

THE HONG KONG POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT AND MARKETING

Departmental Research Seminar



Gender Asymmetric Responses to Brand Gender Bending: A Power Symbolism Perspective By

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Date : 11 Oct 2022 (TUE)
Time : 9:30 – 11:00 pm
Venue : Online via Zoom

Abstract

Increasingly, traditionally gender-focused brands are targeting consumers of the opposite gender, a practice known as brand gender bending. The unanswered question is, do male and female consumers respond similarly to brand gender bending? Using mixed methods, including two secondary data analyses and five experiments, the authors reveal consumers' gender asymmetric responses to brand gender bending, such that women are more accepting of masculine brands, but men are less accepting of feminine brands. This asymmetry may be explained by the power symbolism of masculine brands, which is rooted in the hegemonic masculinity prevalent in U.S. society. That is, women respond positively to female-targeted products from masculine brands due to their power symbolism, particularly when power is salient or when women support a male-dominated system. In this vein, conservative (vs. liberal) women tend to favor masculine brands. By contrast, feminine brands are not associated with power symbolism, which lowers men's acceptance of products from feminine brands, particularly among conservative men motivated to maintain men's hegemonic status. This effect is less salient among men holding egalitarian beliefs about gender-power associations (i.e., liberals). These novel findings contribute new insights to the branding and gendered marketing literatures.

Prof. Carlos Torelli is the Anthony J. Petullo Professor of Business Administration in the Gies College of Business. He is a renowned expert in the areas of global branding, cross-cultural consumer behavior, self-regulation, and persuasion. He looks to identify the key cultural factors that drive consumer behavior in a globalized economy and to uncover the underlying socio-cognitive processes for such culturally driven behaviors. He earned a BE in civil engineering from Andres Bello Catholic University in 1986, an MBE from Simon Bolivar University in 1993, an MBA from Marquette University in 1997, and a PhD in business administration from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign in 2007.

All interested are welcome.



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