

# Dual Process Intuitions: Consumers' Beliefs About Persuasion Processing Drive Morality of Marketing Communications

**Zarema Khon**

Nazarbyaev University

**Yi-Ju Chen**

University of Bath

**Yvetta Simonyan**

University of Bath

**Haiming Hang**

University of Bath, U.K.

**Samuel Johnson**

University of Waterloo (Department of Psychology)

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## **Abstract**

We show that consumers use a simplified version of dual process theory to evaluate the morality of marketing persuasion—Dual Process Intuitions. If consumers believe persuasion aims at fast, intuitive, emotional processing (e.g., humor), it is considered more immoral than persuasion believed to aim at slow, deliberate, rational processing (e.g., reading about a product). This is because persuasion considered to be processed fast is also believed to be automatic, so that it bypasses rational processing and, most importantly, consumers' autonomous choice compared to persuasion considered to be processed slower. As a result, even positively-valenced persuasion, such as humor appeal, is considered manipulative, less credible, and has a less positive effect on brand attitudes than persuasion perceived to show more respect to consumers' autonomy, such as providing more information about the product.

**Subject Areas:** *Advertising, Attitude, Consumer Behaviour, Decision-Making, Information Processing*

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