

A better understanding of consumer's perception of an innovative brand through perceived novelty

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Abstract

This communication presents a research on the contribution of perceived novelty in understanding consumers' perception of an innovative brand. Based on a review of literature in the field of innovations' perception, perceived novelty and innovativeness, a model integrating different variables was proposed. It includes the analysis of consumers' perception of an innovative brand, and implicit measures of attitudes that enriched the research. The implementation of an experiment on a representative sample of the population and data analysis using structural equation will provide a validation of the model.

Key words

Innovation, perceived novelty, innovativeness, innovative brand, consumer behavior, implicit attitude.

Innovation is a central concept in business life today and they are meaningful and relevant to businesses only when they are adopted by consumers. In order to be competitive, companies need to innovate (Pauwels et al, 2004) and marketing strategies use these elements to communicate and compensate their costs. Despite a lot of studies and thoughts, most new products do not find their place in the market (Srinivasan et al, 2009).

The adoption and diffusion of innovations have been much developed in academic research (Rogers , 2003; Roehrich , 1993, 2004 ; Volle , 1995; Cestre , 1996, Jansson, 2011; Flight et al , 2011) , but little work were interested in the perception of novelty by consumers (Roehrich, 1993). For Bartels and Reinders (2011), most failures of innovations are due to a lack of understanding of consumer expectations. The difference in perception of the novelty of a product between businesses and consumers is a significant risk in the adoption of innovations. According Ziamou and Ratneshwar (2002), the question of novelty in innovations is seen from the marketer point of view and not the consumer, because the innovations considered as new products are designed by marketers, and then offered to consumers.

In addition, innovations are developed by companies to gain a competitive advantage, but also to influence their brand equity (Staake et al 2009). Some studies (Smith and Bolton, 2002 ; Roehm and Brady, 2007 ; Andreassen, 2000; Liao and Cheng, 2012) showed that the failure of an innovation affects the brand image and consumer satisfaction. In addition, Kaplan (2009) emphasized the importance of innovation in the development of strong brands and on the judgment of an innovative brand. This field of research has been little developed in recent years (Smith, 2012), preferring to study the innovative capacity of brands (Beverland , Napoli and Farrelly, 2009; Anselmsson and Johansson, 2009).

The aim of this paper is to show how perceived novelty can enhance the comprehension of consumer's perception of an innovative brand by consumers. The perception of innovations by consumers is a complex process that can be influenced by many factors: testability, relative advantage ... (Rogers, 2003). Perceived novelty has been little studied in the literature, and it represents a significant influence on consumers' perception of these variables. In addition, it also enhanced the assessment of the brand by consumers, because perceived a product as new can affect attitude toward the brand, including the perception of an innovative brand.

This paper will present the conceptual framework of research in developing different theoretical models : the adoption and diffusion of innovations, consumer innovativeness, perception of novelty by the consumer, attitudes and the influence of consumers on brands. Then the research problem and the proposed model will be presented. Finally, in conclusion, the proposed research methodology will be introduced to open the theoretical, methodological and managerial implications of the research.

1. Conceptual framework

The adoption and diffusion of innovations has been greatly developed in the literature (Rogers, 2003; Roehrich, 1993, 2004 ; Volle, 1995; Cestre, 1996, Jansson, 2011; Flight et al, 2011). Rogers and Shoemaker (1971) define innovation as a new idea, practice, or perceived as new by the individual object. A product is considered new if it is perceived by consumers. Perceived novelty, although present in the definition of Rogers and Shoemaker (1971) does not appear as an intrinsic characteristic of influencing the

adoption process. Rogers (2003) modeled the process of diffusion of innovations to the analysis of decision-making consumers face a new product where it has five intrinsic characteristics of the product that determines the speed of adoption: relative advantage, compatibility, simplicity, testability (Tan and Teo, 2000) and observability. These five characteristics must be taken into account jointly to predict the adoption of innovation. Two other criteria have been added by some authors to supplement and enrich the analysis of consumer perception of innovation.

- Perceived risk of innovation (Volle, 1995 ; Meuter et al, 2005)
- Perceived novelty (Roehrich, 1993, 2004)

Despite the inclusion of novelty in the definition of an innovation as an intrinsic criteria (Rogers, 1995), few researches exist on this topic (Roehrich , 1993, 2001). Today in marketing, new innovations are analyzed by objective criteria (date of marketing the product, setting up a new campaign, new product attributes, etc.) but not by the perceived novelty. (Roehrich, 1993; Pantin - Sohler Miltgen and Lancelot, 2012 ; Mukherjee and Hoyer, 2001; Xuereb, 1993). It exists different definitions of novelty :

Autor	Date	Definition
Slappendel	1996	The novelty differentiated innovation and change.
Roehrich	2004	"Is perceived as new what is perceived as new and / or different."
Baregheh et al	2009	An innovation is described as something new or unique, be it a product or a service.
Wells et al.	2010	Novelty represents a new alternative to the existing

Table 1 : Definitions of novelty

Flight et al (2011) and Wells et al. (2010) emphasize the importance of the perception of innovation by consumers to identify problems of adoption of an innovation.

Each individual evaluates a new product differently and has its own perception of innovations (Wells et al. , 2010) . Innovativeness is the term used differently in the literature : it may be related to the innovation of a brand or an individual, but also its ability to adopt new products (Cestre , 1996). It is in this latest perspective that we use this term. Innovativeness seeks to explain, by personality traits, why some individuals adopt an innovation upon its release , while others adopt it later or not at all (Rogers and Shoemaker , 1971; Zhuang , 1995) . Much academic research has focused on the tendency to adopt an innovation : innovativeness (Bagozzi and Foxall , 1996 The Louarn , 1997, Wood and Swait , 2002; Roehrich , 2004). But according to Tellis et al. (2009), there is no consensus on the measurement of innovativeness and many types and innovativeness measures have been proposed (Roherich 2004; Steenkamp et al , 1999; Raju , 1980; Venkatraman and Price 1990; Hirschman , 1980; Midgley and Dowling, 1978). Vandecasteele and Geuens (2010) proposed to distinguish four types of innovativeness.

Type of innovativeness	Définition
Functionnal	Innovativeness motivated by the functional performance of innovations and focuses on task management and accomplishment improvement
Cognitive	Innovativeness motivated by the need for mental stimulation
Hédonitic	Innovativeness motivated by affective or sensory stimulation and gratification
Social	Innovativeness motivated by the self-assertive social need for differentiation

Table 2 : Typology of innovativeness (Vandecasteele and Geuens, 2010)

To measure the influence of perceived novelty on consumer's perception of an innovative brand, we use the concept of attitude. Attitude is a term outcome of psychology which is defined as "stored in memory between an object and an evaluation association." (Fazio et al , 1982). It helps make the link between an object and evaluation or judgment issued by an individual (Nosek , 2007 ; Greenwald and Banaji , 1995 ; House , Greenwald and Bruin , 2004). Attitude and implicit social cognition are from psychology and are introduced in marketing recently (Ackermann, 2010; Ackermann, Matthew and Roehrich , 2010; Warlop and Trendelenburg , 2005; Brunel Tietje , and Greenwald , 2004). Consumer attitudes toward products or objects has a strong predictive value on behavior (Perugini and Richetin Zogmaiser , 2010) , especially in the case of innovations (Steyer and Zimmermann , 2004) , decision making (Arcuri et al, 2008 ; Bodenhausen and Todd , 2010; Fazio, 2002), evaluation of brands (Courbet and Fourquet - Courbet, 2005) and the purchase and use (Madhavaram and Appan , 2010; House Greenwald and Bruin , 2004; Wanke et al , 2002). The study of implicit and explicit attitudes are complementary (Fazio and Olson , 2003) and can collect different information about the same object, which reduces bias (social desirability , demand effect , ...) (Nosek , 2007 and Greenwald Krieger , 2006) and associated risk, particularly in the analysis of innovations (Hetet , Moutot and Mathieu , 2013; Hetet and Moutot , 2012).

Finally, brand and innovation are linked. Kaplan (2009) emphasized the importance of innovation in the development of strong brands. Innovations will influence the brand, including consumers' perception of the brand. The influence of the perception of innovations on the judgment of an innovative brand, is a field of research that has not been developed (Schmitt, 2012; Barone and Jewell, 2013). An innovative brand is perceived by consumers as having a capacity of innovation. Some studies have focused on the impacts of launch failures of innovation and their effects on consumer satisfaction (Smith and Bolton , 2002; Roehm and Brady, 2007 ; Andreassen , 2000). The failure of an innovation affects the brand (Liao and Cheng, 2012 , Smith and Bolton , 2002; Roehm and Brady, 2007 ; Andreassen , 2000) , but research has not developed variables at the origin of these influences , preferring to study the innovative capacity of brands (Beverland , Napoli and Farrelly, 2009; Anselmsson and Johansson, 2009).

2. Research questions

Following the definition of the theoretical framework of the research, we have highlighted the central role of innovation seen in the process of perception and evaluation of innovations by consumers. We have seen that the concept of perceived novelty was little studied in the literature and its influence on the perception of innovation, is very important (Roehrich , 1993, 2004) . In addition, the influence of innovations in brand is present and has been studied in the context of failure of diffusion of innovation (Smith and Bolton , 2002; Roehm and Brady, 2007 ; Andreassen , 2000) , but the concept of " innovative brand " and its characteristics are still not defined. Finally, the perception of innovation also depends on how consumers will analyze its characteristics through their personality traits. So, it is important to take into account the concept of innovativeness (Wells et al., 2010).

We believe that the novelty of an innovation perceived by different types of innovators should influence their attitudes (explicit and implicit) and have an influence on the perception of an innovative brand. We propose to address this problem in the form of two research questions associated with the model presented:

- Q1: How four types of innovativeness they perceive new and what is the influence of the variables of perceived innovation?
- Q2: What is the role of the perceived novelty of an innovation on the perception of an innovative brand ?

To answer each research question, the model is divided into two parts :

- Q1: How four types of innovativeness they perceive new and what is the influence of the variables of perceived innovation?

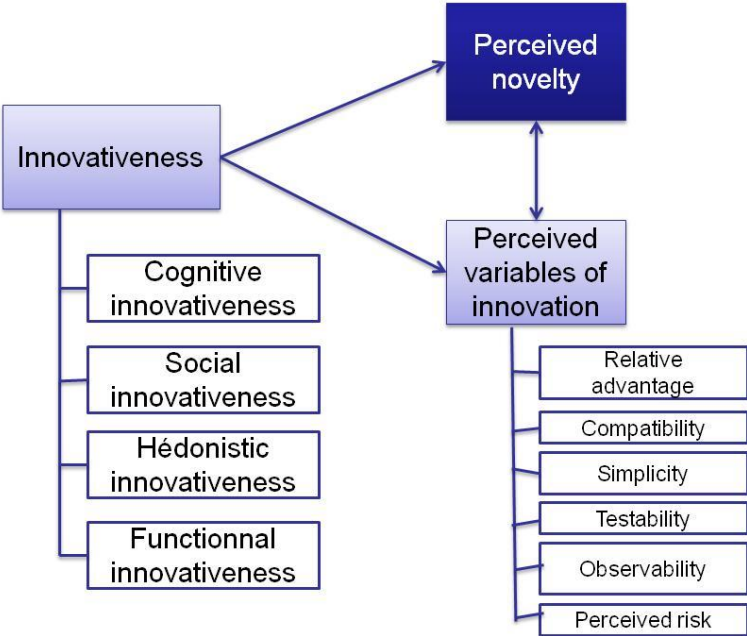


Figure 1: Typology of innovativeness and perceived novelty

This is how the perceived novelty of innovation is influenced by the innovativeness and perceived variables of innovation. Innovativeness is an individual process that will influence the perceived novelty of the innovation as well as the perception of associated variables. Vandecasteele and Geuens (2010) distinguish four types of innovativeness

which each has a different influence on the perception of novelty and the importance given to each of the perceived variables defined by Rogers (2003) and enhanced the perceived risk (Volle , 1995). This first part of the model will understand and distinguish the role of each of the variables, especially the perceived novelty.

- Q2: What is the role of the perceived novelty of an innovation on the perception of an innovative brand ?

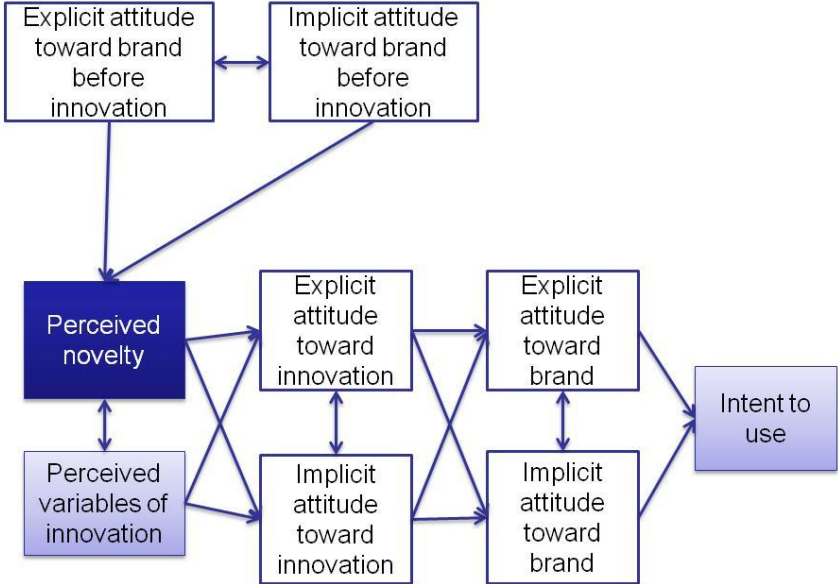


Figure 2 : Innovative Brand and perceived novelty

Perceived novelty, in the center of our new model, will have an influence on the implicit and explicit consumer attitudes on innovation. To measure the influence of perceived novelty on the perception of an innovative brand, it is necessary to assess consumer attitudes toward the brand before and then after the presentation of the innovation, to highlight the differences made by the attitude toward innovation and novelty perceived. These two complementary measures will assess whether consumers perceive the brand as innovative or not. Finally, the measure of the intention to adopt the innovation will predict consumer behavior and describe the influence of perceived novelty of attitudes, but also on behavior. The use of explicit and implicit measures will enrich the understanding of attitudes and prevent the demand effect, very present in the case of innovation for which the consumer has not yet in-memory representation.

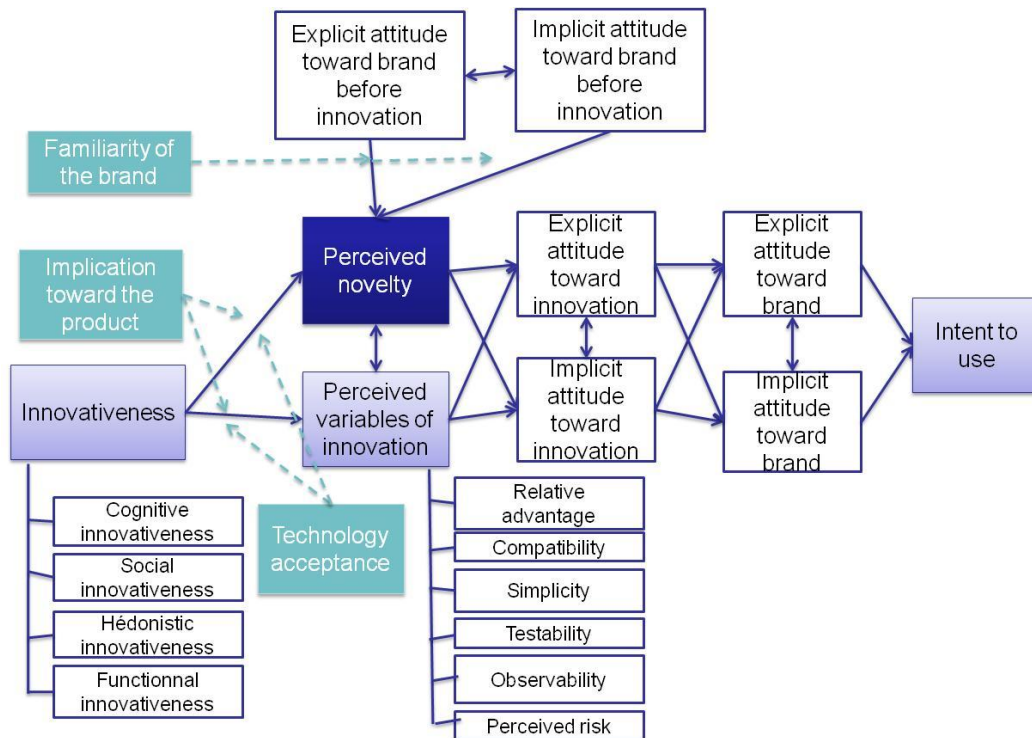


Figure 3: Global Model

This model will be enhanced by taking into account the familiarity of the brand by the consumer as a moderator of the influence of his attitude on the perceived novelty. Taking into account the involvement with the product will also moderate the results on the influence of consumer innovativeness on perceived novelty and perceived variables of innovation. Finally, the acceptance of new technologies is an important consideration in the focus on technological innovation model moderating variable.

3. Conclusion

Perceived novelty represents a significant influence on innovations and on the perception of an innovative brand analysis. Modeling perception novelty's influences on the attitude and evaluation of an innovative brand will develop a field of research still little studied.

The research methodology proposed to validate the model is the development of a questionnaire to assess the different variables using validated scales in the literature. The analysis will be enriched by an Implicit Association Test (IAT) to take into account the implicit attitudes of consumers and to refine the model study. The brand and innovation proposed in this study belong to the technological and ecological area. This research is centered on technological innovations, but the perceived novelty concerns all the innovations available on the market in all areas. Testing the model on different types of innovations would further study the novelty according to the type of product. Furthermore, the study of the influences between innovation and brand would allow marketers to optimize the diffusion of innovations. Clarifying the different variables in the process will update point of attention to facilitate the work of managers. The study of perceived novelty represents a strategic advantage for marketers who can develop elements that differentiate the product from others and make it unique in the

eyes of consumers. Finally, the inclusion of these new areas of research can be integrated into business marketing strategies to reposition the perception by consumers at the center of their studies to better predict the adoption of innovations and its impact on their brand.

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