

THE HONG KONG POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT AND MARKETING

Departmental Research Seminar



Consumer Aversion Toward Company Waste By

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Date : 21 Oct 2021 (THU)
Time : 9 am – 10:30 am
Venue : Online via Zoom

Abstract

How do consumers react to company waste during product manufacturing? The present research theorizes that consumers are relatively insensitive to company waste in the form of excess use of resources, compared to equivalent waste in the form of excess disposal of resource residuals. This difference in waste aversion sensitivity emerges because consumers perceive companies' wasteful use of resources (vs. disposal) as causing less immediate environmental harm—a problematic finding for sustainability given that such waste is a major contributor to depletion of the Earth's resources. A series of studies provide converging evidence for this theorizing, while identifying interventions to increase consumer sensitivity to company's wasteful use of resources (e.g., educating consumers about the environmental harm of company waste, making resource scarcity salient). This research further examines the flip side of company waste, namely sustainability initiatives focused on waste mitigation, and—consistent with theorizing— demonstrates that i) consumers react less favorably to firm sustainability initiatives focused on reducing resource use (vs. disposal) and ii) scarcity-based interventions can effectively increase consumer appreciation of such sustainability initiatives. Together, these findings shed light on how, why, and when consumers are averse to company waste, while providing guidance regarding interventions focused on company waste and sustainability.

Prof. Lisa E. Bolton is a Professor of Marketing and Anchel Professor of Business Administration at the Pennsylvania State University. Her Ph.D. is in Marketing from the University of Florida. She has a Master's degree in Clinical Engineering from the University of Toronto and a Bachelor's degree in Engineering Physics from the Royal Military College of Canada. Her research focuses on judgment and decision-making by managers and consumers, with substantive interests in new products and technology, pricing, cross-cultural marketing, and consumer welfare (e.g., spending and finances, health, sustainability). She has published in leading marketing journals, including the *Journal of Marketing Research*, *Journal of Consumer Research*, *Journal of Service Research*, *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, and *Journal of Retailing*. Her research has also been recognized by MSI (MSI Young Scholar's Program 2005) and the AMA (the John A. Howard AMA Doctoral Dissertation Award 1999-2000), and she serves on the editorial review boards of the *Journal of Consumer Research* (AE), *Journal of Marketing* (AE), *Journal of Service Research* (AE), *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing* (AE), *Journal of Retailing* (AE), *Journal of Marketing Research*, *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, and *Journal of Consumer Affairs*. She teaches marketing courses, with an emphasis on consumer insight, in undergraduate, MBA, and Ph.D. programs in the Smeal College of Business.

All interested are welcome.



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