

## The Moderating Role of Self-Efficacy on the Relationship between Warmth Arousal and Effectiveness of Green Apparel Advertising

So Young Song, Illinois State University, USA  
Youn-Kyung Kim, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, USA

Keywords: brand attitude, green advertising, green apparel, self-efficacy, warmth

**Research Background** The research finds that the arousal of emotional warmth is a crucial factor in advertisements to promote green apparel consumption. Most consumption behavior occurs through cognitive, affective, attitudinal, and selection processes. Literature shows that self-efficacy can be increased through advertising messages that impact brand attitude, ad evaluation, and behavioral intention. This study examines the relationship between warmth and two attributes of advertising effectiveness (brand attitudes and ad trust). Further, it explains the moderating role of self-efficacy that accelerates the relationship between warmth and advertising effectiveness and proposes a research model of green apparel advertising.

**Method** The study uses an online survey with eight types of green apparel advertisements distributed to U.S. consumer panelists. A pretest was conducted using a snowball sampling technique ( $n=134$ ). The six constructs of self-efficacy, warmth, brand attitude, ad trust, positive WOM, and purchase intention were measured on a 7-point Likert-type scale. In the main data collection, respondents' ( $n=829$ ) had an average age of 40.9, even gender distribution (52.4% female; 47.6% male), and a median household income of \$60,000–\$79,999.

**Results** A CFA, SEM base model, and multi-group analysis are conducted with Mplus 7.31. The measurement model has excellent fit:  $\chi^2(215) = 837.052, p < 0.001$ ; CFI = 0.968; RMSEA = 0.059; factor loadings 0.765 to 0.924; all path weights  $p < 0.001$ ). Convergent and discriminant validities are evaluated. The SEM base model's goodness-of-fit is good:  $\chi^2(164) = 743.003, p < 0.001$ ; CFI = 0.968; RMSEA = 0.074. In the multi-group analysis, the goodness-of-fit of the anchor model is reasonable:  $\chi^2(358) = 1094.735, p < 0.001$ ; CFI = 0.950; RMSEA = 0.074. The Wald  $\chi^2$  differences associated with the relationship between warmth, brand attitudes, and ad trust are significant (H2a: Wald  $\chi^2(1) = 5.974, p < 0.05$ ; H2b: Wald  $\chi^2(1) = 4.555, p < 0.05$ ),

**Conclusion and Implications** The results indicate that warmth positively influences brand attitude and ad trust that lead to engagement in positive WOM, which increases the purchase intention of green apparel. The relationship between warmth and brand attitude is stronger when their self-efficacy is higher. However, the relationship between warmth and ad trust is weaker when they possess high self-efficacy. This study presents strong evidence that self-efficacy has a substantial impact on the relationship between emotions and brand attitude and trust in green apparel ads. Green apparel marketers should direct their advertising message to boost the sense of self-efficacy by providing a reason for “why” it is good for consumers and suitable for them to try. Additionally, advertisers should consider both rational and emotional aspects of their advertisements that increase warmth while using self-encouraging messages that encourage individuals in their ability to care about the environment and other people.