

RESEARCH ARTICLE

When the frugal become wasteful: An examination into how impression management can initiate the end-stages of consumption for frugal consumers

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Abstract

Premature disposal of functional products is a global problem adding to waste and feeding a consumer culture. Contrary to this, frugal consumers take care and extend the life of their products, elongating the usage and value obtained from their possessions. Despite this, little is known about frugal consumers and the factors that eventually initiate their actions towards the end-stages of consumption (e.g., declined usage). The present research explores one such psychological factor that may dictate frugal consumers' willingness to discontinue usage of their products; impression management. Three studies demonstrate that when the marketplace's opinion of an owned product is negative (e.g., inferior value), then the well-accepted frugality-usage intentions relationship diminishes. This effect is due in part to the undesirable image that owning such a product portrays, that of a consumer who makes poor choices. By examining what can initiate the end-stages of consumption for frugal consumers, this study broadens our understanding of anticonsumption lifestyles postpurchase, exploring factors beyond functionality, and obsolescence that influence decisions to continue or discontinue using products consumers already own.

KEYWORDS

anticonsumption, frugality, impression management, usage, waste

1 | INTRODUCTION

Consumers appear to own far more than they can use or accommodate (Winter, 2004), often hoarding vast quantities of items they do not use, sometimes requiring self-storage units specifically rented for that reason. The popularity of television shows such as *Hoarders*, *Storage Wars*, and *Tidying Up with Marie Kondo* reveals a further dimension of this problem, that it is common for people to continue buying items while still having many possessions they simply do not use. Whereas topics related to consumer waste and disposal have received increasing attention (e.g., Brosius, Fernandez, & Cherrier, 2013; Gruber, Holweg & Teller, 2016; Lee, Roux, Cherrier, & Cova, 2011; Trudel, Argo, & Meng,

2016), there is still a need to understand more fully the situations and psychological processes involved in consumer decisions to move towards these end-stages of consumption and retire the usage of their products; and this is in spite of longstanding calls from the consumer behavior field (e.g., Jacoby, Berning, & Dietvorst, 1977; Wells, 1993).

Contrary to this consumer culture, frugal individuals are efficient and resourceful with their consumption. Interestingly, frugality has been defined as a type of anticonsumption lifestyle, as it is adopted voluntarily by individuals who want to reduce their consumption (Albinsson, Wolf, & Kopf, 2010; Khamis, 2019; Kropfeld, Nepomuceno, & Dantas, 2018; Nepomuceno & Laroche, 2015). While frugal individuals are known to refrain from making unnecessary

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consumption decisions *prepurchase* (Nepomuceno & Laroche, 2015), they also resourcefully use the products they already own *postpurchase*, extending product usage to avoid any new purchases (Evers, Gruner, Sneddon, & Lee, 2018; Lastovicka, Bettencourt, Hughner, & Kuntze, 1999). Therefore, there is a positive frugality-usage intentions relationship, where frugal consumers delay the end-stages of consumption (e.g., store, sell, dispose, etc.) and consequently have greater intentions to continue using the products they already own. Yet, when it comes to the end-stages of consumption, little is known about the factors that initiate frugal consumers to discontinue usage and therefore progress towards these end-stages.

While the usage of a product is likely to decline as it becomes obsolete and breaks down through wear and tear, there is another possibility beyond this. Specifically, this current research examines the impact of impression management motives (e.g., Schlenker, 1980; Tedeschi, 2013) as one possible psychological factor that can prematurely diminish usage intentions for frugal consumers, therefore, initiating movement towards the end-stages of consumption. In particular, we examine how exposure to negative marketplace opinions of an owned product can diminish the frugality-usage intentions relationship. In general, frugal consumers should be confident that they have made smart and resourceful purchases and should, therefore, be less concerned about any negative impression that ownership and usage of their products might portray. Yet, we find that if the marketplace's opinion of their product is negative, frugal consumers are triggered and become concerned that others will think negatively of them for buying an inferior product. In response, to avoid portraying this impression, usage intentions decrease, and the frugality-usage intentions relationship therefore diminishes. This suggests that frugal consumer's antimaterialistic and resourceful consumption views amplify, rather than shield them from the impression management concerns associated with owning such a product. For these frugal individuals, ownership and usage of a relatively inferior product portray an image that directly contradicts their desirable pennywise and economical image, and that they, therefore, should be motivated to avoid. As we demonstrate, such a possibility decreases usage intentions for the frugal, essentially contributing to more waste.

This study makes several contributions to the literature. First, we explore psychological and external factors that can initiate the end-stages of consumption. Whereas research investigating issues related to anticonsumption has focused primarily on reasons for rejecting consumption *prepurchase* (e.g., Iyer & Muncy, 2009; Zavestoski, 2002), this study investigates a reason for rejecting consumption *postpurchase*. Although researched to a lesser extent, those who live anticonsumption lifestyles seek to extend the life of their products, using them to the fullest to avoid making new purchases (Brosius et al., 2013; Cherrier, 2010; Lee et al., 2011; Scott & Weaver, 2018). In other words, continued usage intentions and the overall lifetime of the products anticonsumers own should be high. This is especially true for frugal consumers, for example, as they are known to be economically resourceful when it comes to acquiring and using goods and services, specifically using what they already have to delay future purchases (Evers et al., 2018; Lastovicka et al., 1999). While exploring factors related to what *extends* product life and usage is important to anticonsumption research, equally

important is the investigation of factors that might *diminish* product usage *postpurchase*, especially for individuals who follow an anticonsumption lifestyle. This is also an important area of exploration for anticonsumer researchers because it uncovers the downstream (*postpurchase*) consequences of adopting an anticonsumption lifestyle. In particular, our research demonstrates conditions in which frugal consumers, who would otherwise intend to elongate the usage and value they obtain from their possessions, will reduce their usage intentions.

Second, the current work also identifies a novel reason for why frugal consumers may avoid further consumption of their existing products: Impression management. Most theories of consumption would predict that usage declines as products become obsolete, age, and functionality decreases (Brouillat, 2015; Kim, Rao, Kim, & Rao, 2011; Levinthal & Purohit, 1989; Pieters, 1991; Purohit, 1992). Existing research and understandings of frugality, more specifically, point out that frugal consumers are economically motivated to extend product lifetime through careful use (Lastovicka et al., 1999) and creative solutions (Evers et al., 2018). Therefore, frugality is positively associated with continued usage intentions. This current research extends this prior work by demonstrating that this frugality-usage intentions relationship is contingent upon how the product is portrayed in the marketplace. When the marketplace perceives the product negatively, independently of functionality and personal opinions of satisfaction, the frugality-usage intentions relationship dissipates. This, as we argue, is the result of an impression management motivation to avoid portraying an incompetent consumer image (i.e., an individual who inadequately navigates the consumer and economic environment by making foolish and inferior value purchases).

Finally, this study adds to the understanding of factors that influence consumers' *postpurchase* behaviors more generally. Existing work on *postpurchase* behaviors focuses primarily on factors that influence satisfaction, word-of-mouth, loyalty, and complaint behaviors (e.g., Anderson, 1998; Anderson & Sullivan, 1993; Keiningham, Perkins-Munn, & Evans, 2003; Oliver & DeSarbo, 1989; Seiders, Voss, Grewal, & Godfrey, 2005). Less research, however, examines what factors may be involved in initiating movement towards the end-of-life for products. Examining such issues can help practitioners and policy-makers better understand the various situational factors and psychological mechanisms that diminish usage and therefore increase waste.

This article proceeds by first reviewing the anticonsumption literature, with a focus on frugality, the end-stages of consumption, impression management, and where decreased usage intentions fit into this literature. By integrating research on anticonsumption, impression management, and *postpurchase* behaviors, three hypotheses are formed and tested across three studies.

2 | FRUGALITY AND THE MOVEMENT TOWARD THE END-STAGES OF CONSUMPTION

Anticonsumption is often defined as against consumption (Chatzidakis & Lee, 2013; Cherrier, 2010; Lee, Motion, & Conroy, 2009), and it

is viewed as a lifestyle or set of motivations that explain why consumers do not purchase or acquire a product or service (Iyer & Muncy, 2009; Nepomuceno & Laroche, 2015). Thus, anticonsumption research cites numerous reasons (Kozinets, Handelman, & Lee, 2010), such as commercial resistance (Lee et al., 2009, 2011), sustainability concerns (Black, 2010; García-de-Frutos, Ortega-Egea, & Martínez-del-Río, 2018), environmental concerns (Black, 2010; Richetin et al., 2012), personal beliefs (Iyer & Muncy, 2009; Nepomuceno & Laroche, 2015; Nepomuceno, Rohani, & Grégoire, 2017), or the desire to live simply (Etzioni, 1998; Schor, 1999) as motivations of this behavior. Overall, this past work points out that individuals engage in anticonsumption when they (a) have strong personal or societal concerns (Iyer & Muncy, 2009), (b) possess the cognitive strength and self-control to resist persuasion attempts (Krishnamurthy & Prokopec, 2010), and (c) focus on long-term oriented goals (Nepomuceno & Laroche, 2017).

One such specific anticonsumption lifestyle that aligns with these three factors is being frugal. Frugality is defined as “a consumer lifestyle trait characterized by the degree to which consumers are both restrained in acquiring and in resourcefully using economic goods and services to achieve longer-term goals” (Lastovicka et al., 1999, p. 88). Such consumers are forward-looking (Nepomuceno & Laroche, 2017), pride themselves on their ability to consume efficiently and effectively (Evers et al., 2018), and even experiencing pleasure when getting a deal (Rick, Cryder, & Loewenstein, 2007) or spending less (Chancellor & Lyubomirsky, 2011). Therefore, for frugal consumers, anticonsumption in regard to their ability to avoid frivolous expenditures and instead consume in a smart and efficient manner is important to their self-image.

Despite the large focus of studying anticonsumption as reasons to avoid acquiring and purchasing, anticonsumption also studies (although to a lesser extent) one's desire to prolong the life and usage of a product by maintaining and restoring existing products to reduce waste and avoid future unnecessary consumption (Brosius et al., 2013; Cherrier, 2010; Lee et al., 2011; Scott & Weaver, 2018). Related to this, our current research investigates what motivates frugal consumers either to continue or discontinue using a product. Such a decision, as we suggest, is a precursor to the end-stages of consumption, which might lead to storing, sharing, reselling, recycling, or disposing of the item; and it is therefore also important to our general understanding of anticonsumption.

2.1 | Frugality and usage intentions

Broadly, anticonsumption lifestyles have been associated with reclaiming (Brosius et al., 2013), repurposing (Scott & Weaver, 2018), and resourcefully using goods (Lastovicka et al., 1999; Nepomuceno & Laroche, 2017). This would suggest that such consumers would be most concerned about the benefits that continued usage provides to them (Brosius et al., 2013). Therefore, for the products anticonsumers already own, usage is likely to decline only when the products can no longer provide any value to them.

In the case of frugal consumers, one would expect that purchases would be used to their fullest extent, until all functional value is exploited, to avoid spending on a replacement. Consistently, frugal consumers are encouraged to be careful with their products and reuse currently owned products rather than buying new ones, helping to extend product life and lengthening the time between purchases to save money (Dacyczyn, 1998). In general, frugal consumers are believed to be largely motivated by an economic asceticism (Dacyczyn, 1998), foregoing short-term pleasures that could be experienced through spending to achieve longer-term financial goals (Lastovicka et al., 1999; Nepomuceno & Laroche, 2016, 2017). More broadly, foundational research in frugality sees resourcefulness as a source of satisfaction (De Young, 1996) and observes that frugal behaviors can increase pleasure (Chancellor & Lyubomirsky, 2011; Rick et al., 2007). More specifically, recent research has emphasized that frugality is positively associated with more sustainable consumption practices towards the end-stages of consumption, such as finding new and different uses to extend product life (Evers et al., 2018). Although this prior research on frugality focuses on these personal motives as an explanation of why frugal consumers avoid buying new products, this also means that frugal individuals have higher intentions to continue using the products they already own (i.e., a positive frugality-usage intentions relationship). More formally,

H1: *For the products that consumers currently own, trait frugality is positively associated with continued usage intentions.*

2.2 | Incompetent image concerns

Given that frugal consumers are economical and efficient in their purchasing habits, it is reasonable to assume that they should not have any concerns that the products they already own will make them appear incompetent (i.e., like an individual who makes inefficient and inferior value purchases). In fact, as frugality increases, this concern should in general, decrease. This is because the products frugal consumers own and are satisfied with are likely to be consistent with their desirable consumer identity as frugal consumers who make smart and resourceful consumer decisions. Thus, we expect a negative association between frugality and incompetent consumer image concerns.

However, we believe incompetent image concerns play a crucial role in the frugality-usage intentions relationship in such a way that the association between incompetent image concerns and usage intentions should be negative. This builds on prior research that has identified incompetent consumer image concerns as a deterrent to other consumer behaviors, specifically the sharing of negative word-of-mouth (Philp, Pyle, & Ashworth, 2018; Richins, 1983). This prior research notes that consumers who see themselves as generally competent people are less willing to share negative word-of-mouth following dissatisfying consumption experiences because they are concerned that doing so will portray a contradictory and undesirable image. Similarly, frugal individuals see themselves as smart

consumers and should, therefore, be more attuned to any behaviors that could portray a contradictory impression (e.g., purchasing, owning, and using a widely negatively reviewed product). Extending this prior work, we predict that if a frugal individual is concerned that an owned product portrays an incompetent consumer image, usage intentions will decline to avoid this possibility. Inversely, if these incompetent image concerns are reduced, usage intentions will increase.

To support this prediction, we refer to impression management theory (e.g., Tedeschi, 2013), which is known as “the process by which individuals attempt to control the impressions others form of them” (Leary & Kowalski, 1990, p. 34). Applied to a consumer context, it is accepted that individuals are motivated to consume or not consume in ways that portray desirable and avoid undesirable impressions prepurchase (e.g., Argo & Main, 2008; Ashworth, Darke, & Schaller, 2005; Banister & Hogg, 2004; Hogg & Banister, 2001). For example, Kim and Yi (2016) highlight how impression management can explain the decision both to use or not to use a coupon for a purchase. Specifically, they identify that coupon usage portrays both the desirable image of a smart consumer (Schindler, 1998) and the undesirable image of a cheap consumer (Ashworth et al., 2005). Similar ideas have been discussed in the anticonsumption domain, where symbolic concerns (i.e., associations with a brand or an act of consumption that create a certain impression) can result in anticonsumption prepurchase (Chatzidakis & Lee, 2013; Hogg, Banister, & Stephenson, 2009). Taken together, similar motivations should influence consumers’ usage habits postpurchase as well. Specifically, consumers will likely intend to use a product more when it portrays a desirable impression but less when it portrays an undesirable impression.

Overall, we argue that the frugality-usage intentions relationship is in part driven by impression management. Frugal consumers believe their products do not convey the undesirable impression of an incompetent consumer; therefore, they convey a consistent image of a smart consumer, and this in turn increases usage intentions. This partial mediating relationship is presented in Figure 1. More formally,

H2: *Frugal consumers are (a) less concerned that their products portray an incompetent image and (b) incompetent image concerns are negatively associated with usage intentions.*

2.3 | Marketplace opinions

As mentioned above, because frugal consumers are economical and efficient in their purchasing habits, the concern that the products they have bought will make them appear incompetent should be rare. However, certain external-situational factors can arise whereby

owning and using a product becomes associated with a self-image that contradicts this frugal anticonsumption lifestyle. For example, if a frugal consumer were to discover that the marketplace’s opinion of an owned product was negative (i.e., has inferior relative value) and, consequently, not a smart purchase, ownership and usage would portray a contradictory and undesirable self-image. Therefore, if frugality increases usage, and making smart/high-value purchases is important to a frugal consumer’s image, then the frugality-usage intentions relationship should be contingent on the belief that others think the product is a smart and high-value purchase as well.

Broadly, for a consumer, a simple Google search of a brand, product, restaurant, or hotel recently purchased or visited will likely result in numerous examples of the marketplace’s opinion. And because consumers are known to seek out marketplace opinions postpurchase to feel part of the community, validate their choice, and provide opinions of their own (Hennig-Thurau, Walsh, & Walsh, 2003; Sweeney, Hausknecht, & Soutar, 2000), they are likely to be informed about the marketplace’s opinion of their products postpurchase. Therefore, while communicating information about the product to potential consumers before purchase, product reviews can also communicate information of whether a smart or incompetent purchase decision was made postpurchase.

We argue that frugal consumers are particularly sensitive to appearing as incompetent consumers. Broadly, coming across as competent, and not incompetent, is desirable to all consumers (Philp et al., 2018; Vohs, Baumeister, & Chin, 2007). However, this should be especially relevant for frugal individuals. This is because frugal individuals pride themselves on being able to make resourceful, efficient, and smart purchases (Evers et al., 2018; Lastovicka et al., 1999; Nepomuceno & Laroche, 2017). Prior research has even postulated that “frugal consumers’ identity is inextricably linked with frugal practices—getting the most for their money” (Evers et al., 2018, p. 950). Therefore, and consistent with impression management theory (e.g., Tedeschi, 2013), frugal (compared with nonfrugal) individuals should be more motivated to maintain this image of competent consumers and avoid portraying the undesirable image of incompetent consumers. For frugal consumers, evidence that they made a poor purchase (e.g., negative marketplace opinion of their purchase), suggesting that they made an otherwise inefficient and nonresourceful purchase, will contradict their desirable self-image. Such information will have a larger impact on product usage for frugal, in contrast to nonfrugal, consumers.

For example, imagine two consumers who bought the same product: One is frugal and the other is not. The frugal consumer motivated to be efficient and resourceful in her spending, likely believes this was the best-value purchase she could have made to satisfy her needs. Consistent with H1 and H2, this frugal consumer should be more inclined to continue using her product, and that doing so is partially driven by the belief that her purchase is not portraying the negative and contradictory image of an incompetent consumer. Now imagine both consumers discover that the marketplace, in general (through expert reviews, the popular press, news outlets, online reviews, etc.), believes the same product is relatively inferior

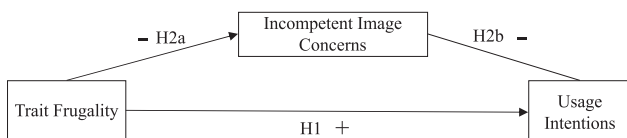


FIGURE 1 Conceptual model

in value compared with other similar products. The nonfrugal consumer, with his self-image not strongly tied to making good-value purchases, will likely not be influenced by such opinions postpurchase. The frugal consumer, however, should be more strongly impacted. For the frugal person, her product is no longer a signal of her consistently smart consumer image but instead a signal to others that she has made a poor-value consumer decision. To avoid portraying this contradictory impression, we argue that frugal consumers will have lower intentions to continue using their product going forward, thus diminishing the frugality-usage intentions relationship and initiating movement towards the end-stages of consumption, more formally,

H3: *The mediated effect of incompetent image concerns on the frugality-usage intentions relationship will be moderated by the marketplace's opinion concerning the relative value of the product in such a way that a negative (positive) marketplace opinion will increase (decrease) incompetent image concerns for frugal consumers.*

3 | OVERVIEW OF STUDIES

Overall, it is predicted that frugal consumers will have greater intentions to continue using their owned products (H1), that this effect is partially mediated by impression management motivations to avoid appearing incompetent (H2), and that this mediated effect is moderated by the marketplace's opinion of the product (H3). These predictions were tested across three studies. Study 1 establishes the base frugality-usage intentions effect (H1) and the mediating role of impression management in this effect (H2). Study 2 tests the effect of the marketplace's opinion on usage intentions, demonstrating that the effect from Study 1 dissipates when the consumer becomes aware of the marketplace's negative opinion, but remains following a positive opinion (H3). Finally, Study 3 extends these findings by exploring personal opinions of the product as a boundary condition, demonstrating that the moderating effect of the marketplace's opinion of a product does not influence consumers who are already personally dissatisfied with their purchase.

4 | STUDY 1: FRUGALITY, IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT, AND USAGE INTENTIONS

There were two primary objectives of Study 1: The first was to provide initial evidence that frugality is associated with increased usage intentions of owned products. The second was to provide initial process evidence that this effect is partially driven by impression management.

4.1 | Method

Ninety-four participants (45.7% female; $M_{\text{age}} = 35.69$ years) based in the United States and recruited from Amazon Mechanical Turk were asked

to complete two unrelated consecutive tasks. The first task involved the participants' filling out an eight-item measure of frugality (Lastovicka et al., 1999), with items averaged to assess the participants' level of trait frugality ($\alpha = .90$; $M = 5.80$; standard deviation (SD) = .86; min = 3.63; max = 7.00). In the second task, participants were asked to "identify a product you have bought, own, and you personally like (i.e., you are satisfied with its performance)." All participants then completed the same questionnaire. All items for each measure were assessed on 7-point scales, anchored by (1) "Strongly Disagree" and (7) "Strongly Agree," and then averaged to create the desired measure. The measure capturing usage intentions consisted of three items, asking participants their intentions to "continue using the product as intended," "use it normally," and "stop using it" (reversed; $\alpha = .79$). The measure for impression management motives related to the image concerns of portraying an incompetent consumer image consisted of four items adapted from Philp et al. (2018): "I am concerned that others will think I made a poor choice," "I think others will think I am smart for making this purchase" (reversed), "I worry that others will think I am stupid for making this purchase," and "I am NOT concerned that others will think I am stupid for making this purchase" (reversed; $\alpha = .69$; see Table 1 for descriptive statistics and construct correlations).

4.2 | Results

We tested H1 and H2 using process analysis (Hayes, 2018; Model 4), which is based on ordinary least squares regression analysis. First, the results revealed a significant positive effect of frugality on usage intentions ($\beta = .459$, $p < .001$), supporting H1. Second, and supporting H2, frugality diminishes incompetent image concerns ($\beta = -.532$, $p < .001$; H2a); and as this concern increases it diminishes usage intentions ($\beta = -.447$, $p < .001$; H2b). In addition, the indirect effect of trait frugality on usage intentions through incompetent image concerns was estimated using 10,000 bootstrapped samples. The results show that the concern about portraying an incompetent image mediates the positive relationship between frugality and usage intentions, as evidenced by the confidence intervals (CIs) surrounding the effect of the mediating path not spanning zero ($\beta = .238$; CI 95%: 0.114–0.405). Overall, frugality increases usage intentions, and this is partially mediated by diminishing incompetent image concerns. Thus, as frugality increases, concerns that owning the identified product also portrays an incompetent consumer image decreases (H2a); and as this concern increases, the intention to continue using the product decreases (H2b; see Figure 2).

4.3 | Discussion

Overall, the results of this study provide evidence that frugal consumers intend to use their owned products more in comparison with less frugal consumers, supporting H1 and conceptually supporting the broad understanding of how frugal consumers approach the usage of their owned products (Dacyczyn, 1998; De Young, 1996; Lastovicka et al., 1999). Extending this prior work, this study provides some initial evidence of the role of impression

TABLE 1 Descriptive statistics and construct correlations for Study 1

Construct	1	2	3	4	5
Trait frugality (mean centered)	-				
Incompetent image concerns	-0.432 (-0.394)***	-			
Usage intentions	0.590 (0.516)***	-0.634 (-0.683)***	-		
Age	0.258 (2.234)*	0.276 (-2.949)**	0.279 (2.850)**	-	
Sex ^a	0.041 (0.018)	-0.072 (-0.038)	0.095 (0.048)	0.075 (0.379)	-
Mean	.00	2.29	6.25	35.69	.46
Minimum	-2.18	1.00	3.00	21.00	-
Maximum	1.20	5.25	7.00	70.00	-
Standard deviation	.86	1.06	1.02	10.06	-
Cronbach's α	.90	.69	.79	-	-

Note: Covariances reported in parentheses.

^a1 = Female; 0 = Male.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

*** $p < .001$.

management motives that partially drive this effect of frugality on usage intentions. Supporting H2, this study demonstrates that frugality is associated with consumers' belief that their owned products do not convey an incompetent image and therefore portray an image of a smart consumer. These results support the general idea that image concerns vary depending on frugality and provide evidence of the basic main effect upon which the remaining studies build from. Specifically, if image concerns about appearing to be an incompetent consumer can diminish usage intentions, then what will happen if the image associated with owning a product shifts? Specifically, what if the marketplace opinion of an owned product is negative? Such a question exposes the limitations of these findings. Specifically, although the results show that frugal consumers are less concerned about their image than are nonfrugal consumers, this does not necessarily mean that frugal consumers will be less impacted by negative marketplace opinions.

5 | STUDY 2: MARKETPLACE OPINIONS AND INITIATING THE END-STAGES OF CONSUMPTION FOR THE FRUGAL

The primary objective of Study 2 was to extend the findings of Study 1 and examine how frugal consumers respond to varying marketplace opinions of their owned products. Specifically, how do negative

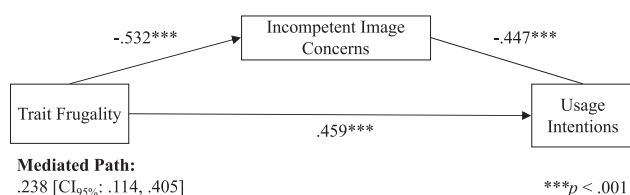


FIGURE 2 Mediating effect of incompetent consumer image on usage intentions for frugal consumers. CI, confidence interval

versus positive, marketplace opinions of owned products influence both impression management motives of avoiding portraying an incompetent consumer image and usage intentions of that product going forward. In testing H3, it is predicted that highly frugal individuals will be more concerned about an incompetent image after becoming aware of negative, as compared with positive, marketplace opinions of their product. If this is the case, as we predict, frugal consumers will diminish the usage intentions of their product following exposure to these negative marketplace opinions in contrast to positive ones. Demonstrating this effect would highlight conditions where frugal consumers are wasteful, pushing their products towards the end-stages of consumption prematurely. This influence of varying marketplace opinions on image concerns should not exist for nonfrugal consumers, as they should be less concerned about the varying marketplace opinions on products they have already bought.

In addition, a secondary objective to this study was to demonstrate that this effect exists across a broad range of marketplace opinions. Specifically, this study sought to demonstrate that the effect of marketplace opinions on impression management and usage intentions holds across opinions that discuss more aesthetic attributes, arguing superior or inferior aesthetics and style, as well as functional attributes, arguing superior or inferior quality and specifications.

5.1 | Method

Three hundred twenty participants (47.8% female; $M_{\text{age}} = 39$ years) based in the United States and recruited from Amazon Mechanical Turk participated in a 2 (marketplace opinion: Positive and negative) \times 2 (argument type: Functional and aesthetic) between-subjects design with trait frugality as a continuous independent variable. Participants were told they would complete two unrelated tasks. The first task involved their filling out the same eight-item measure of frugality scale

(Lastovicka et al., 1999), with items, averaged to assess the participants' level of trait frugality ($\alpha = .86$; $M = 5.99$; $SD = .74$; $\min = 2.75$; $\max = 7.00$), from Study 1. Participants then moved on to the seemingly unrelated second task. As in Study 1, the participants were asked to identify a product they had bought, owned, and were satisfied with. However, different from the procedure in Study 1, the participants moved on to the next page, where they were exposed to either general positive or negative information about what industry experts and review sites across the internet thought of their product (marketplace opinion). These reviews made claims about the product's value that focused on either functional or aesthetic attributes (argument type). The Functional condition informed participants that the specifications and quality of their products were either positive or negative relative to other similar products. The aesthetic condition was identical but instead informed the participants that the aesthetics and style were either positive or negative relative to other similar products (see Appendix A for full scripts of conditions). The participants then moved on to the questionnaire, on which they filled out the same usage intentions ($\alpha = .90$) and incompetent image concerns ($\alpha = .76$) measures as in Study 1 (see Table 2 for descriptive statistics and construct correlations).

5.2 | Results

5.2.1 | Initial analysis

Consistent with the predictions, a series of 2 (marketplace opinion) \times 2 (argument type) analysis of variance revealed a main effect of marketplace opinion on usage intentions ($F(1, 316) = 8.58$, $p = .004$) and incompetent image concerns ($F(1,316) = 17.05$, $p < .001$). This indicates that reading a negative (vs. positive) marketplace opinion

decreases usage intentions ($M_s = 6.21$ vs. 6.51) and increases incompetent image concerns ($M_s = 2.63$ vs. 2.18). Also, as expected, the effect of Argument Type on usage intentions and incompetent image concerns were both nonsignificant ($F(1,316) = 2.14$, $p = .144$; $F(1,316) = 0.72$, $p = .395$, respectively), as well as the Marketplace Opinion \times Argument interactions ($F_s < 1$). These results help demonstrate that usage intentions and incompetent image concerns are, in general, influenced by the valence of the marketplace's opinion being either negative or positive. The argument type, commenting on either functional or aesthetic attributes, has less influence. Because there was no difference, we continue our analysis by collapsing the argument type conditions (see Table 3 for cross condition means summary).

5.2.2 | Main analysis

To analyze our predicted model and test H3, we constructed a model using process (Hayes, 2018). Specifically, a first-stage moderated-mediation model (Hayes, 2018, Model 7) was used in which mean-centered trait frugality acts as the independent variable, usage intentions as the dependent variable, incompetent image concerns as the mediation variable, and marketplace opinion moderates the path from trait frugality to incompetent image concerns. Although our initial analysis demonstrated no effect of the argument type on either incompetent image concerns or usage intentions, this variable was added to the model to act as a covariate to control for any influence it might have on the overall model.

First, in providing additional support for H1, the results revealed a direct positive effect of frugality on usage intentions ($\beta = .164$; $p = .005$): As frugality increases, so do usage intentions towards the

TABLE 2 Descriptive statistics and construct correlations for Study 2

Construct	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Trait frugality (mean centered)	-						
Marketplace opinion ^a	-0.008 (-0.003)	-					
Argument type ^b	0.086 (0.032)	-0.032 (-0.008)	-				
Incompetent image concerns	-0.307 (-0.231)***	0.227 (0.115)***	-0.054 (-0.027)	-			
Usage intentions	0.309 (0.212)***	-0.164 (-0.076)**	0.087 (0.040)	-0.607 (-0.568)***	-		
Age	0.058 (0.520)	-0.028 (-0.166)	0.061 (0.364)	-0.122 (-1.473)*	0.148 (1.639)**	-	
Sex ^c	-0.033 (-0.012)	-0.042 (-0.011)	-0.017 (-0.004)	-0.104 (-0.051)	0.125 (0.053)*	0.103 (0.619)	-
Mean	.00	.49	.49	2.40	6.36	39.01	.48
Minimum	-3.24	-	-	1.00	2.00	19.00	-
Maximum	1.01	-	-	6.50	7.00	81.00	-
Standard deviation	.74	-	-	1.01	.93	11.99	-
Cronbach's α	.86	-	-	.76	.90	-	-

Note: Covariances reported in parentheses.

^a1 = Negative; 0 = Positive.

^b1 = Functional; 0 = Aesthetic.

^c1 = Female; 0 = Male.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

*** $p < .001$.

TABLE 3 Means, standard deviations, and cell counts for Study 2

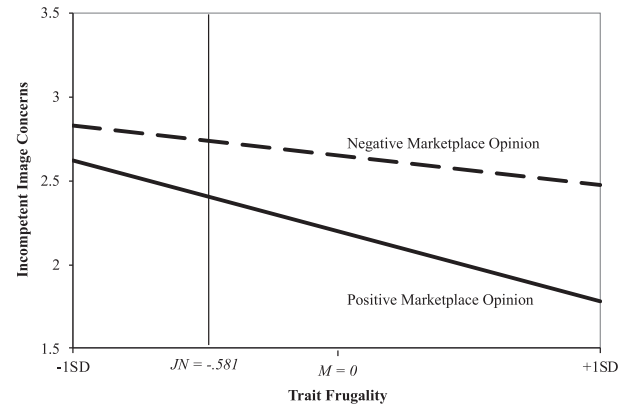
Marketplace opinion Argument type	Positive		Negative	
	Functional	Aesthetic	Functional	Aesthetic
Usage intentions	6.61 (.58)	6.42 (.84)	6.27 (1.11)	6.16 (1.06)
Incompetent image concerns	2.10 (.99)	2.26 (.89)	2.62 (1.00)	2.65 (1.06)
Cell size	82	81	74	83

Note: Standard deviations are reported in parentheses.

consumer's focal product. In addition, providing further support for H2, as frugality increases, incompetent image concerns decrease ($\beta = -.565$; $p < .001$; H2a); and as these concerns increase, usage intentions decrease ($\beta = -.517$; $p < .001$; H2b). Finally, as expected, reading negative (vs. positive) marketplace opinions about the consumer's product increased incompetent image concerns ($\beta = .452$; $p < .001$).

In providing support for H3, the results showed a significant frugality \times marketplace opinion interaction on incompetent image concerns ($\beta = .329$; $p = .020$). Examining this interaction further we used the Johnson–Neyman technique (Johnson & Neyman, 1936; also called a “floodlight analysis” by Spiller, Fitzsimons, Lynch, & McClelland, 2013). This analysis is used to determine at which point on a continuous independent variable the differences in a moderator become significant (Spiller et al., 2013). Supporting our predictions (H3), a negative (vs. positive) marketplace opinion increased incompetent image concerns when trait frugality was high, with the Johnson–Neyman point at -0.581 of frugality ($\beta_{JN} = -.261$, $p = .050$; CI 95%: 0.000 – 0.522). Representing 19.06% of the sample population, when frugality was below -0.581 , the effect of a negative (vs. positive) marketplace opinion on incompetent image concerns was insignificant. However, representing the remaining 80.94% of the sample population, when frugality was higher than -0.581 , the effect of a negative (vs. positive) marketplace opinion on incompetent image concerns was significantly higher (see Figure 3).

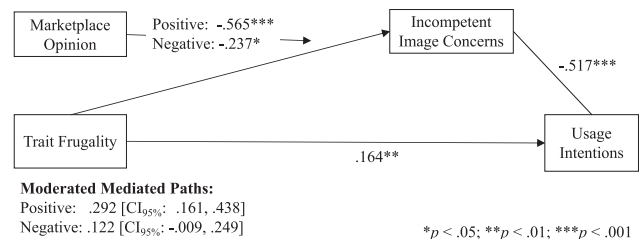
Assessing the entire model, the conditional indirect effect of trait frugality on usage intentions through incompetent image concerns was estimated when exposed to either positive or negative marketplace opinions on the basis of 10,000 bootstrapped samples. As predicted, the conditional indirect effect of frugality on usage intentions through incompetent image concerns was significant when exposed to positive marketplace opinions of the product ($\beta = .292$; CI 95%: 0.161 – 0.438). These results replicate the base effect established in Study 1 and provides further support for H1 and H2. However, this effect was insignificant when exposed to negative marketplace opinions of the product ($\beta = .122$; CI 95%: -0.009 – 0.249), signified by the CI spanning zero. These results suggest that the positive frugality-usage intentions effect is contingent on marketplace opinion of the product, so that when the marketplace opinion is negative, the frugality-usage intentions relationship dissipates. As additional support for the conditional indirect effect, the index of moderated mediation did not span zero

**FIGURE 3** Effect of trait frugality on incompetent image concerns moderated by marketplace opinions

(CI 95%: -0.353 to -0.004), which indicates that there is a significant difference in strengths between these conditional mediated paths, supporting H3 (see Figure 4).

5.3 | Discussion

The results of this study provide evidence that those high in trait frugality are more susceptible to the marketplace's opinion of the products they have bought and own. Specifically, for frugal consumers, a negative (compared to positive) marketplace opinion increased the concern that their product portrays an incompetent consumer image. This then influences usage intentions; and the positive frugality-usage intentions relationship diminishes in the case of a negative marketplace opinion, supporting H3. In general, frugality is known to be associated with extended usage for the economic motivation of saving money (Evers et al., 2018; Lastovicka et al., 1999); and therefore, the opinions of others should carry little weight. However, our results suggest that the valence of the marketplace's opinion can influence usage intentions for frugal consumers, diminishing the frugality-usage intentions effect so that the effect of frugality on continued usage is significantly weaker after consumers' being exposed to negative marketplace opinions about the product. Therefore, even though the frugal individual is personally satisfied with her product and it is still functional, her usage intentions decline. This extends our understanding of frugal consumers' postpurchase behavior, suggesting that they could be

**FIGURE 4** Effect of trait frugality on continued usage intentions through incompetent image concerns moderated by marketplace opinions. CI, confidence interval

wasteful and obtain less value from their products in these circumstances.

In addition, this study provides evidence of the effect of marketplace opinions on frugal consumers in a broad context. Specifically, the participants were exposed to either positive or negative opinions that focused on either the functional or aesthetic attributes of their products. The effect of marketplace opinion on usage held for both types of value arguments, demonstrating that this effect is not limited to a specific type of value argument and extends to a broad range of marketplace opinions.

Overall, Study 2 provides evidence that the frugality-usage intentions relationship is partially mediated by incompetent image concerns in such a way that the usage intentions of frugal consumers are more strongly impacted by marketplace opinions. More specifically, this study demonstrates that the frugality-usage intentions relationship diminishes when exposed to negative marketplace opinions of a product. However, a limitation to Study 2, as well as Study 1, is that the participants identified an owned product that they personally liked. In Study 2, more specifically, the context was to examine the influence of marketplace opinions on products the participants were personally satisfied with. To examine the broader range of possibilities, it would be necessary to experimentally manipulate personal opinions of the product along with the marketplace's opinion. Doing so would determine whether the inverse effect from Study 2 is possible, that is, whether positive marketplace opinions of an owned product can increase usage intentions for a frugal consumer who is personally dissatisfied with his or her product. This is tested in Study 3.

6 | STUDY 3: FRUGALITY AND USAGE INTENTIONS FOR PERSONALLY SATISFYING VERSUS DISSATISFYING PRODUCTS

The primary objective of Study 3 is to examine a boundary condition to the effect of the marketplace's opinion of a product on the frugality-usage intentions relationship. Specifically, we explore how personal opinions of the product can interact with this relationship. Studies 1 and 2 required participants to recall and identify products that they currently own and personally like. While this procedure allowed for a good demonstration of how frugal consumers could engage in wasteful behaviors by reducing the usage of products they are otherwise satisfied with, it does not allow us to test the inverse possibility. Could usage intentions increase for products that consumers are personally dissatisfied with? We test this possibility here.

6.1 | Method

Five hundred sixty-four participants (50.5% female; $M_{\text{age}} = 38.25$) based in the United States and recruited from Amazon

Mechanical Turk participated in a 2 (marketplace opinion: Positive and negative) \times 2 (personal opinion: Satisfied and dissatisfied) between-subjects design with trait frugality as a continuous independent variable. Following a procedure similar to that in Study 2, the participants were told they would complete two unrelated tasks. The first task involved their filling out the same eight-item measure of frugality (Lastovicka et al., 1999), with items being averaged to assess participants' level of trait frugality ($\alpha = .83$; $M = 5.90$; $SD = .72$; $\text{min} = 2.50$; $\text{max} = 7.00$), from Studies 1 and 2. Participants then moved on to the seemingly unrelated second task. To manipulate personal opinion, the participants were asked to identify a product they had bought, owned, and either personally liked (i.e., satisfied) or personally disliked (i.e., dissatisfied). As in Study 2, the participants then moved on to the next page, on which they were exposed to either positive or negative marketplace opinions of their product (marketplace opinion). The participants then proceeded to the questionnaire, in which they filled out the same usage intentions ($\alpha = .93$) and incompetent image concerns ($\alpha = .74$) measures as in Studies 1 and 2 (see Table 4 for descriptive statistics and construct correlations).

6.2 | Results

As in Study 2, to analyze the entire model as well as probe the interactions, we constructed a model using Process (Hayes, 2018). Specifically, a first-stage moderated-moderated-mediation model (Hayes, 2018, Model 11) was used in which trait frugality acts as the independent variable, usage intentions as the dependent variable, incompetent image concerns as the mediation variable, and the interaction of the marketplace and personal opinion moderates the path from trait frugality to incompetent image concerns.

Investigating the influence on incompetent image concerns, the results replicated Studies 1 and 2, revealing that as frugality increases, incompetent image concerns decrease ($\beta = -.496$; $p < .001$), supporting H2a. In a way similar to that in Study 2, exposure to negative marketplace opinions of a participant's identified product increases these concerns ($\beta = .533$; $p < .001$), and this is qualified by a significant frugality \times marketplace opinions interaction ($\beta = .437$; $p = .004$), providing additional support for H3. Furthermore, there was a significant positive effect of being personally dissatisfied (vs. satisfied) with the product on incompetent image concerns ($\beta = .770$; $p < .001$): When a consumer is personally dissatisfied with a purchase his or her incompetent image concerns increase.

While both the frugality \times personal opinion ($\beta = .150$; $p = .387$) and marketplace opinion \times personal opinion ($\beta = -.197$; $p = .249$) interactions were not significant, the three-way frugality \times marketplace opinion \times personal opinion interaction on incompetent image concerns was significant ($\beta = -.648$, $p = .008$). From investigating this interaction further, the results support H3: The frugality \times marketplace opinion interaction is significant, but only when participants recall owned products they are satisfied with

TABLE 4 Descriptive statistics and construct correlations for Study 3

Construct	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Trait frugality (mean-centered)	-						
Marketplace opinion ^a	-0.063 (-0.023)	-					
Personal opinion ^b	0.116 (0.042)	-0.038 (-0.010)	-				
Incompetent image concerns	-0.200 (-0.159)***	0.190 (0.105)***	0.278 (0.153)***	-			
Usage intentions	0.072 (0.084)	0.039 (0.031)	-0.505 (-0.408)***	-0.307 (-0.549)***	-		
Age	0.137 (1.212)**	-0.043 (-0.265)	0.039 (0.243)	-0.111 (-1.500)**	0.035 (0.686)*	-	
Sex ^c	0.064 (0.023)	0.007 (0.002)	0.023 (0.006)	-0.123 (-0.068)**	-0.011 (-0.009)	0.047 (0.286)	-
Mean	.00	.49	.51	2.82	5.40	38.25	.51
Minimum	-3.40	-	-	1.00	1.00	18.00	-
Maximum	1.10	-	-	7.00	7.00	78.00	-
Standard deviation	.72	-	-	1.62	1.62	12.27	-
Cronbach's α	.83	-	-	.74	.93	-	-

Note: Covariances reported in parentheses.

^a1 = Negative, 0 = Positive.

^b1 = Dissatisfied, 0 = Satisfied.

^c1 = Female, 0 = Male.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

*** $p < .001$.

($\beta = .437$; $p = .004$) and not products they are dissatisfied with ($\beta = -211$; $p = .268$).

Through assessing the entire model using 10,000 bootstrap samples to estimate the indirect paths at different levels of the moderators, the results replicate Study 2. Specifically, when consumers are personally satisfied with the product, the conditional indirect effect of frugality on usage intentions through incompetent image concerns remains significant upon being exposed to positive ($\beta = .224$; CI 95%: 0.118–0.345), but dissipates upon being exposed to negative ($\beta = .027$; CI 95%: -0.067–0.134), marketplace opinions of their product. However, this frugality \times marketplace opinion interaction dissipated entirely when the participants recalled a product they were initially dissatisfied with. In this case, the frugality-usage intentions effect through incompetent image concerns remains when exposed to either positive ($\beta = .156$; CI 95%: 0.035–0.284) or negative ($\beta = .253$; CI 95%: 0.109–0.405) marketplace opinions of their product. As additional support for the conditional indirect effect, the index of moderated-moderated-mediation did not span zero (CI 95%: 0.061–0.542), which indicates that there is a significant difference in strengths between the four conditional mediated paths (see Figure 5).

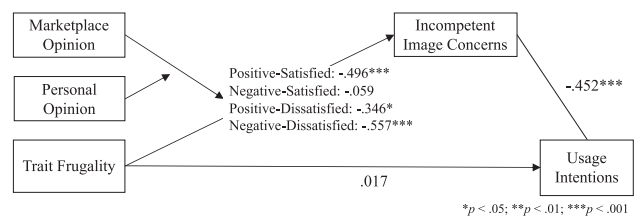
6.3 | Discussion

Overall, the results of this study provide further support for our findings in the previous studies. Frugal consumers are influenced by varying marketplace opinions of their owned products, and this can influence image concerns and usage intentions. However, this study also highlights an important boundary condition:

Namely, varying marketplace opinions do not influence already dissatisfied consumers. Therefore, while a negative marketplace opinion may contribute to declining usage and unnecessary waste for frugal consumers who are otherwise satisfied with their purchase, positive marketplace opinions do not discourage waste by increasing usage intentions of otherwise dissatisfied frugal consumers.

7 | GENERAL DISCUSSION

This current work examines the positive frugality-usage intentions relationship and how negative marketplace opinions about a product can act as a trigger that initiates frugal consumers on their path to the end-stages of consumption. Evidence is provided that negative marketplace opinions of a product decrease the usage intentions of



Moderated Mediated Paths:
 Positive Marketplace Opinion and Personally Satisfied: .224 [CI_{95%}: .118, .345]
 Negative Marketplace Opinion and Personally Satisfied: .027 [CI_{95%}: -.067, .134]
 Positive Marketplace Opinion and Personally Dissatisfied: .156 [CI_{95%}: .035, .284]
 Negative Marketplace Opinion and Personally Dissatisfied: .252 [CI_{95%}: .109, .405]

FIGURE 5 Effect of trait frugality on continued usage intentions through incompetent image concerns moderated by marketplace and personal opinions. CI, confidence interval

frugal owners, not solely because they do not like the product, but also because of an impression management motivation to avoid portraying an incompetent consumer image.

Three studies tested this central hypothesis. Study 1 establishes the base effect with evidence that there is a positive frugality-usage intentions relationship. However, mediation evidence supported the view that image concerns vary with frugality, so that frugal owners, in general, are less concerned that their owned products will portray an incompetent image, and these concerns are negatively related to usage intentions. Therefore, when these concerns subside, usage intentions increase. This finding helps demonstrate that consumers in general are concerned about appearing incompetent postpurchase and that this can influence usage intentions. However, frugal consumers, through their smart and resourceful purchasing habits, have lower concerns about appearing this way with their products, and this receding concern can partially explain the positive frugality-usage intentions relationship. Overall, this base effect demonstrates the importance of impression management for the effect of the frugality-usage intention.

Study 2 extends these findings by manipulating the marketplace opinions of owned products. If impression management is an important factor in the frugality-usage intentions relationship, then modifying what others think of a product (i.e., marketplace opinions) should moderate this effect. The results revealed evidence that negative (compared with positive) marketplace opinions diminished the frugality-usage intentions relationship. Specifically, mediation evidence supported the view that for highly frugal consumers, when exposed to negative marketplace opinions of their products, their image concerns increased. Therefore, because their image concerns did not subside, and these image concerns diminish usage, being exposed to negative marketplace opinions postpurchase diminishes the effect of the frugality-usage intention. The results further showed that nonfrugal consumers are not influenced by varying positive or negative marketplace opinions.

Finally, Study 3 exposes an important boundary condition whereby consumers must be initially satisfied with their product for the marketplace's varying opinions to have an impact on incompetent image concerns and usage intentions. Specifically, when consumers are initially dissatisfied with their products, varying marketplace opinions have no influence. Therefore, positive marketplace opinions do not enhance usage by dissatisfied frugal consumers by signaling a positive image. These results suggest that the role of impression management in the frugality-usage intentions relationship involves a desire to avoid portraying an incompetent image rather than a self-enhancement motivation of portraying a positive image.

Overall, these three studies make several interesting contributions to the anticonsumption literature. First, and most broadly, we explore and provide evidence for a psychological process that can trigger movement towards the end-stages of consumption. While the majority of anticonsumption research examines consumers' motivations and behaviors before making or not making a purchase, this study focuses on current owners and the usage value they obtain from the products they have already bought. While usage is likely to decline after years of wear and tear, we explore a situational context

that will result in otherwise functional products not being used by their owners and therefore leading to premature waste. We argue that the decision to discontinue usage of an owned and still functional product is relevant to the understanding of anticonsumption in general, as it results in otherwise useful and functional products not being used to their fullest extent, thus contributing to waste. Understanding and examining the external and psychological factors that can diminish usage and initiate movement towards waste and disposal should be relevant to researchers interested in anticonsumption, for it explores reasons "against consumption," but at the postpurchase stage. Thus motivated, this study presents impression management concerns about portraying an incompetent consumer image in the context of exposure to varying marketplace opinions as one possible psychological mechanism that could decrease usage and initiate movement towards disposal.

Second, this study also ties in to existing research on anticonsumption by exploring how those following the anticonsumption lifestyle of frugality behave in the context of being exposed to negative and positive marketplace opinions postpurchase. We demonstrate that frugal consumers are more negatively impacted by third-party negative reviews about the products they own. Specifically, these consumers become more concerned about appearing incompetent as a consumer and their usage of products (that remain functional and they otherwise still enjoy) declines. This contributes to our understanding of frugal consumers as anticonsumers. As anticonsumers, frugal individuals practice restraint in their purchasing, being resourceful in the pursuit of longer-term goals (Lastovicka et al., 1999). While the effect is that they "consume" less at the prepurchase phase, they are also expected to use the products they already own in an efficient way until they provide no more value to delay purchasing anything new (e.g., Lastovicka et al., 1999). We demonstrate evidence for this frugality-usage intentions effect. However, in the context of being exposed to negative marketplace opinions about their owned product, we find that frugal consumers are more concerned about their image and will diminish their usage intentions of these products they already own. While contradicting an intuitive understanding of frugal consumers, these findings support our theory that the effect of a negative marketplace opinion on current owners' usage is driven by incompetent consumer image concerns. Specifically, we argue that because frugal consumers pride themselves on being forward-looking to achieve longer-term financial and consumption goals, avoiding unnecessary and foolish consumption today (Nepomuceno & Laroche, 2017), evidence against this would be especially damning for their image. Therefore, if our effect is partially driven by impression management concerns of appearing to be an incompetent consumer, the effect of negative marketplace opinions on the usage intentions of current owners postpurchase should be strongest on those who identify as being "smart" consumers (i.e., frugal individuals).

Finally, our results demonstrate an important boundary condition. The effect of marketplace opinion of a product on the usage intentions of current owners is only relevant for consumers who are initially personally satisfied with their product. This means that

consumers who are personally dissatisfied with their purchase will not intend to use their product anymore even if they discover positive reviews about their purchase. This is relevant to the domain of anticonsumption, as the field has been particularly interested in issues related to deterring waste and future consumption at the end-stages of consumption (e.g., Brosius et al., 2013; Cherrier, 2010; Lee et al., 2011; Scott & Weaver, 2018). Therefore, while our results suggest that a negative marketplace opinion can increase waste of otherwise functional products, a positive marketplace opinion does result in more usage (i.e., deter waste) of products people are already dissatisfied with.

While our findings have several limitations, this study opens the doors to several interesting future research opportunities. First, the research examined usage intentions rather than actual usage. Although our findings can make assertions that such an effect can have implications for actual usage, future research should seek to develop a paradigm and method to capture usage over time following exposure to various marketplace opinions of a target product. Such an exploration could point to the duration of the effect as well as the different types of products for which this is likely to be a greater or lesser effect.

Second, although we demonstrate the effect of impression management through measurement across all studies, our experimental demonstration is limited. We show that varying marketplace opinions of an owned product can influence impression management motives. While providing evidence for our mediator, future research should consider investigating this phenomenon across different contexts that are theoretically related to impression management to examine the limitations to this effect. For example, is there a certain type of product or characteristic of a product that may further influence the effect of negative marketplace opinions on usage intentions? If the effect is driven by impression management concerns, as we propose and provide evidence to demonstrate, then a product's being more visible and/or conspicuous during usage should increase our effect. Arguably, ownership of a product that is used primarily in public and is more conspicuous during usage will likely be more susceptible to the effects of negative marketplace opinions because it will be easier for others to recognize them. Inversely, if the product is used only in private, out of sight from others, it is likely that such negative marketplace opinions will have no influence. Furthermore, there could be various individual differences that could moderate the effect of negative marketplace opinions on usage intentions. Various individual differences that are known to moderate impression management motives, such as the need to belong (e.g., Baumeister & Leary, 1995), susceptibility to normative influence (e.g., Bearden, Netemeyer, & Teel, 1989), and self-monitoring (Snyder, 1974), could be examined in the context of postpurchase usage intentions.

Overall, stepping beyond the prior perspective of anticonsumption being primarily focused on preconsumption, this current research challenges the existing assumption about why a consumer might not consume postpurchase and broadens theories of anticonsumption to be more inclusive. Examining the anticonsumption lifestyle of frugality and exposing how impression management plays an important role in consumers' postpurchase usage habits contribute to our understanding

of this important anticonsumption lifestyle. More generally, identifying impression management concerns as a factor influencing usage habits can help researchers better understand the motives behind anticonsumption postpurchase practices and a broader range of factors that could lead to the end-stages of consumption.

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APPENDIX A

TABLE A1 Marketplace opinion and argument type manipulations for Study 2

1. Marketplace opinion: Negative; argument type: Functional

Now imagine that you come across several reviews written by experts on well-known review sites about your product that you identified on the previous page.

The consensus from the expert reviews was that in comparison with other products of its type on the market, the price definitely does NOT make it worth it. This is because that given the specifications

and quality, it is more comparable with a low-end low-priced version of that product.

2. Marketplace opinion: Positive; argument type: Functional

Now imagine that you come across several reviews written by experts on well-known review sites about your product that you identified on the previous page.

The consensus from the expert reviews was that in comparison with other products of its type on the market, the price definitely makes it worth it. This is because that given the specifications and quality, it is more comparable with a high-end high-priced version of that product.

3. Marketplace opinion: Negative; argument type: Aesthetic

Now imagine that you come across several reviews written by experts on well-known review sites about your product that you identified on the previous page.

The consensus from the expert reviews was that in comparison with other products of its type on the market, the style definitely does NOT make it worth it. This is because that given the design and aesthetics, it is more comparable with an out-dated out-of-style version of that product.

4. Marketplace opinion: Positive; argument type: Aesthetic

Now imagine that you come across several reviews written by experts on well-known review sites about your product that you identified on the previous page.

The consensus from the expert reviews was that in comparison with other products of its type on the market, the style definitely makes it worth it. This is because that given the design and aesthetics, it is more comparable with a more modern in-style version of that product.

(Continues)