

SUPERSTITIOUS BELIEFS IN CONSUMER EVALUATION OF BRAND LOGOS

*Yong Jian Wang, University of Texas-Pan American, United States
Monica D. Hernandez, Kansas State University, United States
Michael S. Minor, University of Texas-Pan American, United States*

ABSTRACT

In today's unpredictable market environment, superstition may be deployed by a consumer in controlling and predicting particular market conditions with uncertain information. Particularly, when consumers encounter a brand logo without experiencing a company's service or consuming its products, superstitious beliefs may serve to fill the void of the unknown to evaluate the brand logo and judge the services or products. Our purpose is to examine the role of various superstitious beliefs in the way consumers process information and link their beliefs to brand logos.

We proposed six variables affecting superstitious evaluation of brand logos, in order to measure the unconscious memories and beliefs in consumers' interpretation of brand logo meanings not accounted by experiencing a company's services or consuming its products. These variables include belief in fate, belief in fortune-tellers, belief in magic and fictional figures, belief in urban legends, belief in lucky charms, and belief in superstitious rituals.

Our survey instrument was based on previously tested scales, including both positive and negative aspects of superstitious beliefs. Factor analysis results confirmed that superstitious beliefs include both aspects.

Multiple regression analysis was used to investigate the relationship between consumers' superstitious evaluation of brand logos and six independent variables (superstitious beliefs). Results indicated that consumers' belief in fate has a negative effect on their superstition toward brand logo, while consumers' belief in fortune-tellers, belief in magic and fictional figures, belief in lucky charms, and belief in superstitious rituals have positive effects on their superstition toward brand logo.

Our study indicates that highly fatalistic individuals are less likely to rely on environmental clues, such as brand logos, to explain their consumer-related benefits because they tend to believe that fate determines their fortune. Our study also revealed that brand logos associated with good luck and fortune might increase brand equity.

The understanding of the effects of superstition in consumer evaluation of brand logos offers an unexplored perspective from the traditional and scientific-based consumer behavior research concerning evaluation and decision process.

References available upon request