

Statement of Research Interests

I am a transformative behavioral researcher whose work centers on developing solutions to consumer and marketing problems.

Specifically, my research focuses on understanding how and when mindfulness in general and short mindfulness-based interventions (e.g., briefly meditation sessions) in particular, enhance consumer well-being and provide solutions to marketing problems. I draw from a broad theoretical background in consumer behavior, judgment and decision-making, and social and cognitive psychology to understand the processes and to develop interventions. Within this broad domain, I have focused on the following three areas: 1) mindfulness and branding, 2) consumer well-being, and 3) mindfulness and well-being (an intersection of the first and the second). Here, I briefly summarize several lines of my continuing research program and describe future directions for my work.

1. Mindfulness and Branding

Mindfulness research has gained attention in business, but little is known about the managerial and marketing applications of mindfulness. This research stream aims to study the meaning and applications of a mindful brand. Mindfulness has turned into a booming industry of 4 billion dollars (Purser 2017), and brands are now incorporating mindful elements into their products. Mindfulness represents a non-critical focus on the experience of the present moment, a form of active information processing occurring without judgment but with awareness of the internal and external sensations and experiences. However, marketers and scholars are unclear about what constitutes a mindful brand.

My dissertation focuses on conceptualizing and clearly defining a mindful brand, developing and validating a mindful brand scale (MBS), and demonstrating how a mindful brand can influence important outcome variables (purchase intention, willingness-to-pay premium price, loyalty, and referral), which helps formulate engagement and communication strategies (in-store and social media) to maintain or enhance consumer-brand relationships using MBS attributes. I am currently working on a manuscript derived from my dissertation that will be submitted to the *Journal of Marketing* in spring 2021.

In another co-authored paper, I show that in partially comparative retail price contexts, consumers with high (vs. low) level of mindfulness classify products from different categories as part of the same event category. Consequently, their price beliefs for the non-comparison price products are more favorable, following their price beliefs for the comparison price products. We are currently working on the manuscript, which will be submitted to the *Journal of Retailing* in spring 2021.

2. Consumer Well-being

My second research stream concerns the study of consumer physical and social well-being.

In a co-authored study, I provide a novel perspective by showing that both chronotype orientations and descriptive norm adherence affect dietary choices. Specifically, I show that morning chronotypes (MTs) tend to adhere to eating norms and therefore make more healthful dietary choices, while evening chronotypes (ETs) tend to act counter to social norms and make unhealthful dietary choices. However, when MTs strongly identify with a reference group that follows minority norms, MTs adopt such norms and suffer unintended consequences of unhealthful eating. This paper will be submitted to the *Psychology & Marketing* in fall 2020.

In another co-authored paper, I develop an integrative theoretical model discussing how mindfulness can be applied to consumer behavior and propose an agenda for future inquiry. I am currently working on the manuscript, which will be submitted to the *Journal of Consumer Psychology* in spring 2021.

In a third co-authored paper, I investigate the effects of product type and gift options on brand forgiveness after consumers' experience brand transgression. The findings suggest that after a negative brand experience with a material (experiential) purchase, consumers will forgive the brand more if they can receive a hard-copy (electronic) gift card. This happens because material (experiential) purchase activates a concrete (abstract) mindset, and a matching compensation option with an activated mindset increases the likelihood of brand forgiveness. Along with my co-authors, we are writing the manuscript for submission to the *Journal of Business Research* in fall 2020.

3. Mindfulness and Consumer Well-being

Since the beginning of my Ph.D. program, I was always interested in research that could improve consumer well-being. Thus, I aim to make a significant contribution to transformative consumer research on demonstrating ways that mindfulness can be used as a tool by companies and consumers to promote well-being.

One of the common consumer complaints is long waiting time in many service contexts. My research aims to present a solution to this problem by introducing a short mindfulness meditation intervention in a service context. In a sole-authored paper, I show that a short mindfulness meditation, while waiting to receive the service, indeed enhances customer satisfaction and the likelihood to spread positive word-of-mouth (WOM). This research was invited for second round of review at *Journal of Consumer Affairs*.

In another sole-authored paper, I demonstrate that even at countries with different cultures (such as the U.S. and Brazil), a short one-time mindfulness intervention can improve consumer's waiting time satisfaction in general. The effect was consistent using different methods to offer mindfulness meditation to various age groups and individuals. I have received financial funding for this project by the Center for International Business Education and Research (CIBER) institute at FIU. I am currently conducting two final studies. This paper will be submitted to the *International Journal of Research in Marketing*.

In a third co-authored paper, I explore a common phenomenon in our society—the effect of stress on mental health—and show that mindfulness meditation intervention can help college students across cultures (the U.S. and Brazil) to cope with stress and consequently improve their emotional well-being. This project has received partial funding from UNICHRISTUS (Brazil). This study will be submitted to the *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*.

In a final co-authored paper, I explore the effect of mindfulness interventions on the decision process of consumers during the time of the pandemic. In this paper, we explore the positive effects of mindfulness meditation as a means to counter the negative effects of binge watching. We show that mindfulness-based intervention reduces the excessive binge watching behavior. Along with my co-authors, we are finalizing the manuscript for submission to the *Journal of International Marketing (Special Issue on "Well-being in a Global World")* in fall 2020.

Vision for the future

In each of the lines of research described above, I have taken, and continue to take, the lead role in conceptualizing the research ideas and hypotheses, directing data collection, and writing the manuscripts. In the near-term, my focus is on publishing these papers with my co-authors. However, I also foresee exciting opportunities for future research in these general areas of investigation. Over the past few years, I have successfully collaborated with faculty and doctoral students from our marketing department and from other schools in the U.S. and Brazil to work on various research projects. Although my plan for future research projects will largely develop from these three research streams, I look forward to collaborating with new colleagues and in new areas within transformative consumer research focusing on solutions to consumer and marketing problems. I also believe my current and prospective research provides me with a strong foundation for a productive career of publishing in top-tier marketing and consumer research journals.