

THE HONG KONG POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT AND MARKETING

Departmental Research Seminar

Privileged and Picky: How a Sense of Disadvantage or Advantage Influences Consumer Pickiness Through Psychological Entitlement By



Prof. Alice Wang
University of Iowa

Date : 16 Oct 2025 (Thu)
Time : 10:30 am – 12 noon
Venue : M714, PolyU

Abstract

Growing inequality continues to impact consumers' lives, further widening the gap between the advantaged and the disadvantaged. The present work examines how these inequalities impact consumer pickiness, defined as the latitude of acceptance around idiosyncratic ideal points. Across eight studies, including an analysis of consumer panel data, a study in the field at a local food pantry, and six preregistered experiments, we find that a sense of disadvantage leads consumers to be less picky, while a sense of advantage leads consumers to be pickier. We find evidence that this process is driven by differences in psychological entitlement: A sense of disadvantage leads consumers to feel less entitled, and a sense of advantage leads consumers to feel more entitled, driving subsequent pickiness. Importantly, while some might think that those who are advantaged might be pickier because they have more resources or access to products, we find these differences in the absence of resource or other external constraints, further speaking to entitlement as an important psychological mechanism. We find that the effects are moderated by social dominance orientation. The impact of disadvantage versus advantage on entitlement and subsequent pickiness is attenuated for individuals who do not endorse existing inequalities.

Prof. Jing (Alice) Wang is Professor of Marketing and John F. Murray Fellow at the Tippie College of Business, University of Iowa. She received her PhD in Marketing from Northwestern University and has been recognized with numerous research grants and honors for the significance and influence of her work. She serves as an Area Editor for the *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* and as a member of the Editorial Board for the *Journal of Consumer Psychology*.

Prof. Wang's research examines how firms and policymakers can better support vulnerable consumer groups—such as the lonely, elderly, and disadvantaged—to enhance their well-being. Her scholarship has been published in leading journals including the *Journal of Marketing Research*, *Journal of Consumer Research*, *Management Science*, and the *Journal of Consumer Psychology*. Her contributions not only advance academic theory but also offer practical insights for organizations and policymakers seeking to generate meaningful societal impact.

In the classroom, Prof. Wang is a dedicated and award-winning teacher who integrates her research insights into practice. She teaches Marketing Management and Integrated Marketing Communications in MBA and undergraduate programs, empowering students with the knowledge and tools to thrive in today's rapidly evolving marketing environment. Her teaching is recognized for its excellence, relevance, and the inspiration it provides to future business leaders.

All interested are welcome.



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