

PhD THESIS DECLARATION

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Its Antecedents and
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ABSTRACT

Entitlement is a popular concept today and it has been intensively studied in the psychology and sociology fields. High levels of psychological entitlement are almost universally linked with negative outcomes in anecdotal reports and existing research: aggressiveness, opportunism, selfishness, egoism, and self-serving behaviors. Since entitlement is such a prevalent phenomenon in an everyday life there are reasons to expect entitlement to be a key variable of the exchange process in retail environments.

In the current work I study the concept of entitlement in the marketplace. Across three papers I explore the antecedents and consequences of this phenomenon. I especially focus on the ways entitlement is triggered, its manifestation in the consumer behavior domain and the ways of attenuating its negative outcomes. Finally, I provide theoretical and practical implications of how to convert the downsides of entitlement for good and nudge prosocial behavior of entitled individuals.

Introduction

Entitlement is at the heart of many questions concerning the distribution of resources in society, from tax breaks and social welfare to university enrollments and even access to good seats for football games. This is perhaps the reason why psychological entitlement has become a frequent topic of discussion in the public forum. LexisNexis™ (2003), for example, noted roughly 400 mentions of “sense of entitlement” in major newspapers over the last year. Recent press coverage has noted entitlement in a range of groups, from children (Lehman 2014) who firmly believe they are entitled to expensive toys, electronic gadgets, trips and cars without having to earn them to the teenagers whose sense of deservingness and sense of uniqueness have raised significantly during last years. Psychologist Jean Twenge and her colleagues compiled the data and found that over the last decades there has been a dramatic rise in the number of students who describe themselves as being 'above average' in the areas of academic ability, drive to achieve, mathematical ability, and self-confidence. While students are much more likely to call themselves gifted in writing abilities, objective test scores actually show that their writing abilities are far less than those of their 1960s counterparts (Daily Mail article, based on the studies by Twenge and colleagues, 1998-2013). High levels of psychological entitlement are almost universally linked with negative outcomes in anecdotal reports and existing research. Across different domains entitlement is linked to negative self-serving beliefs and behaviors such as deserving more salary than fellow employees, reporting higher deservingness of pay in a hypothetical employment setting and interpersonal aggression (Campbell et al. 2004), claiming A grades regardless of the effort in a university setting (O'Brien et al. 2011), and expecting special treatment in retail environments (Boyd and Helms 2005).

Thus, anecdotal evidence suggests that psychological entitlement is a far reaching concept that can be evidenced across a wide variety of settings. However, despite the importance of the concept of entitlement and its popularity among psychologists and sociologists apart from several articles (Boyd and Helms 2005; Butori 2010; Butori and De Bruyn 2013) it has been largely overlooked by marketers.

There are many reasons to consider consumer entitlement as a key variable of the exchange process in retail environments (Butori 2010). First, based on findings from the previous literature, entitlement can have a set of important behavioural consequences that are crucial to

understand. Next, a customer's sense of entitlement directly influences his or her expectations, which in turn determine satisfaction (the Disconfirmation Model—Oliver and Swan, 1989) and perceived service quality (the Gap Model—Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry, 1985). Moreover, entitled consumers whose expectations are not met may behave assertively or even aggressively (Richins, 1983). Finally, special treatment has to be used cautiously since it can trigger feelings of speciality within a prioritized group of customers which can lead to a set of desirable as well as undesirable consequences. Indeed, some people feel embarrassed when they are publicly favoured in front of others (de Wulf, Odekerken-Schröder, and Iacobucci, 2001; Jiang, Hoegg, and Dahl 2013). Others tend to feel indebted to the firm, which spoils the advantages they are granted. For all these reasons, it is essential that marketers pay attention to their customers' treatment expectations. A good understanding of their customers' entitlement profiles would prevent them from wasting resources in over satisfying less profitable customers while under satisfying more valuable ones (O'Brien and Jones 1995). It would also enable them to optimize the allocation of their human, financial, and technical resources. Indeed, as Boyd and Helms (2005) correctly note, this understanding determines the choice of the most efficient means of communication to reach entitled customers and the selection of the employees most likely to successfully address their needs. The aim of my dissertation project is to close this gap and explore antecedents and consequences of consumer entitlement in the marketplace. The main goal of my thesis is to focus on the concept of entitlement and its influence in the marketplace. I think that customers feeling themselves entitled in certain situations can behave completely different from what is expected from them under normal circumstances

I define entitlement as the illegitimate sense of deservingness. My approach to this concept focuses more on entitlement stemming from a specific situation rather than an individual trait. I adopt a novel approach to studying entitlement and think that entitlement can not only appear from individual differences, but it can manifest itself in different situations.

The first paper of my dissertation project looks at precursors of entitlement in the marketplace. I argue that in certain cases companies are responsible themselves for triggering this feeling among their consumers. By preferential treatment I understand companies' offering benefits to limited groups of customers that are designated as being exclusive (Lacey et al. 2007). The use of prioritization tactics requires that extraordinary effort and focused attention be directed towards selected customers. As a result, prioritized customers grow to

perceive that they are worthy of the additional effort that a company should make in order to please them (Wetzel et al. 2014). I propose that preferential tactics can lead to elevated feeling of entitlement. More specifically, I show that whereas loyal and new customers are both pleasantly surprised and thankful for receiving preferential treatment, such special attention from a firm can elevate the sense of entitlement in the new customers group. Especially when preferential treatment occurs without any explanation, “walk-in” customers may attribute such attention not to provider firm good intentions’, but to their own uniqueness and speciality. This effect does not occur in the loyal customers group. Following the literature, I show that elevated entitlement leads to negative consequences and provide evidence that special treatment may not be only beneficial.

In the second paper I concentrate on a completely overlooked by the literature issue- potential positive consequences of entitlement. I propose that entitlement can have not only negative, but also positive downstream consequences depending on underlying motivations. Motivation is one of important determinants of human behavior (McClelland 1985) that produces inner forces that guide human behavior. In the current project I investigate the influence of motivation, in particular, social motivation, on subsequent behavior of entitled individuals. My objective in this paper is to explore and explain the positive side of psychological entitlement in the field of consumer behavior. More specifically, I study consequences of entitlement in the context of prosocial behavior. To do so, I draw on motivated information processing theory from social psychology, which offers a promising conceptual framework for understanding double-edged nature of entitlement. The core premise of motivated information processing theory is that motivations shape cognitive processing: individuals selectively notice, encode and retain information that is consistent with their desires (Kunda 1990). Thus, when individuals are driven by pro-self motivation, they will be more inclined to behave prosocially if the situation allows them to gain a benefit for themselves by acting like that. Since proself orientation is more likely to provide this opportunity I propose that a proself motivation will be more likely to shape entitled individuals’ behavior since according to the literature they are more selfish and egoistic. Moreover, I propose a way of how a negative effect of entitlement on prosocial motivation can be attenuated and a positive of proself one can be strengthened: I argue this effect to be influenced by publicity of actions.

Finally, paper 3 of my dissertation further explores the role of entitlement in the marketplace. Its main goal is to understand a possible link between the concept of entitlement and a set of

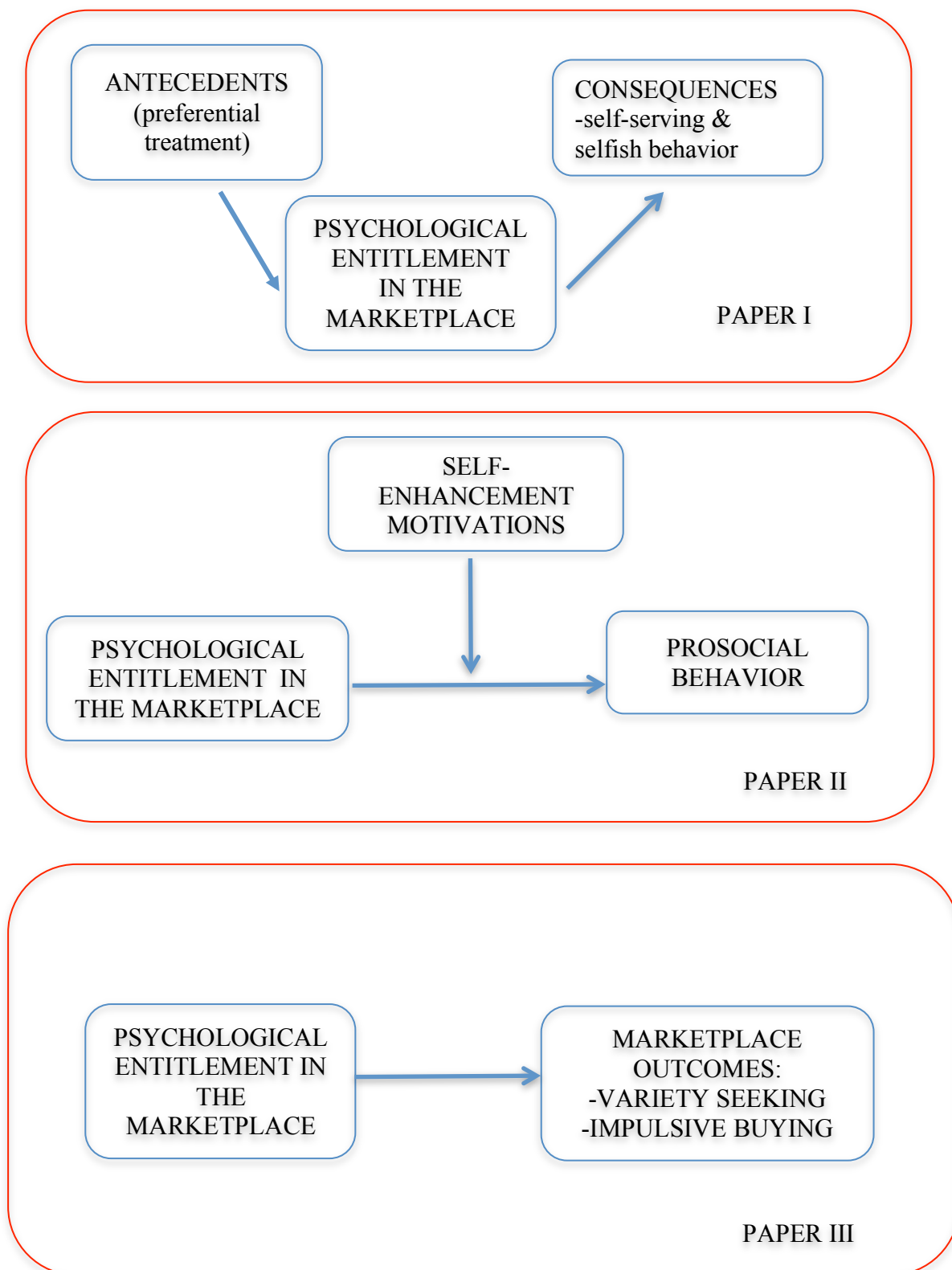
frequent consumer behaviours such as impulsive buying and variety seeking tendencies. Impulse buying and variety seeking are both low-effort feelings-based behaviors with similar psychological origins. However, there is little research exploring the common socio psychological processes regulating these behaviors. Thus current study proposes that entitled individuals will be more likely to buy impulsively and express variety-seeking tendencies. This effect will occur due to the fact that entitlement is associated with higher risk taking propensity. Thus, I expect that individuals scoring high in entitlement will be more impulsive and would be less likely to inhibit their inclinations to immediately satisfy their desires.

This paper could have lots of managerial implications since it provides an easy way to increase variety seeking and impulsive tendencies among consumers. I discuss how this can be used by companies and managers to improve life of individual customers and society as whole at the end. Since previous research has demonstrated that entitlement can be situationally primed I think that current paper can be of interest to many companies.

I investigate those and related ideas in a set of three projects, which occupy a separate chapter each. A graphical summary of the three papers is represented on Figure 1 below.

Figure 1.

Graphical representation of the papers in the dissertation



Chapter I: Consumer Entitlement, its origins and consequences in the marketplace

Abstract

This first paper of the dissertation focuses on the role of entitlement in the marketplace. We focus on the antecedents of entitlement and show a particular market situation which leads to elevated entitlement among certain group of customers. Moreover, following the previous literature, we demonstrate negative consequences of entitlement which seem to expand to other areas than those where entitlement was triggered.

More specifically, we argue that preferential treatment provided to selected customers leads to elevated sense of entitlement which in turn leads to questionable behaviour. Further, we study the effect of entitlement on different consumer groups based on their past relationships with a firm and examine why this effect occurs. Results from five experiments show that when preferential treatment is provided to non-loyal customers of the firm they experience elevated sense of entitlement and are more prone to behave in a problematic way compared to the loyal customers. This effect holds irrelevant of other factors such as providing explanations during situations of customer prioritization or types of consumer goals when using company's services.

Key words: Entitlement, loyalty, ethics, preferential customer treatment

Customer preferential treatment, where some customers but not others are offered extra benefits, has become a common marketing strategy. “One-millionth” in store promotions, unexpected upgrades when checking in for a flight or a hotel, surprises and exclusive promotions available only here and now only for this specific client - those and other perks have become very popular and wide spread. Among the most famous recent examples is a widely discussed promotion from KLM which decided to provide special treatment to some of its passengers: when they arrived at security checkpoints and gates, flight attendants were there to greet them by name and give them a personalized gift. Such kind of free gifts, instant discounts, exclusive offers and options not available to other customers are typical illustrations of preferential treatments which are not provided in a predictable manner, but they do occur (Butori and De Bruyn 2013; Jiang et al. 2013).

Each of these examples involves benefits being offered to some but not all customers; however, they differ with respect to the process by which the consumer is singled out (Jiang et al. 2013). In some cases (for instance when some products are made available only to a limited number of loyal clients or when only frequent customers are informed about special sales) preferential treatment is based on past history of customer’s relationships with a firm and is somehow “earned” through past iterations. In other cases, for instance when a new customer checks in a hotel which he booked via internet 5 min ago and gets an unexpected upgrade such treatment may be perceived as surprising but not earned by the consumer.

Previous literature has indicated the value of effort- or loyalty-based preferential treatment with respect to customer satisfaction (Henderson et al. 2011; Homburg et al. 2008; Jiang et al. 2013; Lacey et al. 2007). Indeed, individuals who earn preferential treatment through their past purchases experience feelings of elevated status, which leads them to be less price sensitive, to engage in positive word-of-mouth about the firm, and to be more loyal over time (Dre’ze and Nunes 2009; Kumar and Shah 2004). Little research, however, has examined the effects of unearned preferential treatment (i.e. when such treatment is offered spontaneously) on consumers and assessed whether it too leads to solely positive outcomes for recipients. For example, instant-win promotions (e.g., Huggies), different forms of upgrades (rental cars upgrades), exclusive sales available only for special customers, random experiences of prioritizing selected customers (e.g. skipping the queue in the restaurant in front of others) are regular promotional efforts used by companies to reward customers. These types of benefits are not provided in a consistent way, but they do occur both with loyal customers and new

ones. To the best of our knowledge, surprisingly, the literature gave scant attention to the fact whether such benefits are justified and equally beneficial for different groups of customers. Managerial wisdom and common sense suggest that preferential treatment, especially an unearned one will be especially surprising and flattering consequently leading to higher satisfaction, positive word-of-mouth and finally higher return rates. We conducted interviews with 4 managers in the service sector (hotels and rental agencies managers). The main aim of this series of interviews was to gain a better understanding of the situation of preferential treatment occurring in different industries and understand managerial point of view regarding this fact. We asked them to elaborate more about the cases of customer prioritization, different types of customers which receive companies' special treatment and about the way their clients react on such specific occasions. Surprisingly, the managers diverged in their opinions: some of them said that special treatment is greatly appreciated by their customers, while others said that after receiving special attention from a company its clients may become more demanding and require such kind of treatment during subsequent iterations. We realized that though the opinions regarding preferential treatment provision are uniformly positive (100% of managers agreed about that) still there are some doubts about the rationality of prioritizing not loyal customers. Moreover, it seems that there is no clear opinion regarding which type of customers should be targeted in the literature as well: should the company pay special attention to its own customers or should a firm try to acquire new ones by giving them benefits not available to others? Some authors state that deepening relationships with current customers increases their satisfaction and loyalty which in turn leads to higher revenues and thus creates mutually beneficial partnership (O'Brien and Jones 1995). The other point of view is reflected in one of recent paper in Marketing Science (Shin and Sudhir 2010). This work suggests that only in one of four marketplace situations examined in the paper a firm should reward its current customers and in other cases companies should focus their incentives on new customers in an attempt to increase sales and earnings.

Our research addresses the above mentioned issues. In the work presented here we focus on companies' use of preferential treatment and investigate how consumer reactions to these types of experiences can differ depending on their type of relationships with a focal firm. More specifically, we show that whereas loyal and new customers are both pleased and thankful for receiving preferential treatment, such special attention from a firm can elevate the sense of entitlement in the new customers group. This effect does not occur in the loyal

customers group. Following the literature, we show that elevated entitlement leads to negative consequences in different consumption situations and provide evidence that special treatment may not be only beneficial.

PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT AND ENTITLEMENT

Consumers naturally desire status (Heffetz and Frank 2011), and the provision of preferential treatment enables consumers to make downward social comparisons with others, enhancing feelings of elevated status and superiority (Barone and Roy 2010; Dre`ze and Nunes 2009; Jiang et al. 2013). However, the literature studies preferential treatment in the context of loyal customers and is silent about the feelings and behaviours of those individuals who receive such treatment unexpectedly, without past investments from their side. Despite the proclaimed importance of making consumers feeling special and immense efforts companies make in order to instil this feeling in its customers, evidence of the effectiveness of such efforts is surprisingly scarce.

A recent paper by Wetzel, Hammerschmidt, and Zablah (2014) provides an overview of prioritization tactics which could be classified as concrete (core benefit provision), symbolic (status elevation) and hybrid ones. Preferential treatment is a hybrid tactic, which contains both concrete and symbolic elements; it involves offering prioritized customers benefits that are designated as being exclusive (Lacey et al. 2007). The use of prioritization tactics requires that extraordinary effort and focused attention be directed towards select customers. As a result, prioritized customers grow to perceive that they are worthy of the additional effort which a company should make in order to please them (Wetzel et al. 2014). Following this logic, we propose that preferential tactics leads to elevated feeling of entitlement.

In this work we define customer entitlement as customers' claims for extra effort from a company based on the belief that they deserve it (Wetzel et al. 2014). We argue that consumers feeling entitled think that limits set for others are not applicable to them anymore and they are allowed to behave differently from other customers. Our view is consistent with the literature, which defines psychological entitlement as phenomenon in which individuals consistently believe that they deserve preferential rewards and treatment, often with little consideration of actual qualities or performance levels (Harvey and Martinko 2009). High levels of psychological entitlement are almost universally linked with negative outcomes in anecdotal reports and existing research. Ethicists and legal scholars have discussed the

apparent link between inflated entitlement perceptions and outcomes such as selfish and aggressive behaviour (Campbell et al. 2004) and a chronic sense of dissatisfaction with one's life (Robinson 2007).

In the present study we argue that in the marketplace higher entitlement is associated with higher propensity to behave problematically. Moreover, we adopt the most recent approach to studying entitlement and propose that entitled individuals are more likely to behave opportunistically not only in a domain where entitlement was triggered, but across several domains. Although most past research has focused on entitlement as a stable individual difference, we think that an individual can also vary in the extent to which he or she feels entitled in the course of any given day. Following recent publications, we show that entitlement can be a dynamic mindset, and not just a chronic disposition (Zitek et al. 2010) and that feeling entitled in one domain can license unethical behaviour in a completely different domain.

We argue that the feeling of entitlement arises when consumers receive preferential treatment, especially when they get it without any past investments from their side. Our idea is consistent with prior research which shows that customers might feel they are special, even unique, when offered a surprise from the service provider (Huand and Lin 2005; Kim and Mattila 2013).

Both groups of customers are likely to feel happy and lucky when receiving preferential treatment. However, we predict that loyal customers when receiving such treatment would value it more and be less likely to behave opportunistically compared to the new customers of a firm. We build our reasoning on several theoretical findings. The norm of reciprocity (Gouldner 1960; Wetzel et al. 2013) suggests that prioritized customers will be motivated to repay suppliers in the future. Kivetz, Urminsky, and Zheng (2006) demonstrate that consumers respond more favorably to an offer (e.g., by accelerating purchases) when they have more invested in a marketer's rewards program and therefore have developed greater relationship equity with the firm. Accordingly, the level of effort a consumer invests in building a relationship with a firm should be positively related to the degree to which recipients are sensitive to deal characteristics (including promotional exclusivity) and, as a result, to the extremity of their response to a targeted offer (Barone and Roy 2010).

Organizational behavior research has demonstrated that more committed to a firm employees are less likely to steal something from that firm than those who are less committed (Grover

and Hui 1994). Those customers who intent to purchase from a company in the future are less likely to cheat on service guarantees (Wirtz and Kum 2004). Consumers are more likely to be opportunistic when they are in one-time transactions compared to when they have an established relationship with the firm (Wirtz and McColl-Kennedy 2010). Finally, according to self-serving bias in relationships theory (Sedikides et al 1998) self-serving bias is not anticipated in close relationships. However, the opposite trend comes up in distant dyads (i.e. when partners in a dyad did not have previous relationships). Those individuals in a successful outcome situation considered the self more responsible than the partner for the task outcome, whereas in a failure situation blamed the partner, i.e. manifested the self-serving bias tendency.

Extending all above mentioned arguments to the preferential treatment context we argue that consumers who invested more (through past purchases, time spent, etc.) would have a lower level of entitlement compared to new customers who receive such benefits unexpectedly without any investments from their side. One might argue that the opposite trend might exist: those customers who invested more in the relationships with a firm should also feel entitled to more from a company since, according to the norms of reciprocity, they are entitled to get something back. We agree that this can be true; however we have to emphasize the fact that in most of our studies we focus on a situation of a single occurrence of preferential treatment. In this case as we predict theoretically and demonstrate empirically loyal customers feel more grateful and less entitled compared to new customers. Nevertheless, in a case of multiple occurrences of preferential treatment situations customers would behave differently. We speculate more about that in the last part of the paper.

In sum, past research has claimed that entitlement is the cause of a huge range of behaviors, including numerous self-serving behaviors in a variety of settings. In reality, very little is known about entitlement in the consumer behavior context, especially how and when it is triggered and how it shapes the behavior of consumers, if it does at all.

Thus the current research aims to show the antecedents and consequences of preferential treatment. Only recently entitlement has been conceptualized as a state (Zitek et al. 2010; O'Brien et al. 2011). Messages of narcissism, entitlement, and related self-promoting attitudes and behaviors are increasingly pervasive in the environment (Twenge 2006), but we know very little about the exact situations when entitlement is triggered. Moreover, existing evidence has demonstrated that there is a relationship between entitlement and selfish and

opportunistic behavior. There is no direct evidence that entitlement leads to self-serving behavior in the marketing context, although some studies are supportive of the notion. Our research sought to build on these findings in several ways. First, by manipulating entitlement as a psychological state we demonstrate how individual customer prioritization leads to elevated feelings of entitlement in the B2C setting. Second, we demonstrate that under certain circumstances prioritized customers tend to behave questionably and this behaviour is explained by elevated feelings of entitlement. Third, we demonstrate how the feeling of entitlement triggered in one domain influences individuals' behaviour in a completely different domain. Finally, we explore factors which potentially can influence the state of entitlement. We study two of such factors: providing explanations during the situations of preferential treatment and the degree of relationship closeness with a firm. We show that consumers who have a history of relationships with a firm have a lower level of entitlement compared to new customers who receive such treatment unexpectedly without any investments from their side.

We demonstrate the robustness of our findings in the Internet and laboratory environments and test our predictions using "real life data". Study 1 demonstrates that entitlement leads to higher propensity to behave unethically. We show that prioritization tactics leads to elevated feeling of entitlement and provides evidence that a propensity to behave unethically stems from the feeling of entitlement. Study 2 and Study 3 show that effect to be especially pronounced in new vs. loyal customers group. Study 4 demonstrated the effects of customer prioritization on consumer behaviour in different than that where entitlement was triggered setting. Study 5 confirms our findings in the field study. Appendix A contains a conceptual model of the paper and an overview of the studies.

STUDY 1

The primary objective of Study 1 was to study how certain marketplace situations can trigger the feeling of entitlement. In particular, we examined a relatively frequent consumption situation and subsequent customers' reactions. To do so, we asked participants to read a scenario and imagine themselves facing alike situation.

Moreover, Study 1 explores a previously suggested by the literature effect in the context of marketing: entitlement elevates individuals' propensity to behave unethically. We demonstrate the process driving this effect: preferential treatment alters unethical intentions

through the feeling of entitlement. In our study participants were asked to read a vignette which asked them to imagine a hypothetical situation of choosing a hotel room between two options: standard room (control condition) and an upgrade condition where participants paid for standard room and were upgraded to a luxury room with no additional costs. Later they answered to a set of questions measuring their propensity to behave unethically in different marketplace situations. We predicted that the upgrade group will exhibit higher intentions to behave unethically compared to the control condition and this effect will be mediated by the elevated feeling of entitlement.

Procedure

One hundred sixty seven participants located in the United States (66% aged 21-34) completed a study on line for US\$0.4. They were recruited through Amazon's Mechanical Turk, which helps collect representative and reliable data online (Buhrmester et al. 2011). The system randomly assigned them to entitlement vs. control condition. In the entitlement condition they read the description of two rooms available when booking a hotel room: Standard Double room priced \$99 and a Deluxe Double Suite (\$199). After the following text appeared on a screen:

After comparing all the facilities, you choose to book a Standard Double room for \$99/night. When you arrive to the hotel, you are informed that for reasons not disclosed for the same price of \$99 you are offered a Deluxe Double suite which normally costs \$199/night.

Control condition participants paid \$99 for a standard room which they presumably selected. This vignette served as our entitlement manipulation (for the full description, see Appendix B). After reading scenarios, participants completed Psychological Entitlement (PES, $\alpha = .93$) scale (Campbell et al. 2004). Items were scored on a 7-point scale (1 = Completely Disagree, 7 = Completely Agree).

Our main dependent variable measure followed. General tendency to behave unethically was captured by Consumer ethics scale (CES; $\alpha = .84$). This scale was developed by Muncy and Vitell (1992) and it has been used in numerous studies since (e.g., Erffmeyer et al. 1999; Polonsky et al. 2001). The CES was developed over several years using a range of items which examine a range of "questionable" consumer behaviors in relation to their dealing with firms (e.g., "Not saying anything when the waitress miscalculates the bill in your favor."). Ten items were scored using a 5- point scale (1 = Strongly believe that it is wrong, 5 =

Strongly believe that it is *not* wrong). A debriefing followed. No participants guessed the hypothesis being tested or reported being suspicious.

Results and Discussion

Manipulation check. Participants correctly answered the questions regarding their room allocation (“How much did you pay for the room at the end” and “Which type of the room did you finally get”), thus we conclude that they understood the task properly.

Main analysis. We evidenced a significant relationship between participants’ allocation to entitlement vs. control group and their feeling of entitlement. As expected, the examination of participants’ responses revealed that participants in the entitlement group scored higher on PES ($M = 4.55$) than participants in the control group ($M_{\text{control}} = 3.95$), $t(160) = 2.85$, $p < .01$).

As a next step, we checked whether feeling entitled would increase participants’ propensity to engage in ethically questionable behaviour. Participants in the entitlement condition reported a higher CES ($M_{\text{entitlement}} = 2.98$) than those in the control group ($M_{\text{control}} = 2.6$), higher scores meaning higher propensity to behave unethically, $t(160) = 3.33$, $p < .005$.

Mediation Analysis. To support our contention that that PES affects the link between preferential treatment and unethical behaviour, we conducted a mediation analysis. When both condition and entitlement were entered into a linear regression model predicting unethical behavioural intentions, condition was significant for the entitlement vs. control group. Using the bootstrapping method (with 5,000 iterations) recommended by Preacher and Hayes (2004), we tested the significance of the indirect effect of condition on unethical behaviour through entitlement. In our study the 95% CI for the indirect effect ranged from $-.2140$ to $-.0233$, which does not include zero, which according to Hayes (2009) indicates successful mediation. Thus, entitlement mediated the relationship between preferential treatment and unethical behavioral intentions.

Our first study shows that preferential treatment can generate negative consequences among those who received this special treatment. We empirically demonstrate how the feeling of entitlement can be situationally driven by a company’s behavior which is especially essential in the current situations where many firms are trying to invent strategies to attract more

customers. Our findings go hand in hand with previous research (Zitek et al. 2010) which speculates that consequences of entitlement and much more far-reaching and are not only limited to a domain where this feeling was triggered. Consumer Ethics Scale comprises a wide range of possible consumer behaviors which suggests that providing preferential treatment can negatively affect a wide range of consumer domains including the domain and the company where entitlement was triggered.

Our main claim in this research is that in the marketplace preferential treatment drives psychological entitlement which in turn increases customer opportunistic behavior. While study 1 provided support for the mediating role of entitlement in the link between preferential treatment and unethical behavior, demonstrating the effect of prioritization on different groups of customers and other types of opportunistic behavior than unethical one would provide further evidence in favor of our theorizing. If favoring certain customers increases their level of entitlement and even can trigger a set of undesirable behaviors, the easiest solution would be to treat all customers equally. However, current market situation throws companies into a fierce competition and forces them to adopt preferential strategies in order to please their customers. Nevertheless, as a recent paper by Jiang et al (2013) suggests that prior research on consumer response to preferential treatment has focused on treatment that has been earned through loyalty or effort. Since sometimes preferential treatment occurs without any previous investment from a customer's side we think it is very important to understand how customers react on such a type of treatment. Nowadays there exist lots of offers available only to loyal or new customers of a firm. Therefore, the main objective of Study 2 was to understand how different groups of customers react on firm's preferential treatment.

STUDY 2

The aim of this study is to demonstrate the differential impact of preferential treatment on consumers based on their relationship with the firm. We explicitly manipulate the strength of a customer relationship with a company. We expect loyal customers to feel less entitled when receiving preferential treatment compared to “walk-in” consumers. To make sure we capture the right effect in this study we use a state version of PES by asking participants to report their feeling of entitlement “at the current moment, i.e. now” (Zitek et al. 2010). Moreover, we tested several alternative explanations. One could argue that prioritizing certain customers

compared to equally deserving others can increase their status or dominance and those variables consequently can increase the feeling of entitlement. Alternatively our results can be explained by increased satisfaction of those individuals who received preferential treatment. Finally, observed differences can be attributed to customers' feeling lucky or grateful. To test all those possibilities we include those measures in our study.

Procedure

Two hundred seventy five US-based participants (40% aged 21-34, 42% females) completed this study for US \$0.4 in Amazon Mechanical Turk. The procedure closely followed that of Study 1 except that a paragraph describing participants' relationships with the firm (loyal vs. new customers) was added. Thus we had 2 conditions in this study: upgrade new and upgrade loyal. Participants in both upgrade groups paid for the Standard room and received an upgrade upon arrival. Our dependent variable followed. We used a specifically adapted for the study state-version of the PES. Specifically, participants indicated the extent to which they agreed with such items as "I want significant effort from the Sea Spa Hotels chain because I deserve it"; "I demand the best from the Sea Spa Chain because I'm worth it" and others using a 9-point dis/agree scales. The scores were averaged to form an overall measure of entitlement ($\alpha = .91$). Following Jiang et al. (2013), we then asked participants to rate how appreciative and thankful they felt, as well as how lucky and fortunate they felt and measured their perception of satisfaction, status and dominance. The first two items were averaged to form a gratitude index ($\alpha = .64$), the next two items formed a luckiness index ($\alpha = .82$). In addition, we asked participants to report overall satisfaction with the deal they received from the hotel ("How satisfied do you feel with this deal from Sea Spa?" and "I'm NOT pleased with the deal I had in this hotel." reverse-coded), $\alpha = .84$. Finally, we assessed their perceptions of status and dominance. To measure status, participants completed the Achievement Motivation Scale (Cassidy and Lynn, 1989), which has been used in previous work to assess status and power (e.g., Maner and Mead, 2010). The status subscale is comprised of 4-items assessing participants' desire for respect and admiration (e.g., "I would like an important job where people look up to me"; 1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree; $\alpha = .8$). We used the Dominance-Prestige scale (Cheng et al. 2010) to measure dominance. Four items were

averaged to form a dominance index ($\alpha = .89$). The items were drawn from previous research (Jiang et al. 2013) that examines consumers' reactions to preferential treatment.

Results and Discussion

Eleven participants were excluded from the analysis since they failed to correctly answer attention check questions embedded in the survey. Participants in the upgrade new preferential treatment condition reported higher feeling of entitlement than those in the loyal one: $M_{loyal} = 4.75$ vs. $M_{new} = 5.19$, $t(262) = -2.01$, $p < .05$.

Further analysis revealed no difference between groups in status, dominance and gratitude which potentially could have explained the raise of entitlement in the conditions ($p > .10$). Consistent with the previous research (Jiang et al. 2013) there were differences in luck and satisfaction: new customers who received an upgrade felt more lucky than loyal ones ($M_{loyal} = 4.7$, $M_{new} = 4.8$, $t(262) = -2.03$, $p < .05$). The results also indicated marginally significant differences in satisfaction: $M_{loyal} = 6.68$, $M_{new} = 6.80$, $t(262) = -1.7$, $p = .08$. However, none of those variables mediated the effect of preferential treatment on entitlement.

This study provided initial support for the hypothesis that preferential treatment elevates entitlement among new customers to a greater extent than among loyal ones. In the next study we wanted to replicate this finding in a laboratory setting. Moreover, we further explore potential factors which can influence the effect of preferential treatment on different groups of customers.

STUDY 3

The goals of this study are twofold. First we wanted to confirm the results of previous study in a more controlled laboratory setting. Second, and more important aim included studying a factor which can potentially influence preferential treatment effect: providing explanations for receiving an exceptional type of service. Research in a hospitality context suggests that individuals have a normative expectation for some sort of explanation when things go wrong (McCull Kennedy and Sparks 2003). The amount of relevant information provided may be important to a customer. That is, the thoroughness of the account has also been found to influence an explanation's effectiveness (Folger and Cropanzano 1998) in an organizational justice context. According to the literature explanation should decrease the likelihood of

feeling special in a certain situation. For example, the recent article by Kim and Mattila (2013) shows that providing explanations helps customers understand the situation, hence preventing them from forming overly high expectations which are likely to lead to lower satisfaction in the future. Explanations potentially can help service firms to effectively delight their customers. Applying those ideas to our research we would expect that the level of entitlement in the explanation condition would be lower than that with no explanation.

Procedure

Ninety two students of a West European University (65% females) participated in our study for course credit. They were randomly assigned to the loyal vs. new customers upgrade condition. Participants were again asked to imagine that they were the focal protagonists of several scenarios, and to indicate the extent to which they would feel entitled in a specific situation. The study used 2 (customer type: loyal vs. new) x 2 (explanations: explicit vs. implicit) between-subjects design. Thus, as in Study 2 participants read a scenario which stated that they received an upgrade when checking in the hotel. The system randomly allocated participants to the customer type condition (new vs. loyal, i.e. “Imagine you are a new customer of the hotel” vs. “Imagine you are a frequent customer of the hotel”) and then to the explanations condition. In the explicit explanation condition loyal customers read that the upgrade and further services are provided as a reward for their loyalty, whereas new customers read that special services are provided to some customers due to a company’s anniversary that day. Implicit explanation condition did not provide any information regarding the reason of why an upgrade was provided (“You originally booked the Standard Double room but I’ll upgrade you to the Deluxe suite for no extra charge!”). After measuring our main dependent variable, state version of entitlement, we also included the measures of satisfaction, luck and gratefulness used in study 2. Finally, as manipulation check we asked participants about their room allocation (“Which type of the room did you finally get?”) followed by a set of questions measuring their demographics.

Results and Discussion

Manipulation Check. Two participants were removed before the analysis due to their difficulties understanding the task. The participants correctly reported the type of the room they were allocated to. Age and gender did not influence the results (all $p > .10$) and, hence, are not discussed.

Entitlement Scores. Results revealed no effect of the explanation factor ($F(1, 86) = 1.27, p > .10$) and a main effect only for the customer type condition ($F(1, 86) = 3.82, p = .05$), with entitlement scores higher in the new customers group ($M_{\text{new}} = 5.77$ vs. $M_{\text{loyal}} = 5.1$). Interaction effect was not significant ($p > .10$).

Other Effects. An ANOVA model of luck, gratitude and satisfaction with upgrade and explanation as independent variables revealed a significant interaction between customer type and the explanation condition on luck ($F(1,86) = 6.66, p = .01$), gratitude ($F(1,86) = 6.28, p = .01$) and marginally significant interaction on satisfaction ($F(1,86) = 3.11, p = .08$). Further analysis revealed that explaining the reason for special treatment does make participants in the upgrade (new) condition feel more lucky: $M_{\text{new}} = 4.47$ vs. $M_{\text{loyal}} = 3.84, t(41) = -2.7, p = .009$). However, they felt equally grateful and equally satisfied (both $p > .10$)

However, when participants did not receive any explanations for the preferential treatment, individuals in both groups did not demonstrate any difference in their perceptions of luck ($t > .10$). Nevertheless, participants in the loyal condition felt more grateful, $M_{\text{new}} = 3.77$ vs. $M_{\text{loyal}} = 4.26, t(41) = 2.49, p = .01$) and more satisfied compared to the participants in the new condition, though the difference did not reach statistical significance $M_{\text{new}} = 5.79$ vs. $M_{\text{loyal}} = 6.15, t(45) = -1.3, p = .19$).

Moreover, we ran a mediational analysis to understand whether the feeling of entitlement would mediate the relationship between preferential treatment and luck, satisfaction and gratitude. Using the bootstrapping method (with 5,000 iterations) recommended by Preacher and Hayes (2004), we tested the significance of the indirect effect of preferential treatment provided to new vs. loyal customers on luck, gratitude and satisfaction through entitlement. In our study the 95% CI for the indirect effect for luck ranged from .0032 to .1632, and from .0037 to .1984 for satisfaction which does not include zero¹, which according to Hayes (2009) indicates successful mediation. Thus, entitlement mediated the relationship between preferential treatment and luck and satisfaction.

¹ The 95% CI for gratitude included zero.

Our findings go in line with the results of Kim and Mattila (2013): their study demonstrates that providing appropriate explanations can reduce escalating expectations for future consumption episodes and thus help service firms to effectively delight their customers. We show that providing explanations make customers in the new group feel more lucky, so thus probably they also feel more delighted. However, at the same time we demonstrate that the absence of explanations makes new customers feel less grateful. There is also some indication that such customers are less satisfied when provided preferential treatment with no explanations. Moreover, we demonstrate that the perceptions of luck and satisfaction are mediated by entitlement.

Study 3 provided additional evidence that preferential treatment, especially an unearned one elevates the feeling of entitlement. Our findings revealed that even when preferential treatment has reasonable justification individuals still experience higher level of entitlement. Participants who received special treatment without any justification felt more entitled than those who believed they received such treatment through past relationships. However, it seems that entitlement triggered by customer prioritization is such a far-reaching concept that it offsets positive feelings of gratitude and luckiness which accompany preferential treatment situation.

Across three studies we have demonstrated that when consumers are prioritized compared to equally deserving others, and especially when such prioritization occurs without any past investments from the consumer side individuals experience elevated feeling of entitlement which outweighs positive spillovers of preferential treatment. In the first study we showed the possible consequences of preferential treatment as well as the mechanism explaining consumers' opportunistic behaviour; in the next couple of studies we focused on the entitlement perceptions and the marketplace situations where they can be triggered. We provided evidence that in the situation of customer prioritization new customers are much more likely to feel entitled compared to the loyal ones. In the next study we would like to investigate whether different groups of customers would behave differently when they experience preferential treatment. In this study we adapted a behavioural measure instead of checking participants' intentions.

STUDY 4

Study had two main objectives. First, we sought to document the negative effect of entitlement, manipulated through preferential treatment of loyal and new groups of customers, on subsequent behaviour of individuals. Second, we wanted to demonstrate that the effect of entitlement, triggered in one domain, can negatively influence the behaviour of participants in a completely different domain. Whereas in Study 1 we focused on individual's behaviour within a consumer domain and explored participants propensity to behave opportunistically in consumption-related situations, in this study we wanted to go further and test Zitek et al. (2010) proposition that entitlement is a far-reaching phenomenon. In that work the authors proposed that the feeling of entitlement manipulated through feeling wronged in one domain should lead to self-serving behaviour in a completely different domain. In the current research we wanted to understand whether preferential treatment provision would alter individual's behaviour in other than consumer behaviour domain. Moreover, our goal was to show that individuals in the loyal customers group are less likely to behave in a self-serving manner when provided with preferential treatment compared with the new customers group. Finally, unlike in Study 1, we wanted to see participants' real behaviour and not intentions. To that end, we exposed participants to the entitlement manipulation using the preferential treatment scenario adopted from previous studies. An adapted version of Guilford's Alternative Uses Task (1967) served as our measure of unethical behavior. We also included measures of participants' level of narcissism, dominance, status, and self worth to control for alternative explanations.

Procedure

Ninety nine students of a Western European University (60% females) participated in the main study in a behavioural lab as a part of a 1-hour session in exchange for course credit. They were randomly assigned to the loyal vs. new customers upgrade condition.

Participants entered the lab and were seated at a computer stations separated by privacy partition panels. Each session had between 6 and 10 participants. In the beginning of the session participants completed a series of control measures. We wanted to exclude any variables that could have alternatively explained our results. For example, since one of the most idiosyncratic symptoms of narcissism is an inflated sense of one's own specialness or importance (Twenge and Campbell 2009) one could argue that any possible differences in

participants' behavior can be explained by narcissism. Thus, narcissism was measured using the reliable and valid eight-item (e.g., "I wish somebody would someday write my biography") Narcissism Scale (Narcissistic Personality Inventory, Raskin and Terry 1988). The scores were averaged to form a narcissism measure ($\alpha = .73$). Alternatively any changes in the feelings of self-worth can play their role: for instance, Baumeister et al. (1996) found that deviant behavior relates to low self-worth. Thus, we used a 5-item measure from Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (1995), Coefficient alpha was 0.74. Moreover, following the manipulation we also measure Contingent Self-Worth (Crocker et al. 2003) to capture the state level of self-worth ($\alpha = .73$). We also adopted the measures of status and dominance used in previous studies. All variables were measured on a 7-point Likert scale.

After answering these statements, participants were exposed to the entitlement manipulation which we adapted from our previous studies. They were asked to imagine that they were the focal protagonists of a preferential treatment scenario describing getting a hotel room upgrade while being a loyal vs. new customer of the hotel. After reading the preferential treatment scenario, participants were asked whether they correctly understood the scenario. The manipulation check comprised the following questions: "I'm a frequent customer of a hotel described in the scenario," and "I can characterize our relationships with this hotel as "Good old friends"; all items were on a 10-point "Completely Disagree/Agree" scale. Coefficient alpha was 0.87. After those items our main dependent variable followed. We adapted a common measure of creativity: Guilford's Alternative Uses Task (1967) asks participants to list as many possible uses for a common house hold item (such as a paperclip, a newspaper, etc). In our task we asked people to list as many uses as they could think of for a brick. However, we added a timing condition to our test: participants were asked to try their best for the full 2 minutes. A timer was shown on the page, so participants knew how much time they had left. Participants were explicitly asked to work on this task for the full 2 minutes; however, they were able to proceed to the next page at any time by pressing the Next button. We timed their page view, so participants' likelihood to advance before the allocated time served as our main measure of opportunistic behavior. We base our dependent variable measure on earlier findings by O'Brien et al. (2011) who demonstrated that feeling entitled can influence actual time-related behavior. In their study those primed with 80% entitlement words appeared in a greater hurry to leave the study than those primed with 0% entitled words (p. 1292), presumably because they felt they had better things to do with their "precious"

time. O'Brien and colleagues conclude that these findings suggest that feeling entitled may prompt the desire to end routine tasks (e.g., completion of the study) or quickly receive rewards (e.g., research credit). Following this line of reasoning we propose that finishing the task before the allocated time would indicate that entitled participants are more prone to receive rewards (research credit in our case) quicker than others and more easily behave in a self-serving manner (i.e. not following the task instructions and benefiting the self, i.e. ending the experiment earlier than supposed using extra time for own needs) .

Since entitled people think they are more deserving of resources than others (e.g., status, material gain) regardless of the amount of effort put toward gaining those resources (an “all play and no work” worldview; Twenge and Campbell 2009) we used an additional dependent variable. The number of words (i.e. uses of a brick) created by participants in both conditions was the other way to measure participants' delinquent behavior and in some sense in a reflection of an “effort” made by participants. To make sure that all participants are equally interested and involved in the task, we highlighted the fact that this was a creativity task and those who score high on this task are usually more creative in various spheres, they usually perform better during exams and generally are considered to be more successful in life. Thus, their final score can serve as a “proxy” to their success in real life which was assumed to contribute to internal motivation of participants to be involved in the task.

Results and Discussion

Manipulation Check. Participants in the upgrade loyal condition felt that their relationship with the hotel were more frequent, close and time-proof than those in the upgrade new condition ($M_{upg_loyal} = 5.44$ vs. $M_{upg_new} = 3.58$; $t(97) = 3.43$, $p < .001$), which means that our manipulation was successful.

Opportunistic Behavior. Two participants failed to understand the Creativity task and were excluded from further analysis. Out of remaining 97 participants 20 behaved opportunistically, i.e. finished the task before the allocated time. Participants in the upgrade (new) condition were significantly more likely than loyal customers to advance (i.e. press the Next button) before the 2 minutes were up ($\chi^2(1) = 6.79$, $p < .01$).

Moreover, we used the number of words (uses)² participants in both conditions created as an additional dependent variable. Participants in the loyal upgrade condition created more words than those in the new upgrade condition: $M_{upg_loyal} = 7.57$ vs. $M_{upg_new} = 6.45$; $t(95) = 2.05, p < .05$.

Narcissism, dominance, status and self worth measures did not significantly influence the results (all $p > .10$).

Thus, even imagining receiving preferential treatment led non-loyal participants to behave in a self-serving manner. They skipped the study to a greater extent and were less eager to create words in the task as it was requested. These findings are also of theoretical interest. They provide additional evidence for behavioral effects of entitlement in a domain, different than those where entitlement was triggered. Our study confirms findings by Zitek et al. (2010) who assumed that feeling entitled in one domain should lead to increased opportunistic behavior even in a completely different domain. The results of study 4 additionally demonstrate that customer prioritization leads to increased propensity of behaving opportunistically, unless the prioritization is not based on past history of relationships with the firm.

Finally, Study 5 extends our on-line and laboratory findings to the field setting. In this exploratory study we used the data from the tripadvisor.com website the analysis of actual customer reviews was undertaken. The main goal of this study was to increase reliability of our claims actually showing that the assumptions which were made during previous study pass the reality checks and quite often occur in everyday life.

STUDY 5

Given the paucity of literature on customer perks which admits that situations of customer prioritization happen rather frequently we lack the practical evidence of such behaviour frequency. Moreover, it is not clear which groups of customers should be targeted in a case when a company decides to provide preferential treatment to its customers. Thus apart from testing the main idea of our research we also wanted to understand more in-depth the nature of the situations of customer prioritization. We wanted to see practical evidence from customers who received preferential treatment, observe their reactions and understand the

² In our survey due to space limitations we asked participants to use only one word which briefly explains the way a brick can be used. Thus in our results number of words equals to a number of different uses of a brick.

frequency of its occurrence with both groups of customers. In order to do that we ran an exploratory study. We chose a setting where preferential treatment is supposed to occur relatively frequently: hospitality industry. Study 5 investigated customer reviews on tripadvisor.com, a travel website providing reviews of travel-related content. We chose this website due to its popularity and recognition as an important information source among users for travel planning (Chung and Buhalis 2008). Since its launch in 2000, it has gained more than 75 million reviewers (TripAdvisor Factsheet 2013). Moreover, most importantly for us, results of a set of studies suggest that reviews in TripAdvisor could be largely reliable (Chua and Banerjee 2013). We analyzed the customer reviews of four 4- and 5-star large hotels located in New York which were left from July 2013 till September 2014. The hotel chains were: “Marriott”, “Sheraton”, “Grand Hyatt” and “St. Regis New York”. Overall 1720 reviews were found. However, for the analysis we carefully identified only those reviews which were left by customers who received preferential treatment. If the customers indicated they were upgraded to a better room, we made sure that this upgrade was provided by the hotel voluntarily and the customers did not pay an additional fee or used their loyalty points for that. As our main dependent variable we adopted a rating score which customers left to the hotel chain when leaving the review. We predicted that among those customers who received preferential treatment those who are loyal to the hotel would leave higher ratings compared to the “walk-in“ customers.

Procedure

Study 5 investigated customers reviews left to a hotel chain and analysed the comments and final ratings left. More specifically, using the keywords “upgrade”, “special”, “surprise”, “extra” and “benefit” 81 reviews were assessed as those coming from consumers who received perks from the company. Examples of such perks are room upgrades, exclusive customer surprises or services not provided to other customers (i.e. late free check-out or exclusive wedding privileges to just married couples). Those customers who mentioned in the review that: 1). They are members of hotels’ loyalty clubs or 2). Stayed in those hotels previously were qualified as loyal customers, whereas those who said 1). This is their first experience with the hotel or 2). They found this hotel by occasion were qualified as new customers. Following such classification 33 reviews were identified as coming from new

customers and the remaining 48- from loyal ones. The main dependent variable utilized in this study was the rating the customers gave to the hotel (1-5 scale, 1 = Terrible, 5 = Excellent). However, apart from that other information available on tripadvisor.com was taken into account: if the customer travelled solo or with a company and whether the goal of the trip was business or leisure. As there is no prior literature on how different types of vacation aims can affect the ranking customer leave, we do not advance a hypothesis here but explore this issue in our analysis. Specifically, we examined whether number of companions influence overall evaluation of the service experience and whether type of vacation moderated the link between customer prioritization and service experience evaluation.

Results and Discussion

Following our prediction loyal to the hotel customer who received preferential treatment left a significantly higher overall rating compared to those who used the hotel services for the first time: $M_{loyal} = 4.4$ vs. $M_{new} = 3.9$, $t(79) = -2.31$, $p < .05$. Thus receiving an exclusive treatment from a high-quality hotel for exerting no efforts from their side did not make new customers reciprocate and behave in a nice way by leaving higher ratings. Many new customers who received free perks from the hotels managed to find some things to complain about. This negatively influences an overall hotel ranking which is extremely important when other potential travelers browse through the experience of others (Lo et al. 2011).

Moreover, we checked for other variables which might potentially affect our results. First of all we checked whether the fact that a customer travelled solo or in a company influenced the overall rating. However, the data did not provide enough reviews from the customers travelling solo: more than 90% of the reviews left belonged to the individuals travelling with a family or with a group of friends.

However, we found that the purpose of the trip played a role in the relationship between the type of the trip and the customer's rating. More specifically, apart from the group variable which identified whether a customer belonged to a new vs. loyal group we included a type of a trip (business vs. leisure) as the independent factors in ANOVA analysis. The analysis showed marginally significant effect of groups $F(1, 73) = 3.06$, $p = .08$, and a main effect of type, $F(1, 73) = 7.69$, $p < .05$). Whereas in the business type the evaluations of new and loyal customers did not differ ($p > .1$), they significantly differed in the leisure type: $M_{loyal} = 4.62$

vs. $M_{new} = 4.04$, $t(55) = -2.55$, $p = .00$. Thus those customers who came to the hotel for vacation seems to be much more picky and demanding compared to those who stayed in the hotel with the business purpose. We do not make any definite conclusions based on those findings. However, we consider the non-significant interaction effect as a robustness check for our main proposition. We find the effect of entitlement on loyal vs. new customer even controlling for other factors, such as a type of the trip. Whereas business customers look for a set of minimum requirements necessary for them to stay (ex. unlimited internet access, 24 hours check-in, etc), leisure travelers look for a much broader set of services and consequently have many more occasions to complain about. A significant difference of ratings of loyal and new customers in the leisure group requires further understanding. However, we conclude that the effect of preferential treatment on the level of entitlement in different groups of customers holds independently of a type of a trip and new customers consistently express higher propensity to behave questionably when receiving preferential treatment compared to loyal customers irrelevant of other factors.

Though we find those results rather interesting, we are still in the process of finalizing the study. We also would like to see whether there is an effect in the loyal vs. new customers who were *not upgraded*. The current version of the study has a more exploratory nature, though we aim to continue research in this direction.

GENERAL DISCUSSION AND FURTHER RESEARCH

This research examined the feelings of entitlement in the marketplace, its antecedents and consequences. Following the literature which has partially studied the topic of the consequences of elevated entitlement (Poon et al. 2013; Zitek et al. 2010, etc) we demonstrated the negative influence of elevated entitlement in the consumption situations. Moreover, we demonstrate the companies are themselves responsible for their customers feeling entitled. Study 1 found that customer prioritization leads to higher propensity to behave unethically; furthermore, this effect was mediated by entitlement. Study 2 and 3 scrutinized how feelings of entitlement differ between loyal and new customers. Study 4 demonstrated that after being exposed to preferential treatment loyal customers are less likely to take advantage of the situation and interpret it to their own benefit compared to the new

customers of the firm. Study 5 using the “real-world” data demonstrated that new customers value those free perks received from the company to a lesser extent compared to loyal customers and often find a rotten apple even in the barrel of most impeccable service.

This research aims to provide theoretical and practical implications. It adds to our knowledge of an underexplored role of entitlement in the marketplace. As Jiang et al. (2013) correctly noted, preferential treatment has been an increasingly popular marketing practice and had received a great deal of scholarly attention. However, most prior work has concentrated on earned through loyalty or past efforts preferential treatment, neglecting the situations when preferential treatment occurs spontaneously. Our findings contradict the prevalent view that preferential treatment is always beneficial for the recipient and for the firm. Following Jiang et al. (2013) who demonstrated the importance of social environment during the situations of customer prioritization we identify firm-customer relationships as an important consideration during the preferential treatment in the B2C setting. Though preferential treatment programs have been found to lead to stronger consumer-brand relationships, more positive word of mouth and increased purchased intentions (Lacey et al. 2007) we show that preferential treatment at the same time can lead to increased feeling of entitlement which in turn can invoke a set of delinquent behaviours. We demonstrate that loyal customers are much less likely to behave in a self-serving way and value all kinds of benefits provided by the firm and thus are more lucrative candidates to receive a company perk compared to walk-in customers. Another domain which might benefit from the current research is the area of experimental design in marketing. To the best of our knowledge, we are first to find a way to manipulate entitlement in the marketing domain using an example of an everyday situation. Moreover, we demonstrate that the feeling of entitlement triggered in one consumer domain can influence the behaviour of individuals in a completely different domain, even the one which is completely unrelated to the behaviour of consumers. However, more research is needed in order to clarify what other marketplace situations might positively influence the feeling of entitlement and how entitlement can alter subsequent behaviour of individuals.

Preferential treatment is a costly practice which companies nevertheless have to adopt due to increasing marketplace competition. Thus it is very important to understand the ways a company should deliver its preferential treatment and especially consider groups of customer this treatment should be aimed at. Our results suggest that companies should better focus on their loyal customers and provide additional benefits only when a customer invested

something in his/her relationship with a firm. However, our results also suggest that individual customers also can feel grateful to the company for receiving the special kind of attention from a company. Following Wetzel et al. (2014) we observe B2C customers being entitled and at the same time grateful. However, Wetzel and colleagues show that prioritization initiate both a gratitude-driven process, which enhances sales and profit, and an entitlement-driven process, which reduces profit. They attributed the latter process in a large part to the nature of the preferential treatment the more symbolic it is, the higher is a customer's propensity to feel entitled. Thus, probably from a managerial standpoint it would be better to prioritize customers by providing some tangible utilitarian benefits framed in a right way. For example, instead of providing customers with a special kind of an upgrade available only for them the management can offer an equivalent sum voucher which can be used in the hotel later. An alternative way of providing preferential treatment can be the one recently used by WestJet last year: its guests while checking in for the four-hour flight expressed their Christmas wishes which were waiting them in the airport upon arrival (Trifunov 2013). In this case though preferential and special kind of treatment obviously occurred, it occurred with all passengers of the flight simultaneously and customers were aware about that. Of course, a potential downside of this type of preferential treatment is that other WestJet clients may feel wronged by this type of behavior and thus feel entitled to more benefits when using company's services next times, though it might be an interesting avenue for future research. Is it better to prioritize single customers or groups of customers or all the customers currently using company's product or service? And how other customer will react on that? This is an open question waiting to be understood.

Other future research directions may compare the effects of preferential treatment to the effects of high consumer satisfaction during the service encounter or even more interesting, following a service failure. Many papers suggest that effective service recovery is important to retain the goodwill of customers who experience a service failure, and providing fair compensation for perceived damages is essential for recovery (Tax et al. 1998). Thus in the situations of service failure it will be interesting to understand whether customers would be satisfied by effective recovery or the company should go to greater lengths to satisfy the customer and should provide preferential treatment in front of others to make sure the customer forgets about the negative accident and feels special.

Another direction which further research could explore is understanding other marketplace situations which can trigger entitlement. For example, Zitek et al. (2010) demonstrated that feeling wronged increases the sense of entitlement. It would be fruitful to delve more deeply in those rather common situations when a customer probably feels wronged: when he is overcharged, when a wrong item is delivered after an on-line purchase experience, when the company fails to provide adequate services or alternatively provides much higher than expected level of service, etc. Do all those situations elevate the feelings of entitlement? If yes, does entitlement equally increase in various marketplace situations or some situations prime entitlement to a higher extent than others? Do levels of entitlement differ if a customer receives super positive vs. super negative treatment? This is an intriguing question which requires further clarifications.

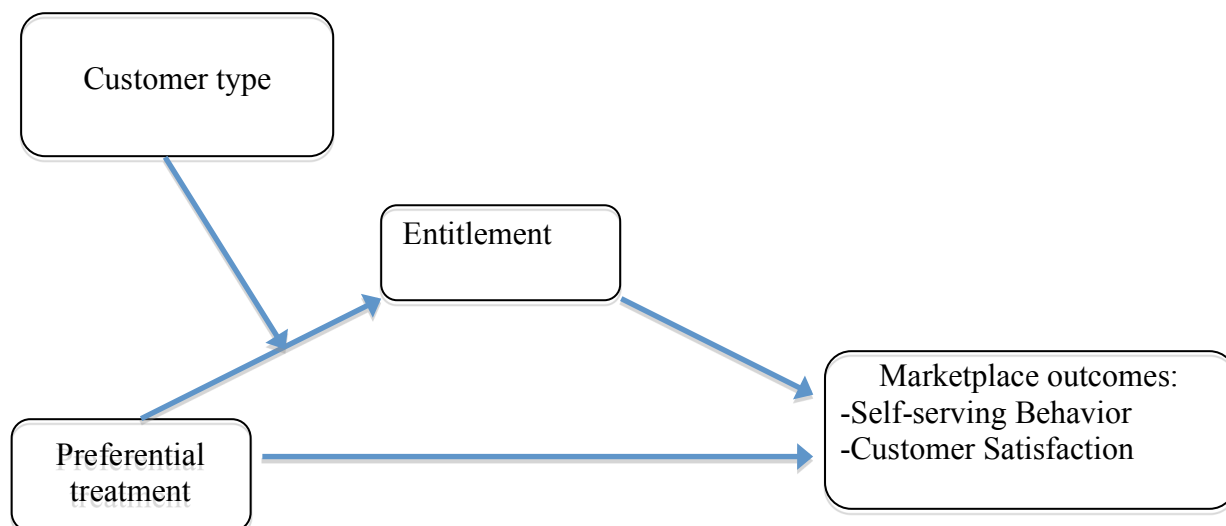
Of course, our work has several limitations to be addressed in the future research. First of all we have all our studies in the hospitality industry. It is possible that preferential treatment provokes different degree of entitlement depending on the setting. Also, it would be interesting to see the effect of preferential treatment in different cultural settings. In our studies we mostly embrace individuals from the Western cultures. However it will be also interesting to see the impact of preferential treatment in the countries where high levels of individualization are not culturally supported. Further research can explore situations of preferential treatment in the Eastern countries, such as Japan or China. Can it be possible that prioritization of an individual will not be welcomed there, whereas as prioritization of a group (for example, a hotel guest and his friends) will make a significant difference? Future work could also vary the cultural and industry settings to see whether possible interactions can occur.

Another study limitation which provides a very fruitful avenue for future research is that in our studies the situation of preferential treatment occurred one time only. However, it will be interesting to see whether multiple occasions preferential treatment (in the same or different companies) will alter our findings. For example, if a loyal consumer was prioritized several times in a row, will it be possible that s/he will get used to this treatment, will feel entitled to receive the perks from the company and will expect them during each service encounter? If this is the case, analogous findings might help shed light and gain deeper understanding of work that has shown that loyal customers are not most profitable customers (e.g., O'Brien and Jones 1995; Homburg et al. 2008).

Current study contributes to the marketing ethics field. Most attention to date focuses on consumers' perceptions of the morality of business and marketing practices rather than consumers behaving ethically themselves. However, consumers are also a major part of the sales transaction dyad and ignoring them in ethics research may result in an inadequate understanding of consumption processes (Vitell 2003) and in the development of ineffective marketing strategies (Swaidan, Vitell, and Rawwas 2003). A key possible implication of this research is that we show customer prioritization intended to have only positive effects can sometimes backfire. We suggest that any customer needs to feel special, but up to certain limits. Our results indicate that firms should be very careful when rewarding customers and it should be done based on previous interactions.

APPENDIX A

CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF THE PAPER



Studies Overview

Study 1	Demonstrates that preferential treatment leads to higher propensity to behave unethically. The effect is mediated by entitlement.
Study 2	When receiving preferential treatment, new customer feel more entitled compared to the loyal ones.
Study 3	Explores the effect of explanations during preferential treatment situations for new and loyal customers.
Study 4	Explores the behavioral effects of entitlement across domains.
Study 5	Field study: the effect of preferential treatment on consumer behavior in real life.

APPENDIX B

Entitlement manipulation (Studies 1-4).

Upgrade group:

Imagine you have the following two options when booking a room in a hotel:

<u>Room facilities</u>	<u>Standard Double room (Price: 99\$/night)</u>	<u>Deluxe Double suite (Price: 199\$/night)</u>
Room Size:	170 sq ft (bedroom only)	350 sq ft (bedroom+ separate living room)
Bed Size(s):	2 Twin or 1 Full	1 King and 1 Sofa bed
TV	Cable channels Flat-screen TV	Cable channels, Flat-screen TV DVD Player, Satellite channels,
Bathroom	Shower Hairdryer Toilet	Bathtub, Hairdryer, Bathrobe, Toilet,
Air conditioning	Wall/window model	Split system
Additional	Telephone Fax Safe Iron Desk	Telephone Fax Safe Iron Desk Free morning newspaper Minibar

After comparing all the facilities, you choose to book a Standard Double room for 99\$/night.

When you arrive at the hotel, you head directly toward the reception desk. The receptionist enters your information in the computer, and then smiles and says: “You originally booked the Standard Double room but I’ll upgrade you to the Deluxe suite for no extra charge! The room normally costs € 199 /night! Wow, you are the only customer I have seen today get this deal!”

After you finish at the reception desk, the hotel porter helps you to carry your luggage in the room, where you find a card “*Dear Mr./Ms./Mrs. (your last name)! The Hotel Management thanks you for your choice*”.

APPENDIX C

Measurement of Constructs

Psychological Entitlement Scale (Campbell et al. 2004).

Please respond to the following items using the number that best reflects your own beliefs. Please use the following 7-point scale (1 = strong disagreement, 7 = strong agreement)

1. I honestly feel I'm just more deserving than others.
2. Great things should come to me.
3. If I were on the Titanic, I would deserve to be on the first lifeboat!
4. I demand the best because I'm worth it.
5. I do not necessarily deserve special treatment.
6. I deserve more things in my life.
7. People like me deserve an extra break now and then.
8. Things should go my way.
9. I feel entitled to more of everything.

Consumer Ethics Scale (Vitell and Muncy 1992)

1. Buying a counterfeit CD instead of the real thing
2. Using a computer software or games that you did not buy.
3. Changing price-tags on merchandise in a retail store
4. Finding a lost stored value ticket and using up the balance.
5. Taking an ashtray or other souvenir from a hotel or restaurant.
6. Getting too much change and not saying anything.
7. Recording a CD instead of buying it.
8. Spending over an hour trying on different dresses and not purchasing any.
9. Taping a movie off the television.
10. Downloading music from the Internet instead of buying it.

Dominance-Prestige Scale (Cheng et al. 2010)

Dominance score is computed by averaging items: 3, 5, 7, 9, 10 (reversed), 11, 12, 16.

Prestige score is computed by averaging items: 1, 2 (reversed), 4, 6 (reversed), 8, 13, 14, 15, 17 (reversed).

1. Members of my peer group respect and admire me.
2. Members of my peer group do NOT want to be like me.
3. I enjoy having control over others.
4. Others always expect me to be successful.
5. I often try to get my own way regardless of what others may want.

6. Others do NOT value my opinion.
7. I am willing to use aggressive tactics to get my way.
8. I am held in high esteem by those I know.
9. I try to control others rather than permit them to control me.
10. I do NOT have a forceful or dominant personality.
11. Others know it is better to let me have my way.
12. I do NOT enjoy having authority over other people.
13. My unique talents and abilities are recognized by others.
14. I am considered an expert on some matters by others.
15. Others seek my advice on a variety of matters.
16. Some people are afraid of me.
17. Others do NOT enjoy hanging out with me.

Achievement Motivation Scale (Cassidy and Lynn 1989)

1. I would like an important job where people looked up to me
2. I like talking to people who are important
3. I want to be an important person in the community
4. I really admire people who have fought their way to the top
5. I think I would enjoy having authority over other people
6. I think I am usually a leader in my group
7. I like to give orders and get things going
8. People take notice of what I say

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Chapter 2: How self-enhancement motivations shape behaviour of those feeling “entitled”

Abstract

The second paper of the dissertation addresses the issues mentioned before, i.e. a tendency of entitled individuals to behave in a selfish and self-serving manner. In this paper we try to see whether there exists a way to influence such individuals and nudge their prosocial behavior. More specifically, this paper shows that psychological entitlement, indeed, can have positive consequences, but these are activated differentially by underlying self-enhancing motivations: personalized power motivation strengthens and socialized power motivation attenuates prosocial behavior of entitled individuals. In a series of three studies we demonstrate that a desire to self-enhance, manifested both privately and publicly, nudges prosocial behavior of entitled individuals: driven by a desire to look positive they are more likely to help others in need independently of the context where entitlement was triggered.

Entitlement is at the heart of many questions concerning the distribution of resources in society, from tax breaks and social welfare to university enrolments and even access to good seats for football games (Campbell et al. 2004). Recent press coverage has noted entitlement in a range of groups, from children (Lehman 2014) who firmly believe they are entitled to expensive toys, electronic gadgets, trips and cars without having to earn them to the teenagers whose sense of deservingness and sense of uniqueness have raised significantly during last years. Psychologist Jean Twenge and her colleagues compiled the data and found that over the last four decades there has been a dramatic rise in the number of students who describe themselves as being 'above average' in the areas of academic ability, drive to achieve, mathematical ability, and other abilities. High levels of psychological entitlement are almost universally linked with negative outcomes in anecdotal reports and existing research. Across different domains entitlement is linked to negative self-serving beliefs and behaviors such as deserving more salary than fellow employees, reporting higher deservingness of pay in a hypothetical employment setting and interpersonal aggression (Campbell et al. 2004), claiming A grades regardless of the effort in a university setting (O'Brien et al 2011), and expecting special treatment in retail environments (Boyd and Helms 2005). This latter article also suggests that entitlement is an important marketplace factor to be considered since consumers high in entitlement may feel alienated from the exchange process and expect that it will be exploitative. Harboring a strong sense of consumer entitlement may set the stage for inflated expectations as to how things should transpire at the buyer-seller interface. As a result, the authors contend that highly entitled consumers may be prone to mistrust the actions of the firm. In so doing, they may tend to be very suspicious of the firm's marketing related activities.

Individuals who scored higher on the Psychological Entitlement Scale took more candy from a bowl that was to be shared with children, said they deserved higher salaries than other workers, acted more greedily in a commons dilemma game, and treated their romantic partners in a more selfish manner (Campbell, Bonacci, Shelton, Exline, & Bushman, 2004). In another study, higher scores on the Exploitativeness/Entitlement dimension of the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (Raskin & Hall, 1981) predicted less social responsibility (P. J. Watson & Morris, 1991). Finally, in a third study, parents who scored higher on the Basic Adlerian Scales for Interpersonal Success—Adult Form (a measurement of preference for special treatment; Wheeler, Kern, & Curlette, 1993) were more likely to drop out of a parenting class,

even though material learned in it could benefit their children (Snow, Kern, & Curlette, 2001). Thus psychological entitlement has a pervasive and largely unconstructive impact on social behavior (Campbell et al. 2004). Current research argues that entitlement can have not only negative, but also positive downstream consequences depending on underlying motivations. We suggest that entitled individuals can behave prosocially, but this happens if they are motivated to behave in such a manner. Motivation is one of important determinants of human behavior (McClelland 1985) that produces inner forces that guide human behavior. In the current project we investigate the role of motivation, in particular, social motivation, in subsequent behavior of entitled individuals. Social motivation is defined as the preference for a particular distribution of outcomes between oneself and the counterpart (De Dreu et al. 2000).

In the current research we propose that entitled individuals can behave prosocially and be helpful, though such behavior is largely influenced by a motivation to self-enhance. We show that when entitled individuals see such an opportunity they are willing to go greater lengths, help others in need and behave altruistically in order to maintain a positive image of themselves.

Psychological Entitlement and Its Consequences

The most relevant empirical research on entitlement emerges out of the narcissism literature (Morf and Rhodewalt, 2001) and originally was measured by the 40 item Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI; Raskin and Terry, 1988). A more recent and popular definition (Campbell et al (2004) conceptualizes psychological entitlement as a sense that one deserves more and is entitled to more than others (p.31). Though Campbell et al. (2004) introduces entitlement as a trait, several recent articles have demonstrated that entitlement can be situationally primed. Thus, Zitek and colleagues (2010) demonstrated that feeling wronged makes individuals experience a sense of entitlement to avoid further suffering and to obtain positive outcomes, leading them to behave selfishly by refusing to help, expressing more selfish intentions, or claiming a bigger piece of the pie. Another study by O'Brien, Anastasio and Bushman (2011) who in a set of studies exposed participants to entitled messages and subliminally exposed to entitled words demonstrated that after a manipulation participants behaved in line with classical entitlement behavior canons: they found tasks less interesting,

thought they took longer to complete, and walked away faster when leaving the laboratory. Sivanathan and Pettit (working paper) demonstrated that winner take-all arrangements produce among its winners a sense of entitlement: armed with this inflated self-view, winners embezzled funds from the experimenter, deceived fellow participants, and misrepresented their achievements, all in the service to “take” further wealth for themselves. Finally, Poon et al. (2013) when studying the link between ostracism and unethical intentions showed that ostracism increases dishonesty through increased feelings of entitlement and suggested that entitlement can be manipulated through ostracism priming.

Entitled people think and feel they are more deserving than others of all positive things. Evidence was found in various spheres. For example, entitled employees seem to think they deserve the payment only for showing up at their work place (Twenge et al. 2012). Employers often complain that such individuals are more resistant to feedback, more inclined to overestimate their talents and accomplishments, tend to be demanding and overbearing, blame others for mistakes, and have little sense of team loyalty (Mueller 2013). Individuals high in entitlement think they deserve special treatment in customer settings (Boyd and Helmes 2005) and should receive better outcomes for making the same (or even less) efforts than others (Campbell et al. 2004).

Fisk (2010) provides a clear explanation of how and why individuals scoring high in entitlement (she calls it excessive entitlement) think they should get more than others. According to this article, the ability to categorize entitlement as excessive requires assessing not just beliefs regarding the type and amount of outcomes an individual wants or believes are owed to him or herself, but also necessitates assessing that person's attitudes toward the type and amount of inputs that should be contributed (e.g., the Equity Sensitivity Instrument; Naumann et al., 2002). Excessively entitled individuals exhibit preference for a small input: outcome ratio does not negate the fact that he or she may contribute inputs though to observers, those inputs would be viewed as either irrelevant to the calculation of the equity ratio or as reflecting low levels of investment (e.g., time, effort, skill) relative to their expected pay-off (Naumann et al., 2002). For instance, excessively entitled individuals are likely to view subjective characteristics and experiences as comprising valid inputs, believing they are deserving simply because of “who they are or what they have done” in the past (e.g., Lerner, 1987, p. 108). Individuals high in excessive entitlement could therefore be expected to endorse the idea that they deserve to receive a disproportionately greater amount or kind of

outcome than what would be predicted on the basis of their objective performance-related contributions. Such individuals strongly believe that they deserve better outcomes than others and are ready to go greater lengths to get what they want.

Past research has shown that psychological entitlement is associated with dishonesty, immorality and all kinds of antisocial behaviour. Emmons (1987) found that entitlement correlates positively with measures of aggression, dominance, anxiety, tenseness, and suspiciousness. Likewise, Watson, Grisham, Trotter, and Biderman (1984) found that entitlement correlates negatively with three measures of empathy. Watson et al. (1984) also showed negative relationships between entitlement and two measures of social desirability. Raskin and Terry (1988) demonstrated that entitlement is positively correlated with measures of hostility and power orientation. By contrast, they observe that entitlement is negatively correlated with measures of self-control and tolerance. Boyd and Helmes (2004) showed that entitled customers are characterized by a heightened proclivity to presume that a service provider should meet their expectations and they have a right to expect and claim special treatment in retail environments. Campbell et al. (2004) evidenced entitled individuals taking more candy from a bowl that was to be shared with children, said they deserved higher salaries than other workers, acted more greedily in a commons dilemma game, and treated their romantic partners in a more selfish manner. Zitek et al (2010) demonstrated that feeling wronged led individuals to be more entitled to positive outcomes, leading them to behave selfishly. This brief overview of the literature provides enough evidence for the positive link between entitlement and dishonest and selfish behaviour.

It may appear entitled individuals are prepared to use all means and opportunities at their disposal in their ambition to possess better resources than others regardless of the amount of effort put toward gaining those resources and impression their behaviour may make. However, some work has shown that entitled individuals are very sensitive about the opportunity to bolster their self-image (Snow et al. 2001). It seems that an opportunity to appear better than someone in reality is looks so attractive to entitled individuals craving for such image that they are ready to go to great lengths just to retain this view. Thus in the current paper we argue that entitled individuals can behave in a welcoming manner if they see such a behavior beneficial for themselves. The literature has demonstrated that self-enhancing individuals may be likely to regularly seek affirmation of their positive self-views (Sedikides and Strube 1997). Having increased sensitivity to positive self-image and respectable self-

view in situations that bring the self rewards and pleasures may imply that entitled individuals will behave prosocially if this benefits them. Hence, we predicted that desire to self enhance will alter entitled individuals' behavior. We argue entitled individuals who feel this urge to maintain a positive self-view will be prone to go to greater lengths and even alter their behavior just for the sake of looking good. We draw on motivated information processing theory from social psychology, which offers a promising conceptual framework for understanding double-edged nature of entitlement. The core premise of motivated information processing theory is that motivations shape cognitive processing: individuals selectively notice, encode and retain information that is consistent with their desires (Kunda 1990). We distinguish between two types of motivation: proself and prosocial and argue that a proself motivation would be significant contributor to the relationship between entitlement and prosocial behavior. The next section explains how motivation theory can be used to frame prosocial behavior as beneficial.

Entitlement, Self-enhancement and Prosocial Behavior

A distinctive feature of entitled individuals is that they are very sensitive about the opportunity to bolster their self-image. This attribution of favorable outcomes to internal characteristics can help to bolster one's self-image and appears to be common among those who feel "privileged" (Lang 1985). Harvey and Martinko (2009) demonstrated that entitlement perceptions are positively associated with self-serving attribution styles. Thus, entitlement leads individuals to selectively focus on causal information that reinforces their positive self-perceptions and their self-image.

In the current paper we argue that since entitled individuals are prone to self enhancement (Snow et al. 2001), they should be enthusiastic about any opportunity which allows them to self enhance. This effect should be especially pronounced if such an opportunity occurs in front of others or such individuals have a strong motivation to believe that the current situation provides them with such an opportunity. Previous literature has demonstrated the impact of self-enhancement motivations on subsequent individual's behaviour. For example, Lord and Brown (2001) illustrated how a leader's value orientation toward self-enhancement or self-transcendence may affect leader behaviours and subsequently trigger values and related behaviour patterns among followers. In particular,

personal value orientations toward self-enhancement or self-transcendence may play a significant role in activating different types of leadership motivation (Lord and Brown 2001). Later Wallace and Baumeister (2002) demonstrated that the relationship between subclinical narcissism and performance is moderated by a motivational factor: perceived self-enhancement opportunity. They hypothesized that narcissism can be either advantageous or detrimental to performance, depending on the situational context. Specifically, the authors suggested that the effects of narcissism on task performance should be moderated by perceived self-enhancement opportunity. Narcissists crave opportunities for self-enhancement, and some tasks offer more self-enhancement value than others. Narcissists should perform well when task success will be taken as an impressive sign of personal superiority. In a series of experiments involving various manipulations and performance tasks they showed that narcissists performed better when self-enhancement opportunity was high rather than low.

Another research (Robins and Beer 2001) showed that self-enhancers tend to show higher levels of ego involvement, that is, they care more about performing well than non-self-enhancers.

In the current paper we argue that framing prosocial behavior as beneficial to the self increases participants' willingness to engage in it. We suggest that one of the ways to make prosocial behavior look appealing to entitled individuals is to use their desire to retain positive self view, and one of the ways to make it happen is to motivate and convince entitled people that prosocial behavior is beneficial for them.

Taken together, these studies suggest that self-enhancement opportunity can be an important driver of human behavior. We posit that this need to self enhance shapes the behavior of entitled individuals in such a way that in order to feel themselves good and appear in a positive vein those people would engage in a variety of actions, which sometimes might even not be beneficial to themselves.

In the current paper we propose that self-enhancement opportunity would lead to different behavioral outcomes for entitled individuals depending on the motivation individuals see in such an opportunity. The literature distinguishes between two types of motivations: prosocial motivation which is the desire to expend effort based on a concern for helping or contributing to other people and proself one which cares about positive outcomes only for oneself (Grant 2007; Grant and Berry 2011).

Whether people take others' point of view and others' interests into consideration depends on their prosocial versus proself motivation (Grant and Berg 2011). Individuals with a proself motivation are concerned with their own needs and interests and not with those of their fellow group members. Owing to temperament, socialization, or specific circumstances, individuals may also have a prosocial motivation— they are concerned with their own needs and interests as well as with those of other group members (McClintock, 1977). For example, giving instructions or incentives to consider not only one's own but also others' interests raise prosocial motivation (Weingart, Bennett, and Brett, 1993). Even referring to the counterpart as a partner rather than as an opponent raises prosocial motivation (Burnham, McCabe, and Smith 2000). This in turn affects perceptions as well as behavior. For example, in the context of negotiations individuals with a proself motivation tend to see the negotiation as a competitive game in which power and personal success are key, whereas those with a prosocial motivation perceive a cooperative game in which harmony and inclusiveness, fairness, and joint success are key (e.g., Chen, Mannix, and Okumura 2003).

Building on those ideas, we propose that in general the behavior of entitled individuals will be driven by the opportunity to self-enhance. Since proself orientation is more likely to provide this opportunity (due to the fact that when taking a proself action all the benefits come to the individual, whereas a prosocial action assumes distribution of outcomes between the focal individual and others, i.e. it brings less benefits to the self) we propose that a proself motivation will be more likely to shape entitled individuals' behavior since according to the literature they are more selfish and egoistic. Thus, we expect that proself motivation will make entitled individuals to be willing to behave prosocially. We don't think that this effect will be replicated, or it will be replicated with the same intensity in a case of proself motivation for those low in entitlement. We think that though benefits for the self is important for any person, we expect people who don't feel entitled will make any prosocial actions because any prosocial behavior is driven by mostly selfless motivations (Batson, 1991) which won't play an important role in this case.

A number of scholars have assumed that high prosocial motivation assumes low self-interested motivation, and vice-versa (e.g., Cialdini et al., 1997; Meglino and Korsgaard, 2004; Schwartz and Bardi, 2001). Thus, we think that prosocial motivation, on the contrary, will positively influence people low in entitlement' desire to help others. Since prosocial behavior is performed to benefit mostly others than self (Twenge et al. 2007), in this case

entitled individuals are unlikely to behave in such a way unless they see a clear opportunity to benefit themselves in such a situation. One such opportunity can be provided by the publicity of actions.

People will act more prosocially in the public sphere than in private settings (Ariely, Bracha, and Meier 2009). Donors appreciate the prestige they get from having their donations made public, and when donations are advertised in categories (e.g., gold, silver, or bronze donors), people often give the minimum amount necessary to appear in a higher category (Harburgh 1998). In a laboratory experiment, people were more likely to contribute to charity if their donations were made public. These results were sustained in a field experiment, in which people were more likely to cycle on an exercise bike for charity if the bike was placed in a prominent public position (Ariely, Bracha, and Meier 2009). Get Out the Vote experiments have shown that “social pressure” mailings, letting people know whether or not they or their neighbors voted last time, can increase voter turnout (Gerber, Green, and Larimer 2008). Thanking people for civic behavior, such as voting, has also been shown to have positive effects by reinforcing pro-social behavior (Panagopoulos 2011). According to Ratner and Kahn (2002) people sometimes make decisions other than those they would privately favor when they expect others will form impressions of them based on the decisions made. Thus we expect publicity of actions to strengthen the positive effect of proself motivation on prosocial behavior.

Overview

The mainstream literature suggests that entitled individuals are unlikely to act prosocially. The main argument of our research is that entitlement can lead to prosocial behavior, especially when this behavior provides an opportunity to self enhance. Although no previous research has directly examined the relationship between entitlement and prosocial behavior, several studies are relevant to our line of reasoning. Campbell et al (2004) show that entitlement would be linked to making competitive or selfish choices when faced with a commons dilemma. Zitek et al (2010) show that entitled individuals are more likely to refuse to help the experimenter with a supplementary task.

We think that higher levels of entitlement in a case of prosocial motivation would correspond with lower levels of altruistic behavior. In a case of prosocial situation an entitled

individual would only see a chance to do good for others without necessarily getting some benefits (like the opportunity to self enhance) for himself since prosocial motivation makes people more aware and concerned about others and not self (Grant and Berry 2011). Taking a prosocial action in such situation won't explicitly tribute a giver; thus we think that entitled individuals would be reluctant to provide any kind of prosocial action since that won't allow them to have any kind of benefits for themselves. On the contrary, when a situation offers an opportunity to make an impact on others and elevate positive self-image even when this requires some costs (i.e. when a situation implies a proself motivation) we suggest that this would increase the likelihood of entitled individuals to behave prosocially.

Therefore, in line with the theoretical argumentation above we argue that publicity of actions will reinforce the effect of proself power motivation on prosocial behavior. Entitled individuals will be even more prone to behave prosocially having a proself motivation driven by the fact that others will have an opportunity to witness their behavior. Moreover, we suggest that publicity attenuates the effect of prosocial power motivation on prosocial behavior. If the action is public, entitled individuals will be less likely *not* to behave prosocially since otherwise their positive image may suffer.

A set of studies test our theorizing. In study 1 we employ a 2 (entitlement vs. control) x 2 (motivation: prosocial vs. proself) between subject factorial design to examine the impact of entitled individual's motivation on their propensity to behave prosocially. Study 2 further generalizes the findings by examining a moderator to the proposed relationship: publicity of actions. Study 3 extends our findings by adopting a different manipulation of entitlement and controlling for a set of factors which potentially can explain our results.

STUDY 1

The main objective of this study is to show evidence for our main hypothesis regarding the differential impact of proself vs. prosocial motivations on the behavior of entitled individuals. If, as we propose, self-beneficial concerns are more important for entitled participants, then their behavioral response to a proself-framed message should be stronger than the one to a prosocial-framed one.

Moreover, in this study we manipulate entitlement through feelings of being rejected and wronged. According to the logic of Zitek et al. (2010) and Poon et al. (2013), when people

experience unjustified deprivation and disadvantages they may feel more entitled to benefits than others, which may motivate them to over-benefit themselves through dishonesty as compensation. Ostracism is an aversive interpersonal experience which shares many attributes with entitlement: rejected people are more likely than the others to behave aggressively (Twenge et al., 2003); they are substantially less likely to act in prosocial ways (Twenge et al., 2007), they are worse in self-regulation (Baumeister et al., 2005); they show distorted time perception (Twenge et al., 2003), just like those scoring high in entitlement for whom time seems to crawl (O'Brien et al., 2011).

However, rejected individuals can behave nicely; however, this happens only when they see some benefits in such behavior: social acceptance (DeWall et al., 2007; Williams et al., 2000); social benefits (Maner et al., 2007; Romero-Canyas et al., 2010); financial benefits (Baumeister et al., 2005).

Thus we apply the same logic to our study and expect that those participants exposed to the proself-oriented message will exhibit higher prosocially oriented intentions than those exposed to the prosocial-oriented message. We think this effect will occur due to the fact that proself-oriented message provides more opportunities to benefit self than the prosocial one. By benefiting self in the context of prosocial behavior we understand the opportunity to self-enhance: proself motivation allows more opportunities to self-enhance than the prosocial one. Importantly, we controlled for several factors that might be also related to entitlement and prosocial behavior, such as narcissism, empathy, self-esteem, positive or negative mood. For example, since one of the most idiosyncratic symptoms of narcissism is an inflated sense of one's own specialness or importance (Twenge and Campbell 2009) one could argue that any possible differences in participants' behavior can be explained by narcissism. Alternatively any changes in the feelings of self-worth can play their role: for instance, Baumeister et al. (1996) found that deviant and antisocial behavior relates to low self-esteem. Finally, some participants might behave in a more prosocial way compared to others simply because they are more empathetic, or they appeared to be in an extremely positive (negative) mood during taking part in the study.

We wanted to test the link between entitlement and prosocial behavior above and beyond the influence of these other factors.

Method

Participants and design. One hundred fifty six participants located in the United States (52% males, 51% aged 21-34) completed a study on line for US\$0.4. They were recruited through Amazon's Mechanical Turk, which helps collect representative and reliable data online (Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011). The experiment had a 2 (entitlement vs. no entitlement) x 2(motivation: prosocial vs. proself) between subject factorial design, in which participants were randomly assigned to one of four conditions.

Procedures and materials. As a cover story in the description of the survey to be completed we told participants that we study an opportunity to introduce an option of making a donation using money participants earn for on line surveys participation. Before participants proceeded to manipulation, they completed the reliable and valid seven-item (e.g., "I honestly feel I'm just more deserving than others") Psychological Entitlement Scale (PES, Campbell et al. 2004). Items were scored on a 7-point scale (1 = Completely Disagree, 7 = Completely Agree). The scores were averaged to form an overall measure of entitlement ($\alpha = .89$).

Entitlement was primed using Poon et. al (2013) suggestion: participants were asked to write a personal story about their prior experiences with ostracism. Since ostracism is an aversive interpersonal experience that brings immediate distress and deprives people of benefits associated with social connection (Williams, 2007, 2009), ostracized people may feel more entitled to benefits than others. Participants in the no entitlement condition were explicitly asked to write about the experience "when they were included in a group of people" (Chen, DeWall, Poon, and Chen 2012). Afterward, the participants completed the state version of PES containing three items (e.g., "I'm entitled to gain more than others", 1 = Completely Disagree, 9 = Completely Agree; Poon et al. 2013). The scores were averaged to form an entitlement index ($\alpha = .85$). The main purpose of entitlement scores double check before and after the manipulation was to make sure that we succeeded when manipulating entitlement: if entitlement scores don't differ before the manipulation and vary after, we conclude that our manipulation was successful.

Next, participants were asked to read a vignette describing a situation when they were supposed to take a prosocial action (making a donation). Likelihood to make a charity donation and the amount of the proposed donation were the main dependent variables. Participants in the proself motivation read the following description:

The sponsor of this study gives you an opportunity to make a donation to a charity in honor of your friends. It's the most personal gift you can give.

If any of your relatives or friends has a birthday or a wedding soon you can celebrate with them in a special way. You can select and personalize an "I Do charity" gift card for whatever amount you choose. Later your friends will select a charity of their preference.

By doing so, you will make the celebration more meaningful and share some of your generosity and benevolence. Surely your gift will be memorable and original which is a great way to highlight your unique personality.

Moreover, your charitable donations are tax-deductible. Through your Mturk account you will be able to keep record of all your giving history to get all the deductions you are allowed to.

Donate Today!

Participants in the prosocial motivation read the following description:

The sponsor of this study gives you an opportunity to make a donation to a charity in honor of those who are in need—it's the most generous present you can make.

According to the World Economic Forum, we're facing a major economic crisis from extreme wealth inequality in the world.

Consider this statistic: The richest 85 people are now worth the same amount as the poorest 3.5 *billion* (half the world's population)! Sadly, at least 80 percent of the people in the world live on less than \$10 a day.

As a caring global community, we must work together to ensure that everyone has access to basic necessities: food, water, and shelter.

Our charity serves poorest countries in East Africa. This year we aim to distribute an estimated 6.5 million pounds of food and grocery products which will be 100% covered by your generous donations.

Let's all together help the world's poorest citizens survive and break through the grips of poverty.

Donate Today!

Then participants answered a set of questions regarding their propensity to donate: “How likely you would donate the part of the money you earn through Mturk to this charity?” (1 = Very Unlikely to 7 = Very Likely) and “If you would like to donate to this charity organization, how much you are willing to donate?” (participants chose one from several options ranging from 1-6, 1 = “0”, 6 = “More than \$10”). Participants’ propensity to self enhance was measured using the Over-claiming technique designed by Paulhus et al. (2003). Over claiming is a concrete operationalization of self-enhancement based on respondents’ ratings of their knowledge of various persons, events, products, and so on. Self-enhancement is assessed by the overall tendency to claim familiarity with items. Nine items were scored using a 7- point scale (1 = Never heard of it, 7 = Very familiar), higher score indicating higher propensity to self enhance.

Narcissism and self-esteem might also be related to the feelings of entitlement. For example, since entitlement is partially rooted in narcissistic personality, we had to be sure that any possible effects in our study are not explained by participants’ differences in those two variables. Thus, narcissism was measured using the reliable and valid eight-item (e.g., “I wish somebody would someday write my biography”) Narcissism Scale (Narcissistic Personality Inventory, Raskin and Terry 1988). The scores were averaged to form a narcissism measure ($\alpha = .82$). Participants also completed the 10-item self- esteem scale (Rosenberg Self-esteem scale, Rosenberg 1965), $\alpha = .88$. To make sure that any possible variations in participant’s

propensity to donate is not explained by individual differences, we also controlled for empathy ($\alpha = .76$, see Appendix A). Empathy is an important contributor to prosocial behavior (Twenge et al. 2007). Finally, we controlled for any possible variations in participants' mood. Participants completed the positive and negative mood measure, the 12-item Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS; Watson et al. 1988). Responses were averaged to form an index of positive mood ($\alpha = .83$), and negative mood ($\alpha = .89$). A debriefing followed. No participants guessed the hypothesis being tested or reported being suspicious.

Results

Preliminary analyses. Thirteen participants who failed to write a story about the experience of being ostracized vs. included were excluded from the analysis. Moreover, in order to understand better participant's thoughts regarding the study and make sure whether our cover story was successful we left blank space in the end of the questionnaire which read: "We would like to let you know that this was just a preliminary study and you don't have an opportunity to donate to the charity organizations in this case. However, if you think that Mturk should give this opportunity to its workers, please indicate this in the comments section which will follow next."

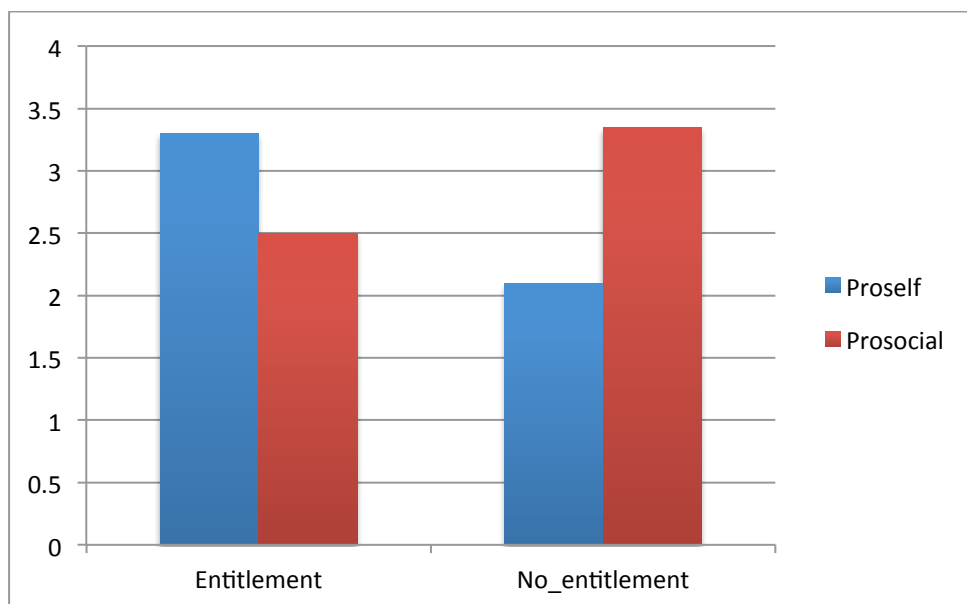
Although, as we highlight in the description leaving any comments is absolutely voluntary and filling in the blank space requires more time and effort which our participants could alternatively have devoted to completing other surveys, we noticed that approximately one sixth of all participants left their comments, of which 16 individuals explicitly stated their opinion regarding the opportunity to give a part of their earnings to some charity and even proposed the ways of how to do that. We consider this to be an additional evidence of our cover story credibility.

Manipulation check. First of all we checked whether our manipulation worked as expected. Entitlement manipulation was successful. Whereas participants didn't differ in their entitlement score before the manipulation ($F < 1$), their scores marginally differed after ($M_{entitlement} = 3.82$ vs. $M_{no_entitlement} = 3.27$; $F(1,139) = 3.00, p = .08$).

Primary analyses. The results of the univariate analysis of variance revealed no significant main effects, but a significant interaction on propensity to donate ($F(1, 139) = 10.5, p = .001$, see fig. 1). Moreover, following analysis revealed that participants in the entitlement proself condition were marginally more likely to make a donation than participants in the entitlement prosocial condition, $M = 3.3$ vs. $M = 2.5$ respectively, $F(1, 139) = 3.35, p = .06$. Participants in the no entitlement condition also differed in their propensity to donate, however, in this case participants in the prosocial condition were much more likely to donate than those in the proself condition ($M = 3.35$ vs. $M = 2.1, F(1, 139) = 7.5, p < .01$). Looking at that differently, participants in the proself motivation condition were more likely to donate when they were given with the entitlement (vs. no entitlement) instructions, $M = 3.35$ vs. $M = 2.18, F(1, 139) = 6.37, p < .05$, though participants in the prosocial motivation condition were less likely to do so when they were given with no entitlement (vs. entitlement) instructions, $M = 2.5$ vs. $M = 3.3, F(1, 139) = 4.22, p < .05$.

Figure 1

Likelihood to make a donation as a function of entitlement and motivation



When answering to the second dependent variable measure which we had “If you would like to donate to this charity organization, how much you are willing to donate” three participants did not provide an answer to this question. The univariate analysis of variance revealed

significant interaction on the amount of donation: $F(1, 136) = 3.76, p = .01$. Further analysis showed that participants in the entitlement proself condition were willing to make a higher amount of donation than participants in the entitlement prosocial condition, $M = 2.09$ vs. $M = 1.55$ respectively, $F(1, 136) = 3.53, p = .06$. Participants in the no entitlement condition also differed in the amount of donation, however, in this case participants in the prosocial condition were much more likely to donate than those in the proself condition ($M = 2.26$ vs. $M = 1.48$ respectively, $F(1, 136) = 7.6, p < .01$). Looking at that differently, participants in the proself entitlement condition were eager to donate a bigger sum compared to those in the no entitlement condition, $M = 2.09$ vs. $M = 1.48, F(1, 136) = 4.37, p < .05$), though participants in the prosocial entitlement condition were less likely to donate a significant amount of money compared to participants in the prosocial no entitlement condition, $M = 1.55$ vs. $M = 2.22, F(1, 136) = 6.44, p < .05$.

In addition, participants in the entitlement condition expressed a stronger propensity to self-enhance than those in the no entitlement condition: $M = 3.37$ vs. $M = 2.91$ respectively, $F(1, 139) = 1.67, p = .03$. Meanwhile, participants in experimental conditions didn't differ in their levels of narcissism, empathy, self-esteem, positive or negative mood (all $p > .10$ for main effects and interactions).

Discussion.

As expected, entitled participants in the proself condition were more socially oriented and exhibited higher likelihood of making a donation and higher amount they were willing to donate (keeping in mind that we made them believe that an option of making a donation was real). The opposite trend was observed in the no entitlement condition: here individuals were much more likely to donate in order to help those in need driven by prosocial motivation. This relationship remained significant even after controlling for a variety of variables that also could be related to entitlement or likelihood to donate. Of all the variables measured, the only significant difference between groups was observed in their self enhancement tendency: participants in the entitlement condition revealed much stronger tendency to self enhance compared with participants in the no entitlement condition.

To summarize, Study 1 demonstrates that proself and prosocial motivations play a significant role in determining the behavior of entitled participants. More importantly, we show that

entitled individuals are significantly more likely to self-enhance and this can be a significant driver of their behavior. However, in the current article we are interested in examining ways of increasing prosocial tendencies in entitled individuals' behavior. We reasoned that, as the first study shows, self-enhancement opportunities are driving entitled participants' behavior, there should be other factors which can influence their actions. Thus, in our second study we show that if entitled participants are given the opportunity to make prosocial actions in public (i.e. when the situation clearly provides the opportunity to strengthen their positive self-image), they are more likely to behave prosocially.

STUDY 2

Our main contention in this research is that entitled individuals, in their desire to self-enhance, will commit a variety of actions, which sometimes could be even not beneficial to themselves. While Study 1 provided support for the role of proself and prosocial motivations in exploring entitled individuals' propensity to behave prosocially, demonstrating the way of strengthening the effect of proself motivation and attenuating the effect of prosocial motivation would provide further evidence in favor of our theorizing. Thus the aim of this study is to introduce a moderator to the observed relationship between psychological entitlement and prosocial behavior. We propose that publicity of actions will moderate this link. More specifically, we think that if prosocial actions would be made public, this will increase provide a chance to self-enhance and appeal to entitled individuals since public prosocial actions is a great way to maintain positive self-image. Thus, the main prediction of Study 2 is that in a case of prosocial motivation those entitled individuals whose actions would be observed by others will be more likely to behave prosocially compared to the group where prosocial actions will be private.

Method

Participants and design. One hundred twenty one participants (66% females) located in the United States and recruited through Amazon's Mechanical Turk completed a study on line for US\$0.3. Study 2 utilized a 2 (entitlement vs. non-entitlement) x 2 (public vs. private) design where the first factor was manipulated using an episodic recall task (similar to Study 1) and

the second one was manipulated using a scenario. Participants were randomly assigned to one of four conditions.

Procedures and materials. Similar to Study 1 participants first completed the Psychological Entitlement Scale (PES, Campbell et al. 2004) and then proceeded to the entitlement manipulation which we used in the Study 1. As in Study 1, after the manipulation, participants answered a set of questions intended to measure their level of entitlement at the current moment. The scores were averaged to form an entitlement index ($\alpha = .87$). Next, participants were exposed to the publicity manipulation. By random assignment, participants read that their prosocial actions could be observed by others (public condition) vs. remained unrevealed (private condition). For example, participants in the public condition read the following scenario:

The requester of this study chose that you may donate to the charity which tries to cope with the problem of preterm birth.
 One in seven babies is born prematurely.
 Prematurity is the leading cause of newborn death.
 Join us in the fight to give every baby a healthy start!
 If you choose to donate, your name would be reflected on our public Thank you board displayed at the store entrance and visible to all store visitors.
 Donate Today!

Participants in the private condition read exactly the same scenario except for the fact that the description didn't say anything about the fact that their actions will be made public. Then participants answered a question regarding their propensity to donate which was our dependent variable measure. Finally, to make sure that any potential differences between groups are not explained by individual differences among participants, we also measured individuals' levels of self-esteem ($\alpha = .87$), positive ($\alpha = .9$) and negative mood ($\alpha = .93$) using the same scales as in the Study 1. A debriefing followed.

Results

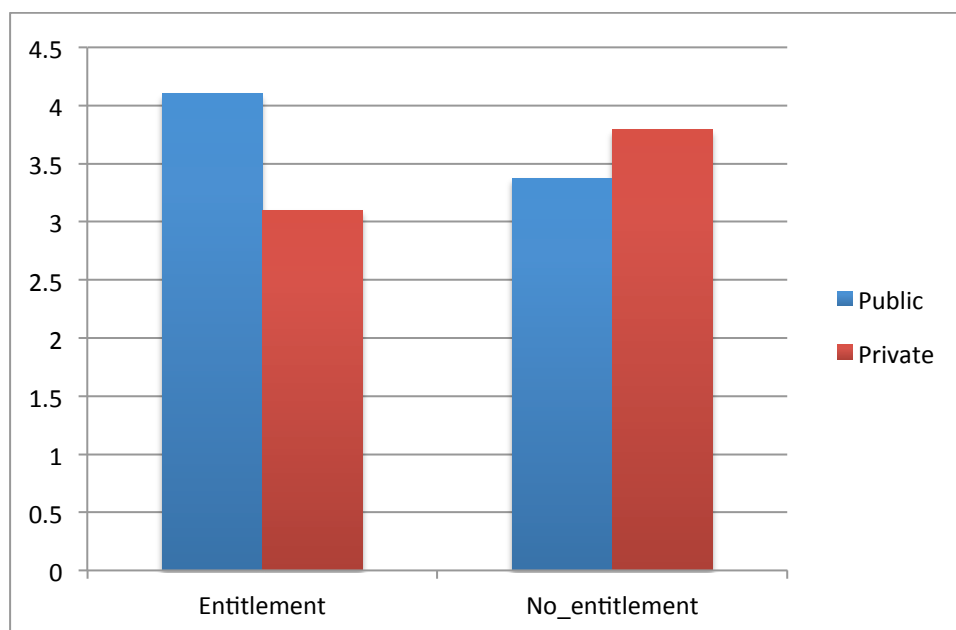
Manipulation checks. Five participants were excluded from the analyses due to their suspiciousness to the hypotheses being tested.

Primary analyses. The results of the univariate analysis of variance revealed no significant main effects, but a marginally significant entitlement x publicity interaction on propensity to donate: $F(1,116) = 3.37, p = .06$ (see Figure 2). Subsequent analysis revealed that participants in the entitlement public condition were marginally more likely to make a donation compared

to participants in the private condition ($M_{\text{public}} = 4.0$ vs. $M_{\text{private}} = 3.0$, $F(1,116) = 3.31$, $p = .07$) whereas participants in the no entitlement condition didn't differ between public and private groups, $M_{\text{public}} = 3.37$ vs. $M_{\text{private}} = 3.79$, $F < 1$. Looked at another way, participants in the private and public conditions did not differ between entitlement and no entitlement groups: $M_{\text{entitl}} = 3.00$ vs. $M_{\text{no_entitl}} = 3.79$, $p > .10$ and $M_{\text{entitl}} = 4.00$ vs. $M_{\text{no_entitl}} = 3.37$, $p > .10$ consequently.

Meanwhile, participants in experimental conditions didn't differ in their levels of self-esteem, chronic level of entitlement, positive or negative mood (all $F < 1$).

Figure 2. Results of the univariate analyses with entitlement (1 = entitled; 0 = no) and publicity (1 = publicity; 0 = no) as independent variables and likelihood of making a donation as the dependent variable



Discussion

The findings from Study 2 replicate and extend those from Study 1. Entitled participants explicitly given an opportunity to demonstrate publicly their prosocial actions were more likely to donate to a charity than those who were given the same option privately. Simply offering entitled individuals an opportunity to make some prosocial action in front of observers seems to nudge them towards a prosocial behaviour. According to our results, a

chance to appear positive in their own eyes and those of the surrenders is an effective way to influence entitled individuals.

Thus, these results in conjunction with those of the previous study provide converging evidence toward the role of self-enhancement in changing entitled individuals' behavior. When entitled individuals see a clear opportunity to self-enhance (and public prosocial actions is a perfect example of such an opportunity) they are more likely to behave prosocially.

STUDY 3

One might argue that the effect that we get in our studies might be explained not by entitlement, but by some other variable, which could have been evoked by negative feeling of being ostracized or wronged. For instance, our participants could have felt bad after experiencing ostracism and in order to feel themselves better they decided to help others. Thus, our results could be explained by side effects of ostracism or other variable, such as, for example, altruism. Moreover, manipulations we have been using so far have little to do with the consumer behavior context. It could be easily argued that in the marketplace context companies usually do not ostracize their customers and actually try to treat them exactly in the opposite way.

Thus, the aim of Study 3 was to address those shortcomings. First of all, we thought that getting the same effect with different manipulation would strengthen our results. Thus, as an entitlement manipulation we described a situation which rather frequently occurs with the customers in the real life. Second, we use here a different manipulation of self-enhancement. While in all the previous studies we offered participants an opportunity to self-enhance in a public context (ex. in front of their friends or some unknown people), in this case we use a private setting and make participants self-enhance by stating their positive qualities. Moreover, we include in our study a set of control variables aiming to exclude alternative explanations of the effect.

Method

One hundred fifty participants (70% females, 47 % aged 22-34) located in the United States and recruited through Amazon's Mechanical Turk completed a study on line for a small

remuneration. Study 3 utilized a 2 (entitlement: yes vs. no) x 2 (self-enhancement: yes vs. no) design where the first factor was manipulated using a scenario of a frequent marketplace situation and the second one was manipulated by asking participants to write several sentences about themselves describing positive qualities in several domains (Wilson and Ross 2000, see Appendix A).

Entitlement was manipulated using a preferential treatment scenario adopted from Polyakova et al. (2014). Participants in both entitlement and no entitlement conditions were asked to imagine a situation of choosing a hotel room for the upcoming trip. Participants read the description of two rooms available: Standard Double room priced \$149 and a Deluxe Double Suite (\$249). Participants in both groups studied the room description and presumably chose (and paid for) the Standard Double option. The only difference between conditions was in the information participants received upon hotel arrival. Whereas participants in the no entitlement condition received the room which they paid for (Standard Double), participants in the entitlement condition received an upgrade to a much better room and additional free of charge facilities (for further clarifications, please see Appendix A).

After that participants proceeded to the self-enhancement manipulation. Individuals in both conditions were asked to write several sentences about importance of certain qualities in everyday life. Whereas participants in the self-enhancement condition described their own positive qualities, participants in the no self-enhancement condition described positive qualities of an average person. In both conditions, participants provided a description on the following attributes: social skills and self-confidence.

Our dependent variable, a sum of a charity donation, followed. Participants in both conditions read the following description:

Please imagine that once you have finished with all check-in procedures in the hotel, the receptionist informs you that Sea Spa hotel chain has recently decided to involve in social responsibility campaigns and you are invited to participate in one of such campaigns.

Participants read a description of a charity that helps African people and sends them the most necessary food and medicines. After that participants reported the amount of donations they were willing to make.

A series of control measures followed after. We measured the level of narcissism of our participants using Narcissism Scale (Narcissistic Personality Inventory, Raskin and Terry

1988, see Appendix A). We reasoned since our work has a lot to do with self-enhancement and narcissists are very prone to self-enhance (Campbell et al. 2000) we need to make sure narcissism does not affect our results. The narcissism items were averaged to form a narcissism measure ($\alpha = .65$).

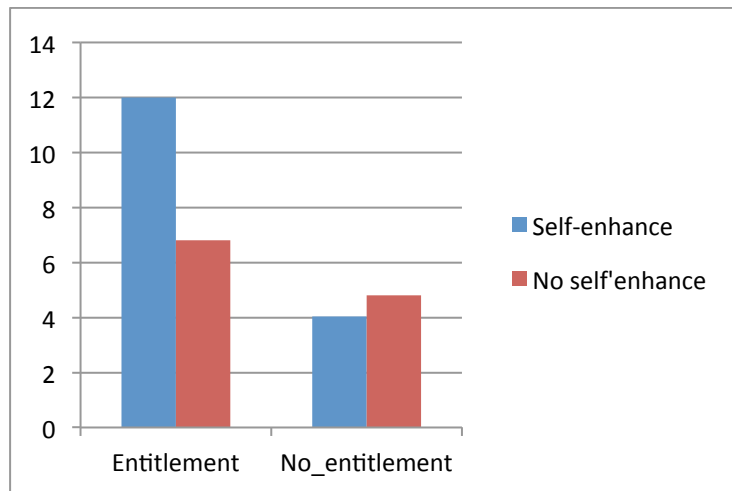
It could be argued that any differences in the amount of donations could be explained by participants' level of altruism. In order to avoid those concerns, we capture this variable using the items from the Altruistic Personality Scale (Rushton et al. 1981, $\alpha = .81$, see Appendix A). To account for possible mood effects from the manipulation following the prime we also checked for participants' feelings of self worth, self-efficacy and positive and negative mood. Participants completed Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (1995), Coefficient alpha was 0.68; The General Self Efficacy Scale (Schwarzer and Jerusalem 1995, $\alpha = .8$), positive and negative affect scale (PANAS) (Watson et al.1988). Participants were instructed to indicate their feelings "at the present moment".

Results

Manipulation checks. Seven participants were excluded from the analyses due to their suspiciousness to the hypotheses being tested.

Primary analyses. The results of the univariate analysis of variance revealed a main effect of entitlement: *Mentitlement* = 9.04 vs. *Mno entitlement* = 4.41, $F(1,139) = 8.9$, $p = .003$. Further analysis revealed marginally significant entitlement x publicity interaction on amount of donation: $F(1,139) = 3.22$, $p = .07$, see fig. 3

Figure 3. Results of the univariate analyses with entitlement and self-enhancement as independent variables and amount of donation as dependent variable



Subsequent analysis revealed that participants in the entitlement self-enhancement condition were more likely to make a donation compared to participants in the no self-enhancement condition ($M_{\text{self-enhance}} = 12.0$ vs. $M_{\text{no self-enhance}} = 6.8$, $F(1,139) = 8.9$, $p = .00$) whereas participants in the no entitlement condition didn't differ between self-enhancement and no self-enhancement conditions, $M_{\text{self-enhance}} = 4.04$ vs. $M_{\text{no self-enhance}} = 4.8$, $F < 1$. Though we find the main effect of entitlement here contrary to our predictions (it may look like entitled individuals are more likely to donate higher sums of money), we also ran analysis to see whether there are any differences between entitlement_no self-enhancement group and both control groups ($M_{\text{entitlement_no self-enhance}} = 6.8$ vs. $M_{\text{no entitlement_average}} = 4.41$). The difference appeared to be non-significant, $F < 1$, indicating that the main effect is mainly driven by the participants in the self-enhancement condition who indicated they would donate a significantly higher sum. Since this is the first study of the paper where participants were offered to write an actual sum they were willing to donate (in contrast to Study 1, where participants were given a choice from a series of options) we think it can be another interesting finding for further exploration. It may well be that when entitled participants are given a chance to self-enhance and later they are offered to participate in a prosocial action, they are likely to use this chance as another opportunity to elevate their positive image. Thus they donate a sum which is much higher compared to the one which seem more sensible in the situation.

Finally, we checked if any of the control variables we incorporated in the survey affected the results. Whereas participants in experimental conditions didn't differ in their levels of narcissism, altruism, and positive mood (all $F > 1$), we observed significant differences in their perceptions of self-worth ($M_{entitlement} = 5.64$ vs. $M_{no entitlement} = 5.36$, $F(3,139) = 3.09$, $p = .02$), self-efficacy ($M_{entitlement} = 5.12$ vs. $M_{no entitlement} = 4.9$, $F(3,139) = 2.76$, $p = .04$), and negative mood ($M_{entitlement} = 1.41$ vs. $M_{no entitlement} = 1.92$, $F(3,139) = 3.38$, $p = .02$). Several participants in their comments noted that the fact that they were told they chose a cheaper room made them feel uncomfortable, like they cannot afford a better room. While this concern probably cannot change our main results, we aim to take care of this issue in our future research.

Thus, consistent with the previous results, Study 3 demonstrated that entitled participants who are given a chance to enhance and maintain or improve their positive self-image are more likely to behave prosocially. This result holds true after using different manipulations and even when self-enhancement occurs in private and no one else observes the actions of an individual.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

So far the literature has demonstrated that entitled individuals are least likely to behave nicely and most people who score high in this variable are unlikely to behave prosocially. Our research demonstrates that it is so not in all cases and several leverages to influence entitled individuals indeed do exist.

One of such leverages as we believe is to provide entitled individuals a chance to self-enhance. Across several independent studies, we confirmed our hypothesis: desire to self-enhance drives entitled individuals' behavior and makes them behave prosocially if that allows maintaining positive self-image. Such individuals are more likely to donate if they see a self-enhancement opportunity in such an action (Study 1), and it seems that the more public their actions are, the more they are willing to demonstrate others their positive sides, such as for example generosity (Study 2). Results further suggest that this relationship is not confounded by related constructs (Study 1 and 2). Study 3 confirms our findings in a different setting and using different manipulations of entitlement and self-enhancement.

Current research addresses concerns mentioned in the literature previously. In such a way, Campbell and colleagues (2004) raised the possibility that entitlement might not always have

negative consequences for the individual and perhaps for society (p.42). To our knowledge present research is the first study to theoretically and empirically demonstrate that entitlement, generally considered as a negative state, can have some bright aspects. In this regard, we contribute to entitlement theory by detailing the differences between proself and prosocial motivations and their effects on prosocial behavior. We aim to demonstrate that negative sides of entitlement can be used in a positive vein when being approached correctly. Our findings empirically support and extend this speculation as we show that a self-enhancement motivation can significantly influence individuals scoring high in entitlement. In our paper we demonstrate that by framing benefit as an opportunity to self-enhance. However, future research can explore other opportunities which might seem beneficial for people high in entitlement.

Second, we contribute to the recent stream of the literature studying a state version of entitlement. We provide additional evidence that entitlement can be experimentally primed. Our approach is consistent with recent literature streams demonstrating that factors traditionally thought of as structural and heavily determined by long-term factors (e.g., power) can be productively reconceptualized as mindsets (Galinsky et al. 2003). Following Zitek et al. (2010), who presented a model which posits that entitlement is a mindset that can be activated whenever one feels wronged, we show that a state version of entitlement plays an important role in everyday behavior. We demonstrate that across different situations and using different manipulations of entitlement. We demonstrate that entitlement is a far-reaching phenomenon and can be triggered across a huge variety of everyday situations. That is why we think it is very important to understand its consequences in different conditions.

Implications

The current research comprises the first direct assessment of the positive link between entitlement and prosocial behavior. But why is such a result important? Given the fact of entitlement culture prevalence nowadays (Campbell et al. 2004; Twenge, 2006; O'Brien et al. 2011) it is very important to understand if/how we can influence the behavior of entitled individuals. Across a variety of settings, samples and manipulations we demonstrate that at least one method of influencing entitled individuals does exist.

Entitlement is one of very important, though overlooked, phenomena prevalent in everyday life and we firmly believe it is extremely important to know more about this phenomenon. Moreover, we think our research also can be of interest from managerial perspective since it provides further understanding of causes and consequences of elevated entitlement and provides some suggestions of how to deal with people who think they deserve more than others. Our findings suggest that one simple though presumably effective way of influencing such individuals is to provide them with an opportunity to self-enhance which will allow them to maintain their positive self-image and at the same time might be beneficial for other members of society as well.

Future Research

Future research should directly examine whether other variables, besides self-enhancement could positively influence the link between entitlement and prosocial behavior. Moreover, in our research we used charity donations which are one of the brightest examples of prosocial activities. Will entitled individuals be the same likely to demonstrate prosocial tendencies in other prosocial actions, such as being eco-friendly? For instance, one of recent articles (O'Brien et al. 2011) demonstrated that dull tasks seem to crawl for people who feel entitled. What entitled individuals value more-spending time or money and which strategies should be used depending on a type of prosocial action in order to make entitled individuals interested? Other work might study implications of entitlement regarding the delay gratification research (Celeste and Baumeister 2011). Our studies offered immediate reward for acting prosocially (e.g., Make a donation and your name will be publicly displayed), but will entitled people be more or less likely to behave nicely if the reward is more time-distant? Do other factors, such as number of observers or type of relationships with them influence participants likelihood to act in a socially desirable way?

In summary, although the current research is the first to demonstrate that entitled individuals can, indeed, behave prosocially, it is only the first step on a long road. Entitlement, and especially its manifestation in a state version, is a clearly overlooked variable and we are enthusiastic about future possibilities such a journey can offer.

Conclusion

Maintaining a positive self-view is important for all people, but it seems for particular individuals, such as those high in entitlement, it is extremely important. Despite the prevailing view in the literature, which views entitlement mostly from a negative side, we show that under certain conditions entitlement can be a factor that can push individuals' behavior for good. Since keeping and may be even improving positive self-view is very important for entitled individuals, it looks like self enhancement is a clue which kills two birds with one stone. Providing a chance to self-enhance, as we show in our studies, might be not that difficult, but it can be beneficial for both the society and entitled individuals. Ultimately, any negative phenomenon can be used for good for the whole society; we just need to know the leverages we should employ.

APPENDIX A

Empathy Scale (Study 1)

1. I find it easy to put myself in somebody else's shoes
2. I am quick to spot when someone in a group is feeling awkward or uncomfortable.
3. If anyone asked me if I liked their haircut, I would reply truthfully, even if I didn't like it.
4. Other people tell me I am good at understanding how they are feeling and what they are thinking
5. I can sense if I am intruding, even if the other person doesn't tell me.

Over-Claiming Questionnaire (Paulhus et al. 2003), Study 1

Format of the Over-Claiming Questionnaire (OCQ)

Using the following scale as a guideline, write a number from 0 to 6 beside each item to indicate how familiar you are with it

Never heard of it							Very familiar
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Physical Sciences							
_____ Manhattan Project			_____ asteroid			_____ nuclear fusion	
_____ cholarine			_____ atomic number			_____ hydroponics	
_____ alloy			_____ plate tectonics			_____ photon	
_____ ultra-lipid			_____ centripetal force			_____ plates of parallax	
_____ nebula			_____ particle accelerator			_____ satellite	

Note. Of the 15 items above, the following 3 are foils: cholarine, ultra-lipid, and plates of parallax. Other topic categories include literature, art, history, social science, language, contemporary culture, and consumer products.

Entitlement manipulation (Upgrade Scenario Description, Study 3)

When you arrive at the hotel, you head directly toward the reception desk.

The receptionist enters your information in the computer, and then smiles and says: “You originally booked the Standard Double room but I’ll upgrade you to the only King Suite we have in the hotel for no extra charge! The room normally costs \$ 549 /night!

Moreover, the key from your Suite allows you to have a private access to the Sea Spa Club Level where a dedicated concierge attends to your individual needs in a well-appointed, relaxed lounge environment. You will have an exclusive access to remarkably spacious layout including a salon, library and parlor.

Congratulations! Wow, you are the only customer I have seen lately get this deal!”

The hotel porter helps you to carry your luggage in the room.

Self-enhancement manipulation (Study 3)

“Depending on our goals and situations, we may describe ourselves in different ways. Sometimes we want to describe ourselves in a way that makes us feel particularly good about ourselves. We select the information that makes us feel best and describe ourselves in the most positive light. The ability to sometimes describe ourselves in this positive way may be important for maintaining a positive self-image and good mental health. Please describe yourself in a way that makes you feel particularly good about yourself on the following attributes. Please only report truthful information, but you may selectively present whatever kinds of information that best accomplishes this goal.”

Narcissism Scale (Studies 1-3)

1. I see myself as a good leader.
2. I am more capable than other people.
3. I wish somebody would someday write my biography.
4. I like to look at myself in the mirror.
5. I can make anybody believe anything I want them to.

Altruistic Personality Scale (Study 3)

- 1.)I have helped push a stranger's car that was broken down or out of gas.
- 2.)I have given directions to a stranger.
- 3.)I have made change for a stranger.
- 4.)I have given money to a charity.
- 5.)I have given money to a stranger who needed it (or asked me for it).
- 6.)I have donated goods or clothes to a charity.
- 7.)I have done volunteer work for a charity.
- 8.)I have donated blood.

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Chapter 3: Exploring the relationship between Entitlement, Impulsive Buying and Variety Seeking

Abstract

The third and final paper of the dissertation links entitlement and a set of widespread consumer behaviours. From past literature we know a lot about feelings and emotions of entitled individuals, but we have a very limited knowledge about their actual behaviours, especially those in the consumer domain. This paper addresses this gap.

More specifically, variety seeking and impulsive buying tendencies are among most studied marketing outcomes and their antecedents and consequences are well documented. Given the common mechanisms explaining both effects - low effort, feeling-based decisions making- it is reasonable to expect there are lots of similarities between those concepts and consumer entitlement also characterized by low need for cognition. This paper draws analogies between those concepts, demonstrates how entitlement leads to higher impulsive buying and variety seeking tendencies, provides theoretical explanation for the underlying mechanism and discusses implications for both marketing managers and companies.

Key words: Entitlement, impulsive consumption, variety seeking, exploratory behavior.

Can impulsive purchasing and variety seeking among consumer be originated from the same psychological cause? Those two variables are among the most studied and popular in the literature, however, there is little research exploring the common socio psychological processes regulating these behaviors. The current paper links those two concepts and proposes that they both are triggered by the feeling of entitlement among consumers.

Impulsive purchasing is a widely recognized phenomenon. A recent study indicates that 80% of people made impulsive purchases in 2009, despite the recession (National Endowment for Financial Education 2010). Impulsive consumption has been linked to a variety of psychological “markers” (e.g., lack of reflectiveness, spontaneity, lack of persistence) and general correlates (e.g., thrill-seeking, need for stimulation, low self esteem; Gerbing, Ahadi, and Patton 1987; O’Guinn and Faber 1989; Weun, Jones, and Beatty 1998). More recently, research has explored the relation between impulsive consumption and variety seeking. Impulse buying and variety seeking are both low-effort feelings-based behaviors with similar psychological origins. The literature views impulse buying as an example of limited problem solving with a high sense of emotional involvement and urgency, whereas variety seeking is defined as the pursuit of change for the sake of change, in the presence of several familiar and similar alternatives (Blackwell et al. 2006).

The literature shows that there are lots of similarities between those two concepts. For example, Hoyer and McInnis (2001) describe these as examples of low-effort, feeling-based decision making, associated more with feelings rather than cognitive processing and with a strong affective component. Impulse buying is also influenced by sensation seeking and exploratory tendencies, which are generally associated with variety-seeking behavior.

The behavioral and life-outcome correlates of impulsivity are well documented. Relative to nonimpulsive people, impulsive people tend to be more delinquent (White et al. 1994), engage in more risky sexual behavior (Kahn et al. 2002) and driving behavior (Bogg and Roberts 2004), engage in more substance abuse (Wulfert et al. 2002), have poorer academic performance (Merrell and Tymms 2001), choose short-term over long-term rewards (Funder, Block, and Block 1983), are unable to cope with stress or distress and commit more crimes (Wulfert et al. 2002).

According to the literature, entitlement attitudes, whether situational or dispositional, share many of those traits: selfishness, aggressiveness, propensity to behave unethically, more risky financial behavior (Campbell et al. 2004; Poon et al. 2013; Zitek et al. 2010).

Moreover, there exist other indirect evidence linking entitlement, impulsivity and variety seeking, such as desire to self-enhance and a low level of cognitive effort characterizing all three phenomena.

Thus, summarizing all the above-mentioned arguments in the current paper we argue that entitled individuals are more likely to buy impulsively and express variety-seeking tendencies. Entitled individuals prefer conditions of over reward and try to reify their feelings of deservingness by engaging in a variety of acquisitive behavioral tactics (Campbell et al., 2004; Huseman et al. 1987). This effect occurs because entitled individuals think they deserve more positive outcomes in life than others and are less likely to inhibit their inclinations to immediately satisfy their desires. Thus, in the current research we propose that such individuals will be more likely to engage in a behavior which allows them to satisfy their impulses. Moreover, the current study demonstrates preliminary results explaining the process driving this type of behavior: entitled individuals are more likely to take higher risk in their exploratory behavior and thus are more likely to express impulsive and variety seeking tendencies compared to other participants.

This paper extends research on impulsive buying, variety seeking and consumer entitlement in several significant ways. First of all, we demonstrate positive relationship between those important marketing outcomes. A lot has been already said about the antecedents of exploratory consumer behavior but to the best of our knowledge we are first who claim that such behavior can be triggered by the feeling of extreme deservingness among customers which allows them to self-reward themselves across a variety of situations. We aim to demonstrate how both measured as a personality trait or experimentally manipulated as a psychological state entitlement produces the same outcomes, i.e. leads to higher level of impulsivity and variety seeking among consumers.

Second, we demonstrate the process driving such kind of behavior. We provide theoretical reasons and then show empirically that risk-taking mediates the link between entitlement and exploratory marketplace behaviors. In line with the previous literature, based on the conceptual overlap between entitlement and narcissism we show that entitlement leads individuals to form unrealistically high expectations about the outcomes of their actions and to underestimate the level of risk. Evidence that narcissism is linked to more risk-taking lends credibility to the idea that entitlement would be related to risk-taking. One set of studies found that people reporting high levels of narcissism also reported that they gambled more and that

they had more gambling-related pathology, relative to people reporting low levels of narcissism (Lacey et al. 2008). These findings indicate a link between unrealistically high opinions of oneself and undervaluation of risks when engaging in different behaviors.

Next we review the pertinent literature to develop our proposed account and test it with a set of studies. Several studies confirm our line of theorizing. Study 1a and 1b support our main hypotheses regarding the positive relationship between entitlement and impulsive consumption and variety seeking behavior in the Internet setting. These studies provide preliminary evidence regarding the relationship between entitlement and novelty-seeking behavior in the consumer behavior domain. This is followed by a more general discussion and prospects for future research.

IMPULSIVE CONSUMPTION, VARIETY SEEKING AND ENTITLEMENT

Impulsive purchasing is defined as involving spontaneous and unreflective desires to buy, without thoughtful consideration of why and for what reason a person should have the product (Rook 1987; Rook and Fisher 1995; Verplanken and Herabadi 2001).

Recent research has indicated that almost everyone engages in occasional impulse spending and that even identified impulse buyers can and do control their impulses at times. (Vohs and Faber 2007). Researchers ultimately concluded that impulsive spending arises not from some special product feature but rather from within the consumer (Rook and Fisher 1995).

On the other hand, impulse buying has been described as a sudden, compelling, hedonically complex purchase behavior in which the rapidity of the impulse purchase decision precludes any thoughtful, deliberate consideration of alternatives or future implications (Rook 1987). It is typically characterized by high emotional activation, low cognitive control, and spontaneous behavior in the proximity of an appealing attractive object.

Impulse buying has often been associated with negative traits and behaviors (Zuckerman 1994), including disinhibition (Gorenstein and Newman 1980), self-control (reversed; Gough 1956), ego-control (reversed; Block and Block 1980), and deliberation (a facet of conscientiousness, reversed; Costa and McCrae 1992). It is also closely related, conceptually and empirically, to other constructs such as the inability to delay gratification (Funder et al. 1983; Wulfert et al. 2002), the behavior inhibition and activation systems (BIS/BAS; Carver and White 1994), sensation-seeking (Zuckerman 1993), psychoticism (Eysenck 1997), and

conscientiousness (reversed; Bogg and Roberts 2004). The literature highlights the fact that impulsive buying is one of most evident examples of feelings-based behavior alongside with variety seeking.

Impulse buying and variety seeking are both low-effort feelings-based behaviors with similar psychological origins (Sharma et al. 2010). Variety seeking is defined as the pursuit of change for the sake of change, in the presence of several familiar and similar alternatives (Blackwell et.al 2006). Both these behaviors seem to share the same features, such as sensation seeking and exploratory tendencies (Arnould et al. 2004; Sharma et al. 2010). Baumgartner (2002) classifies both of these as hedonic purchase behaviors, associated with feelings and psychosocial motivations rather than thinking and functional benefits. Hoyer and McInnis (2001, pp. 265-269) describe these as examples of low-effort, feeling-based decision making, associated more with feelings rather than cognitive processing and with a strong affective component. Both these behaviors are also associated with hedonic rather than utilitarian shopping motivations (Arnold and Reynolds 2003 ; Dhar and Wertenbroch 2000). Impulse buying is also influenced by sensation seeking and exploratory tendencies, which are generally associated with variety-seeking behavior (Arnould et al. 2004).

Individual traits associated with impulse buying and variety seeking seem to originate from a single personality trait labeled impulsivity by Eysenck (1993) or impulsive sensation seeking by Zuckerman (1993).

Thus the literature draws a lot of similarities between those two constructs. In the current research we argue that there is a third variable driving both impulsive buying and variety seeking. We propose that this variable is entitlement and higher levels of entitlement correspond to higher levels of impulsive consumption and variety seeking tendencies.

Although entitlement first received attention as one of several factor within the broader concept of narcissism (Raskin and Terry, 1998), in recent years it has become the focus of research separate and apart from narcissism. A review of the literature on the constituents of narcissism concluded that narcissists believe that their abilities are better than they are in reality, they consider themselves special and unique people, they consider themselves better than others, they act selfishly, and they are driven to succeed (Campbell and Forster 2007). In contrast, entitlement simply reflects a strong sense of superiority and the resultant high expectations which do not correspond to the level of effort made.

Entitlement is considered more maladaptive and pathological than the other dimension of narcissism (the other dimensions are vanity, authority, self-sufficiency, superiority, exhibitionism, exploitativeness, and exhibitionism; Raskin and Terry, 1998). Across different domains entitlement is linked to negative self-serving beliefs and behaviors such as deserving more salary than fellow employees, reporting higher deservingness of pay in a hypothetical employment setting and interpersonal aggression (Campbell et al. 2004), claiming A grades regardless of the effort in a university setting (O'Brien et al, 2011), and expecting special treatment in retail environments (Boyd and Helms 2005).

Individuals high in entitlement tend to exhibit lower levels of self-control. People with low self-control tend to seek immediate gratification of their desires, often without consideration of future consequences (Gottfredson and Hirschi 1990). That is, participants who initially engaged in self-control and whose self-regulatory resources were diminished overestimated the length of time during which they were regulating; being in a state in which the present time is elongated means that long-term goals are not accessible but instead momentary temptations, urges, and impulses loom large (Vohs 2006).

Traditional decision making and psychological accounts see impulsive behavior as a general overweighing of short-term gratification relative to longer-term concerns. Entitlement leads to lower level of self-control and higher likelihood to gratify oneself immediately. Those tendencies are believed to be one of most important antecedents of impulsivity and variety seeking.

There is another similarity between impulsivity and entitlement (Dittmar and Bond 2010). Impulse buyers are assumed to discount future at too rapid a rate, where the benefits of the desired object at the point of imminent purchase outweigh the (future) problem of paying the bill (Winston 1980).

Moreover, individuals scoring high in impulsivity demand significantly more compensation to wait for goods high in identity-expressive potential, compared to those goods that do not offer this potential (Dittmar and Bond 2010). Another overlapping detail characterizing both entitlement and impulsivity again highlight similar psychological origins of those concepts. Such individuals are happy to demonstrate everyone their personality and improve their self-image. A distinctive feature of entitled individuals is that they are very sensitive about the opportunity to bolster their self-image. This attribution of favorable outcomes to internal

characteristics can help to bolster one's self-image and appears to be common among those who feel "privileged" (Lang 1985).

Moreover, there is indirect evidence regarding the link between entitlement, impulsivity and variety seeking. Entitlement is highly correlated with narcissism and narcissists are very prone to self enhance. Some research findings suggest that self-enhancement is a spontaneous and unconscious response that requires little cognitive deliberation (Paulhus 1991; Paulhus and John 1998). Individuals who make unrealistically positive self-judgments often do so spontaneously (Greenwald and Banaji 1995) and believe in the truthfulness of these judgments (Paulhus 1991). Further, they often cannot help but project an overly positive view of themselves in social situations and seldom engage in critical reflection of the validity of their exaggerated positive self-views. Thus, self-enhancement and impulsivity are again correlated, which provides further support for the idea.

Finally, many papers say that both impulsivity and variety seeking and low in cognitive efforts activities. Selection of variety might be used by consumers as choice heuristic to simplify purchase decisions (Simonson 1990). Harvey et al (2008) demonstrate that a strong sense of entitlement is associated with diminished need for cognition.

Existing evidence summarized above has demonstrated that there exists, at least theoretical overlap between the concepts of entitlement, impulsive consumption and variety seeking tendency. The concepts share a portion of underlying processes regulating exploratory and low-effort based behavior. Entitlement leads to lower self-regulation, whereas inability to regulate one's impulses is one of major antecedents of impulsivity and variety seeking.

Thus in the current research we aim to understand better the nature of those concepts. Due to the fact that all those behaviors are marked by low-effort and feelings-based activities we expect that individuals scoring high in entitlement will be more impulsive and would be less likely to inhibit their inclinations to immediately satisfy their desires.

Moreover, in the current research we seek to demonstrate the underlying process driving a positive link between entitlement and consumer exploratory behavior. We argue that higher risk-taking propensity mediates the link between entitlement and exploratory marketplace behaviors. Next section provides theoretical support for our argument.

Risk-taking as an Underlying Process

Entitlement, impulsive buying and variety seeking are linked to exploratory behaviors, as well as other constructs such as risk and behavioral intentions (Michaelidou 2012). We suggest that due to overpositive self-evaluations entitled individuals will underestimate risk related to impulsive consumption and seeking for variety in buying, thus they will be more prone to express such tendencies in their behavior as consumers. We think that entitlement and impulsive buying and variety seeking each tell part of the story and that risk-taking is needed to provide a complete picture of entitlement and its consequences in the marketplace.

Impulsiveness is closely related to sensation seeking, and both are associated with various exploratory behaviors such as gambling (McDaniel and Zuckerman 2003), lottery buying (Balabanis 2002), drug abuse (Robbins and Bryan 2004), irresponsible sexual behavior and reckless driving (Zuckerman 2000). In the consumption context impulsive sensation seekers engage in several exploratory behaviors, including watching movies or fear-arousing advertisements, gambling for high stakes, participating in risky activities and switching brands for the sake of variety (Steenkamp et al. 1996; Sharma et al. 2010) Variety seeking is linked to exploratory behaviors, as well as other constructs such as risk and behavioral intentions (Michaelidou 2012). Moreover, the same research demonstrates that individuals high in variety seeking compared to other individuals score high on need for novelty, activity and risk. Consumers also report feeling out of control and thrown into a stage of psychological disequilibrium by their sudden impulsive urges (Rook 1987). Moreover, many consumers report feeling good or 'high' after buying impulsively, suggesting an increase in their level of arousal during the purchase process (Rook and Gardner 1993). Therefore, just like variety seeking, impulse buying also appears to be an exploratory purchase behavior that provides consumers at low arousal level with an opportunity to seek stimulation from their environment by taking risks and experiencing excitement, a change of pace, and relief from boredom. (Sharma et al. 2010).

Low self-regulatory control predicts a variety of negative outcomes including endorsement of risky behaviours (e.g., Magar et al., 2008) and participation in aggressive — even violent — acts (DeWall et al. 2007). Moreover, Wink (1991) shows that narcissism is negatively correlated with self control. Given the overlap between entitlement and narcissism, evidence that narcissism is linked to more risk-taking gives preliminary support to the idea that

entitlement would be related to risk-taking. Thus, consistent with the evidence linking entitlement, impulsivity and variety seeking with generally higher propensity of risk taking, we propose that entitlement will lead to undervaluation of risk inherent to exploratory behaviour in the marketplace. Since entitled individuals think they deserve positive things in their lives more than others and since they are less prone to control their impulses compared to individuals scoring low in entitlement we expect that entitled consumers will not stop their self-gratification desires and will be more willing to buy new things and have new experience with a little thought about the consequences of such behaviours. Several experiments test these predictions. In different studies we measure chronic version and manipulate situational version of entitlement.

STUDY 1a

The main objective of this study is to show evidence of the relationship between entitlement, impulsivity and variety seeking. We aimed to assess correlations between those variables. At the same time we wanted to demonstrate preliminary evidence that entitlement leads to higher impulsive buying and variety seeking tendencies. To test this idea, immediately after measuring participant's chronic level of entitlement we capture their impulsivity and variety seeking tendencies using widely recognized scales. We predicted that higher level of entitlement among our participants would correspond with higher impulsive buying and variety seeking.

Method

Participants and design. Ninety one participants located in the United States (53% males, 50% aged 21-34) completed a study on line for US\$0.4. They were recruited through Amazon's Mechanical Turk, which helps collect representative and reliable data online (Buhrmester et al. 2011).

Procedures and materials. Participants completed materials online at a time of their choosing. To assess entitlement, we used the nine-item Psychological Entitlement Scale (PES; Campbell et al. 2004, see Appendix A). Participants rated their agreement from 1 (strong disagreement) to 7 (strong agreement) with statements such as "If I were on the Titanic, I would deserve to

be on the first lifeboat” and “I honestly feel I’m just more deserving than others”. The scale demonstrated good reliability, $\alpha = .91$. To assess impulsive buying, participants completed the 8-item Impulsive Buying Scale (Rook and Fisher 1995, see Appendix A), and the scale was reliable, $\alpha = .77$. Sample items of the scale included such statements as ““I see it, I buy it” describes me” and “I buy things according to how I feel at the moment”. Variety-seeking tendency was captured using Change Seeker Index (Steenkamp and Baumgartner’s 1995, see Appendix A), widely used to measure variety-seeking personality. The scale proved to be reliable, $\alpha = .85$.

Results

Preliminary analyses. Twelve participants who failed to pass attention checks embedded in the survey in order to make sure that participants pay full attention to the study were excluded from the analysis. Participant’s age did not significantly influence the results. However, participant’s gender did not produce significant differences in impulsive buying, though appeared to be a significant predictor of variety-seeking tendency, $F(1,75) = 8.07, p = .00$. with females expressing higher tendency compared to males ($M_{females} = 4.53$ vs. $M_{males} = 3.95$). However, this is an established finding in the literature which suggests that females are more prone to be variety seekers (Yang and Chin 2007). Thus, the effects of age and gender are not discussed further.

Main analyses. As expected, a stronger sense of entitlement corresponded to greater impulsive buying propensity, $r = .22, p < .005$. The relationship between entitlement and variety seeking tendency approaches marginal significance, was $r = .18, p = .07$. This indicates that the scales share some variance.

The relationship between variety seeking and impulsive buying was not significant, $r = .03, p > .10$.

Discussion

Our first study provided preliminary evidence about the positive relationship between entitlement, variety seeking and impulsive buying. The latter constructs shared some variance

with psychological entitlement scale. Thus we conclude that our idea regarding the link between entitlement and exploratory consumer behaviors found first empirical support. However, one might argue that not all of our ideas were supported. Moreover, we do not provide any evidence or explanation regarding the process underlying such behaviors. Study 1b was designed to address those issues. We expected to find further support to our main hypothesis about positive relationship between entitlement, impulsive buying and variety seeking. Further, we aimed to provide some indications regarding the process driving such behaviors.

Study 1b

This study was designed to confirm our preliminary findings regarding positive relationships between entitlement and impulsive buying and variety seeking tendencies. Moreover, we wanted to understand the process triggering this relationship. According to the literature, entitlement and impulsive buying and variety seeking are all characterized by low level of cognitive effort, little deliberation, lower self-control and higher exploratory tendencies. Since entitled individuals are more likely to follow their curiosity without having second thought, we propose that risk-taking would serve as a mediator in proposed relationships. We predict that those scoring high in entitlement would demonstrate higher impulsive buying and variety seeking tendencies and this effect would be mediated by risk-taking. To test our predictions, we again measure the chronic level of entitlement and immediately after that take dependent measures.

Method

Participants and design. One hundred participants located in the United States (51% males, 58% aged 21-34) were recruited from Amazon's Mechanical Turk to complete an on-line task in exchange for a small monetary payment.

Procedures and materials. Participants completed materials online at a time of their choosing. To assess entitlement, we again used the nine-item Psychological Entitlement Scale (Campbell et al. 2004, $\alpha = .89$). To assess participants' risk taking, we used the Domain-

Specific Risk-Taking scale (DOSPERT; Blais and Weber, 2006, see Appendix A). The scale, taken from the judgment and decision-making literature, asks participants to rate how likely they would be to perform specific behaviors on a scale from 1 (*extremely unlikely*) to 7 (*extremely likely*). The scale captures perceived risks in a variety of domains, however, to keep the length of the study reasonable we chose those domains which were most applicable to our setting: *financial risks* domain (e.g., "Investing 5% of your annual income in a very speculative stock) and *ethical risks* (e.g., cheating on an exam). Reliability was poor, but acceptable, $\alpha = .57$. After that participants completed scales measuring our dependent variables: Impulsive Buying Scale (Rook and Fisher 1995, $\alpha = .93$) and Change Seeker Index (Steenkamp and Baumgartner's 1995, $\alpha = .72$).

Results

Preliminary analyses. We again checked for correlations between our main variables. The results again proved to be significant: the relationship between entitlement and impulsive buying was significant, $r = .34, p < .001$. The relationship between entitlement and variety seeking tendency was $r = .28, p < .005$. The relationship between impulsive buying and variety seeking tendency was $r = .35, p = .005$.

Main analyses. Using median split analysis, we identified participants scoring high ($n = 56$) and low ($n = 44$) in entitlement. Further analysis revealed that higher entitlement led to higher impulsive buying propensity $M_{entitlem_high} = 3.38$ vs. $M_{entitlem_low} = 2.65$; $t(98) = 2.33, p = .02$. Moreover, it led to higher variety seeking propensity, $M_{entitlem_high} = 4.2$ vs. $M_{entitlem_low} = 3.76$; $t(98) = 2.64, p = .01$.

Moreover, we wanted to get initial understanding about the process driving impulsive buying and variety seeking among entitled individuals. Using bootstrapping method (Preacher and Hayes 2008) we found that risk-taking - measured as a continuous variable- served as a mediator between entitlement (a continuous variable measure) and variety-seeking tendency. In our study the 95% CI with 5 000 iterations for the indirect effect ranged from $-.2027$ to $-.0125$, which does not include zero, which indicates successful mediation. Moreover, we used the same bootstrapping technique for testing the mediating role of risk-taking between entitlement and impulsive buying. We again found that the CI did not include zero ($\beta = .04$,

95% CI = .0015, .1443). Since our measure of risk taking included measures of financial risks and ethical risks, we wanted to delve into those domains more deeply and explored the potential of each of those variables of being to be a mediator in the studied relationships. We found that ethical risks ($\alpha = .68$) mediated the relationship between entitlement and impulsive buying (95% CI = .0016, .1356), though not variety seeking since the interval did include zero. Cronbach alpha for financial risks was below an acceptable level ($\alpha < .5$), so we did not proceed with further analysis of financial risks.

Those results require further understanding. First of all, the fact that risk-taking mediates the relationship between entitlement and impulsive buying and variety seeking is a promising result which requires further understanding though. The fact that the risk-taking scale reliability was acceptable but poor makes us think that there is a specific reason behind that. It may well be that entitled individuals' propensity to exhibit impulsive buying and variety seeking are explained by a specific facet of risk-taking, for example they perceive such behavior as gambling. We aim to address this issue more deeply in our future studies.

Discussion

Thus study 1b confirmed our main proposition regarding the effect of entitlement on variety-seeking and impulsive buying. We demonstrate that those participants who feel more deserving than others also felt they are more entitled to gratify themselves and follow their impulses to try something new or buy some novel product without initial planning of doing that. Moreover, the study provides evidence about the process triggering such behavior. Mediation results confirmed that those who feel entitled demonstrate higher propensity to take risks than those who feel less entitled, which then resulted in higher impulsive buying and variety seeking tendencies.

DISCUSSION

There is nothing inherently wrong with novelty and variety seeking, and to some extent each person at some point of time is interested in buying something new and experiencing new product/service. Impulsive consumption is a pervasive phenomenon that may have potentially serious consequences, particularly in the U.S. Although all impulsive consumption is not

necessarily problematic, it is often associated with a variety of negative traits (immaturity, poor value system) and outcomes (financial problems, lower self-esteem, post-purchase dissatisfaction; Rook 1987; Rook and Fisher 1995). Impulsive shopping is less innocent if it takes the form of compulsive shopping (Verplanken and Sato 2011). Some have suggested that impulse buying may at least partially explain the remarkably high debt-to-income ratios in the U.S. (Vohs and Faber 2007, Zhang and Shrum 2008). When financial risks turn out badly, the effects can be extremely harmful to the individual, to one's family, and to society (such as when taxpayers pay for unmet financial obligations).

The other area of interest of the current research was better understanding of the antecedents of variety-seeking behavior. This is an important marketing concept since it determines 1) acceptance of new products and retail stores and 2) brand switching (Hoyer and Nancy M. Ridgway (1984). Given lots of similarities between those two important marketing concepts and the notion of consumer entitlement the current study provided the first evidence of existence of a positive relationship between those variables.

The aim of our research was to identify an antecedent to impulsive buying and variety seeking behavior. Results indicated that people with a higher sense of entitlement were more likely than others to commit acts of impulsive buying and explore variety of options in the market which is explained by higher risk-taking propensity of such individuals.

Study 1a demonstrated elevated entitlement scores corresponded to a preference for Impulsive buying and variety seeking. Moreover, individuals with higher entitlement scores indicated higher propensity to seek for variety compared others. Study 1b confirmed positive correlations between entitlement, impulsive buying and variety seeking. More than that, further analysis revealed that higher entitlement led to higher impulsive buying and variety seeking propensity. The results indicated risk-taking to mediate this process.

The current investigation extended the existing literature in several ways. First, we contributed to the exploration of entitlement in the marketing literature. We further identified outcomes of this feeling of "over deservingness" in the marketplace and showed that entitlement leads to undervaluation of risks inherent in consumer exploratory behavior and subsequent increases in impulsive buying and variety seeking. Second, our studies speak to the literature on impulsive buying and variety seeking. We highlighted psychological similarity of those two concepts, at the same time delineating common origins with entitlement. We show a shared process driving those types of behavior and demonstrate

robustness of our results across a variety of settings, with different measures and manipulations and with predicted and real behavior.

At the same time we think the current research has a set of managerial implications. It provides managers with a way to increase exploratory behavior among consumers. This knowledge can be used for both good and bad: companies might exploit it to push their customers to try different and not necessarily useful products. At the same time, by increasing consumer entitlement firms can nudge its customers to try innovative products and services which otherwise consumers would be reluctant to try.

Moreover, the paper provides food for thought regarding impulsive consumption. Apart from understanding more about the nature of impulsive consumption and its relation to variety seeking and entitlement there is another way of looking at a generally considered “negative” phenomenon of impulsive consumption. Instead of trying to reduce the consumption of certain products, many of which are not needed at all it is possible to actually increase impulsive consumption and nudge customers towards ethical products, where besides only self-interested benefit of consuming a product other factors, such as what is right and good for other people and the environment influence are considered (Lades 2014). This latter article suggests that instead of trying to reduce customers’ tendency to act impulsively, it is possible to influence this tendency and guide individuals’ impulsive behavior in ethical directions. Thus we believe that in the current paper we provide some insights regarding the ways marketers can increase ethical and green consumption by simply priming individuals with the feeling of entitlement. Though entitled customers’ propensity to engage in eco-friendly consumption is not a direct focus of the current paper, in the light of recent trend to increase eco-friendly behavior we consider this line of research as a promising one for the future endeavors.

Our results are not without limitations. At the current moment, we only use the dispositional version of entitlement and capture it using a trait entitlement scale. However, it also would be interesting to use different options of priming entitlement and compare the results. Also, since the literature suggests variations in the level of entitlement among men and women this can also affect impulsive purchasing and variety seeking tendencies among consumers. We hope pursue those lines of inquiry in the future research.

Overall, we believe the current research to provide a crystallized view on consumer entitlement in the context of impulsive buying and variety seeking behavior. There seems to

be a set of takeovers coming from such an area of research. Our hope is that this knowledge will be used for good in a ways nudging positive sides of impulsive buying and variety seeking consumer behavior.

APPENDIX A

Measurement of Constructs

- I. Psychological Entitlement Scale (Campbell et al. 2004).
 1. I honestly feel I'm just more deserving than others.
 2. Great things should come to me.
 3. If I were on the Titanic, I would deserve to be on the first lifeboat!
 4. I demand the best because I'm worth it.
 5. I do not necessarily deserve special treatment.
 6. I deserve more things in my life.
 7. People like me deserve an extra break now and then.
 8. Things should go my way.
 9. I feel entitled to more of everything.

- II. Impulsive buying scale (Rook and Fisher 1995), 1 = strong disagreement, 7 = strong agreement
 1. I often buy things spontaneously.
 2. "Just do it" describes the way I buy things.
 3. I often buy things without thinking.
 4. "I see it, I buy it" describes me.
 5. "Buy now, think about it later" describes me.
 6. Sometimes I feel like buying things on the spur-of-the-moment.
 7. I buy things according to how I feel at the moment.
 8. I carefully plan most of my purchases.
 9. Sometimes I am a bit reckless about what I buy.

- III. Change Seeker Index (Steenkamp and Baumgartner 1995)
 1. I like to continue doing the same old things rather than trying new things
 2. I like to experience novelty and change in my daily routine.
 3. I like a job that offers change, variety, and travel, even if it involves danger.
 4. I am continually seeking new ideas and experiences.
 5. I like continually changing activities.
 6. When things get boring, I like to find some new and unfamiliar experience.
 7. I prefer a routine way of life to an unpredictable one full of change
 8. I am very cautious in trying new or different styles of my image.

- IV. Domain-Specific Risk-Taking scale (Blais and Weber 2006)
 1. Shoplifting a small item (e.g. a lipstick or a pen).
 2. Illegally copying a piece of software.
 3. Betting a day's income on the outcome of a sporting event
 4. Cheating on an exam.
 5. Gambling a week's income at a casino.

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GENERAL CONCLUSION

The current dissertation project focuses on consumers' feelings of entitlement and explores the antecedents and consequences of this phenomenon. Across three papers, I explore the causes of this concept, explain how companies are sometimes responsible themselves for instigating this feeling among its consumers and show the ways how negative consequences of entitlement can be attenuated or influenced in a way beneficial for the society.

In the first paper of the dissertation I show that consumer entitlement arises when companies provide preferential treatment to its customers and entitlement attains its highest values when such treatment is given to the new customers of the firm compared to the loyal ones. I provide theoretical reasons and demonstrate empirically that entitled individuals are prone to exhibit self-serving behavior in a variety of settings not limited to a consumer domain only. The second paper of my dissertation prolongs this line of research and explores methods to suppress opportunistic behaviors among entitled individuals. I show the way to use negative traits of such individuals for good and demonstrate how to increase their prosocial behavior. In the third paper I explore the link between entitlement and such important marketing outcomes as impulsive buying and variety seeking. I provide evidence that those behaviors are related and give some suggestions of how this can be used beneficially for both entitled individuals and their counterparts.

In summary, the current project is one of the first attempts to introduce the concept of entitlement into the marketing literature in a more profound way. However, the work presented has a potential that can seed future research. Future work could explore other marketplace situations that can influence consumer entitlement. The literature suggests entitlement to be revealed that self-esteem and entitlement levels have changed in the United States over the last several decades (Twenge and Campbell 2002). Since entitlement is a far-reaching phenomenon its outcomes can be widespread across different everyday situations, which makes further research in this area highly desirable.

The current project focuses on customers' preferential treatment as a source of entitlement, but there may exist other cases that increase or decrease this feeling of being special. A related issue is that in this work preferential treatment was given mostly in private. Previous research (Jiang et al. 2013, p.424) suggests that if a firm is employing an unearned preferential treatment strategy, a private environment is the best because it reduces the feeling

of social discomfort accompanying such treatment. Our research suggests that preferential treatment in private increases the feeling of entitlement. Thus, it would be fruitful to delve more deeply in the ways preferential treatment should be given in the future.

The other issues which require further understanding is the ways to influence self-serving behavior of entitled individuals. At the end we demonstrate that self-enhancement is a good way to do that; however, there might exist other methods, such as, for example, monetary rewards. What is the relationship between entitlement and wealth? Are entitled individuals greedier? Or can the relation is more complex, such that once people get wealthy they also feel more entitled to get only positive things in their life?

Finally, other entitlement outcomes in the marketplace remain an open question. It would be interesting to see the relationship between entitlement and delayed gratification research, the reactions of entitled customers to different promotion strategies employed by the companies and also understand better the if/ how the behavior of entitled individuals influence other customers. Finally, future research may also want to explore the prevalence and length of entitlement attitudes triggered in a certain situation. It would be very interesting to understand the spillovers of entitlement across social contexts as well as how long perceptions of entitlement, triggered by some situation will be active and what makes them dissipate.