

Robots are “alive”? Effect of loneliness on the intention to adopt social robots

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Abstract

Loneliness is aversive, and it leads to compensatory consumption behaviour to restore one's sense of belonging. Recently, social robots are designed to socially interact with people and evoke emotional connection. These robots are seductive as they seem “alive” and potentially offer solutions to resolve human vulnerabilities. In this conceptual paper, we propose the psychological mechanisms underlying the effect of loneliness typology (emotional and social loneliness) on the intention to adopt social robots by integrating existing theories. Consumers who feel lonely might attribute social robots the ability to provide various types of social supports typically provided by other humans and expected to alleviate loneliness. Our research makes important contributions to the literature regarding human-robot interaction as well as loneliness and compensatory consumption literature.

Keywords: *loneliness; well-being; human-robot interaction*

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