

Exploring the Use of Online Social Marketing Tools in Motivating Healthy Alcohol Consumption Patterns in Britain

Diana Gregory-Smith and Danae Manika

Abstract A major criticism of social marketing endeavors related to alcohol consumption is that they are perceived to be targeting dependent drinkers (NHS, Department of Health, Social Marketing Toolkit, 2009), or asking consumers to adopt unrealistic alcohol consumption behaviors. Our study uses *expectancy research* to focus on the positive change in experience from drinking, and utilizes a straightforward approach by asking drinkers about their current motivation and experiences in order to identify ways to empower them in developing healthy alcohol drinking patterns. To advance the social marketing literature we explore: (1) lay beliefs, including expectations (positive and negative), lifestyles and risk perceptions across different age groups and alcohol consumption levels in Britain; and (2) the use of online and digital social marketing information tools in motivating consumers to stay within the recommended alcohol limit. The latter was done by assessing the NHS website and online tools (i.e., the alcohol units monitoring application), in terms of known cornerstones of online communications. An inductive approach using semi-structured interviews, following a flexible format, and thematic analysis were used for the purpose of this research. The sample (31 interviewees belonging to different age groups) was recruited through snowball sampling using social networks, and monetary incentives. The results provide interesting findings which can be used both by public organizations (e.g., the NHS and various not-for-profit organizations) and private companies that could recommend such online tools to their consumers, as part of their corporate social responsibility endeavors.

References: Available upon request

D. Gregory-Smith (✉)

Sheffield University Management School, University of Sheffield, Sheffield, UK

e-mail: d.gregory-smith@sheffield.ac.uk

D. Manika

School of Business and Management, Queen Mary University of London, London, UK

e-mail: d.manika@qmul.ac.uk

© The Academy of Marketing Science 2016

M.D. Groza, C.B. Ragland (eds.), *Marketing Challenges in a Turbulent Business Environment*, Developments in Marketing Science: Proceedings of the Academy of Marketing Science, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-19428-8_160

657