

Can Company Image Explain the Influence of Perceived Innovativeness and Target Group Similarity on Consumers' Willingness to Co-Create with Companies? A multilevel analysis

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Abstract

Collaboration with consumers for innovation purposes is popular. At the same time, companies put a great effort in shaping their image via signals perceived as valuable to consumers. This study hypothesizes consumer perception of company innovativeness and target group similarity to increase their willingness to co-create with that company because of an improved company image. Danish consumers ($J=494$) provided responses ($N=1499$) on their perception of different companies ($B=22$). Data were analyzed by (crossed) Multilevel SEM. Results support the hypotheses, but also indicate that the relationships are likely to differ depending on the individual consumer and the brand in question. This study provides knowledge on the importance of two important company signals for co-creation engagement and is among the first to address the important role of company image in this relationship. Moreover, this study is the first to address co-creation motivation from a multilevel perspective.

Keywords: *co-creation; image; multi-level SEM*

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