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# From Customizing Products to Possessive Bonds: The Role of Consumer Involvement and Consumer Privacy Concern

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# **From Customizing Products to Possessive Bonds: The Role of Consumer Involvement and Consumer Privacy Concern**

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## **EXTENDED ABSTRACT**

Despite the prevalence of customized products and service in the marketplace, little research has examined the impact of customization on consumers. This research responds to the research question by first identifying the mechanism underlying the positive effect of brand customization on brand attitude from a theoretical lens of psychological ownership. Next, this research investigates the role of two potential moderators—consumer involvement and privacy concern.

Findings from Study 1 reveals the positive effect of customization on psychological ownership, which subsequently mediates to endorse favorable brand attitudes. In addition, the mediating effect is moderated by consumer involvement. Those with a high involvement in the customization feel stronger psychological ownership and develop more favorable attitudes, whereas those with a low involvement do not. Study 2 demonstrates that the customization effect on consumers could be mitigated by a high level of privacy concerns. In other words, the identified customization effect exists only for those with low privacy concerns. When consumers' privacy concern is high, there is no significant difference in their brand attitude.

This research provides insights into how customization affects the way consumers responds to the brand. It suggests that to appeal to target consumers, brands that utilize customization should consider consumers' different levels of involvement. It is important to prime consumers the value of customization to them to induce high level of consumer involvement, as the positive impact of customization on consumers exists only among those with high involvement. Future research should explore ways to mitigate the impact of consumer privacy concern on their response towards the customized products.

Keywords: customization, psychological ownership, involvement, privacy concerns

## **ABOUT THE AUTHORS**

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