

Associate Editor review (reviewer 4)

Associate Editor's Comments

This paper investigates how the response speed of the co-participant affects post-purchase regret of the initiator of a group buying transaction, as well as the moderating effect of deal popularity and expected discounts.

The research topic is quite interesting, as the group-buying model is relatively new in the area of electronic commerce. Meanwhile, this paper provides a novel perspective to identify the antecedents to post-purchase regret. This being said, the authors need to strengthen their justifications for the two moderators and perform their econometric analysis more rigorously.

I sent this paper to three reviewers with expertise in the related area. They all agreed that the research topic was relevant to the track theme and quite interesting, and they provided detailed and constructive comments on how to revise the paper. My evaluation largely echoes the voices of the reviewers. I hope these comments help the authors further improve their research.

Reviewer review (reviewer 1)

Comments to the Authors

Summary:

Drawing on expectancy disconfirmation theory, this manuscript proposes the response speed of the co-participant has a negative effect on the group initiators' post-purchase regret, and both group deal popularity and expected discounts can moderate the effect. The results of data analysis support the above hypotheses.

Strength:

The paper is nicely organized, and the research questions and findings of this paper are interesting. Therefore, I recommend accepting this paper.

Major concerns:

Nevertheless, some parts of this paper need to be revised.

First, the manuscript emphasizes that the initiator's disconfirmation occurs before actual consumer experiences. I am very curious, why do initiators still buy the products when they already have negative disconfirmation? Conversely, the initiators, who wait a long time but still choose to buy, may be more likely to

want to buy the product and less likely to regret it. I expect that the authors can explain this issue carefully in the revised manuscript.

Second, I have some concerns about the research methodology.

1) Do the initiator and co-participant's behaviors (i.e., refund or return) affect each other? If the co-participant regrets it, will the initiator also have to initiate a request for refunding or returning the product? If it is, then the initiator's refund or return behavior does not mean that the initiator regrets it, and thus the measure of the dependent variable is inaccurate.

2) Is there sample selection bias, because some initiators may not actually purchase after initiating the campaign?

3) The DealPop variable should be included in Model 2. And the result of a model including all variables also needs to be reported.

Reviewer review (reviewer 2)

Comments to the Authors

This paper examined the effect of co-participants' response time to a deal on post-purchase regret in a two-person-group-buying context. Using a field dataset from a group-buying platform in China, the authors demonstrated the positive effect of co-participants' response time and the moderating effect of deal popularity and discount depth. Post-purchase regret before consumers receiving the product is an interesting research area to explore. The key idea of this research makes sense to me, but its reasoning needs to be strengthened. For example, popularity (accumulated sales) seems to be a more diagnostic cue of product performance compared with the co-participant's response time. Why does the consumer rely on the latter to make purchase decisions? A related issue is, the authors proposed a positive moderating effect of product popularity because it supposedly increased consumer expectation of the product. However, higher popularity may induce more external attributions of the partner's late response (i.e., attributions unrelated to product performance), leading to a decrease of the focal effect.

Regarding the method, I didn't see how the authors controlled for endogenous variables such as product quality. In addition, when the campaign was initiated (e.g., day vs. night, or work days vs. weekends) may also influence consumer regret and should be controlled. The effect size of response time was small, which limited the contributions of this research. Finally, the authors calculated the

square of response time, which I guess was to explore the non-linear effect. However, I didn't see the result of this item in the table. A non-linear effect here sounds reasonable for me and is worth exploration.

Reviewer review (reviewer 3)

Comments to the Authors

The paper focuses on the two-person group-buying and explores the important role of co-participants response speed in initiators' post-purchase regret. Overall, the goal of the paper is clear and is well motivated. However, there are some issues with the paper.

Contribution and positioning

1. The authors introduce the model of "two-person group-buying" which is the context-related contribution of the paper. However, as far as I know, the number of group-buying participants is not always restricted to two. For example, merchants in Pinduoduo can design the group-buying rules as they want. I suggest the authors to give an official definition of such a new business model (i.e., two-person group buying), which can help justify the contribution related to context.
2. Exploring the effect of co-participants respond speed on initiators' post-purchase regret in the context of two-person group-buying is the essential contribution of this paper. However, I think in a traditional group-buying context, the co-participants' response speed can also affect initiators' post-purchase regret. So, I am confused about what new idea is introduced by focusing on the two-person group-buying.

Literature review and hypotheses development

1. The hypotheses development part is weak and needs more evidence to support the theoretical framework. There are several unsupported claims in the hypothesis development section. For example, the authors do not give any reference when developing hypothesis 1.

* Research methodology *

1. The authors do not control variables related to product quality, such as product rating, product price, etc. Ignoring characteristics of product quality may cause an endogeneity problem. That is because product quality can affect both co-participants' response speed and initiators' post-purchase regret.
2. The authors focus on the disconfirmation occurring before actual experiences, which is the main contribution of this study. However, their model does not

control the disconfirmation between pre-use expectation and post-use experiences, which is the core of EDT proposed by Oliver (1980). It will significantly constrain the causal interpretation of the observed results.

3. The model that examines the moderating effect has some problems. When exploring the moderating effect of DealPop, the authors should add the main effect (DealPop) and the interaction term ResonseTime×Deal. However, the main effect of DealPop is missed in Model 2. Similarly, the authors should control the main effect of Discount instead of DealPop. For these reasons, I think the results of the Model 2 and Model 4 may not be confident.

* Other comments *

1. P1: “Pingduoduo” -> “Pinduoduo”

I hope the author will find my comments helpful in revising their work. Good luck.