marketing literature as to examine how to solve inter-client conflicts.

Second, the stable patterns about how to provide process- versus outcome-beneficial measures to solve inter-client conflicts uncovered in both studies 2 and 3 can enhance our understanding regarding how to solve inter-client conflicts. Scant research has sought to both conceptually and empirically examine how to address this ubiquitous problem during service encounters. This research found that consumers who valued process-beneficial measures were more satisfied if they were provided with process-beneficial measures than otherwise and consumers who preferred outcome-beneficial measures were more satisfied if they were offered outcome-beneficial measures than otherwise during inter-client conflicts.

The findings of this research showed that consumer satisfaction in recovery of inter-client conflicts was contingent upon the match or mismatch of their preference of measures and the measures provided to them, therefore contributing to the contingency theory on service encounters (Ma & Dubé, 2011). Consumer satisfaction also depends on the interaction between customer measure preference and measures provided by the firm. Specifically, measures offered can either enhance or dampen consumer satisfaction, contingent upon the extent to which consumer measure preference matches or mismatches measures offered by the firm.

Third, this research enriches extant literature on conflict management during service encounters. The present research proposes that by providing right measures to the right customers, it is possible that both consumer parties in inter-client conflicts can be satisfied. Specifically, consumers can be segmented into process- and outcome-preferred groups. To achieve satisfaction from both parties, the key is that the service firm should offer process-beneficial measures to process-preferred customers and vice versa.

Finally, the present research identifies a theoretically-driven boundary condition for total consumer satisfaction during inter-client conflicts. Specifically, it is found that total consumer satisfaction was higher if the firm put a time constraint on the option that could harm the other party's benefits than when there was no such a constraint. Although providing right measures to right consumers is important to achieve satisfaction from both parties, it was found that time constraint played an important moderating role for total consumer satisfaction, therefore enriching our understanding on inter-client conflicts.

The mechanism uncovered by this research on how to solve inter-client conflicts in service encounters offers important managerial implications. Insights on why the firm should take the initiative allow managers to understand the importance to pre-specify procedures for the firm to solve inter-client conflicts, whereas knowledge on how to solve such conflicts is helpful for assessing the effect of the pre-specified procedures on customer satisfaction. In this sense, a simple three-step framework

is recommended for solving inter-client conflicts. First, managers should identify the possible reasons for which inter-client conflicts may happen. For instance, a restaurant manager may observe that loud noises made by a table of consumers are the reason for inter-client conflicts; a movie theater manager might find that some viewers may conflict with others because they talk too loudly on the phone. Managers should diagnostically go through the service process to find all possible reasons leading to inter-client conflicts. Second, managers should pre-specify how to solve inter-clients conflicts. Providing right measures to right customers requires the firm to build a large consumer database in which consumer preference of measure type is recorded. Firms without such database may start from collecting data on consumer preference for later use. Finally, managers should measure consumer satisfaction after solving inter-client conflicts. This can provide useful guidance regarding how to improve consumer satisfaction next time. For example, if a consumer complains that he or she does not like the outcome-beneficial measure offered by the firm, then managers should consider using process-beneficial measure next time to him/her or offering both types of measures.

The findings of this research on providing right measures to right consumers indicate that the service provider should adjust his or her behavior with what the consumer desires to achieve satisfaction from both parties during inter-client conflicts. Managers ought to change their perception that inter-client conflicts, regardless of conflict causes, cannot result in satisfaction even after effective and efficient service recovery. Instead, they need to realize that it is possible to satisfy both consumer parties if measures are pre-specified and consumer preference is known. In order to do this, managers may have to develop their own consumer database containing such information as consumer preference of recovery measures and consumer satisfaction after recovery. This can be conducted using survey or just keen observation.

The findings of this research on time as a moderator in inter-client conflicts suggest that the provider should put a time limit on the option that would harm the benefits of the other party. A high level of consumer satisfaction is likely to occur when there is a time limit on the option harmful to the benefits of the other party during inter-client conflicts. Although unconditional offer is desired in service recovery, our findings suggest that service provider should not only provide right measures to right customers but also impose time limits on those options that may harm the other party's benefits during inter-client conflicts. Managers often care too much about the benefits of one party and may neglect the benefits of the other party's, causing the other party to feel unfair or even angry. To correct this, the firm should first analyze the advantages and disadvantages that both consumer parties can get and then impose a time limit on the one that can harm the other party's benefits. It is desirable that the provider explain why there exists such a time constraint to the party that chooses the focal option. Future research can build upon the present study by investigating the focal effect on objective outcomes such as the frequency and amount of current and future purchase so as to expand our understanding on inter-client conflicts and provide more insightful managerial implications.

The present research contains some limitations which should be addressed in further research, although the results support the underlying conceptualization. First, the presence of the observer in the experiment may have affected participant behaviors. Indeed, the presence of others may increase one's tendency to behave in a socially desirable manner. Although our observers were trained well and excised great care, it was possible that their presence still influenced participants' behavior. Therefore, future research should adopt a less obtrusive data collection method.

Other important moderators may be omitted from this book. One important moderator is consumers' expectations about the extent to which the service provider should take responsibility to solve inter-client conflicts. Some conflicts may occur due to service inadequacy or inappropriate service procedure. In this case, consumers would attach a large extent of importance that the provider should take the initiative to solve the conflict. Other conflicts may happen because of consumers' own problems and therefore they can understand if the firm takes less responsibility and initiative in solving the conflict.

Another potential moderator may be the relationship quality between the service provider and the two consumer parties. If both consumer parties perceive that they have a good relationship with the service provider, then they would much more easily comply to the provider's solutions and reconcile with the other consumer party than otherwise.

In addition, the effect of personality traits was not taken into consideration. Personality traits may influence the outcome of inter-client conflicts. For example, some individuals are more aggressive than others and thus may be less likely to be satisfied with service provider's recovery measures. Therefore, it is desirable for future research to examine individual difference in personality as a boundary condition for inter-client conflicts.

Further research should also replicate the findings of this research on time constraint as a moderator in a field study setting. It is also desirable for future research to further explore the extent to which consumers prefer process- versus outcome- beneficial measures in order to provide more insights into how to offer right measures to right consumers.

10.4 Summary

This chapter offers implications of developed hypotheses, propositions, results, and findings in this book for research and practice. Limitations and future research directions are also discussed. It is desirable to continue with the investigation of the effects of uncertainty avoidance, rituals, and external threats on consumer behavior. The next chapter will make a brief summary of the whole book.

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Summary and Conclusions

11

This book extends our understanding on how cultural and social factors affect consumer behavior, with a focus on uncertainty avoidance, rituals, and external threats. By addressing literature gaps, this book studies the relationships between uncertainty avoidance and superstitious buying and proposes the positive influence is driven by state anxiety and is moderated by locus of control. Regarding rituals, this book proposes that repeating the youth ritual could enhance willingness to use the ritualized product and this effect is mediated by goal progress illusion and is moderated by goal importance. This book focuses on the effects of health, economic, and informational threats on green consumption. Specifically, health threats are proposed to positively affect green consumption via ontological insecurity with mortality salience proposed to moderate the focal relationship. Economic threats are suggested to negatively influence green consumption through anxiety with psychological distance proposed to moderate the focal relationship. Informational threats are proposed to elicit a sense of loss of control, thus leading people to refrain from excessive consumption with uncertainty avoidance proposed to moderate the focal relationship. Finally, this book proposes that inter-client conflicts could be handled through firm-initiated solutions. In this chapter, major conclusions will be summarized and presented.

Empirical evidence was shown for the relationship between uncertainty avoidance and superstitious buying as well as how to solve inter-client conflicts using both surveys and experimental methods. Two surveys were conducted to provide preliminary evidence on health threats and green consumption as well as economic threats and green consumption. The results showed support for the hypotheses and propositions developed.

11.1 Major Conclusions

The results of this book were presented in four sets of major conclusions.

Conclusion 1: Uncertainty avoidance exerts a positive impact on superstitious buying. State anxiety is proposed to mediate the focal relationship and this effect is moderated by locus of control. Specifically, consumers with high (vs. low) UA engage in relatively higher levels of superstitious buying when their locus of control is external than internal.

This book examined the effect of uncertainty avoidance on superstitious buying. This research enhances our understanding on how uncertainty avoidance affect superstitious buying. Theoretical contributions therefore are strengthened by proposing anxiety as its mechanism and locus of control as the boundary condition. By doing so, this investigation could contribute to relevant literature on uncertainty avoidance and superstitious consumption.

Conclusion 2: Repeating the youth ritual would enhance willingness to use the ritualized product. Goal progress illusion is proposed to mediate the above relationship. Goal importance is proposed to moderate the effect of repeating youth ritual on willingness to use the ritualized product.

This book proposes that repeating youth rituals could elicit a sense of goal progress illusion, leading consumers to be more willing to use the ritualized product. Indeed, maintaining young is desirable in our society. By repeating the youth ritual, consumers would produce a sense of illusion that they are near this goal, motivating them to use more of the ritualized product. However, if the goal is not important for an individual, then the above effect would get attenuated.

Conclusion 3: (1) Health threats can enhance consumers' green consumption. Ontological insecurity mediates the above relationship. Mortality salience is proposed to moderate the above relationship. Specifically, in the presence of mortality salience, health threats can induce stronger ontological insecurity, leading consumers to have a higher likelihood towards green consumption, whereas in the absence of mortality salience, the effect of health threats would get attenuated. (2) Economic threats can decrease consumers' green consumption. Anxiety mediates the above relationship. Psychological distance is proposed to moderate the above relationship. Specifically, when psychological distance is near, economic threats can induce stronger anxiety, leading consumers to have a lower likelihood towards green consumption; however, when psychological distance is far, the effect of economic threats on green consumption would get attenuated. (3) Informational threats can increase consumers' tendency to refrain from excessive consumption. Loss of control mediates the above relationship. Uncertainty avoidance is proposed to moderate the above relationship. Specifically, when consumers are high in uncertainty avoidance, informational threats can induce stronger feelings of loss of control, leading consumers to have a higher tendency to refrain from

excessive consumption; however, when consumers are low in uncertainty avoidance, the effect of informational threats on the tendency to refrain from excessive consumption would get attenuated.

As a human being, we are facing numerous external threats every day. This book seeks to enhance our understanding on how health, economic, and informational threats affect green consumption. Specifically, health threats, as the most important type of threats, could produce a sense of ontological insecurity, motivating consumers to buy more of the green products. A salient mortality would strengthen this effect. However, green products are expensive products. Economic threats such as a reduced income would induce anxiety, and lead to less green consumption. When an individual perceives the economic threats as psychologically near, the focal effect would be strengthened. Conflicting information about the same event may cause confusion, leading to a feeling of loss of control. To regain control, consumers may refrain from excessive consumption. This book intends to offer news way of theorizing and thinking about how external threats affect green consumption.

Conclusion 4: Satisfaction from both consumer parties is higher if the firm takes the initiative to resolve inter-client conflicts than when either consumer party initiates solutions. Consumers who value process-beneficial measures are more satisfied if they are provided with process-beneficial measures than otherwise and consumers who prefer outcome-beneficial measures are more satisfied if they are offered with outcome-beneficial measures than otherwise during inter-client conflicts. Total consumer satisfaction would be higher if the firm puts a time constraint on the option that would harm the other party's benefits than without such a constraint.

Managers and researchers are interested to understand how to solve inter-client conflicts. A firm-initiated solution seems to result in a high level of consumer satisfaction than a consumer-initiated solution. If right measures are offered to the right consumers, both consumer parties are more likely to be happy. This effect would get attenuated if there is no time constraint on the option that would harm the other party's benefits.

11.2 Summary

This book addresses the effects of cultural and social influences on consumer behavior with a specific focus on uncertainty avoidance, rituals, and external threats as well as how to solve inter-client conflicts. Putting all these influences together could help us understand more and be aware of how these influences affect consumption behavior. In all, this book contributes knowledge to the marketing literature given that the propositions and hypotheses developed receive less research attention. I hope this book could not only advance relevant knowledge

on how to understand how cultural and social influences affect consumer behavior, but also offers guidance for future researchers by providing new thoughts and theorizing.

The Effects of Regional Economic Level, Management Level, and Organizational Culture on Person-Organization Fit

When attempting to understand and predict the attitudes and actions of individuals with regard to their organizations, prior research has advocated examining the fit between the individual and the organization, that is, person-organization fit (hereafter P-O fit; Vancouver & Schmitt, 1991). Generally, P-O fit occurs when there is a congruence between the attributes of an individual within an organization and those of the organization or the work context (Chan, 1996). Prior research on P-O fit has primarily focused on the antecedents and consequences of compatibility between people and the organizations in which they work (Kristof, 1996). Individual characteristics, such as values and expectations may interact with the situational context, leading to different levels of P-O fit (O'Reilly III, Chatman, & Caldwell, 1991). When exploring the influencing factors of P-O fit, regional development levels, management levels, and organizational culture need to be taken into consideration. Following is a set of propositions with simple reasoning. Future research may collect data to test the following propositions.

A.1 Theory and Propositions

Regions differ in terms of the economic development level. For example, the east region in China is more developed than the west region. In a developed region, management may value more of and be more oriented towards creating a high level of fit between employees and the company (Stavrou, Brewster, & Charalambous, 2010). Within a company, compared to middle-level managers or workers, senior managers tend to have a clearer sense of the company mission and thus be more aware of whether the company fits with themselves.

P1: The developed regions tend to have a higher level P-O fit than the less developed regions.

P2: Senior management tends to have a higher level of P-O fit than middle-level management or workers.

Different firms have different types of organizational culture, which can impact the values beliefs and performance of employees. For example, firms with a developmental culture tend to have a flexibility orientation (Quinn, 1988). In these organizations, employees are more likely to fulfill their potential, resulting in a high level of P-O fit. In turn, employees who are more satisfied with their jobs tend to perceive a high level of P-O fit the organization.

P3: The more flexible and innovative the organizational culture is, the more P-O fit there is.

P4: Employees with a high level of job satisfaction tend to have a high level of P-O fit.

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Application of Diffusion Theory and Uses and Gratifications Theory to Online Chatting Behavior

B

Nowadays, millions of people across the world use online chatting to communicate. Due to the convenient access to internet, an individual can easily download online chatting applications on computer or phone to chat. There may be various reasons behind the rapid growth of online chatting, including convenient communication, relaxation or making new friends. To further shed light on the reasons for the usage and rapid growth of online chatting, this research aims to interpret the phenomenon by applying diffusion theory and uses & gratifications theory.

B.1 Diffusion Theory

Rogers (1995) defined diffusion as “the process through which (1) an innovation (2) is communicated through certain channels (3) over time (4) among the members of a social system.” The four elements are the innovation, communication channels, time, and social system.

B.2 The Innovation

An innovation is an object, idea, or practice, which is perceived as new by an individual (Rogers, 1995). New information or new ideas can be easily exchanged online. Essentially, diffusion research is concerned with the process by which innovations spread, get adopted, and the reason of diffusion (Sherry, 2002). Online chatting app is a technological innovation. A technology is a design for instrumental action that could help to reduce the uncertainty involved in achieving a desired outcome. A technological innovation usually has at least a certain degree of benefits for its potential adopters. In all, the innovation-decision process is essentially an information-seeking and information-processing activity in which an individual is motivated to reduce uncertainty about the advantages and disadvantages of the innovation.

The characteristics of innovations can help to explain their different rates of adoption. These features are: (a) Relative advantage, which is the degree to which an innovation is perceived as better than the idea it supersedes; (b) Compatibility, which is the degree to which an innovation is perceived as being consistent with past experiences, existing values, and needs of potential adopters; (c) Complexity, which is the degree to which an innovation is perceived as difficult to understand and use; (d) Trialability, which is the degree to which an innovation may be experimented with on a limited basis; and (e) Observability, which is the degree to which the results of an innovation are visible to others and observability has been found to be positively associated with the diffusion of an innovation (Kortelanien, 2001).

Innovations that are perceived by individuals as having greater relative advantage, compatibility, trialability, observability, and less complexity are more likely to be adopted more rapidly than otherwise. Prior research indicates that these five qualities are the most important characteristics of innovations in explaining the rate of adoption.

B.3 Communication Channels

A communication channel is the means by which messages travel from one individual to another. Mass media channels are the means of transmitting messages that involve a mass medium, such as television, radio, newspapers, and so on, which can enable a source of one or a few individuals to reach a wide audience. Interpersonal channels involve a face-to-face exchange between two or more individuals. The diffusion theory proposes that the process of innovation adoption can help to reduce uncertainty. A key message sender variable is the level of homophily or heterophily the sender has with the receiver. Communications in which the sender and receiver are homophilous are more likely to be effective (Sweeney, Soutar, & Mazzarol, 2008).

B.4 Time

The time dimension relates to diffusion in terms of the innovation-decision process by which an individual passes from being first aware of an innovation to its adoption or rejection. Moreover, the relative earliness/lateness with which an innovation is adopted and the number of members in a system that adopt the innovation in a given time period are important characteristics to consider in innovation diffusion.

B.5 Social System

A social system is defined as “a set of interrelated units engaged in joint problem solving to accomplish a common goal” (Rogers, 2003, p. 23). The social system has a structure or patterned arrangements of units in the system. Social norms are the behavior patterns for the members of the social system to conform. Opinion leaders are particularly influential members of the social system, often by the virtue of education or leadership position. Additionally, individuals differ in terms of how willing or resistant they are to adopt new innovations.

Applying diffusion theory to the diffusion of online chatting, two elements (i.e., innovation and time) should be considered. As a technological innovation, online chatting was first adopted by those who have easy and convenient access to the internet. Subsequently it experienced the phases of early majority and late majority. Now millions of people are using online chatting to communicate. This is because people have a fundamental desire to communicate with others. When face-to-face talk is not available, people would turn to online communication. The internet-based technology enables cheap real-time dialogue and is particularly popular among youngsters.

Understanding the characteristics of online chatting can help us explain its quick diffusion rate. (a) Relative advantage. Online chatting has a relative advantage of convenience, compared to face-to-face chatting. (b) Compatibility. Online chatting has become everyday habit for many people and is consistent with the existing values for convenient communication. (c) Complexity. Online chatting is easy for anyone with internet access. (d) Trialability. Online chatting has experienced very short diffusion period. Through learning by doing, people could master different chatting tools very quickly. (e) Observability. Online chatting has become an everyday communication tool for many of us due to its effectiveness and efficiency. Based on the above analysis, it can be concluded that online chatting is perceived as having greater relative advantage, compatibility, trialability, observability, and less complexity.

Regarding the time dimension, there may be not many individuals (i.e., innovators) who were willing to chat online when online chatting just started. But very soon the diffusion curve began to climb, as more and more people adapted this innovation chatted online. Eventually, the trajectory of adoption began to level off. Finally, the curve would reach its asymptote, and the diffusion process would finish. During and after the Covid-19 pandemic, people have become used to and familiar with virtual meetings or conferences. Online chatting is considered as a necessary tool for work for many people and has achieved a great extent of growth. Various innovative chatting apps have emerged. It is hard to conclude that the diffusion of online chatting has reached its asymptote, since in different times, there may exist different shapes for diffusion. It is desirable to study the diffusion curve for online chatting in different time periods.

B.6 Uses and Gratifications

Uses and gratifications' principal elements include people's needs and motives to communicate, the psychological and social environment, the mass media, functional alternatives to media use, communication behavior, and the consequences of such behavior. Blumler and Katz (1974) pointed out that social and psychological needs could generate expectations of the mass media, leading to different patterns of media exposure, and thus exerting impact on need gratifications.

The basic assumptions underlying uses and gratifications are as follows. First, an individual's use of media is goal-directed, purposive, and motivated to fulfill his or her needs. Secondly, people actively initiate the selection and use of media based on their expectations for the media. People use and select media to gratify their needs or wants, such as seeking information to solve a personal dilemma (Katz, Gurevitch, & Haas, 1973). Thirdly, media compete with other sources of need gratifications. The extent to which that media can satisfy an individual's motives or desires varies depending on the specific social or psychological context. Finally, self-reported data are reliable. People are sufficiently self-aware of their needs and wants.

Uses and gratifications research values audience motivation and consumption by shifting our focus to what people do with the media, instead of what the media do to people (Klapper, 1963). Audience needs and expectations play an important role in the diffusion, use and effects of media.

Clearly, people have the choice among a variety of media for communication or information search (online, telephone, face-to-face, etc.). Each medium may satisfy a different need. Based on the uses and gratifications model, when an individual perceives online chatting as a solution to a particular need, he or she may engage in online chatting and the gratification acquired from online chatting will determine whether it would be repeatedly conducted in the future.

People have different social and psychological needs for chatting with others online. People generate expectations for online chatting, leading to differential patterns of internet exposure, resulting in need gratifications. Chatting with individuals online from different towns, cultures and countries and exchanging ideas and thoughts widens a chatter's horizon. Chatting online can reflect a certain extent of need for diversion, to escape from routine and problems and get emotional release. In all, the uses and gratifications paradigm offers important implications for online chatting.

B.7 Conclusion

By applying diffusion theory and uses & gratifications theory to online chatting, it can be concluded that the highly diffusion speed of online chatting does have its theory origin to go with. Future study to investigate online chatting might further examine its diffusion curve during different time periods.

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Uncertainty Avoidance Scale¹²

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1. It is important to have instructions spelled out in detail so that I always know what I'm expected to do
 2. It is important to closely follow instructions and procedures
 3. Rules/Regulations are important because they inform me of what is expected of me
 4. Standardized work procedures are helpful
 5. Instructions for operations are important
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Notes ¹Yoo and Donthu (2002); ²Measured on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

Reference

Yoo, B., & Donthu, N. (2002). The effects of marketing education and individual cultural values on marketing ethics of students. *Journal of Marketing Education*, 24(2), 92–103.

Afterward

It was the year of 2010 that the major studies of this book began. I have a keen interest in cultural influences. A series of studies have been conducted on the effect of one of the most important cultural dimensions, that is, power distance belief, on consumption attitudes and behavior during the past years. To take the effect of other cultural influences into consideration, this book examines another important cultural dimension, that is, uncertainty avoidance, to investigate how uncertainty avoidance affects superstitious buying, which is my another research interest (i.e., irrational beliefs that people hold in their life).

The ritual study was part of the project funded by the National Natural Science Foundation of China (Grant Number: 71772108). I always have a passion towards exploring how rituals affect our consumption. The studies on external threats and green consumption were part of the project funded by the National Natural Science Foundation of China (Grant Number: 72272052). In reality, we have to deal with various external threats, such as health threats especially during and after the Covid-19 pandemic. This book studies three major types of external threats (i.e., health, economic, and informational threats) and their impacts on green consumption. In addition, inter-client conflicts, as one type of conflicts and threats to certain people (e.g., frontline service employees) are also studied.

To address the above challenges, this book uses a new approach by combining relevant theories on culture, rituals, external threats (including health, economic, and informational threats), green consumption, and inter-client conflicts as well as evidence from surveys and experiments in order to offer more consumer insights in relevant areas. In all, this book makes important contributions by offering new knowledge in understanding cultural and social influences on consumer behavior.

All the studies contained in this book relate to cultural and social influences on consumer behavior, with specific focus on uncertainty avoidance, rituals, external threats, and inter-client conflicts. The hypotheses and propositions about how these factors influence consumption are developed. Not only mechanisms on the focal relationships are developed, but also boundary conditions are identified. Although not all studies have empirical support using surveys or experiments, this book offers theoretical rationale and provides preliminary evidence for future research to go along with. In all, this book contributes new knowledge into the marketing

literature by offering new understanding on the omnipresent influences of cultural and social factors on consumer behavior.

Lastly, writing this book is a very pleasant journey. It helps me to organize my research ideas and findings. I would like to thank Springer Nature for this great opportunity to share my research.

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