The networked consumption: development, validation and application of a social capital scale from the consumer perspective

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Introdução

Although widely used in consumer behavior studies, the measurement of social capital as an object of study is neglected in the existing literature, and a better understanding of the mechanisms related to social capital are still scarce aspects in the existing literature. Studies on the direct relationship between social capital and consumer responses are quite consolidated in the literature however, few studies address intervening mechanisms.

Problema de Pesquisa e Objetivo

How can social capital be measured from the customer'sperspective? This study aims to develop and validate a social capital scale from the specific domain of consumer behavior, and apply it to understanding purchase intention of sustainable products, and participation in brand communities, two themes widely related to social capital, conditional on self-efficacy and self-esteem. Initially, a systematic literature review was conducted.

Fundamentação Teórica

Social capital stimulates networks of reciprocity and a power sense. Social capital, represented by the presence of more or less structured social networks, relationships, and shared norms, can provide individuals with access to resources, information, and supportive relationships. Consumers use social capital to establish a purchasing behavior that is more empowered by their network of relationships, such as sustainable behavior and brand community engagement, producing high levels of self-esteem.

Metodologia

Then, through exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis for scale development, structural equation modeling for hypothesis predictive testing, and regression analysis for mediation testing, data from 624 participants were obtained and analyzed in a nomological network (Ferrando & Lorenzo-Seva, 2018, Hair et al., 2019, Hair et al., 2022).

Análise dos Resultados

The results suggest a three-dimensional scale with adequate psychometric properties capable of predicting consumer network responses. Results further point to the mediating effect of self-efficacy-self-esteem on responsible and networked consumption

Conclusão

This study validated the application of a Social Capital scale in the context of consumer behavior, and its predictive ability to purchase Intention, and Intention to participate in brand communities, conditioned to self-efficacy-self-esteem. In this way, not only direct relationships were evaluated, but a mediating mechanism underlying these phenomena, based on consumers' confidence in their resources and feelings favorable to themselves, to achieve purchase desires, and engagement in brand groups.

Referências Bibliográficas

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