



## Determinants of a lasting purchase: The case of the tattoo patron

Jeremy J. Sierra <sup>\*</sup>, Ravi K. Jillapalli <sup>1</sup>, Vishag A. Badrinarayanan <sup>2</sup>

Texas State University, McCoy College of Business Administration, Department of Marketing, 601 University Drive, San Marcos, TX 78666, United States



### ARTICLE INFO

Available online 19 February 2013

#### Keywords:

Anticipated regret  
Dual-process theory  
Perceived trust  
Self-esteem  
Self-expression  
Tattoo

### ABSTRACT

Evidence suggests that both cognitive and emotive factors elucidate consumer decision processes; yet, research exploring such factors jointly (i.e., a dual-process approach) as antecedents of high-involvement, lasting purchases is lacking. To address this paucity, we developed two studies, each with a unique dual-process model for explaining consumers' intention to get a tattoo. Study 1 explores anticipated regret about getting a tattoo, emotional response before and now regarding a tattoo purchase, and self-expression via tattoo acquisition. Study 2 examines perceived trust in the tattoo artist, self-esteem, attitude toward art paintings, and age as determinants of intention to get a tattoo. Data collected for testing these models support dual-process theory in the tattoo context. Implications and future research directions are offered.

© 2013 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

### 1. Introduction

Recognized as a risk-filled acquisition (Sanders, 1985), tattoos represent a unique purchase due to their permanent alteration of the body and their relationship to personal expression, creativity, and identity (Handwerk, 2002; Hudson, 2009; Watson, 1998). Although previously shunned upon by society, tattoos have become fixtures in mainstream culture (Handwerk, 2002; Watson, 1998); their visible presence and social acceptability can be attributed to intense media exposure of tattoo-laden athletes, entertainers, celebrities, and business executives (Koch et al., 2010; Kosut, 2006; Levins, 1997).

In the US, the tattoo industry, which consists of over 15,000 studios (Swan, 2006) and is seemingly immune to difficult economic times (Hudson, 2009), is the sixth fastest growing retail business, with the middle-class suburban woman being the fastest growing demographic group to get a tattoo. Tattoo procurement spans a gamut of societal members; for example, in 2004, over 30 million Americans had at least one tattoo (37% between the ages of 18 and 25 and 40% between the ages of 26 and 40) (Tattoo Trends, 2009). Further, nearly 40% of teens and 20-somethings have at least one tattoo; of these, 50% have between 2 and 5 (Neighbor, 2010). Tattooing is also experiencing unprecedented international acceptance and success (Levins, 1997).

Widespread adoption of tattoos by mainstream society is evident; yet research on tattoo buyer behavior lags this movement (Kjeldgaard and Bengtsson, 2005; Lipscomb et al., 2008; Sanders, 1985; Totten et al., 2009). Tattoos, as symbolic and lasting purchases, are conduits for human expression (Velliquette et al., 1998) and their proliferation across social strata represents attractive marketing and sales potential (Pentina and Spears, 2011). To better understand determinants of tattoo acquisition and to offer insight to both advertisers' design strategies and marketers' modeling efforts of purchase behavior, we propose, across multiple studies, two dual-process models of intention to acquire body art in the form of a tattoo.

Specifically for Study 1, we examine the following antecedents of intention to purchase a tattoo ( $Pur_{INT}$ ): self-expression ( $Self_{EXP}$ ) [viewed as the categorization and communication elements of self-expressive values (Richins, 1994)] via tattoo acquisition, anticipated regret ( $Ant_{REG}$ ) [considered a negatively-charged emotion directed toward forecasted anguish resulting from a failed exchange outcome (Currie, 1985)] about getting a tattoo, and emotional response before ( $Em_{BEF}$ ) and now ( $Em_{NOW}$ ) [both regarded as states of feeling (MacInnis and de Mello, 2005)] about getting a tattoo. Regarding Study 2, we test the following determinants of intention to purchase a tattoo ( $Pur_{INT}$ ): perceived trust ( $T_{RUST}$ ) [ascertained as an overall disposition toward an entity based on performance competency (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001) and ardor toward consumers' well-being (Delgado-Ballester et al., 2003)], self-esteem ( $E_{STEEM}$ ) [considered a positive or negative feeling toward oneself based on some personal trait(s) (Durgee, 1986)], attitude toward art paintings ( $A_{PAINT}$ ) [viewed as a tendency to respond either favorably or unfavorably to this type of artistry (MacKenzie and Lutz, 1989)], and age ( $A_{GE}$ ). Previous research suggests these determinants

<sup>\*</sup> Corresponding author. Tel.: +1 512 245 3819; fax: +1 512 245 7475.

E-mail addresses: [js204@txstate.edu](mailto:js204@txstate.edu) (J.J. Sierra),

[Ravi.Jillapalli@txstate.edu](mailto:Ravi.Jillapalli@txstate.edu) (R.K. Jillapalli), [vb16@txstate.edu](mailto:vb16@txstate.edu) (V.A. Badrinarayanan).

<sup>1</sup> Tel.: +1 512 245 3826.

<sup>2</sup> Tel.: +1 512 245 4378.

influence buyers' choices across various contexts, and thus, because of their applicability, may explain meaningful variance in consumers' intention to get a tattoo.

The exposition proceeds as follows. First, we review the importance of dual-process theory to consumer choice models and discuss its applicability to our research. Next, we present the model constructs and develop hypotheses for Study 1, followed by the method and results. A similar methodological description ensues for Study 2. We then offer an overall discussion, followed by implications, limitations, and future research directions.

## 2. Dual-process theory

Dual-process frameworks provide a comprehensive delineation of decision-making processes by modeling both cognitive and emotive factors as choice antecedents. Because cognitions and emotions function jointly to affect choice during the decision-making process (Hansen, 2005), focusing exclusively on cognitive acuties or emotional responses as choice antecedents is likely to leave consequential variance arcane (Agarwal and Malhotra, 2005; van Gelder et al., 2009). Supporting this notion, empirical research suggests that cognitive-based systematic models do not accurately describe how people decide; choice processes are more aptly modeled by integrating cognitive and emotive decision-making determinants (Finucane and Holup, 2006; Pawle and Cooper, 2006). For example, researchers who assume that online resort bookings are made strictly on room rate (cognitive appeal) fail to capture the scope of consumer decision processes (Lehrer, 2009). In addition to a fair nightly rate (cognitive appeal), the ambiance of the website (e.g., music) and images portrayed (e.g., family fun) (both emotional appeals) strongly influence travelers' intentions to stay at a certain resort destination.

A number of other studies validate the appropriateness of dual-process frameworks for modeling consumer purchases. For instance, anticipated emotions, emanating from fantasized outcomes (Kwortnik and Ross, 2007), along with cognitive factors, influence credit card use (Wiener et al., 2007), gambling intentions (Sierra and Hyman, 2009), apparel purchase intentions (Sierra and Hyman, 2011), and the desire to exercise, diet, and study (Perugini and Bagozzi, 2001). Additionally, shopping center image and positive anticipated emotions relate positively to shopping center visits (Hunter, 2006). In sport settings, group affiliation and love for the game motivate college football fans to attend games (Kahle et al., 1996). Both cognitions and emotions are effectual predictors of consumer choice especially when customer–employee interaction is high (Bitner, 1992). As the aforementioned research suggests, an amalgam of cognitive and emotive factors jointly influence consumer behavioral intentions. Accordingly, both cognitive and emotive factors are likely to influence lasting purchases, such as body art, which are high-involvement transactions characterized by close interaction between customers and employees. Yet, dual-process frameworks for explaining the purchase determinants of body art, such as tattoos, are lacking. In an effort to grow our understanding of this particular choice process, we develop two studies and test multiple dual-process models to further delineate factors that influence consumers' intention to get a tattoo.

## 3. Literature review

### 3.1. The tattoo purchase

Considered a highly social act that alters one's self-image (Sanders, 1990), tattoos are a high-involvement purchase, and in

becoming one with a person's skin, they have more of an influence on one's self-concept than tangible external possessions (Shelton and Peters, 2006), which may help to explain the affective nature of this type of purchase (Frederick and Bradley, 2000). Further, the oft self-gift nature of tattoos represents a personally symbolic, self-communicated message about one's uniqueness; here, two facets – communication and specialness – of the self-gift paradigm are readily apparent (Mick and DeMoss, 1990). The communication nature of the self-gift stresses personal symbolism grounded in one's self-concept, accentuating self-esteem and identity, which is apparent in tattoos that reflect people's makeup. And, the specialness associated with the self-gift is found in the uncommonness and sacredness of the purchase, emphasizing one's pursuit of escape and discovery, evident in one-of-a-kind tattoos (Mick and DeMoss, 1990).

### 3.2. Determinants of tattoo procurement

Applicable to the self-gift paradigm previously mentioned, motivating factors for getting tattooed include honoring people, constructing identity by meaningful designs, seeking uniqueness and creativity, and symbolizing cultural values (Pentina et al., 2007). Also, commemorating life events, typifying personal identity, asserting spirituality, enhancing body aesthetics, vowing a relationship, conforming, and adhering to initiation rites antecede consumers' willingness to get a tattoo (Shelton and Peters, 2006). Additionally, approval from support groups, trust in the tattoo artist, and having an art collector mindset are reasons to *get inked* (Goulding et al., 2004), as are one's desire to enhance his/her individuality and one's need to improve his/her sexual attractiveness (Antoszewski et al., 2010). Other research suggests fashion/art appreciation, personalization and creation of memoirs, and a contextual representation of self as determinants of tattoo procurement (Kjeldgaard and Bengtsson, 2005); also, mark of disaffiliation from conventional society and a symbolic affirmation of personal identity and association explain why consumers get tattooed (Sanders, 1988). Further, ethnographic studies show that tattoos are an extension of one's self; they constitute a simulation of one's being (Velliquette et al., 1998). These findings linked to the communication and specialness aspects of the self-gift framework posited by Mick and DeMoss (1990) reveal both cognitive and emotive-based precursors of consumers' tattoo acquisitions.

Additionally, there is an affiliation need to get tattooed, as skin art can be used to identify one as a member of a certain group (Sanders, 1990). In this sense, there can be a tribalism component associated with getting a tattoo. For example, ardent football fans of a team, although not acquaintances, could be drawn to each other at social gatherings (e.g., tailgating) based on a common or related tattoo; also, such brand tribal behavior linked to tattoos is readily seen in motorcycle rider and music fan circles. As the aforementioned findings indicate, both cognitive and emotive factors can be used to help explain why consumers get tattooed. Yet, a simultaneous assessment of germane cognitions and emotions (i.e., a dual-process theoretical approach), which would lend insight regarding the interplay of these types of factors on the tattoo purchase process, is lacking.

### 3.3. Perceptions of tattoos

Both positive and negative attitudes toward people with tattoos are professed (Totten et al., 2009). Regarding favorable pose, students are likely to recommend instructors upon knowledge that instructors have a tattoo (Wiseman, 2010). Also, companies like Ford, Wells Fargo, and Yahoo! are demonstrating a shift in corporate attitudes by accepting tattoos as part of employees' personalities and implementing increasingly lenient

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/1029141>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/1029141>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)