Motivated Consumer Innovativeness: Concept, Measurement, and Validation

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Functional, hedonic, social and cognitive motivations, which are incorporated in a new Motivated Consumer Innovativeness scale, underlie consumer innovativeness. These reliable and valid scale dimensions predict innovative purchase intentions better than traditional and recent innovativeness scales. Moreover, the scale disproves the consensus that age is always negatively related to innovativeness.

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT
Since the early seventies, several researchers have tried to predict consumers’ innovative buying behavior by means of different scales intended to measure innovativeness as a personality trait. However, most previous research disregards the consumer-product relation (Gatignon and Robertson 1985; Goldsmith and Flynn 1992) and ignores the different motivation sources. By constructing a new Consumer Innovativeness scale which incorporates a diversity of underlying goals and motivations for buying an innovation, we take the notion of product-consumer interactions in Consumer Innovativeness one step further: Consumers differ not only in level of innovativeness (i.e., personality trait of consumers) but also in type of innovativeness (i.e., motivations to buy the innovation).

Consumer innovativeness is “the tendency to buy new products in a particular product category soon after they appear in the market and relatively earlier than most other consumers in the market segment” (Foxall, Goldsmith, and Brown 1998, 41). This personality trait should provide an explanatory basis for innovative buying behavior; however, predictive validity still is problematic with the existing innovativeness scales (Im, Bayus, and Mason 2003). By including a wider spectrum of motivations, we are able to construct an innovativeness scale that performs better both in terms of content validity and predictive validity. Moreover, it may help marketing researchers and managers to identify and reach the motivated innovative consumer for their innovation more effectively.

We base our conceptualization on general motivation, goal and value taxonomies (Ford and Nichols 1987; Schwartz 1992) and can conclude that at least four motivational dimensions are of importance for Consumer Innovativeness: (1) Functionally Motivated Consumer Innovativeness (fMCI) is Consumer Innovativeness motivated by the functional performance of innovations which focus on task management and accomplishment improvement. (2) Hedonically Motivated Consumer Innovativeness (hMCI) is Consumer Innovativeness motivated by an affective or sensory stimulation and gratification. (3) Socially Motivated Consumer Innovativeness (sMCI) is Consumer Innovativeness motivated by the self-assertive social need for differentiation. And finally, (4) Cognitively Motivated Consumer Innovativeness (cMCI) is Consumer Innovativeness motivated by stimulation of the mind. These four motives often recur in general consumer behavior literature (Rossiter and Percy 1997; Sweeney and Soutar 2001), innovativeness literature (Arnould 1989; Fisher and Price 1992; Simonson and Nowlis 2000; Voss, Spangenberg, and Grohmann 2003) or different innovativeness scales (Baumgartner and Steenkamp 1996; Tellis, Yin, and Bell 2009). To conclude, this four-dimensional Consumer Innovativeness scale consists of a hedonic, functional, social, and cognitive dimension is useful for several reasons. First, the eight studies show that the dimensionality, reliability, convergence, discriminant, and predictive validity of MCI prove satisfactory. Second, MCI measures more than existing Consumer Innovativeness scales: (1) MCI not only measures the intensity of Consumer Innovativeness, but also its origin. (2) MCI keeps the middle ground between existing general innovativeness scales, which are unimpressive in predicting innovative behavior, and the domain-specific innovativeness of Goldsmith and Hofacker (1991), which is product-specific and thus not very practical, leading to a better performance in terms of predicting innovative behavior. (3) Moreover, MCI disproves the general consensus that younger people are more innovative than older people: Older people are as innovative as younger people as far as functional innovations are concerned. As most existing innovativeness scales focus on hedonic and social innovativeness, and older people are less hedonically and socially motivated to buy innovations, these scales are not able to capture the innovativeness of older people.

REFERENCES


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