

“I should have won” - Deconstructing (Un)Fairness Perceptions in creative crowdsourcing contests

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Cite as:

shuai min, Steils Nadia (2024), “I should have won” - Deconstructing (Un)Fairness Perceptions in creative crowdsourcing contests. *Proceedings of the European Marketing Academy*, (122688)

Paper from EMAC Regional Conference, Lisbon, Portugal, September 25-27, 2024



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Abstract

This research explores how counterfactual thoughts (CTs) impact fairness perceptions in crowdsourcing and participant-brand relationships. We conducted a 2x3 experiment with 423 participants, finding that winners and losers generate different CTs, affecting fairness perceptions, word of mouth, brand attachment, and willingness to participate again. When both generate upward other CTs, it triggers stronger CT strength and low fairness perceptions. The evaluator type moderates this negative relationship. Our findings contribute to consumer behavior literature by understanding fairness perception generation and offering managerial strategies to mitigate negative perceptions, emphasizing evaluator selection's role in enhancing fairness.

Subject Areas: *Branding; Cognition; Consumer Behavior; Customer Relationship Management and Customer Satisfaction; Diffusion of Innovations; Technology, innovations, robotics*