A Grounded Typology of Consumer Conceptualizations of Failure

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ABSTRACT - Consumers often fail in their attempts to achieve desired goals in the marketplace. However, failure is an outcome that consumer researchers rarely explore. Using text from interviews with 23 informants in various stages of infertility treatment, we offer a grounded taxonomy of four conceptualizations of failure that influence consumer trying and persistence: Failure as a Mobilizing Challenge, Failure as an Unacceptable Outcome, Failure as the Will of Fate, and Failure as Nonfailure. We compare these conceptualizations along seven underlying dimensions, and discuss the implications of these findings on future research pertaining to goals and trying.

[to cite]:

[url]:
http://www.acrwebsite.org/volumes/9124/volumes/v32/NA-32

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Consumers often fail in their attempts to achieve desired goals in the marketplace. However, failure is an outcome that consumer researchers rarely explore. Using text from interviews with 23 informants in various stages of infertility treatment, we offer a grounded taxonomy of four conceptualizations of failure that influence consumer trying and persistence: Failure as a Mobilizing Challenge, Failure as an Unacceptable Outcome, Failure as the Will of Fate, and Failure as Nonfailure. We compare these conceptualizations along seven underlying dimensions, and discuss the implications of these findings on future research pertaining to goals and trying.