

The Impact of Conceptual (vs. Perceptual) Product Categorization on Consumer Shopping Experience

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Cite as:

Ghiassaleh Arezou, Kocher Bruno, Noris Basilio, Maire Pierrick, Borduas Gabriel (2019), The Impact of Conceptual (vs. Perceptual) Product Categorization on Consumer Shopping Experience. *Proceedings of the European Marketing Academy*, 48th, (8642)

Paper presented at the 48th Annual EMAC Conference, Hamburg, May 24-27, 2019.



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Abstract

In this research, we distinguish between the effects of conceptual and perceptual categorization on consumer shopping experience. Across our studies (two field studies and two lab studies), we show that conceptual (vs. perceptual) categorization induces a rational thinking style, increases the time consumers are willing to spend in the store, increases multi-category purchase and ultimately the number of products consumers buy. In addition, our findings suggest that conceptual (vs. perceptual) categorization is not always perceived positively by consumers. We show that conceptual (vs. perceptual) categorization is evaluated more positively for utilitarian but not for hedonic products.

Keywords: *Conceptual Categorization; Perceptual Categorization; Rational Thinking*

Track: Retailing & Omni-Channel Management