

Cleaning with bacteria, why not? How consumers' mental abilities influence the evaluation of incongruent products.

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Abstract

This study investigates how consumers' mental abilities (in particular consumer's cognitive flexibility, need for cognitive closure, and analytic/holistic perception), influence the evaluation of incongruent sustainable products from different product categories (i.e. food, textile, cleaning). Data from a cognitive pretest and an online survey show that some facets of the three constructs significantly relate to the evaluation of incongruent, really new products (RNPs). In addition, the data highlight that consumers rank symbols that illustrate the main feature of an incongruent sustainable product (e.g. Peta bunny for meat products without animal suffering or eco-friendly detergents as symbol for a probiotic cleaner) higher than a more abstract representation of the product. These findings are crucial for marketers launching sustainable products that differ from conventional options.

Subject Areas: *Cognition, Consumer Behaviour, Product Categorization*

Track: Consumer Behaviour