



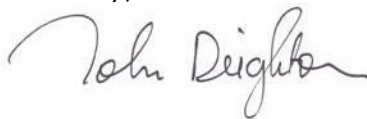
JCR MANUSCRIPT REVIEW HISTORY 003-3 (REVIEWS)

Editor's Decision Letter

Thank you for resubmitting "Threats to Hope and the Motivated Reasoning of Product Information." You have been quite responsive and the paper is almost officially accepted for publication. I would like to see some polishing as you prepare the final materials for publication, but only I will see these materials. With respect to study 2, I don't quite think you have made your case. Please follow Reviewer C and note that the bias you expect to notice will be in that low confidence consumers will buy into weaker claims, while high confidence consumers will reject them. I am not going to insist that in Table 1 separate means be reported for effectiveness of brochures and newspapers as this manipulation seems to be within subjects.

Congratulations on a very nice contribution.

Sincerely,



John Deighton

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AE comments for the author(s)

The paper should be accepted. I have read it over and the only thing I might suggest is that the authors pay attention to the third paragraph of reviewer C's comments about how high confidence subjects may be convinced by high credibility claims to the same level as low confidence subjects, I think that might be a good clarification. The last full paragraph of the reviewer's comments seems wrong to me because information source (newspaper vs. brochure) is within subjects.

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Reviewer C

Comments for the author(s)

In my last review of this paper, I indicated that the results of study 2 were problematic because under high credibility conditions, both high and low confidence consumers were equally likely to try the advertised product. This seemed to run against the statements that you made in the paper that low (and not high) confidence people are the ones that try out products with the hope that they will address their problems.

I don't think you answered this question. Instead, you mentioned the fact that you manipulated confidence in study 2 vs. measured it in study 1. You also mentioned that the mediation analysis is supportive of the process that you outlined. It does not support the findings though.

My understanding of the process is that threatened consumers resort to biased processing. Biased processing is best demonstrated when information that is objectively weak is as persuasive as information that is objectively strong. If you indicate in your paper the possibility that strong messages about the 'hope' products will be persuasive even for high confidence consumers, and that the bias you expect to notice will be in how the low confidence consumers will cling on to weaker claims while high confidence consumers will reject them, the anomaly is resolved.

To make your presentation consistent, please present means for both the brochure condition and the newspaper condition in Table 1. Currently, you present credibility and perceived effectiveness data that is collapsed across the newspaper and brochure conditions. You should find that high confidence consumers don't differ (or differ slightly) from low confidence consumers in their evaluation of the product when it is presented in a newspaper, but do differ in the brochure condition. This way, you will have three studies that nicely demonstrate systematic bias in the threatened consumers (low credibility source (study 1), low credibility message (study 2), and lower weighting of negative information (study 3).)

Thanks for your responsiveness throughout the process. I wish you success.