

Masstige Marketing: Addressing Short-Term and Long-Term Happiness

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Masstige marketing: Addressing short-term and long-term happiness

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Abstract

Consumers must manage their experiences to achieve their goals. It is currently unclear how masstige products are involved in these experiences. This study experimentally examines the relationships between self-control, self-indulgence, intention to purchase a masstige product, and both short- and long-term happiness. In total, 319 consumers participated in this experiment. This study compared four models addressing these relationships and concluded that a higher level of self-control leads to a lower level of self-indulgence and a weaker intention to purchase a masstige product. Additionally, a higher level of self-indulgence leads to a stronger intention to purchase a masstige product. Finally, a higher level of short-term happiness leads to a greater level of long-term happiness and stronger intention to purchase a masstige product.

KEYWORDS

consumer happiness, consumption happiness, emerging market, luxury consumers, masstige product

1 | INTRODUCTION

Happiness is a central purpose of human life. An individual feeling happy indicates that their life is going well (Summer, 1996). Happiness is a subjective evaluation of having more pleasurable experiences in one's life (Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, & Schkade, 2005). Compared with their peers, happier individuals are more likely to have children (Cetre et al., 2016), higher incomes, superior work performance, community involvement, robust health, and a longer life (Lyubomirsky, King, & Diener, 2005). However, existing research has focused more on the consequences of happiness than on the predictors of that emotion (Pham, 2015). Therefore, a greater understanding of the keys to happiness is required (Easterling, 2015; Pham, 2015; Veenhoven et al., 2021). This is because individuals often have difficulty selecting choices that make them feel happier (Hsee & Hastie, 2006). For example, Kahneman et al. (2006) found that many individuals believe that they would be happier if they were richer, but being wealthy makes individuals spend more time at work and less time on non-work activities (such as watching TV and childcare) which makes them feel less happy. Importantly, a happy consumer is an asset for marketers (Dhiman & Kumar, 2022).

Similarly, existing research on consumption has focused on the consequences of happiness. For example, Guven (2012) finds that happier people save more, spend less, and have a lower marginal propensity to consume. Specific to spending patterns, Zhu et al. (2021) found that happier people spend more on basic living goods, education, and gifts. Furthermore, Niedermeier et al. (2019) found that happiness motivates word-of-mouth and the intention to purchase. Empirical studies on the relationship between consumption and happiness concluded: 'It is worth knowing what patterns of consumption generate the most happiness for what kinds of people under which circumstances. As yet, the available research findings leave us little wiser about these topics. Data are still scarce and scattered, and causal effects have not been established' (Veenhoven et al., 2021, p. 15).

Therefore, it is important to investigate happiness resulted by the consumption of masstige products. Masstige products are affordable for the masses but are positioned as those bringing prestige. Compared to other products, masstige products are a relatively recent phenomenon that provides a big opportunity (Kumar et al., 2020) whereby consumers expect that consumption of the products will lead to feelings of greater happiness (Kumar et al., 2021; Mansoor &

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