

Consumption acquisition: Theory and practice

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Consumption acquisition practices

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This conceptual paper aims to advance a theory of acquisition practices by integrating concepts and theories about resource circulation practices, such as buying, sharing, gifting, access based consumption, into a common framework. While acquisition, the process of obtaining consumption resources, is an essential aspect of consumer behavior, it has mainly been conceptualized in terms of buying. Recent research has begun to identify and conceptualize alternative acquisition practices and theoretical approaches. We build on these works and develop an organizing theoretical framework that integrates these concepts towards the advancement of a theory of acquisition process and aims to provide conceptual clarity in the current literature. We develop a typology of research acquisition practices on the basis of a) the level of market mediation, and b) ownership transfer based on a literature review and theories of exchange. The typology distinguishes six consumption acquisition practices: buying, bartering, gifting, renting, sharing, and borrowing. We conceptualize each practice, discuss associated consumption consequences, and discuss hybrid cases. Our model helps advance the theoretical account of consumer behavior and widen the scope of such theorization to enclose recent phenomena that arise from the sharing economy.

When and why attachment avoidance affects the sharing of personal possessions

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Although existing research highlights the importance of consumers' participation in the sharing economy, it remains unclear under what condition consumers are more willing to share their personal possessions. This research builds on attachment theory and investigates whether, when and why attachment avoidance - the degree in which individuals tend to avoid closeness and dependency- has an effect on their intentions to share personal possessions. In three experimental studies, we show that attachment avoidance has a negative effect on intentions to share personal possessions. This effect is strengthened for consumers higher in materialism and is reversed when the sharing partner is a stranger. The authors suggest a mechanism by which the consumer's possession-self link mediates the effect of attachment avoidance on sharing intentions. Avenues for future research and implications for peer-to-peer sharing schemes are discussed.

Wanting ever more: Acquisition procedure motivates continued possession acquisition

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What drives consumers to invest resources to acquire material possessions? We suggest that, aside from the consumption utility and the psychological benefits that possessions deliver, people are motivated by the procedure of acquiring them. In six experiments, we compare two procedures: piecemeal procedure, whereby a quantity of possessions is acquired gradually through repeated small efforts; and lump-sum procedure, whereby more possessions are acquired all at once through a longer period of work. Holding constant the total quantity of acquired possessions and the effort-possession exchange rate, we find that piecemeal procedure is more likely to motivate effort investment to earn rewards in the future than lump-sum procedure, because the former results in a greater sense of achievement. If that sense of achievement is curtailed, piecemeal procedure is no more motivating than lump-sum procedure.

Consumer attachment styles and preference for participating in sharing systems

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This paper suggests and empirically shows that consumers' attachment styles determine their likelihood to participate in sharing systems. While anxious consumers are more likely to participate in non-market based systems; avoidant consumers are less likely to take part in such settings. Only for anxious consumers, non-market based sharing systems have a self-esteem enhancing role, significantly increasing the likelihood to participate in sharing settings. Only for avoidant consumers, market based sharing systems provide trust, significantly increasing likelihood to participate in such systems. Interestingly, anxious consumers' likelihood to use a shared item is dependent on its contagion level. Such individuals are more likely to use a shared good when the contagion level of that item is high.