

“How do you like that one?” or “Which do you like better between these two?”: Being Asked to Evaluate Options in Isolation or Pairwise and the Probability of Order-Effects-in-Choice

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Abstract

Past research has demonstrated the robustness of order-effects-in-choice (i.e., disproportionate preference for the first and last item in a choice set), but little work has been done on what salespersons can do to amplify or counteract these effects. This current work focuses on one possible way for them to accomplish this: guiding consumers to follow an isolation or pairwise evaluation strategy. The authors find that the likelihood of order-effects-in-choice are amplified when an isolation or pairwise strategy is congruent with how they would evaluate options naturally; however, order effects are eliminated when following an incongruent strategy. Three experiments test this notion and demonstrate the role of attention in mediating the effect of evaluation strategy congruency on the presence of order-effects-in-choice. Overall, this present research identifies salesperson interventions that can both increase and decrease the likelihood of order-effects-in-choice.

Keywords: *Order-Effects-in-Choice; Category Knowledge; Salesperson Interventions*

Track: Consumer Behaviour