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Do Personality Types Make Consumers Exhibit Different Complaint Behaviors?*

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the differences and similarities in complaint behavior of consumers according to their personality types. 116 managers of a large Turkish finance company have participated in the study. Results show that Intuition-Thinking and Sensing-Thinking individuals tend to engage in public action, while Sensing-Feeling individuals prefer to take private action, and Intuition-Feeling individuals take no action, which is a different form of complaint behavior.

JEL classification: M39 and M12

Keywords: Complaint behavior, personality type, Jung's theory, Myers-Briggs type indicator, Turkey

1. INTRODUCTION

Customer retention is regarded as one of the major forces of competitiveness. The cost of gaining a new consumer is deemed as being far and away higher than the cost of protecting an existing consumer (Blodgett *et al.*, 1995; Duffy, 2003). According to Lee *et al.* (2003), if the consumer defection decreases by 5 per cent, then the profits increase by 25–80 per cent in service industry. A major component of customer retention involves understanding consumer complaint behavior for better designed marketing activities (Henning-Thurau, 2000; Rust *et al.*, 1993; Tax *et al.*, 1998). For instance, Grönroos (2003) identifies customer focus as an essential dimension similar to finance and human resources, implying that a business must listen to and understand their complaining customers in order to maintain a long relationship, which is in turn useful for achieving financial goals.

Consumer complaint behavior has drawn attention in marketing literature (Day&Landon, 1977; Jacoby&Jaccard, 1981; Singh, 1988). Previous studies investigated the impact of demographic

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characteristics such as age, gender and education (Day&Landon, 1977; Herrman *et al.*, 1975; Han *et al.*, 1995). Similarly, an alternative variable that may explain and predict consumer preference for one modality over another is the “personality type” (Harrington&Loffredo, 2009). Consumers in different personality types can choose to exercise different types of complaint behavior with different intentions. Understanding the effects of different consumer personality types on consumer complaint behavior can help marketers to improve consumers’ perceptions of service quality further.

The purpose of this paper is, therefore, to explore the potential differences and similarities in attitudes toward complaint behaviors among different personality types. The results will be valuable in assisting marketing managers in understanding the customer complaint behavior with regard to personality types.

The remainder of the paper is organized as follows: a brief presentation of the personality types includes Jung’s theory, Myers-Briggs type theory and customer complaint behavior literature review. This is followed by the proposed research hypotheses and the research methodology. The analysis of the collected data and testing of the hypotheses are complemented by a discussion of the main results with regard to the customer complaint literature. The article ends with a revision of the main findings, limitations of this study, and future research directions.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. The Myers-Briggs Type Theory

The concept of personality types was first proposed by the psychiatrist Carl Jung, whose ideas were later improved by Briggs and Myers into a practical self-report instrument called the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) (Saggino *et al.*, 2001; Harrington&Loffredo, 2009). MBTI is one of the most popular psychological instruments to measure an individual’s preference (Zardouz, 2011), attitudes and perceptions (Buboltz, 2000). Contemporary business practice still benefits from MBTI with approximately three million individuals filling the questionnaires every year. During the last decade, many human resources departments have continued to utilize MBTI to measure management ability in various contexts (Young&Walters, 2002) and to enhance self-knowledge, interpersonal understanding and teamwork (Garrety, 2007).

Jung initially identified two major personality orientations: extroversion and introversion along with four fundamental psychological functions: Extroversion (E) – Introversion (I), Sensing (S) – Intuition (N), Thinking (T) – Feeling (F) Judging (J) – Perceiving (P) (McKenna, 2001), suggesting that individuals exhibit one of 16 possible personality types based on 4 dimensions with 2 possible levels in each (2x2x2x2) (Hough, 2005). In Table 2, all the possible personality types are shown.

The first dimension involves the extraversion and introversion levels. Extraversion refers to a person whose mental processes are directed at the outer world of people while introversion refers to an orientation towards the inner world of people. The second dimension involves sensing and intuition. Sensing involves receiving information directly through the five senses while intuition involves discovering possibilities, which might not be immediately obvious from sensory data. The third dimension encompasses thinking and feeling. Thinking involves the logical analysis of information while feeling measures the emotional value that is attached to objects or events. Lastly, the fourth dimension involves judging and perceiving. Judging is concerned with organizing and processing information while perceiving is concerned with directly receiving information without evaluation (Furnham *et al.*, 2003). Table 1 summarizes the focus, preferences and potential strengths and weaknesses of these different levels of personality types (Gardner&Martinko, 1996).

Table 1
Summary of Purported Personality Type Preferences and Characteristics

Personality Types	Focus and Preferences	Strengths	Weakness
Extroversion (E)	Energized by outer world; focus on people and things; active; breadth of interest; interactive; sociable; and outgoing.	Good at social interaction; enthusiastic and confident; stimulates communication and ideas; instigates action; open and straightforward.	Intellectual superficiality; intrusive; lack of respect for others' privacy; easily distracted by external stimuli.
Introversion (I)	Energized by inner world; focus on thoughts and concepts; reflective; depth of interest; concentration; inwardly directed.	Good at personal interaction; stays calm and focused; can concentrate intensely; develops ideas; uses discretion in talking.	May lose touch with outer world; bottles up emotions; keeps people at a distance; easily preoccupied; gives insufficient feedback.
Sensing (S)	Facts; data; details; concrete; practical; reality-based; present-oriented; utility.	Pragmatic; precise; stable; results-oriented; sensible; systematic; bases opinions on observations.	Lacks long-range outlook; may overlook implications and meanings; may reject innovative ideas.
Intuition (N)	Meanings; associations; possibilities; hunches, speculations; theoretical; future-oriented; novelty.	Imaginative; conceptualizes easily; creative; holistic perspective; intellectually tenacious; idealistic.	Unrealistic; out-of-touch; may overlook key variables or facts; bored by routine; scattered; overcomplicates.
Thinking (T)	Analysis; objective; logic; impersonal; critique; reason; criteria; justice; systematic inquiry; principles.	Rational; logical; analytical; assertive; deliberative; carefully weighs alternative; firm but fair; explains thoroughly.	Undervalues or suppresses own and others' feelings; overly analytical; cold; insensitive; critical; judgmental; overly formal.
Feeling (F)	Sympathy; consideration; subjective; humane; personal; trust; harmony; empathy; appreciates values; compassion; altruistic	Persuasive; empathic; warm; sensitive; demonstrative and expressive; draws out feelings of others; loyal; committed to values.	Overly sensitive; moody; may give indiscriminately; can become emotionally overburdened; unable to give unpleasant feedback
Judging (J)	Organized; planned; settled; closure; controls one's life; sets goals; structured; routine.	Plans, organizes, and controls well; persistent; life is well-structured; decisive; conscientious; reliable.	Closed-minded; inflexible; can jump to conclusions too quickly; intolerant; critical; judgmental.
Perceiving (P)	Pending; flexible; curious; spontaneity; tentative; lets life happen; open to change; undaunted by surprise.	Open-minded; adaptable; spontaneous; understanding; tolerant; inquisitive; zest for experience.	Indecisive; procrastinates; unfocused; disorganized; impulsive; may collect data too long before deciding.

Source: Adapted from Gardner&Martinko, 1996:47.

Management literature often visits cognitive styles that utilize Jung's theory of psychological types and MBTI as a widely accepted approach to measure personality of managers. Cognitive style is defined as "*an individual difference in how people perceive, think, solve problems, learn, motive and relate to each other*" (Hough, 2005) and identified in four categories which are sensing-thinking (*ST*), sensing-feeling (*SF*), intuition-thinking (*NT*) and intuition-feeling (*NF*) (Gallen, 2009). *ST* individuals are practical, guardian and logical. They show immediate responses and feedback in any situation. *SF* individuals share feelings and experiences with other people during the process of judging. *NF* individuals are intuitive and highly idealistic. They focus on

other people for effective communication. Finally, *NT* individuals are rational and inventive. They can also be described as being debater and defensive (Gallen, 2009; McPhail, 2002). This paper extends these four cognitive styles with the combination of sixteen MBTIs.

Figure 1

16 personality types of MBTI and the classification of MBTI types

Cognitive Styles	<u>ST Type</u>	<u>SF Type</u>	<u>NF Type</u>	<u>NT Type</u>
	ISTJ	ISFJ	INFJ	INTJ
	ISTP	ISFP	INFP	INTP
	ESTP	ESFP	ENFP	ENTP
	ESTJ	ESFJ	ENFJ	ENTJ

Source: Hough J.R. and Ogilvie D. (2005) "An empirical test of cognitive style and strategic decision outcomes", *Journal of Management Studies*, 42 (2), 417–448.

2.2. Customer Complaint Behavior

Numerous studies have investigated the possible link between personality types and customer behavior (Davidow&Dacin, 1997; Bodey&Grace, 2006). It is found that individual differences in personality influence behavior (Mowen&Speers, 1999). Similarly, personality types such as extroversion or introversion have been reported to have significant effects on consumer behavior including purchasing, changes in attitude and complaint behavior (Bodey&Grace, 2006).

Customer complaint behavior is defined by Ngai *et al.* (2007), as, "... an action taken by an individual which involves communicating something negative regarding a product or service either to the firm manufacturing or marketing that product or service or to some third-party organizational entity". There are many factors influencing customer complaint behavior, such as situational variables, product and personal variables, and the intensity of the consumer's dissatisfaction (Volkov *et al.*, 2002). Customer complaint behavior is reported as a function of dissatisfaction which results from the negative disconfirmation associated with the related purchasing expectations (Heung&Lam, 2003). Moreover, there is an opportunity for building customer loyalty upon reflecting seriously on customer complaints (Hansen *et al.*, 2010).

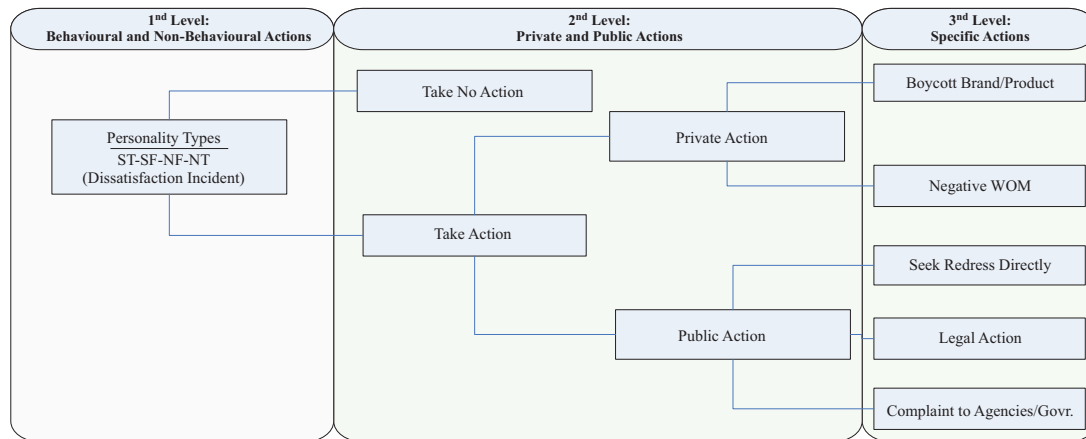
There is emerging research adopting a multidimensional perspective to predict and explain consumer complaint behavior. (Kitapci&Dortyol, 2009; Phau&Baird, 2008; Liu&McClure, 2001). For example, Mattila and Wirtz (2004) refer to Day and Landon's (1977) categorization of complaint behaviors with a two-level hierarchical classification (Figure I) where the first level distinguishes between non-behavioral (non-action) and behavioral (take action) actions stemming from dissatisfaction. Some dissatisfied consumers prefer doing nothing as a legitimate response (Phau&Sari, 2004) while others take some form of action. The second level varies from private action, which includes specific actions such as boycotting a firm's brand and products, negative word-of-mouth communication to friends, relatives and/or other people face-to-face or in social networks, to public action, which includes specific actions such as seeking redress directly, instigating legal actions and taking direct complaint actions to consumer agencies or government.

Whether any dissatisfied customer will take an action or not is the result of a decision-making process. If the individual chooses to take an action due to a bad experience, how the complaint will

be raised also involves another intrinsic decision-making. It is reported that introvert individuals are more inclined to engage in private complaint actions such as exiting or boycotting the firm brand and negative word-of-mouth. Extroverts, on the other hand, exhibit engagement with public complaint actions such as seeking redress directly and taking direct complaint actions to third party (Davidow&Dacin 1997). However, personality types and cognitive styles extend to more alternatives than introversion and extroversion, which are yet to be investigated within the domain of complaint behavior research. This paper aims to extend the literature in this particular focus.

Figure 2

Classification of Customer Complaint Behavior



Source: Adapted from Mattila and Wirtz, 2004.

3. METHODOLOGY

Individuals with different personality types may choose to exhibit different complaint behaviors upon a dissatisfactory experience. This study aims to understand the differences and similarities in the consumer complaint behaviors of individuals with different personality types and cognitive styles. The scope and the depth of this study is extended to a series of hypothesis.

H_1 : There is a significant difference in the complaint behaviors among different personality types (ST, SF, NF, NT) in terms of: (a) public complaints, (b) private complaints and (c) no action.

H_{1-a} : There is a significant difference among personality types (ST, SF, NF, NT) in relation to the actions of a public complaint. H_{1-b} : There is a significant difference among personality types (ST, SF, NF, NT) in relation to the actions of a private complaint. H_{1-c} : There is a significant difference among personality types (ST, SF, NF, NT) in relation to the actions of no action.

The MBTI personality test was applied to managers of a finance company who were then asked to participate in our survey, which consisted of two sections. The first section of the questionnaire includes 9 items on a 5-point Likert scale for data collection, with “1” as “strongly disagree” and “5” as “strongly agree” (Likert, 1934), to measure dissatisfied complaint actions at the levels of no action, public and private actions. The second section includes questions regarding the demographic profiles (age, education level, income and gender) of the respondents. A pilot test of the questionnaire was completed in early February 2013 by the participation of four university staff. Pilot test respondents did not report any problems but a few minor wording change suggestions.

Subsequent to the satisfactory pilot test, a large-scale consumer questionnaire was administered by two graduate students to the managers of a large finance company in Turkey. 121 of the 168 managers were chosen based on the MBTI test results, and 116 of these participated in our questionnaire. Five managers were not included in the analysis because they were unavailable for reasons of annual leave, maternity leave etc., although they were included in the sample. Respondents completed the questionnaire in their mother tongue, Turkish. SPSS 19.0 for Windows was used for data analysis. Descriptive statistics such as means, frequencies, One-Way ANOVA test were calculated. Reliability and internal consistency of statements are measured by Cronbach's Alpha coefficient values.

Table 2

Demographic breakdown of respondents (n = 116)

Age	f	%	Education	f	%
26–29	17	14.6	High/Commerce School	11	9.5
30–33	38	32.8	Bachelor's Degree	77	66.3
34–37	33	28.5	Master's Degree	25	21.6
38–41	28	24.1	Ph.D. Degree	3	2.6
Total	116	100.0	Total	116	100.0
Gender	f	%	Income	f	%
Female	35	30.2	Lower Income	15	12.9
Male	81	69.8	Average Income	76	65.5
Total	116	100.0	Higher Income	25	21.6
			Total	116	100.0

Table 2 summarizes the demographics of the respondents. The sample of respondents contained approximately 70 per cent males and 30 per cent females. 14.6 per cent of the respondents were aged between 26 and 29 years, 32.8 per cent were aged between 30 and 33 years, 28.5 per cent aged between 34 and 37 years, and 24.1 per cent aged between 38 and 41 years. Close to 73 per cent of the respondents were married. 66.3 per cent of the respondents had bachelor's degree while 2.6 per cent of the respondents had Ph.D. degree. In terms of spending power, the majority of the participants subjectively thought that their incomes were average compared to other consumers.

3.1. Findings

The Cronbach's Alpha test was applied to assess the internal consistency and reliability of the scales. The Cronbach's Alpha value calculated for all the items was 0.784.

The Cronbach's Alpha value for four items of public action was 0.87 and for the four items in private action alpha was 0.73. But for no-action there is no value due to the limited number of items (one item). The mean values, maximum and minimum values, standard deviations, number of items and reliability analysis are summarized in Table 3. Literature reports that 44 per cent of consumers who are dissatisfied with a service make a complaint directly to the business (Bolfing, 1989). Our results indicate that complaining directly to a manager has the highest score, as well.

ANOVA, a hypothesis testing the procedure to evaluate the mean differences between two or more populations, was employed to analyze the data collected from the questionnaire survey. The mean difference is statistically significant in this study at the 1 per cent level when the corresponding significant value is equal to or less than 0.01. One-way analyses of variance

(ANOVA) were conducted on the mean scores of all sources and effects of stress across the four groups (sensing-thinking (*ST*), sensing-feeling (*SF*), intuition-thinking (*NT*) and intuition-feeling (*NF*)). Scheffe's test, which has been developed to compare all possible linear combinations between groups, is accepted as the most flexible post hoc type as it can stake out the error when the number of groups is high and as it pays no attention to the assumption that states the number of observations is equal in groups. For the purpose of this article, only significant results ($p < 0.01$) are reported.

Table 3
Descriptive Statistics of Variables

Variables (1–5 Scale)	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min-Max	Cronbach's α	Items
PUBLIC ACTION	3.75	0.873	2.0–5.0	0.87	4
Complain to manager	4.25	0.903			
Write a complaint letter	3.85	1.049			
Report to legal office	3.45	1.074			
Report the problem to consumer agency	3.44	1.074			
PRIVATE ACTION	4.06	0.535	2.8–5.0	0.73	4
Speak to friends/relatives about bad experience	4.37	0.666			
Warn friends/relatives	4.34	0.709			
Stop using product (forsaking)	3.95	0.828			
Speak to friends/relatives in social network	3.56	0.887			
NO ACTION	1.41	0.646	1.0–4.0	–	1

Table 4
ANOVA Test for Personality Types As Regards Complaint Behaviors

Complaint Behaviors		ST (n = 33)	SF (n = 33)	NF (n = 33)	NT (n = 33)	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
		Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean					
Public Action	Inter-groups					67.669	3	22.556	126.996	0.000
	Intra-groups	4.48	2.55	3.63	4.33	19.893	112	0.178		
	Total					87.562	115			
Private Action	Inter-groups					14.018	3	4.673	27.738	0.000
	Intra-groups	3.52	4.41	4.22	4.16	18.867	112	0.168		
	Total					32.957	115			
No Action	Inter-groups					6.170	3	2.057	5.513	0.001
	Intra-groups	1.21	1.17	1.70	1.58	41.786	112	0.373		
	Total					47.957	115			

We carried out a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to analyze if the mean values of personality types are significantly different in relation to public action, private action and no action (Table V). The results showed that there are significant differences in relation to public action ($F = 126.996$; $p < 0.000$), private action ($F = 27.738$; $p < 0.000$) and no action ($F = 5.513$; $p < 0.01$).

Accordingly, *ST* individuals choose to complain via private actions less while *SF* individuals choose to complain via public actions less than the other personality types. Besides, *NF* individuals are more inclined to choose no action for complaint when compared to *ST* and *SF* individuals.

Table 5

Homogenous subsets from Scheffe's test for public, private actions and no action

Variables	N	Subset for $\alpha = 0.05$		
		1	2	3
FOR PUBLIC ACTION				
SF	29	2.55		
NF	30		3.63	
NT	24			4.33
ST	33			4.48
Significance		1.000	1.000	0.645
FOR PRIVATE ACTION				
ST	33	3,52		
NT	24		4.16	
NF	30		4.22	
SF	29		4.41	
Significance		1.000	0.768	
FOR NO ACTION				
SF	29	1.17		
ST	33	1.21		
NT	24		1.58	
NF	30		1.70	
Significance		0.97	0.914	

A post hoc analysis (Scheffe's test) shows where the significant intra-group differences occur (Table VI). Accordingly, *NT* ($\mu = 4.33$) and *ST* ($\mu = 4.48$) individuals are more likely to engage in public complaint behavior than *SF* ($\mu = 2.55$) and *NF* ($\mu = 3.63$) individuals. Moreover, *SF* ($\mu = 4.41$), *NF* ($\mu = 4.22$) and *NT* ($\mu = 4.16$) individuals are more likely to engage in private complaint behavior than *ST* ($\mu = 3.52$) individuals, respectively. Finally, *NF* ($\mu = 1.70$) and *NT* ($\mu = 1.58$) individuals are more likely to choose no action for exhibiting complaint behavior than *ST* ($\mu = 1.21$) and *SF* ($\mu = 1.17$) individuals. These findings result in the rejection of the null hypothesis with regard to H_{1-a} , H_{1-b} and H_{1-c} .

4. DISCUSSION

Sensing-Feeling and Intuition-Feeling individuals have been described to share feelings and experiences with others via effective communication during the process of judging by the management literature. Our results reveal that Sensing-Feeling ($\mu = 4.41$) and Intuition-Feeling ($\mu = 4.22$) individuals are more willing to engage in private complaining actions such as negotiation, word-of-mouth with friends and family when compared to other personality types. On another note, altruism, concern for the welfare of others (Velazquez *et al.*, 2010) is seen as a characteristic of Feeling (Furnham *et al.*, 2003) individuals, and it is related to negative word-of-mouth (Chelminski&Coulter, 2011). Thus, Sensing-Feeling and Intuition-Feeling individuals are altruistically motivated to help others. Referring to the other characteristics of Feeling, as being persuasive, demonstrative and expressive, and Intuition, as conceptualizing his/her idea easily, Intuition-Feeling individuals are driven to engage in effective communication.

The results indicate that Sensing-Thinking ($\mu = 4.48$) and Intuition-Thinking ($\mu = 4.33$) individuals are more inclined to engage in public complaint behaviors including complaining directly to the business or using other public complaint instruments. Within the scope of Sensing-Thinking, being logical and showing immediate responses and feedback in any situation can be seen as the reasons to complain directly. Likewise, for Intuition-Thinking individuals, being rational and debater are the motivators that lead them to public actions. Accordingly, with the influences of being results-oriented, as a strength of Sensing, and explaining thoroughly, as a strength of Thinking, Sensing-Thinking individuals seek redress directly. As distinct from Sensing-Thinking people, Intuition-Thinking individuals, who are idealistic, feel themselves taking part in public actions and spending time and making efforts in legal actions.

Finally, the results emphasize that Intuition-Feeling ($\mu = 1.70$) individuals choose to take no actions related with their bad experiences. However, Intuition-Feeling individuals are defined as idealistic; therefore, a complaint action could be expected from these individuals. Yet, the strength of Feeling could result in loyalty, which is coupled with oversensitivity, might prevent these individuals from raising a complaint. In other words, loyalty combined with oversensitivity might lead to no actions of complaint despite the idealistic state.

4.1. Conclusion

The purpose of this paper is to explore the potential differences and similarities in attitudes toward complaint behaviors among different personality types. The present study provides invaluable managerial cues for a deeper understanding of the underlying motivations with regard to personality characteristics of both complaining and non-complaining behaviors of customers.

Finally, the results show that Intuition-Thinking and Sensing-Thinking individuals tend to engage in public action, while Sensing-Feeling individuals prefer to take private action, and Intuition-Feeling individuals take no action, which is a different form of complaint behavior.

4.2. Limitations of the Study and Recommendations for Future Research

The ability to generalize our research findings is limited by the limited scope of the participants surveyed. As the sample only contains managers, a wider range of consumer population is not represented. Besides, as the possibility that the managers may have the characteristics of their industry was ignored, the generalization of the results to other industries may seem unfounded. Therefore, future research should take this point into account. Moreover, the effects of environmental factors may differ depending on the different demographic characteristics such

as age, gender, income and/or education. Future research is required to collect data from the various segments of customers with an increased sample size in order to analyze the proposed theory in this paper. Furthermore, the use of a longitudinal approach might provide a better insight into customer complaint behavior for different product categories.

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Authenticity in marketing: a response to consumer resistance?

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ABSTRACT

Prior research points out the emerging phenomenon of consumer resistance in terms of resistance towards the marketing discipline. At the same time, extant literature suggests the increasing importance of authenticity in marketing.

This study investigates the research question whether and by which means authenticity in marketing can be a response to consumer resistance. The authors conducted qualitative research within which one part of the interviews was conducted with marketing-resistant participants, another one with non-resistant respondents. This permitted to elaborate on divergences between the two groups concerning the evaluation of authenticity.

The results illustrate that resistant consumers showed a greater sensitivity for authenticity and clear preferences for authentic brands compared to a more indifferent assessment of the comparison group. Resistant consumers were more likely to identify themselves with the presented authentic brands and appreciated their benefits such as autonomy, closeness, quality assurance, individuality and economic rebellion that directly contrast with the elaborated points of criticism about marketing. This suggests that, in order to regain consumers that are critical towards the marketing discipline, the elaborated authenticity facets could be applied to brands as an ‘antidote’.

JEL classification: M00, M30, M31

Keywords: authenticity, authentic marketing, consumer resistance, marketing skepticism

1. INTRODUCTION

The marketing discipline faces an incontrovertible gap between its self-concept and the consumers’ perception (Heath and Heath, 2008: 1036). While marketing initially defines its purpose in satisfying customer needs (Kotler *et al.*, 2009: 25), it seems to be facing an image problem nowadays (Sheth and Sisodia, 2006: 26). A form of consumer behavior called consumer

resistance describes the growing distrust and cynicism toward the entire discipline (Galvagno, 2011; Heath and Heath, 2008; Izberk-Bilgin, 2008; Sheth and Sisodia, 2006) or sub-disciplines such as advertising (Darke and Ritchie, 2007; Rumbo, 2002). Consequential behavior such as ad-avoidance strategies (Rumbo, 2002), boycotting (Fournier, 1998) or brand avoidance (Lee *et al.*, 2009a; 2009b) have been examined in depth but extensive research has not conveyed tangible ‘antidotes’ to this tendency. The following article contributes to the extant literature by elaborating one possible directive as a way to overcome consumers’ resistance towards marketing and regain their trust step by step. The authors examined if and to what extent the phenomenon of authenticity could represent the key to unlock consumer resistance.

Regarding the academic body of work, authenticity (Gundlach and Neville, 2012; Dickinson, 2011; Molleda, 2010; Beverland, 2009; Beverland and Farrelly, 2010; Gilmore and Pine, 2007; Van den Bergh *et al.*, 2009, etc.) as well as consumer resistance (Cherrier, 2009; Fournier, 1998; Heath and Heath, 2008; Holt, 2002; Izberk-Bilgin, 2008; Lee *et al.*, 2009a; 2009b, Obermiller and Spangenberg, 1998, etc.) are increasingly examined in extant research on an exclusive basis. However, previous research has not investigated in depth a possible relationship between the two phenomena. Only slight conjunctions have so far been drawn between the two phenomena (Gustafsson, 2006: 522; Holt, 2002), such as Lee *et al.* (2009: 423) referring to inauthenticity as one reason for a specific type of brand avoidance or Moore (2003: 104) indicating authentic communication as a valuable means of regaining people’s faith in marketing, all of them representing rudimentarily the academic basis for this study.

2. THE EMERGENCE OF CONSUMER RESISTANCE

The creation of value for the customer is the ultimate aim of marketing (Armstrong *et al.*, 2009: 3) and could be translated, according to Kotler and Armstrong (2010: 29), into understanding the customer’s needs and satisfying them. This definition would imply a comprehensive positive view of the marketing discipline, advocating the customer and improving his life.

However, marketing practices have increasingly been critically questioned and even accused (Galvagno, 2011; Heath and Heath, 2008; Sheth and Sisodia, 2006; Klein, 2002; Rumbo, 2002). The mutually beneficial relationship is perceived to tilt over in such a way that marketing takes an unfair advantage of the consumer and thus becomes unethical (Sheth and Sisodia, 2006: 4). As a consequence, consumer resistance as one form of consumer behavior is theorized (Heath and Heath, 2008: 2025; Izberk-Bilgin, 2008: 808).

According to Penalzoza and Price (1993: 123, following Poster, 1992), the term ‘resisting’ can be defined as “*to withstand the force or effect of*” something. Different resistance forms can be classified in terms of their intensity ranging from passive occurrences in terms of avoidance behaviors or downshifting (Lee *et al.*, 2009b: 421), up to active rebellion such as boycotting (Fournier, 1998: 89). This article focuses on resistant consumers who not only incorporate a set of negative attitudes, but also adapt their consumption behavior to their convictions by at least reducing the consumption of specific brands or products. Compared to the concept of anti-consumption, consumer resistance is thus deciphered as a more active form of consumer behavior (Garcia-Bardidia *et al.*, 2011: 1790, Galvagno, 2011: 1699). However, the results can just as well be applied to skeptical or cynic consumers.

Following Holt (2002: 89), the marketplace rejuvenates itself via consumer resistance. But, when not wanting to leave the market to its own devices, it becomes evident that most of the existing studies do not extensively research implications for businesses, intervention strategies or have advice on how to tackle the issue (Cherrier, 2009; Chylinski and Chu, 2010; Heath and Heath, 2008; Izberk-Bilgin, 2008; Obermiller and Spangenberg, 1998).

In fact, only brief managerial recommendations for upcoming marketing resistance due to branding issues, such as homogenization, saturation and deceptiveness, exist in the extant literature (Dobscha, 1998; Holt, 2002; Lee *et al.*, 2009a).

When anti-clutter advertising does not work anymore (Rumbo 2002: 132), the notions of honesty, genuineness and authenticity are found as “*brand avoidance antidotes*” (Dobscha, 1998: 96; Lee *et al.*, 2009a: 177). In order to serve the postmodern consumer who creates his identity via brands, “*branded cultural resources must be perceived as authentic*” (Holt, 2002: 83). Lee *et al.*, (2009a: 177) described the approach against brand avoidance more strategically: “*The first antidote involves a genuine adaptation of the brand, one that is initiated from the highest point within the company*”. This indicates a first hint that authenticity can be a possible solution to consumer resistance.

3. THE EMERGENCE OF AUTHENTICITY

The second investigated phenomenon, authenticity, is considered to be a new business imperative (Gilmore and Pine, 2007: 1), being derived from the Latin word ‘*authenticus*’ and from the Greek word ‘*authentikos*’, meaning “*worthy of acceptance, authoritative, trustworthy, not imaginary, false or imitation, conforming to an original*” (Cappannelli and Cappannelli, 2004: 1).

When classifying authenticity, Grayson and Martinec (2004) distinguished between indexical and iconic authenticity, whereupon the former one is characterized as an object that is “the original” and not an imitation. The index does “*refer to cues that (...) are thought to have a factual and spatio-temporal link with something else*” (Grayson and Martinec, 2004: 297, following Peirce, 1998). The latter one, iconic authenticity, is depicted as a reproduction or recreation of an indexically authentic object. Following Peirce (1998), an icon is considered as an object that is “*perceived as being similar to something*” (Grayson and Martinec, 2004: 298).

“Creating authenticity in marketing” is partly considered as a paradox in itself. Once you intend to create it, it seems to become artificial. When authenticity is claimed actively, immediate suspicion may come up (Beverland, 2009: 25). Given the fact that authenticity exists far from mass-markets, provided by unique and artisanal production processes from a place you know (Cova and Cova, 2001: 78), then the term “brand authenticity” can only be considered as a compromise, not reflecting “real authenticity”. According to Gilmore and Pine (2007: 89), “*All human enterprise is ontologically fake – that is, in its very being it is inauthentic – and yet output from that enterprise can be phenomenologically real – that is, it is perceived as authentic by the individuals who buy it.*”

The authors took this approach as a basis for the following research, determining as authentic what is considered authentic by consumers, basing it on the construct elaborated above.

4. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND FOR THE RESEARCH QUESTION

Based on theoretical secondary research, the authors identified first indications supporting the main research question when regarding the reasons for emergence of both phenomena. Table 1 specifies the key drivers of consumer resistance and authenticity and highlights clear congruencies.

While consumer resistance is a reactive form of consumer behavior (Izberk-Bilgin, 2008: 808; Lee *et al.*, 2009a: 169), authenticity is an active brand proposition (Carroll and Wheaton, 2009: 256; Van den Bergh *et al.*, 2009: 9). The authenticity construct answers the reasons for emergence of authenticity; so for instance does the authenticity facet of uniqueness respond to ubiquity, one reason for emergence of authenticity. As those authenticity drivers are similar to the ones

for consumer resistance, it seems to be logical that authenticity could also respond to the drivers of consumer resistance. In this case, uniqueness responds equally to saturation, one elaborated reason for the emergence of consumer resistance.

Table 1

Theoretical congruencies of consumer resistance and authenticity

Drivers of consumer resistance	Drivers of authenticity	Responding dimension of authenticity
Corporate domination and cultural imperialism (Izberk-Bilgin, 2008; Klein, 2002; Lee <i>et al.</i> , 2009a)	Complexities of globalization (Beverland, 2009: 23)	Heritage and relationship to place (Beverland, 2006; 2009; Van den Bergh <i>et al.</i> , 2009)
Risk perception and functional dissatisfaction (Kleijnen <i>et al.</i> , 2009; Chylinski and Chu, 2010)	Risk minimization (Lunadro, 2009; Van den Bergh <i>et al.</i> , 2009)	Quality commitments and method of production (Beverland, 2006; 2009; Cova and Cova, 2001)
Deceptiveness and loss of trust (Maathuis <i>et al.</i> , 2004; Obermiller and Spangenberg, 1998)	Loss of institutional trust (GfK Custom Research, 2010; Gilmore and Pine, 2007)	Downplaying commercial motives and quality commitments (Beverland, 2006; 2009)
Homogenization (Brown and Williams, 2010)	Homogenization (Lunardo 2009)	Stylistic consistency and sticking to your roots (Beverland, 2009)
Saturation (Gerzema and Lebar, 2008; Rumbo, 2002)	Ubiquity (Van den Bergh <i>et al.</i> , 2009)	Uniqueness and appearing as artisanal amateurs (Beverland, 2009; Van den Bergh <i>et al.</i> , 2009)

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The authors conducted a qualitative study for primary research via semi-structured in-depth interviews, as this is appropriate to explain relationships between two marketing constructs (Shiu *et al.*, 2009: 173). A focus was set on brand management in order to narrow the research field. This seemed adequate as talking about specific brands during the interview helped the interviewees to overcome the difficulty of discussing the abstract authenticity construct. Following Beverland (2009: 27), “*one critical manifestation of consumers’ search for authenticity is brands*”. The authors exclusively selected brands of the food sector as all participants were checked to be familiar with the selection of these. Additionally, by sticking to one category, biases due to different category involvement were avoided.

Generally, the sample is a randomly selected convenience sample, typically used in early stages of research (Shiu *et al.*, 2009:480). Heterogeneity in gender, age, profession and education is considered in order to minimize biases (Beverland and Farrelly, 2010: 840).

However, the sample is split along one crucial variable: marketing-resistance. Two groups are interviewed: marketing-resistant people and a group of a similar size with people that are in accordance with or at least accept marketing practices. This adds more depth to the study, allowing for deciphering variances between the groups if they exist. One test interview was executed beforehand in order to validate and test the interview guide in terms of timing and stringency.

For this split, a screening questionnaire identifies each respondent beforehand (see also Appendix 1 for the screening questionnaire). Items are validated statements from the “Handbook of marketing scales” (Bearden *et al.*, 2010).

Table 2 provides an overview of the interviewees and the principal group split.

Table 2

List of participants and group split

	Respondent	Gender	Age	Education	Profession
Group 1: Non-resistant participants	Ruth	female	60	secondary school (8 years), job training	housewife, parttime gardener
	Stefanie	female	45	secondary school (10 years), job training	bank employee
	Ilka	female	28	studies of Germanistics	jobbing in gastronomy
	Marie-Bel	female	25	studies of business administration	student
	Grid	female	54	studies of history, Germanistics, theater sciences	editor
	Sarah	female	22	studies of business administration	student
	Tanja	female	34	studies of political sciences	PhD student
	Christian	male	25	studies of energy and process engineering	student
	Jacob	male	25	studies of sports and English	student
Group 2: Resistant participants	Bernd	male	31	studies of pedagogy	circus pedagogue, student
	Anne	female	27	studies of Germanistics, politics, philosophy	stage direction assistant
	Eva	female	28	secondary school (13 years), fashion designer training	self-employed
	Malte	male	25	studies of physics and English	student
	Nils	male	24	studies of sports and Spanish	student
	Sebastian	male	26	studies of nautical sciences	nautical inspector

To summarize, the primary research consisted of two phases:

- 1) Screening of the participants and classifying them into resistant or non-resistant
- 2) Conducting the interview.

In order to get a detailed answer to the initial research question “To what extent does authenticity in marketing play a role for people being resistant towards marketing (in comparison to people being in accordance with marketing)?”, the researchers elaborated six specific research propositions, breaking down the main research question into six parts. The interview guide was elaborated along these research propositions, with a set of questions in each section aimed at answering specific research propositions.

The interview consisted of the following subsections (see Appendix 2 for the interview guide):

- 1) Warm-up
- 2) Marketing in general and branding
- 3) Authenticity
- 4) Influence on buying behavior

After a warm-up at the beginning of the interview, the authors explained the meaning of marketing in order to provide a common knowledge basis for each of the respondents. Interviewees were then asked to elaborate on their attitude towards marketing by means of likes and dislikes and in connection to their consumption behavior. The motivation and reasons for resistance were especially expected to become clear and were assumed to be in line with the elaborated theoretical reasons, that are:

Research proposition P1: Resistant participants criticize marketing due to one or more of the elaborated reasons of domination, cultural imperialism, value incongruence, functional dissatisfaction, perceived risk, deceptiveness, homogenization, saturation.

The third part of the interview elaborated on authenticity and authentic brands. In order to introduce the subject of branding, the authors first asked respondents about their favorite brands and brands they rejected. Subsequently, the authors explained in detail the notion of brand image.

Afterwards, six authentically branded products as well as six inauthentic counterparts were presented to the interviewees at random (classified authentic according to the six authenticity facets of Beverland (2006: 253): *Sylter Salatfrische, Tannenzäpfle, Bonne Maman, Fritz Kola, Viva con Agua, Buko* and inauthentic: *Knorr Salatdressing, Becks, Zentis, Fanta, Vittel, Philadelphia*). The authors classified the brands as authentic when they fulfilled the six authenticity dimensions identified by Beverland (2006: 253). Respondents' task then was to split the given brands into two groups according to the most evident differentiation criteria of their brand image. This mapping exercise helped in revealing whether they possessed sensitivity for authenticity or whether they had other differentiation criteria in mind that were consequently relevant to them (Desai, 2002: 121). Hence:

Research proposition P2: Resistant participants are supposed to have a higher sensitivity for authenticity. Thus they are more likely to classify the proposed brands according to authentic and inauthentic brands.

Later on, the authors discussed the term 'authenticity' in detail in terms of its definition and facets. This also happened in reference to the given brands as this facilitated elaborating facets of the construct. Furthermore, this part allowed figuring out whether there were differences in perceptions of authenticity between the groups. As "*detailed knowledge may be required to identify authentic varieties*" (Carroll and Wheaton, 2009: 260) and knowledge about specific cues attributing authenticity are necessary (Beverland, 2009: 25), it can be concluded that:

Research proposition P3: Resistant participants have a clearer understanding about the notion of authenticity.

After having specified the authenticity concept, an evaluation took place in the last part in order to elaborate the consumers' motivations within the quest for authenticity. Following the results of Lee *et al.* (2009b: 423), inauthenticity is one reason for brand avoidance. Vice versa, authenticity could be an important attribute for (re-)engaging with brands. This is supported by Moore's work (2003: 522) that points out the importance of authentic communication for people who have lost faith in marketing. That is:

Research proposition P4: Resistant participants obtain more important benefits of the consumption of authentically branded products compared to non-resistant participants.

Research proposition P5: Authentic brands could help (re-)gain resistant participants' enthusiasm for marketing.

In this part, the respondents elaborated on the influence authenticity can have on them and were asked directly about the authenticity paradox in order to check on credibility and business

implications. It was assumed that non-resistant participants were not bothered in depth about the subject and consequently neither about the paradox, given the fact that the authenticity paradox takes place at a meta-level and implies being engaged with the subject (Beverland, 2009: 25).

Research proposition P6: Resistant participants are more concerned with the paradox of “created authenticity” from marketing.

6. RESEARCH FINDINGS

6.1. Attitudes about marketing

Understanding of marketing

When analyzing the results of the word association test for marketing, clear differences in the initial associations between the two differing groups could be ascertained. The non-resistant interviewees mostly employed a descriptive approach, associating it with advertising such as TV commercials. Furthermore, the activity of marketing itself was tried to be explained as “*selling products*” or “*creating awareness*”. Sporadically, appreciative evaluations or tangible associations as “*Apple, black sunglasses*” occurred.

In contrast to this, the group of resistant respondents instantly came up with various negative judgments and evaluations. The participants stated their rejection from several perspectives, on the one hand describing marketing’s techniques as being “*manipulative, kidding people and controlling one’s behavior*”, and on the other hand criticizing a broader capitalistic scope, mentioning “*huge volumes*” and mechanisms such as “*outmatching others*”. The definition of marketing was clearly less objective, e.g. “*convince for buying*” instead of “*bringing products to the market*” in the non-resistant group. Once again, resistant interviewees added judgments even when mentioning advertising (described directly in a negative way as dull or crappy).

Marketing evaluation

Evident differences also manifested between the two groups when it came to stating positive and negative aspects of marketing. Non-resistant participants indicated more important personal benefits of the marketing discipline for themselves, such as variety and diversity, information and orientation as well as entertainment. Their criticism points can be circled down to deceptiveness, saturation and monotony.

Regarding the resistant participants’ positive mentions, their focus lay on quality improvements and the initial development of products.

Concerning the negative aspects of marketing, the number of mentions relative to the number of participants of this group increased, as well as the intensity of the main points of criticism that could be deducted from the mentions:

- **Manipulation:** Similarly to the previous group results, the issue of dishonesty in marketing dominated. But in contrast to the non-resistant group, where deceptiveness was the main issue, in this group the gravity of criticism increased. Respondents complained about a purposeful attempt of influencing and controlling the consumer’s behavior, thus it was seen at a more personal level.
- **Lack of quality:** A lack of product quality was another major aspect that was elaborated on, referring to predominant superficiality and exclusive profit-orientation of corporations instead of high quality, functionality and customer service. This was a major issue for three of the respondents, also because quality was one of the main purchasing criteria.

- **Abundance:** Huge quantities of advertising and marketing activities were also criticized, supporting extant literature suggesting information overload as an “*important antecedent to resistance*” (Kleijnen *et al.*, 2009: 350). Respondents mentioned the permanent exposure to advertising but also the financial resources that are wasted. Additionally, saturation and subsequently irrelevant product innovations go along with this.
- **Disturbing and aggressive advertising** was another aspect, aimed at selling as much as possible. Exaggerations such as “*mega, hyper, super*” in advertising were disliked and might result in consumer skepticism (Obermiller and Spangenberg, 1998: 159).

In conclusion, research proposition P1 can be supported; respondents criticize marketing due to the theoretically elaborated reasons of value incongruence, functional dissatisfaction, deceptiveness, homogenization and saturation. For the group of resistant participants, the aspect of domination could be added, as well as a greater depth of criticism in terms of purposeful manipulation.

Attitude towards brands

The results of discourses about brands suggest a different enthusiasm about these. While the resistant group preferred brands such as Miele, Manufactum, NoaNoa due to quality attributes, participants of the non-resistant group also indicated that they were inspired by sophisticated brand images (Adidas, Lacoste, Massimo Dutti) and could feel enthusiastic about superficial attributes such as the packaging color. In terms of brand rejection, the results of resistant respondents clearly conveyed two main reasons for disapproval:

- **Value incongruence** of the individual and the company behind a brand was the most important reason among resistant participants when it comes to rejecting specific brands, supporting the findings of Chylinski and Chu (2010: 800). More specifically, this concerns bad working conditions and unfair treatment of the employees for which brands such as Nike or Lidl are rejected. Secondly, the disapproval of an organization’s political attitude reinforces rejection of a brand.
- **Corporate domination** is one of the triggers exclusively mentioned by the resistant group. Huge organizations are consequently rejected due to their power and size, such as McDonalds or Coca Cola (supporting the argumentation of Lee *et al.*, 2009b: 423). Inconsistencies in the corporate image and an unfair pricing policy are further motives for rejecting brands.

6.2. Sensitivity for authenticity

In order to elicit the sensitivity for authenticity, participants were asked to classify the brands that had been presented to them at random. The split was to be pursued according to differences in brand image in two groups. The term authenticity had not been mentioned beforehand. Following research proposition P2, critical respondents would rather be able to divide products according to the “authenticity split” conceived according to the authenticity dimensions by Beverland (2006: 253) compared to non-critical respondents.

The qualitative data suggests that all participants of the resistant group classified the products according to the assumed way. Their differentiation criterion was always either the size, degree of common knowledge or power of the brands. Inauthentic brands were named “*mainstream, dominating, mass-market, commercial, powerful*” whereas the authentic brands were called “*underdog, no-name, personal, good world, less known*”. This indicates that critical respondents had as a first thought the intended split in mind and attributed facets of authenticity to the brands as a classification criterion.

Contrarily, in the group of non-resistant participants, not even half of the participants divided the products in the intended way, also classifying them according to the degree of knowledge, mass-market or conventionality. Consequently, five out of nine interviewees built up a different split, choosing different differentiation criteria, such as “*health-indulgence, dynamic-traditional, civic-fresh, everyday-lifestyle, associations-no image*”.

This is a first indication and supports research proposition P2 that resistant consumers tend to have a greater sensitivity for authenticity and for authentic brands. Another fact supporting this assumption is that two respondents of the resistant group came up by themselves with the notion of authenticity and sanguinity without needing to be prompted. The fact that the rest of participants in this group did not come up with the word authenticity itself but described facets of it, such as “*closeness, good-world, niche-character, no profit-orientation*” suggests that the concept is perceived unconsciously.

Regarding the rest of the respondents who were prompted and asked which group (or, if a ‘wrong’ split was made, which brands) are more authentic, all resistant respondents attributed authenticity to the authentic brands and declared to prefer this group of brands. In contrast, only two out of nine non-resistant participants attributed authenticity to authentic brands. These findings also support the proposition that resistant respondents have a greater sensitivity for authenticity. In consequence, research proposition P2 is substantiated.

6.3. Definition and facets of authenticity

In coherence with what extant literature suggests (Cappannelli and Cappannelli, 2004: 1; Davis, 2010: 139; Molleda, 2009: 87; Taylor, 2001: 8), the research findings reveal various definitions of the term authenticity. However, no evident differences between the groups occurred in this part. Consequently, research proposition P3 cannot be confirmed. Mostly, informants defined authenticity as honesty, truthfulness and genuineness. Furthermore, characterizations of consistency, integrity and credibility were predominantly mentioned.

As the brands that were used in the interviews had been chosen according to the theoretical elaborated attributes of authenticity based on Beverland (2006: 253), similarities with the facets resulting from this study are a logical consequence. The authors identified the following major facets of authenticity from the interviews:

- **Low commercialization** is one main elaborated aspect as this conveys the contrasting position to global companies and supports small companies and the niche character of organizations. Confirming Beverland’s (2006: 256) authenticity facet of downplaying commercial motives, respondents in this study also mentioned the attribute of having other objectives than profit-orientation.
- **Nostalgia** as a facet is mainly revealed via executional details such as the typical ancient milk bottle form of Sylter Salatfrische, the traditional reference via the date on the packaging (1791 for Rothaus) and the handmade appeal transferred by Bonne Maman.
- **Exclusiveness** is closely connected to the previous facet, by means of conscious production and a small production lot size which indicate rarity of the product.
- **Consistency** is another important facet of authentic brands that has been revealed by the research results. Differing from Beverland’s findings (2006: 253), this does not only include constancy and few changes in design but is also attributed to the consistency of the information communicated to the outside versus the actual ingredients, thus referring to honesty. It also includes the consistency of the communicated brand image and the actual product. Vice versa, brands as Coca Cola claiming health and sponsoring sports are considered to be inauthentic.

- **Disinterestedness** could also be described as inner-orientation, representing the opposite of the typical market-orientation. Thus, participants mentioned individualism, being true to oneself and not exclusively focusing on the consumers' needs. Consequently, an authentic brand is not staging itself and pushing itself in the foreground. This supports Goldstein's point of view:
"The brand reeks of authenticity. The fact that it's not advertised everywhere and whispers rather than shouts its benefits, helps [it] convey something meaningful and subtle to consumers" (Goldstein, 2003: 62, following Beverland *et al.*, 2008).
- **Simplicity** is another facet revealed by the research results, being closely connected to the previous notion of disinterestedness. It refers mainly to the executional aspect of a plain and simple design, contrasting classical brands' stylish make-ups.
- **Regionality** in terms of local-rootedness is another aspect, representing an important basis for the benefits authenticity delivers such as identification described within this study. This context around an authentic brand is described as referential authenticity (Gilmore and Pine, 2007: 49).
- **Personalization** similarly provides a basis for identification for the participants due to e.g. the two faces on the Fritz Kola logo that convey humanity and assurance of good quality.
- **Transparency** is the last facet of authentic brands revealed by the research results, referring to the communication of the product's make-up. It should be as clear as possible, implemented via visible information on the packaging or via disclosure of the method of production, supporting Beverland's findings (2006: 255).

6.4. Benefits of authenticity in consumption

When asking respondents about the importance of authentic brands or to what extent authenticity plays a role for the interviewees, findings suggest that proposition P4 can be supported: all resistant participants indicated their preference for authentic brands and re-explained why authenticity was important to them. This supports Woodruffe-Burton and Wakenshaw (2011: 70) who pointed out the construction of identity and the self via consumption. Their elaboration on benefits of the consumption of authentically branded products was much more detailed and deciphered to what extent they value authenticity. In contrast, only one out of nine non-critical participants clearly stated the importance of authenticity, whereas the rest of this group clearly was less involved. Accordingly, those people indicated benefits they got from the consumption of inauthentic brands.

Concerning authentic brands, the qualitative data permits conveying six main benefits that are provided by these. The authors based the results on indications of all participants. This is because there were few differences between the groups in terms of the kind of mentions of benefits but in the evaluation of importance of these benefits.

- **Quality assurance** is the sole functional benefit delivered by authentic brands within this study. It is provided by truthfulness and assumed conscious production as well as by executional details, as for instance the two faces of Fritz Kola that are *"assuring with their face that the product has a certain quality"*.
- **Autonomy** is highlighted as a principal benefit by the research findings. This supports one of the main benefits Beverland and Farrelly (2010) pointed out in their research under the aspect of 'control', referring to *"personal sovereignty over consumption choices"* (Beverland and Farrelly, 2010: 842). Respondents of this study depicted this as making conscious purchasing decisions, being critical in their product choice and due to the disinterestedness of authentic brands respondents felt rather free from marketing influence in their choices.

- **Closeness** refers on the one hand to a notion of warmth, either expressed by the personal appeal, by the emotions of nostalgia or by down-to-earthiness of the brands that are transmitted for instance by the founder myth. On the other hand, regional connectedness transmits closeness. Knowing about a brand's origin permits the participants to develop a trust relationship with the brand, which is crucial as trust is closely linked to authenticity (Gustafsson, 2006: 522). When coming from the same city, respondents partly even pointed out a "*feeling of belonging with the product*".
- **Individuality** allows participants to distinguish themselves from the mainstream and to claim distinctiveness and exclusiveness, being partly also connected to the rarity of the products.
- **Economic rebellion** is experienced by the participants from two directions. Supporting small "underdog brands" is one idea participants want to express in order to foster alternative ideas and diversity, whereas rebellion against the big global brands depicts the reverse side. This occurred mainly with resistant respondents in a very predominant and conscious way, with notions of wanting to 'hurt' the big players.
- **Identification** is one main emotional benefit of authentic brands emerging from this study. Several respondents mentioned value congruence between the brand's and their own values (e.g. truthfulness or social responsibility). One participant underlined this point: "*I can identify with these products, it is consistent with my convictions*". This quotation is a salient example of how participants share values and beliefs with those brands. Additionally, when consuming authentic products in public, they also have a self-expressive function as to communicating a certain mindset and convictions. Literature suggests that an expressive and self-identification function helps consumers to communicate certain messages about themselves such as their values or what they find valuable to aspire for (Franzen and Moriarty, 2008: 85).

7. CONCLUSION

The initial question of this research has been to find out to what extent authenticity in marketing plays a role for people being resistant towards marketing, compared to people being in accordance with marketing.

The research pointed out the main points of criticism about marketing for both non-resistant and resistant participants. The latter ones confirmed deeper and more intense disadvantages of the discipline and felt personally more involved in the subject.

Analyzing the results in a broader context, the assumption comes up that an overall political criticism correlates with consumer resistance. This is suggested by the findings as the resistant participants tended to criticize the capitalistic system as a whole, including the large, dominating organizations it supports, but not only marketing specifically.

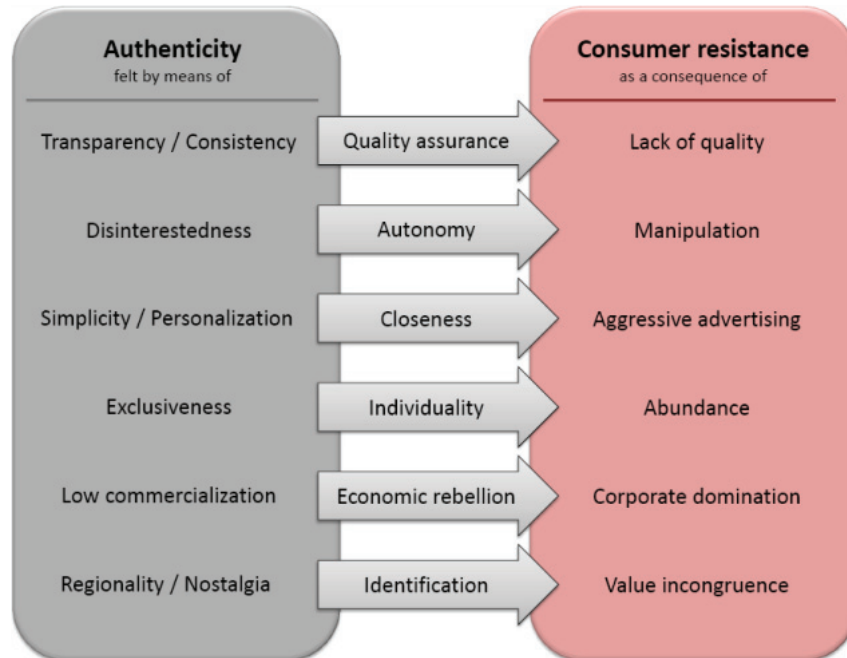
In the course of the study, it was illustrated that resistant respondents showed a greater sensitivity for authentic brands and had more ease in classifying the proposed products according to an authentic and inauthentic brand image. However, their understanding of the notion of authenticity was not explicitly clearer (although they were more at ease talking about brand image).

Nevertheless, resistant respondents had clearer preferences for authentic brands compared to inauthentic brands and indicated valuable benefits of authenticity for them, whereas non-resistant respondents also showed preferences for "mainstream brands" and pointed out several benefits of them. When asking them directly, all resistant respondents admitted that authentic brands could help (re-)gain enthusiasm for marketing. Consequently, the crucial research proposition P5 can be supported.

Figure 1 summarizes the elaborated findings of this study and provides an answer to the main research question, as it deciphers which benefits of authenticity provide a direct response to the points of criticism that are those of the resistant group of interviewees.

Figure 1

Facets of authenticity accounting for benefits that oppose marketing criticism points



On the left side the facets of authenticity are listed. One or two of them account mainly (but not exclusively) for one benefit delivered by authentic brands. These are illustrated by the arrows and each directly contrasts with one point of criticism mentioned for marketing. These criticism points on the right side are the ones mentioned by the resistant group, elaborated in this study within the section of marketing evaluation and reasons for rejecting brands.

For instance, the facets of consistency and transparency provide assurance of quality to the consumer and oppose the criticism of lacking quality which turned out to be one main criticism point resistant consumers claimed. The inner-orientation or disinterestedness facet of authenticity provides the consumer with autonomy and freedom of choice as he is not purposefully manipulated and influenced in his buying decision. Another stated criticism point of marketing was aggressive advertising that provokes a distance and annoyance with the consumer. This upcoming distance can be opposed by authenticity facets in terms of personalization or simplicity as they transmit the emotional benefit of closeness. The criticism of overload and abundance can be contrasted by individuality, provided by the authentic brand facet of exclusiveness and rarity. Closely connected is the notion of low commercialization that often refers to a small company size and provides consumers with a feeling of rebellion against the big players, consequently opposing corporate domination structures. Finally, regional or nostalgic attributes of brands help to create identification with an authentic brand that is the opposite of value incongruence.

This conclusive image shows vividly that authenticity with all its facets can obviously be considered as an antidote for consumer resistance, especially as the criticism points are the ones mentioned by resistant respondents.

Moreover, this graph serves not only as an overview of the research results, but at the same time contains managerial implications. That is, if a brand aims to address resistant consumers or

aims to shift its negative brand image at a specific point of criticism, the corresponding antidote could be reinforced in communication.

However, it has to be considered that this is a rough overview, whereas authenticity is a holistic concept in itself of which several facets contribute to several benefits (e.g. regionality was indicated to also convey closeness). This is not explicitly shown here due to the simplification of the graphic.

Furthermore, business implications need to be considered prudently because providing “perceived authenticity” goes hand in hand with a credibility issue and can quickly evoke a paradox. Nevertheless, this graphic highlights the power of authenticity when the question is about coping with the phenomenon of consumer resistance; with honesty and truthfulness, one is assured to be on the right track.

8. RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

The most important limitation within this study is the small sample size. This allows no generalizations as it lacks reliability (Shiu et al., 2009: 174) and consequently the findings need to be considered within the context and frame in which the study was conducted. The quantity of the sample is not representative and coincidental specifics that might result do not at all represent a global view. In addition, there was no split according to age, gender, education or other socio-demographic variables due to the convenience sample. Thus, involuntary biases could be the consequence.

Furthermore, the content and validity of the screening questionnaire and the classification of participants according to resistant and non-resistant respondents are not objective matters, and both the questionnaire and the classification could have been conducted differently. The order of the questions as well as the different degrees of confidence toward the interviewees can also have an influence on the answers.

Moreover, the reduction of the chosen brands to one category, fast moving consumer goods, might reveal results that are not necessarily a representative account for other categories and consequently no generalization is possible (as talking about authenticity in general). The elaborated criticisms predominantly refer to consumer markets and reveal nothing about the perception of B2B or non-profit marketing. Furthermore, interviewees were only asked about the proposed brands, thus their enthusiasm about authentic brands does not automatically imply an enthusiasm about authenticity in marketing in general.

Within the analysis, inaccuracies due to translation may occur. Later on, the analysis is a subjective matter and could have been done differently by another person. “Though the analysis is based on the descriptions presented by the interviewees, the interpretations in the final report are those of the researcher” (Rubin and Rubin, 2005: 201). In any case, the analysis is speculative as it is a theoretical interpretation and consequently no proof of any kind but rather represents conjectures.

9. FUTURE RESEARCH

First of all, further research is needed in order to verify the validity of the research results. A quantitative study could be appropriate for quantifying the ability of authenticity to gain or regain marketing enthusiasm among resistant consumers. This could also be useful for categorizing people more specifically according to their demographics and to see whether and how socio-demographic variables influence consumer resistance and the appeal of authenticity. More concretely, a relationship between an overall political criticism and the effects on consumer

behavior and a critical attitude is suggested by the results of this study and could be investigated quantitatively. The same would be interesting for a correlation between the preference for organic food and for authentic brands as well as the correlation between intelligence and consumer resistance, as both relationships were assumed in this study.

Supplementary validation would also be provided by researching professional opinions such as those of marketing managers or brand managers on the subject. This would also be of managerial use in order to work out more specifically the application of authenticity in branding.

Furthermore, as this study is only focused on fast moving consumer goods, further research concerning authenticity in other domains such as high-involvement products or services might be of interest. This extension would also make sense for the other levels such as organizational authenticity or authenticity in advertising.

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APPENDIX

1. Screening questionnaire

Respondent No.

Items	1 Strongly agree	2 Agree	3 Rather agree	4 Rather disagree	5 Disagree	6 Strongly disagree
1. "What is seen on the outside of a package is many times not what you get on the inside." (Lundstrom and Lamont, 1976)						
2. "When a product is advertised as 'new' or 'improved' it is the same old thing only in a different package." (Lundstrom and Lamont, 1976)						
3. "I believe advertising is informative." (Obermiller and Spangenberg)						
4. "Quite often advertising is amusing and entertaining." (Pollay and Mittal, 1993)						
5. "We can depend on getting the truth in most advertising." (Obermiller and Spangenberg, 1998)						
6. "Most advertising is very annoying." (Gaski and Etzel, 1986)						
7. "If all advertising were stopped, the consumer would be better off." (Lundstrom and Lamont, 1976)						
8. "Most manufacturers are more interested in making profits than in serving consumers." (Barksdale and Darden, 1972)						
9. "Manufacturers seem to be more sensitive to consumer complaints now than they were in the past." (Barksdale and Darden, 1972)						
10. "I use brand names as a sign of quality for purchasing products." (Strizhakova, Coulter, Price, 2008)						
11. "For most product categories, the best buy is usually the private label brand." (Burton et al., 1998)						

2. Interview guide (40 minutes)

1) Warm-up (5 min)

- **Aim and context** of the study (only say roughly it's about marketing, not mention authenticity), methodology: own opinion is important, anonymity, recording
- **Presentation of respondent:** First name, age, education, profession, family, leisure activities
- **Key consumption behavior factors:** when buying something, according to which criteria are you choosing? Food preferences and nutrition specifics, fashion preferences

2) Marketing in general & Branding (10 min)

- **Spontaneous reaction to “marketing”**
- **Intro:** short explanation what marketers would include in the term marketing: advertising, promotions, packaging, product development...
- **Evaluation: positives and negatives** (is it useful sometimes?, are there any negative points? → try to find out to what extent there are likes/dislikes: do you often care about it? Where does this come from?
How do you feel at the specific points as a consumer?)
- **If negatives:**
 - **Reasoning behind** where does skepticism/likes come from
(paying attention if elaborated reasons come up: domination, cultural imperialism, value incongruence, functional dissatisfaction, perceived risk, deceptiveness, homogenization, saturation)
 - **At what level:** capitalism, organizational, product, brands, advertising
 - **Consequences:** where does it lead to? Behavioral change?
- **Branding:** Do you have any **favorite brands**? What are common characteristics of them? Are there brands you **reject/avoid**? Why?

3) Authenticity (15 min)

- **Intro:** explanation of **brand image**.
 (“a brand is not only a name and the relevant product, but people always have an image in mind about a brand, sometimes a whole world comes up: e.g. Marlboro – cowboys, horses, desert, but also values such as freedom, independence”)
- **Show brands (12 in total, no order)**

“authentic” brand	“inauthentic” classical counterpart
Sylter Salatfrische	Knorr Salatdressig
Tannenzäpfle	Becks Gold
Bonne Maman	Zentis
Fritz Kola	Fanta
Viva con Agua	Vittel
Buko	Philadelphia

- **Knowledge** of all brands (remove the ones they don't know)
 - **Buying behavior** towards these brands
 - **Perception of brand image** → let people divide them into two groups according to brand image, criteria they believe most adequate (exclude category and texture)
(Take a picture of the arrangement)
Which ones are liked more, which ones less and why?
 - **Differentiation criteria**: what distinguishes the groups in terms of brand image (Refer to the fact that there is an abstract level of distinction)
 - **Similarities** within the groups
 - **Sentence completion**, focus on specific brands (the ones best known):
 - Compared to Fanta, Fritz Kola is....
 - People who consume Viva con Agua are....
 - People consuming Bacardi, Knorr and Becks Gold wear...
 - **The typical** Becks/Fanta/Zentis **user** vs. the typical Tannenzäpfle/Fritz Kola/Bonne Maman user (Take the most known brand)
 - **Awareness**: If the subject of authenticity doesn't come up. Prompt them: Are there brands that are more... than others? Ask about 1–2 other concepts beforehand.
 - Tradition
 - Elegance
 - Superiority
 - Youthfulness
 - **Authenticity**
 - Uniqueness
 - Credibility
- (Make a note if people had to be prompted or not)
- How would you **define authenticity**? What is authentic for you? What are related values?
 - **Authenticity construct**: If some of these brands are more authentic than others: where does it come from, attributes?

4) Influence on buying behavior (10–15 min)

4.1. Marketing-accepting people

- **Evaluation**: How important is authenticity of brands for you?
- What are the **benefits** when buying one group or another/ brands? (also ask about inauthentic brands)
 - functional
 - emotional
 - social
- **What attributes** play a role for you when choosing a brand?

4.2. Marketing-resistant people

- **Evaluation**: How important is authenticity of brands for you?
- What are the **benefits** when buying one group or another/ authentic brands?
 - functional
 - emotional
 - social
- To what extent does authenticity of brands **influence your buying behavior**? Could authentic brands regain a part of your enthusiasm for marketing?
- What **other brands** would you consider authentic and why?
- **Authenticity paradox**: Is the term “authentic brands” a paradox for you? Why? Do you think classical brands could be authentic?

Generation Y on the e-commerce market. Comparison between Polish and South Korean young consumers' behaviour

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ABSTRACT

This article investigates the problem of Polish and South Korean Millennials' consumer behaviour on the e-commerce market. There were arguments about whether Generation Y members as Digital Natives are rather a coherent or diversified cohort of consumers. They were raised in the culturally diversified world, but the trend of globalization and the use of the Internet may influence their consumer behaviour in a similar way. The aim of this paper is to reveal particular patterns crucial to understanding their way of making an online purchase. An online survey was conducted among Polish and South Korean respondents from Generation Y in order to investigate this issue. Besides being the representatives of culturally distant cultures, the two groups from the research sample revealed mostly convergent preferences and attitudes towards making an online purchase. Also, Polish and South Korean respondents revealed different attitudes online and offline, when compared to the cohort general analysis. In terms of making an online purchase via their mobile phones, Poles and Koreans remained coherent outside their national group and diversified inside their national group in terms of e-commerce but patterns slightly differed. Since this research was limited by too general e-commerce context, the aspect of making m-purchase should be investigated in the future.

JEL classification: M300, M310, M390, M00, M160, M100, M190, M370

Keywords: e-Commerce, Generation Y, Poland, South Korea

1. INTRODUCTION

Globalization enabled business internationalization. Adjusting to the culturally distant markets with implementation of e-commerce online channels became crucial for a business. This might be regarded as **online internalization** (Garcia et al., 2015). Because of globalization, young adults were acclaimed as being globally oriented and homogeneous, from global brands and multinational firms perspective. Nevertheless, some research concerning *glocal cultural identity* might provide the assumption that young adults mixed their global and local approach, which made them differentiated in terms of global and local consumption patterns (Strizhakova et al., 2012). What reveals the ambiguity while attempting to understand e-consumer behaviour with focus on personal values might be technology paradoxes that concern divergent attitudes towards the

same aspect at the same time: freedom and enslavement, engaging and disengaging, assimilation and dissimilation, efficiency and inefficiency, control and chaos, fulfilling and creating needs, competence and incompetence, new and obsolete. The **dichotomic** pairs identified by Mick and Founier (1998) concern: competence and incompetence as well as assimilation and isolation. After encoding those complex personal values, they should be incorporated into advertising and other forms of company communication, according to the specific Internet activities (Schiffman et al., 2003). In terms of culture convergence and divergence, the so-called *middle way* might be considered. The cultural convergence is provided by centralization and standardization of processes enabled by uniformization of technological tools. As a result, an *Internet culture* provides the same values and norms for its users, promoting the uniformization (Verhoeven et al., 2009). McMullin (2007) extended the concept of a generation by including *computing technology as a marker of culture through which generations may be formed* (Parry, Urwin, 2011). Knowledge about particular generational cohort characteristics might be crucial in terms of communication campaigns. Generation Y members, also referred to as Millennials, are acclaimed as having strong purchase leadership in the current economy (Parment, 2013).

This article aims at investigating an online consumer behaviour from the cultural convergence and divergence perspective among Generation Y members. This is why the comparison was made between two culturally very distant countries: European Poland and Asian South Korea.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Changing business environment: embracing a digital approach.

Since terms e-commerce and e-business are very often used interchangeably, it is important to provide at first a clear distinction between the two of them. E-commerce might be understood as a narrower version of e-business in a functional context concerning e-transactions with customers. Consequently, e-business refers to a broader framework, including business partners and online processes (Laudon, Traver, 2010; Turban et al., 2012).

According to Burke's (2002) research, shopping online might be characterized as a complement rather than substitute channel. When customers are using a less expensive channel, such as the Internet, it does not have to necessarily mean higher incomes for companies, since customers aware of the cost effectiveness are demanding lower prices (Dziewanowska, 2012). What should be mentioned in terms of multichannel is the so-called ROPO effect, acclaimed *inter alia* as gaining strong popularity in Poland. It concerns doing firstly research online and then making a purchase offline (Cichomski et al., 2011). What appeared to be crucial for respondents in terms of online shopping in Burke's (2002) research was: product and pricing information, convenience and security of ordering, order tracing, reliable delivery, accessible customer service. Multichannel referred to as click-and-mortar (Laudon, Traver, 2010; Turban et al., 2012) gained great popularity as a source of: learning about products (82%), searching for information (77%), comparing and evaluating offerings (74%), purchase and payment form (63%). The brick-and-mortar form of purchase appeared to be the least popular in terms of high frequency of particular products purchase (Burke, 2002). The following characteristics were said to enable e-tailers to provide advantageous shopping experience over traditional brick and mortars: better customer service, additional value delivery and offering customization, sites personalization and offering personalization, mass customization and consequently offering beyond assumption, which might result in gaining customers loyalty (Tapscott, 2008).

Social Media, which comprise such elements as SNS, UGS, online (viral) communities, online review/rating sites, virtual worlds, provides an opportunity of creating, sharing and editing content. Consumers were said to rather consume than create the social media content; nevertheless, this

tendency is to be changed (Bolton, 2013). The social media space of communication is enabling a shift from a one-directional into two-directional way of communication between a consumer and a company (Mangold and Faulds, 2009). Online reviews might appear to be the crucial influence in terms of this consumer empowerment since they provide a sense of engagement for the customer. Also, the level of engagement of consumers in the social media content differs in character across the globe, for instance in Asia, consumers are very active participants, while in the US and Europe, consumers are passive consumers of the content provided to them rather than active providers (Smith, 2009). The key purpose of social media use for Millennials is interaction. This may lead to the conclusion of more advantageous evaluation of others' opinions in the social media and the feeling of importance by content providing (Bolton, 2013). Mobile social media might be considered as mobile marketing applications, providing the opportunity of UGC creation. What might be useful in conducted research evaluation is the fact that, according to research, mobile users who indicated privacy sharing and using such systems and online payment revealed that trust does not have to be more important (Reuver et al., 2015). Mobile devices, because of providing fast access to numerous transactions, were acclaimed as being the most influential electronic devices (Fromm and Garton, 2013).

2.2. Cultural identity. Insight into Polish and South Korean cultural distance

Since the knowledge about particular generational cohort characteristics might be crucial in terms of communication campaigns (Parment, 2013), what should be firstly introduced is the definition of culture. According to Hofstede (2011), it might be defined as a particular group set-up which enables its members to distinguish themselves from others. A strong emphasis was put on the collective character of such a phenomenon (Hofstede, 2011). It was stated by culture specific approach supporters that, despite technology and economics issues, the total cultural convergence is impossible. The authors proposed a solution called *the middle way* approach, which suggests that, despite universal characteristics derived from the Internet culture, some kind of diversity is to be preserved (Verhoeven et al., 2009).

An insight into Hofstede cultural dimensions in terms of Polish and South Koreans is as follows:

- 1) In terms of power distance, Poland appeared to be a hierarchical society the members of which are particularly situated in the hierarchy without any need for justifying it because they take it for granted. On a scale from 0 to 100, while Poland gained the score of 68, South Korea achieved the result of 60. This leads to the assumption that similarly to Poland, in Korean societies and organizations people are placed at particular position with no need for justifying it.
- 2) In terms of independence, Poland appeared to be an individualistic society with 60 points. Its structure is loose and Poles are rather concerned with themselves and their closest family members. This assumption provides an insight into a particular conflict between two first factors. The contradiction between the sense of hierarchy and individualistic character of the society at the same time might cause tensions inside the society. South Koreans scored only 18 points in this dimension, which presents them as a highly collectivistic society (geert-hofstede.com). This might be related to Confucius philosophy, which is so influential on not only South Korea but in general Asian nations. A great sense of responsibility for a group is what defines collectivistic cultures (Kim and Jaffe, 2010). An offence is taken very seriously and evokes a feeling of great shame.
- 3) Poland was acclaimed as a masculine society gaining a score of 64 in terms of this dimension. This implies the favourability for such values as competitiveness, success, accomplishment, need for a win. Also, a way of resolving conflicts is to fight and attack. The third Hofstede's dimension revealed that the Korean culture is coherent in terms of previous dimensions. With

the score of 39, the Korean society is characterized by femininity. This is associated with such values as feeling responsible for others and not standing out of the group. Also, it means highly valuing the quality of life, unity or consensus. Conflicts are not dealt with by fighting but negotiations and agreement.

- 4) In terms of uncertainty avoidance, Poland scored 93, which means very high inclination in this direction. It might cause such characteristics of the society as intolerance and very strong need for having settled standards and rules. South Korea gained 85 points on this scale, which means that it shares similar values with Poland in terms of avoiding uncertainty.
- 5) Poland, after obtaining low results of 38 in terms of long-term orientation, might be acclaimed as traditionalists. Valuing the past far more than perspectives of the future, they are oriented towards short-term goals the results of which will appear faster. This constitutes Polish society as quite normative, while South Koreans scoring maximum in this dimension are to be regarded as complete pragmatists. They are focused on achieving long-term results.
- 6) Both Poles and South Koreans achieved the same result of 29 in terms of indulgence. Cynicism and distrust are characteristics of low indulgence. These restrained societies are not very indulging (geert-hofstede.com).

2.3. Specification of generation Y as a research group. Polish and South Korean Millennials

Different consumption patterns applied to marketing strategy might refer to generational differences. According to Mannheim (1952), a generation might be understood as a clue about the social and intellectual insight. Two determinants that are to be mentioned when defining this term are the historically understood location which provides the second factor: facing certain experiences by a particular group. The consciousness of this historical time is what constructs these experiences. Bearing in mind the second determinant, the collective memories appear to be a condensation of a group creating a particular generation. National or international events are what constitutes certain behaviour, attitudes and preferences (Parry, Urwin, 2011). Knowledge about values, preferences and behaviour patterns on which generational cohort marketing is said to be focused might increase the ease and precision of marketing segmentation. These special values extracted from particular social events which generational cohort participants are experiencing are referred to as *defining* moments (Parment, 2013), for example, Generation Y members are also referred to as **Digital Natives**, since they are the first cohort whose all members' lives were embedded in the digital surroundings (Bolton, 2013).

Millennials might be referred to as *clients of the future* because of numerous reasons, such as their constant access to the digital media, the ability of effective communication via digital sources or the ability to make a purchase at any time and place in the world (Eisner, 2005). Millennials are said to be historically placed between 1981–1999 in terms of the year of birth. The date might be conventional. It can be difficult to precisely specify the date of birth ending the membership of this generation because of the lack of a significant emotional event that might be considered as a defining moment for Millennials. Generation Y was shaped by: instant contact with technology, globalization, social networking and communication technologies (Bolton, 2013). They are used to customized and personalized offerings. The elder part of Millennials faced rather prosperity in comparison to the younger one that was challenged by recession effects and economic turbulences (Bolton, 2013) such as the crisis of 2008. Nevertheless, they remain positively inclined towards their future (EliteDaily, 2015). They might be conventionally divided into two age groups: 18–24 and 25–34 (Barton et al., 2014). Their attitude might be defined by the statement: *they want it all and want it now*, which refers to the perspectives on a job, personal life as well as a balance between them. Those frequent social media users are accused of narcissism and constant multitasking. They might be also referred to as Peter Pan Generation since they are acclaimed as postponing the moment of becoming adults by prolonging the time

of living with their parents and refraining from starting their own families. They behave in this way in order to focus on making career or avoid what they perceive as their parents' lapses (Bolton, 2013). Nevertheless, there is an argument over Generation Y members postponing their financial independence. With reference to the Federal Reserve Survey of Consumer Finances, Millennials appear to be the best educated in comparison to 3 previous generations and earning the worst salaries and having higher retirement age at the same time. This employment and economic downturn is said to be blamed on past generations rather than looking for pejorative characteristics of Millennials (Rattner, 2015). At the same time, Millennials are said to manage their spending better than their counterparts from generation X (Anderson, 2015).

Because of being born and raised in the information and technology age, accompanied by constant gratification, Millennials are said to be very impatient but also highly leery (Bolton, 2013). They reveal depreciation for the power of the authority, always including their own perspectives and opinions (Parment, 2013). They evince the feeling of being privileged and the habit of dismissing social correctness. Because of such factors as a sense of encouragement from their families, increase in education development and great technological innovations, Gen Yers are said to be more tolerant, open for diversity and change. Also, they are incredibly tech-savvy and productive in terms of multitasking (Bolton, 2013). According to Neustar research, as much as 54% of Millennials consider their mobile devices to be the basic tool for shopping research (MarketingSherpa, 2015). According to the research conducted by Elite Daily (2015), most of Millennials (33%) admitted reviewing blogs before making a purchase online, which are clearly a more powerful source of information than advertisement. Peer advice appeared to be the most credible source of information.

The research by Kacprzak and Dziwanowska (2015) that consisted in analysing generation Y representatives from Poland and South Korea involved 5 segments of consumers, based on six sociocultural trends: virtualization, virtual tribalism, tribalism in real space, greening, materialism and impulsive consumption outlined earlier by Kacprzak-Choińska (2011). The first segment, materialists, were characterized by a strong tendency towards materialism, impulsive and compulsive consumption, virtualization as well as tribalism, with no interest for ecology issues. The milieu opinion appeared to be of great significance for this profile. The opposite segment, ecologists, revealed a great interest in greening trends. They opposed such social trends as consumerism and virtualization. Thirdly, moderns demonstrated confirmative attitudes towards all six social trends mentioned at the beginning. The importance of affiliation for representatives of these group might be pictured by their use of social networks, whilst a purchase might be often perceived by them as a way to improve their state of mind. The reverse group, traditionalists, consequently did not reveal attitude towards any of those social trends. The use of the Internet was explained by information search related purposes. The last fifth segment, netizens, did not favour greening or consumerism trends, but scored highly on the virtualization scale (Kacprzak-Choińska, 2011).

According to the research results, Polish and Korean Millennials revealed differing attitudes. Polish respondents demonstrated a strong tendency towards impulsive consumption, while very few Koreans revealed such a tendency. The trend for greening so popular among Koreans was not considered by any of Polish Gen Y member at all. Additionally, Korean youngsters favoured virtual tribalism, which was not very popular among Polish Millennials. The majority of Polish respondents, represented by 55% of this group sample, matched with the materialists segment. The fewest of them (13%) shared the characteristics of netizens profile. The second most numerous Polish segment, with the result of 21%, ecologists, appeared to be the most popular among Korean respondents, obtaining the result of 45% of Koreans. The second most numerous segment among Koreans, moderns, reached 19% of his group sample. The fewest of them, 11%, represented the segment of traditionalists and netizens (Kacprzak and Dziwanowska, 2015).

Based on the above literature analysis, the following research questions were stated:

Q1: How do Polish and Korean Millennials describe and evaluate their material standing and how does it relate to the frequency of an online purchase?

According to Bolton (2013), the Peter Pan generation members evaluate their financial situation rather positively or moderately since they prolong the time of being supported financially by their parents. Since Millennials are regarded as having such a great purchasing power, they might buy more often online because of their better budget management, as stated by Anderson (2015).

Q2: Are drivers to make e-purchase and kinds of products bought online alike in both groups? Can drivers be related to the frequency?

Besides being well educated, Millennials faced inconvenient economic circumstances in terms of employment (Rattner, 2015); nevertheless, they are said to manage their spending very well (Anderson, 2015). The fact that Millennials more often use the online channel might also reveal the aspect of price importance as the main factor for making an online purchase, taking the above into consideration. Also, since the purchase reveals Millennials' lifestyle, which is very important to them (Barton et al., 2014), and Polish and Korean Millennials reveal different attitudes in terms of lifestyle (Kacprzak and Dziewanowska, 2015), the kinds of products purchased online should differ as well.

Q3: What is the most favourite purchase channel for Polish and Korean Millennials and how does their e-spending differ?

Since Burke (2002) acclaimed an online channel as a complementary not substitutive one, it should be investigated whether this aspect might differ depending on culture of Millennials, bearing in mind that Polish consumers were said to opt rather for the ROPO model (Cichomski et al., 2011). At the same time, besides Burke's (2002) conception of a complementary channel, South Koreans were ranked as pragmatists in Hofstede's six-dimensional model, contrary to Poles, who appeared to be rather traditionalists.

Q4: What is the most preferable source of information gathered before making a purchase?

According to Elite Daily (2015) and Schawbel (2015), most of Millennials rely on their peers' advice, checking blog reviews before making a purchase, and are rather homogenous on this matter. Also, all means of advertising lost for Millennials the sense of authenticity and were regarded as credible by only 1% of respondents, whilst blog reviews gained as much as 33%, which was the majority of responses.

Q5: What are the preferences and attitudes of the above groups in terms of making a purchase via a mobile device?

Taking into consideration self-presentation, self-disclosure and impulsiveness theory of mobile users in general and de Reuver et al. (2015) mobile privacy conclusion, the results should be more alike in both groups with respect to the collectivistic aspect of the Internet culture.

3. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The online survey was conducted from 7th to 13th April 2015 by courtesy of Surveygizmo.com, which allowed a free trial. A link to the survey was shared among respondents through SNS, instant messengers, student online forums, and WOM. The participants of the survey were South Koreans from Chonnam National University in Gwangju and Polish students from the

University of Warsaw, providing 86 and 80 responses respectively. The non-probability quota sampling technique was used for the purpose of the research. From the total group of 179 asked Millennials, only 7.3% stated that they had never made any purchase online. The dominance of Korean respondents was very slight: 51.8% over 48.2% of Polish students. (see: Table 1).

Polish and Korean samples varied in terms of age diversification. While the average for Polish students was 22.1 years old with the most frequent score of 22 (33%) and 21 years old (31%), the age of Koreans varied more. They were 23.6 years old on average with the most common age statement of 24 (12%) and 26 years old (12%). There was a broader range of results (from 19 to 35 years old) than in the case of Poland. In terms of gender, the difference did not appear to be significant either: 55.4% of females took part in the survey and over 44.6% of males. The most numerous stated place of living was a city with the population above 1 million inhabitants with the result of 63.3%. An outright majority of Polish respondents (81.3%) declared a city with the population above 1 million inhabitants. In South Korea, this indicator revealed more diversified results. 46.5% acknowledged living in a city with the population above 1 million inhabitants. In terms of material standing description, most of respondents said that they were financially supported by their parents and made some additional money on their own.

Table 1

Cross-section for the sample characteristics: age, gender, place of living

Age	South Korea	Poland
19–25 (younger group of Millennials)	66	76
26–35 (elder group of Millennials)	20	4
Gender	South Korea (%)	Poland (%)
Men	46.5%	42.5%
Women	53.5%	57.5%
Place of living	South Korea(%)	Poland (%)
Village	1.2%	5.0%
City with population smaller than 100 thousand inhabitants	3.5%	6.3%
City with population from 100 thousand to 500 thousand inhabitants	24.4%	2.5%
City with population from 500 thousand to 1 million inhabitants	24.4%	5.0%
City with population above 1 million inhabitants	46.5%	81.3%

Source: own research

4. RESULTS

4.1. Material standing and frequency of an online purchase

As can be observed in Table 2, the most numerous group of Polish and Korean respondents acknowledged being supported by their parents whilst earning some additional money on their own (55% and 49% respectively) and being fully supported by their parents (33.8% and 33.7% respectively). At the same time, most of Polish respondents described their financial situation as good (42.4%) or medium (33.8%). Similarly, Korean students declared their material standing situation to be medium (41.9%) and good (37.2%). A significant relationship between the frequency of making an online purchase and material standing evaluation was revealed (see: Table 3). The frequency of making a purchase online was alike for the most numerous answers.

Whilst the majority of Poles declared making an e-purchase several times a year (51.3%) and once a month (43.8%), Korean consumers mostly stated that they made an e-purchase once a month (46.5%) and several times a year (34.9%). The fact that as many as 14% of Koreans make such a purchase online 2–6 times a week suggests that they are slightly more diversified, contrary to more coherent Polish respondents. Koreans appear to make e-purchases slightly more often, which is due to the fact that they evaluated their financial situation as slightly less good when compared to Polish respondents, which might suggest the online channel as cost effective in their perception.

Table 2

Material standing description and evaluation

Material standing description	South Korea	Poland
My parents fully support me	33.70%	33.80%
My parents support me partially and I also work to make some additional money	49.00%	55.00%
I am financially independent from my parents	17.40%	11.30%

Material standing evaluation	South Korea	Poland
Very good	10.5%	21.3%
Good	37.2%	42.5%
Medium	41.9%	33.8%
Bad	9.3%	2.5%
Very bad	1.2%	0.0%

Source: own research

Table 3

Frequency of online purchase

Frequency of an online purchase	South Korea	Poland
Less often than once a year	1.2%	0.0%
Once a year	1.2%	1.3%
Several times a year	34.9%	51.3%
Once a month	46.5%	43.8%
2–6 times a week	14.0%	1.3%
Every day	1.2%	1.3%
I did it only once	1.2%	1.3%

Source: own research

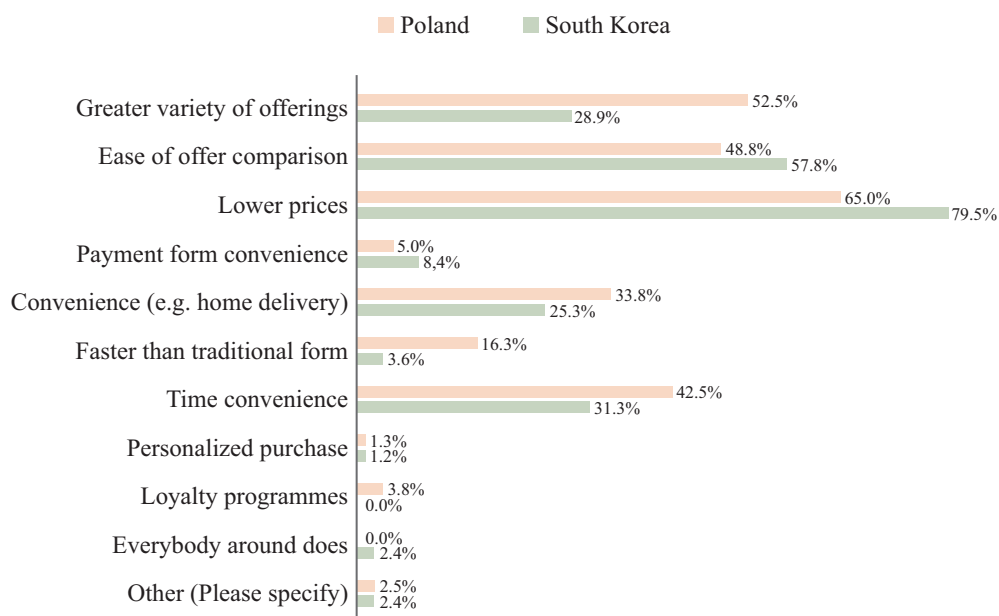
4.2. Motivators/drivers for an online purchase and kinds of products bought online

As regards motivators and drivers of an online purchase, both groups ranked lower prices first (65% for Poland and 79.5% for South Korea) (see: Figure 1). Milieu influence was the least important and not mentioned by any of Polish respondents in this case, which might be connected with Hofstede's cultural model, according to which Poles are representatives of an individualistic culture, which depreciates the group influence. Loyalty programmes were the least popular and not marked by any of Korean respondents. In general, Polish and Korean Millennials revealed coherent preferences in terms of cross-section analysis, but were diversified inside their

national groups. In a different order but both clearly favoured: greater variety of offerings, ease of comparison and time convenience, next to lower prices. Similar patterns of internal heterogeneity and external heterogeneity of the national group appear even more strongly in terms of preference for the kind of products purchased online (see: Figure 2). Clothes, shoes and accessories, also CDs, movies, books and finally tickets were placed in a group of three most numerous chosen answers, in different order of importance. The most strongly favoured answer in the case of Korean respondents were: clothes, shoes and accessories (90.7%). The fourth place was taken by cosmetics, which were marked by Poles as fifth among 14 possibilities. Tickets were the most commonly chosen by Poles for online purchase (67.5%).

Figure 1

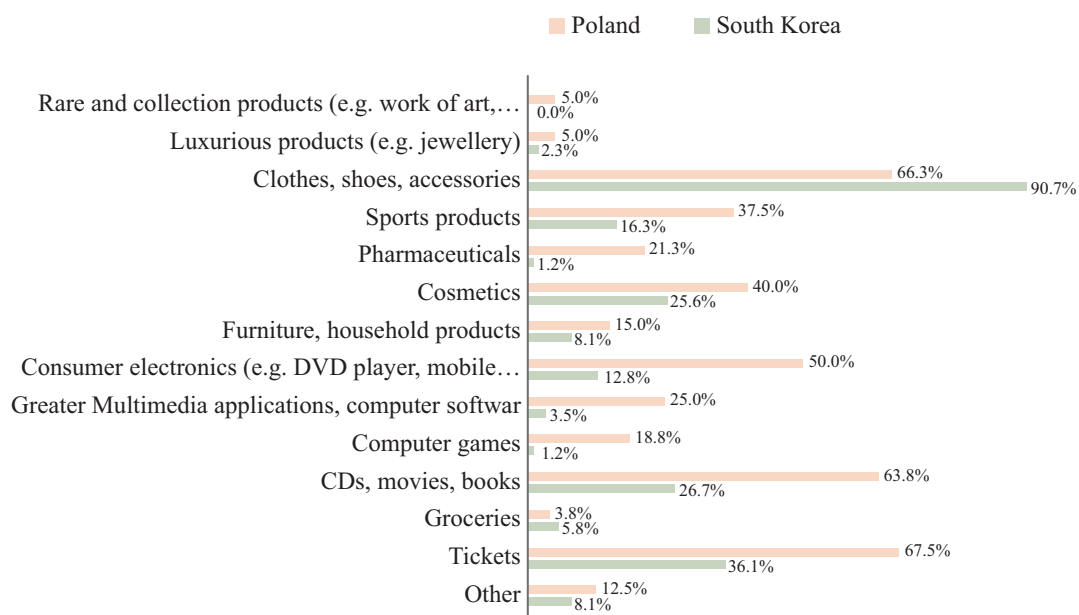
Motivators and drivers for e-purchase



Source: own research

Figure 2

Kinds of products purchased online



Source: own research

4.3. Most preferable purchase channel and e-spending.

Also, the lesser favourability of buying such products as clothes online might be related to the shopping place mostly favoured by generational cohorts from both countries (see: Table 4). Even more noticeably than in 2 previous categories, Poles and Koreans revealed high diversity in answers inside their nations groups. Whilst the majority of Korean Millennials (41.9%) preferred most strongly making a purchase solely online, Polish respondents mostly chose the answer concerning doing research online and making a purchase offline. ROPO was chosen by 30% of Polish Millennials compared to 27.5% that chose solely online purchase. The ROPO model shows that Poles rather buy online what does not need to be checked beforehand, e.g. tickets. Besides revealing similar financial status, Korean Millennials declared spending slightly more on an online purchase compared to Polish respondents (see: Table 5). Whilst the majority of Polish consumers (33.8%) declared spending \$21–60, most of Korean respondents declared spending \$61–100 (34.9%) on such a purchase. This might be related with the fact that online purchase is more common for Koreans, especially via mobiles. When analysing expenditures via mobiles, the difference appears to be even more distinctive. The majority of Koreans (34.2%) was willing to spend \$21–60, contrarily to Poles, the majority of whom (40%) declared less than \$20. Secondly, whilst Koreans declared \$61–100 (26.8%), Polish Millennials stated \$21–60 (32%).

Table 4
Shopping places

Shopping place	South Korea	Poland
ROPO	20.90%	30.00%
Reverse ROPO	22.10%	20.00%
In a physical store	15.10%	22.50%
Online	41.90%	27.50%

Source: own research

Table 5
E-expenditures

E-expenditures	South Korea	Poland
More than \$900	3.5%	3.8%
\$601 to \$900	1.2%	2.5%
\$301 to \$600	3.5%	7.5%
\$101 to \$300	14.0%	16.3%
\$61 to \$100	34.9%	26.3%
\$21 to \$60	33.7%	33.8%
Less than \$20	9.3%	10.0%

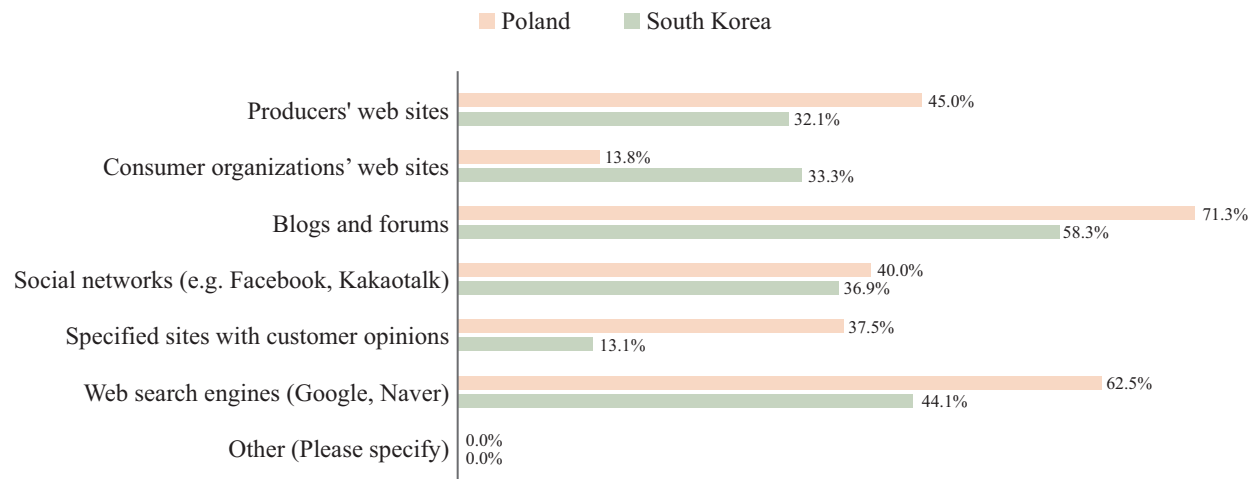
Source: own research

4.4. Most preferable source of information before making a purchase and attitude towards e-advertisement

In terms of information source credibility, both Polish and Korean Millennials mostly favoured blogs and forums (71.3% and 58.3% respectively) and secondly web search engines (62.5% and 44.1% respectively). This might prove the assumption that Polish and Korean Millennials, when seeking for information, highly rely on peer-delivered information as being highly credible (see: Figure 3).

Figure 3

Research source of information



Source: own research

4.5. Making an online purchase via a mobile device: the frequency, motivators and drivers, preferable kinds of products

In the case of m-purchase, the majority of both Polish and Korean Millennials opted for the frequency of *several times a week* (52% and 39% respectively) and once a month (28% and 24% respectively) (see: Table 6). Nevertheless, whilst no Polish respondents made such m-purchase in the frequency range from *every day* to *2–3 times a week*, Koreans provided more numerous answers for *2–6 times a week* (7.3%) and *once a week* (7.3%) than in the case of e-purchase. Korean consumers appeared to be more diversified over this matter, whilst Polish respondents remained rather coherent. The tendency of answers for m-motivators and m-drivers changed as well (see: Figure 4). Korean respondents still in majority favoured mostly lower prices (55.3%) and ease of offerings comparison (36.8%). Instead of time convenience, which took the fourth place (31.6%), a great variety of offerings appeared afterward (34.2%). These answers appear to be similar to the ones given for e-purchase, when compared to Polish responses. In the case of Poland, previously favoured lower prices were ranked now second (40%). The majority significantly switched to time convenience (80%). Third, favourability of m-purchase as a channel faster than others (32%) emphasized the importance of time convenience. Also, convenience appeared to be a new motivator (28%). Similarly as in the case of the frequency of m-purchase, Polish respondents appeared to be more coherent inside the group. Interestingly, in terms of kinds of products purchased via a mobile device, such distinctive tendency did not occur as in the 2 cases describing m-purchase above. Polish Millennials still mostly favoured buying this time via their mobile devices: tickets (56%), clothes, shoes, accessories (28%), CDs, movies, books (28%), whilst Korean Millennials remained stable with their preference for: clothes (65.9%), tickets (29.3%), CDs (22%) and cosmetics (22%). The analysis of answers for these above 3 questions from the survey provides significant conclusions about m-purchase.

Table 6

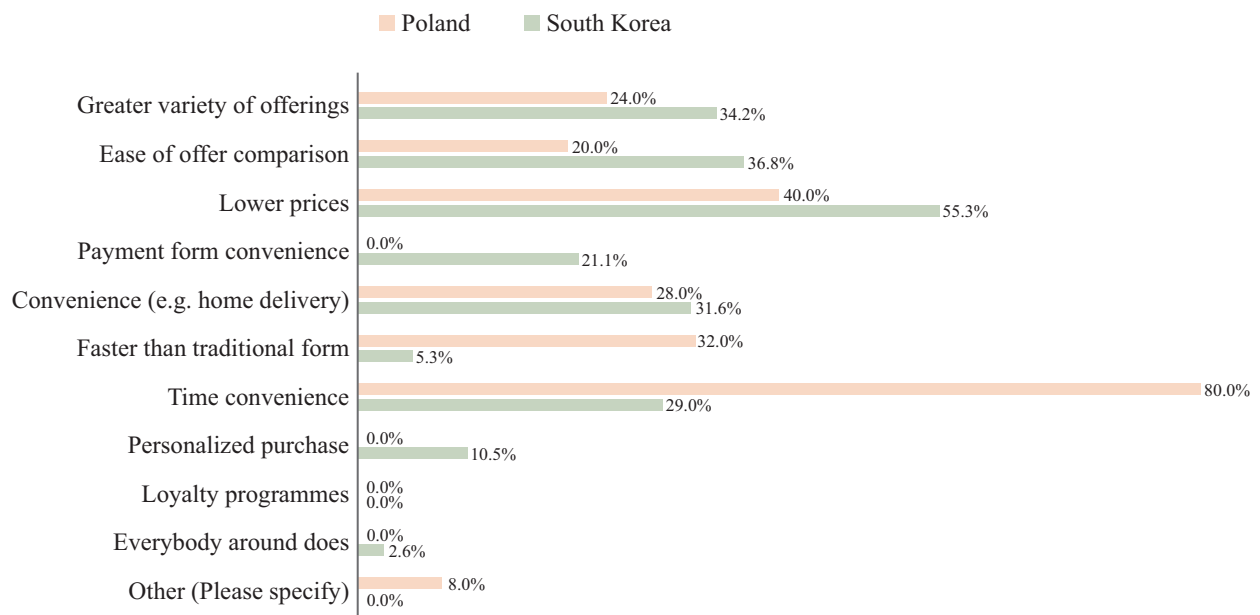
The frequency of m-purchase

The frequency of m-purchase	South Korea	Poland
Less often than once a year	4.90%	8.00%
Once a year	4.90%	4.00%
Several times a year	39.00%	52.00%
Once a month	24.40%	28.00%
2–3 times a month	2.40%	0.00%
Once a week	7.30%	0.00%
2–6 times a week	7.30%	0.00%
Every day	0.00%	0.00%
I did it only once	9.80%	8.00%

Source: own research

Figure 4

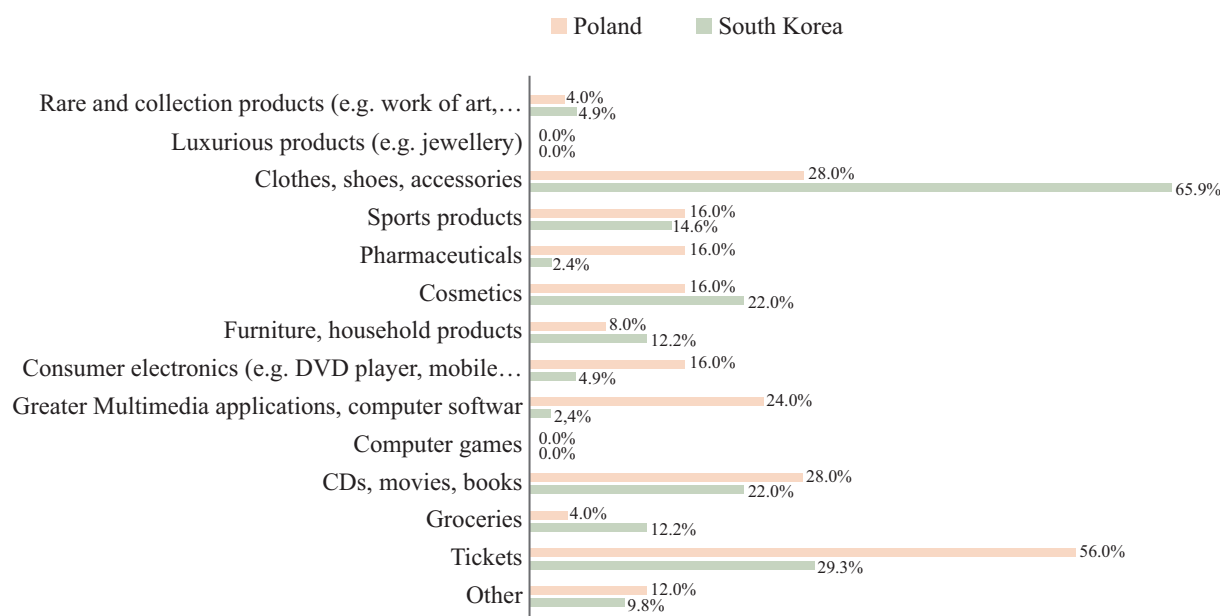
Cross-section: motivators and drivers for a purchase via a mobile phone



Source: own research

Figure 5

Cross-section: kinds of products bought via a mobile device



Source: own research

5. DISCUSSION

As appears in the Peter Pan Generation description (Bolton, 2013), since Millennials remain for a longer time dependent financially on their parents, they might evaluate their material standing higher despite economic turbulences that the younger group of Millennials had to face. Koreans appear to make e-purchases slightly more often, which is connected with the fact that they evaluated their financial situation as slightly less good when compared to Polish respondents, which might suggest the online channel as cost effective in their perception. This is why, this channel does not have to be necessarily cost effective for companies (Dziewanowska, 2012) since tech-savvy and well educated Millennials take low prices for granted.

In terms of motivators and even more in terms of products bought online, both groups appear to be homogenous outside their groups and heterogeneous inside their groups. Nevertheless, whilst milieu influence was the least popular e-driver among Poles, Koreans less numerously chose loyalty programmes. Also, whilst Polish young consumers ranked tickets fourth, South Koreans chose cosmetics. This might be explained by the fact that Korean Millennials, especially men, take far greater care of their appearance than Poles. Males use beauty cosmetics not less often than Korean females. This might be different for Poles, who come from highly traditionalist culture with a strong masculinity model. The item most commonly chosen by Poles to buy online, i.e. tickets (67.5%), and their individualistic culture might suggest travelling oriented attitude. As with e-motivators, Polish consumers were the least interested in milieu influence because in terms of Hofstede's dimension they appear to have collectivistic culture.

When Burke (2002) encountered different motivators for shopping, distinguishing the online channel, click-and-mortar channel and the multichannel so called by him, he described the online channel as a complement rather than substitute one. Nevertheless, the research was conducted in 2002, hence might rather concern older members of Generation Y, not the younger group that was taken into consideration in this article. Also, this issue differs and is more certain for Koreans, who appear to be slightly more advanced at making online purchases than Polish respondents.

This might suggest that after some time pure commerce will replace click and mortar. In other words, the online shopping will become a substitutive rather than complementary channel.

As for information source credibility, both Polish and Korean Millennials mostly favoured blogs and forums and secondly web search engines. This not only implies the importance of time saving for respondents but also that of the credibility of the source who are their peers. This aspect confirms the approach presented by Barton et al. (2014), concerning Millennials as most importantly looking for authenticity whilst evaluating a brand. The choice is crucial since it is supposed to manifest their lifestyle in front of their peers. That is why peers' knowledge is the most trustworthy. According to Leeflang et al. (2014), social media driven WOM was strongly emphasized as a source of information credibility. Also, according to Elite Daily, review blogs were gaining incredible trust in contrast to offline and online advertisement which lost all credibility. The research confirmed this issue.

Kinds of products preferred in Poland and South Korea bought simply online or via mobile devices do not differ significantly, remain internally diversified, appear to be externally coherent and concern mostly the same products in both cases for both nationalities. What differs are the frequency of purchases and motivators, which necessitates implementing a different approach to m-purchase than e-purchase as separate channels. According to the MarketingSherpa (2015) research, it might mean that it would be a source of information rather than a means of purchase. Location convenience might be time effective in terms of searching for information; nevertheless, the purchase requires more time to be spent carefully. Also, it might mean that Polish and Korean Millennials reveal impulsive purchase behaviour neither when it comes to using a mobile device nor when they make such a purchase via desktop.

When comparing the results of this survey, which concerns Millennials' consumer behaviour on the e-commerce market, and the research conducted by EliteDaily (2015), there appear some similarities and some differences. This might lead to the conclusion that Millennials reveal different purchase attitudes in digital space in comparison to their attitudes that they would reveal otherwise, in general, as this research confirmed in general that Polish and Korean young consumers from so culturally distant milieus revealed rather homogenous attitudes towards values and preferences in terms of cross-section. According to the research by Kacprzak and Dziewanowska (2015), Polish and Korean consumers differed in their attitudes and values. Nevertheless, when it comes to the Internet use, they become more homogeneous outside their national groups despite being so distant culturally. Polish and Koreans consumer behaviours differ in terms of online and offline purchases. As argued by Smith (2009), what appears in terms of the Internet culture is the transmission of online opinions into offline environment. In addition, according to Garcia's (2015) concept of online internalization and Strihakova et al.'s (2012) concept of *glocalisation*, Millennials from Poland and South Korea might exemplify such a phenomenon as Generation Y homogeneity and heterogeneity inside national groups at the same time. Also, interestingly, on the one hand, both Polish and South Korean cultures were placed in Hofstede's dimension as characterized by restraint. Nevertheless, at the same time young South Koreans and Poles are supported financially by their families, resulting in higher spending, which would rather suggest that Millennials even from non-indulgence cultures in fact gain on tendencies towards indulgence. Taking the above into consideration, what appears is the confirmation of the concept of cultural *middle way* in terms of cultural convergence.

6. CONCLUSION

The Internet culture and globalization that made Generation Y so homogeneous is not absolute in terms of its influence extent. There are still cultural elements, not relicts from the past but every day issues that Millennials are facing, depending on the place of living such as geographical, economic or political ones. This is why, when Millennials come to their local milieu with their Internet culture providing homogeneity, they experience particular tensions in their society, which makes them more and more heterogeneous as a particular synthesis of two cultures. Consequently, they appear to be heterogenic internally in their national groups and homogeneous globally. This might be why Millennials as consumers reveal different consumer patterns online and offline.

The Internet paradoxes and the Internet culture ambiguity support this statement, also supporting the thesis of Millennials' consumer behaviour being so difficult to predict. Millennials are very diversified, tolerant and open for change. As seen above, Millennials from Poland and South Korea, such distant cultures, revealed homogeneity when analysing their online consumer behaviour or some of social phenomena.

The fields of e-commerce and digital marketing are evolving so fast that even m-purchase is already becoming characterized by different consumer behaviour patterns, as appears from the analysis of Millennials from South Korean and Poland. Millennials revealed coherent attitudes but different for e-commerce and more or less different for m-commerce.

This research was limited by too general context of the topic. What should be investigated in the future that could not be grasped by this research results and analysis is the broadly understood attitude of Millennials from distantly different cultures towards e-advertisement and the factors constructing the way this form of marketing communication is perceived. Also, research should be carried out concerning a greater insight into m-purchase tendencies. This channel should be taken into consideration separately from generally understood e-purchase. Secondly, what was not mentioned in the research was the aspect of Millennials mobility. There should be an investigation into the aspect of travelling as a factor making culture more homogenous and its relevance to the culture. This might be related to the offline globalization, since online globalization was addressed in this research.

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A conceptual model for driving green purchase among indian consumers

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ABSTRACT

Marketing is considered as responsible for increasing consumerism and overuse of limited resources. An endeavour to promote sustainable consumption is the need of the hour and an answer to growing concerns towards it is required. Marketing can be used as a tool to promote sustainability and increase responsible consumption. Many products which have energy saving potential can be successfully promoted through marketing activities. Increasingly, consumers are becoming aware about the issue and through constant marketing efforts green products and sustainable consumption can be taken to a high level. Contextual factors like value for money, features and selling point communication can play a crucial role in increasing the purchase of green products. Several studies are being conducted in this area but there is still a need for more research particularly in India. This paper will be a contribution to the existing area of knowledge and will focus on discovering the role which marketing can play in promoting sustainability among consumers in India. The factors which are responsible for sustainable consumption are explored and a conceptual model has been suggested which may help marketers in promoting green products and provide a platform for further research.

JEL classification: M00, M30, M31, Q50

Keywords: green purchase behaviour, sustainability, selling point, contextual factors

INTRODUCTION

Sustainability is an alarming issue in an emerging economy like India as the South Asian giant is on the verge of expanding its consumption to a higher level. As per a report of KPMG (2014), if it continues at the same growth rate, it will double its spending by 2025, with average household earning to triple in the next 20 years and consequently it may become the fifth largest consumer economy by 2025. Indian consumers are going through a transition stage, where they are exposed to a variety of products and services. Numerous brands are knocking at their doorsteps and positioning themselves in different ways. Indian consumers with majority of young population and rising disposable income are eager to make their lifestyle more and more comfortable. In

a situation like this there is always a threat of over-consumption and consumerism is adding a flavour to it. Marketing in many ways has fuelled consumerism and made consumers realise some unique needs which they have never considered before.

The nature of Indian consumers is apparently price sensitive (Mukherjee et al., 2011), they are conscious of the price which they have to pay for the product they seek. So through marketing efforts and orientation from the initial stage like marketing research, the issue of pricing of a sustainable product shall be taken care of. Sustainability is a globally discussed issue and requires proper attention in the Indian context also. Previous researches have shown that consumers in India are aware about the concept of sustainability and there is a gap in concern and action. According to Greendex report (2014), consumers in participating countries including India have shown greater concern over environmental issues and believe that new technology can solve the environmental problem. There are many products available in the market which are comparatively better at saving energy and are less detrimental to the environment. There is a need for pulling consumers towards these products and through marketing activities this may become achievable. Marketing communication along with other complementing activities may positively position the pro-environmental products and boost their penetration in the form of increased sales which in return will reduce the consumption of energy and other limited resources.

In this paper we have taken variables like demography, psychography, awareness, intention, exposure to marketing communication, trust in green claims and reinforcement of the green issue at a point of purchase through salesmen along with clearance of doubts about the value for money, functional benefits of the product, advantages of the product over its non-green counterpart. The role of various factors which are crucial to driving green purchase is discussed.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The issue of sustainability is of growing concern. It is the need of the hour and if producers intend to blend environmentalism in successfully, then it should be in every aspect, be it designing of a product, manufacturing, delivery channels, usage, disposal, etc. (Ottman, 1992) Consumers' inclination towards environmentalism is more pronounced than before, consumers are interested in purchasing products which are environment-friendly (Krause, 1993). According to Elkington (1994), green consumers are the ones who avoid offerings which may adversely affect the health of the user.

The role of marketing in promoting sustainability can be very pronounced through proper understanding of consumers, their needs, demand, cost-benefit analysis, proper communication at various exposure points and especially at the point of purchase, where the salesperson can guide the customer about sustainability and its benefit and how one can help the cause through purchase of green products. The salesperson can make them realise the hedonic value of the product and imbibe the feeling of altruism also. They should also allay any apprehension over the green product in terms of its functionality and performance.

The pressure from the society is aligning companies towards sustainable behaviour (Ottman, 1992) The pressure created by this should not be ignored and green marketing can become one of the ways of answering the green concerns and promote sustainability. Companies can satisfy green consumers through proper marketing of green products (Polonsky, 1994). Green marketing includes all the functions which are taken by the marketing department to serve and satisfy the green consumer (Jain & Kaur, 2004).

In order to serve the green customer in an effective manner proper understanding of their behaviour and attitude is required through segregating market into segments and then devising positioning strategies (Jain & Kaur, 2004) which may serve as the initial steps towards sustainability.

Green Marketing

Green marketing has been an important area in academic research. (Fuller, 1999; Ottman, 1998). Peattie (2001) suggested that evolution of green marketing was comprised of three phases, the “Ecological” green marketing phase was the first one and in this phase marketing activities were revolving around environmental problems and their solutions, after it came the second phase of “Environmental” green marketing where emphasis was on clean technology, improved designing and innovative products, to cope with problems like waste management, pollution, etc. And then the third phase was called as “Sustainable” green marketing which focuses on more comprehensive solutions. Increased environmental concern has resulted in the increase of challenges for companies (Johri & Sahasakmontri, 1998). Sustainable or green marketing involves serving customers with good quality products offering standard performance and convenience at a lucrative price and which essentially work in a pro-environmental way (Dutta, 2009). For success of sustainability initiatives companies should believe and have confidence that green marketing can work and should make wise efforts to incorporate necessary product modifications, which not only deliver performance, but also are marketable.

Green Consumption

For the sake of green consumption a strong commitment towards environmental issues is required which may involve cost in terms of financial means and comfort from customers (Moisander, 2007) “Consumers looking to green their consumption are exposed to a wide number of environmental labels (Pedersen & Neergaard, 2006; Hjalmarson et al., 2010), they may have to face the risk called as green washing (Peattie & Crane, 2005) and keep themselves updated about the latest sustainability issues creeping up and have to cope with the ambiguity and uncertainty associated with green consumption (Halkier, 1999; Connolly & Prothero, 2008). Green consumption in reality is challenging in terms of practicality and psychology; customers who want to become green may have to sacrifice some part of their comfort and style (Jonsson, 2006). Consumers turning towards sustainability should be committed to working harder than regular consumers and marketing efforts should help in finding more sustainable ways of consumption through offering green products.

Green Consumer Satisfaction

The contribution to the good of society through purchase of green products imbibes a feeling of satisfaction in customers (Montoro Rios et al., 2006). Sustainable behaviours from customers require some patience as they yield results in the long run rather than instant benefits but are good for the society as a whole (McCarty & Shrum, 2001). When a customer purchases a green product he may do it out of altruism and feels a sense of accomplishment and well-being (Hoeffler & Keller, 2002; Ritov & Kahneman, 1997). The other benefit is a symbolic benefit, associated with the needs like external personal expression which is common in Indian consumers also. Consumers may not be interested in products which are unable to reflect their ideology (Montoro Rios et al., 2006) and consumers in India also seek products which can be an answer to their environmental concern, strengthen the feeling of altruism and deliver at par performance.

Motivators for Green Consumers

Many customers experience gratification when they are close to nature (Hartmann, Ibáñez, & Sainz, 2005). This may be because of an emotional attachment and a feeling of freeness, safety and belonging with nature (Kals, Schumacher, & Montada, 1999) “Also social approval seems to

be an important factor in affecting green consumption but it is not the only driving force for taking voluntary actions that help to improve environmental quality and reduce environmental concern. A number of empirical studies also bring into light that environmental attitude of consumers related to the day to day behaviour is based on morality (Thøgersen 1999; Brul, Halvorsen, & Nyborg, 2002; Guagnano, Stern, & Dietz, 1995). For instance, Thøgersen (1999) pointed out that a majority of Danish consumers had developed personal norms for choosing environment-friendly packaging and these personal norms were the most important predictor of their probability to choose environment-friendly packaging. Likewise, in a survey conducted in Norway, (Brul, Halvorsen, & Nyborg, 2002) suggested that many of respondents stated that they recycled mostly because they wanted to be portrayed as responsible people and that motivated customers for pro-environmental action (Whitmarsh & O'Neill, 2010).

Green Products

Products can be classified on the basis of many characteristics like functions “utilitarian vs. hedonic” (Bridges & Florsheim, 2008; Jones, Reynolds, & Arnold, 2006) and involvement (low vs. high) (Bauer, Sauer & Becker, 2006). Even the products can also be classified on the basis of their impact on the environment. All products are made of material and require energy in many ways, they excrete waste in the process of production and consumption also. However, some products have higher environmental impact and some have less. Several consumer behaviour scholars have pointed out that concern varies with the type of product (Babin, Darden, & Griffin, 1994; Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982). Thus, it is assumed that the concern associated with purchasing low environmental impact products, such as cereals or soya milk, may not be same as the feelings associated with purchasing high environmental impact items, like cars, batteries, or detergent. In reality, when consumers are going to buy a product and come to know that the product may be detrimental to the environment, they may begin to feel guilty.

Green Advertising

Previous studies have shown that effectiveness of advertising depends on how well the product matches with the real execution (Malhotra, 2005; Rossiter, Percy & Donovan, 1991; Johar & Sirgy, 1991). Rossiter et al. (1991) suggested that emotional advertising may work well in the case of low involvement or hedonic products. For products with the possibility of higher environmental impact, a message with green appeals probably has stronger effects than a message without green appeals. Therefore, the customers are more concerned for purchase of products which may impact the environment in an adverse manner (Henion, Russell, & Clee, 1981). Laroche, Bergeron, & Barbaro-Forleo (2001) found that it is possible that consumers may lack adequate knowledge of the causes and effects of environmental problems, and if presented with the same they may make pro-environment choices for products with high environmental concerns. Henion et al. (1981) emphasised that for consumers, ecological performance is more important and is ahead of functional performance and price in the case of products with higher negative effect on environment. It is also of vital importance that the weak connection between the green appeal and the product may lead consumers to mistake the green appeal as a green washing strategy adopted by the seller. If there is a gap in the promise and action customers may believe that they are deceived and it impedes the communication effectiveness in favour of green products (Chan & Wong, 2006).

VARIABLES THAT MAY DRIVE CHOICE FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Demography

The demographic profile of Indian consumers is very essential to be understood because previous studies have shown that various factors like age, income, education, gender, etc. are important in driving action towards sustainability.

Education

Previous researches have pointed out that education is an important factor for determining pro-environmental behaviour and found that there is a positive correlation between education and green consumer behaviour (Schwartz & Miller, 1991).

Age

Most of the researches have shown that young and pre-middle age consumers are more inclined towards sustainability (Anderson & Cunningham, 1977; Roberts & Bacon, 1997).

Gender

Generally it is believed that probability of females being more environment conscious is high (Banerjee & McKeage, 1994). Also, MacDonald & Hara (1994) have found the relationship to be significant between gender and environment. On other hand, Samdahl & Robertson (1989) have pointed out that the relationship between environmental concern and gender is insignificant. So this issue also requires proper attention for devising the right targeting strategy.

Income

In a country like India where consumers are very sensitive towards the price of a product, income plays an important role because with increasing income consumers may think of buying green products at a higher price. Zimmer (1994) found significant relationships between income and environmental attitudes and behaviour; on the other hand Roberts (1996) found no significant relationship between income and environmental concerns. In the Indian context income may be an important element which can play a crucial role in sustainable behaviour.

Straughan & Roberts (1999) showed doubt over using demography alone as a variable for the segment of green consumers. Roberts (1996) also asserted that the demographic profile is not adequate for green consumer behaviour and marketers may identify and incorporate other variables like attitudes and behaviours, lifestyle, and purchase intentions in such studies.

Values

Values influence behaviour (McCarty & Shrum, 1995), and consumers who buy environment-friendly products are the ones who value the environment and understand the impact of their purchase on sustainability (Peattie, 2001). Consumers may realise that by purchasing an environmentally friendly product they can make a contribution to the cause of sustainability. A lower level of ecologically favourable behaviours may be because of a low level of self-involvement in protection of the environment (Wiener & Sukhdial, 1990). Consumers can be motivated for sustainable purchases by making them realise the importance of the issue and the role which they can play (Bei & Simpsons, 1995). Therefore, marketers should try to communicate to the consumers that purchase of green products can significantly impact the welfare of the environment and result in sustainability (Laroche et al., 2001).

Beliefs/Knowledge

As far as impact of knowledge on sustainability is concerned, there are different views but in majority of researches, knowledge was found to be an important factor related to the purchase choice and evaluation (Alba & Hutchinson, 1987). Knowledge is also a key predictor of sustainable behaviour (Vining & Ebreo, 1990; Chan, 1999). As knowledge may influence all steps of the purchase decision, wrong information can lead consumers to make an imperfect choice. For example, most consumers in India are indifferent towards energy rating and they generally buy equipment with heavy energy consumption.

It has been a common argument that consumers perceive most recycled materials as of inferior quality when compared to non-recycled materials; consumers may perceive the performance of most recycled products below par with that of its non-recycled counterparts. Rao (1974) found customers are generally uncertain and sceptical about purchasing a green product if it is of poorer quality.

Needs & Motivations

Many consumers' reports suggest that consumers are ready to spend extra for socially desirable products but actual purchase data in the Indian context reveals that sustainability in purchase means little. Therefore, companies are not very certain about consumers' responses to such surveys (Mainieri, Barnett, Valdero, Unipan, & Oskamp, 1997). The probable reason for this may be "social over-reporting" of concern for environment (Peattie, 2001). Additionally, Hume (1991) concluded that consumers need not always act in line with their social reporting as far as environmental action is concerned and especially when purchasing a green product involves some sort of trade-off like paying a green premium, i.e. paying a higher price, choosing a lesser level of technical performance, visiting a non-standard retail outlet, etc. McCarty & Shrum (1994) stated that inconvenience related with the product (its use, availability, etc.) also has an impact on consumers' action, which explains that any product which requires considerable amount of sacrifice despite being environment friendly may not succeed. It is evident from this that consumers generally are not interested in sacrificing comfort and quality lifestyle for sake of the environment and society.

Attitude

When we consider the effects of environmental attitudes on behaviour, findings suggest that attitudes are a very reliable and consistent predictor of green purchasing behaviours (Schlegelmilch, Greg, & Diamantopoulos, 1996). Most of the studies have concluded that there is a positive correlation between concern (i.e. attitude) towards the environment and pro-environmental behaviour (van Liere, Dunlap Roberts & Bacon, 1997). Simmons & Widmar (1990) also found that in the case of recycling there is a significant relationship between concern and ecologically responsible behaviour. Berger & Corbin (1992) found that behaviour of green consumers could be a result of their perceived notion (i.e. attitude) of the conservation of the environment. To further strengthen the finding regarding the impact of attitude on behaviour, researchers have suggested including multiple measures to increase the reliability of research outcome. Ajzen & Fishbein (1977) have recommended to include other intervening variables, such as different attitude representations towards various objects. In addition, Weigel (1983) suggested incorporating situational or contextual factors to understand the relation between attitude and behaviour. Moreover, Straughan & Roberts (1999) suggested that a mixed model incorporating a range of both demographics and psychographics should be preferred to the conventional demographic profiling methods in defining environmental behaviour as a function of environmental concern as psychographic variables may provide closer profiles of green consumers.

Intentions

A consumer who is conscious of the environment will try to protect it in one way or another (Suchard & Polonski, 1991). Therefore, there are different categories of eco-concerned consumers. A consumer who recycles aluminium may not be the same consumer who cares about recycling plastic or about air pollution. Intention is defined as a course of action that one intends to follow. It is believed that one who is purchasing a pro-environment product has an intention to buy it but several studies have shown a significant difference between intention and actual behaviour (Laroche, Toffoli, & Muller, 1996).

Eco-labelling

Research has shown that consumers are not necessarily able to decipher the eco-labels attached to the products (Kangun & Polonsky, 1995). Eco-labels like biodegradable, recyclable, fair wage/fair trade, environment-friendly, and sustainable are usually unfamiliar /unknown to consumers. Moreover, recognising a label does not guarantee that one also understands its meaning and importance (Morris, Hastak, & Mazis, 1995). Consumers are required to be able to decipher the information and trust the label before making purchasing decisions. Even the companies must remember that environmental labels can only work as a supplement for awareness and educational efforts for the environment and not as their substitute (Thogersen, 2000). Thus a comprehensive communication approach using clear eco-labels with a complementing smart salesman may help in educating consumers on the environmental impact of their purchasing decisions. Additionally, trust in green claims and label is very essential as consumer rely on the label only when it conveys trust.

Consumer Backlash

Studies have also found that many customers face difficulty in accepting products which claim to be environmentally safe and useful because of overemphasising the claim (Brown & Wahlers, 1998). Inappropriate and unsubstantiated claims from companies have increased the cynicism about the products. Rousseau et al. (1998) emphasised that trust can be defined as the intention to accept vulnerability keeping in mind the positive expectations from the product, and trust may affect their decision to purchase (Gefen & Straub, 2004). Messages based on facts, logic and representation of the actual benefit are more welcomed by customers and excessive claims increase the feeling of scepticism about the product.

Role of Salesman

Many researchers have argued for the inclusion of contextual factors, such as external drivers and barriers, when measuring pro-environmental behaviour, and this would probably have improved the explanatory power of the models further (McKenzie-Mohr, 2000; Stern, 2000). Contextual factors specific to a nation play an important role in affecting behaviour (Black et al., 1985); firms are required to devise comprehensive marketing strategies blending sustainability in at each step with inclusion of all the stakeholders like producer, salesman, distribution channel rather than going for green promotion alone (Polonsky et al., 1998). Salespeople can play a very vital role in developing and strengthening the buyer-seller relationship (Shepherd, 1999) as they are vested with the responsibility for making an initial contact with the customer, assessing his needs, and identifying products or services suiting his requirements and providing follow-up support and service (Pelham, 2002). Communication at the point of purchase with the help of the salesman may serve as a guide for green purchase and remove any cynicism regarding the product

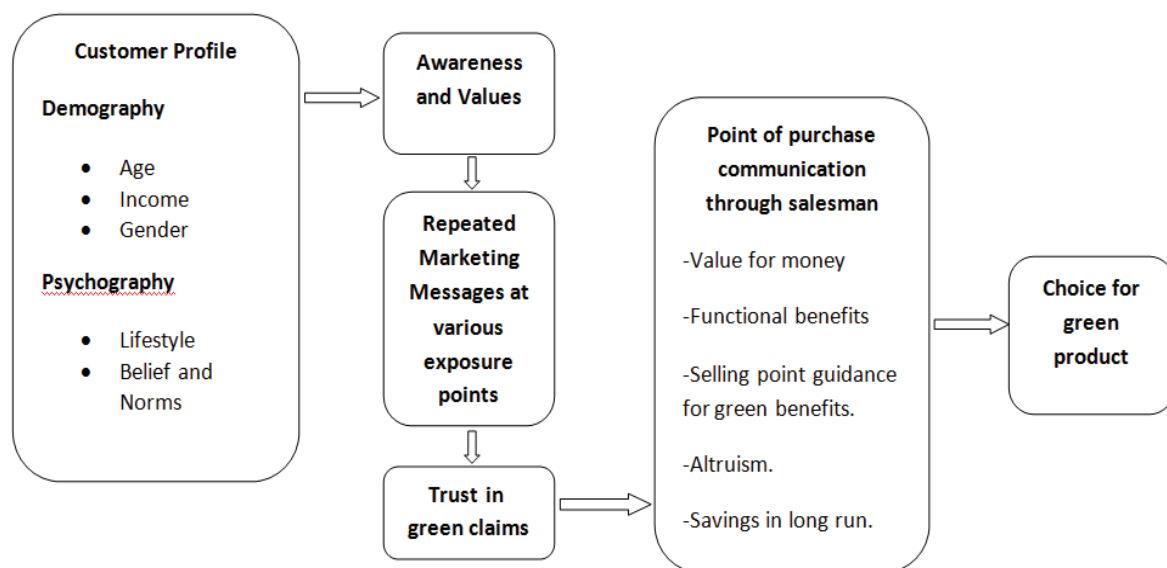
and claims as the salesman is in a better position to understand the psychology of the customer at the point of purchase, which can be a decisive factor in an emerging nation like India, as any confusion, doubt, apprehension can be removed and awareness about the green product can be increased, which may drive for green purchase. Moreover, merely copying models of researches based on high income, industrialised countries may not yield the desired result in emerging nations (Bodur & Sarigöllü, 2005). Thus, marketers may design strategies which suit the Indian consumers and the marketing mix associated with it should reflect the same. Marketing with the help of integration of sustainability in every aspect can play a very vital role in converting the need for green products to want and the salesman can play a crucial role in directing green purchase.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Consumers' purchasing decisions on eco-friendly products which are helpful in promoting sustainability are influenced by many variables and a proposed model of how these variables affect purchase intentions and purchase decisions for environmentally friendly products is depicted below.

Figure 1

Conceptual model for green purchase in emerging nations



Findings and Suggestions

The findings in the form of conceptual model indicate that the role of marketing in green purchase decisions is crucial at every stage from product development to purchase. Through well planned and directed communication at various exposure points, marketers can increase the awareness about sustainability and benefits of green products, strengthen the trust in eco-friendly claims. Depending upon the profile of the customers, the salesman at the selling point can assess the needs of the customer and serve as a guide for a green product and the point of purchase can act as a classroom for consumer to learn and inquire about the green products where they can clear up their doubts regarding the product, compare it with the non-green substitute, learn about the reason for premium pricing (if any), long-term gain from its purchase, its features, performance

and other aspects. The salesman can also imbibe a feeling of altruism among customers which may also become a factor driving them towards green purchase. The functional benefits and design of the product should be at par with customer expectations. Thus, thorough marketing efforts are required in promoting sustainability through green purchase choices. In light of these findings, we can say that marketing efforts in the right direction are helpful in promoting sustainability among Indian consumers and companies should make proper marketing efforts to promote green products and use factors like selling point communication, value for money, functional benefits of the product, altruism effectively in driving consumer towards green purchase choices and develop an edge in these aspects to lead towards better positioning of sustainable products, which may lead to repeating the purchase of green products in India.

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The review of the book
“Employer Branding – Eine wissenschaftliche Analyse
des State-of-the Art empirischer Untersuchung
im Bereich Employer Branding” written by Peter Kuhn

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ABSTRACT

This paper is a review of a book about employer branding written by Peter Kuhn. The comments and suggestions concerning its content are based on the literature available in English, German and Polish. Employer branding is very often analysed from the business point of view, but not so often from the linguistic one. The possible research fields are mentioned.

Keywords: employer branding, employment brand

This book is definitely a good start to analyse the phenomenon of employer branding. The author presents a summary of important aspects which could be taken into account in analysing this particular part of a company's management strategy. The book is divided into a couple of parts, namely: an introduction with an explanation of the methodology, characteristics of an attractive employer, influence of employer branding on employees and brand equity, a description of the ways of managing employer brand and criteria which could be taken into account in establishing the segmentation of the employee market. In each chapter the reader can find a summary of the most important key points in the topic and one research example described in more detail. The author is specialized in the marketing field, and that is why this work is also mostly a summary from the strategic business perspective.

Employer branding aims to create and manage the employer brand which appeals to internal “clients” such as employees and to “external” ones, for example job candidates and distributors. The author emphasizes that the term “employer branding” is quite new (Barrow, 1990); therefore, he tries to use the results of research from other fields which are directly or indirectly connected with employer branding in order to make some assumptions or draw conclusions. Some terms come from domains that are distant from employer branding, for example “child care”, “centralization”, “gender self-schema”, but their indirect influence on the “company's reputation” or “corporate brand” is assumed to exist through deduction or some research results. The distinction between employer branding and corporate branding was not clearly shown in this state-of-the-art book. Instead, the author tries to find an influence of some company activities, such as CSR or the mentioned keywords, on attracting potential candidates. In scientific papers employer branding is often perceived as a process separate from the Corporate Social Responsibility, because the CSR

main goal is to create a perception of ethical management and it is more the core of a company's reputation rather than creation of an image of being a good employer. CSR is a part of corporate branding that has an influence on employer branding, but this influence is indirect because, for an employee, the most important features of the employer brand are: the job itself, career chances, work environment and salary (Turban, 1993 and Ng/Burke, 2006). That is why, I would recommend to pay more attention to the aspects of employer branding which do have a direct impact on the reputation of a company as an employer, not as a company itself.

On the other hand, some important components of employer branding were unfortunately not mentioned, for example: discussion about employment brand vs. employer brand, the measurement of effectiveness of employer brand activities, corporate brand vs. product brand vs. employer brand, the statistics concerning the media usage in the employer branding management, and also the inconsistency between the perception of a company as an employer and the real image of this company. I would also recommend to mention which companies in which branches perceive employer branding as an important part of their management strategy (rankings of the best employers organized by Universum or other non-scientific companies).

One of the topics mentioned is the research about Person-Job Fit and Person-Organisation Fit (Carless, 2005) which takes into consideration two different perspectives of assessing an employer by a candidate who did not work for a particular company. The personality traits of potential candidates are compared with the characteristics of companies and it has come out that, also in those cases, correlations could be found. The author led the reader through different studies which have various hypotheses. In this part of the chapter it would be very advisable to present the concepts of employment brand and employer brand, especially when it was proved that P-J had a direct influence on the acceptance of the job offer by a candidate but was not an attractor factor. Job Fit is a reaction of a potential candidate to the job description (employment brand) which is presented in job offers. Organization Fit, on the other hand, is more connected with the perception of the employer brand as a part of the organization's image.

The aspect which was very well introduced in the reviewed book was the fact that different factors have an influence on the intentions to apply for a job and to quit it (Rad/De Moraes, 2009). Although the company characteristics such as the size of the company or the description of the company's services are the most often mentioned pieces of information in job descriptions (Backhaus, 2004), it was proved by some researches that these parts are the least important for the potential candidates. As the job description must always be mentioned in the job offer, companies must find other ways to distinguish themselves from other companies. Finding a competitive edge in the strategy of managing a realistic employment brand (job offer), instead of usually too general employer brand, is an important goal of a company's strategy. It seems that companies have standard forms of job offers which they use to find their candidates (Backhaus has created 10 such forms based on his statistical research connected with the keywords in the job offers posted on the monster.com). Meantime a Polish researcher (Łacka-Badura, 2012) has investigated the UK job offers and created a model employer branding advertisement which could be the same for every branch. Is the creation of a model job advertisement a clue in the business world? Peter Kuhn asked another question: How can companies distinguish their offer without forgetting about the factors which are the most important for candidates? In his book the author mentioned such company characteristics as: work-life balance, family concentrated company, flexible hours, corporate social responsibility, diversity management in order to show other aspects of companies' activities which could be unconventionally added to the job description. At this point, it should not be forgotten that unrealistic job offers that are too concentrated on the marketing concept of distinguishing themselves from those of other companies, which is often realized through employer branding, will be a way to attract candidates, but also a factor making those candidates resign from their job after gaining real experiences with the company (Phillips, 1998). An interesting fact is that the instrumental factors (i.e. pay, benefits, or the opportunities to travel

abroad, etc.) were the factors which did not have such a big influence on the initial attractiveness of an employer (Lievens, Highhouse 2003). Symbolic meanings which correspond to non-product-related attributes, especially user imagery (Keller, 1998), were perceived as decisive in this phase of analyzing job offers. However, when we differentiate the attractiveness of an employer as an employer brand from the actual decisions and decision criteria of accepting or not accepting a job offer, we can see that a candidate would pay attention to instrumental factors.

In this book the author concentrated on the strategic aspect of employer branding concerning the Employer Value Proposition, so on the values which could be offered by an employer. When we look closely at the operational aspects such as building the tools to transfer the knowledge about employer branding, we can see that there are more topics to discuss such as: the influence of job offers, of company events organized at universities, of video commercials, etc. Some research on those topic was also conducted, but was not a part of employer branding research. The author mentions some of those studies (for example, the influence of a company's website design on the corporate brand) as an example of a new field of research in management. The research about employer branding in the linguistic perspective concerning not only the text but also the multimodality of job offers or even the whole employer branding strategy is still based on the previous results of corporate brand research.

What should also be taken into account when writing this kind of state-of-the-art summaries is consistency in giving information about the researched group in all mentioned scientific results. As stated in the book, the expectations concerning employer branding vary depending on the gender, age and also the number of job offer alternatives which a candidate has. The cultural aspect was unfortunately not widely discussed although it has a significant role in defining the priorities in strategy creation (Christiaans, 2008). What is more, the branch or field in which potential candidates are searched for is also an important factor, because the so-called "war for talent" is stronger or weaker in some branches, which can have an influence on the research results. Those cultural, professional and social factors could have an influence on the research into employer branding.

This book is a summary which is strictly concentrated on the marketing point of the employer branding process. Employer branding is also connected with the human resources management, because the image of an employer brand should be coherent with the reality in order to prevent unnecessary rotation which could be caused by improper expectations. That is why in some research papers it is stated that employment brand should be differentiated from employer brand, because the first one corresponds more to operational goals of Human Resources where the employer brand is connected more with the corporate brand and creates the whole company image as a great place to work (Jędrzejczyk, 2013). The way of reconciling the world of marketing with the world of more human resources management is still a question. What to do to attract candidates but not create an unreal image of companies? It is also a topic which was mentioned in this book but not analyzed in detail. Generally speaking, it is a good summary of the employer branding literature if we concentrate only on the strategic marketing aspect of job offers.

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