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Author: Saurabh Bansal Brent Moritz



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# ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT

## Perceived Versus Actual Value of Product Substitution Flexibility: An Experimental Investigation

#### Saurabh Bansal<sup>1</sup>

Department of Supply Chain and Information Systems

405 Business Building,

Smeal College of Business,

The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA, 16802

Email: sub32@psu.edu, Ph: 814 863 3797

#### **Brent Moritz**

Department of Supply Chain and Information Systems

469 Business Building,

Smeal College of Business,

The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA, 16802

Email: bmoritz@psu.edu, Ph: 814 863 7243

<sup>1</sup> Corresponding author.

Abstract

Prior literature suggests that in the presence of operational uncertainties such as uncertain demand, firms should deploy operational flexibilities. However, these flexibilities are costly to develop and a correct valuation of these capabilities is necessary to ensure that they are only deployed when the expected benefits exceed the cost.Using a set of behavioral decision-making experiments for inventory of substitutable products, we investigate how decision-makers perform when estimating the value of operational flexibility of product substitution. We found that subjects consistently overestimated the monetary value of product substitution. Furthermore, the overestimation became more acute as demand correlation increased. This behavior is not explained by risk aversionor random errors. Instead, it appears

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