



Special Issue

CONSUMER IDEOLOGIES IN TIME OF UNCERTAINTY

Guest Editors:

Edoardo Lozza, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore - Milan

Donata Vianelli, University of Trieste - Trieste

Marco Balzano, Ca' Foscari University of Venice - Venice

Giulia Sesini, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore - Milan

The last few years have witnessed a number of unexpected events which dramatically changed the rule of the game across many industries. For example, the spread of multiple COVID-19 pandemic outbreaks challenged worldwide economies, requiring prompt governmental interventions to sustain national economies. Also, climate change is becoming an increasingly relevant concern for a variety of stakeholders, including end-consumers. The onset of wars contributed to increasing uncertainty in both the short- and long-term future. These turbulent variations of the status quo affected almost every aspect of business environments, severely increasing the overall uncertainty towards the future.

On one hand, business had to quickly reorganize their business activities to cope with this environmental dynamism and uncertainty. On the other hand, environmental uncertainty also triggered remarkable shifts in consumers preferences and expectations. Consumers have become increasingly demanding for local, sustainable, authentic, ethical, green, safe goods. This posed a renewed challenge for firms, which now have to carefully transform their businesses for accomplishing these new consumer standards.

Interestingly, while several consumers just develop preferences for specific goods and services, in other cases consumers develop strong consumer ideologies, that significantly affect their needs and habits, and subsequently their willing to purchase some goods or services rather than others (Balzano & Vianelli, 2022; Schmitt et al., 2021). Furthermore, consumer ideologies play a crucial role in the emergence of new forms of lifestyles and consumptions patterns, such as the neo-frugality trend (Goldsmith et al., 2014; Lozza & Fusari, 2019), that (re)emerged due to the above-mentioned environmental issues, but also due to economic constraints.

The study of consumer ideologies lies at the heart of marketing research (Kozinets & Handelman, 2004). Indeed, consumer ideologies entail the way in which consumers think. This can reveal key insights for the development of effective marketing strategies. In this perspective, consumption is a symbolic act, through which consumers not only focus on the products but also give great importance to the symbolic meanings behind the act of consumption (Martinengo, 2009).

In general terms, consumer research defines consumer ideologies as any sets of normative beliefs shared among groups of individuals. In most of the cases, consumer ideologies manifest in the form of action-oriented ideas that provide values, meaning, and identity (Schmitt et al., 2021). As time moves forward, new consumer ideologies emerge, while the existing are subject to continuous evolution (Vescovi & Trevisiol, 2011). Thus, ideology formation and evolution are iterative in nature, as they encompass social practices and processes.

Some of the most prominent consumer ideologies that have recently attracted the attention by scholars are locavorism (Balzano & Vianelli, 2022; Reich et al., 2018), ethnocentrism (Maison & Maliszewski, 2016), green consumerism (Moisander, 2007), environmentalism (Kahn, 2007), anti-consumption (Makri et al., 2020).

However, extant knowledge on what leads to the formation of consumer ideologies, their consequences, and their evolution is still limited.

This, combined with today's business environments characterized by escalating levels of uncertainty, leads us to the present call for paper. Extant literature on consumer ideologies in time of uncertainty must therefore be updated. Questions arise which study and research could offer reflections and answers.

We welcome papers providing new empirical evidence and theory testing on consumer ideologies. There is also room for in-depth qualitative analysis to investigate how consumer ideologies evolve over time. Moreover, we invite scholars to propose conceptual contributions, methodological advancements and literature reviews representing the current state on knowledge on consumer ideologies.

The presented papers should look for, but not be limited to, addressing the following issues:

- The relationship between uncertainty and consumer ideology formation and evolution;
- The identification of emergent consumer ideologies and the validation of new scales capturing them;
- Impact of consumer ideologies on brand strategies (e.g., boycotting behaviors);
- The evolution of well-explored consumer ideologies;
- The role of brands in shaping consumer ideologies;
- How and when consumer preference can become consumer ideologies;
- How a consumer ideology dynamically can evolve within an established group of individuals (e.g., through a netnographic approach);
- Consumer ideology emerging from self-authenticating acts in consumption;
- Mapping the most prominent ideologies and investigating the commonalities and differences among them, or exploring how they differently relate to marketing variables;
- Exploring how generational-related factors or other demographic variables drive the formation of consumer ideologies;
- Consumer ideologies and digital environments (e.g., spread of fake news and misinformation; local vs global delivery platforms);
- Consumers' expectation of social involvement from brands: brand activism as a consumer ideology;
- Move beyond the food industry to explore how consumer ideologies are shaped in a variety of industrial sectors;
- Cross-country and cross-industry differences in terms of consumer ideology;
- How consumers coming from multiple countries differently frame consumer ideologies.

Other topics are welcome if they contribute to the proposed academic conversation.

Important Dates

- Expressions of interest and abstract – **Oct. 31, 2022**
- Initial screening of abstracts and informing of those selected to proceed – **Nov. 15, 2022**
- Deadline for submission of full paper – **March 10, 2023**
- Publication: **December 2023**

Submission Instructions

- Abstracts should be submitted to the Guest Co-Editors prior to October 31, 2022. When submitting, be sure to indicate the submission is for the special issue. All submissions will be subject to a rigorous, double-blind, peer-review process.
- Abstracts should be submitted by e-mail to edoardo.lozza@unicatt.it and donata.vianelli@deams.units.it. Full papers should be submitted to [Submissions |Micro & Macro Marketing \(rivisteweb.it\)](#)
- Full papers are due in English.

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