

NON – CONSCIOUS WOMEN CONSUMER PSYCHOLOGY

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INTRODUCTION

A growing literature has documented that a wide range of consumption behaviors are strongly influenced by factors outside of people's conscious awareness. For instance, consumers are often unaware that they have been exposed to an environmental cue that triggers a given consumption behavior, or are unaware of a mental process that is occurring outside conscious awareness, or are even unaware of the consumption-related outcome of such a non-conscious process (Chartrand, 2005). Such processes are often adaptive and highly functional, But consumers. By shining a light on a wide range of non-conscious consumer psychology we hope to facilitate increased reliance on our unconscious systems in certain situations and equip consumers to defend themselves when unconscious processes can lead to negative outcomes.

WOMEN CONSUMER PSYCHOLOGY

Women exactly then is a non-conscious psychological process for a consumer? We define it as a subset of automatic processing (Bargh & Chartrand, 1999) An automatic process is one that, once set into motion, has no need of conscious intervention (Bargh, 1989). The labeling of automatic process in social and cognitive psychology, including those set forth in dual process models, implies that processes are either automatic or they are not. Labels such as automatic/controlled, implicit/explicit, conscious/non-conscious, spontaneous/deliberative, and system1/system2 by their dichotomous nature suggest that consumers are either in conscious decision making mode or have their unconscious driving their decision making entirely. However, there are different elements of automaticity (including lack of awareness, lack of intent, efficiency, and lack of control; see Bargh 1994). These elements do not always go together and most, if not all, automatic process have the other elements, performance on the classic Stroop task has lack of control, and most priming effects have lack of awareness and intent.

Research on non-conscious processes in women consumer behavior has tended to focus on lack of conscious awareness. But it is important to note that even when focusing on awareness, it is not the case that a given process is one a person is either totally aware of or totally unaware of. Most

women consumer behavior falls into a middle ground, where some component of the process is conscious (that is, consumers are aware of it) while some is not accessible to the women consumer. In other words, research has shown that virtually all consumer psychological processes range on a continuum from highly conscious to entirely non-conscious, and don't fall only into one of the two "buckets". This continuum view of the conscious nature of decision making is important as it suggests that the study of non-conscious process in women consumer choice is important not just for a small category of research topics that focus on subliminal persuasion and other relatively rare and/or extreme situations. Rather, virtually all consumer psychology has both a conscious and non-conscious elements that are important to understand. As a result, we believe that consumer psychologists studying motivation, emotion, attitude formation, and decision making should all consider the role of the unconscious in the specific processes they are examining.

WOMEN CONSUMER PREFERENCE

While women consumer choice research has dedicated considerable research attention to aspects of choice that are deliberative and conscious, only limited attention has been paid to aspects of choice that occur outside of conscious awareness with relevant research. That suggests that women consumer choice is mix of conscious and non-conscious influences. Across a series of research domains, these influences are found to include stimulus area not consciously perceived by the women consumer, non-conscious downstream effects a consciously perceived stimuli or thought process and decisions processes that occurs entirely outside of awareness.

Consumer choice is traditionally assumed to be a conscious, deliberative process. Increasingly, however, research has shown that a large part of consumer decision-making occurs outside of conscious awareness or is influenced by factors unrecognized by the decision maker. Based on a review of this research, it argues that all decision consists of a conscious and non-conscious process and that the degree to which non-conscious process influences the consumer choice process is much greater than most choice researchers believe.

It was not that long ago that the use of the term non-conscious (or unconscious) to describe women consumer psychology was essentially verboten. Perhaps researchers were (too) comfortable with traditional information processing models implying that women consumer behavior is driven by conscious, deliberative thought and choice. Perhaps some were unaware of the virtual revolution of automaticity in social psychology over the last several decades. Perhaps women consumer psychologists, along with many women consumers, did not want to acknowledge that many of the processes that occur in a consumption domain occur largely outside the awareness of the women consumer.

NON-CONSCIOUS PROCESSING AND METACOGNITION

In the present context the levels of inside consumers or managers have regarding the source, causes and in some cases existence of their knowledge, attitudes and preference. Meta-cognition should be poor when individual responses are driven by stimuli or processes that occur below the level of conscious awareness. Although through, this classic view of non-conscious processing is restrictive and under states the degree of Meta cognitive error.

CONCLUSION

With the brief reviewed, some of the mounting evidence in support of non-conscious influence on many aspects of the women consumer choice process. Evidence continues to accumulate regarding stimulus that are not consciously perceived by the women consumer, non-conscious stimulus that are not consciously perceived by the women consumer, non-conscious downstream effects of a consciously perceived stimuli are thought process and decision process that occur entirely outside of awareness. Each of these non-conscious components of women consumer choice as important implication for researchers studying consumer decision-making, particularly women consumer choice contexts exhibit many of the conditions that lead to automatic processing.

