Sparking conversations: Editors' Pick with commentaries and thematic article compilations

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In this issue, we feature a lead article by Si and Dai (2022) on how memory biases can impact time perception as the “Editors’ Pick” and two commentaries on it—one by Tu and Soman (2022) and the other by Davis and Drolet (2022). While we are excited by all the papers we publish, on occasion, when we come across papers that present provocative findings on understudied topics that have the potential to spark conversation, we will be featuring such *editors’ pick articles and commentaries*.

The paper by Si and Dai (2022) introduces the concept of memory brackets and proposes that consumers who use larger memory brackets, such as older consumers, may perceive objectively more distant events to be subjectively closer in time. It is possible consumers who access larger memory brackets think of different events from those consumers who access smaller memory brackets do or using a larger memory bracket results in their picking the most vivid events and vividness makes these events feel subjectively closer even though they are objectively more distant.

The authors explore some of these aspects, but the provocative findings spark new questions that warrant further investigation and more specification of when and why these effects arise. Moreover, if consumers who use larger memory brackets feel objectively more distant events are subjectively closer, this finding could have substantive implications. For example, in the domain of health decisions and testing, consumers who use larger memory brackets, including but not limited to older consumers, may think they had a health check-up done recently when it was done a while back and is now overdue. In the domain of financial decisions, such consumers may find it harder to keep up with bills and payments if they feel they recently paid off their invoices that are from a while back. Such findings would imply a need to develop interventions including in health and financial communications that

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encourage use of shorter memory brackets so that consumers procrastinating on such decisions are motivated to take necessary actions in a timely manner.

Given the possibilities for future research to develop this finding, we invited two commentaries to serve as theoretical reviews of related topic areas and link this paper with those areas. The first commentary is by Tu and Soman (2022) and it reviews in detail findings in the time perception literature. It discusses other factors that impact subjective perceptions of time, compares methods used by Si and Dai (2022) with those used in the time perception literature, and suggests ideas for future research. The second commentary is by Davis and Drolet (2022) and it reviews literature on memory effects among aging consumers. It also compares findings reported by Si and Dai (2022) on aging consumers with the more extensive findings in the broader literature on effects of aging and suggests future research ideas.

This issue also includes two *thematic compilations* of related articles on two current topics of interest—Charitable Giving and Greater Good, and AI and Other Emerging Technology. We will also, on occasion, be organizing papers into such *thematic compilations* to encourage integration of insights and ideas across closely related papers.

The first thematic compilation of research articles includes research on generating social impact and compiles four papers on “*Charitable Giving and Greater Good*.” Keenan et al. (2022) lead this discussion and present a counterintuitive and important finding that consumers are more likely to support brands that donate a higher proportion of their profits to charity rather than donate a higher absolute amount to charity because they consider relative donation to be a greater signal of generosity than absolute amount donated. Next, Morvinski (2022) presents a counterintuitive finding that adding information on unavailable donation options increases charitable giving by consumers to the remaining options because consumers believe their donation will have a higher impact on the remaining causes. Third, turning to a consideration of factors that increase individual rather than societal well-being, Lee et al. (2022) show that anthropomorphizing material products can increase the happiness they provide to consumers because doing so makes consumption feel more social. Thus, while the first two papers in this compilation look at how firm and individual consumer actions benefit society, this paper looks at how conferring individual level consumption with sociality benefits can increase the happiness such products provide to consumers. Finally, Kristofferson et al. (2022) investigate the important role virtual reality can play in increasing charitable donations by consumers.

The second thematic compilation of research articles is on “*Consumer Preferences for and Reactions to AI and Other Emerging Technologies*.” This thematic compilation of research articles, as a set, provide insight pertaining to marketing decisions such as managing brands, improving advertising impact, and facilitating adoption of technology such as autonomous vehicles, augmented reality, service robots, and AI algorithms. On the topic of *autonomous vehicles* and the role of branding, Eggers and Eggers (2022) investigate consumer preferences for purchasing versus renting autonomous vehicles that are brand extensions of technology firms (e.g., Google) versus traditional automakers (e.g., Ford). On the topic of *augmented reality* and its role in advertising, Pozharliev et al.

(2022) investigate whether augmented reality advertisements enhance customer physiological responses and willingness to pay more than traditional print advertising by creating greater consumer arousal and engagement. This paper ties in nicely with the paper by Kristofferson et al. (2022) in the first thematic section of the current issue that provides converging evidence in the context of charitable giving and shows virtual reality can also increase donations by consumers. The third paper in this thematic compilation on *Consumer Preferences for and Reactions to AI and Other Emerging Technologies* is by Choi et al. (2022). This paper investigates questions pertaining to the adoption of *service robots* that are conferred with sincere versus exciting brand personalities and how these personalities differentially impact adoption of high versus low contact robots. Finally, Von Walter et al. (2022) investigate the impact of lay beliefs about relative intelligence of *Artificial Intelligence* (AI) versus humans on the adoption of algorithmic advice.

This thematic compilation is followed by two Idea Corner submissions also on AI and Emerging Technologies designed to spark conversation and raise important questions for future research. Hermann (2022) raises important practical and research implications of the trend of increasing humanization and emotional intelligence of AI applications on transforming human-to-AI interactions into human-to-human-like interactions. In a companion Idea Corner submission, Caruelle et al. (2022) further discuss how affective computing, which develops AI and machines capable of detecting and responding to human emotions, stands to transform the practice of marketing.

We hope you enjoy reading these three collections of papers.

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