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SPECIALTY SECTION  
This article was submitted to  
Advertising and Marketing Communication,  
a section of the journal  
Frontiers in Communication

RECEIVED 04 February 2023  
ACCEPTED 23 February 2023  
PUBLISHED 06 March 2023

CITATION  
Bettiga D, Yacout O and Noci G (2023) Editorial:  
Emotions as key drivers of consumer behaviors:  
A multidisciplinary perspective.  
*Front. Commun.* 8:1158942.  
doi: 10.3389/fcomm.2023.1158942

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# Editorial: Emotions as key drivers of consumer behaviors: A multidisciplinary perspective

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## KEYWORDS

emotions, consumer behavior, consumer neuroscience, consumer experience, purchasing process

Editorial on the Research Topic  
Emotions as key drivers of consumer behaviors: A  
multidisciplinary perspective

Consumers not only make rational decisions but also emotional ones. Research now recognizes the significance of diverse neglected factors, such as emotions, affect, arousal and pleasure in appraisal, and has identified processes and behaviors that do not fit with the traditional view of acting as a result of a purely deliberate process. Understanding consumer behaviors has long been a challenging endeavor, due to different variables affecting decision-making mechanisms and the difficulty of measuring them. It requires, indeed, a comprehension of both the cognitive, information-processing mechanisms and of the affective and experiential systems of individuals. Moreover, it demands an appreciation of the rich and deep interplay between cognitive and affective processes.

Understanding consumers' emotions can inform practitioners on how to effectively communicate with their target audience, whether internal or external, in order to elicit attention, engagement and positive emotional responses, and to build emotional connections. Human stress, engagement, cognitive and emotional responses may be taken into account in the development of products and services, by understanding consumers' responses and experience with them. This has a deep impact at the organizational level in terms of marketing strategies, putting the consumer at the center of the whole organization.

To address this important area in the literature, the editors submitted this Research Topic. We accepted 11 manuscripts that cover the broad theme of emotions with a focus on their impact on consumer behaviors. The contributions to this Research Topic provide knowledge on the role of emotions in consumer behavior throughout the purchasing process, while allowing for dialogue between disciplines such as psychology, organizational behavior, marketing, neuroscience, bioscience and design.

The article from [Zhang and Zhang](#) focuses on the consumer purchasing process, taking the emerging product "blind box" (a closed small box with built-in dolls of different styles, diffused in Asia) as the research object. The work reviews the SOR theory and hypothesizes that uncertainty increases blind box purchase intention, as its core selling point is uncertainty, and that emotional value has a mediating effect on the uncertainty connected to purchase intention. Customer consumption purpose functions as a moderator in such a relationship. Results confirm that uncertainty increases the emotional value of consumers purchasing a blind box.

The consumer purchasing process is explored as well by [Bian and Yan](#), in the context of brand extensions. They investigate the intention to purchase a brand extension and how it is mediated by the consumer's emotional brand-relationship. Brand attribute associations, which are descriptive features used in the characterization of a brand, emerge as impactful on the intention to purchase luxury brands extensions. Consumers, when evaluating the purchase of a brand extension, rely on cognitive memories and schemas related to luxury brands plus the emotional bonds developed with them.

[Doran et al.](#) investigate whether tourist consumption motives and purchasing intentions for sustainable groceries differ on vacation vs. at home. They report that self-reported purchasing intentions were weaker for a vacation scenario than for a home scenario. Furthermore, the consumption motives were different in the two contexts. While normative motives were related to intentions to buy sustainable groceries at home and on vacation; hedonic motives (i.e., pleasure) added explanatory variance to intentions in a vacation context. The findings reflect the contextual discrepancies in environmental behavior, while noting possible implications for promoting sustainable consumption among tourists.

[Liu et al.](#) offer a new perspective on the antecedents of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) and the creation of eWOM. Using an experimental design, the pride state was manipulated and its effect on eWOM was examined. Findings indicate a positive effect of authentic pride on positive eWOM and constructive eWOM. Conversely, hubristic pride caused negative eWOM and destructive eWOM. This study offers insights on how different types of eWOM are created as a result of consumer emotions such as pride.

Delving into marketing communication, the article from [Sohail et al.](#) focuses on the process and concept of anthropomorphism in marketing literature, being a precursor of positive marketing outcomes. They analyze the relationship between consumer psychological and dispositional motivational traits for a product advertisement displaying human body features.

The work from [Luo](#) reports a time series analysis of day-to-day emotional text related to fund investments on Weibo. The work shows that fund performance is a predictor of fear, anger, and surprise expressions on Weibo, offering insights for media emotion analysis.

From a more social perspective, [Ning and Hu](#) studies the influence of social support of online travel platform enterprises on customer citizenship behavior. The work indicates that emotions have an influence on customer citizenship behavior and play a mediating effect in the relationship between social support and customer citizenship behavior. Customer satisfaction plays a relevant role as well.

Also the article from [Do et al.](#) investigates social drivers by exploring how corporate social responsibility initiatives influence brand love, grounding on the theory of social identity complexity. Brand authenticity has been tested as a variable intervening between perceived corporate social responsibility and brand love.

On a similar perspective, [Wang et al.](#) investigate the measures that companies should take to reduce consumers' negative response to them in the case of perceiving them as hypocritical. Specifically, they conducted an experiment to explore the effect of the match between corporate hypocrisy manifestation (moral hypocrisy vs. behavioral hypocrisy) and the corporate response strategy (reactive CSR communication vs. proactive CSR communication) on consumers' negative behaviors (negative word of mouth, complaint, and boycott). Findings support the hypothesized relationships and consumer emotions were found to mediate these relationships.

From a methodological point of view, the article from [Russo et al.](#) introduces neuromarketing as a powerful tool to monitor the emotional and cognitive states of the consumer, overcoming the limitations of traditional marketing methodology. The work focuses on virtual and augmented reality (AR), being able to produce immersive and enjoyable emotions.

In their article, [Balconi et al.](#) examine how COVID-19-related contents affect hemodynamic brain correlates of the consumer approach or avoidance motivation. Using an experimental design, Italian participants were randomly assigned to two different groups. Groups either watched COVID-19-related or non-COVID-19-related commercials. The hemodynamic response within the left and right prefrontal cortices (PFC) was monitored with Functional Near-Infrared Spectroscopy (fNIRS). Their findings reveal that the COVID-19-related contents stimulated emotional processing to a higher extent. The authors concluded that these commercials propelled consumers to dedicate more attention to the processing of emotional components compared to the semantic meaning conveyed by the ad.

## Author contributions

All authors listed have made a substantial, direct, and intellectual contribution to the work and approved it for publication.

## Conflict of interest

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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