

Research Topic and Related Article Assignment

In this assignment, you will show how your topic is connected to previous work. Your goal is to come up with a conceptual replication (i.e., a study by which you improve on the construct validity of a previously conducted study).

Questions to ask to help generate a conceptual replication:

- a) Are there better ways to devise operational definitions of variables? Can you devise operational definitions that do a better job reflecting the construct of interest?
 - a. Is there a better way to manipulate the independent variables?
 - b. Are there better ways to measure the variables under investigation? Can you decrease the role of demand characteristics, social desirability, etc.?
 - i. Change measure to:
 1. Self-reports
 2. Physiological Measures
 3. Behavioral Measures
 - a. Overt measures
 - b. Covert measures

Assignment Instructions:

- 1) Locate one article that is a logical predecessor to your study and turn it in to me.
- 2) Summarize the article (in a paragraph). You may not use direct quotations in your summary, even if appropriately cited; failure to follow this rule will result in a ZERO for this assignment.
- 3) State your research idea (in a sentence or two)
- 4) Describe the rationale for your idea (This is the most important part of the assignment). Here you provide a rationale/justification for your idea--the "why" behind the "what" What about the article you selected made you develop this topic? Describe your strategy for developing a conceptual replication by referring to and answering the questions listed above? What is the new twist you are putting on the topic? Why is it important to conduct your proposed study (i.e., what does it add to the field's understanding of the topic?)

On the following pages, you will find an example of what you will turn in for the "Research Topic and Related Article" assignment.

Please follow the formatting as well as the content. The example is based on the Friese & Hoffmann (2008) article we discussed in class. BE SURE TO TURN A COPY OF THE ARTICLE YOU SELECT.

Research Topic and Related Article

Student Name: Ima Scholar

Reference (must be in APA style):

Friese, M. & Hofmann, W. (2008). What would you have as a last supper? Thoughts about death influence evaluation and consumption of food products[Electronic Version]. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 44*, 1388-1394.

Article Summary:

Facing one's own mortality is a primary source of insecurity for humans. Terror Management theory (TMT) (as reviewed by Friese & Hofmann, 2008) asserts that individuals cling to cultural norms to reduce anxiety associated with the inevitability of death. This theory suggests that, when confronted with their own mortality, individuals validate their worth by demonstrating allegiance to their culture/religion/worldview. Friese and Hofmann argued that death anxiety and the resulting need to bolster attachment to one's own culture has implications for consumer behavior. In particular, they argued that both preference for and consumption of domestic products would increase for individuals whose own deaths are made salient compared to those whose own deaths are not brought to mind. The researchers conducted two studies to test that notion; however, because Study 1 is most relevant to the present work only it will be reviewed. In Study 1, the researchers compared preferences for and consumption of a domestic soft drink between participants who wrote an essay about their own death and those who wrote an essay about dental pain. The findings were consistent with TMT; that is, when participants experienced death anxiety they tended to value and seek out domestic products.

My Research Idea:

To test whether experimentally induced insecurity about one's own death will lead to preferences for service providers who display cultural symbols in their advertising.

Rationale for My Idea:

To expand the construct validity of Friese and Hofmann's (2008) work, the proposed work will employ a different operational definition of consumer behavior. Friese and Hofmann measured consumer behavior using food products, whereas I am proposing to measure consumer behavior by using service products. In my study, I will set up a scenario where participants judge the likelihood they would hire a professional (e.g., plumber, doctor, therapist) based on looking at an advertisement for that professional. In one version the advertisement will include a cultural symbol (e.g., a fish or an American flag) and in another version there will be no cultural symbol present. According to TMT, those raters who undergo a death salience manipulation should prefer the service provider if their cultural symbol is present, whereas the presence of the cultural symbol should not determine preference for participants whose deaths are not made salient. The findings from the proposed work will help to test how well TMT can explain different types of consumer behavior.