

THE HONG KONG POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT AND MARKETING

Departmental Research Seminar



Frequency versus Intensity: How Thinking of a Frequent Consumption Indulgence as Social versus Solitary Affects Preferences for How to Cut Back By

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Date : 11 Mar 2021 (THU)

Time : 10 am – 11:30 am

Venue : Online via Zoom

Abstract

Many consumers engage in regular, or “frequent,” consumption indulgences. Because such indulgences accumulate resource costs (e.g., money, calories), consumers are often prompted or need to cut back, posing questions for how to design cut-back programs with consumer appeal. This research distinguishes between frequent indulgences that consumers think of as social (vs. solitary), demonstrating that thinking of an indulgence as social (vs. solitary) decreases preferences to cut “frequency” (how often the indulgence occasion occurs) and increases preferences to cut “intensity” (choosing a within-category substitute that involves lower resource expenditure). These effects are explained by differentiating between enjoyment from the product itself versus enjoyment from aspects outside the product. Thinking of an indulgence as social (vs. solitary) heightens anticipated enjoyment particularly for aspects outside of the product, decreasing interest in cutting the occasion itself (cutting frequency) and increasing interest in cutting the product’s enjoyment (cutting intensity). This divergence in cut-back preferences for social (vs. solitary) experiences is thus eliminated: 1) when consumers think of social experiences with distant (vs. close) others, which involve lower enjoyment outside of the product, or 2) when solitary experiences primarily involve heightened enjoyment for aspects outside of the product.

Dr Peggy J. Liu is Assistant Professor of Marketing and Ben L. Fryrear Faculty Fellow at the University of Pittsburgh's Joseph M. Katz Graduate School of Business. Her research expertise is consumer behavior, with a focus on judgment and decision making in the health, financial, and social domains. Her research has been published in top marketing, management, and psychology journals, such as *Journal of Consumer Research*, *Journal of Marketing Research*, *Journal of Marketing*, *Management Science*, *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, *Organizational Behavior & Human Decision Processes*, *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology*, and *Personality & Social Psychology Bulletin*. She has also published extensively in public health and medical journals. She has won multiple awards for her research, including the ACR-Sheth Foundation Dissertation Award and the Katz Excellence in Research Award multiple times. She was selected as a Marketing Science Institute Young Scholar for 2021. She currently serves on the editorial review boards of *Journal of Consumer Research* and *Journal of Consumer Psychology*. She was also named one of Poets & Quants Top 50 Undergraduate Business School Professors in 2020, and she has won the Katz Excellence in Teaching Award multiple times.

All interested are welcome.



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