

Understanding and Measuring Consumer Solidarity as a Collective Bond

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Abstract

Despite its importance for society, solidarity has not been recognized and explored as a key construct in consumer research. Extant literature on relationship marketing examines bonds between consumers and firms on a dyadic rather than collective level. In contrast, this research explores consumer solidarity as a collective driver of consumers' support toward companies, above and beyond dyadic bonds. Conducting a qualitative interview study in the context of the coronavirus pandemic, we explore why and how consumers support companies. Affective and calculative solidarity emerge as key drivers of consumers' supporting behaviors. Combining these two dimensions, we develop and validate a measure for consumer solidarity. A MIMIC model supports this two-dimensional conceptualization that explains 90% of the variance in an overall measure of consumer solidarity. In support for nomological validity, we demonstrate that consumer solidarity enhances consumer engagement.

Keywords: *Consumer Solidarity; Consumer Collectives; Measurement Development*

Track: Relationship Marketing