

Saurabh Mukesh Rawal

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EDUCATION

Ph.D. Candidate (Marketing) 2021 (expected)
University of Alberta, Canada

Bachelor of Engineering (Hons.) 2008
Graduated with distinction, University of Rajasthan, India

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Sustainable consumer behavior, sustainable markets, retailing, social influence, and social media

MANUSCRIPT UNDER PREPARATION

Rawal, Saurabh, Robert Fisher and Jennifer Argo, “Rediscovering Consumer Wastefulness”. Target: *Journal of Consumer Research*.

Fisher, Robert, **Saurabh Rawal**, Bryan Hochstein and Christopher Plouffe, “Development and Validation of a New Measure of Socially Desirable Responding in Organizations: Contingent Effects of Injunctive and Descriptive Ethical Norms on Whistle-Blowing Self-Reports”. Target: *Journal of Marketing*.

Fisher, Robert and **Saurabh Rawal**, “The Social Desirability of Consumer Wants and Needs: Why Do We Consume More Than We Need?”. Target: *Journal of Marketing*.

RESEARCH UNDER PROGRESS

Rawal, Saurabh, Jennifer Argo and Robert Fisher, “The Effect of Anthropomorphism on Willingness to Dispose of Possessions to Others”. Target: *Journal of Consumer Research*.

Rawal, Saurabh, Robert Fisher and Jennifer Argo, “To Sell or to Donate: Why Special Possessions are Donated and Not Sold?”. Target: *Journal of Consumer Psychology*.

Rawal, Saurabh, Piyush Kumar Sinha, Akriti Sinha, “Determining Probability of Brand Adoption by Bottom of the Pyramid Retailers”. Target: *Journal of Retailing*.

Castelo, Noah and **Saurabh Rawal**, "The Effect of Selective Exposure to Partisan News in Social Media: A Field Experiment". Target: *PNAS*.

REFEREED PUBLICATIONS

Desai, Naman, Sharvari Dalal and **Saurabh Rawal** (2018), "The Effects of Volunteerism on Self-Deception and Locus of Control", *VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, 29(1), 83-92.

Sinha, Piyush Kumar, Suraksha Gupta and **Saurabh Rawal** (2017), "Brand Adoption by BoP Retailers", *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*, 20(2), 181-207.

Sinha, Piyush Kumar, Srikant Gokhale and **Saurabh Rawal** (2015), "Online Retailing Paired With Kirana - A Formidable Combination For Emerging Markets", *Customer Needs and Solutions*, 2(4), 317-324.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Rawal, Saurabh, Robert Fisher and Jennifer Argo, "Rediscovering Consumer Wastefulness" Special Session at *Society of Consumer Psychology Conference, Huntington Beach, USA, 2020*

Rawal, Saurabh, Robert Fisher and Jennifer Argo, "Rediscovering Consumer Wastefulness" Special Session at *Association for Consumer Research Conference, Atlanta, USA, 2019*

Fisher, Robert J., **Saurabh Rawal**, Bryan Hochstein, and Chris Plouffe (2019), "Development and Validation of a New Scale to Measure OSDB (Organizational Social Desirability Bias)," *Recent Advances in Retailing and Consumer Science Conference, July 2019, Tallinn, Estonia.*

Rawal, Saurabh, Robert Fisher and Jennifer Argo, "To Sell or to Donate: Why Special Possessions Are Donated and Not Sold," Special Session at *Society of Consumer Psychology Conference, Savannah, USA, 2019*

Rawal, Saurabh, Robert Fisher and Jennifer Argo, "To Sell or to Donate: Why Special Possessions Are Donated and Not Sold," Working Paper at *Asia Pacific Association of Consumer Research, Ahmedabad, India, 2019*

Rawal, Saurabh, Robert Fisher and Jennifer Argo, "To Sell or to Donate: Why Special Possessions Are Donated and Not Sold," Working Paper at *Society of Consumer Psychology Conference, Dallas, USA, 2017*

SELECT MEDIA COVERAGE OF RESEARCH

CBC News - War on storage: How finding new homes for your old stuff could solve society's waste problem - <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/war-on-storage-how-finding-new-homes-for-your-old-stuff-could-solve-society-s-waste-problem-1.5959242>

Global News – Holding onto items we don't use can be considered wasteful: Researcher - <https://globalnews.ca/video/7710534/holding-onto-items-we-dont-use-can-be-considered-wasteful-researcher>

Zero Waste Edmonton (Invited to be a panelist – Webinar attended by 500+ people) – <https://www.stalberttoday.ca/local-news/free-waste-reduction-talks-later-this-month-prajapati-zero-waste-kalmanovitch-rawal-mcneal-morin-3249541>

Business Standard (India) – IIM-A study suggests 'brick & click' model for retail growth - https://www.business-standard.com/article/management/iim-a-study-suggests-brick-click-model-for-retail-growth-114030300574_1.html

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

2018 (Spring) Principal Instructor – Introduction to Marketing – USRI evaluation: 4.7/5
2017 (Fall) Principal Instructor – Introduction to Marketing – USRI evaluation: 4.8/5
2017 (Winter) Teaching Assistant – Retailing and Channel Management – Evaluation: 5/5
2016 (Fall) Teaching Assistant – Introduction to Marketing – Evaluation: 5/5

TEACHING INTERESTS

Introduction to Marketing, Consumer Behavior, Retail and Distribution Management, Digital and Social Media Marketing, B2B Marketing, Sales and Advertising, International Marketing, and Sustainable Business Management.

AWARDS AND HONORS

2020 AMA-Sheth Foundation Doctoral Consortium Fellow
2019 GRA - Graduate Rice Award, University of Alberta
2018 Excellence in Retail Relevant Research Award, University of Alberta
2018 Graduate Student Teaching Award, University of Alberta

SCHOLARSHIPS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Ph.D. Program Scholarship, University of Alberta
Poole Foundation Scholarship, University of Alberta
Domtar Scholarship, University of Alberta
CEBMAT Research Fellowship, University of Alberta

ACADEMIC SERVICE

2021	Northeast Decision Science Institute Conference
2021-2018	Conference Reviewer, Society of Consumer Psychology
2020-2019	Conference Reviewer, Association of Consumer Research
2020	Trainee Reviewer, Journal of Consumer Research
2019	<i>Ad hoc</i> Reviewer, Journal of Marketing Management
2019-2018	Representative – Business Ph.D. Policy Committee, University of Alberta
2018	President – Business Doctoral Association, University of Alberta
2017	Committee Chair, Business Research Conference, University of Alberta
2016	Organizing Committee – Triennial Invitational Choice Symposium, Banff
2016	Organizing Committee, Business Research Conference, University of Alberta

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2013-2014 Research Associate, Indian Institute of Management (Ahmedabad), India
Responsible for reviewing literature, designing and administering data collection instruments, analyzing data and writing papers on retailing in emerging markets.

2013-2014 Research and Development Consultant, Yuva Unstoppable, India
Responsible for designing and launching social impact assessment tools across 200 municipal schools and designing interventions based on the assessment.

2012-2013 Marketing Manager, Futurz Xplored, India
Designed and executed online and offline brand development activities for marketing a design education curriculum in schools.

2011-2012 Business Development Manager, Span Apparels, India
Established multiple revenue streams, for a women's fashion brand, via franchisees, e-commerce, social media marketing, and multi-brand outlets across 15 cities.

2010-2011 Business Development Executive, Vivante Pure Foods, India
Led primary and secondary market research (including analysis) and developed the go-to-market strategy for the launch of a dairy brand.

2008-2010 Regional Coordinator, Yuva Unstoppable, India
Designed and launched volunteerism platforms for schools, universities and corporate houses (e.g., Microsoft, Intel, HDFC).

REFERENCES

Robert J. Fisher

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University of Alberta, Canada
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Jennifer Argo

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Sarah G. Moore

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DISSERTATION ABSTRACTS

Co-advisors: Dr. Robert Fisher and Dr. Jennifer Argo

Committee: Dr. Sarah Moore, Dr. Kyle Murray and Dr. John Pracejus

Dissertation essay 1 - Rediscovering Consumer Wastefulness

Consumer wastefulness continues to be one of the biggest challenges in sustainable development. Despite prioritizing waste-reduction in policy, consumers continue to be wasteful. I argue that one of the foundational reasons we are so wasteful and largely unsuccessful in reducing waste is because of how we have conceptualized and thus studied wasteful consumer behavior. Specifically, waste has been defined based on how consumers perceive it is created – at their sole discretion, if and when they discard their possessions (e.g., throwing away usable clothes or electronics into the garbage bin). As a result of this consumer-centric conceptualization, consumers tend to ignore socio-ecological costs of consumption while researchers and policymakers put undue emphasis on waste management practices (e.g., recycling) that are unsustainable in the long term. In the current research, I propose a novel conceptualization of waste from the lens of the product and its utilities. The implications of the proposed product-centric definition are significant, in particular, it changes the way wasteful consumer behavior is identified, measured, and reduced. Furthermore, I discuss unexplored avenues for future research that are essential in developing a better understanding of wasteful consumer behavior.

Dissertation essay 2 - The Effect of Anthropomorphism on Willingness to Dispose of Possessions

The traditional view of waste considers that goods become waste only when they are discarded. One of the ironies of this approach is that consumers believe that they are not being wasteful until they throw something out, which helps explain why consumers spend billions of dollars each year to store unused and unneeded goods. Reducing the waste of such goods entails encouraging consumers to dispose of these goods to potential users in the marketplace. I argue that one way to increase disposal to others is by changing how owners perceive these possessions – from inanimate objects without rights to anthropomorphized entities with a purpose. In three experiments, I find owners are more likely to dispose of unused but usable possessions to others when these possessions are anthropomorphized than when they are not. I further hypothesize that this effect occurs as a result of greater feelings of responsibility towards the product that motivates consumers to care about the extent to which the possession's unused utility is used up before the possession is discarded. Overall, this research advances extant literature on consumer willingness to dispose of possessions as well as product anthropomorphism. In the end, I discuss the practical implications of this research for consumers as well as non-profits that seek donations of goods (e.g., clothing).

SELECT RESEARCH ABSTRACTS

To Sell or to Donate: Why Special Possessions Are Donated and Not Sold?

Authors: Saurabh Rawal, Robert Fisher and Jennifer Argo.

Although the market for both donating and selling used goods is large and growing across the world, little research has examined consumer's disposal preferences. So why are certain possessions sold and others donated? Across three experiments, we reveal an asymmetry in disposal preferences as consumers show greater willingness to donate (vs. sell) special (vs. non-special) possessions that otherwise are appraised using high dollar valuation. The basis for this prediction is two-fold. First, special possessions hold personal meanings for their owners and are a part of the owner's self-concept. Second, selling entails appraising a possession based on its functional value or appearance without giving any consideration to the emotional meaning an owner associates with the possession. Disregarding the owner's emotional meaning symbolically serves to threaten the owner's self-concept, consequently reducing the owner's willingness to sell even at the cost of giving it away for free (donating). Our research suggests that non-profits that often advertise seeking donations of goods that owners do not care about, and thus, are more likely to throw away, may not receive donations of goods that owners consider special.

The Social Desirability of Consumer Wants and Needs: Why Do We Consume More Than We Need?

Authors: Robert Fisher and Saurabh Rawal

Why do people consume more than they need? Consuming more than needed is associated with excess consumer debt, obesity, and reduced well-being, as well as negative societal effects including increased waste, resource scarcity, and greenhouse gas emissions. Although the issue of overconsumption has been the subject of intense philosophical debate and growing public interest, the present research is the first to offer empirical insights into why it occurs. Merely framing a product design task as a want rather than a need increased the price of a laptop design by 12% and the size of a house design by 18 to 25%, but only when social desirability concerns were present. The research offers evidence that consuming more than is needed is socially desirable in consumer societies such as the United States, which is in direct opposition to religious, philosophical, and academic writings that contend that needs are good and wants are frivolous, superficial, and inherently bad. We use a combination of projective and self-report questioning techniques to understand the effects of social desirability concerns on needs and wants. The research has important theoretical implications for understanding the distinction between consumer needs and wants and offers practical insights into how to increase consumer and societal welfare.

Development and Validation of a New Measure of Socially Desirable Responding in Organizations: Contingent Effects of Injunctive and Descriptive Ethical Norms on Whistle-Blowing Self-Reports

Authors: Robert Fisher, Saurabh Rawal, Bryan Hochstein and Christopher Plouffe

Despite the significant rewards for lying and other forms of inauthentic impression management in organizations, prior research has often found no effects of social desirability bias (SDB) in organizational self-reports. The present research argues and finds evidence that the absence of significant SDB in organizational settings can be attributed to both the measures that are used to estimate the bias and the theory guiding the investigations. Consequently, the present research develops and validates the first measure of the trait-tendency to respond in a socially desirable manner that is designed specifically for the workplace and other organizational settings (i.e., the SDR-O). We also develop and test a contingency theory of social desirability bias that predicts SDB contamination as an interaction of the trait-tendency to respond in a socially desirable manner and the injunctive and descriptive norms that exist within the organization. We test our theory within the context of the self-reported willingness of organizational members to whistle-blow on the unethical or illegal behaviors of their co-workers, fellow students, or MTurk contractors. The new theory is the first to accommodate circumstances in which the injunctive and descriptive norms governing behaviors are in conflict, which means that organizational members have inconsistent information about what is appropriate or desirable within the organization. We report on eight studies used to develop and validate the new scale, and four studies that test our new contingency theory within the context of the self-reported willingness to whistle-blow. Our research has important implications for both academic and managerial researchers.