

Status Signalling of Product Maintenance and Purchase Decisions

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Status Signalling of Product Maintenance and Purchase Decisions

Abstract

Prior research has shown that individuals engage in pro-environmental purchases, such as buying 'green' products when they are particularly motivated to be seen as altruistic and selfless. While identity and signalling forces have been the cornerstone of prior research on motivations for pro-environmental purchases, there is limited knowledge on how such forces operate in the context of post-purchase sustainable consumption choices, such as product maintenance. The current research looks at status-signals of product-maintenance and shows that (through a combination of three experiments) individuals who choose to repair (vs. buy-new) an old product are perceived to be of low socio-economic status (vs. high socio-economic status). Our effects are consistent across both lay associations of status (Study 1 and Study 2), and with priming of status membership (Study 3). We offer actionable ways in which product-repair – a move towards long-term sustainable consumption practice, can be made more aspirational and socially desirable.

Subject Areas: *Consumer Behaviour, Decision-Making, Information Processing, Product Management*

Track: Product and Brand Management