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STUDIES ON CONSUMER'S SELF AND PERFORMANCE IN THE AGE OF TECHNOLOGY

The market for innovative products that enable consumers to improve their performance is constantly growing. This dissertation studies three specific examples of such innovative technologies and how the consumer's self may influence their consumption. Each of them has a clear objective benefit, but a behavioral science perspective may predict potential backfire effects. Comparing more detailed vs. more generic feedback, people have a preference for more detailed feedback, however they (mis)use it to arrive at a more favorable, but less accurate self-view. Artwork that is created by artificial intelligence with human-like capabilities is depreciated, even when it is of the same objective quality as human-created artwork, as it may threaten unique human superiority. Performance improvement in competitive settings using technological tools vs. biological substances is less accepted, as it does not allow for an attribution to the self, although it may be less harmful to the consumer. Overall, the findings of this research suggest a biased view on those innovative products, where maintaining a favorable self-view may be more central than the consumption of the product and resulting performance improvements. Thus, businesses and policymakers need to take the role of people's self into account when developing and marketing technological innovations.

About the author

Florian Buehler conducted his doctoral research at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. He holds an MSc in International Business and Management (cum laude) from the University of Groningen and an MSc in Advanced International Business Management and Marketing (with distinction) from Newcastle University. His main research interests focus on judgment and decision making, the role of identity and self(-threat) in consumer behavior, and the consumption of innovative technologies.



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