

The Fighter and the Caregiver: Brands that Help Individuals with Self-Esteem and Social Exclusion Threats

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Abstract

Past research shows that brands help individuals mitigate the effects of psychological threats. Overlooked in past research is the kind of brands that help individuals cope with different psychological threats. We propose and show that fighter and caregiver brands help individuals to cope with self-esteem and social exclusion threats, respectively. Additionally, we demonstrate that these brands (i.e., fighter and caregiver) help individuals to engage in problem-focused (i.e., the fighter brand) or emotion-focused (i.e., the caregiver brand) coping to mitigate the effects of these psychological threats. We support our predictions across multiple studies that include a correlational study and multiple laboratory experiments. The findings extend the literature on branding and coping with psychological threats and generate actionable managerial practice.

Keywords: *self-esteem; social-exclusion; branding*

Track: Product and Brand Management