

12-15-2014

# When Do Political Ideologies Affect Brand Extension Evaluation? The Role of Analytic Versus Holistic Mindsets

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When Do Political Ideologies Affect Brand Extension Evaluation? The Role of  
Analytic Versus Holistic Mindsets

by

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in

Business Administration

Darla Moore School of Business

University of South Carolina

2014

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## Dedication

To Angel. Thanks for not letting me down, your endless support, and for teaching me every day how to be a better person.

Thanks to Red, Cookie, Cesc, Forest, and Leela for being my loyal best friends in this long trip. Will always love you.

## Acknowledgements

Firstly I want to thank Sonia Monga for agreeing to be my advisor. I especially want to thank her for her infinite patience, unwavering encouragement, and her efforts to not only teach me how to conduct research, but also how to face the challenges of academic life. Also, I would like to express my endless appreciation to Tom Kramer, Randy Rose, and Kathy Whitcomb for their feedback and support.

All of this could not be possible without the support and funding of the Becas Chile program and the sponsorship of my Alma Mater, the University of Chile.

Finally, thanks to my family and friends, and special thanks to the people that made it possible for me to study abroad, especially those who helped me while I was an international student at the Moore School of Business: Sergio Olavarrieta, Pedro Hidalgo, Eduardo Torres, Randy Rose, Satish Jayachandran, Ashwani Monga, Tom Kramer, Greg Niehaus, Louis Dessau, Angel Earle, Scott Ranges, Caglar Irmak, and Kartik Kalaignanam.

## Abstract

Political ideologies are becoming an important focus of attention in the marketing literature. This research examines the impact of political ideologies on consumers' evaluation of brand extensions. In a series of six studies, this work shows how, and under what conditions, liberals evaluate brand extensions differently than conservatives. Because liberals are more open to new experiences, and tend to seek novelty, while conservatives show stronger preferences for order, structure, and conventional things, liberals are expected to react more favorably to new stimuli, as in the case of dissimilar brand extensions. However, the effects of political ideologies are dependent on some degree of activation, and it is expected, that broader styles of thinking facilitate the expression of ideologies. In particular, this research shows that liberals evaluate dissimilar brand extensions in a more favorable way (compared to conservatives) when consumers are in a holistic mindset, but not in an analytic mindset. Moreover, this research shows that these effects are bounded by political ideology centrality such that the effects emerge only when ideologies are central to the self-concept. Finally, the findings also show that the proposed effects are

driven by liberals' need to seek novelty. When liberal consumers in a holistic mindset are provided with an opportunity to satiate their novelty-seeking goals prior to exposure to the brand extension, the effects dissipate and liberals respond similar to conservative consumers. Conversely, when there is no opportunity to satiate novelty-seeking goals, findings of previous studies are replicated, and liberal consumers in a holistic mindset evaluate dissimilar brand extensions in a more favorable way compared with conservative consumers. These findings have important implications for the branding literature and for marketers.

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## Chapter 1.

### Introduction

Brand extensions are new products introduced under an existing brand name (Aaker and Keller 1990). Some recent examples of brand extension include Apple watches, Nike Fuel Bands, Kellogg's breakfast shakes, Starbucks Refreshers, Garmin activity trackers, and Amazon Fire phones. When consumers evaluate a brand extension, they try to see if there is fit or similarity between the parent brand and the extension. Generally, high levels of fit or similarity between the parent brand (e.g., Kellogg's) and the extended product (e.g., breakfast shakes) leads to an easier categorization of the extension within the parent brand category (Aaker and Keller 1990; Volckner and Sattler 2006). As a consequence, the existing knowledge of the brand (e.g., Kellogg's makes high quality products) can be transferred to the new product (the breakfast shakes would be of high quality). However, if the level of perceived fit is low, as in the case of dissimilar brand extensions (e.g., Kellogg's shoes), such processes are not possible, and the brand extension is evaluated poorly (Boush and Loken 1991; Keller and Aaker 1992; Broniarczyk and Alba 1994; Meyvis and Janiszewski 2004, He and Li 2010).

In general, dissimilar brand extensions provide higher levels of novelty, as well as higher levels of uncertainty, leading to lower extension evaluations.

The brand extension literature has uncovered a wide range of factors that affect consumers' evaluations of brand extensions, such as the nature of the brand (e.g., prestige versus functional; Park, Milberg and Lawson 1991), the nature of the consumer (e.g., analytic versus holistic thinkers; Monga & John 2007), and the nature of the marketing program (e.g., ad content and repetition; Lane 2000). However, there is no research on how political ideologies may affect brand extension evaluations.

The interest in political ideologies within the marketing literature is growing fast but the potential impact of ideologies on consumer behavior still remains unclear. Political ideologies could become a relevant source of information for marketers as political preferences are well known and widely available using secondary data, turning this kind of information into a relatively easy way to activate marketing tactics (compared with underlying psychological variables). Political polls and the results of the elections (for example at a county level in the US) can become an important tool to manage geographical segments, and to plan the marketing mix of new product launches. If ideologies effectively turn into a relevant characteristic of consumers, in terms of their influence in product choices and behavior, understanding the role of political ideologies is

particularly important, and even more in the context of brand extensions, as brand extensions are crucial for the growth of companies, and the preservation of brand equity. Research on political ideologies has been closely linked with the acceptance of uncertainty, openness to novelty, and some other stable traits that generate relevant individual differences (Jost et al. 2003). The two extremes of the ideological continuum differ in two main variables; while liberals support social change and reject inequalities, conservatives resist social change and accept inequalities, showing a strong preference for status quo (Jost, Nosek and Gosling 2008). These differences may well affect how consumers react to brand extensions.

In particular, this dissertation identifies specific mindsets under which political ideologies are more (versus less) likely to affect brand extension evaluations. In an analytic mindset, consumers tend to detach the object from the context, pay special attention on the attributes of the object, and try to apply known rules to assign the object to a category (Nisbett et al. 2001). In contrast, under a holistic mindset, consumers tend to be focused on objects and the context as a whole, and pay more attention to the relationships and interactions between the objects and the context (Nisbett et al. 2001). In general, a holistic mindset allows consumers to process in a broader way and to be more inclusive, which may encourage the use of values and ideologies.

The purpose of this dissertation is to assess whether political ideologies affect brand extension evaluations and identify when such effects are more likely to occur. Also, we aim to understand the processes behind these potential effects. This dissertation proceeds as follows. First, we provide a review of the brand extension literature. Second, we provide a conceptual overview of the literature on political ideologies, mainly from a socio-psychological perspective. Next, we review the analytic-holistic mindsets literature. Then, we propose our hypotheses and show our completed studies.

## Chapter 2.

### Brand Extensions

In order to increase value, maintain success and increase profits, companies often need to extend their scope of activities, and explore new ways to generate revenue. One alternative that companies can use to achieve these goals is to launch new products into their current market realm or into new product categories. In either case, when companies launch new products, they face the decision of using a new brand or an existing brand. It has been estimated that creating a new brand costs tens or even hundreds of millions of dollars (Aaker and Keller 1990; Kotler and Armstrong 2004), so it is of little surprise that companies have easily identified the advantages of leveraging their existing brand's equity. Companies often use their existing brand names to market new products in order to take advantage of the consumer's knowledge of an established brand. This phenomenon, known as brand extensions, encompasses the vast majority of new products launched in the past 20 years (Milberg, Sinn and Goodstein 2010), with current estimates that over 80% of new product launches are brand extensions (Mortimer 2003).

Brand extensions are as old as the concept of brands themselves. For example, in the mid-19th century, the US firearm manufacturer Remington launched typewriters, extending their usual firearms business with relative success. However, it was not until the early 1990's that the academic literature in marketing began studying the phenomena of brand extensions, primarily based on the Aaker and Keller (1990) article on how consumers form attitudes toward brand extensions. The authors differentiated between line extensions (e.g., Jeep Cherokee) where "a current brand name is used to enter a new market segment in its current product class," and brand extensions (e.g., Jeep strollers), where "a current brand name is used to enter a completely different product class (Aaker and Keller 1990, p. 27)."

Specifically, Aaker and Keller (1990) suggested several factors that would impact extension's success. Firstly, consumers should hold positive beliefs about the parent brand. Secondly, those beliefs would be transferred to the new extended product. Finally, negative associations are not transferred to the extended product (Aaker and Keller 1990). However, these assumptions fall short in explaining the way brand extensions work.

Generally, brand extensions increase the chances of success for a new product (Swaminathan, Fox and Reddy 2001), reduce the costs of promotion, advertising and marketing (Morrin 1999), reduce perceptions of risk for



consumers (Aaker and Keller 1990), generate advantages from the positive associations with the brand (Erdem 1998), increase the perception of trust and familiarity toward the new product (Milberg and Sinn 2008), and help to increase the brand equity associated with the parent brand when the extension is successful (Keller and Lehmann 2006). However, some potential negative effects are also associated with brand extensions. For example, negative associations about the extension could be transferred back to the parent brand as a whole (Aaker and Keller 1990). For example, a Bic laptop could be viewed as disposable, when people look for a durable product. Brand extensions that do not fit well with the parent brand could harm prior beliefs about the parent brand (Loken and John 1993) and affect current products evaluations, brand image and reputation. With all the potential implications that brand extensions could entail, the decision to extend a brand is complex, highly strategic, and requires a company to know its consumers well.

Early research on brand extensions revealed how consumers evaluated them and transferred existing knowledge of the parent brand to the extension. An early attempt to explain this process was based on the psycholinguistic theory of "semantic generalizations" which states that two objects could be similarly judged just because they carry a similar (same) name, regardless of the physical differences between them (Osgood 1963). However, applied to brand

extensions, tests of this theory showed non-significant results and suggested that other, more complex processes were at play (e.g., differences in the consumers' affect towards the brand; Kerby 1967). Another approach proposed that the differences in the evaluations were caused by differences in the attitude toward the parent brand, and that the positive or negative evaluation of an extension only depended on the transference of positive or negative beliefs from the brand. However, this model of "affect generalization" working alone, was not supported (Boush et al. 1987).

Later, Boush and his colleagues identified the role of similarity (Boush et al. 1987), and typicality (Boush and Loken 1991) in moderating the evaluation of the brand extensions, laying the foundations for "categorization theory" as a plausible explanation for brand extension evaluation process. Categorization involves a process where consumers classify an object into a category they already know (the parent brand), then transfer their beliefs from the parent brand to the brand extension. This approach was taken from the literature in social psychology (Fiske 1982), and was adapted to the brand extension domain (Aaker and Keller 1990; Boush and Loken 1991; Nan 2006). However, for the transfer of associations to occur, two conditions have to be present. Firstly, the categorization process has to be successfully achieved, that is, the brand extension has to be considered as a part of the parent brand by the consumer.

Secondly, judgment regarding the brand extension is affected by the knowledge and associations related with the parent brand (Park, Lawson, and Milberg 1989; Nan 2006). The former is also known as perceived fit or the perceived match between the existing brand knowledge and the new extension. If the perceived fit or perceived similarity between the parent brand and the extension is high (e.g., Apple iPhone, Kellogg's breakfast shakes), then affect is transferred from the parent brand to the extension category.

It has also been proposed that brand extensions are evaluated with an associative network system where nodes that belong to the brand knowledge link or match nodes belonging to the brand extension, activating associations between both of them, and retrieving information that can be transferred from the brand to the extension (Balachander and Ghose 2003). This explanation is consistent with a connectionist model and was found to provide the best explanation of how people learn to predict the performance of a new product based on the information stored about the brand name (Janiszewski and van Osselaer 2000).

What both approaches, categorization and associative networks, have in common and what most authors highlight as playing a key role in the evaluation of extensions is the level of fit between the parent brand and the new extension (Aaker and Keller 1990). Levels of fit have been operationalized and considered

in multiple ways, for example as relatedness, typicality, perceived or conceptual fit, and brand concept consistency (Aaker and Keller 1990; Boush and Loken 1991; Park et al. 1991; Volckner and Sattler 2006). Nevertheless, it is always related to the extent in which consumers evaluate the "perceived similarity and relevance of parent brand associations for the extension category, which should positively influence consumer attitudes toward the brand extension" (Spiggle, Nguyen, and Caravella 2012, p. 967).

While assessing brand extension fit, consumers compare the parent category and the extension category and try to create associations between them (Aaker and Keller 1990; Boush and Loken 1991; Dawar 1996; Herr, Farquar and Fazio 1996). These associations could be based on: a) common features (e.g., the cleaning attribute of Clorox that could be relevant for Clorox paper wipes or detergent); b) substitutability (e.g. Cherry Coke as a substitute for regular Coke); or c) complementarity (e.g., Ragu pasta sauce consumed with Ragu pasta) (Herr et al. 1996; Spiggle et al. 2012). Fit can also be based on the relevance of the brand's overall concept (e.g., luxury) in the extension product category (Broniarczyk and Alba 1994; Park et al. 1991). For example, the brand extension Rolex perfumes would fit well with Rolex because the overall concept of luxury which is relevant for the perfume category, even though there is little physical similarity between watches and perfumes. Regardless of the approach used,

perceived fit has been shown to be the most important driver in determining a brand extension's success (Volckner and Sattler 2006). However, several other variables determine brand extension evaluations such as the characteristics of the parent brand, the characteristics of the extension, the nature of the consumers, the marketing program, and the environment or context.

#### PARENT BRAND CHARACTERISTICS

As mentioned before, the main influence of the parent brand name on the brand extension evaluation process is the positive or negative associations that may be transferred to the brand extension (Aaker and Keller 1990). For brands of moderate quality, fit perceptions can have a strong influence on brand extension evaluation, such that high fit extensions are evaluated more favorably than low fit extensions (Keller and Aaker 1992). However, for brands of high quality, the effects of fit can dissipate (Keller and Aaker 1992).

Boush and Loken (1991) proposed that brand breadth (or the variability of the brand's portfolio of products) can also influence the evaluation of brand extensions. Narrow brands (those with few products in their portfolios) are evaluated faster and elicit fewer cognitive responses than broad brands (those with many products in their portfolios). Thus, brand extensions for narrow brands are evaluated in a more extreme way than for broader brands. Further, Meyvis and Janiszewski (2004) showed that the effects of brand breadth are

moderated by the type of cognitive approach taken by consumers, differentiating between accessibility (the extent to which information can be retrieved from memory) and diagnosticity (the extent to which information is relevant for judgment) processes. These findings were complemented by Dacin and Smith (1994), who stated that not only is the variability of the portfolio important, but also the nominal number of products (Morrin 1999), and the variance in quality among them.

Also, the nature of the parent brand associations plays an important role in the evaluation of extensions. Brands with symbolic images increase the memorability and key associations of the brand, providing a higher level of abstraction than functional brands (Reddy, Holak and Bhat 1994). Extensions of more symbolic brands tend to achieve greater market success compared with less symbolic brands (Reddy et al. 1994). The level of perceived status of a brand also plays a role in the evaluation of the extensions. For example, owners of a prestige brand (e.g., Mercedes Benz) will favorably evaluate new extensions only if those extensions are not priced too low (Kirmani, Sood and Bridges 1999). Pricing extensions of luxury brands too low can erode the exclusivity associated with the prestige brand (Kirmani et al. 1999).

Other research has shown that perceptions of brand personality could affect the evaluation of brand extensions. In particular, if the masculine or

feminine personality of the brand matches with the actual gender of the consumer, brand extension evaluations become more favorable (Grohmann 2009). Moreover, if the personality of the brand is evaluated as “unique” (compared with the characteristics of personality that the category of product shares with the brand), the brand is considered to possess advantages in its potential to extend to new categories (Batra, Lenk and Wedel 2010).

#### EXTENSION CHARACTERISTICS

Aside from fit, several features of the brand extension are important in determining responses to brand extensions. Smith and Park (1992) proposed that brand extensions in “experience products” (those which their attributes can only be evaluated through actual trial), compared with “search products” (those which their attributes can be accurately evaluated through simple visual inspection) have more favorable effects on market share and advertising efficiency. If the new product needs to be tried, consumers rely heavily on known cues (such as a brand name) in order to make inferences regarding quality.

Ahluwalia and Gurhan-Canli (2000) explored the effects of the valence of the available information on the extended product. The authors identified differences in the processing of information depending on the level of fit of the extension. In particular, they proposed that in situations of low similarity

between the parent brand and the brand extension, positive information will be rated as more diagnostic than negative information. In contrast, in situations of high similarity, negative information will take a more diagnostic role. Thus, in situations of high similarity, brands are more adversely affected when a new extension fails, and the positive equity associated with the brand gets diluted.

In a more recent study, it has been shown that culturally congruent extensions (which present a consistent cultural schema between the extension and the parent brand, for example, Giorgio Armani Cappuccino Maker or Burberry Tea Kettle) can be evaluated more favorably than neutral (Giorgio Armani or Burberry Toaster Ovens) or incongruent ones (Giorgio Armani Tea Kettle or Burberry Cappuccino Maker; Torelli and Ahluwalia 2012). The proposed effect was shown to emerge for different levels of perceived fit and brand breadth, but only when the positioning of both the brand and the extension were culturally symbolic.

#### MARKETING PROGRAM / INDUSTRY AND ENVIRONMENT

Managerial decision-making and characteristics of the industry and the environment also play a key role in the performance of brand extensions. For example, the decision of when to introduce an extension and the order of entry (in case of multiple new products) can have a significant effect in the subsequent evaluation of these extensions (Keller and Aaker 1992; Swaminathan 2003). The



introduction of sequential brand extensions will be affected by the success or failure of each of the previous extensions launched. In particular, a successful intervening extension can improve the evaluation of moderate quality extensions, and an intervening extension that fails can damage the future introduction of new high quality extensions (Keller and Aaker 1992). Also, it is probable that an extension entering earlier into a specific category of product can be more successful than later entrants, and within the same parent brand, earlier extensions are expected to perform better than those introduced later (Reddy et al. 1994), these effects were shown to hold only for strong brands. Also, extensions that are supported with strong advertising and promotion spending perform better than those not supported strongly (Reddy et al. 1994; Lane 2000).

Brand naming strategies have also been considered in several studies as an important determinant of a brand extension's success. Besides naming a new product with the full parent brand name, utilizing a different naming strategy or a combination of names can be used to brand the product. Special attention has been paid to when a company introduces a new extension based on "sub-brands" which is the use of a new name in conjunction with the parent brand name (for example, Courtyard by Marriot; Janiszewski and Van Osselaer 2000; Kirmani et al. 1999; Milberg, Park and McCarthy 1997; Sood and Keller 2012). For poor-fitting brand extensions, sub-brands can reduce negative reactions of consumers

(Milberg et al. 1997). Additionally, sub-brands can prevent dilution of brand attitudes when luxury brands introduce lower priced extensions (Kirmani et al. 1999).

## CONSUMER CHARACTERISTICS

Consumer characteristics have been an important focus of the study of brand extensions. Smith and Park (1992) found that the degree of the consumer's knowledge of the extension's product category affects the market share and advertising efficiency, such as the greater the knowledge, the lesser the relative influence over the outcomes. Better knowledge of the category also showed a positive impact in the confidence of the evaluations of quality and the overall evaluation of the extensions (Dacin and Smith 1994).

Not only the knowledge of the product class, but also the knowledge of the parent brand was shown to increase the favorability of the extensions. When consumers have better knowledge of the brand, they are able to make more specific associations between the parent brand and the extension (Broniarczyk and Alba 1994). An extension of this work showed that the level of relative knowledge of the parent brand and the level of familiarity with the competitors in the new category of product can influence the evaluation of the brand extensions, in such a way that low fit extensions facing low familiarity

competitors will be evaluated equal or better than high fit extensions competing with high familiarity competitors (Milberg et al. 2010).

Consumers' motivation and mood appear to affect evaluation of the brand extensions. On the one hand, when motivation is high, consumers are more willing to incorporate new pieces of information to the existing schema, thus reducing the effects of typicality on the evaluation of the extension (Gurhan-Canli and Maheswaran 1998). In contrast, under low motivation, consumers are less likely to take the effort to process the new information in detail, and will respond negatively to incongruent information, resulting in more extreme evaluations in high typicality conditions (Gurhan-Canli and Maheswaran 1998). On the other hand, differences in mood can affect fit perceptions and evaluations of the extensions. Positive mood will increase the perceptions of similarity for moderate fit extensions, enhancing the evaluation of such brand extensions (Barone, Miniard and Romeo 2000). These results were later supported in another study by Yeung and Wyer (2005), but the effects were restricted to the explicit consideration of core-extension similarity as a basis for the evaluations.

Klink and Smith (2001) found also two consumer-side variables that moderate the effects of perceived fit on brand extensions evaluation. Firstly, the higher the exposure of consumers to the brand extension, the higher the perceptions of fit, and secondly, higher levels of consumer innovativeness will

enhance the acceptance of risks, thus diminishing the negative effects of low-fit. On the affective side of consumer-brand relationships, it has been found that the level of brand loyalty (Balachander and Ghose 2003) as well as the level of involvement (Berens, van Riel and van Bruggen 2005) can affect consumers' evaluation of brand extensions. More loyal/involved consumers will evaluate and accept new brand extensions in a more favorable way.

Finally, some individual differences are highly influenced by culture, as in the case of self-construal and styles of thinking. Self-construal can affect the way consumers retrieve the information of a brand and its products (Ng and Houston 2006). Individuals with a dominant independent self heavily rely on trait attributes for their judgment of stimuli, thinking in a more abstract way. In contrast, interdependent individuals prefer to put their focus on roles and relationships. As a result, while interdependents favor extensions into products that are used in known usage occasions, independents favor extensions into products that are close to existing categories (Ng and Houston 2006). Further analysis in this topic showed that this effect emerges only when consumers are highly motivated (Ahluwalia 2008). Additionally, the fact that most studies on brand extensions were conducted in the United States or in a single country does not allow one to identify with clarity the potential effects of culture on brand extensions evaluation. A few studies developed this research stream showing

that, in fact, it is possible to find relevant cultural differences affecting consumers' evaluations. Bottomley and Holden (2001) showed that even though the main effects of fit (with the parent brand) and quality (of the brand extensions) held when analyzed cross-culturally, there were relevant differences in the relative importance of these factors across cultures. In a more recent study it was shown that cultural backgrounds interact with levels of fit in such a way that Easterners perceive stronger fit and more favorable evaluation of the extensions, compared with Westerners (Monga and John 2007), and these divergences are driven by the difference in styles of thinking.

## Chapter 3.

### Political Ideologies

Ideology has been considered as “the most elusive concept in the whole social science (McLellan 1986, p. 1)” despite extensive research on the topic by philosophers, political scientists, sociologists, and social psychologists among others. From its origins in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, ideology has been conceptualized in a number of different ways. Whereas the initial roots of the term “Ideology” are not clearly defined, Francis Bacon is considered as the most notable precursor of the concept (MacKenzie 2003). In his book *Novum Organon* (Bacon 1620), he identifies a stable and deeply rooted set of beliefs in peoples’ minds that was founded on religious revelations, myths, superstition or prejudice (MacKenzie 2003). Since then, a continuous secularization of people’s internal belief systems and socialization processes were shaping a new social structure. These social processes reached a peak when during the French Revolution a new rational system of government was established based on three universal principles: liberty, equality and fraternity. This declaration of principles is recognized as the birth of “ideology” as a concept and comprises a

representation of the desired social structure and the relationships of the individuals with the hierarchies and social power. At this point in time, a separation of those who supported the old regime (rightists) and those who promote the new order (leftists) laid the foundations of what we know today as the left-right political spectrum (and its derivations). Subsequently, the concept of “ideology” was shaped continuously by socio-political processes (mainly in Western Europe), and strongly influenced by revolutionary periods (MacKenzie 2003), generating a bigger diversification of the concept, and more importantly, some more extreme conceptualizations (like authoritarianism).

#### CONTEMPORARY APPROACH TO IDEOLOGIES

The aforementioned relationship of the concept of ideology and revolutionary periods, lead to ideologies focusing on the extreme views of the world (e.g. Marxism, Fascism), and attaching a negative connotation to the notion of ideology itself, especially in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. This perspective led to a critical conceptualization of ideologies as a “propagandistic system of beliefs” and as a “motivated, system-serving belief system” (Jost et al. 2008, p. 127). Nonetheless, ideologies can also be considered as a value-neutral way to see the world, or an interpretive framework of a socio-political structure, and not necessarily an underlying extreme theory to impose on others (Eagleton 1991). Even though both approaches have supporters and detractors, most empirical

research in social sciences has adopted the latter approach and considers political ideology as a “set of beliefs about the proper order of society and how this order can be achieved (Erikson and Tedin 2003, p. 64).” The common concept of ideology involves by its nature a social and a political perspective on how reality could be bettered. Firstly, an ideology helps to make sense of the complex social world by providing a description of society that allows us to position ourselves in the social landscape. Secondly, an ideology embodies a set of political ideals aimed at describing the best possible form of social organization (MacKenzie 2003).

These two conceptual visions of ideologies are normally considered as opposite one to another, however, they share some crucial aspects (for example, both account for an unconscious activation of ideological thinking; Nosek, Graham, and Hawkins 2010). An inclusive mixed approach proposed by Jost and his colleagues (Jost et al. 2003; Jost 2006; Jost, Federico and Napier 2009) has gained strength and acceptance in the academic community. The theory of conservatism as motivated-social cognition (Jost et al. 2003), considers ideology as an “interrelated set of attitudes, values, and beliefs with cognitive, affective, and motivational properties (Jost et al. 2009, p. 315)”. Consistent with this view, Maio et al. (2006) stated that while attitudes are referred to “tendencies to evaluate an object positively or negatively”, and values are “abstract ideas that



function as important guiding principles”, ideologies are “systems of attitudes and values that are organized around an abstract theme” (Maio et al. 2006, p. 284). However, the motivated-social cognition approach proposes that ideology includes two mental structures: (1) a socially constructed high-level macro-structure (or discursive structure) that accounts for an internal network of attitudes and values that becomes salient in particular situations (Jost et al. 2003), and (2) a motivational low-level sub-structure (or functional structure) that comprise a set of social and psychological needs, motives, and goals driving political interest (Jost et al. 2003; Jost et al. 2009).

As a result of an extensive meta-analysis of the prior literature, Jost et al. (2003) identified a group of variables that are related with differences in the ideological spectrum. The authors considered the motivational nature of ideologies, and created three main categories of motives involved in its formation and expression: epistemic, existential, and relational motives (Jost et al. 2009). Epistemic motives are those related to cognitive needs, particularly mechanisms to reduce of uncertainty (e.g. need for cognition, need to evaluate, and need for cognitive closure). Existential motives are those related with the conservation and integrity of the self-concept, particularly mechanisms to control and to obtain security (e.g. denial of death anxiety, threat management, and coping with emotional disgust). Relational motives are those involved with

affiliation and establishing and maintaining interpersonal relationships, particularly mechanisms that generate solidarity (e.g. political socialization, social identification and group justification, and need for shared reality) (Jost et al. 2003; Jost et al. 2009). These motivational sub-structures are expected to jointly influence two discursive supra-structures that together define an individual's ideological beliefs. On the one hand, those showing preference for openness to change and rejection of inequality are considered to be in the political "left" side of the spectrum (liberals). On the other hand, those showing resistance to change and acceptance of inequality are considered to be in the political "right" side of the spectrum (conservatives; Jost et al. 2009).

Overall, we consider political ideologies as a socio-psychological construct formed by a set of attitudes with motivational roots (Jost et al. 2003). Political ideologies create differences in personality orientations of individuals that can be easily operationalized with the liberal-conservative continuum in order to attempt to predict individual's behavior (Graham, Haidt and Nosek 2009). This perspective is consistent with the conceptualization of political ideologies that are widely used nowadays in the political psychology literature (Kruglanski 1999; Jost et al. 2003) and it has been extended to the marketing and the consumer behavior literature in the last years (Kidwell, Farmer, and Hardesty 2013).

## LIBERALISM AND CONSERVATISM

The left-right metaphor to define the political spectrum has been used for more than 250 years and dates back to the times of the French Revolution where during the Assembly meetings, those who sat on the left were pro-change and those who sat on the right were pro-status quo (Bobbio 1996). Nowadays, this dichotomy remains valid and is widely used under the umbrella of two main ideologies: conservatism and liberalism; at least in most parts of the “Western” world (Maio et al. 2006). Despite some criticism regarding the inability of this single dimension to capture the whole picture of political beliefs (Klein and Stern 2008; Shils 1954), the conservative-liberal continuum is the most accepted classification scheme in political psychology and it has been shown to work remarkably well in predicting politically related outcomes (Jost 2006; Knight 1999).

Modern liberalism is characterized by the defense and promotion of individual liberties (Gutmann 2001), and the promotion of attitudes and values related to benevolence and universal rights (Kerlinger 1984). In general terms, liberals are more open to new experiences and show a strong preference for novelty (McCrae 1996). In contrast, modern conservatism is characterized by reliance on institutions and authority as a basis for the social structure (Graham et al. 2009), but endorsing attitudes and values that promote self-enhancement

(Kerlinger 1984). In general terms, conservatives show stronger preferences for stability and tradition (Jost et al. 2008; McCrae 1996). From the perspective of the theory of motivated social-cognition (Jost et al. 2003), the core driver of conservatism is the resistance to change and the defense of status quo as a way to justify inequalities. These reasons are motivated by a basic psychological need to manage uncertainty and threat in both a stable (chronic) and a situational way (Jost et al. 2009; Jost 2006; Jost et al. 2003).

Because the differences between conservatism and liberalism are multiple and complex, political psychologists have been focusing their efforts to identify and understand the underlying reasons to adopt a particular ideology. Next, we present the most relevant findings that provide evidence for the link between motivational aspects and individual differences in political ideologies.

#### EPISTEMIC MOTIVES / COGNITIVE DIFFERENCES

*Dogmatism and Intolerance to Ambiguity.* Dogmatism refers to the extremity of beliefs (normally associated with the right-wing authoritarianism; Altemeyer 1981) and the rigidity of one's position, characterized by the assumption that one's ideas are correct (or better) compared with other's premises (Rokeach 1960). Intolerance to ambiguity refers to the preference for certainty and the inclination for rigid categorization (Frenkel-Brunswik 1949), and perceiving ambiguity as a source of threat (Budner 1962). Jost et al. (2003) found a consistent

positive and significant relationship between dogmatism and intolerance to ambiguity with conservatism scores, such that more conservative individuals reported higher levels of dogmatism and lower tolerance to ambiguous stimuli. Recently, Choma et al. (2012) in a study that considered conservatism and liberalism as two independent constructs, found that conservatism was positively correlated with dogmatism and intolerance to ambiguity (even after controlling for liberal tendencies).

*Integrative Complexity.* Also known as “cognitive complexity”, refers to the ability to differentiate among multiple dimensions and the capacity to perform processes of integration or synthesis of these differentiated components (Tetlock, Bernzweig, and Gallant 1985). Examining several studies that operationalized the integrative complexity in different ways (including: cognitive complexity, cognitive flexibility, and attributional complexity; Tetlock 1984; Gruenfeld 1995; Sidanius 1985; Altemeyer 1981), Jost et al. (2003) found support for a negative relationship between conservatism and integrative complexity, such that liberal individuals reported higher levels of integrative complexity.

*Openness to Experience.* From the “Big 5” personality traits (Costa and McCrae 1985), openness to experience is the dimension that has attracted the most attention within the political ideology literature, and it is often considered as a stand-alone variable. Jost et al. (2003) found a significant negative relationship

between conservatism scores and openness to experiences concluding that conservative individuals are less inclined to accept novelty. Several newer studies have supported this finding. However, no other dimension of personality (extroversion, agreeableness, or neuroticism) can consistently predict political ideology, and only “conscientiousness” showed a weak but inconsistent positive relationship with conservatism (Carney et al. 2008; van Hiel and Mervielde 2004; Cornelis et al. 2009; Sibley, Osborne, and Duckitt 2012; Hirsh, Walberg, and Peterson 2013)

*Personal Needs for Order and Structure.* Some evidence points to a positive relationship between need for order and structure and conservatism scales (Webster and Stewart 1973). Conservatives report being significantly more organized, and more likely to describe themselves as neat and orderly (Jost et al. 2003).

*Need for Cognitive Closure.* This refers to the willingness to opt for a quick and definitive answer, instead of being in confusion or ambiguity, due to a longer processing of the issue (Kruglanski 1989). Conservatism has been strongly and positively related to need for cognitive closure (Thorisdottir and Jost 2011). Conservatives show a stronger preference for quick, firm, and final decisions (Jost et al. 2003; Golec and van Bergh 2007; Cornelis et al. 2009; Federico, Deason, and Fisher 2012). Close-mindedness has been considered as a key dimension of

need for cognitive closure. Working as a standalone variable, close-mindedness has not shown a consistent relationship with conservatism, but it mediates the effect of threats on conservatism scores (Thorisdottir and Jost 2011).

*Creativity.* Creativity refers to the ability to respond in a novel, appropriate, useful, and correct way to a particular task at hand (Amabile 1983). Conservatives are theoretically expected to be less creative than liberals for three reasons (Dollinger 2007): a) individuals worried about uncertainty may focus in lower-order needs to increase their safety (Bar-Tal 2001); b) conservatives comply with conventional things rather seeking something new (Mayer 1999); and c) the authoritarian elements of conservatism weaken imagination (Feather 1979). Recent studies have shown that creativity is directly related with political ideologies, such that creativity is lower among conservatives and higher among liberals (Dollinger 2007; McCann 2011; Choma et al. 2012).

## EXISTENTIAL MOTIVES

*Threats to Self-Esteem.* Earlier theories of authoritarianism and uncertainty avoidance predicted that people low in self-esteem should be more likely to embrace a conservative political ideology, but empirical research has failed to find a consistent and robust relationship (Jost et al. 2003). However, a study by Altemeyer (1998) suggests that even if no significant relationship between political ideologies and self-esteem scores was found, conservatives tend to react

in a stronger (and more defensive) way to situations that threaten the self-concept.

*Fear, Anger, and Aggression.* Conservatives are expected to be more motivated by fear and danger, and to respond using anger, aggression, and pessimism in front of threatening stimuli (Jost et al. 2003; Bulkeley 2002). Compared to liberals, conservatives react more quickly and strongly to threatening stimuli even when these stimuli are non-politically related (Lavine et al. 2002). Overall, the findings of a meta-analysis (Jost et al. 2003) concluded that fear is positively related to political conservatism. Additionally, newer studies support this idea showing that “belief in a dangerous world” effectively predicts both implicit and explicit conservatism (van Leeuwen and Park 2009).

*Regulatory Focus.* Despite the fact that Jost et al. (2003) proposed a theoretical connection between regulatory focus and political ideologies, the authors were not able to demonstrate any relationship because a lack of relevant studies to that date. However, several studies (Janoff-Bulman, Sheikh, and Baldacci 2008; Rock and Janoff-Bulman 2010) have shown an association between political orientation and self-regulation. Liberals are approach-based, tend to focus on advancing positive outcomes (potential gains), and try to regulate society via active participation. In contrast, conservatives are avoidance-based,



tend to focus on preventing negative outcomes (potential losses), and try to regulate society by submission to social order (Janoff-Bulman 2009).

*Fear of Death.* Terror management theory posits that salience of one's own mortality tends to activate internal defensive mechanisms that match with the stable beliefs of political conservatism (Greenberg et al. 1992). Jost et al. (2003) showed a strong positive association between mortality salience and conservative beliefs. Moreover, a recent study found that mortality salience strengthens conservative beliefs for those previously identified as liberals (i.e. make liberals think more like conservatives; Nail et al. 2009).

#### RELATIONAL MOTIVES

*System Justification.* Researchers have proposed that supporters of right-wing ideologies (like conservatives) have a stronger motivation to defend the existing social system compared with those on the left wing (Jost, Burgess, and Mosso 2001). In order to fight against instability, conservatives strongly support status quo under the assumption that the existing social order, even if it can be considered as unfair or unequal, delivers higher levels of certainty (Jost, Banaji, and Nosek 2004). One of the most direct consequences of system justification is the way people interact and evaluate those who belong to their groups (the "in-groups") and those who do not belong to their groups (the "out-groups"). Conservatives are expected to show a higher in-group favoritism (Jost et al. 2004)

and also a higher tendency to use of stereotypes when evaluating others and themselves (Cheung and Hardin 2010).

*Social Dominance.* The origins of social dominance motives are also rooted in an underlying need to reduce uncertainty. Conservatives support group dominance as a mechanism to decrease potential conflict via establishing a structure, based on hierarchies, and defining hegemony of some groups over others (Sidanius and Pratto 1999). Jost et al. (2003) posit that social dominance orientation measures correlate positively with a variety of conservatism measures. In a recent study, liberals showed a negative relationship with the highly related value of “power” that comprises social power, authority, and wealth among other concepts (Hirsh et al. 2013).

As shown above, there are multiple motivational and attitudinal antecedents to either a conservative or a liberal orientation and also a considerable number of variables that can predict people’s ideological beliefs. But, are political ideologies relevant in defining individual’s behavior? And more important, how are political ideologies involved in decision-making processes? It is expected that, given its motivational component, ideologies influence a wide range of behavioral outputs that are consistent with the principles they endorse.

## EFFECTS OF POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES ON BEHAVIOR

As should be expected, the most evident consequences of ideological beliefs are related to political behavior and attitudes such as voting, party affiliation, and opinions about public-policy issues. Conservatives tend to adopt positions aligned with the political right-wing, evaluate conservative candidates in a better way, support the Republican Party, and show support for capital punishment, protection of family, increased defense spending, and restrictions on immigration, among other social issues (Jost 2006; Jost et al. 2009). In contrast, liberals tend to adopt positions aligned with the political left-wing, evaluate liberal candidates in a better way, support the Democrat Party, and show support for socialized health care, abortion, same-sex couple's rights, and gun control, among other social issues (Jost 2006; Jost et al. 2009).

Nonetheless, the influence of political ideologies on behavior transcends the boundaries of the political domain and can also influence social behavior that is related with the epistemic, existential, and relational motives. Evidence shows that personality traits are associated with a conservative or a liberal view of the world. Conservatives are more rigid, intolerant, obedient, aggressive, careful, anxious, and moralistic, while liberals are more ambiguous, eccentric, imaginative, curious, novelty-seekers, complex, and open to experiences, to name only some of the characteristics associated with the two main ideologies

(for full list, see Carney et al. 2008, p. 816). Moreover, even more subtle differences have been documented in terms of specific preferences that conservatives and liberals hold about issues related with lifestyles. For example, conservatives were more favorable toward newspaper subscriptions, sport utility vehicles, drinking alcohol, fishing, and watching television, while liberals were more favorable toward Asian food, foreign films, big cities, poetry, tattoos, and recreational drugs (Jost et al. 2008).

Political ideologies can also affect consumer behavior but studies in the marketing literature are scarce. Crockett and Wallendorf (2004) explored how segregation and mobility, among other variables, can shape the shopping behavior in some African-American communities, as an expression of social and political relations, revealing a “pivotal role of normative political ideology in everyday acts of consumption (p. 525)”. Meanwhile, Zhao and Belk (2008) also explored a particular socio-political process analyzing how the political transition of China, from a pure communist country to a more open market economy, was reflected in the advertising strategies. Also, Kim, Rao and Lee (2009) explored the effects of matching the political messages’ level of abstraction and the temporal distance of voter’s decision, they found that concrete messages are more persuasive when decisions are close and abstract messages are more persuasive when decisions are far. More recently two studies have considered

the effects of political ideology (using the liberal-conservative spectrum) on direct consumer domains. Firstly, the effect of political orientation on the intentions of “going green” (willingness to incur in sustainable behaviors) was explored by Kidwell et al. (2013). The authors focus on how persuasive appeals influence sustainable practices (like recycling or conservation of resources) when they match with the underlying moral foundations on which conservatives and liberals differ. Specifically, they found that messages with a binding (individualizing) persuasive appeal increase conservatives’ (liberals’) intentions to recycle. Secondly, in a study based on secondary data, Khan, Misra, and Singh (2013) explored how traits associated with political ideologies affected consumers’ routines and product choices. They found that conservative consumers showed a systematic preference for established national brands (versus generic substitutes).

Finally, three important findings from Jost et al. (2009, 325) are worthy of mention: a) political ideologies can influence people’s non-political related behavior “without necessarily being consciously or full aware of the role of ideology in their lives”; b) “at higher levels of abstraction [ideology can predict] general value orientation” and “interestingly, many of these patterns are observable at the level of automatic or implicit attitudes”; and finally, c) “the downstream consequences of ideology are not readily observable at all levels of

political sophistication". In summary, in order to examine behavior driven by political ideologies in non-political related domains, it will be important to examine the role of other factors like mind-sets and styles of thinking, and the relevance of political beliefs for the individuals.

## Chapter 4.

### Analytic and Holistic Thinking

From the times of the earlier empiricist philosophers in the 18<sup>th</sup> century up to the times of classical psychologists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it was believed and accepted that basic cognitive processes (such as categorization, learning, and causal reasoning) worked the same way for every person (Nisbett et al. 2001).

Nevertheless, several studies by Nisbett and colleagues in the 1990's (Nisbett 1993; Larrick, Nisbett and Morgan 1993; Smith, Langson and Nisbett 1992) showed that people can actually differ drastically in the way they see the world, consequently, affecting their cognitive processing. One of the key drivers of these differences is the cultural environment and the social organization to which people were exposed (Nisbett et al. 2001). Social organization and culture can directly affect the way people direct their attention, attribute causality, perceive change, and tolerate contradictions (Choi, Koo, and Choi 2007).

Two main styles of thinking were identified: a) Holistic thinking, which involves “an orientation to the context or field as a whole, including attention to relationships between a focal object and the field, and a preference for explaining

and predicting events on the basis of such relationships (Nisbett et al. 2001, p. 293);” and b) Analytic thinking, which involves “detachment of the object from its context, a tendency to focus on attributes of the object to assign it to categories, and a preference for using rules about the categories to explain and predict object’s behavior (Nisbett et al. 2001, p. 293).”

Holistic thinking is rooted in the way that early Eastern Asians cultures developed their social relationships. Originally based on agriculture, these societies needed cooperation among members to be successful, thus, they were motivated to maintain social harmony, considered the social-self as more important than the personal-self, and perceived a reciprocal obligation or collective agency (Nisbett et al. 2001; Valenzuela, Mellers and Strebel 2009; Yang-Soo 1981). Analytic thinking, on the other hand, is rooted in the ancient Greek civilization, which is predominant in the “Western World”. Originally based on fishing and hunting (and trading later on), the ancient Greeks depended on personal performance to survive, and had a focus on autonomy rather than in social relationships, and consequently, attributed power to the individual. Importantly, the attention shifted to objects and personal goals rather than to other people (Nisbett et al. 2001).



As the main socio-cultural differences between Easterners and Westerners still persist, cognitive differences do arise when comparing contemporary Eastern and Western cultures. We will focus on 4 main areas of differences:

*Attribution of Causality.* Easterners view and interpret the world in a more complex way. As Easterners focus on the relationships and interactions, they explain how the world works in a complex way. They not only consider particular actor/object, but also the surroundings and the connections between the actor/object and their context (Nisbett et al. 2001). Conversely, Westerners focus on the individual and believe that actions are only caused by the internal disposition of the actor, dismissing the potential role of others and the environment (Choi et al. 2007). As a result, Easterners rely on “interactionism,” attributing causality primarily to the environment, while Westerners rely in “dispositionism,” attributing causality primarily to objects/actors (Choi et al. 2007; Nisbett et al. 2001).

*Attitude toward Contradictions.* Easterners are able and willing to accept that two contradictory interpretations of the same event can be true. As a result, Easterners tend to search agreement for a “middle ground” option, rather than create controversy while defending one of two opposite alternatives. This phenomenon, known as “naïve dialectism” (Peng and Nisbett 1999), can be summarized as the disposition to reconcile contradictions. In contrast,

Westerners emphasize the resolution of a contradiction by leaning towards one of the two opposing options, and resolve the contradiction through formal logic and applying rules (Choi et al. 2007).

*Perception of Change.* Easterners see objects as interrelated in a kind of complex network. As the number of connections to explain a particular phenomenon is quite high, they understand that every phenomenon is non-static, and they accept continuous change as a natural characteristic of this system (Nisbett et al. 2001; Choi et al. 2007). Conversely, Westerners see objects as independent units that are not affected by external forces or other entities, thus the essence of the objects tends to be constant over time. As a result, Easterners perceive the world as cyclic with constant fluctuations, while Westerners have a more linear view based on stability (Choi et al. 2007; Ji, Nisbett, and Su 2001).

*Locus of Attention.* Easterners focus on the relationships between the objects, and also take into consideration the context (Nisbett et al. 2001). For Easterners, it is difficult to separate a particular object from the context where the objects resides. In contrast, Westerners tend to focus their attention on the focal elements and salient target objects, at the expense of the context, so they tend to not consider the background when evaluating a focal object. As a result,

Easterners are “field dependent” while Westerners are “field independent” (Choi et al. 2007; Masuda and Nisbett 2001).

As a key component of the styles of thinking differences, the locus of attention dimension has been considered as the core component of the holistic/analytic construct, and has been extensively used in the marketing literature to operationalize differences between holistic and analytic thinkers (Monga and John 2008; Monga and John 2010; Ein-Gar, Shiv, and Tormala 2012; Bhargave and Montgomery 2013). Although the emphasis was centered on cultural differences, there is considerable amount of evidence pointing to the fact that differences in holistic and analytical thinking can be: a) also found within a culture (Choi et al. 2003), and b) induced temporarily (Monga and John 2008). It implies that even if Easterners will score higher in holistic thinking compared with Westerners, we can still find significant differences among individuals from the same culture. In addition, an analytic/holistic mindset can be primed in order to make it temporarily accessible, even if there is a chronic tendency to hold one style of thinking (holistic or analytic). We will adopt these approaches in understanding styles of thinking.

#### BROAD AND NARROW MINDSETS

The holistic/analytical dichotomy has been linked with the dual-process theory that identifies two paths in decision-making processes: intuitive and

rational (Epstein et al. 1996). Firstly, intuitive processing, that is more automatic, affective, fast, and associative, has been related with holistic thinking. Secondly, rational processing, that is more deliberative, non-affective, slow and rule-based, has been related with analytic thinking (Pretz and Totz 2007). Nevertheless, despite the things they share in common, holistic thinking (based in the field dependency approach) can be activated deliberately, while the intuitive system is purely automatic, somewhat differentiating the two theories (Butchel and Norenzayan 2009).

Holistic and analytic thinking has been also related with construal level theory (Trope and Liberman 2003). High-level construals (or more abstract mindsets) have been associated with holistic thinking and a tendency to use heuristic rules when processing. Meanwhile, low-level construals (or more concrete mindsets) have been associated with analytic reasoning (Wyer, Perfect, and Pahl 2010; Forster, Friedman, and Liberman 2004).

Evidence relating abstract mindsets and internal beliefs suggest that when thinking broadly, people tend to define subsequent situations in terms of higher-level goals (Freitas, Gollwitzer and Trope 2004). In fact, Torelli and Kaikati (2009) found that when primed with an abstract mindset (but not when primed with a concrete mindset), people used relevant values to define and evaluate consequent actions. Likewise, Giacomantonio et al. (2010) showed that, when

inducing an abstract mindset through psychological distance, subsequent individual's social behavior was consistent with social motivations they endorsed, in particular, the expression of pro-social or pro-self behavior. Thus, thinking broadly/abstractly (rather than narrowly/concretely) facilitates the expression of values and internal belief systems.

## Chapter 5.

### Hypotheses

Behavior can be influenced by political ideology, across a wide variety of domains not just in politically-related domains. There is ample and consistent evidence that conservatives and liberals differ not only in their visions of the world but also in terms of cognitive characteristics, motivations, and more relevant to us, the way they respond to new stimuli. One remarkable difference between conservatives and liberals is their level of avoidance/acceptance of novelty. Conservatives are, in general, reluctant to embrace novelties, they show a strong preference for status quo, and often lean to options that represent tradition, structure, and stability. Conversely, liberals tend to be novelty-seekers and are more open to new experiences (Jost et al. 2001; Jost et al. 2009). They also tend to express more creativity (Dollinger 2007; McCann 2011; Choma et al. 2012).

A dissimilar brand extension (e.g., Honda watch, Coke popcorn) can be considered as a highly novel stimulus because it not only represents a new category of product for a particular brand, but also its lack of perceived fit with

the parent brand creates an inconsistency that consumers have to resolve (Aaker and Keller 1990). Dissimilar brand extensions, compared with similar brand extensions, are less likely to be consistent with the consumer's structure of beliefs about the parent brand. Faced with a dissimilar brand extension, conservatives and liberal will be expected to react differently. Considering the tendency of liberals to be more open to novel experiences and to be more creative, we expect that liberal consumers will evaluate dissimilar extensions in a more favorable way compared with conservative consumers.

Nevertheless, as political ideologies are high-level abstract systems of beliefs that comprise simultaneously attitudes and values (Maio et al. 2006), they are more likely to be latent rather than active, thus their potential expected effects on the evaluation of dissimilar brand extensions are likely to arise only when ideological beliefs are salient (Higgins 1996; Kruglanski 1996). Prior research identified that consumers' mindsets are important in driving the influence of values on behavior (Torelli and Kaikati 2009). For example, Torelli and Kaikati (2009) showed that participants were more likely to act in accordance with their values (e.g., power, benevolence) when they were thinking broadly than when they were thinking narrowly. Apparently, thinking broadly facilitates defining a subsequent action in terms of values (Torelli and Kaikati 2009). Similarly, thinking broadly encourages people to understand stimuli in relation

to high-level goals and concepts (Fujita and Han 2009). This suggests that thinking broadly may facilitate the expression of political ideologies as well.

An analytic style of thinking represents a narrow mindset. It is characterized by a detachment of the context from the objects, a preference for the use of rules and categories. Conversely, a holistic style of thinking represents a broad mindset and it is characterized by the ability to find broad relationships between objects and their contexts, and a strong tendency to focus attention on the context and background (Nisbett et al. 2001). Holistic thinkers' greater attention to the context and consideration of larger number of factors into their decision making (Choi et al. 2003), also suggest that their own political ideologies are more likely to matter during the brand extension evaluation process.

When exposed to a dissimilar brand extension, we expect that under an analytic mindset, political ideologies will not be salient, and are unlikely to affect responses to brand extensions. However, under a holistic mindset, political ideologies are more likely to matter. In a holistic mindset, we expect that liberals will respond more favorably to a dissimilar brand extension than conservatives, because a dissimilar brand extension represents novelty (since the brand extension is in a product category that is quite different from that of the parent brand). As discussed earlier, while conservatives show stronger preferences for order, structure, and conventional things, liberals are more open to new



experiences, and tend to seek novelty, and express creativity (Jost et al. 2003).

Taken together, we propose that, in a holistic mindset, liberals are likely to evaluate dissimilar brand extensions more favorably than conservatives.

However, in an analytic mindset, political ideology is unlikely to affect brand extension evaluation. Thus, we forward the following political ideology x mindset interaction:

**H1a:** Under an analytic mindset, liberal consumers and conservative consumers will evaluate dissimilar brand extensions similarly.

**H1b:** Under a holistic mindset, liberal consumers will evaluate dissimilar brand extensions more favorably compared with conservative consumers.

One factor that may moderate the interaction between political ideology and consumers' mindsets on subsequent behavior is the centrality of the political ideology. Considering the definition of centrality from the values literature, we understand value centrality as the "degree to which an individual has incorporated this value as a part of the self (Verplanken and Holland 2002, p. 436)". In the same way that values can be central to the self, we understand that ideologies can be central or not central to an individual. Extending Verplanken and Holland's (2002) definition to ideologies, we will consider ideology centrality as the degree to which a particular ideology is incorporated to the self-concept and is considered relevant for the individual's identity. In other words,

ideology centrality is related to the relevance of the political beliefs in determining self-identity, and how these beliefs help individuals to understand a situation, focus their attention on relevant and related information, evaluate this information, and stimulate a particular behavior accordingly (Verplanken and Holland 2002). Central values [ideologies] are the ones that make an individual define and interpret a situation in terms of those values (Verplanken and Holland 2002).

Consistent with this idea, political ideology may also be central to a person and, more likely to affect behavior when it is central than when it is not central. We have proposed that political ideologies are more likely to matter in a holistic mindset than in an analytic mindset. If our effects are being driven by the activation of political ideologies in the holistic mindset, but not in the analytic mindset, we expect that the mindset  $\times$  political ideology interaction is more likely to emerge when political ideology is central. When political ideology is less central, it is unlikely to affect responses to brand extensions. We can summarize this proposition in the following hypothesis:

**H2a:** When political ideology is central:

- And consumers are in a holistic mindset: liberal consumers will evaluate brand extensions more favorably than conservative consumers.

- And consumers are in an analytic mindset: liberal consumers and conservative consumers will evaluate brand extensions similarly.

**H2b:** When political ideology is not central, the interaction of political ideology and mindset will not emerge.

Next, we examine whether the effects of political ideology on brand extension evaluation are being driven by a need to seek novelty or express creativity. Prior research shows that once a need has been satisfied, it decreases in strength (Chartrand et al. 2008). For example, Chartrand et al. (2008) show support for a motivational process, by demonstrating that an unconsciously held goal can affect a choice task when an intervening task does not satiate the goal, but not when the intervening task satiates the goal. Drawing upon these results, we expect that in a *holistic mindset*, if the effect of political ideology is driven by a need to express novelty and creativity, brand extension responses for liberal consumers will be more favorable compared with the responses of conservative consumers when goal satiation is low. When goal satiation is low, there is no intervening creativity/novelty-seeking task and brand extension responses of liberal consumers will be more favorable than responses of conservative consumers (as in our earlier studies). However, when goal satiation is high, the liberal consumers' goal of expressing novelty and creativity would be met through an intervening task, thus reducing the need to be novel/creative while

evaluating the brand extension in a subsequent task. Thus, when goal satiation is high, we expect no differences in the way that liberal and conservative consumers evaluate dissimilar brand extensions. In an *analytic mindset*, we expect no differences between liberal and conservative consumers, for both the low and high goal satiation conditions, since the effect of political ideology is unlikely to emerge in an analytic mindset.

**H3a:** When satiation of novelty-seeking goals is low:

- And consumers are in a holistic mindset: liberal consumers will evaluate brand extensions more favorably than conservative consumers.
- And consumers are in an analytic mindset: liberal consumers and conservative consumers will evaluate brand extensions similarly.

**H3b:** When satiation of novelty-seeking goals is high, the interaction of political ideology and mindset will not emerge.

## Chapter 6. Methodology

### 6.1. STUDY 1A

The purpose of this study is to test our prediction that, a) in a holistic mindset, liberal consumers will evaluate dissimilar brand extensions in a more favorable way compared with conservative consumers, and b) in an analytic mindset, liberal consumers and conservative consumers will evaluate dissimilar brand extensions similarly. Additionally, measures of parent brand attitude, brand familiarity, mood, fluency, and brand liking were obtained to assess if these were responsible for the proposed effects.

#### SAMPLE AND STIMULI

Sixty undergraduate students (48.3% females) were recruited from a southern university in exchange for class credit in an introductory Marketing class. Our predictions were tested in a 2 (political ideology: liberal, conservative) x 2 (mindset: analytic, holistic) design, where both dimensions were measured with continuous scales. Participants were asked to evaluate a hypothetical brand extension (Coke Popcorn; Monga and John 2004). A pre-test (n = 62) confirmed

that the selected extension fell into a moderate-to-low level of fit (rating = 2.94 on a 7-point scale, where 1 = inconsistent with the brand and 7 = consistent with the brand; Monga and John 2007).

## PROCEDURE AND MEASURES

Participants were given a computer-based survey that asked them to evaluate a prospective brand extension. The subjects completed the survey in an individual cubicle using a personal computer in the Behavioral Lab, under the supervision of a research assistant. Participants were first asked to give their opinion about the parent brand (Coke) on a 7-point scale (1 = poor, 7 = excellent). Next, respondents were introduced to the proposed extension (Coke Popcorn) and asked to give their evaluation of it on a two-item semantic differential 7-point scale (anchored at 1 = unfavorable/poor and 7 = favorable/excellent), followed by an open-ended question about their evaluation of the brand extension ("Even though you have never tried Coke Popcorn, what went through your mind when you were deciding if it would be a good product or a bad product? What reasons came to mind in trying to decide what kind of product it would be?"). Subsequently, subjects were asked to evaluate brand extension fit using a two-item semantic differential 7-point scale (anchored at 1 = Is inconsistent with Coke/Fits with Coke and 7 = Does not fit with Coke/Is

consistent with Coke), similar to scales used in previous brand extension studies (e.g., Loken and John 1993; Monga and John 2007).

In the next section of the survey, the participants' mood was evaluated through the question "To what extent do you currently feel the following?" using an 8-item scale (e.g. upset, joyful) and a 5-point scale ranging from 1 = "Very slightly or not at all" to 5 = "Extremely". Then, the subjects completed fluency measures (example item: "When I was thinking about Coke Popcorn, I found the idea to be: 1 = Difficult to understand, 7 = Easy to understand"; Keller and Block 1997; Lee and Aaker 2004; Petrova and Cialdini 2005), parent brand familiarity (1 = Not familiar at all, 7 = Very familiar), parent brand attitude (1 = poor, 7 = excellent), and brand liking (1 = I don't like it at all, 7 = I like it very much).

In the last section, participants were asked to complete a socio-political ideology scale where they had to indicate the degree to which they were either in favor or against 7 politically relevant issues (e.g. gun control, same-sex marriage; Kidwell et al. 2013) measured on a 7-point scale (1 = strongly against, 7 = strongly in favor) where higher numbers represent a conservative ideology and lower numbers represent a liberal ideology ( $\alpha = .78$ ). One item was dropped from the analysis due a low item to total correlation (.22). Finally, styles of thinking was measured using the "Locus of Attention" dimension of the Analytic/Holistic scale (Choi et al. 2007), which measures focus on context. Participants indicated

their agreement with six statements (e.g., “It is more important to pay attention to the whole rather than the parts” anchored at 1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree;  $\alpha = .78$ ). One item was dropped due to low item to total correlation (.30).

## RESULTS

All dependent measures were analyzed using OLS regression analysis with political ideology, mindset, and the 2-way interaction as independent variables. Correlation between the independent variables was non-significant ( $r = .08$ , *ns.*) eliminating potential problems of multicollinearity and cross-variable dependency. Main descriptive statistics are in Appendix B.

*Brand extension evaluation.* A significant political ideology x mindset interaction emerged ( $\beta = -.27$ ;  $p < .05$ ). In order to explore this interaction, we followed the procedure proposed by Dawson (2013). Predicted values for the dependent variable (extension evaluation) are calculated under each combination of high and low level of the independent variables (low political ideology-low style of thinking, and so on). High and low levels are normally evaluated one standard deviation above and below the mean ( $SD_{\text{political ideology}} = 1.16$ ;  $SD_{\text{style of thinking}} = .87$ ). Then, the significance of each contrast can be assessed with a simple slope tests, or calculating a new beta in a new regression with the variable evaluated +/- 1 SD.



Consistent with our hypothesis, in a holistic mindset, there was a significant effect of political ideology ( $\beta'_{\text{holistic}} = -.40; p < .05$ ), with liberal consumers evaluating the brand extensions significantly better than conservative consumers. In contrast, in an analytic mindset, there was no effect of political ideology ( $\beta'_{\text{analytic}} = -.07; p > .1$ ). See Figure 6.1.

*Ancillary analysis.* Additionally, for the overall current mood measures, the positive items were combined to form a measure of positive mood ( $\alpha = .92$ ) and the negative items were combined to form a negative mood measure ( $\alpha = .87$ ). The political ideology x mindset interaction did not affect positive mood ( $p > .1$ ) or negative mood ( $p > .1$ ).

Similarly, the political ideology x mindset interaction did not affect measures of fluency (all  $p$ 's  $> .1$ ), familiarity ( $p > .1$ ), liking ( $p > .1$ ), and parent brand attitude ( $p > .1$ ). These results suggest that our effects cannot be explained by these variables.

## DISCUSSION

Our results provide evidence to support our hypothesis that political ideology and mindset influence responses to dissimilar brand extension. In fact, our findings indicate that in a holistic mindset, liberal consumers evaluate brand extensions in a more favorable way than conservative consumers. Conversely, in an analytic mindset, no differences emerge between liberals and conservatives.

We ruled out some alternative explanations, showing that the effects are not caused by differences in mood, brand liking, brand familiarity, parent brand attitude, or fluency. To increase the generalizability of the results, the next study will replicate the effects using different stimuli and an online, adult sample.

As a follow-up, we explored similarity as a boundary condition for the effect of political ideology on brand extensions evaluation. We expected that no differences would emerge when higher fit brand extensions are used as a stimuli, because our expected results are proposed to arise given differences in novelty-seeking between liberals and conservatives. To test this, 64 undergraduate students evaluated Coke Caffeine Shots (a higher fit brand extension; fit mean = 4.77) using the same procedure as in study 1A. As expected, there was no significant political ideology x mindset interaction ( $\beta = -.01; p > .1$ ), and the effect of political ideology was not significant for the holistic or the analytic mindsets ( $\beta'_{\text{holistic}} = .06; p > .1; \beta'_{\text{analytic}} = .07; p > .1$ ). These results show support for the idea that differences between liberals and conservatives in evaluating brand extensions arise for dissimilar brand extensions.

## 6.2. STUDY 1B

The purpose of this study is to provide additional support for the effects proposed in our first hypothesis, using the same study design with a different brand (Honda), extension category (watches), and sample (adult). We expect to

replicate the key results obtained in Study 1A and rule out the possibility that our effects are due to something unique about the Coke brand.

#### SAMPLE AND STIMULI

One hundred and seventy six individuals (44.3% females) participated in exchange for a small payment. Subjects were recruited from a large online panel platform (Amazon Mechanical Turk) and were asked to complete a computer-based survey. Our predictions were tested in a 2 (political ideology: liberal, conservative) × 2 (mindset: analytic, holistic) design, where both factors were measured. Honda watches was chosen as the stimuli based on a pretest showing that it was perceived to be a dissimilar brand extension (Fit rating = 2.88 on a 7-point scale, where higher numbers indicate higher levels of fit).

#### PROCEDURE AND MEASURES

The procedure for this study followed the same procedure as the one presented in Study 1A. Due to time constraints, participants only completed measures of brand extension evaluation, political ideology, and mindset using the same scales described in Study 1A. However, we included an additional measure of political ideology, a single item scale measuring political orientation (1 = very liberal; 5 = very conservative; Carney et al. 2008; Thorisdottir and Jost 2011). Brand extension fit was measured on a 7-point scale, where higher numbers indicated higher levels of fit.

## RESULTS

All dependent measures were analyzed using an OLS regression analysis with political ideology, mindset, and their interaction term as independent variables. Correlation between the independent variables was non-significant ( $r = -.06$ ; *ns.*) eliminating potential problems of multicollinearity and cross-variable dependency. Main descriptive statistics are in Appendix B.

*Brand extension evaluation.* A significant political ideology x mindset interaction emerged ( $\beta = -.19$ ;  $p < .05$ ). In order to explore this interaction, high and low levels of the independent variables were calculated one standard deviation above and below the mean ( $SD_{\text{political ideology}} = 1.33$ ;  $SD_{\text{style of thinking}} = 1.14$ ) and then were used as the regression terms. The result for the new set of regressions evaluated at high and low levels of the independent variables showed a significant effect of political ideology for individuals under a holistic mindset ( $\beta'_{\text{holistic}} = -.26$ ;  $p < .05$ ), with liberals evaluating the brand extension significantly better than conservatives, while no effect was found for individuals under an analytic mindset ( $\beta'_{\text{analytic}} = .16$ ;  $p > .1$ ). See Figure 6.2.

*Brand extension fit.* There were no significant effects ( $p$ 's  $> .1$ ).

*Ancillary analysis.* Using the alternative measure of political ideology, a significant political ideology x mindset interaction on brand extension evaluation emerged ( $\beta = -.27$ ;  $p < .05$ ). The contrast showed a marginally significant effect of

political ideology for individuals under a holistic mindset ( $\beta'_{\text{holistic}} = -.31; p < .1$ ), with liberals evaluating the brand extension significantly better than conservatives, while no effect was found for individuals under an analytic mindset ( $\beta'_{\text{analytic}} = .29; p > .1$ ).

## DISCUSSION

Results of Study 1B provide additional evidence to support our hypothesis that political ideology and mindset influence responses to a dissimilar brand extension. We replicate the effects with a different type of sample and a different parent brand and extension category. Overall, our findings indicate that in a holistic mindset, liberal consumers evaluate brand extensions in a more favorable way than conservative consumers. Conversely, in an analytic mindset, no such differences emerge between liberal and conservative consumers.

As a follow-up, we explored similarity as a boundary condition for the effect of political ideology on brand extensions evaluation, expecting no significant results for a higher fit brand extension. To test this, 84 participant from an online panel evaluated Honda Buses (a higher fit brand extension; fit mean = 4.46) using a similar procedure as reported in study 1B. As expected, there was no significant political ideology x mindset interaction ( $\beta = .03; p > .1$ ), and no significant effects of political ideology emerged for either the holistic or

the analytic mindsets ( $\beta'_{\text{holistic}} = -.13; p > .1; \beta'_{\text{analytic}} = -.06; p > .1$ ). These results show additional support for the idea that differences between liberals and conservatives in evaluating brand extensions arise only for dissimilar brand extensions. In the remaining studies, we will focus only on dissimilar brand extensions.

In the next study, we prime analytic and holistic mindsets. Doing so allows us to eliminate confounds associated with measuring mindsets, and to provide a more stringent separation between analytic and holistic mindsets.

### **6.3. STUDY 2**

The purpose of this study is to test whether the hypothesis will be supported when mindset is manipulated instead of measured.

#### **SAMPLE AND STIMULI**

One hundred and sixty eight individuals (39.4% females) participated in exchange for payment. Subjects were recruited from a large online panel platform (Amazon Mechanical Turk) and were asked to complete a computer-based survey. Our predictions were tested in a 2 (political ideology: liberal, conservative)  $\times$  2 (style of thinking: analytic, holistic) design study. Political ideology was measured with the scale previously used in Study 1A (Kidwell et al. 2013) and mindset was primed with a standard procedure (Monga and John

2008). Participants were asked to evaluate a dissimilar brand extension (Honda watches).

## PROCEDURE AND MEASURES

The procedure was identical to the one presented in Study 1B except that styles of thinking were induced via priming. Consistent with Monga and John (2008), analytic mindset was manipulated by asking participants to observe an image (Panel A) that contained 11 objects (e.g. fish, iron, telescope), and to find these objects in a second, larger image (Panel B) that contained these objects embedded in a larger scene. Both, panel A and B were shown simultaneously on the screen and participants were able to select areas of Panel B (by clicking on them) where they found the hidden objects shown on Panel A. Finding embedded objects encourages field independence (Monga and John 2008), which is a relevant aspect of analytic thinking (Nisbett et al. 2001). Holistic mindset was manipulated by asking participants to look at the same scene (only Panel B) and to write about what they saw in the image as a whole. Participants were specifically instructed to focus on the background of the picture to encourage field dependence (Monga and John 2008), which is a relevant aspect of holistic thinking (Masuda and Nisbett 2001). Next, participants were exposed to the brand extension. Subjects were then asked to complete measures of brand

extension evaluation, brand extension fit, political ideology, and mindset using the same scales described in Study 1A.

## RESULTS

All dependent measures were analyzed using OLS regression analysis with political ideology, styles of thinking (primed), and their interaction term as independent variables. Main descriptive statistics are in Appendix B.

*Brand extension evaluation.* A significant political ideology x style of thinking two-way interaction emerged ( $\beta = -.33; p < .05$ ). In order to explore this interaction, a spotlight analysis was conducted at one standard deviation above and below the mean of the continuous variable ( $SD_{\text{political ideology}} = 1.35$ ; Fitzsimons 2008). In a holistic mindset, liberal consumers evaluated the brand extension more favorably than conservative consumers ( $\beta'_{\text{holistic}} = -.31; p < .01$ ). However, in analytic mindset, no significant differences emerged between liberal and conservative consumers ( $\beta'_{\text{analytic}} = .02; p > .1$ ). See Figure 6.3.

*Brand extension fit.* We found no significant results for the 2-way interaction as well as for the individual slopes in the analytic or holistic conditions ( $p's > .1$ ).

## DISCUSSION

Our findings corroborate our hypothesis that political ideology and mindset affect brand extension evaluation. Importantly, the findings emerged



even when mindset was primed instead of measured, showing that our results in prior studies are not due to confounds. Overall, our findings indicate that when consumers are primed to think holistically, liberal consumers evaluate dissimilar brand extensions in a more favorable way than conservative consumers. Conversely, when consumers are primed to think analytically, no differences emerged.

In the following studies, we will explore the underlying process mechanism. If our effects are being driven by the activation of political ideologies in the holistic mindset, but not in the analytic mindset, we expect that the mindset x political ideology interaction is more likely to emerge when political ideology is central to the self. When political ideologies are less central, the interaction is less likely to emerge.

#### **6.4. STUDY 3**

##### **SAMPLE AND STIMULI**

One hundred and fifty six undergraduate students (64.1% females) were recruited from a southern university in exchange for class credit. Our predictions were tested in a 2 (political ideology: liberal, conservative) x 2 (mindset: analytic, holistic) x 2 (centrality: low, high) design, where both political ideology and centrality were measured and mindset was primed. Participants were asked to evaluate a proposed dissimilar brand extension (Coke Popcorn).

## PROCEDURE AND MEASURES

The procedure was identical to that in Study 2. Mindset was manipulated using the same tasks as in our previous study (Monga and John 2008). After responding to the brand extension, participants responded to the political ideology scale used in Study 1A (Kidwell et al. 2013). Also, participants responded to a 5-point single-item political orientation scale (very liberal, liberal, moderate, conservative, and very conservative). The responses to this item were embedded into the items used ideology centrality. Specifically, political orientation centrality was measured with two 7-point items: “I consider that being [previous response embedded]...” 1 = Does not describe me at all/Does not have any influence on my day to day decisions, 7 = Describes me very well/Has a relevant influence on my day to day decisions (adapted from Verplanken and Holland 2002). An index was created averaging the two items as they show a high and significant level of correlation ( $r = .73; p < .01$ ).

## RESULTS

All dependent variables were analyzed using OLS regression analysis with political ideology, political orientation centrality, mindset (as a categorical variable), and all the 2-way and 3-way interaction terms as independent variables. Correlation between the measured independent variables was non-significant ( $r = .00; ns.$ ) eliminating potential problems of multicollinearity and

cross-variable dependency (correlation between political ideology centrality and political ideology converted to the deviation from the mean or the deviation from the scale middle point, was significant but very low [ $r = .26; p < .01$ ;  $r = .25; p < .01$ ], this confirms the independence of the two constructs). Main descriptive statistics are in Appendix B.

*Brand extension evaluation.* A significant political ideology x mindset x centrality three-way interaction emerged ( $\beta = -.29; p < .01$ ). In order to explore this interaction, we follow the procedure proposed by Dawson (2013). Predicted values and the effect of the main independent variable are calculated for each combination of high and low levels of the moderators. High and low levels for the continuous variables are evaluated one standard deviation above and below the mean ( $SD_{\text{political ideology}} = 1.28$ ;  $SD_{\text{centrality}} = 1.841$ ), and different levels of analysis for the categorical variables are given by the dummy coding of the manipulation (0 = analytical, 1 = holistic). Then, the significance of the relevant contrast can be assessed with a simple slope tests, or calculating a new beta in a new regression with the variable evaluated in the defined levels of analysis.

Our analysis revealed a significant political ideology x mindset interaction when centrality was high ( $\beta'_{\text{high centrality}} = -.69; p < .01$ ), but not when it was low ( $\beta'_{\text{low centrality}} = .37; p > .1$ ).

When centrality was *high*, liberal consumers evaluated the brand extension more favorably than conservative consumers in a holistic mindset ( $\beta'_{\text{holistic}} = -.48; p < .01$ ). However, no differences emerged between liberal and conservative consumers in an analytic mindset ( $\beta'_{\text{analytic}} = .21; p > .1$ ). These findings replicate our results from prior studies. See Figure 6.4.

When centrality was *low*, no differences emerged between liberal and conservative consumers in an analytic mindset ( $\beta'_{\text{analytic}} = -.14; p > .1$ ), nor in a holistic mindset ( $\beta'_{\text{holistic}} = .23; p > .1$ ). See Figure 6.5.

*Brand extension fit.* Our analysis showed no significant 3-way interaction, no significant 2-way interactions in either the low and the high centrality conditions, and also no significant slopes for any combination of political ideology and mindsets ( $p$ 's  $> .1$ ).

*Ancillary analysis.* The data was reanalyzed using the one item scale of political orientation used in Study 1B. A non-significant but directional political ideology x mindset x centrality interaction ( $\beta = .36; p > .1$ ) emerged, and the contrasts were in the expected pattern. When centrality was *high*, liberal consumers evaluated the brand extension more favorably than conservative consumers in a holistic mindset ( $\beta'_{\text{holistic}} = -.55; p < .05$ ). All other contrasts were not significant (all  $p$ -values  $> .1$ ).

## DISCUSSION

Our results provide support for the underlying process mechanism. We find that when centrality is high, the predicted interaction of ideology and mindset emerges, whereas when centrality is low, the interaction dissipates. Our results show evidence for the process mechanism. We have proposed that a holistic mindset, unlike an analytic mindset, is likely to make consumers focus in their own political ideology. Support for this was provided by showing that our results are more likely to emerge when political ideology is central to the self. When political ideologies are less central to the self, the predicted interaction between mindset and political ideology dissipates.

### 6.5. STUDY 4

In this study, we investigate our third hypotheses (H3) and examine whether novelty-seeking goals are responsible for the differences observed between liberals and conservatives in a holistic mindset.

Creativity has been closely linked with novelty-seeking. Silvestro (1977) showed that preference for novelty was diminished and novelty-seeking goals were effectively satiated by a preceding “divergent thinking task,” (Friedman and Forster 2001; Seibt and Forster 2004; Nusbaum and Silvia 2011).

## SAMPLE AND STIMULI

One hundred and seventy eight undergraduate students (61.8% females) were recruited from a southern university in exchange for class credit. Our predictions were tested in a 2 (political ideology: liberal, conservative) × 2 (mindset: analytic, holistic) × 2 (goal satiation: low, high) design, where political ideology was measured (Kidwell et al. 2013), mindsets were primed, and goal satiation was manipulated. Participants were asked to evaluate a proposed dissimilar brand extension (Coke Popcorn).

## PROCEDURE AND MEASURES

The procedure was similar to that in Study 2, but participants were exposed to a goal satiation task, either low or high, prior to exposure to the brand extension. In the *high* goal satiation condition, participants were asked to work in a standard creativity task, responding to a set of problems from the remote associates test (Mednick 1962; Monga and Gurhan-Canli 2012). This task consists of finding a concept that is related to three words that are provided (e.g. “skate,” “cream,” “water”). In this example the correct answer could be “ice” (ice skate, ice-cream, and ice water). For those in the *low* goal satiation condition, the same sets of words were provided, but they were requested to read the concepts, and not to perform any special task with them.

## RESULTS

All dependent variables were analyzed using OLS regression analysis with political ideology, mindset and goal satiation (as categorical variables), and all the 2-way and 3-way interaction terms as independent variables. Main descriptive statistics are in Appendix B.

*Brand extension evaluation.* A marginally significant political ideology x mindset x goal satiation three-way interaction emerged ( $\beta = .71; p < .1$ ). Following same procedure that was used in Study 3 (Dawson 2013), the nature of this interaction was explored. High and low levels for the continuous variables are evaluated one standard deviation above and below the mean ( $SD_{\text{political ideology}} = 1.21$ ), and different levels of analysis for the categorical variables are given by the dummy coding of the manipulation (for mindsets: 0 = analytical, 1 = holistic; for goal satiation: 0 = low [task absent], 1 = high [task present]). Then, the significance of the relevant contrast can be assessed with a simple slope tests, or calculating a new beta in a new regression with the variable evaluated in the defined levels of analysis.

In the *low* goal satiation condition, liberal consumers evaluated the brand extension more favorably than conservative consumers in a holistic mindset ( $\beta'_{\text{holistic}} = -.38; p < .05$ ). However, no differences emerged between liberal and

conservative consumers in an analytic mindset ( $\beta'_{\text{analytic}} = .01; p > .1$ ). These findings replicate our results from prior studies. See Figure 6.6.

When goal satiation is *high*, no differences emerged between liberal and conservative consumers in an analytic mindset ( $\beta'_{\text{analytic}} = -.15; p > .1$ ), nor in a holistic mindset ( $\beta'_{\text{holistic}} = .17; p > .1$ ). See Figure 6.7.

*Brand extension fit.* Our analysis showed no significant 3-way interaction, no significant 2-way interactions in either the low and the high goal satiation conditions, and also no significant slopes for any combination of political ideology and mindsets ( $p's > .1$ ).

*Other measures.* Our analysis showed no significant 3-way interaction, no significant 2-way interactions in either the low and the high goal satiation conditions, and also no significant slopes for any combination of political ideology and mindsets using cognitive rigidity, short-term thinking, routine seeking, and emotional reactions as dependent variables ( $p's > .1$ ).

*Confound Check.* In order to assess whether cognitive resources were depleted when the goal satiation task as high versus low, we analyzed reaction times for brand extension evaluation and fit, as well measures of estimated effort and difficulty to process the proposed brand extension. In particular, an ANOVA analysis was performed with goal satiation as a factor and several dependent measures. No significant differences emerged for time to evaluate the extension



( $F = .017$ ), time to evaluate the fit with the parent brand ( $F = .30$ ), effort ( $F = .19$ ), ease of imagining the extension ( $F = .01$ ), and difficulty of creating a mental image of the extension ( $F = .02$ ; all  $p$ -values  $> .1$ ). This provides some evidence that cognitive load was not a cause of the proposed effects. If the cognitive resources had been depleted, we would expect shorter response times, and differences in amount of effort when the goal satiation is high (vs. low goal satiation).

## DISCUSSION

Our results provide support for the underlying process mechanism. We find that when novelty-seeking goals are not satiated, the predicted interaction of ideology and mindset emerges, whereas when novelty-seeking goals are satiated, the interaction dissipates. Our results show evidence for the process mechanism based on the liberals' need to seek for novelty.

### 6.6. STUDY 5

In this study, we continue to investigate our third hypotheses (H3) by using an alternative way to observe satiation of novelty-seeking needs. We used a different divergent thinking task. In order to achieve this objective, we asked participants to complete a task where they needed to imagine alternative uses for standard objects (a brick, a pen).

## SAMPLE AND STIMULI

Two hundred and sixteen undergraduate students (58.2% females) were recruited from a southern university in exchange for class credit. Our predictions were tested in a 2 (political ideology: liberal, conservative) x 2 (mindset: analytic, holistic) x 2 (goal satiation: low, high) design, where political ideology was measured, mindsets were primed, and goal satiation was manipulated. Participants were asked to evaluate a dissimilar brand extension (Coke Popcorn).

## PROCEDURE AND MEASURES

The procedure was similar to the one used in Study 4, but participants were asked to perform a different goal satiation task. In the *high* goal satiation condition, participants were asked to work in a two-stage task. The task read as follows: “List as many different uses for a brick that you can think of. Be as imaginative as possible”. After participants finish this task, a second task will be presented: “Now list as many different uses of a pencil that you can think of. Once again, be as imaginative as possible” (Silvestro 1970; Friedman and Forster 2001; Seibt and Forster 2004; Nusbaum and Silvia 2011). For those in the *low* goal satiation condition, participants were asked only to read the same words.

## RESULTS

All dependent variables were analyzed using OLS regression analysis with political ideology, mindset and goal satiation (as categorical variables), and

all the 2-way and 3-way interaction terms as independent variables. Main descriptive statistics are in Appendix B.

*Brand extension evaluation.* The political ideology x mindset x goal satiation three-way interaction was not significant ( $\beta = -.34; p > .1$ ). However, since we have theory based *a priori* hypothesis, we examined the contrasts to test the hypothesis. Following the same procedure that was used in Study 3 (Dawson 2013), high and low levels for the continuous variables are evaluated one standard deviation above and below the mean ( $SD_{\text{political ideology}} = 1.23$ ), and different levels of analysis for the categorical variables are given by the dummy coding of the manipulation (for mindsets: 0 = analytical, 1 = holistic; for goal satiation: 0 = low [task absent], 1 = high [task present]). Then, the significance of the relevant contrast can be assessed with a simple slope tests, or calculating a new beta in a new regression with the variable evaluated in the defined levels of analysis.

In the *low* goal satiation condition, liberal consumers evaluated the brand extension more favorably than conservative consumers when using a holistic mindset ( $\beta'_{\text{holistic}} = -.47; p < .05$ ). However, no differences emerged between liberal and conservative consumers in an analytic mindset ( $\beta'_{\text{analytic}} = .04; p > .1$ ). These findings replicate our results from prior studies. See Figure 6.8.

When goal satiation is *high*, no differences emerged between liberal and conservative consumers in an analytic mindset ( $\beta'_{\text{analytic}} = -.10; p > .1$ ), nor in a holistic mindset ( $\beta'_{\text{holistic}} = .04; p > .1$ ). See Figure 6.9.

Due to the difficulty of finding a three-way interaction when the expected effect is driven only by one condition, the analysis of the effects of the two-ways interactions involved is relevant. Considering independent samples by task condition and by priming condition helps to understand the nature of the proposed effects. Reinforcing the previous findings for the relevant contrasts, the two-way interaction for ideology  $\times$  mindsets is significant in the low satiation condition ( $\beta'_{\text{low satiation}} = -.50; p < .05$ ). Conversely, the same two-way interaction is not significant in the high satiation condition ( $\beta'_{\text{high satiation}} = -.06; p > .1$ ).

*Brand extension fit.* Our analysis showed no significant 3-way interaction, no significant 2-way interactions in either the low and the high goal satiation conditions, and also no significant slopes for any combination of political ideology and mindsets ( $p's > .1$ ).

*Other measures.* Our analysis showed no significant 3-way interaction, no significant 2-way interactions in either the low and the high goal satiation conditions, and also no significant slopes for any combination of political ideology and mindsets using dependent variables as cognitive rigidity, short-term thinking, routine seeking, and emotional reactions ( $p's > .1$ ).

*Confound Check.* In a similar way as we tested confounds in study 4, we conducted ANOVA with goal satiation as a factor and several dependent measures. No significant differences were found for time to evaluate the extension ( $F = 1.077$ ), time to evaluate the fit with the parent brand ( $F = .145$ ), effort ( $F = .014$ ), ease of imagining the extension ( $F = .099$ ), difficulty of creating a mental image of the extension ( $F = .845$ ), paying attention ( $F = 1.467$ ), motivation ( $F = 2.669$ ), and involvement ( $F = 2.160$ ; all  $p$ -values  $> .1$ ). This provides evidence that cognitive resources were not depleted while performing the divergent thinking task.

Additionally, an ANOVA analysis was performed to determine if the goal satiation task influenced analytic/holistic thinking. No significant differences were found for analytic/holistic score ( $F = .77$ ;  $p > .1$ ). This result supports the independence of the mindset priming task and the goal satiation.

## DISCUSSION

Our results provide additional support for need to seek for novelty as the underlying process mechanism. We found that, similarly to Study 4, when novelty-seeking goals are not satiated, the interaction of ideology and mindset emerges with the predicted pattern (liberal show a more favorable evaluation of dissimilar brand extensions under a holistic mindset, compared with conservatives), whereas when novelty-seeking goals are satiated, the interaction

dissipates. Our results confirm the previous evidence for the process mechanism based on the liberals' need to seek for novelty, using an alternative way to satiate liberal's goals.

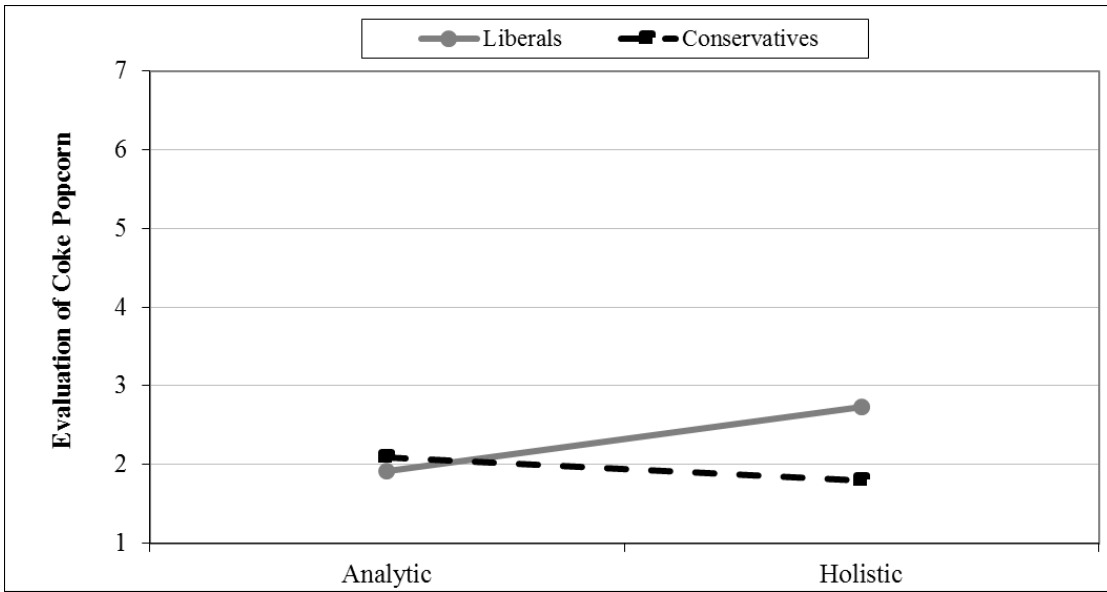


Figure 6.1. Results for Study 1A.

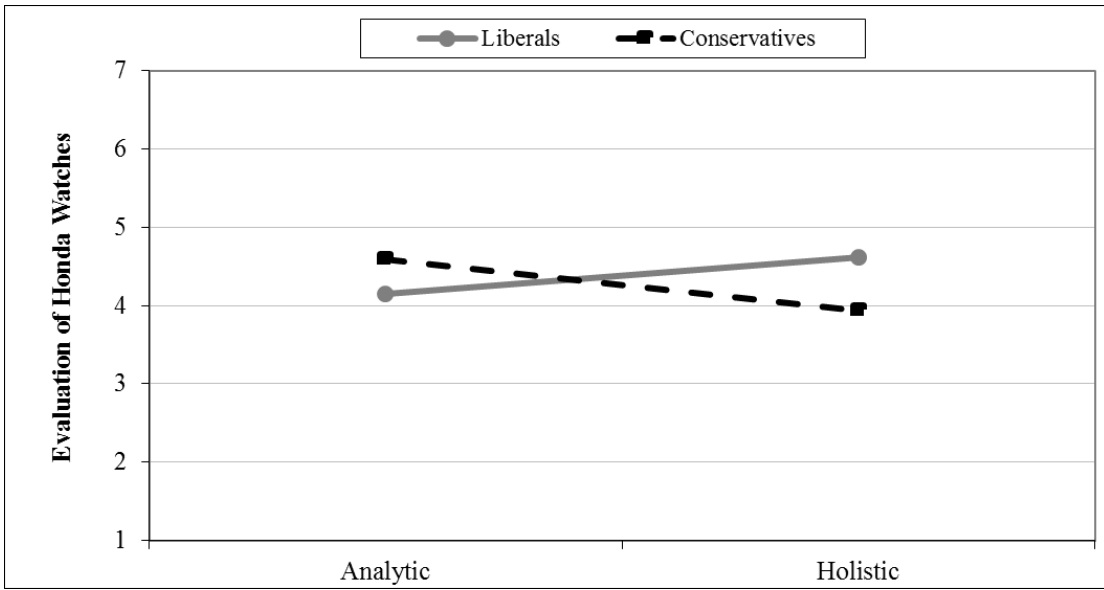


Figure 6.2. Results for Study 1B.



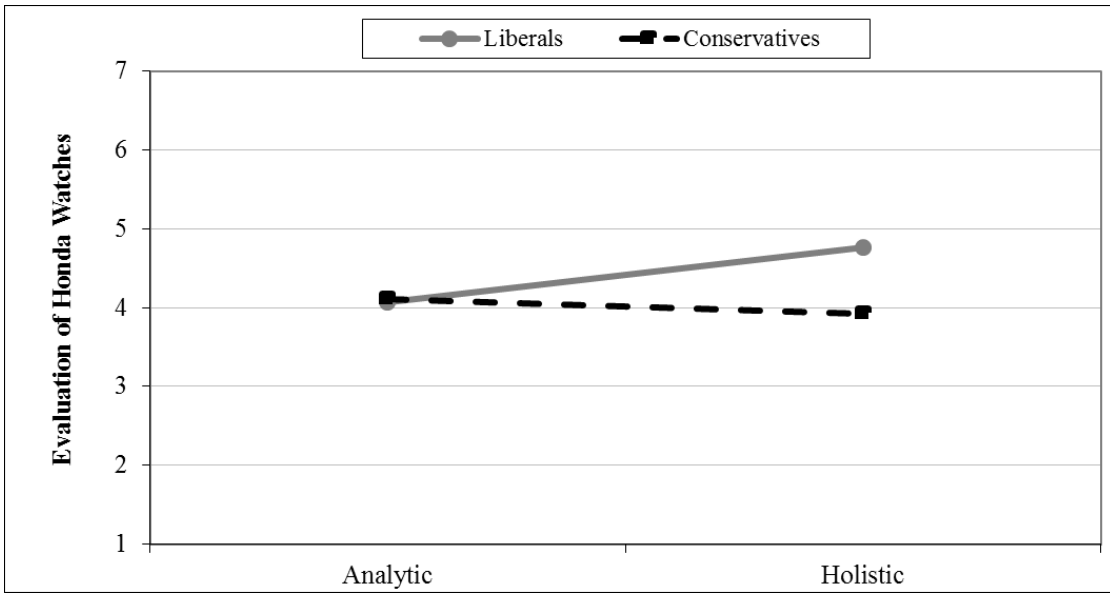


Figure 6.3. Results for Study 2.

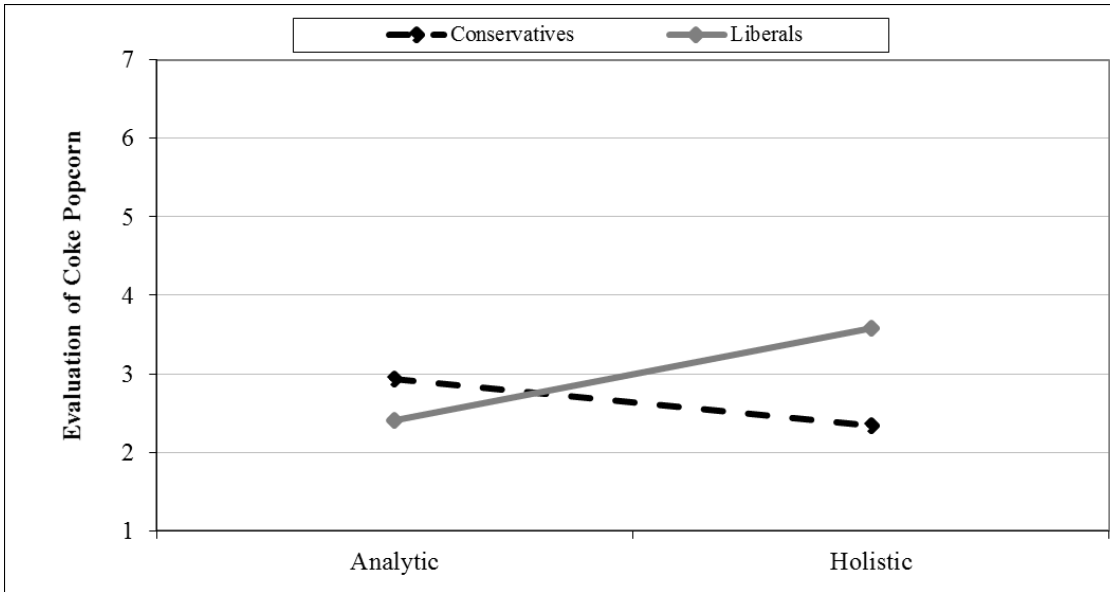


Figure 6.4. Results for Study 3 (High Centrality Condition).

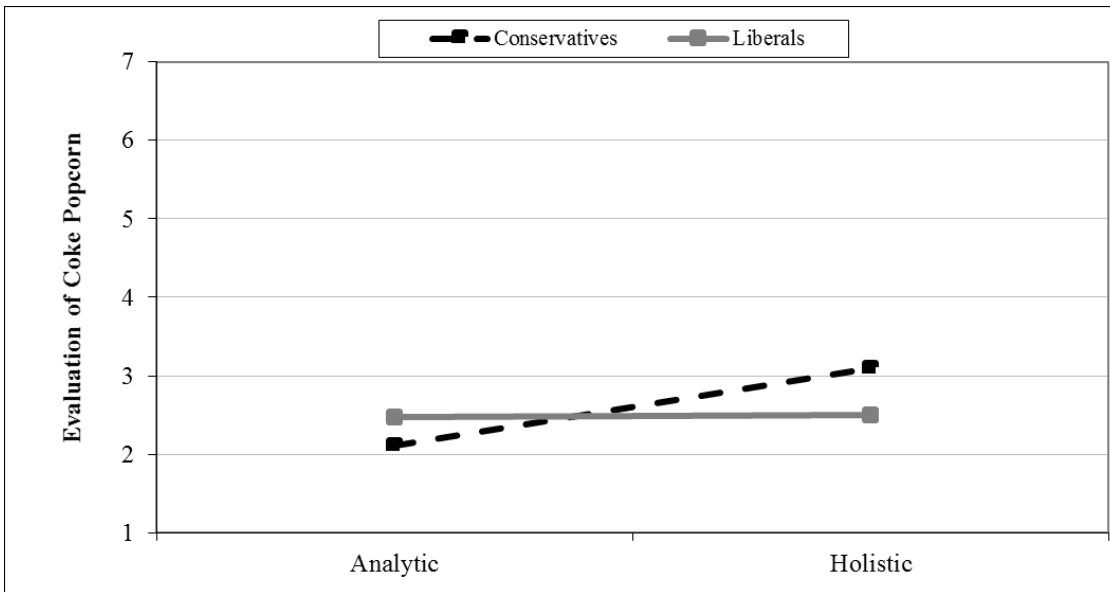


Figure 6.5. Results for Study 3 (Low Centrality Condition).

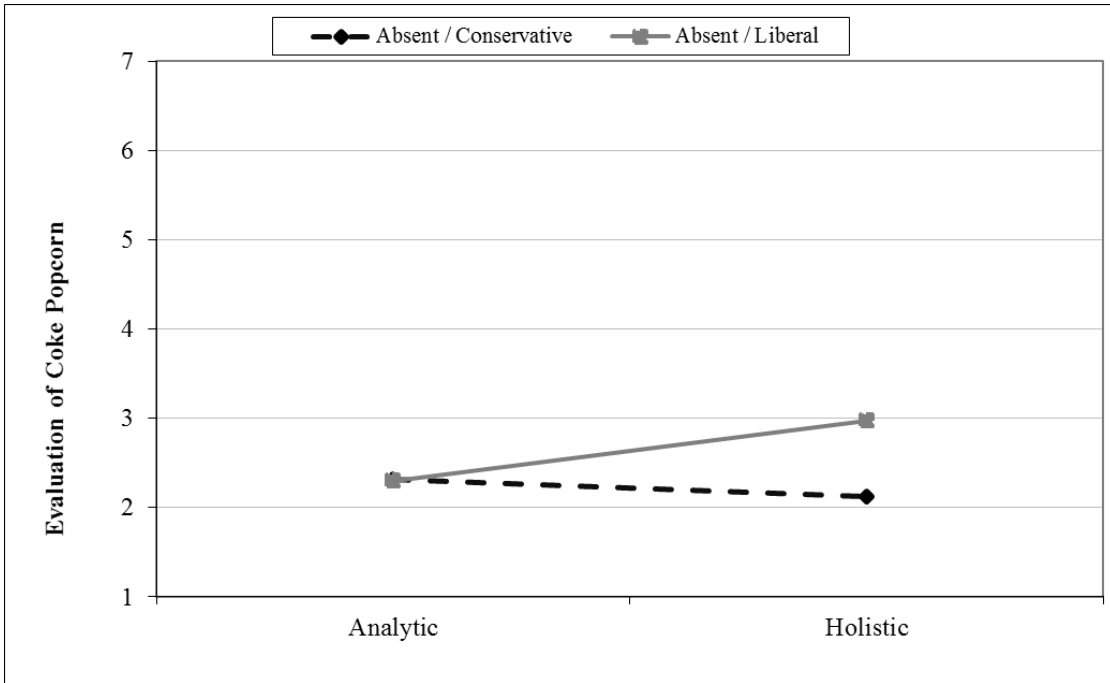


Figure 6.6. Results for Study 4 (Goal satiation low).

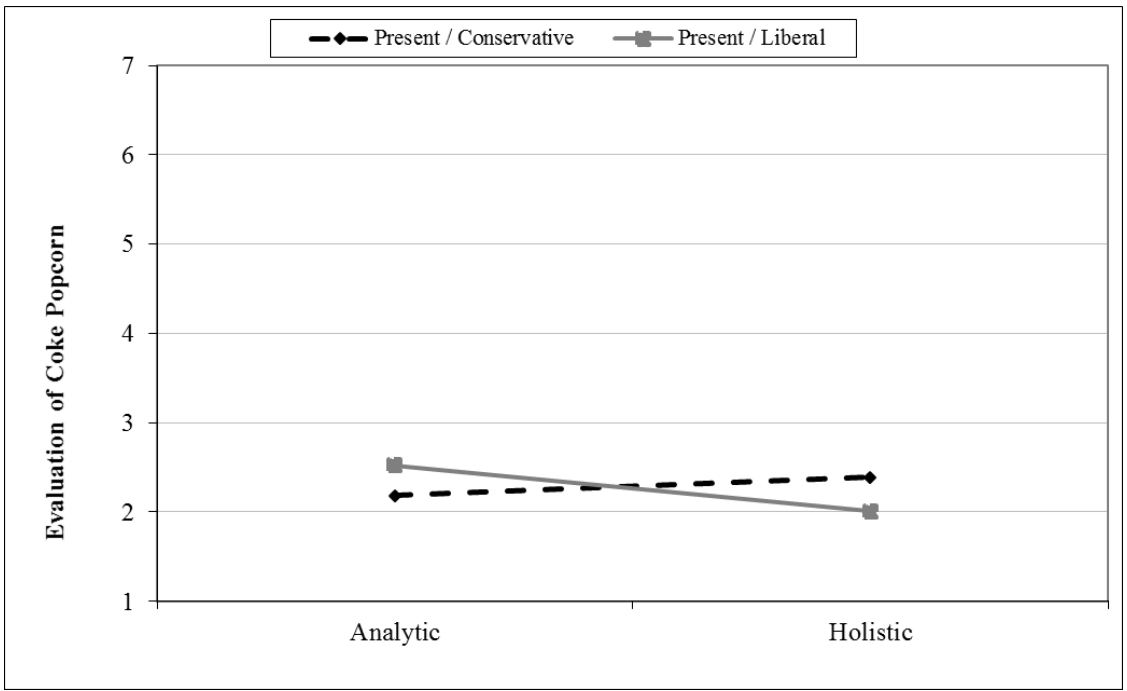


Figure 6.7. Results for Study 4 (Goal satiation high).

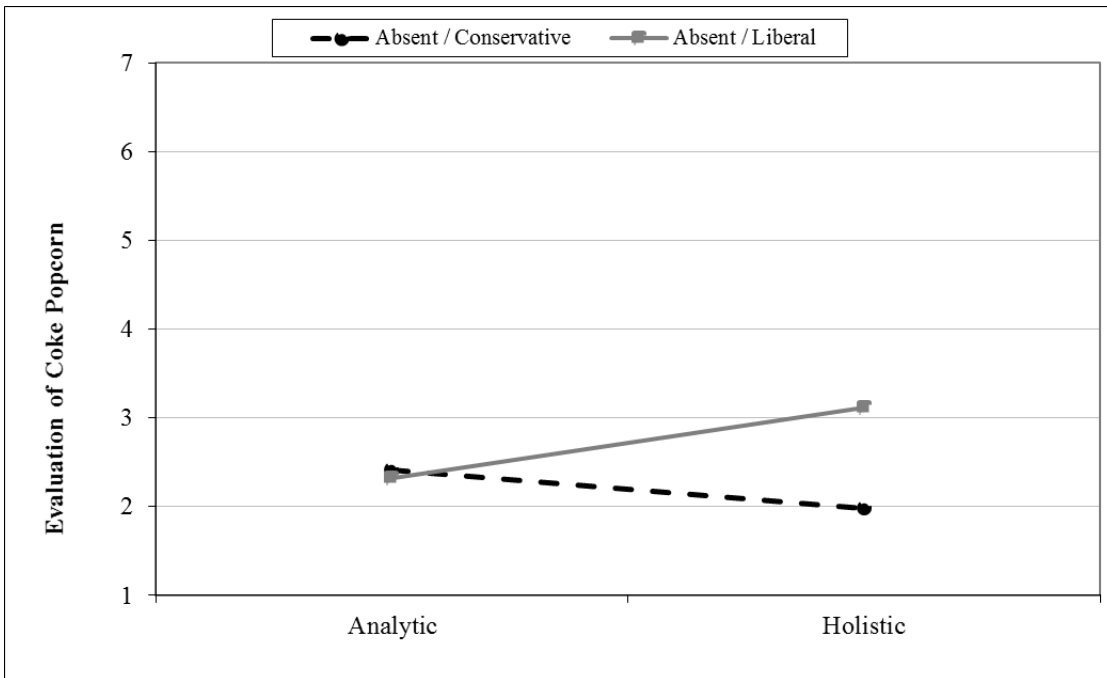


Figure 6.8. Results for Study 5 (Goal satiation low).

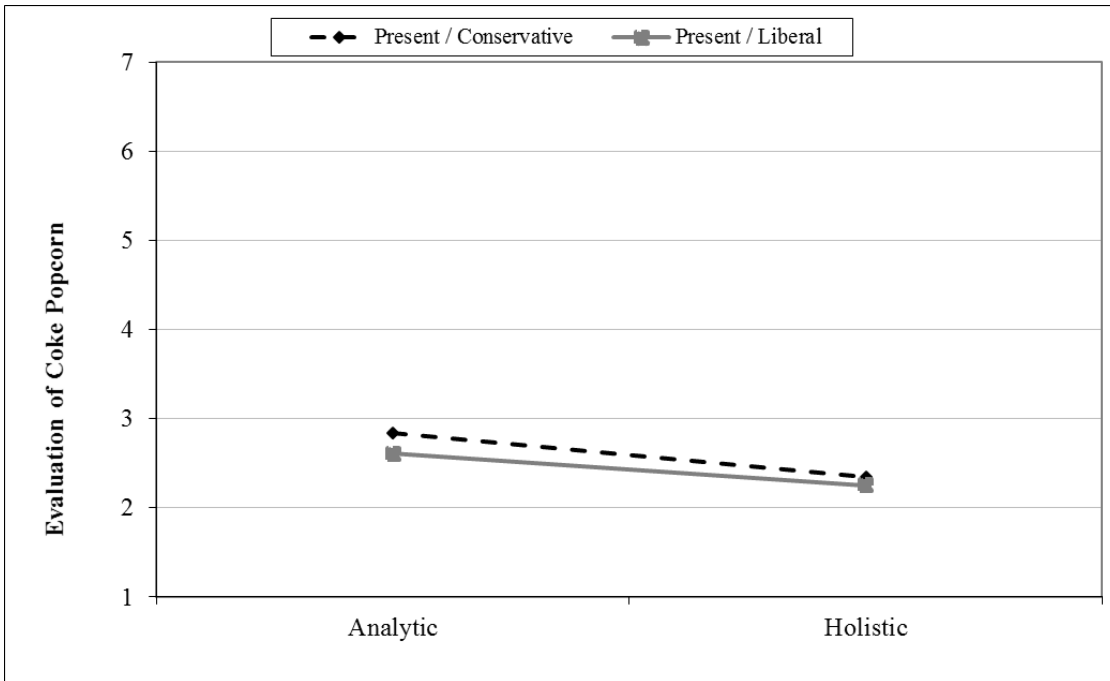


Figure 6.9. Results for Study 5 (Goal satiation high).

## Chapter 7.

### General Discussion

We have proposed and tested a conceptual approach on how and when political ideologies affect the evaluation of dissimilar brand extensions. In a series of six studies we showed that when thinking in a more holistic way, liberal consumers evaluate dissimilar brand extensions more favorably than conservative consumers. This results were consistent across different brands, categories of products, and nature of the samples, as well as when mindsets were either measured (Studies 1A and 1B) or induced through the manipulation of a priming task (Study 2). Furthermore, we showed that when political ideologies are not central to the self-concept, the effects on consumers' assessments of brand extension evaluations dissipate (Study 3). Finally, we demonstrated that the effects of political ideology are driven by the liberal consumers' need to seek novelty and creativity (Studies 4 and 5).

Considering the growing interest in studying the effects of political ideology in consumer behavior (Kidwell et al. 2013; Khan et al. 2013; Fernandes and Mandel 2014), this research is the first one to explore the effects of political



ideologies in the context of branding. It contributes to the brand extension literature by identifying political ideology as an important variable that affects the evaluation of dissimilar brand extensions. This research also contributes to the political psychology literature by showing that holistic thinking is an effective way to encourage the use of political ideologies in unrelated behavior and decision making. Also, this research helps to continue building the bridge between the political psychology and the marketing literatures by extending the findings of political differences to the marketing domain.

Our findings have direct implications for marketers managing brand extensions, and considering new product launches in categories that are not close to their usual markets. For example, in more holistic cultures, like Asian or Latin American cultures, liberals will be more accepting of dissimilar brand extensions compared with conservatives. Marketers and brand managers would prefer to launch new products that are low in fit in a more focalized way in those counties or regions where liberals predominantly live.

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## Appendix A

### Measurement Scales

#### Political Ideology

On the scales below, indicate the degree to which you either are for or against the following issues (1 = strongly against / 7 = strongly in favor):

- i. Capital Punishment
- ii. Abortion (rev)
- iii. Gun Control (rev)
- iv. Socialized Healthcare (rev)
- v. Same-sex Marriage (rev)
- vi. Illegal Immigration (rev)
- vii. Democrats (rev)

## Mindsets (Analytic and Holistic Thinking – Locus of Attention)

Please provide your level of agreement with each of the following statements (1 = strongly disagree / 7 = strongly agree):

- i. The whole, rather than its parts, should be considered in order to understand a phenomenon.
- ii. It is more important to pay attention to the whole rather than to the parts.
- iii. The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.
- iv. It is more important to pay attention to the whole context rather than the details.
- v. It is not possible to understand the parts without considering the whole picture.
- vi. We should consider the situation a person is faced with, as well as his/her personality, in order to understand one's behavior.

## Political Orientation

Please select the label that best describe your political point of view:

- i. 1 = very liberal; 2 = liberal; 3 = moderate; 4 = conservative; 5 = very conservative.

## Political Ideology Centrality

I consider that being [political orientation here]:

- i. 1= Does not describe me at all; 7 = Describes me very well.
- ii. 1= Does not have any influence on my day to day decisions; 7 = Has a relevant influence on my day to day decisions.

## Appendix B

### Descriptive Statistics for Studies

Main descriptive statistics and characteristics of the sample/variables for each study.

#### Study 1A

Sample size: 60. (Male = 51.7%; Female = 48.3%).

Nature of the sample: Undergraduate Students.

Political Ideology (scale, 6 items, 7-points): Mean = 4.54 (SD = 1.12); Alpha = .78.

Mindsets (scale, 5 items, 7-points): Mean = 4.27 (SD = .87); Alpha = .78.

Correlation Ideology/Mindsets:  $r = .08$  ( $p > .1$ ).

#### Study 1B

Sample size: 176. (Male = 55.7%; Female = 44.3%).

Nature of the sample: Online Panel.

Political Ideology (scale, 6 items, 7-points): Mean = 3.43 (SD = 1.33); Alpha = .74.

Mindsets (scale, 5 items, 7-points): Mean = 4.77 (SD = 1.14); Alpha = .89.

Correlation Ideology/Mindsets:  $r = -.06$  ( $p > .1$ ).

Political Orientation: (single item, 5-points): Mean = 2.47 (SD = .93).

Correlation Orientation/Mindsets:  $r = -.12$  ( $p > .1$ ).

## Study 2

Sample size: 168. (Male = 60.6%; Female = 39.4%).

Nature of the sample: Online Panel.

Political Ideology (scale, 6 items, 7-points): Mean = 3.56 (SD = 1.35); Alpha = .76.

Mindsets: Primed.

## Study 3

Sample size: 156. (Male = 35.9%; Female = 64.1%).

Nature of the sample: Undergraduate Students.

Political Ideology (scale, 6 items, 7-points): Mean = 4.20 (SD = 1.28); Alpha = .75.

Mindsets: Primed (2 levels: analytic/holistic).

Ideology Centrality (scale, 2 items, 9-points): Mean = 5.53 (SD = 1.84);  $r = .73$ .

Correlation Ideology/Centrality:  $r = .00$  ( $p > .1$ ).

Political Orientation: (single item, 5-points): Mean = 3.19 (SD = .85).

#### Study 4

Sample size: 178. (Male = 38.2%; Female = 61.8%).

Nature of the sample: Undergraduate Students.

Political Ideology (scale, 6 items, 7-points): Mean = 3.95 (SD = 1.12); Alpha = .67.

Mindsets: Primed (2 levels: analytic/holistic).

Novelty-Seeking Goal Satiation: Manipulated Task (2 levels: absent/present).

#### Study 5

Sample size: 216. (Male = 41.8%; Female = 58.2%).

Nature of the sample: Undergraduate Students.

Political Ideology (scale, 6 items, 7-points): Mean = 4.11 (SD = 1.23); Alpha = .71.

Mindsets: Primed (2 levels: analytic/holistic).

Novelty-Seeking Goal Satiation: Manipulated Task (2 levels: absent/present).