Consumer Research Methods

Master (6830)
Winter Term 2024/25

--- last updated 10.10.2024 ---

Application			
	Application submission deadline Monday 14.10.	3 pm via Moodle	https://moodle.europa-uni.de
	>>> notifications of acceptance Tuesday 15.10.	3 pm via Email	LS Marketing (Bewerbungsverfahren)
Review lecture materials online (narrated powerpoint presentations, videos and articles)			
Prof. Dr. Katja Brunk	Thursday 17.10.	approx. 4 hours	Asynchronous, provided in Moodle
M.Sc. Dominika Niewiadomska	Friday 18.10.	approx. 4 hours	**Review** at your convenience **before 22.10**.!
Introductory Meeting: Clarifying questions of lecture materials; Introduction and allocation of research projects*			
Prof. Dr. Katja Brunk	Tuesday 22.10.*	10 am - 1 pm	room GD 302
M.Sc. Dominika Niewiadomska			
Research question submission and presentation*			
Prof. Dr. Katja Brunk	Monday 4.11. upload research question presentation	3 pm via Moodle	
M.Sc. Dominika Niewiadomska	Tuesday 5.11.* present your research question	10 am - 3 pm	room GD 302
Individual research project consultations**			
Prof. Dr. Katja Brunk	Tuesday 12.11.**	10 am – 3 pm	In presence or online
M.Sc. Dominika Niewiadomska	Request appointment by Friday 8.11. 10 am		
Prof. Dr. Katja Brunk	Tuesday 26.11.**	10 am – 3 pm	In presence or online
M.Sc. Dominika Niewiadomska	Request appointment by Friday 22.11. 10 am		
Prof. Dr. Katja Brunk	Tuesday 10.12.**	10 am – 3 pm	In presence or online
M.Sc. Dominika Niewiadomska	Request appointment by Friday 6.12. 10 am		
Examination: Research paper submission			
Paper submission	Deadline: Sunday 15.12.	End of day via Moodle	

* Attendance is compulsory

** One-to-one consultations by appointment

Prerequisites

- This course is reserved for **students at the Master level** (Bachelor level applicants cannot be considered)
- The course will be taught and evaluated in English, i.e. all lecture materials, consultations and seminar papers will be in English. The collection of the data for your research project may also take place in German, in which case the data that is presented for illustration in the seminar paper needs to be translated into English. **No other languages for data collection are admissible.**
- A basic understanding of statistical methods and quantitative data analysis is assumed (e.g. a previously taken Quantitative Methods course or equivalent knowledge).
- Successful completion of the/a Consumer Behavior course is a benefit, but not a requirement.
- The number of students that can participate in this seminar is limited. If the number of applicants exceeds the spaces available, students will be selected based on their grades in previous marketing classes.
- **Attending the meetings on 22.10. and 5.11. is compulsory**. No exceptions will be made and (even partial!) absence will lead to failing the course.
- The seminar can only be passed once.

Seminar relevance

Today we live in a consumer society, a society in which the buying and selling of goods and services is the most important social and economic activity. For any commercial business, the end consumer of its goods and/or services is a vital stakeholder. Understanding consumer behavior is an important cornerstone of effective marketing and, as a consequence, an essential strategic tool for overall business success.

Learning how consumers think, feel, perceive and behave is also relevant from a societal perspective. Governments' control over corporations and businesses is steadily diminishing. On the one hand, this can be attributed to increasing corporate influence in politics, e.g. through lobbying activities and party funding. On the other hand, this is a result of ever-increasing globalizing business activities and thus complex international supply chains which complicates holding companies accountable. It has therefore become the consumers' role and responsibility to function as a social and environmental control of business. Thus, bringing about societal and environmental change related to consumption (e.g. reducing carbon emission or plastic waste; banning unethical corporate practices such as child labor) strongly hinges upon mobilizing and convincing consumers to make ethically motivated purchase decisions and therefore 'vote' with their consumption choices, e.g. by means of boycotts and buycotts or changing habitual practices.

Understanding and influencing consumer behavior at the individual, social and cultural level is therefore a vital challenge of our time and of interest to businesses, governmental organizations, NGOs and overall society alike.

Objective

This course aims to introduce the topic of consumer research to students at the Master level. Participants will:
1) acquire an overview of the most commonly applied methods of qualitative and quantitative consumer research
2) understand each method's strengths and weaknesses
3) learn to apply one of these methods by engaging in a small research project.

For students unfamiliar with empirical data collection, this course can serve as a suitable introduction and practice exercise for writing a Master thesis.

Course Format

This course uses a blended learning approach. Learning objectives shall be achieved through a mixture of online lecture materials, explanatory videos, interactive Q&A video conferences, individual consultations with the lecturers, as well as an independent data collection project. For the research project, one of the following three data collection techniques will be allocated to students by the course organizers: (1) Interviews; (2) netnography; and (3) surveys, including experiments. The research topic will be announced during our course meeting on **Tuesday, 22.10. 2024**. Within the provided topic, Students are free to develop and empirically answer their own specific research question.

Overview of content

Asynchronous lecture material to review before 22.10.	In-presence meetings* (attendance compulsory)
Thursday 17.10. (plan approx. 4-5 hours to review material) Introduction to consumer research - Importance of consumer research - Background to philosophy of science - Key assumptions and differences between qualitative and quantitative research Qualitative research - Setting up qualitative research - Analytical procedures (coding, interpretation, data triangulation) Specific qualitative data collection methods - Interviews - Ethnography and digital ethnography (netnography) - Other methods (focus groups, observations, projective techniques) Writing up qualitative research	**Tuesday 22.10.** Welcome and introduction to the course - Clarifying questions and reiterating most important points regarding the reviewed lecture material Introduction to the research project - Presenting the research topic - Allocation of data collection methods to course participants - Outline expectations and other logistics **Tuesday 5.11.** - Students present their research question and key considerations for their planned data collection (**5 min max**!) - Presentation to be uploaded via Moodle by Monday, 4.11., 3 pm - Fellow students and lecturers will provide feedback

| **Friday 18.10.** (plan approx. 4-5 hours to review material)
  Quantitative research
  -   Setting up quantitative research (key concepts and considerations, working with hypotheses, measurement, scaling)
  -   Survey research (questionnaire design, sampling)
  -   Experimental research (key concepts, types of experiments, ethical considerations)
  -   Analytical procedure (data preparation, types of data analysis, resources for data analysis)
  Writing up quantitative research | |

Slides and all other relevant materials for the course will be uploaded on Moodle (https://moodle.europa-uni.de).

Mode of Communication
Communication for any course-related matters will exclusively take place in Moodle. We will not answer individual email requests. Instead, we will open a communication thread for general questions in Moodle, where we can reply directly to your posts and all course members can benefit from the information we provide in our answers.

Literature
The lecture part of the seminar will be oriented along the following sources (some of these sources will be uploaded in Moodle):

Qualitative research
-   ***Textbooks***:
    Hackley, C. (2019). *Qualitative Research in Marketing and Management, Doing Interpretive Research Projects*, 2nd edition, Routledge (available in the library).
    Belk, R. (2006). *Handbook of qualitative research methods in marketing*, Cheltenham, Northampton: Edward Elgar.
-   ***Interviews:*** Arsel, Zeynep (2017). Asking questions with reflexive focus: A tutorial on designing and conducting interviews. *Journal of Consumer Research.* 44(4), 939-948.
    McCracken, Grant (1988), *The Long Interview* (Qualitative Research Methods, Vol. 13), Newbury Park: Sage.
-   ***Netnography/online ethnography:***
    Heinonen, K., & Medberg, G. (2018). Netnography as a tool for understanding customers: Implications for service research and practice. Journal of Services Marketing, 32 (6), 657–679.
    Langer, R., & Beckman, S. C. (2005). Sensitive research topics: Netnography revisited. Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal, 8(2), 189–203.
    Kozinets, R. V. (2010). Netnography 2.0. In R. Belk (Ed.), Handbook of qualitative research methods in marketing (pp. 129-142), Cheltenham, Northampton: Edward Elgar.
-   ***Projective methods/collage technique:***
    Herz, M., & Brunk, K. H. (2017). Conceptual advances in consumers' semantic and episodic brand memories: A mixed methods exploration. *Psychology & Marketing*, *34*(1), 70-91.
    Rook, D. W. (2006). Let's pretend: Projective methods re-considered. In R. Belk (Ed.), Handbook of qualitative research methods in marketing (pp. 143–155), Cheltenham, Northampton: Edward Elgar.
    Boddy, C. (2005). Projective techniques in market research: valueless subjectivity or insightful reality? A look at the evidence for the usefulness, reliability and validity of projective techniques in market research. *International Journal of Market Research*, *47*(3), 239-254.
-   ***Focus groups:***
    [Chapter 16] In Hoyle et al. (2002), *Research Methods in Social Relations*, 7th edition, Wadsworth Publishing.
    Caterall, M., & MacLaren, P. (2006). Focus groups in marketing. In R. Belk (Ed.), Handbook of qualitative research methods in marketing (pp. 255-267), Cheltenham, Northampton: Edward Elgar.
-   ***Data analysis (thematic analysis for digital data)***: Ferreira, C., & Scaraboto, D. (2022), Qualitative insights for digital marketing. In A. Hanlon and T.L. Tuten (Eds.), SAGE Handbook of Digital Marketing, Sage Publications (in print).
-   ***Writing and positioning in general***: Fernandez, K. (2020), Prove it! A Practical primer to positioning theoretically, *Australasian Marketing Journal*, 28, 57-64.

- *Research article examples:*
General example for writing up qualitative research: Hartmann, B.J., & Brunk, K.H. (2019). Nostalgia marketing and (re-) enchantment. *International Journal of Research in Marketing* 36 (4), 669-686.
Ethnography and interviewing: Maciel, A.F., & Wallendorf, M. (2016), Taste Engineering: An Extended Consumer Model of Cultural Competence Constitution. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 43 (5), 726-46.
Sandikci, Ö., & Ger, G. (2010), Veiling in Style: How Does a Stigmatized Practice Become Fashionable? *Journal of Consumer Research*, 37 (1), 15-36.

Quantitative research
- *Textbooks*:
Aaker, D.A., Kumar, V., Day, G.S., Leone, R.O. (2011), *Marketing Research*, 10th edition, Wiley.
De Vaus, D. (2001), *Research Design in Social Research*, Sage.
Hoyle, R., Harris, M., Judd, C. (2002), *Research Methods in Social Relations*, 7th edition, Wadsworth Publishing.
- *Surveys*:
[Chapters 10-12] in Aaker et al. (2011), *Marketing Research*, 10th edition, Wiley
Arundel, A. (2023), *How to Design, Implement, and Use a Survey*, Edward Elgar Publishing.
Groves, R., Fowler, F., Couper, M., Lepkowski, J., Singer, E., Tourangeau, R. (2009), *Survey Methodology*, 2nd edition, Wiley.
Schwarz, N., & Bienias, J. (1990), What Mediates the Impact of Response Alternatives on Frequency Reports of Mundane Behaviors, *Applied Cognitive Psychology*, 4, 61-72.
Schwarz, N. (1999), Self-Reports: How the Questions Shape the Answers, American Psychologist, 54(2), 93-105.
- *Experiments*:
[Chapter 13] in Aaker et al. (2011), *Marketing Research*, 10th edition, Wiley.
Shadish, W., Cook, T., Campbell, D. (2002), *Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs for Generalized Causal Inference*, Houghton Mifflin.
- *Data analysis (general):* Hair, J., Black, W., Babin, B., Anderson, R. (2019), *Multivariate Data Analysis*, 8th edition, Cengage Learning, EMEA.
- *Data analysis with SPSS:* Field, A. (2013), *Discovering Statistics Using IBM SPSS Statistics*, 4th edition, Sage.
- *Data analysis with R*: Chapman, C., & McDonnell Feit, E. (2015), *R for Marketing Research and Analytics*, Springer.
- *Data analysis with Excel*: Burns, A.C., & Bush, R.F. (2005), *Basic Marketing Research Using Microsoft Excel Data Analysis*, Pearson.
- *Research article examples:*
Survey research:
Segijn, C.M., & van Ooijen, I. (2022), Differences in consumer knowledge and perceptions of personalized advertising: Comparing online behavioural advertising and synced advertising, *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 28(2), 207-226.
Whelan, J., & Hingston, S.T. (2024), The association between consumers' chronic concerns about infectious disease and anthropomorphism, *Psychology & Marketing*, 41, 2107-2120.
Experimental research:
Kemp, E., Moore, D.J., & Cowart, K. (2016) Me, Myself, and I: Examining the Effect of Loneliness and Self-Focus on Message Referents, *Journal of Current Issues & Research in Advertising*, 37(1), 15-27.
Zhou, L., Poon, P., Wang, H. (2015), Consumers' reactions to global versus local advertising appeals: A test of culturally incongruent images in China, *Journal of Business Research*, 68, 561-568.
Both survey and experimental:
Zarouali, B., Poels, K., Walrave, M., & Ponnet, K. (2019). The impact of regulatory focus on adolescents' evaluation of targeted advertising on social networking sites. *International Journal of Advertising*, 38(2), 316-335.

Examination
The final grade will be based on the final paper, the one-page summary (see below) and data collection materials provided. No alternative examination procedures will be offered.
To receive 6 ECTS course credits, submit your work no later than the deadline (15.12.2024 at midnight via Moodle). No exceptions will be made, and late submissions will be

evaluated with a grade of 5.0.

Expectations for the seminar paper:

Please carefully read the thesis manual provided on the website of the chair of marketing. General guidelines for writing a seminar paper will apply and can be found in the thesis manual. However, please note that for this seminar **you will be writing an empirical** (not just a theoretical) **seminar paper**. Thus, additional requirements above and beyond a theoretical paper are as follows:

- The final paper must not exceed 10 pages including references/bibliography. In addition, please develop a one-page summary visualization (a figure/graph that illustrates your conceptualization/summary of the key research findings)
- Since this is a *research methods* course, we expect a thorough description of the data collection method you applied and a reasoning for the study design choices made.
- *Interviews:* provide the interview protocol and coding scheme in the appendix of the paper (does not count towards the 10-page limit) and upload data (visuals, audio files, transcripts) to Moodle in a separate file.
- *Netnography:* reason your choice of the particular online community/interactive webpage and your approach to data collection clearly. Please provide your coding scheme in the appendix of the paper (does not count towards the 10-page limit).
- *Survey:* provide the final questionnaire and scales used in the appendix (does not count towards the 10-page limit) and upload the collected raw data to Moodle in a separate file.
- *Experiment:* in addition to the final questionnaire and scales, please provide the manipulations (stimuli) in the appendix (does not count towards the 10-page limit).
- **In summary**, the submission files to be uploaded are: **one file with your data**, **one file with your final thesis paper** consisting of maximum 10 pages of text including references/bibliography; *plus* the **one-page summary visualization**; *plus* **appendix of the data** collection information requested above.

Application Procedure

Via Moodle -> LS Marketing (Bewerbungsverfahren)

To apply, please fill in the **application form** and add a record of your grades ("Notenausdruck" for bachelor and master). Only records in German or English are accepted. If you have a different grading system at your home university, please ensure to **convert grades** to the German grading system. Upload your application in Moodle by **October 14, 2024, 3 pm**. Late, incomplete or applications without converted grades cannot be considered.

Contacts

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