

# The Perceived Brand Risk Moderates the Impact of Brand Biographies

**H. Onur Bodur**

Concordia University - Montreal

**Ali Tezer**

HEC Montreal

**Bianca Grohmann**

Concordia University

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## **Abstract**

Brand biographies can trace a brand's evolution from an underdog (i.e., passion and determination that lead to success despite of limited resources) versus a topdog (i.e., success based on abundance of resources). This research examines the interactive effect of brand biography type (underdog, topdog) and consumers' risk perceptions associated with brand choice on consumers' brand evaluations and purchase intentions. Consumers' preference for brands with underdog biographies reverses at higher levels of perceived risk, such that topdog brands are preferred. This reversal is driven by a change in the underlying processes as perceived risk increases. This research highlights a boundary condition to the underdog effect, and delineates two mechanisms underlying consumers' processing of brand biographies. Findings suggest that marketers need to consider the level of perceived risk prior to emphasizing the topdog or underdog characteristics of their brand biography.

**Keywords:** *Brand-biographies; perceived-risk; narrative-transportation*

**Track:** Product and Brand Management