



I Need My Own Part!
Effects of Anthropomorphic Product Presentations on Brand Choice of Complementary Goods

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The Razor-and-Blade Model



Threat from Low-Cost Alternatives



How to Increase Choice Share of the Parent Brand?

- **Anthropomorphic Presentation**
 - Presenting a product as if it looks, talks, or moves like a human being in ads (print or video) or product designs (Aggarwal and McGill 2007; Kim and McGill 2011; Puzakova, Kwak, and Rocereto 2013)

Anthropomorphic Presentation and Brand Choice

- **Anthropomorphic Presentation**
 - Product anthropomorphization will induce consumers to apply a human schema to the focal product (Chandler and Schwarz 2010; Kim and McGill 2011; Puzakova, Kwak, and Rocereto 2013)
- **Body-Part Consideration**
 - In a human schema, the base product looks like the main body and a complementary accessory looks like a body part



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- **Body-Part Consideration**
 - In a human schema, the base product looks like the main body and a complementary accessory looks like a body part
- **Aversion to Foreign Body-Related Substances**
 - People are biologically averse to the receipt of body parts from other humans (Burriss and Rempel 2004; Tybur, Lieberman, and Griskevicius 2009)

Prediction and Overview of Studies

Hypothesis 1

- Anthropomorphic product presentation **increases** choice share of the complementary accessory from the same brand that provides the base product.

Study 1



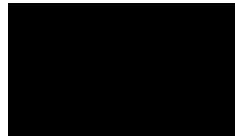
Study 1

Design

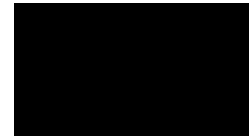
- Single-factor (Presentation: neutral vs. anthropomorphic) between-subjects design

Participants

- 156 undergraduates



Neutral Presentation



Anthropomorphic Presentation

Study 1

Measures

- Choice (Dependent Variable)

Canon
Canon BCI-16C
Color Ink Cartridge

- 2 cartridges per pack
- Up to 75 pages per cartridge
- 16 genuine colors

Price: \$28.99

STAPLES
Staples Equivalent
16-Color Ink Cartridge

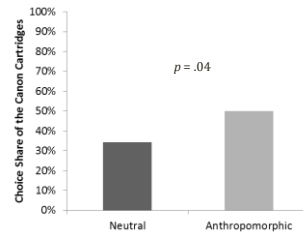
- 2 cartridges per pack
- Up to 75 pages per cartridge
- 16 genuine colors

Price: \$26.49

- Anthropomorphism (Manipulation check)
- Product Attitude toward Canon Printer (Control variable)

Study 1

Results



Anthropomorphism	2.10	3.74	$p < .001$
Product Attitude	4.18	3.96	$p = .3$

Underlying Mechanism: Body-Part Consideration

Aversion to Foreign Body-Related Substances

- People are biologically averse to the receipt of body parts from other humans (Burriss and Rempel 2004; Tybur, Lieberman, and Griskevicius 2009)

Implication 1

- Product anthropomorphism reduces perceived compatibility between the base product and a complementary accessory from a competing brand (foreign body part)

Implication 2

- People who are chronically averse to foreign body-related substances should be more susceptible to this effect

Prediction and Overview of Studies

Hypothesis 1

- Anthropomorphic product presentation **increases** choice share of the complementary accessory from the same brand that provides the base product.

Hypothesis 2

- Perceived compatibility **mediates** the effect of anthropomorphic presentation on brand choice.

Hypothesis 3

- Aversion to foreign-body substances **strengthens** the effect of anthropomorphic presentation on brand choice.



Study 2

Design

- Single-factor (Presentation: neutral vs. anthropomorphic) between-subjects design

Participants

- 102 undergraduates



Neutral Presentation



Anthropomorphic Presentation

Study 2

Measures

- Choice (Dependent Variable)



Philips Sonicare Pro Results Brush Head (3-pack)

Price: \$25.99



Target Up & Up Pro Power Brush Head (3-pack)

Price: \$17.99

- Compatibility (Mediator; $\alpha = .89$)
 - This Philips Sonicare electric toothbrush would be **compatible** with Target Up&Up brush heads.
 - This Philips Sonicare electric toothbrush would **work well with** Target Up&Up brush heads.

- Anthropomorphism & Product Attitude toward Philips Toothbrush

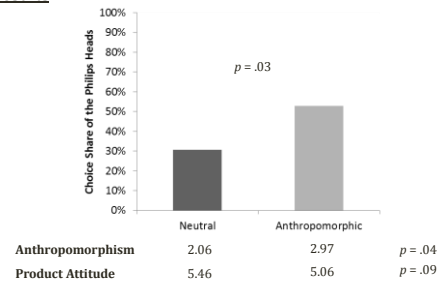
Study 2

Measures

- Aversion to Foreign Body-Related Substances (Moderator; $\alpha = .81$)
 - How disgusting would you find each of the following experiences?
 - Receiving a hypodermic (i.e., beneath the skin) injection in the arm
 - Receiving an anesthetic injection in the mouth
 - Having a dental implant
 - Having a blood transfusion
- Interdependent vs. Independent Self-Construal Scale (Singelis 1994)
 - To exclude social relationship consideration as an alternative explanation

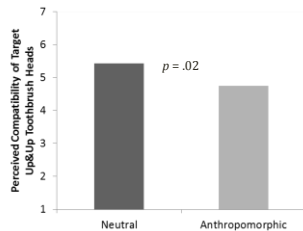
Study 2

Results



Study 2

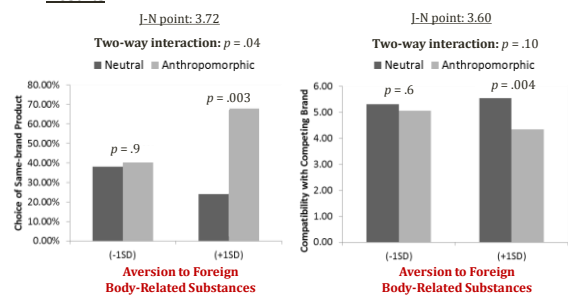
Results



Mediation Analysis (95%CI: -1.32, -.09)
Anthropomorphism → Perceived Compatibility → Brand Choice

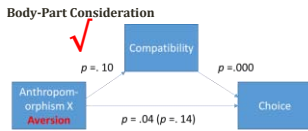
Study 2

Results



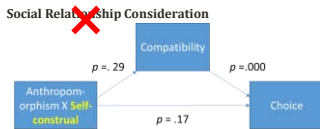
Study 2

Results



Bootstrap Results

Low Aversion (-1SD): 95LL = -.19, 99UL = .10
 High Aversion (+1SD): 95LL = -.35, 99UL = -.07



Underlying Mechanism: Body-Part Consideration

Aversion to Foreign Body-Related Substances

• People are biologically averse to the receipt of body parts from other humans (Burriss and Rempel 2004; Tybur, Lieberman, and Griskevicius 2009)

Implication 1

• Product anthropomorphism reduces perceived compatibility between the base product and a complementary accessory from a competing brand (foreign body part)

Implication 2

• People who are chronically averse to foreign body-related substances should be more susceptible to this effect

Implication 3

• If a complementary accessory is framed as a non-body part, the effect of anthropomorphic presentation on brand choice should be reduced

Prediction and Overview of Studies

Hypothesis 1

• Anthropomorphic product presentation **increases** choice share of the complementary accessory from the same brand that provides the base product.

Hypothesis 2

• Perceived compatibility **mediates** the effect of anthropomorphic presentation on brand choice.

Hypothesis 3

• Aversion to foreign-body substances **strengthens** the effect of anthropomorphic presentation on brand choice.

Hypothesis 4

• Framing a complementary accessory as a non-body part **reduces** the effect of anthropomorphic presentation on brand choice.



Study 3

Design

• 2 (Presentation: neutral vs. anthropomorphic) × 2 (Framing of complementary product: body-related vs. body-unrelated) between-subjects design

Participants

• 300 Mturk participants



Neutral Presentation



Anthropomorphic Presentation

Study 3

A phone case is the **skin** of a phone and an important **part** of a phone.

Body-Related Framing

As the **skin**, it protects the phone from scratches and damages.

A phone case is the **armor** of a phone and an important **add-on** to a phone.

Body-Unrelated Framing

As the **armor**, it protects the phone from scratches and damages.

Study 3

Measures

• Choice (Dependent Variable)



ZOOK Phone Case
 Retail Price: \$9.45
 You Save: -\$9.45
 You Pay: \$0.00

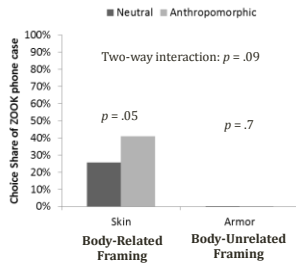


3M Phone Case for ZOOK
 Retail Price: \$12.99
 You Save: -\$12.99
 You Pay: \$0.00

• Anthropomorphism & Product Attitude toward ZOOK Phone

Study 3

Results



GENERAL DISCUSSION

Summary

- Anthropomorphic Presentation Increases Choice of Same-Brand Complementary Goods
- Supporting the Mechanism Based on Body-Part Consideration
 - Mediating Role of Perceived Compatibility
 - Moderating Role of Aversion to Foreign Body-Related Substances
 - Moderating Role of Body-Part Framing
- Ruling Out Alternative Explanations
 - Halo Effect (Product Attitude)
 - Preference for High-Quality Product
 - Consideration of Social Relationship

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Theoretical Contributions

- Complementary Goods
 - Research on brand choice of complementary goods is still scant (Rahinel and Redden 2013)
- Body-Part Consideration** as a New Mechanism Underlying the Anthropomorphism Effect
 - Prior research has focused on how anthropomorphism triggers a consideration of **social relationship** (Ahn, Kim, and Aggarwal 2014; Chandler and Schwarz 2010; Kim and McGill 2011; May and Monga 2014)

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Managerial Implications

- Anthropomorphic Presentation as a Highly **Actionable** Approach to Protect Market Share
 - Video Ad
 - Print Ad
 - Product Design
- Framing** of Complementary Goods
 - Parent Brand---Body-related framing
 - Competing Brand---Body-unrelated framing

THANK YOU!