



Contemporary Research
in Irish Marketing

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Introduction

Welcome to the sixth edition of Contemporary Research in Irish Marketing from students of the B Sc Marketing at DIT for 2017. These abstracts of their dissertation work illustrates the range depth and rigor which characterizes the research undertaken by over one hundred students each year.

Often their first in-depth engagement with marketing research and practice comes with their final year dissertation task. The dissertation allows the students to define, shape and research a marketing issue in great depth, using leading-edge theory to formulate a research question. This question is examined 'out there' in the word of marketing industry practice and consumer reality through the use of appropriate research methods. Such an engagement with research defines and differentiates these graduates and their production of their 'black book' ensures that graduates have demonstrated the core marketing competences needed at the highest level.

Students have provided a summary or abstract of his or her work in their own words. Their academic supervisor is also listed. If you are interested in any particular work you should contact myself or the staff member concerned. Details can be found on <http://www.dit.ie/marketing/staff/>

This year the dominant themes included a focus on the generations, whether they be X, Y or Millennials, retro and luxury consumption and an array of explorations of social media's representation, presentation and influencers. A range of innovative theoretical and practical applications were used to enlighten these contemporary marketing issues.

I hope you find the students' work stimulating and interesting.



Roger Sherlock,

Head of Department of Marketing Studies,

DIT College of Business,

School of Marketing.



An Exploration of Materialism, Conspicuous Consumption and the Pursuit of Happiness within Generation's X and Y

Author: Mary Bohanna

Supervisor: Dr Kevina Cody

Abstract

"This confusion and failure to appreciate generational differences has created pop stereotypes and criticism from both the mass media and academia on its relevance to the diversity dialogue" (Arsenault, 2004, p.124). In today's society, both Generation X and Generation Y have been influenced and formed by various factors throughout their lifetime. This has led to the creation of two cohorts with a unique set of characteristics, attitudes, beliefs and value systems. Therefore, the importance in differentiating and recognising these two differing groups within society in order to conduct this study was seen. A literature review and a contextualisation chapter was carried out in order to provide a solid body of work relating to the topic and facilitate answering the overall research objective.

The aim of this research is to explore materialism, conspicuous consumption and happiness from an intergenerational perspective. A qualitative study was undertaken in which six semi-structured in-depth interviews took place. A mixture of individuals within generation X and generation Y was selected for this dissertation. The data gathered from this research led to the emergence of several themes which are discussed.

The results of this study indicate that there are different attitudes in regards to their consumption process and their views on materialism. Consumers within the older cohort of generation X felt that life is too short to not do what you want to do with the things they own. While generation Y expressed fear among their own age group about correctly engaging in consumption without being socially rejected by society. However, all respondents emphasised the importance of time spent with loved ones and the development of their social relationships in regards to their happiness.



An Exploration into Children's Understanding of Advertising in Relation to YouTube as a Marketing Channel

Author: Sinead Brennan

Supervisor: Dr. Margaret-Anne Lawlor

Abstract

In recent years, attention has been brought to the area of advertising to children. Young consumers are increasingly being targeted as their own segment. With this, comes concern given their level of understanding and vulnerability towards advertising. The concept of advertising to children has been a turbulent point of discussion given the extent of understanding and awareness children acquire.

Given the extent of the internet, marketers have been granted the opportunity to embrace new and innovative ways to target young consumers. Non- traditional forms of digital media have allowed advertisers to manufacture different points of contact such as, the video- sharing platform, YouTube. This scope of surface allows marketers to communicate directly and indirectly to young consumers through the use of video marketing. Today's children are growing up in a digitally obsessed world. They get to experience the always- on side of the internet. Children growing up in today's society are living in the YouTube generation (eMarketer, 2016). Through this, it broadens the ways marketers can reach individuals through online forums. The number of online activities that children associate and engage with have progressed into a broad range of areas. One of these areas is through online videos on social networking sites like YouTube (Montgomery & Chester, 2009).

In a digital world where everyone is a broadcaster and in ways an advertiser, this study aims to explore the video- sharing social media platform, YouTube as a medium in order to gain a clearer perspective on children's understanding and awareness of advertising in non- traditional forms.



An Exploration into Millennial's Perceptions of Democratised Luxury and the Motivations That Drive Their Luxury Consumption Practices.

Author: Ciara Byrne

Supervisor: Elaine Mooney

Abstract

The idea for this dissertation stemmed from the researcher's interest in this topic in the Consumer Behaviour module taken in her penultimate year. The main aim of this dissertation is to explore millennial's perceptions of the luxury concept, and to investigate their motivations for consuming luxury brands.

The literature review consists of three chapters; the first chapter introduces the concept of The Self and Extended Self, Symbolic, Status and Conspicuous Consumption. The second chapter includes ideas on the Luxury Concept; both traditional and contemporary, millennials as consumers and the democratisation of luxury and how it has become so accessible for consumers today. The third chapter of literature focuses on Pierre Bourdieu's forms of capital and how they affect the consumption behaviour of individuals.

A qualitative approach was chosen for this research and six in-depth interviews were conducted. Three male, and three female millennial consumers were chosen to take part in this study in order to obtain the fairest representation of results. Carrying out interviews allowed the researcher to gain deep insights into the millennials attitudes, opinions and feelings towards the topics being addressed. The findings illustrated that while traditional views of luxury are still existent in postmodern society, new ideas of luxury were identified. These included luxury as being an experience and affordable luxuries. The role of the internet was also found to have a significant effect on the democratisation or accessibility of luxury brands today. Findings for the motivations of the consumption of luxury brands also suggested that conspicuous consumption and status consumption are still relevant for millennials today.



How a Band and Their Fans Co-Create an Experience During a Live Concert Setting

Author: Lorna Clarkin

Supervisor: Dr. Tara Rooney

Abstract

The inspiration behind this dissertation was to explore the experience created by both musicians and fans during a live concert. Investigating the motivations and attitudes of the fans present at the event contributes to the understanding of how an experience is created. Moreover, the research aimed to highlight the process of experience during a live event.

This research was undertaken using a mixed methods approach to fully investigate every aspect of an experience. The primary research concludes a mixture of elements which when combined co-create an experience. These elements include external factors, the event and motivations. The research further clarifies the process of co-creation when creating an experience.

The findings of this research contribute to the current literature surrounding co-creation of experience in music.



Exploring the Client – Advertising Agencies Relationship through the Establishment of Media Planning Decision Making Processes

Author: Sinéad Comerford

Supervisor: Dr. Serge Basini

Abstract

This dissertation looks to address the decision making process which concerns the development of marketing campaigns, with a particular focus on media planning, while examining the relationship between advertising agencies and their clients.

There has become a greater need for understanding this relationship in recent years with lack of recent publications on the topic of relationship management of the client and advertising agency relationship, looking at their individual roles and contributions, while the marketing activity and campaign production decision making process has been a topical area of discussion.

From the semi structured interviews conducted, a process on campaign development can be defined, along with characteristics concerning how interrelated the process really is, requiring specialised expertise to ensure brand 'fit'.

Other findings consisted of the importance of empathy and trust in the structured but strategically flexible process, which has been influenced by digitalisation in recent years. It is argued from the research that relationship management and cooperation within this process is a vital element to achieve measurable success.



The Digital Bedroom: An Exploration Of Neotribal Identity Spaces On Instagram

Author: Sinead Downes

Supervisor: Dr. Olivia Freeman.

Abstract

Aim: The aim of this study is to observe and analyse the identities of a modern, tribal grouping on the social media site Instagram. I propose that the social media pages of two women and their respective followers resemble a tribe. The research takes into consideration previous research around subcultures and tribes along with identity spaces. The research focuses on females and, therefore, McRobbie's 'Girl's Bedrooms' was revisited, wherein the bedroom was used as a site for females to negotiate their own place in subcultures.

Approach: Kozinet's Netnographic analysis was carried out on the social media site Instagram. The visuals and texts that comprise two networks were observed and analysed. A covert stance was taken utilising the public data made available on the site. A sensitive and fair observation was given. An interpretive approach was taken in understanding the behaviours of the tribe. The thematic findings were then presented side by side followed by a discussion.

Findings: The findings uncovered that this non-traditional platform, Instagram, can be seen as providing a space for support. Instagram is being adopted by females to create a virtual space that encourages a mutual shared female bond. The research proposes that this space resembles a 'Digital Bedroom' akin to McRobbie's 'Girls' Bedroom'. The 'stylistic myth' that the tribes have formed serve to spread feminist values and offer an internal network of support for its members. This was made possible by the act of bricolage, the diversion of objects' symbolic meanings in order to form a homology that represented the tribe and how it viewed the world. This non-traditional medium shaping this modern virtual tribe.



Improving the Marketing Department's Performance: The Role of the Finance Function

Author: Ashling Devitt

Supervisor: Laura Cuddihy

Abstract

The main purpose of this undergraduate research dissertation is to answer the research question, as to what extent do marketing personnel believe that the finance personnel's involvement in the marketing department can positively influence its performance?

There is not a great amount of research conducted on this area, particularly quantitative research. Therefore, this dissertation entails utilising a quantitative measure, a survey to answer the research question.

The survey was distributed to over 100 marketers using snowball sampling. This method was chosen as access to marketers was difficult to attain and hence, this method was deemed most appropriate.

Current research by Verhoef et al. (2011) and Homburg et al. (2015) suggest that the recent recessionary times have resulted in marketing's importance declining within organisations. Marketers need to integrate with the finance function in order to be influential. Keown et al. (2014) also propose that finance should be taught in marketing so that students can be financially literate when they enter the marketing workforce.

The primary research findings reveal that finance personnel do play an important role in improving marketing's performance. The marketing and finance personnel do collaborate on a number of tasks and the organisational structure was found to have an impact on the inter-departmental relationship. In addition, teaching finance as part of a marketing course was deemed important by the majority of respondents.

The most noteworthy finding was that there is conflict present between the marketing and finance departments. This is because there is a lack of integration mechanisms in place.



An Investigation into the Effect of Using Social Media Influencers as Marketing Tools, on the 18-24-year-old Generation Y Female's Self Concept and Body Image

Author: Aedín Elsted

Supervisor: Dr. Serge Basini

Abstract

We live in an era that is profoundly dominated by the internet's power to influence and to connect the individuals of the world. The Generation Y cohort, often referred to as the Millennials, have been socialised to accept the internet's influence as the norm, as they have been born in to an age of a digitally obsessed era, thus receiving the label; the 'Digital Natives'.

This generation cohort resides on social media; the online meeting ground which has become of great interest to marketers in recent years due to its low cost effective way of advertising and establishing ecommerce sites. Many brands have identified business opportunities within the sea of social media such as endorsement deals, as they cunningly identified how the social media influencer can give rise to promotion and advertising from a new angle, by exerting soft influence rather than forceful power (Brown and Hayes, 2008) to their several thousand followers.

However, these social media platforms have in recent years become a virtual catalogue of a display of physical attributes and lifestyles, from which the generation Y female falls victim to social comparison. This study aims to investigate the effect of using social media influencers as marketing tools on the 18-24-year-old generation Y female's self concept and body image.



An Exploration of Recurring Visual Images on Instagram to Examine the Impact of Networked Technology on Social Norms

Author: Daragh Griffin

Supervisor: Dr. Ruth Casey

Abstract

Society is faced with new technologies that appear to be restructuring some of the ways of traditional communication, ways that society has become accustomed to such as social networking. Social networking is becoming more of a visualised experience. A user of Instagram is more visually aware of his or her surroundings having been provided with a smartphone that enables high-quality photographic experiences. This research provides an interpretation of contemporary social norms as a result of the ability to immediately visualise experience and upload the image on the social network Instagram. This research is influenced by the work of Nick Couldry (2012) who contemplated what the impact of evaluating each other's performances on social media would have on social norms.

This research uses a two-pronged qualitative strategy to enable the researcher to capture the complexity of the research. This qualitative strategy entails five semi-structured interviews with a sample whose age varies from 22 to 26, in conjunction with netnographic research. Netnographic research is used to collect a series of recurring images on Instagram which are used in the interviews for a visual analysis.

This research uses Gilles Deleuze's (1993) concept of the fold as an allegory to how Instagram produces subjective meaning. The addition of Deleuze's concept is essential to this research in extending Couldry's argument and emphasising the research's key findings. This research posits that when individuals upload content to Instagram, they contribute to the production of meaning. Four social norms are to emerge from this production of meaning: mediocrity and laziness, visual language, we the product, and becoming the features.



Exploring the Impact of Fitness Vlogs and Body Image in Young Men's Identities using Interviews.

Author: Jamie Hackett

Supervisor: Dr. Brendan O'Rourke

Abstract

The primary aim of this research is to explore the impact of fitness vlogging and body image in the self-identity of 18-22-year-old Irish men. Additionally, this research seeks to understand in greater detail the relationship between body image and fitness vlogs, the conceptualization of masculinity within fitness vlogs, the practice of social comparison and fitness vlogs and finally, the construction of self-identity and fitness vlogs.

Six in-depth interviews were conducted by the researcher with Irish males aged between 18-22 years' old who frequently consumed fitness vlogs. Upon analysing the interview transcripts it was found that when it comes to body image, fitness vloggers were seen as generally positive with the men regarding the vloggers as motivational.

However, when digging deeper into the discovery it was clear that offline, the men are constantly evaluating their own body image and engaging in social comparison with other men. This led to some of the participants feeling inferior and wanting to participate in a greater amount muscle building activities. Overall it was found that image was important for the participants which suggest that society in placing greater pressure on men to attain an unrealistic image standard.

Measuring Consumer-Based Brand Equity: Empirical Evidence Based on Fulfil Nutrition

Author: Shane Higgins

Supervisor: Dr. Adnan Velic

Abstract

The purpose of this research is to create a validated customer based brand equity model.

Companies place vast quantities of resources on branding strategies in order to build and maintain a strong brand equity. In order to develop a strong brand equity, it is imperative to be conscious of the underlying factors affecting brand equity and their outcome. Under recent years there have been an increase in consumption of sports nutrition products. Previous research has however laid little focus on what affects brand equity for companies in this industry.

Chapter One gives a brief introduction to the study. Chapter Two discusses and reviews previous literature related to the concepts surrounding brands, brand equity and marketing activities. Various approaches are examined and critiqued with different measurement techniques analysed. Chapter Three commences with an overview of previous theoretical concepts and details the structural model used in this study. The empirical methodology section in Chapter Four then communicates the main analytical approach that was utilized for the analysis process. This is followed by Chapter Five which details the data analysis that was conducted in this research paper. From this Chapter Six describes the conclusions that could be drawn from the research. Chapter Seven presents managerial implications of the study and highlights the limitations of this study along with recommendations for future research.

This project uses Fulfil as example to understand and comprehend the effects promotional activities and dimensions brand equity on consumer based brand equity. The main method adopted in this study was quantitative. A total of 130 respondents between 18 to 55+ years old were surveyed on their perceptions towards Fulfil Nutrition's brand. The results show that, four dimensions of brand equity (brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality and brand loyalty) have significant effects on brand equity; with brand loyalty proving most influential. It was also concluded that the five marketing mix activities examined (Perceived Price, Advertising Spending, Perceived Quality, Store Image and Frequency of Price Promotions) are mediated by the dimensions of brand equity.



The Rise of the Online Influencer: An Investigation into Parasocial Relationships between Online Influencers and their Followers

Author: Sarah Kavanagh

Supervisor: Dr. Tara Rooney

Abstract

The overall aim of this under-graduate research dissertation is to explore the effect of online influencer marketing, a rapidly growing marketing tool through the lens of parasocial interaction theory. This research intends to understand the attraction of participating in these parasocial relationships. It will also consider the developmental process and the common features found within these relationships.

The literature reviewed on parasocial interaction theory is primarily focused on relationships developed with television characters (Horton & Wohl, 1956, Rubin et al, 1985, Schiappa et al, 2006). However, through the years there has been a shift in media consumption towards online social media's.

Today, online influencers can be considered a new kind of celebrity. Due to the current and topical nature of the concept of online influencer there is very little previous literature on the subject. Nonetheless, literature on social influencer's as well as celebrity endorsement theory will provide this research with a context to explore.

In depth interviews were conducted with participants who interact daily with online influencers through various social media platforms.

The findings of this research refresh and modernize the current body of literature on parasocial relationships and influencer marketing and provide insight into how these relationships can best be utilized.



Luxury Never Goes Out of Fashion. Fresh Insights into Consumer's Eternal Search for 'In Vogue' Experiences

Author: Aaron Keenan

Supervisor: Dr. Alan McCormack

Abstract

Research strongly supports the view of luxury brand consumption transforming from its traditional base in 'materialistic existence' towards the new digital age of 'experiential luxury'. In this research dissertation, the author investigates the notion of 'Luxury Consumption' alongside the contemporary concepts of 'Self-Gifting' and 'Experiential Marketing'.

This empirical research builds upon existing research conducted within the area of luxury brand consumption. To achieve this aim, existing frameworks were advanced to develop an overall 'Luxury Brand Consumption Framework' (LBC). This modern framework could be utilized by marketing management of luxury brands to gain a fresh insight into the minds of their targeted consumers.

Quantitative methods of research (online survey, n=202) were performed to achieve this objective and to gain an insight into the consumption practices of those who 'indulge' in this phenomenon. The data was analysed using descriptive analysis and Pearson's Correlation tests.

The findings uncovered results on a demographic and socio-economic level, through a multitude of differences across variables. This research dissertation advanced current research within consumer decision-making and the underlying nature of luxury uncovered in a fashion context. In conclusion, the 'Luxury Brand Consumption' (LBC) scale was developed and tested to provide an overall index for the consumption patterns of contemporary consumers within the luxury market.



Old School Cool - An Explorative Study into the Consumption of Retro Commodities Amongst Members of the Millennial Generation

Author: Leanne Keegan

Supervisor: Grainne Murphy

Abstract

This research sets out to explore the reasons behind the increased consumption levels of retro commodities amongst members of the millennial generation.

Over the past number of years, retro marketing has become a common trend in the marketplace. Retro products enable people to reminisce and relive the days of their youth. This is one of the main factors that encourages consumers of older generations to purchase these products. However, this trend of consuming the past has also become increasingly popular amongst consumers of the millennial generation, despite them having no consumption experience or past relationships with many of the original products or brands. Therefore, this research aims to discover what attracts members of this generation to engage in the consumption of retro.

Furthermore, this research aims to uncover whether these young consumers use retro brands and products as a means of expressing their personal and social identity and whether or not they experience any feelings of nostalgia towards these possessions.

For this study, a blended research approach consisting of qualitative research and netnographic research was utilised. This two-phase method entailed a series of semi-structured in-depth interviews, supported by a netnographic analysis across the Instagram accounts of the subjects interviewed.

The findings discovered by the researcher following the analysis of the data generated was compared and contrasted with the discoveries of the literature review conducted.



An Exploration of the Relationship Between Body Image and Health Behaviours in Women

Author: Katie-Jane Myler

Supervisor: Roger Sherlock

Abstract

This study deals with issues of body concerns in relation to body image among women. The literature review discusses health behaviours, which includes, but is not limited to dieting and exercising. Body image is also a main focus with use of various phenomena including the 'thin ideal', thinspiration and fitspiration. These phenomena are then explored with use of Cultivation Theory. Finally, the understanding of how body image and health behaviours relate is explored via Social Comparison Theory and self-objectification. It was noted throughout the literature review that there was a significant gap in academic articles surrounding the everyday woman, the everyday issues and concerns of modern women in relation to body image and the health behaviours.

The main objective of the research is to gain an understanding into the relationship between health behaviours and body image from a female consumer perspective. Another goal of the research is to gain insight into the experiences of each respondent in relation to health behaviours and body image concerns from a female perspective.

This was carried out using a Qualitative method. Six women took part in in-depth interviews, to give insight into their personal experiences. Through the interview process it became apparent that even though both are considered health behaviours, the respondents spoke about dieting and exercise as two different issues, which do not relate to each other. This was interesting as it conflicted with evidence from the literature review. It was also found that though there is a major focus on body image and many issues surrounding it which the respondents face on a daily basis, it does not seem to have too much of a negative effect on their lives. They are all manageable concerns which can become accepted through maturity and understanding.



An Exploration Into Parenting Practices In A Gendered Consumer Culture: A Social Practice Theory Perspective

Author: Ryan McConnell

Supervisor: Dr Olivia Freeman

Abstract

The primary aim of this research was to examine how parents are knowingly or unknowingly gendering their children through the enactment of consumption. Research into children consumption have been studied extensively since Martens, Scott, & Southerton (2004) established that child (and parent) were missing in consumption studies. However, the parent has been left behind in regards to consumption studies. This paper attempts to build upon the studies of parents, by focusing on their gendered practices in consumer culture.

Through qualitative research, six long story/narrative interviews were conducted in order to research the topic. Respondents were asked to narrate their own lived experiences around parenthood, in order to build stories which provided rich interpretations of their lives as parents.

A social practice theory perspective was utilised to analyse and present the findings from the interviews. My dissertation aims to build upon the research conducted by Nairn & Spotswood (2015) as it attempts to apply parents gendered practices to the theoretical framework developed by Shove, Pantzar, & Watson (2012). My analysis outlines the development of gender meanings, materials and competencies which are adapted within the narratives of parenting practice through social interactions and social relationships.

The results of the primary research highlights how parenting practice is implicitly effected by gender as it emerged as a congregative aspect of how the respondents parented day to day. The results also underpinned how parents resisted or enforced the gender conforming behaviours of their children through their practices. This research posits that through consumption, parents engage in practices which accomplish a gendered childhoods. Gendered patterns emerged throughout the parent's stories, which enforced meanings of masculinity and femininity onto their children through the competencies of gender treatment, gender training and transgressive gendered parenting. The findings pointed to parents achieving a gender identity for their child which aligned with societal norms. However a shift emerged as parents innovated gender non conformity within their narratives. Thus portraying potential progress in diminishing strict gender structures in which society governs.



An Exploration Into The Performance Of The Self Identity Project Across Multiple Social Media Platforms

Author: Niamh Mc Fadden

Supervisor: Dr. Kevina Cody

Abstract

The following qualitative research aims to investigate how young adults portray their self-identity across multiple social media platforms. A circus analogy was used to understand the consumer's culture and the relevance social media sites are in consumers lives today. The juggler analogy explored how there can be different dimensions to the self and the juggling balls looked at the role brands and possessions played in their self-identity project, using congruity theory and symbolic interactionism.

An exploratory approach was used in this study to develop insights from the participants of the study. A pilot interview was conducted with a brand manager from a beverage brand to facilitate insights for the consumer interviews, a pilot consumer interview was conducted to ensure the interview would garner insights. Subsequently, eight interviews were conducted, half with males, half with females, half in their final year in college and half were in full-time employment. A netnography section to the interview showed e-collages to participants and their own sites were also discussed. A coding system of open coding, axial and selective coding and memo writing was used to understand the data from the study and help establish themes related to the research objectives.

The research found that consumers are portraying a different dimension of their self across their online platforms, their real self on Instagram, social self on Facebook and professional self on LinkedIn. The influence of those around them included peers, celebrities and their social world influenced the development of their self-identity project. The possessions they displayed on their site represented their real self while the brands that they associated with were a representation of their ideal self. Thus, the self-identity project is a performance which alters based on the audience it is being displayed to.



Cultural Intermediaries: A Study of Online Influencers and the Decision-Making Process

Author: Julie Mc Neill

Supervisor: Dr. Etain Kidney

Abstract

The digital revolution has undoubtedly changed the way in which consumer society operates. Consumers are now more informed than ever before, which poses a threat to the traditional methods of marketing.

This research was inspired by the proliferation of use of online influencers to promote products on both a local and global scale. Reflecting on past literature it is apparent that online influencers are adhering to the definition of cultural intermediaries. Social media has allowed the work of these new forms of intermediaries to dominate as a resource for consumer decision-making. The purpose of this research is to determine if this new form of influence has an impact on consumer decision-making.

The research presents the findings of quantitative analysis on the cosmetics industry. It is noted that 54% of consumers sampled prefer influencer marketing than company-controlled efforts. Drawing from the findings it is clear that the consumers sampled within this study have positive connotation towards these new forms of cultural intermediaries'. Significant implications from practitioner's perspective are also discussed in light of the analysis carried out.



Wanting, Belonging, and Succeeding, The Infinite Consumption Cycle and the GAA identity pillar

Author: Robert Murtagh

Supervisor: Dr. Deirdre Duffy

Abstract

The main reason for exploring this topic was my interest in GAA and my academic interest of consumer behaviour. Throughout Ireland there has been a change in the socio-economic state of the country, which started with the Celtic Tiger and now continues with the Celtic Phoenix. This new postmodern society has consumerism at its heart. This piece of research seeks to explore the effect this change has had on the GAA community and its members.

A literature review was followed up by 6 semi-structured interviews of young men with varying roles in the GAA community.

This research was carried out to see how men develop their self-image and the role which the GAA plays in this. There has been little previous research into member consumption in Ireland's biggest sporting organisation. This study seeks to fill the research gap in this topic.



An Exploratory Study Into The Perceptions Of Tattoos In The Workplace

Author: Laura O Carroll

Supervisor: Kathleen Hughes

Abstract

The Author wishes to explore the perceptions of tattoos within the workplace, across a variety of industries including Legal, Social Work, Management, Animation, Creative Arts, Education, and Healthcare. The aim of the study is to decipher if perceptions vary from industry to industry and whether generational factors impact perceptions of tattoos in the workplace. The common themes within the literature and contextual analysis include expression and suppression of prejudice in the workplace, affect and types of prejudice, prejudice against tattoos in the workplace and the rise of tattoo culture into mainstream society.

The author recognised a gap in the literature of studies based on specific industries perceptions of tattoos, with a workplace environment. In order to collect and generate data for this study, the author conducted a series of seven interviews with participants from the seven industries mentioned above, ranging from 22 - 72 years old. Each interview was 35 to 60 minutes long, and took place over the span of two weeks. The question guide was based off the three chosen main objectives. The research question centred around the perceptions of tattoos in different workplace environment, with the three main objective stemming off this based on the varying perceptions in separate industries, the generational difference in perceptions and the general stigma attached to tattoos.

The findings revealed several interesting points including the impact of the tattoos positioning and bad service, the appearance of a stronger stigma attached to women with tattoos, emergence of expressive and bland industries, differing societal views based on age and fear of the unknown, millennial acceptance and baby boomer's reluctance and evolving generational opinions. Each theme was discussed in detail within this study, in relation to previous studies and theories as well as the objectives set out by the author.



The Face Behind the Selfie: An exploration of the Selfie Phenomenon

Author: Jenny O Reilly

Supervisor: Dr. Olivia Freeman

Abstract

This dissertation begins with the premise that if one was to look at the selfie similar, to how one would view the traditional self portrait, more in depth findings about the phenomenon can be generated. Chapter One will outline the context of the selfie in the modern world and a rationale for the study at hand. Furthermore, the hypothesis that the lens of narcissism is in fact a limitation, rather than an asset when viewing selfie practice will be discussed.

Chapter Two will discuss the vast array of literature surrounding the topic to date that will assist in identifying sufficient gaps, in support of this study. John Berger (1973) is one of the authors who will be discussed throughout this dissertation study. As well as this, lengthy debate surrounding Erving Goffman's (1988) theories, codes and practice will ensue.

Chapter Three will outline the various methodologies, sampling techniques and methods of data analysis used in this research as well as a discussion of the research limitations.

Chapter Four, will outline the findings that emerged from the data analysis. The conclusions from this study were very much in support of its purpose, proving that by viewing the selfie phenomenon through the lens of traditional self-portraiture, and by simply 'reading the language of images', more fruitful insights can be generated.

Finally, in Chapter Six, a comparative discussion will take place between the academic literature to date, and the consequent findings from this study.

