EFFECTS OF GOAL COMPATIBILITY: MATCHING CONSUMER MOTIVATIONS AND ADVERTISING APPEALS

By

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A DISSERTATION PRESENTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

2013
To my family for their love
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to thank my dissertation committee chair, Dr. Cynthia Morton. My journey to earn a Ph.D. degree would have been difficult without her guidance and mentorship. I also want to express my deepest appreciation to my co-chair, Dr. John Sutherland, for his help throughout the Ph.D. degree process. In addition, I want to thank Dr. Sora Kim, for her untiring guidance in reference to the research design and data analysis. My dissertation has benefited from the constructive comments I have received from Dr. James Shepperd. Without their efforts and patience, I would not have been able to complete my work.

I am grateful to Dr. Hyojin Kim, who taught me how to conduct research. Her encouragement always helped me to move forward when I faced challenging moments during this Ph.D. process. My advisor for my master’s degree at Michigan State University, Dr. Mira Lee, opened the door to academia for me. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my colleagues and others at the University of Florida. Their help and encouragement have been invaluable.

I cannot help but believe that I am a truly lucky person, as I have been able to share every moment of this journey with my three lovely girls, Namkyung, Jiwoo, and Yeonwoo. My wife, Namkyung, enabled me to begin work on and complete this degree and my two daughters were the reason of my embarking on this long journey. Finally, I would like to thank my family members, parents-in-law, and brother for their encouragement. I would especially like to express my gratitude to my father and mother for their unconditional love.
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This study examines the interactions between consumers' regulatory focuses and the types of appeals on their evaluations of advertisements, products and purchase intentions. Specifically, the study expects that distinctive advertising appeal matches up with consumers' promotion regulatory focus, but a mismatch with prevention-focused consumers. Popularity advertising appeal pairs with prevention regulatory focus; there is a mismatch on the other hand with promotion-focused consumers. Based on this expectation, this study hypothesizes that the consumers in the fit conditions will be more likely to possess more favorable attitudes toward the advertising, product, and higher purchase intentions than those who are in nonfit conditions.

A post-test only experimental between-subjects design was applied to examine the regulatory fit effect of regulatory focus and advertising appeals on consumers' responses. The results show that the prevention-focused people are more likely to have positive attitudes toward advertising and the products when they are exposed to distinctive advertising appeal than promotion-focused people.
are. Additionally, the findings indicate that promotion-focused people possess more positive attitudes toward advertising than people with prevention focus when a product utilizes popularity advertising appeals.

The present study not only presents implications to marketing communicators, but it also contributes literature in the regulatory focus/fit and message-framing by tapping into unanswered questions and addressing possible moderating variables for the regulatory nonfit effect.
Overview

Imagine a consumer, Nicole, who is planning to travel to Europe with her close friends. She sees an advertisement for a travel package in a magazine and reads the information about the product specifications. Another consumer, Rachel, is also looking for a travel package to Europe. Unlike Nicole, Rachel is traveling with her family, thus, cares most about safety and avoiding any risks during the trip. She reads the same advertisement for the travel package as Nicole.

Advertisers want to find the right target audience and develop advertising messages that fit them best (Vakratsas & Ambler, 1999). Regarding advertisers’ interests in achieving their advertising objectives, two important questions arise from the Nicole and Rachel scenarios, which constitute the research agenda of this study. First, will there be any difference between Nicole’s and Rachel’s interpretations of the travel package advertisement? If so, how will their different advertising processing affect their respective product preference? To answer these questions, this study examines consumers’ motivational states and types of advertising appeals.

A critical ongoing issue in advertising is the determination of what benefits to communicate to target audiences and how to communicate them (Lee, Keller, & Sternthal, 2010). An appeal is the motive by which an advertisement is directed, and its purpose is to move the audience toward a goal set by the advertiser (Williams, 2012). Specifically, an advertising appeal is defined as any
messages designed to motivate the consumer to purchase the advertiser’s product (Mueller, 1987). To motivate consumer action, therefore, the statement must relate to the consumers’ interests, wants, and goals. Accordingly, consumers make their purchase decisions not just based on the information they receive from an advertisement (Bettman & Jacoby, 1976; Peterson & Merino, 2003), but also their specific wishes and needs (Florack & Scarabis, 2006).

Additionally, one medium or message will not solely influence consumers’ decision-making process, but rather consumers’ goals, needs, and wants for the purchase will play a role in their decision making. Moreover, regarding the increasing clutter of advertising in the modern media environment, consumer preferences do not come readily from a message delivered by an advertiser, but are inherently constructive, and it becomes more difficult to influence consumers independently of their internal influencers, such as motivational states and prior attitudes toward the product (Feng & Papatla, 2011; Wang & Lee, 2006).

Unfortunately, however, as consumers are more likely to search for and process information based on their goals, needs and wants (i.e., motivational states), their purchase decision making and their information search and processing may be biased, which in turn, results in poor decisions (Connolly & Zeelenberg, 2002; Oliver, 1977). Therefore, balanced information processing is critical for consumers to make better decisions and avoid the negative consequences of poor decisions (Jonas, Schulz-Hardt, Frey, & Thelen, 2001). In this vein, researchers have tried to include internal factors such as motivation in
the advertising appeal studies to fully understand how advertising works (e.g., Florack & Scarabis, 2006; Keller, 2006; Pollay, 1983).

This study is interested in the role of consumers’ motivational states on advertising appeal persuasiveness. Researchers in advertising have noted that advertising input (e.g., message content, media scheduling, repetition) and the consumers’ cognitive, affective, and behavioral responses are mediated by their motivation (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986; Vakratsa & Ambler, 1999). Supporting the influence of motivational states on persuasion, sizeable literature in motivation science has supported the idea that people’s decision making is affected by basic orientations and motivations related to their goals and motivations (e.g., Crowe & Higgins, 1997; Higgins, 2000; Kunda, 1990). For instance, Chernev (2004) found that if a consumer is motivated to maximize positive outcomes, messages emphasizing performance-related attributes are more persuasive, whereas messages highlighting reliability-related attributes are more effective to a consumer who is motivated to minimize negative outcomes.

Based on the discussion of the role of motivational states and advertising appeals on persuasion, the objectives of this study are to investigate the role of consumers’ motivational orientations on persuasive information processing (i.e., advertising messages).

From these objectives comes the following research question for investigation: Are there different effects between the types of advertising appeals depending on consumers’ motivational states?
Specifically, this study examines the influence of goal compatibility between consumers’ goals (i.e., motivational states) and advertising appeals on their product preference formation. Returning to the consumers, Nicole and Rachel, in the opening scenario, For instance, let’s assume Nicole wants a travel package to enjoy her vacation with her friends. Persuasive messages highlighting fun and enjoyment might be compatible with her consumer goals, compared to advertising appeals that emphasize safety of the trip. In the other case, assume that Rachel is planning a vacation with her family. An advertising appeal emphasizing safety during the trip might be more compatible with Rachel’s goals compared to advertising appeals that stress fun and adventures during the trip.

This study proposes that when consumers form product preferences, the influence of advertising appeals will differ depending on matching between consumers’ motivational states and advertising appeals. Specifically, this study examines regulatory focus as consumers’ motivational states, and two types of advertising appeals— distinctive and popularity appeals— as persuasive messages. The next section specifies the concepts of regulatory focus and fit and their effects on the formation of product preference.

**Interests of Research**

It is assumed that the fit between consumers’ regulatory focus and the advertising appeals has an impact on product preferences. Specifically, regulatory focus theory posits two different motivational orientations, promotion and prevention (Higgins, 1997, 1998). According to regulatory focus theory, people with a promotion focus regulate their attitudes and behaviors toward
positive outcomes, and their concerns are related to the presence or absence of gains (Crowe & Higgins, 1997; Higgins, 1997). Additionally, the goals of a person with promotion focus are represented such as hopes, ideals, and aspirations, and they are sensitive to accomplishment and advancement (Higgins, 1997). In contrast, people with a prevention focus regulate their attitudes and behaviors away from negative outcomes, and their concerns are related to the presence or absence of losses (Higgins, 1997; Molden, Lee, & Higgins, 2008). A person with a prevention focus represents goals as duties and obligations and is concerned with safety and security (Higgins, 1997; Zhu & Meyers-Levy, 2007). A basic prediction of regulatory focus is that people are more concerned with information that is relevant for the salient regulatory focus and that they weigh attributes compatible with the focus more carefully (Higgins, 2002). In the same vein, this study predicts that motivational states will influence consumers’ responses to advertising appeals (Kunda, 1990).

Returning to the case of Nicole and Rachel for an example of regulatory focus, Nicole is categorized as promotion focused, due to her motivation to choose a travel package based on her priorities on the benefits of “having fun and adventures,”. Conversely, Rachel is categorized as prevention focused, as her choice is motivated by the need to be safe and to avoid harm to her family during the trip. In keeping with this, advertisements that coincide with each woman’s concerns are expected to be more effective in their ability to appeal to their respective consumers’ needs. That is, consumers’ responses to advertising appeals are expected to differ depending on their regulatory focus. This study
seeks to explain the influence of regulatory focus on advertising processing from theories of regulatory fit and selective evaluation.

In sum, this study aims to investigate how advertising appeals can interact with consumers’ regulatory foci to influence consumers’ sequent evaluations of a product. Based on the principle of regulatory focus and selective evaluation respectively, the research expects to find differences in consumers’ evaluations of a product depending on the compatibility between regulatory focus and advertising appeals.

**Significance of Research**

Consistent with previous studies on regulatory focus/fit theory and biased information processing, this study examines how consumers’ motivational orientations (i.e., regulatory focus) pair with different types of advertising appeals. Specifically, investigating regulatory focus will contribute to the literature on motivated cognitive reasoning.

Pham and Higgins (2005) noted that an individual’s cognitive processes are not computer-like mental processes, rather are filled with judgment heuristics and preference construction. This study explores more fully the ways in which consumer regulatory focus interacts with advertising appeals to influence relative reliance on online product reviews and product preference. Thus, one goal of the current study is to increase understanding of how two distinct motivational orientations (i.e., promotion- and prevention-focused) influence consumers’ cognitive information processing. Additionally, the current research attempts to extend studies in regulatory focus by demonstrating the persuasive effect of compatibility between regulatory focus and advertising appeals. Specifically,
understanding the role of regulatory focus in consumer information evaluation may help marketing communicators by providing insight into the effective use of advertising appeals and message platforms.

Chapter 2 provides a thorough literature review of extant research in the area of regulatory focus/fit theory, distinctive/popularity advertising appeals, and selective information processing. At its conclusion the hypotheses are induced from the literature review. Chapter 3 details the experimental design of the current study including sampling, procedure, stimulus, measurements, and pretests. Chapter 4 presents the results of the study, including reliability checks, manipulation checks, and hypotheses testing. Lastly, chapter 5 provides a discussion of the findings, limitations, theoretical and practical implications as well as suggestions for future research.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

The objective of this study is to shed light on the effects of regulatory focus on consumers’ product evaluation after they are exposed to advertisements that use appeals which are either consistent or inconsistent with their regulatory focus. Specifically, the current study will examine how consumer regulatory focus interacts with advertising appeal and affects preference construction. That is, this study expects that matching, or fit, between regulatory focus and advertising appeals will positively influence consumers’ attitude toward the advertising, perceptions of the product, and purchase intention.

To make the case for the influence of regulatory focus and advertising appeals stronger, it is necessary to discuss how regulatory focus and advertising appeals could fit into the consumer decision making process. Traditionally, consumer researchers widely use the consumer information processing model to explain consumers’ purchasing decisions (Delozier, 1976; Schiffman & Kanuk, 1997).

The consumer information processing model views consumers as problem-solvers (i.e., cognitive) and, to some degree, emotional (Schiffman & Kanuk, 1997). Specifically, the model explains that a consumer passes through five stages: problem recognition, information search, evaluation and selection of alternatives, decision implementation, and post-purchase evaluation (Schiffman & Kanuk, 1997). In the model, the consumer’s purchase decision making starts with his or her problem recognition. In the case of Nicole and Rachel, for
instance, they may recognize that they have worked so hard and need to feel refreshed in their everyday life. When they find a problem, Nicole and Rachel may search for more information related to travel from their memory (internal search) and/or become more attentive to advertisements (external search). That is, they take actions that precede an information search. Once they form an awareness set, consideration set, and/or choice set, they process competitive brand information and evaluate the value of the brands (i.e., evaluation and selection of alternatives stage). Then, Nicole and Rachel may need to select what specific travel package (what) and specific outlet (where). That is, they move on to the transaction. Lastly, they will evaluate the product based on their purchase and usage experience. Researchers call this stage post-purchase evaluation. That is, consumers' motivational states are involved in problem recognition, whereas advertising appeals are related to an external information search. Therefore, the domain of this study is in the interrelationship between the problem recognition and information search stages.

More specifically, Schiffman and Kanuk (1997) view the process of consumer decision making as three distinct but interlocking stages: the input, the process, and the output stages. They noted that the input stage influences the consumers' recognition of a product need, and consists of two components: a firm's marketing efforts (e.g., product, price, distribution channel, and promotion), and sociocultural environment (e.g., family, information sources, social class, and culture). The process state refers to the influence of psychological factors (e.g., motivation, perception, knowledge) and external factors on consumers'
recognition of a need, such as an information search and alternative evaluations. Again, this study fits into the input and the process stages because it is concerned with the influence of motivational states (the process stage) and advertising appeals (the input stage) on the outcomes (e.g., product trial and purchase). Literature in the areas of selective information processing will be discussed as a foundation for developing relevant hypotheses based on the theories associated with consumer decision making.

Selective information processing is presented because this study understands regulatory fit effect as a type of selective information processing which includes selective information processing, regulatory focus, regulatory fit, and advertising appeals. Then, the interaction between regulatory focus and advertising appeals on consumer information evaluation will be discussed based on regulatory focus/fit effect. Lastly, hypotheses will be proposed based on the literature reviews.

**Regulatory Focus Theory**

Consumer researchers have focused primarily on a cognitive analysis of consumer decision-making (Bettman, Johnson, & Payne, 1991). However, recent work in consumer research has demonstrated that consumer decision making is also influenced by a variety of motivational factors as well as purely cognitive processes (e.g., motivated reasoning) (Kunda, 1990; Pham & Higgins, 2005). In this study, regulatory focus motivation will be examined as a variable that influences consumer information processing.

How consumers process information and make decisions is driven by their consumption goals (Pham & Higgins, 2005). A considerable amount of research
in decision making has focused on people’s fundamental needs for advancement (i.e., nourishment, growth, and development) and security (i.e., shelter, safety, and protection) (Friedman & Förster, 2001; Higgins, 1997; Maslow, 1955; Molden et al., 2008). Related to these two different fundamental needs, the hedonic principle proposes that people are motivated to approach pleasure and avoid pain, and this principle dominates the understanding of people’s motivations in academia (Higgins, 1997; Olshavsky & Granvbois, 1979).

Regulatory focus theory started with criticism about the dominance of the hedonic principle in psychology (Molden et al., 2008). Higgins (1997) pointed out that “the problem with the hedonic principle is not that it is wrong but that psychologists have relied on it too heavily as an explanation for motivation” (p.1280), and suggested regulatory focus theory to increase the understanding of the hedonic principle by studying approach and avoid principles. Specifically, regulatory focus theory proposes that differences in decision making can occur as a function of regulatory focus, regardless of the hedonic principle. Higgins (1997) noted that the hedonic principle provides a description of events rather than an understanding of underlying process. Regarding the descriptive nature of the hedonic principle, regulatory focus helps to identify the distinct principle that underlies the hedonic principle. That is, while the hedonic principle is regarded as unitary, regulatory theory proposes that the ways of seeking pleasure and avoiding pain can be pursued in different ways depending on people’s regulatory focus (Higgins, 1997; Pham & Higgins, 2005).
Specifically, regulatory focus theory proposes two different modes of goal pursuit: promotion and prevention focus (Brockner, Paruchuri, Idson, & Higgins, 2002; Higgins, 1997; Idson, Liberman, & Higgins, 2004; Liberman, Molden, Idson, & Higgins, 2001; Molden et al., 2008). People with promotion regulatory focus are concerned with advancement, growth, and accomplishment whereas people with prevention regulatory focus care about protection, safety, and responsibility. Therefore, promotion-focused people experience pleasure from the presence of positive outcomes (i.e., gain or nongain), but prevention-focused people experience pleasure from the absence of negative outcomes (i.e., loss or nonloss) (Gollwitzer, 1990; Higgins et al., 2001).

In the rest of this chapter, regulatory focus and fit theory will be discussed to address the role of regulatory focus and fit on consumers’ evaluation of product information. Specifically, the characteristics of two motivational orientations (promotion and prevention focus) and fit between motivational orientation and the manner of goal pursuit (i.e. regulatory fit) will be explored in detail. The next section will review research on regulatory focus that examines the two different motivational modes (i.e., promotion and prevention focus).

**Regulatory focus: promotion versus prevention focus.** Regulatory focus is a specific strategic and motivational orientation that a person adopts during goal pursuit. Higgins (1997, 1998) noted that self-regulation involves two different motivational modes: the promotion focus, which regulates nurturance needs and goals related to aspiration and accomplishment (e.g., a person can attend a football club to become a better player), and the prevention focus, which
regulates security needs and goals related to safety and responsibilities (e.g., a person can quit smoking to become a better football player). In this section, two separate motivational orientations will be compared and contrasted to investigate different information processing in terms of regulatory focus.

According to regulatory focus theory, people with a promotion focus regulate their attitudes and behaviors toward positive outcomes, and their concerns are related to the presence and absence of gains (Crowe & Higgins, 1997; Förster, Higgins, & Idson, 1998; Higgins, 1997; Molden et al., 2008). Additionally, the goals of a person with promotion focus are represented as hopes, ideals, and aspirations, and s/he is sensitive to accomplishment and advancement (Higgins, 1997). Researchers in motivational science have noted that when pursuing a goal, people with different regulatory foci adopt different strategies. Promotion-focused people prefer strategies that maximize gains and minimize non-gains. More specifically, promotion-focused people choose strategies that focus on means of advancement (Lee & Higgins, 2009). Thus, they tend to accept ambiguous, risky, and novel options, and use as many opportunities as possible (Crowe & Higgins, 1997). People also have different emotional experiences depending on their regulatory focus. Specifically, people with promotion focus are more sensitive to affective evaluations of elation or dejection. Studies found that promotion focused people were fast at evaluating experiences in terms of elation or dejection (Shah & Higgins, 2001).

In contrast, people with a prevention focus regulate their attitudes and behaviors away from negative outcomes, and their concerns are related to the
presence and absence of losses (Crowe & Higgins, 1997; Förster et al., 1998; Higgins, 1997; Molden et al., 2008). Additionally, a person with a prevention focus represents goals as duties and obligations, and is concerned with safety and security (Higgins, 1997). Additionally, prevention-focused people tend to prefer unambiguous and secure options because they strive to minimize losses and maximize non-losses (i.e., vigilant strategy) (Cesario, Grant, & Higgins, 2004; Lee & Aaker, 2004; Hong & Lee, 2008). For the affective experience, people with prevention focus are faster to evaluate experiences in terms of relaxation or agitation (Higgins, 1997; Shah & Higgins, 2001).

People with a promotion focus regulate their attitudes and behaviors toward positive outcomes and people with a prevention focus regulate their attitudes and behaviors away from negative outcomes. Higgins (1997) noted that the promotion system’s concerns relate to the pleasurable presence of positive outcomes (i.e., gains) and the painful absence of positive outcomes (i.e., non-gains). In contrast, the prevention system is concerned with obtaining security and is the basis for higher-level concerns with safety and fulfillment of responsibilities. Thus, the prevention system’s concerns relate to the pleasurable absence of negative outcomes (e.g., non-losses) and the painful presence of negative outcomes (e.g., losses).

The distinction between promotion and prevention focus has been supported by researchers from various areas such as psychology (e.g., Pennington & Roese, 2003; Liberman et al., 2001), organizational behavior (e.g., Brockner et al., 2002; Pham & Avnet, 2009; Shah et al., 2004), consumer
behavior (e.g., Lee, Aaker, & Gardner, 2000; Sengupta & Zhou, 2007) and advertising appeals (e.g., Aaker & Lee, 2001; Lee & Aaker, 2004). For instance, Aaker and Lee (2001) manipulated information to be either promotion-focused (i.e., approach goal) or prevention-focused (i.e., avoidance goal). They found that independent people with autonomy are more likely persuaded by promotion-focused information whereas prevention-focused information is more effective for interdependent people for whom the self relates to belonging and fitting in with their social groups. Consistent with the distinction between promotion and prevention focus, Wan, Hong and Stemthal (2009) demonstrated that the way in which product information is presented influences peoples’ attitudes toward the products. Specifically, they found that when product information is presented sequentially (i.e., progress strategy), promotion-focused participants showed more favorable attitudes toward the product compared to when the information was presented simultaneously (i.e., accuracy strategy). Figure 2-1 provides the distinctions between promotion and prevention focus.

**Regulatory Fit Theory**

Regulatory focus is based on the concerns or interests that regulate a person's attitudes and behaviors, which implies that decision makers with different regulatory foci assign a different importance to the same outcome of a choice alternative consistent with their regulatory focus (Avnet & Higgins, 2006; Crowe & Higgins, 1997; Pham & Chang, 2010). A central idea of regulatory fit is that a person’s motivational orientation often leads to preferences for certain types of goal pursuit means and that the person’s experience of goal pursuit differs depending on whether or not these preferred means are used (Aaker &
In this vein, researchers have noted that when people adopt strategies and engage in activities that are consistent with their regulatory focus, they experience a fit (Aaker & Lee, 2006; Lee et al., 2000; Pham & Chang, 2010). Specifically, regulatory fit theory proposes that people experience regulatory fit when their strategies for goal pursuit match their regulatory orientation (Avnet & Higgins, 2006; Lee et al., 2010; Pham & Chang, 2010). That is, given their concern for growth and accomplishments, promotion-focused people experience fit when they adopt eagerness strategies that strive toward gains, and experience nonfit when they adopt vigilance strategies. On the other hand, prevention-focused people experience fit when they adopt vigilance strategies and experience nonfit when they adopt eagerness strategies. For instance, if a football player who has higher promotion focus wants to be a better player, he will attend a football club to work out (i.e., eagerness strategy), whereas if the footballer has higher prevention focus, he will try to stop smoking instead of attending the football club (i.e., vigilance strategy).

**The Effects of Regulatory Fit**

Regarding the effects of regulatory fit, extant findings in regulatory fit theory have demonstrated that when people experience regulatory fit, their attitudes (either positive or negative) toward a product become stronger and their confidence in their decisions and judgments strengthens (Aaker & Lee, 2006). Researchers also learned that people are more persuaded when the message frame fits their regulatory focus (Cesario et al., 2004), thereby increasing people’s perception that a decision they made was "right" (Avnet & Higgins,
2006), and that people are willing to pay more for a product when the product is consistent with their regulatory focus (Higgins, Freitas, Idson, Spiegel, & Molden, 2003).

Hong and Lee (2008) tested regulatory fit in the self-regulation domain and found that people in nonfit conditions are less engaged and become less motivated to self-regulate, while regulatory fit enhances self-regulatory performance. Avnet and Higgins (2006) found that when consumers experience fit, they perceive a higher monetary value for the choices they have made. Supporting previous research, a recent study also found that fit positively influences consumers’ brand attitudes, and that the effects are mediated by enhanced engagement and information processing fluency (Lee et al., 2010).

Aaker and Lee (2001) found that people who relate themselves to the autonomy and independence of the individual (i.e., independent self-view) are more persuaded by promotional messages (e.g., gain-framed messages) because the message is consistent with their approach goal. In contrast, people who emphasize belonging and fitting in with their social groups (i.e., interdependent self-view) are more likely to be persuaded by prevention messages (e.g., loss-framed messages) because the messages are compatible with their avoidance goal.

Although regulatory fit has been tested in many domains, from consumer behavior to self-regulation, only a few studies have examined the effects of regulatory fit on selective information processing. One of the studies of regulatory fit effect in selectivity is by Yoon, Sarial-Abi, and Gürhan-Canli (2012). They
investigated the moderating role of information load in the effect of regulatory focus on the selective information process. They found that with a high information load, relative reliance on positive information is greater for promotion-focused people, and with a low information load, relative reliance on positive information is greater for prevention-focused people. Similarly, Wang and Lee (2006) found that people show selective information processing in a low involvement situation, and they pay more attention to the product information that is relevant to their regulatory focus. In a similar vein, the research proposed for the investigation will examine the regulatory fit effect as a moderator on consumers’ selective information evaluations.

**Underlying Mechanism of Regulatory Fit**

Given that the domain of this study is advertising and persuasive messages, one of its objectives is to examine a role of regulatory fit on consumers’ information evaluation. This study is more interested in ways to create conditions optimal for regulatory fit rather than the underlying mechanism of regulatory fit. However, to understand how regulatory fit is created, it is essential to understand the underlying mechanism of regulatory fit.

Studies in regulatory fit theory have sought to understand the mechanisms underlying its effects via the feeling right experience and strength of engagement (Aaker & Lee, 2006; Avnet & Higgins, 2006). That is, when people experience fit, they feel right about what they are doing and engage more strongly in what they are doing (Cesario et al., 2004; Lee & Higgins, 2009). In investigations of the effects of regulatory fit, two important components are involved: a “feeling-right” component and strength-of-engagement component (Avnet & Higgins, 2006).
According to regulatory fit theory, if the manner in which a consumer makes a decision sustains the consumer’s regulatory state, it increases the level of engagement for his/her choice (Avnet & Higgins, 2006; Cesario et al., 2004). Furthermore, increased level of engagement results in feeling right about one’s choice (Higgins, 2006; Lee et al., 2010). Therefore, under the fit condition, people experience the “feels right” sensation and increased engagement in the goal pursuit activity, which in turn influences their subjective confidence in their decisions (Aaker & Lee, 2006; Lee et al., 2000; Pham & Chang, 2010). The next section will briefly discuss how fit with regulatory focus orientation can be created.

**Creation of Regulatory Fit**

Given that the effects of regulatory fit are due to people’s “feeling right” and strength of engagement, regulatory fit can be created or manipulated by developing the two regulatory fit components. Cesario and his colleagues (2008) noted that regulatory fit can be created in several ways, such as framing message arguments or a source’s nonverbal behavior. Aaker and Lee (2006) proposed two different approaches to operationalize the feeling-right experience and strength of engagement: a process-based approach and an outcome-based approach. Their method of creating regulatory fit encompasses the regulatory fit manipulations in current regulatory fit research, thus the distinctions can be useful for understanding the creation of regulatory fit.

First, regulatory fit can be created by inducing people to engage in decision making processes that are either consistent or inconsistent with their regulatory focus (Aaker & Lee, 2006; Hong & Lee, 2008). For example, Pham
and Chang (2010) examined fit between regulatory focus and information search strategies. Specifically, they found that promotion-focused people tend to search for information at a more global level (e.g., larger information set and hierarchically structured decision environment) whereas prevention-focused people tend to search for information at a more local level (e.g., smaller information set and non-hierarchically structured lists).

Avnet and Higgins (2003) also examined the relationship between people’s regulatory focus and their decision making strategies. Specifically, they extended regulatory focus (promotion and prevention focus) to regulatory mode (locomotion and assessment mode) and examined how decision making strategies could fit with those two regulatory modes. They referred to locomotion as “the movement from a current state toward a valued or desired end-state” (Avnet & Higgins, 2003, p. 526), and assessment as “an orientation to measure, interpret, or evaluate the rate, amount, size, value or importance of something.” That is, the locomotion mode is associated with promotion focus, and the assessment mode is associated with the prevention focus.

Avnet and Higgins (2003) used two different decision making strategies to examine fit effects: progressive elimination and full evaluation strategy. People who use the progressive elimination strategy look at the first attribute and eliminate the brand that has the worst value for that attribute. Thus, the progressive elimination strategy involves changing the state of alternative possibilities to the final choice. On the other hand, people who use the full evaluation strategy compare among all of the alternatives for all of the attributes,
and then choose the brand that seems to have the best attributes overall. Avnet and Higgins (2003) found that people with locomotion orientation have a higher fit with the progressive elimination strategy, and people with assessment orientation have a higher fit with the full evaluation strategy.

Regulatory fit also can be created by emphasizing the outcomes to which people with regulatory foci are sensitive (Aaker & Lee, 2006; Cesario et al., 2004; Lee & Aaker, 2004). That is, researchers have tried to create a fit for promotion-focused people by presenting presence and absence of positive outcomes and a fit for prevention-focused people by presenting presence and absence of negative outcomes. For instance, a study asked their participants to read a message emphasizing either potential gains and nongains, “If you pick Alternative A, you will keep $400 worth of the prizes…,” or potential losses and nonlosses, “If you pick Alternative A, you will have to give up $800 worth or prizes…” (Lee et al., 2010). They found more positive brand attitude when promotion-focused participants were exposed to a gain-nogain message frame or when prevention-focused participants were exposed to a loss-noloss message frame.

Researchers have also used advertising messages to create fit (Aaker & Lee, 2006). For instance, Aaker and Lee (2001) found that an advertisement for a juice that emphasized vitamin C, energy, and great taste was more effective than an advertisement that emphasized antioxidants and cardiovascular disease prevention for consumers with promotion focus; but the reverse was true when the advertisement targeted consumers with prevention focus. Wang and Lee
(2006) also created a fit with advertising appeals. In their experiment, they manipulated the participants’ regulatory foci by asking them to write down their hopes and aspirations (promotion focus) or their duties and responsibilities (prevention focus). The participants were then exposed to advertisement for toothpaste. One advertisement described the promotion features of the toothpaste (e.g., breath freshening and teeth whitening) while the other advertisement showed prevention features (e.g., cavity prevention and plaque control). They found that when advertising appeals matched regulatory focus (i.e., promotion focus and appeals emphasizing promotion features), the persuasiveness of the appeal was greater compared to unmatched conditions.

This study examines how consumers evaluate product reviews depending on their regulatory focus, advertising appeals, and the interaction of the two; the interest is in creating regulatory fit using advertising appeals (i.e., an outcome-based approach). Specifically, uniqueness appeals and popularity appeals will be adopted to create regulatory fit, and a discussion of how those appeals fit with consumer regulatory focus will follow in the next section.

Advertising Appeals: Distinctive and Popularity Appeals

Extant research has found that consumers’ motivations can be associated with a variety of decision making strategies and messages; thus, regulatory focus influence on their responses to marketing messages (Aaker & Lee, 2006; Avnet & Higgins, 2006; Lee et al., 2000; Wang & Lee, 2006). In this study, two types of advertising appeals (distinctive appeals and popularity appeals) will be adopted and expected to create regulatory fit with consumers’ regulatory foci.
Distinctive Appeal

Distinctive appeal is considered to be a type of uniqueness appeal (Albers-Miller & Gelb 1996; Pollay, 1983). Therefore, this section starts with a discussion of uniqueness appeal, and then will narrow down to details of distinctive appeals. Uniqueness appeal refers to messages emphasizing the unrivaled, incomparable, and unparalleled nature of a product (Ji & McNeal, 2001). In a similar vein, Pollay (1983) considers uniqueness to be one of the values that advertising can deliver to consumers. Pollay categorized the value of uniqueness into two aspects: dearness (expensiveness) and distinctiveness (rarity). Specifically, Pollay (1983) defined dearness as “expensive, rich, valuable, highly regarded, costly, extravagant, exorbitant, luxurious, and priceless,” whereas distinctiveness was described as “rare, unique, unusual, scarce, infrequent, exclusive, tasteful, elegant, subtle, esoteric, hand-crafted.” (p. 80). That is, dearness appeals do not contain any risk-related cues, whereas choosing a product with distinctive appeal can be a risky choice, as the product has not been adopted by the majority of consumers (Albers-Miller & Gelb, 1996).

This study is interested in advertising appeals that emphasize distinctiveness. Therefore, for the purpose of the investigation, distinctive advertising appeals were defined as persuasive messages that are designed to produce positive consumer responses by making the target audience to perceive the product/brand has potential benefits to make them different from others in a positive way.

Romaniuk, Sharp, and Ehrenberg (2007) proposed an interesting differentiation between brand distinctiveness and brand differentiation. According
to their differentiation, differentiation implies positive improvement of the product. As a result, product buyers become more loyal and the brand can avoid direct competition (e.g., Apple’s advanced display, Dell’s affordable price). Brand distinctiveness focuses more on recognition and identification (e.g., Coca-Cola red, McDonald’s arches). However, this conceptual differentiation has not received empirical support. Additionally, their definition of brand distinctiveness is somewhat limited to perceptual differentiation by the consumers (i.e., how easily consumers can recognize the brand) and disregards the benefits that the brand actually delivers (e.g., what values the consumer can get by consuming this brand). The current study defines distinctive appeals to include potential benefits that the product can have as well as the perceptual distinction of the product. Therefore, this study does not make any strict distinction between brand distinctiveness and differentiation.

**Popularity Appeal**

Marketing researchers refer to the popularity effect as the influence of perceived brand popularity on consumers’ favorable formation of brand preference (Castleberry & Resurreccion, 1989; Tucker & Zhang, 2011). Chiu (2008) noted that popularity claims are persuasive because the popularity cues (e.g., brand name, country of origin, and advertising appeal) provided by marketers indicate that people have positive opinions of the product, and the majority correctly reflects reality, so the consumers accept this as evidence of the product’s true nature. Therefore, consumers feel safe in choosing the popular product because the quality of the product has been proved by masses of people who already have used the product (i.e., low risk choice). Researchers have
explained the popularity effect on persuasion with (1) the relationship between market share (i.e., popularity) and product quality (Huang, Schrank, & Dubinsky, 2006; Miyazaki, Grewal, & Goodstein, 2005) and (2) the role of popularity cues as a risk reducer (Chiu, 2008; Dean, 1999).

First, the influence of other consumers’ choices/opinions can be great for one’s construction of product preferences because consumers assume that the majority of consumers’ choices correctly reflects the reality, and they can infer that the product the majority prefers must be a good product (Miyazaki et al., 2005; Tucker & Zhang, 2011). That is, consumers use market share as a signal for brand quality and a brand’s widespread acceptance as an indicator of superior quality (Huang et al., 2006). Supporting this assertion, Tucker and Zhang (2011) found that if the level of popularity is the same, popularity information is more effective to niche market products than to mainstream products.

For the explanation of Tucker and Zhang’s (2011) findings, let’s assume that a consumer is in a car market, and considering two small sedans, a Suzuki Kizashi and a Ford Focus. According to Tucker and Zhang’s results, the consumer will have a more positive product preference for the Suzuki if the two models are using the same level of popularity information because Suzuki is the product serving a smaller niche of the market compared to Ford, and consequently has a lower likelihood of being chosen when all products offer the same quality. However, the Ford Focus is a product that suits mainstream tastes and therefore stands a high chance of being chosen among products of the same
quality. Therefore, consumers perceive that the Suzuki Kizashi has a better quality than the Ford Focus.

Second, brand/product popularity can be a risk reducer, especially when consumers have a higher level of uncertainty regarding the quality of a product (Huang et al., 2006). Dean (1999) noted that consumers reduce their level of uncertainty in their purchase decision by choosing the most popular selling product. Additionally, researchers have addressed that the effect of popularity cues are moderated by consumers’ product knowledge (e.g., Chiu, 2008; Dean, 1999; Miyazaki et al., 2005). That is, when consumers hold much knowledge about the product category, they are less likely to employ brand popularity as an indicator of brand quality (Dean, 1999). In a similar vein, Miyazaki and his colleagues (2005) demonstrated that when product information was available, consumers were less likely to rely on brand popularity for their judgment of product quality.

It should be noted that brand popularity is distinguished from brand familiarity in this research. A popular brand may be familiar to most consumers. However, a familiar brand does not mean that brand is popular to the majority of consumers (Dean, 1999). That is, a popular brand in this study implies that a naïve consumer can evaluate the popular brand as superior to others based on postulated popularity cues in the advertisement.

It is a common practice for advertisers to incorporate popularity cues into their advertising (e.g., “Honda Accord- number one selling car in America”) (Dean, 1999). Specifically, popularity appeals focus on the universal recognition
and acceptance of a certain product by consumers (Ji & McNeal, 2001; Pollay, 1983). Pollay (1983) considered popularity as an important value frequently observed in advertisements. He referred to popularity in advertising as “commonplace, customary, well-known, conventional, regular, usual, ordinary, normal, standard, typical, universal, general, everyday” (Pollay, 1983, p. 80). Therefore, popularity appeals include phrases such as “largest seller” and “ubiquitous comestible” (e.g., “Honda Civic- best-selling car in Canada 13 years running,” “9 out of 10 consumers chose the brand”). Regarding the adjectives presented by Pollay, his popularity appeals are intended to reinforce the status quo and strengthen the dominance of products. That is, this perception is based on the belief that the products have high market share, and consequently benefit from the bandwagon of choices, making people buy a product because the masses are buying it (Tucker & Zhang, 2011).

Consistent to Pollay’s definition, the present study defines popularity appeals as persuasive messages that are designed to produce positive consumer responses by making the target audience perceive that the product/brand has good quality, using information demonstrating the extent to which a brand/product is widely sought by the population at large. Therefore, popularity appeals imply that it is safe and secure to purchase a product, as a majority of people has already adopted it. Figure 2-2 presents the comparison between distinctive and popularity advertising appeals.

Recalling that the purpose of this study is to examine the regulatory fit effect between regulatory focus and advertising appeal, the current study
understands regulatory fit effect as a type of selective information processing, because the study expects that consumers' information processing will be selective depending on fit or non-fit situations. The next section discusses the background of selective information processing to provide a deeper understanding of the fit effects.

**Selective Exposure and Evaluation**

Judgment and decision making (JDM) literature has demonstrated that biased information processing occurs with decision-making; such bias can include changes in opinions, attitudes, and beliefs (e.g., Edwards & Smith, 1996; Gilovich & Griffin, 2010). That is, decision makers do not objectively consider every possible alternative. Instead, bias is introduced when they seek and evaluate information to serve their beliefs, attitudes, or prior decisions (Ditto & Lopez, 1992). JDM researchers use the term confirmation bias to refer to the tendency that people reliably and readily look for evidence that will support their beliefs, rather than for evidence that would contradict it (Gilovich & Griffin, 2010; Jonas et al., 2001). In other words, people show biases when they gather or remember information, and also when they selectively interpret the information.

This type of case implies that even though a consumer is objectively exposed to information, the consumer may use different criteria for the information when s/he evaluates it, which may result in a poor purchase decision. Therefore, it is important to understand the underlying mechanism of both selective exposure and evaluation. Relatively little attention has been paid to selective evaluation as compared to the selective exposure tendency.
Interestingly, studies investigating confirmation bias do not clearly differentiate selective evaluation from selective exposure, and sometimes use the term “selective exposure” to encompass the concept of selective evaluation (e.g., Fischer, Greitemeyer, & Frey, 2008; Jonas et al., 2002; Yoon et al., 2012). As one of the purposes of this study is to examine the role of motivations and advertising appeals on consumer information evaluation when consumers are exposed to both consistent and inconsistent information, the distinction between the two phenomena of confirmation bias should be made. For this distinction, researchers understand selective evaluation as a tendency to evaluate preference-consistent information more positively than preference-inconsistent information (Ditto & Lopez, 1992; Ditto, Munro, Scepansky & Apanovitch, 1998). That is, selective evaluation is the tendency for biased information processing during the process of analysis and interpretation, whereas selective exposure implies considerations solely at the exposure stage (e.g., people selectively seek, choose, and screen the information).

In this study, the terms confirmation bias, selective information processing, and selective hypothesis testing will be used to refer to a concept encompassing selective exposure and evaluation. Therefore, the term “selective exposure” will be used to indicate the information search stage (before information evaluation) of consumer decision making. Additionally, the term “selective evaluation” will be used to indicate the information evaluation stage (after information exposure) of decision making process.
The next section reviews the historical background of the selective exposure effect, and how the selective exposure phenomenon has been applied to consumer research. Although the focus of this study is on selective evaluation, a discussion of selective exposure is necessary to understand selective evaluation because the two types of biased information processing share similar underlying motivations (Dawson, Gilovich, & Regan, 2003; Klayman & Ha, 1987). Additionally, the stages of selective information processing are part of a continuum process from information exposure to evaluation, rather than disconnected and independent steps (Bettman, 1979).

**Cases of Selective Exposure as A Way of Reducing Dissonance**

One explanation for selective exposure comes from the theory of cognitive dissonance. Cognitive dissonance theory states that dissonance is created when a person is aware that two or more cognitions, such as attitudes, beliefs, or decisions, are contradictory (Festinger, 1957, 1964). As the dissonance is a psychological tension and an aversive arousal, people try to reduce it in various ways, and selective exposure is one of the mechanisms (Cotton, 1985; Festinger, 1957; Smith, Fabrigar, Powell, & Estrada, 2007).

Selective exposure is a way of reducing dissonance. Studies have observed the tendency of selective exposure by creating dissonance in various contexts such as in gambling (Cohen, Brehm, & Latane, 1959), education (Mills, Aronson, & Robinson, 1959), smoking behavior (Feather, 1962), and advertising (Enrlich, Guttman, Schönbach, & Mills, 1957). Specifically, a study examined how the importance levels of situations (high vs. low) interact with the valence of information (positive vs. negative) (Mills et al., 1959). They predicted that a high-
involvement situation would cause higher dissonance when participants encountered information that was inconsistent with their previous choice as compared to a low-involvement situation.

The study followed a traditional selective exposure research procedure to examine the interaction effect of the importance levels and valence of information on the degree of selective exposure tendency (Mills et al., 1959). First, the participants were asked to decide which types of course examinations they would like to take. After the participants made their choices of either essay or objective examinations, the importance levels of the situations were manipulated. Specifically, the participants in the high-importance condition were told that the examination would count for 70% of their total grade whereas the participants in the low-importance condition were notified that the exam would count for only 5% of their total grade for the course. Lastly, the participants were given information that was either positive or negative. They were given a list of six fictitious articles and asked to rank them in terms of their reading preference. For both valence conditions (i.e., positive and negative), three of the articles were about essays and the other three were about objective examinations. Two types of the list were randomly distributed to the participants. The study found that when people were exposed to positive information about both types of examinations, people who chose to take the essay examination wished to read positive articles about the essay examination whereas the reverse was true for the people who chose the objective examination.
Similarly, a study examined the role of publicity on selective exposure effects (Cohen et al., 1959). In the public condition, the participants were told that their choice of position in a game would be reported in the school paper (i.e., higher dissonance condition). In contrast, participants in the private condition were told that only the participant and the experiment would know their choice (i.e., lower dissonance condition). They expected that psychological tension would increase when one’s choice was available to the public and that participants would show a selective exposure tendency to reduce dissonance. As expected, Cohen and his colleagues (1959) found that people showed a selective exposure tendency when the participants were told that their gambling choices would be reported in the school paper (public condition) whereas no selective exposure effects were found when the participants were notified that their choices would be known only to the participants and the experimenter.

From the first description of cognitive dissonance in 1957 to the mid-1960s, however, nine out of 17 studies found no evidence of selective exposure effect (Cotton, 1985). That is, the selective exposure effect yielded equivocal findings and was not very robust. The inconsistent results in selective exposure led Freedman and Sears (1965) to conclude that the evidence did not support selective exposure. Specifically, Freedman and Sears (1965) noted that “under some circumstances, people seem to prefer information that supports their opinion; under other circumstances, people seem to prefer information which contradicts their opinions.” (p. 90). That is, they argued that there was no evidence to support the existence of a selective effect because the evidence was
not systematic. This review by Freedman and Sears (1965) was very influential in social psychology, and the topic moved from the major side of dissonance theory to a minor light. Thus, more than ten years after the negative review by Freedman and Sears (1965), researchers regarded selective exposure as an effect that did not really exist (Cotton, 1985; Frey, 1986a, 1986b).

Although Freedman and Sears (1965) argued that selective exposure should be abandoned, researchers noticed that many earlier studies suffered from a variety of methodological flaws (e.g., Cotton 1985; Fischer, Jonas, Frey, & Schulz-Hardt, 2005; Smith et al., 2007). Subsequent experimental research indicates that selective exposure does exist (Brannon, Tagler, & Eagly, 2007). Researchers have determined that the initial experiments failed to consider the level of dissonance and its effect on selective exposure (Cotton, 1985). Today, cognitive dissonance theory posits that the tendency for selective exposure varies depending on the magnitude of dissonance (Festinger, 1957). Specifically, researchers noted that (1) when little or no dissonance occurs, no selective exposure will be observed, (2) moderate amounts of dissonance will lead to the greatest level of a tendency for selective exposure to reduce dissonance, and (3) extremely high levels of dissonance will not increase selective exposure, but the person will change his/her cognitions because selective exposure is not sufficient to reduce the inconsistency (Festinger, 1957, Cohen et al., 1959; Cotton, 1985; Rhine, 1967).

Festinger’s cognitive dissonance theory posits a curvilinear relationship between selective exposure and dissonance, with the maximum selective effects
at a moderate level. A majority of earlier studies in selective exposure failed to manipulate the level of dissonance and included only two levels of dissonance (low and high) (Frey, 1986b).

Additionally, perceived usefulness may influence selective exposure tendency (Frey, 1986b). When people perceive that the information is highly useful, they will seek information that contradicts their cognitions.

Lastly, people’s norms of honesty or impartiality can be a reason underlying negative conclusions in terms of selective exposure (Jonas et al., 2001). As an example, people may perceive that seeking information that only favors their beliefs, attitudes, and decisions is dishonest. In a situation emphasizing norms of honesty, or if honesty is a variable that influences the selective exposure study, selective exposure will be reduced.

As researchers have learned to control their studies more effectively, research has tended to produce more favorable results regarding selective exposure (Brannon et al., 2007; Cotton, 1985). Additionally, studies have focused increasingly on finding variables that moderate people’s preferences for supportive information over opposing information (e.g., Brannon et al., 2007; Fischer et al., 2005; Frey, 1986a). Peter Fischer may be one of the most active scholars in selective exposure in recent years. He and his colleagues have examined numerous conditions where the selective exposure tendency is stronger or reduced (sources listed for Fischer et al., 2005). For instance, Fischer and his colleagues found that selective exposure is greater when people are exposed to a larger number of information sources (Fischer et al., 2005), when
information is presented by physically attractive information sources (Fischer, J. Fischer, Aydin, & Frey, 2010), when participants are induced via a gain-frame (vs. loss-frame) (Fischer, Jonas, Frey, & Kastenmüller, 2008), when people have higher confidence in their preliminary decision (Fischer et al., 2010), and when people have depleted self-regulation resources (Fischer et al., 2008).

Additionally, a study demonstrated a selective exposure tendency by comparing two approaches that people take in information seeking: sequential and simultaneous information seeking (Jonas et al., 2001). A typical experimental information search procedure in selective exposure research uses simultaneous information seeking (e.g., Frey, 1981; Ehrlich et al., 1957; Smith et al., 2007).

In typical experiments on selective exposure tendency, participants are first confronted with a decision-making case (e.g., whether a store owner should extend a contract with the store manager or seek another person to increase sales) and then asked to make a decision.

After that, participants are offered a sheet that contains additional information that they can select to read. Half of the information is consonant, the other half is dissonant with their prior decisions. Researchers show the titles of the information to the participants and ask them to mark the information they wish to read. Participants can tell from the titles whether the information is supportive or not of their prior decisions. Under this experimental setting, the information is presented simultaneously.

In a real setting, of course, it is rare to have people compare available information using a single sheet. Instead, each time new information comes to
one’s attention, the information is processed and the person has to decide whether to heed or ignore the piece of information. It has been found that when people are exposed to information sequentially, they show a higher selective exposure tendency compared to simultaneous information seeking (Jonas et al., 2001). Recognizing that sequential information seeking is more typical in a real-world setting than the simultaneous information seeking typical of traditional selective exposure research further supports the existence of a selective exposure tendency (Cotton, 1985; Frey, 1986a; Smith et al., 2007).

The selective exposure phenomenon has attracted the interest of consumer researchers who have adopted dissonance theory to explain consumer post-purchase reduction of dissonance (Cohen & Goldberg, 1970; Ehrlich et al., 1957; Oliver, 1977), the effects of brand loyalty on selective exposure (Cummings & Venkatesan, 1976), advertising effectiveness (Norris, Colman, & Aleixo, 2003), and effects of information load (Yoon et al., 2012). For instance, Ehrlich and his colleagues (1957) found that new car owners read advertisements for their own cars more often than those for cars they considered, but did not buy. In other words, their findings supported the idea that people seek out consonant or supporting information after a decision to reduce dissonance (Ehrlich et al., 1957). More recently, Ehrich and Irwin’s (2005) study on consumer seeking information regarding ethical attributes found that consumers do not seek ethical attributes at the same rate at which they would use the information even though the information is important to them and is easily obtainable. They found that participants were reluctant to ask for ethical attributes of the products
they had chosen, and that this avoidance helped them to reduce negative emotions resulting from inconsistencies between their prior choices and their concerns about ethical issues. Ehrich and Irwin’s (2005) finding is also explained by the theory of cognitive dissonance because the magnitude of dissonance increases with the importance of the cognitions involved (Cotton, 1985). Thus, participants with greater concerns showed a greater difference between request and use than participants with less concerns (Ehrich & Irwin, 2005). In a similar vein, a study also proposed that the positive relationship between television programs and advertising effectiveness is because of the selective exposure effect (Norris et al., 2003). That is, the more involved in a television program consumers become, the more likely they are to retrieve the advertisement they watched (increased memory ability).

Even though investigating moderators have demonstrated numerous situational and individuals factors influencing selective exposure and how it may attract and benefit marketing communicators, the purpose of this study is not to just add another moderator to the body of knowledge about selective exposure. This study instead attempts to demonstrate that biased information processing occurs not only in the information exposure stage, but also in the evaluation stage. When people are exposed to information involuntarily or willing to expose themselves to information such as advertisements, better decisions will be assumed. This study is interested in those cases in which a person seeks additional product information after they have already formed a specific attitude toward a product.
This section introduced the underlying motivations of people’s selectivity for information exposure, and its historical background, citing several empirical studies. The next section will review the existing research on selective evaluation and explain how selective evaluation is similar and also distinct from selective exposure.

**Selective Evaluation and Motivated Cognitive Processing**

As discussed in the previous section, one explanation for selective exposure comes from the theory of cognitive dissonance theory (Cotton, 1985; Festinger, 1959; Hart et al., 2009). From the perspective of cognitive dissonance theory, selective exposure is mainly driven by efforts to defend one’s position to feel good by reducing dissonance and justifying cognition. Similarly, motivated-reasoning literature asserts that there is motivation to protect self-relevant attitudes (defense motivation), and this results in a deeper and more favorable elaboration of supportive information than information that is in opposition (Lundgren & Prislin, 1998). As such, researchers have noted that defense motivation is a main driver for the selective evaluation tendency (e.g., Cohen & Goldberg, 1970; Fischer et al., 2011; Hart et al., 2009).

Recently, however, other lines of research have proposed that the selective exposure effect can also occur due to increased accuracy motivation (e.g., Fischer & Greitemeyer, 2008, 2010; Fischer et al., 2011). Accuracy motivation is defined as “a drive to attain objective, unbiased standpoints and decisions” (Hart et al., 2009, p. 385). Thus, information seekers are trying to find the best quality information, and researchers have found that accuracy motivation helps people to make unbiased decisions as they are involved in more
careful and deeper reasoning (e.g., Kunda, 1990). Therefore, it is understandable that some may wonder how accuracy motivation leads people to be biased information seekers. The underlying logic of this counterintuitive effect of accuracy motivation is that information seekers are unable to evaluate information quality independently of their own positions (Ditto & Lopez, 1992; Ditto et al., 1998; Fischer & Greitemeyer, 2010; Fischer et al., 2010). In other words, researchers state that people employ different standards of evidence to evaluate propositions they wish to be true and propositions they wish to be false (Dawson et al., 2003; Kunda, 1990). Therefore, information seekers evaluate decision-inconsistent information more critically than decision-consistent information; and in turn, information seekers prefer decision-consistent over decision-inconsistent pieces of information (Fischer et al., 2010; Lord, Ross, & Lepper, 1979).

These arguments, however, where researchers propose the role of accuracy motivation on biased information processing can be misleading because of their ambiguous distinction between selective exposure and evaluation. Strictly speaking, the influence of accuracy motivation may be greater on selective exposure, rather than selective evaluation.

In the same vein, Lundgren and Prislin (1998) also noted that even though people desire to be objective, the use of new information to satisfy that desire can be limited by existing beliefs. Lord and his colleagues (1979) used the term biased assimilation process to indicate the propensity to remember the strengths of confirming evidence and the weakness of disconfirming evidence. In turn,
people judge confirming evidence as relevant and reliable whereas disconfirming evidence is seen as irrelevant and unreliable (Lord et al., 1979). Klayman and Ha (1987) used the term positive test strategy to indicate a person’s strategies to examine information in a favorable light to their hypothesis (e.g., confirmation strategy). Positive test strategy notes, “people test a hypothesis by examining instances in which the property or event is expected to occur…or by examining instances in which it is known to have occurred” (Klayman & Ha, 1987, p. 212). Additionally, Klayman and Ha (1987) found that people rely on the positive test strategy when cognitive information processing demands are high, or when concrete, task-specific information is lacking. Edwards and Smith (1996) proposed a disconfirmation model stating that when arguments are not compatible with one’s prior belief, the person will conduct a deliberative memory search to undermine the argument. Specifically, the model implies that people spend more time evaluating arguments or information that is incompatible with their prior belief compared to a situation where they are evaluating compatible arguments or information. That is, even though the deliberative memory search may superficially seem to be driven by accuracy motivation, the deliberative search is motivated by a defense motivation to search for disconfirming information. Additionally, people have more output from a memory search in cases of an incompatible argument or information because the initial activation of the memory search mainly retrieves information consistent with their prior beliefs whereas a deliberate memory search retrieves materials with refuting arguments. Thus, a deliberative memory search can be biased information processing.
Typically, supporting information from memory is retrieved first because the information consistent to one’s prior beliefs is easy to access and process. Lord and his colleagues (1979) also proposed a similar idea before Edwards and Smith (1996). They noted that people reduce the complexity of supportive evidence and remember it well. With disconfirming evidence, however, people seek a favorable interpretation to serve their prior beliefs. Thus, the later information processing requires more time and a deliberative memory search. Furthermore, a study found that participants became more polarized in their prior beliefs by reading two arguments that were either supportive or non-supportive of their prior beliefs (Lord et al., 1979). Literature in impression formation noted that people place more weight on negative than positive information when forming an overall evaluation of a target (Ahluwalia, Burnkrant, & Unnava, 2000). One reason for this negativity effect is due to a person’s biased evaluation of information. People simply perceive that negative information is more useful or diagnostic in making decisions (Dawar & Pillutla, 2000).

A study found that commitment toward a brand plays a moderating role in consumer selective evaluation tendencies (Ahluwalia et al., 2000). Specifically, they found that low-commitment consumers give more weight to negative rather than positive information because they perceive the negative information as more diagnostic. In contrast, consumers with high commitment perceive that positive information is more diagnostic than negative information. Moreover, the study demonstrated that low-commitment consumers do not make a counterargument to negative information, thus they perceive the negative information as more
diagnostic. On the other hand, high-commitment consumer defense motivations play a role in making a counterargument for the negative information while supporting the positive information. Although Ahluwalia and colleagues understand their findings within the moderating role of commitment toward a brand on negativity effects, an alternative interpretation may be that consumer selective information processing is utilized to reduce cognitive dissonance and to work towards a preference for information consistent with their belief in a brand.

If accuracy motivation can help a decision maker to process information objectively, some may address the case where the accuracy motivation is greater than the defense motivation (e.g., high risk of decision making). The integrative model by Fischer and Greitemeyer (2008) proposes that the paths in accuracy motivation can both reduce and increase the selective exposure effect whereas defense motivation only increases it. Specifically, they propose that when the accuracy cue refers to the decision context (e.g., making an optimal choice), people’s accuracy motivation leads to a lower selective exposure effect. In contrast, when the accuracy cue refers to the information search task (e.g., finding qualitatively best information), increased selective exposure effects are observed. Fischer and Greitemeyer (2008) explained that the underlying mechanisms of these two different paths are due to: (1) a better fit between the decision maker’s beliefs and consistent information, and (2) a less critical test for consistent over inconsistent information. In a similar vein, Fischer and his colleagues (2011) found that people are more selective in their information searches and evaluations at the beginning rather than at the end of an
information search process because their motivations for accuracy are more salient at the beginning. A study also found the various ways in which information presentation after a preliminary decision influences selective exposure tendency (Jonas et al., 2001). Specifically, they compared sequential and simultaneous information seeking, and found that people show a stronger selective exposure tendency when people seek information sequentially over simultaneous information seeking. Jonas and his colleagues (2001) noted the underlying mechanism of their finding was that when information was sequentially presented, the increased focus on their decision leads to a high commitment toward their prior decision, and this in turn, increases confirmation bias. That is, the strength of the prior belief is reinforced as people repeatedly evaluate the information. Therefore, it is inferred that people experience reduced selective evaluation when the accuracy motivation about their decision is focal compared to when the focus is on the information search itself.

In sum, even though some researchers have argued that accuracy motivation can lead to a confirmation bias (e.g., Fischer & Greitemeyer, 2010; Fischer et al., 2010), the distinction between selective evaluation from selective exposure reveals that the influence of accuracy motivation may be limited to the information exposure stage, and will not often lead to a selective evaluation stage unless the accuracy motivation in the information evaluation stage is greater than the defense motivation.

**Regulatory Focus and Selective Information Processing**

One of the purposes of this study is to determine the biased information evaluation patterns influenced by regulatory focus, and research on regulatory
focus provides an important foundation. People’s information processing is largely influenced by their regulatory focus (Wang & Lee, 2006). Regulatory focus suggests that promotion-focused people pursue their desired end states based on approaching matches whereas prevention-focused people’s self-regulation is based on avoiding mismatches to their desired end states. Therefore, promotion-focused people typically show greater eagerness in goal pursuit compared to prevention-focused people. On the other hand, prevention-focused people show greater vigilance than promotion-focused people (Higgins, 1997; Pham & Chang, 2010).

Empirical findings support the idea that regulatory focus significantly influences people’s information searching and evaluation strategies. For instance, Pham and Chang (2010) pointed out that the evaluation stage and choice stage in consumers’ decision making processing can be influenced by a consumer’s regulatory focus, and it influences consumers’ biased information processing. Specifically, they found that consumers’ information search strategies are different depending on their regulatory focus. In their experiment, the participants were asked to look at a fictitious French restaurant menu, and found out that promotion-focused participants devoted a greater proportion of their search to higher levels of the menu structure (e.g., main menu categories), whereas prevention-focused participants spent more time on looking a lower levels of the menu (e.g., dish descriptions). Thus, Pham and Chang (2010) demonstrated that consumers with promotion focus tend to search for decision alternatives in a more global manner than prevention-focused consumers. They
explained that promotion-focused consumers tended to search information on a more global level because it enabled them to find a broader range of opportunities whereas prevention-focused consumers were concerned with making mistakes so they searched for information at a more local level.

Sengupta and Zhou (2007) found that people’s impulsive eating of unhealthy food is driven by promotion focus. They found that the mere exposure to unhealthy food activates a predominant promotion focus for impulsive behaviors because the promotion focus translates into an emphasis on the ideal attributes (e.g., great taste). Specifically, they induced promotion focus by providing their participants a slice of chocolate cake (vs. an apple or vegetable salad) before the participants entered the research lab. That is, activated promotion focus makes the positive aspects of hedonic stakes salient, such as good taste, whereas the negative aspects of it become slight (e.g., healthy nutrition). Therefore, it is inferred that the positive signal can be salient for people with promotion focus.

Similar evidence can be found in consumer behavior research. Yoon and her colleagues (2012) recently found that people with promotion focus rely more on positive product information whereas relative reliance on negative product information is greater for people with prevention focus. Yoon and her colleagues argued that when consumers’ capacity for information processing is limited, they evaluate product information in a selective manner consistent with their regulatory focus. Specifically, the findings support that promotion-focused consumers place more weight on the promotion feature of the product (e.g.,
driving performance for a car), and prevention-focused consumers place more weight on prevention features of the product (e.g., number of airbags for a car).

Regulatory focus also influences consumer decision making strategy. A study found that consumers with promotion focus facilitate rapid progress toward a decision because promotion-focused people are sensitive to the presence and absence of positive outcomes and attempt to minimize errors of omission (Wan et al., 2009). However, prevention-focused consumers try to maximize the accuracy of a judgment because they are sensitive to the presence and absence of negative outcomes and attempt to minimize errors of omission. The study also implies that positive information will gain more attention from promotion-focused consumers while prevention-focused consumers will place more weight on negative information about products as they attempt to avoid making any mistakes.

In sum, research has also demonstrated that consumers’ evaluation of products and brand choice decisions are influenced by their regulatory focus. Specifically, consumers’ attitudes toward a product or product preference are more favorable when the product benefits fit their regulatory focus (e.g., Avnet & Higgins, 2006; Idson et al., 2004; Lee et al., 2010).

The following section will present hypotheses about regulatory fit effects between regulatory focus and advertising appeals.

**Hypotheses Development**

This section proposes a series of hypotheses based on regulatory focus/fit theories. Given that the purpose of this study is to examine the interaction effects of regulatory focus (promotion- vs. prevention-focused) and advertising appeals
(distinctive vs. popularity appeals) on consumers’ product preferences, the hypotheses are intended to predict how advertising appeals pair with regulatory focus and create a fit. Also, this study predicts the regulatory fit effects on consumers’ evaluation on product. Specifically, this study expects that fit conditions will be created between promotion-focused consumers encounter distinctive advertising appeals, and prevention-focused consumers read popularity advertising appeals. The hypotheses will be developed by addressing (1) related studies that demonstrate the regulatory fit effect with advertising appeal, and (2) consumers’ relative selectivity on types of advertising claims based on their regulatory foci.

As discussed in the previous sections, people adopt strategies and engage in activities that are consistent with their regulatory foci. That is, people with promotion focus are more sensitive to positive outcomes such as gains and no-gains because they approach their goals with eagerness. However, people with prevention focus are more sensitive to negative outcomes such as losses and no-losses because of their needs for safety and security (Crowe & Higgins, 1997; Higgins, 1997; Lee & Aaker, 2004). Thus, the concern of promotion-focused people is to insure hits and error of omission whereas prevention-focused people are concerned about correct rejection and errors of commission (Higgins et al., 2003; Lee et al., 2000). That is, people with a promotion focus do not want to overlook options (i.e., miss hits) whereas people with a prevention focus may not want to consider as many options as necessary because considering unnecessary options will cause them to make mistakes (Crowe &
Higgins, 1997; Liberman et al., 2001). Therefore, consumers pay attention to and rely selectively on information that helps them to attain their goals (Aaker & Lee, 2006). More recently, a study found that promotion-focused consumers are more likely to rely on positive product information, whereas prevention-focused consumers perceive that negative product information is more useful (Yoon et al., 2012). The findings are consistent to the regulatory focus theory as positive information implies accomplishment and eagerness whereas negative information is related to safety and security.

Several researchers in advertising also have tried to examine the influence of regulatory focus on consumers’ advertising content processing (e.g., Cesario et al., 2004, Florack & Scarabis, 2006; Florack, Ineichen, & Bieri, 2009). Specifically, Florack and Scarabis (2006) examined the fit effect between regulatory focus and advertising claim on brand recall. They found that when promotion-focused subjects were exposed to a promotion-focused claim (e.g., Brand X: For an intensive tan), they showed better recall when they were encountered a prevention-focused claim (e.g., Brand X: The best protection for your skin). In this research, the similar fit effect between regulatory focus and advertising appeal, either distinctive or popularity appeals, are expected. A study found similar results in the advertising context (Florack et al., 2009). Additionally, the study examined the effectiveness of two-sided advertising claims, and found that two-sided advertising was less effective to the prevention-focused subjects than promotion-focused subjects, because subjects with prevention-focus are more sensitive to negative information and give more weight to negative
information than positive. People with promotion focus have higher willingness to take risks, but people with prevention-focused try to avoid risks (i.e., higher risk aversion) (Keller, 2006).

The fit effects between regulatory focus and advertising appeal on product evaluation can be drawn by demonstrating the relationship among self-construal, regulatory focus, and advertising appeals. The concept of self-construal is particularly important in consumer research because self-construal can impact the way in which individuals respond to product information (Aaker & Maheswaran, 1997; Mandel, 2003). For the relationship between self-construal and regulatory focus, research by Angela Lee and her colleagues (2000) was the first to address the idea that self-construal can be an antecedent of regulatory focus. Specifically, they demonstrated that people with a dominant independent self-construal place more emphasis on promotion-focused information, and those with a dominant interdependent self-construal emphasize prevention-focused information. That is, promotion focus pairs with independent self-construal, and interdependent self-construal pairs with prevention-focus.

For the relationship between self-construal and advertising appeal, studies have shown that consumers with dominant independent self-construal focus on unique characteristics that distinguish them from others (Aaker & Lee, 2001; Snyder & Fromkin, 1977). However, consumers with interdependent self-construal have concerns about their assimilation with relevant others. That is, prevention-focused consumers will be less likely to show favorable attitudes toward a product with distinctive features. This study expects that promotion-
focused consumers perceive distinctive features in a product as an opportunity to make a better choice (i.e., outcomes as advancement), whereas consumers with prevention focus will regard popular products (i.e., common choice by other consumers) as a promise of product quality. As promotion focus is more salient for people with independent self-views, and prevention focus is focal to interdependent self-view, it seems logical to presume that a distinctive appeal is more effective for people with promotion focus while a popularity appeal may be more effective for people with prevention focus.

In sum, this study expects that the effect will be more likely to occur when promotion-focused consumers are exposed to distinctive advertising appeals compared to when they are exposed to popularity appeals. For prevention-focused consumers, however, a fit effect is expected to be observed when they are exposed to popularity advertising appeals. Based on the discussion, the following hypotheses are presented next:

H1a: For distinctive advertising appeals, consumers with promotion focus will have more positive attitudes toward the advertising than consumers with prevention focus.

H1b: For popularity advertising appeals, consumers with prevention focus will have more positive attitudes toward the advertising than consumers with promotion focus.

H2a: For distinctive advertising appeals, consumers with promotion focus will have more positive attitudes toward a product than consumers with prevention focus.

H2b: For popularity advertising appeals, consumers with prevention focus will have more positive attitudes toward a product than consumers with promotion focus.
H3a: For distinctive advertising appeals, consumers with promotion focus will have higher purchase intentions than consumers with prevention focus.

H3b: For popularity advertising appeals, consumers with prevention focus will have higher purchase intentions than consumers with promotion focus.

Chapter 3 discusses in detail the study design created to examine the proposed hypotheses. Specifically, the Chapter will provide the study sampling, recruiting procedure, procedure, stimuli, measurement instruments, and pretests.
Figure 2-1. Distinction between Promotion- and Prevention Focus

**Promotion focus**
- Nurturance needs
- Advancement needs
- Strong Ideas, Hopes, Wishes, Aspiration
- Gain-Nogain situation/incentives
- Insure hits/Error of omission
- Eager judgment strategy
- Approach as strategic means
- Elation - Dejection emotions
- Sensitivity to
- Presence/Absence of positive outcomes
- Emphasizing speed

**Prevention focus**
- Security Needs
- Strong Oughts, Duties, Responsibility, Obligations
- Nonloss-Loss situation/incentives
- Insure correct rejection and against errors of commissions
- Vigilant judgment strategy
- Avoidance as strategic means
- Relaxation – Agitation emotions
- Sensitivity to presence/absence of negative outcomes
- Emphasizing accuracy
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Distinctive advertising appeal</th>
<th>Popularity advertising appeal</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Advancement</td>
<td>Insure safe choice</td>
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<td></td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High quality</td>
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<td>Consumers' perceived risk</td>
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<td>Cultural value</td>
<td>Independent self-construal</td>
<td>Interdependent self-construal</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Unrivaled, incomparable,</td>
<td>Common, customary,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>unparalleled</td>
<td>well-known, conventional,</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>regular, standard,</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>general, everyday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Examples</td>
<td>“Unique” “Exclusive” “Hand-crafted”</td>
<td>“Best selling” “largest seller”</td>
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Figure 2-2. Comparison of Distinctive- and Popularity Advertising Appeals
CHAPTER 3
METHOD

The research examines differences in attitudes and purchase intention among experiment groups based on their regulatory focus prior to advertisement exposure. To examine the proposed hypotheses, this study applied a post-test only experimental design. The independent variables in this study are 1) regulatory focus, and 2) advertising appeal. Regulatory focus was manipulated according to a state-induced tendency toward promotion focus or prevention focus. Advertising appeals were manipulated based on the criterion of distinctive appeal or popularity appeal.

The research design consisted of four different conditions: two fit conditions and two nonfit conditions. Recall, a fit condition was intended to optimize the effectiveness of a marketer’s business performance outcomes when the audience’s regulatory state coincided with the advertising appeal used. On the other hand, nonfit conditions created tension between an audience’s regulatory state and the advertising appeal used, thus resulting in less effective business outcomes. Specifically, the two presumed fit conditions consisted of 1) the promotion focus x distinctive appeal cell and 2) the prevention focus x popularity appeal cell. In contrast, the nonfit conditions consist of 1) the promotion focused x popularity appeal cell, and 2) the prevention focused x distinctive appeal cell. Table 3-1 presents a visual representation of the assigned variables by condition.
Sampling and Recruiting

Subjects were recruited through advertising, public relations, journalism, and telecommunication courses from the College of Journalism and Communications at the University of Florida.

To recruit the subjects, the researcher of this study contacted instructors of advertising, public relations, journalism, and telecommunication courses during the week of March 4, 2013. Upon agreement between the researcher and instructors, each subject was compensated for her or his time with extra credit points. If a student was enrolled in two or more courses, the subjects received extra credit for all courses by participating in one experiment session.

Specifically, the invitation letter was sent to students via e-mail. The invitation included the purpose of the experiment, anticipated completion time, data collection time frame, research lab location, and process of the participation. Additionally, the invitation provided a URL to the online scheduling service, doodle.com. The online scheduling service provided available time slots for each subject, and the subjects could select the time slot most convenient for them. To use the online scheduling service, the students were asked to provide their e-mail addresses. Their e-mail addresses were only used to send reminders to them to encourage them to visit the research lab. The data collection time was the week of March 11, 2013.

The next section discusses the procedure for the experiment, the measurement instruments, and stimulus development.
Experimental Procedure

Multiple sessions, with a maximum of eight student subjects, were administered in a research lab at the College of Journalism and Communications at the University of Florida. Each subject was seated individually at a desk, and data were collected through questionnaire booklets. The booklets consisted of three sections. The first section was intended to measure the subjects’ chronic regulatory focus. The second section included manipulation of regulatory focus, and the last section contained advertising appeals to be tested and dependent variables.

Upon arrival at the research lab, the subjects received an informed consent form clarifying the experiment’s purpose, the procedures, and the volunteers’ rights as research subjects. The consent form contained (1) the purpose of the study, (2) their rights and obligations as a participant, and (3) the agreement of confidentiality. Duplicate copies of the consent forms were given to subjects so that they had a record outlining their rights as a participant in the experiment. To provide extra credit for their participation, the researcher collected each subject’s name, and the course she/he is taking. This information about the subjects was destroyed after the extra credit was given to the subjects. A sample of the informed consent form is presented in Appendix A.

After the subjects had read and signed an informed consent form agreeing to participate in the experiment, they were asked to complete the questions in the first section of the booklet. The questions in the first section measured the subjects’ chronic regulatory focus. Then, a proctor in the lab randomly distributed the second section of the questionnaire containing either the promotion focus or
prevention focus manipulation materials to the subjects across the experiment sessions. Subjects were asked to read a priming scenario intended to activate the appropriate state condition to which the individual had been assigned (i.e., promotion focus or prevention focus). A question that asked about the regulatory focus scenario was followed as a means for gauging the effectiveness of the manipulation. The subjects in one session received the same condition, thus, the influence of unexpected effects from other subjects was minimized.

After the regulatory focus manipulation, the subjects received the last section of the questionnaire including one of two advertising appeals—either a distinctive or popularity advertising appeal. Subjects were instructed to view the advertisement at their normal pace before proceeding to a series of questions intended to measure 1) attitude toward the advertising, 2) attitude toward the product, and 3) purchase intention. Additional classification questions were also included on the instrument to better understand the profile of the subject pool, including age, gender, ethnicity, and academic major.

When all subjects completed the questionnaire, the experimenter distributed a written debriefing statement explaining the actual purpose of the research. The subjects were then thanked for their time and dismissed. The time for this procedure was about 20 minutes.

The next section discusses the development of stimuli, along with measurements for dependent variables and covariates used in the experiment.
Development of Stimuli

Case of Examination: Target Product Selection

Selection of a target product was important in this study because the target product was involved in the manipulation of both independent variables: regulatory focus and advertising appeals. To select a test product for the experiment, the selected product had to be relevant to undergraduate students (i.e., high involvement level).

This study utilized a travel package to Europe for summer break as a target product. Several studies have demonstrated college students’ general interest in traveling (Chadee & Cutler, 1996; Field, 1999). Besides the subjects’ general interest in the product category, the travel package to Europe is deemed appropriate because of college students’ high involvement and interest level in travelling Europe (Gmelch, 1997). Some may address concerns that college students will prefer independent travel arrangements (i.e., purchasing flights, accommodations, and food separately) over a travel package. However, Field (1999) found that college students preferred to use a travel package compared to making independent travel arrangements, especially if they are staying more than five days at a destination. Selecting a travel package to Europe as a target product can also be justified because travelers who visit Europe stay more than a week, and travel packages have advantages when travelers are actively visiting various places for a long time period of time (Gmelch, 1997). Lastly, a travel package has also been used in other regulatory focus and advertising claims studies (e.g., Florack & Scarabis, 2006).
Stimulus for Regulatory Focus Priming

Following studies in regulatory focus, which manipulated subjects’ regulatory focus using scenarios (e.g., Lee et al., 2010; Liberman et al., 2001; Pham & Chang, 2010), two different travel articles were developed to induce the subjects’ regulatory focus as either promotion or prevention focus. The articles, used to prime relative promotion or prevention focus, were about 360 words long and structurally the same across conditions. In both versions, the subjects were asked to imagine that they were about to plan a trip to Europe to make great memories during this summer break. The subjects were notified that they would be planning the trip and considering a travel package. The subjects viewed two different introductory statements. For the subjects in the promotion condition, the subjects were asked to imagine that they would be traveling with their close friend. However, the subjects in the prevention condition were situated, as they would be travelling with their family. The introduction of the manipulation materials are presented below:

Promotion regulatory focus condition:
Imagine that you and your close friend are planning a trip for the summer. You and your friends want to create a lot of good memories during the trip. You have discussed the destination and decided to travel to Europe.

Today, you found an article about summer travel abroad from the US Tourism Association. The article provides useful tips for an enjoyable/fun trip to Europe. Please read the article on the next page very carefully.

Prevention regulatory focus condition:
Imagine that you and your family are planning a trip for the summer. You and your family want to create a lot of good memories during the trip. You have discussed the destination and decided to travel to Europe.

Today, you found an article about summer travel abroad from the US Tourism Association. The article provides useful tips for a safe to Europe. Please read the article on the next page very carefully.
After the introduction, a list of six things that could happen during the trip was presented to subjects following Florack and Scarabis’s study (2006, study 1). The lists varied by condition to prime the subjects’ regulatory focus. Specifically, the subjects in the promotion focus condition were exposed to good things that could happen during the trip in Europe (e.g., visiting local restaurants, making new friends). However, the subjects in the prevention focus condition were exposed to bad things that could happen during the trip (e.g., luggage lost, bedbugs). The articles of the list were presented as a typical blog posting format (i.e., contents with title). This study expected that asking the subjects to indicate the things they would like to pursue or avoid during the break would strengthen the manipulation of regulatory focus (Florack & Scarabis, 2006, study 1). Thus, after the exposure of the lists of six things that could happen during summer break, the subjects were asked to select which things they would actively pursue (for promotion condition) or avoid (for prevention condition) during the summer break.

In sum, the materials were designed so that the purpose of the trip was the same in both conditions (i.e., making good memories during summer break), but the means for pursuing that goal would depend on the regulatory focus condition (Cesario et al., 2004; Higgins, 2006; Pham & Tamar, 2004). Subjects who were exposed to the promotion-focused scenario would evaluate a travel package based on how much fun and pleasure they would have, whereas the subjects who were exposed to the prevention-focused scenario would evaluate a travel package considering how they could avoid potential risks to ensure a
memorable trip. The articles for regulatory focus manipulation are presented in Appendix B.

**Development of Advertising Appeals**

To examine the effects of advertising appeals (distinctive and popularity appeals) on dependent variables, two advertisements were developed for this study. To develop these advertisements, the study needed to decide on two elements: company name and distinctive and popularity appeals.

First, this study used a fictitious company name as experimental stimuli to avoid any confounding effects of subjects’ knowledge and attitude toward the brand. A fictitious name for the packaged-tour agency, Travelshot, was selected by a random-business-name generator (biznamewiz.com). The random-business-name generator suggested random business names with a keyword that is entered by the users. With a keyword, “travel,” the generator produced 19 business names containing the word “travel,” and this study selected the business name that was generated first.

Advertisements were adapted and mocked up for distinctive and popularity appeals from real travel package advertisements. Specifically, this study first filtered advertisements of travel package for summer break from travel magazines, such as Departures and National Geography. Then, advertisements that had no images were selected to avoid any unexpected influences from images of people or scenery in advertisements. A professional graphic designer developed the advertisements using the format of a real advertisement. Two different appeals in headline copies and contents for the travel package were adopted from real advertisements and modified with four advertising students.
with Pollay’s (1983) definition of distinctive and popularity appeals in advertising. The distinctive appeal version of the advertisement emphasized the distinctiveness of the travel package using words such as “first,” “unique,” and “different.” In contrast, the popularity appeal version of the advertisement used phrases such as “best-selling” and “popular.” The developed advertisements are presented in Appendix C.

**Measurement Instrument**

The questionnaire was organized into three sections: (1) pre-manipulation questionnaire, (2) manipulation of regulatory focus, (3) advertising exposure, and (4) post-manipulation questionnaire. The pre-manipulation questionnaire included measures of subjects’ chronic regulatory focus. After asking about the subjects’ chronic regulatory focus, their general interest in traveling to Europe was measured. Then, their regulatory focuses were induced in the second section of questionnaire. After the subjects were exposed to regulatory focus manipulation, they were exposed to an advertisement, and answered questions of dependent variables (i.e., attitude toward advertising, attitude toward the product, purchase intention), manipulation checks, and demographic questions (i.e., gender, age, major, class classification) in the post-manipulation questionnaire.

First, chronic regulatory focus was measured as a covariate prior to manipulation. To measure the chronic regulatory focus, this study used Haws, Dholakia, and Bearden’s (2010) Regulatory Focus Composite Scale (RF-COMP). The RF-COMP scale is ten items measured with seven-point scales from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Five items related to subjects’ chronic...
promotion focus, and the other five items related to their chronic prevention focus.

To measure the subjects’ general interest in traveling to Europe, this study adopted Zaichkowsky and Judith’s (1985) involvement scale. The scale measured the subjects’ interests in traveling to Europe with seven items on a 7-point semantic differential scale anchored by “irrelevant/relevant,” “undesirable/desirable,” “doesn’t matter/matters to me,” “uninterested/interested,” “boring/interesting,” “not involved/highly involved,” “unexciting/exciting”.

This study hypothesized that the subjects’ attitudes toward the advertising/product and purchase intention would differ depending on fit/nonfit conditions between regulatory focus and advertising appeals. To determine the interaction effects of regulatory focus and the types of advertising appeals, three dependent variables, attitude toward the advertising, attitude toward the travel package, and purchase intention, were measured using items from previous studies in advertising and consumer behavior.

Attitudes toward the advertising were postulated to be a causal mediating variable influencing brand attitudes and purchase intentions (MacKenzie, Lutz, & Belch, 1986). Adapted from previous studies, a 7-point semantic differential scale (bad/good, dislike/like, irritating/not irritating, and uninteresting/uninteresting) was used to measure attitudes toward the advertising (Gardner, 1985; Mitchell & Olson, 1981).

Attitudes toward the travel package were measured with four items on a 7-point semantic differential scale anchored by “good/bad,” “like/dislike,”
favorable/unfavorable,” and “positive/negative”. The original scales were adapted and modified for this study (Bruner, 1998; Holbrook & Batra, 1987). Finally, the scores of the four items were averaged to obtain an index score for the attitude toward the product.

Intention to purchase is a common effectiveness measure that is often used to anticipate a response behavior (Li, Daugherty, & Biocca, 2002). Adapted from various studies in advertising, an established four-item, 7-point semantic differential scale (unlikely/likely, improbable/probable, uncertain/certain, and definitely not/definitely) was used to measure the likelihood that subjects would purchase the travel package (Bearden, Lichtenstein, & Teel, 1984; Li et al., 2002; Wee, Tan, & Cheok, 1995).

For the manipulation check of regulatory focus, a single item was asked after the dependent variables measures to indicate the subjects’ current important aspects, ranging from 1 (something I ought to) to 7 (something I want to) (Keller, 2006). In addition, perceived popularity and uniqueness were measured to examine the success of the advertising’s appeal manipulation. Specifically, scales were adopted from Mishra, Umesh, and Stem’s (1993) study, and these scales measured perceived popularity with four items on a 7-point semantic differential scale anchored by “not an industry leader/industry leader,” “not at all popular/very popular,” “not widely accepted/widely accepted,” and “few like it/many like it”. To measure the subjects’ perceived uniqueness toward the product package, the subjects were asked to answer three 7-point questions adopted from Dean (1999). The questions examined to what extent the
advertised travel package was memorable, different, and unique from other travel packages. Appendix D shows the scales and items used in the experiment.

**Pretests**

A series of Web-based pretests were conducted to ensure the priming of regulatory focus and the validity of advertisements developed.

The first pretest was designed to confirm the validity of the regulatory focus manipulation using the measures and resulting indexes. For this pretest, a total of 24 subjects participated in a Web-based survey. The subjects were recruited from advertising and public relations classes (International Advertising and Ethics and Professional Responsibilities) in exchange for extra credit. The subjects participated in the survey at their convenience within a week after receiving a URL to the survey was given from their instructor. Upon consenting to participate, the subjects were asked questions about their chronic regulatory focus (Haws et al., 2010). After they answered the questions, they were randomly assigned either positive things that could happen during traveling (e.g., meeting new friends) or negative things that could happen during traveling (e.g., lost bags). Then, they were asked which of the things mentioned in the article would they actively pursue (for promotion focus) or avoid (for prevention focus).

A one-way repeated measures ANOVA (analysis of variances) was calculated comparing the regulatory focus score before and after the exposure of manipulation materials. As expected, a significant effect of manipulation materials was found \( F(1, 21) = 11.185, \ P = .003 \). Follow-up t-tests revealed that when the subjects were induced by promotion focus materials, their regulatory focus scores were significantly increased toward promotion focus.
\( M_{\text{pre-manipulation}} = 4.08, SD = 2.02; M_{\text{post-manipulation}} = 5.42, SD = 1.83 \) \((t = -2.464, p = .031)\). However, when subjects were introduced to prevention focus materials, their regulatory focus scores were significantly reduced toward prevention focus \( (M_{\text{pre-manipulation}} = 4.36, SD = 2.29; M_{\text{post-manipulation}} = 3.36, SD = 2.16) \) \((t = 2.345, p = .041)\). Therefore, the manipulation materials for regulatory focus were valid.

The second pretest was designed to examine the validity of the developed advertisements. Specifically, the pretest was created to find out if the two developed advertisements each had similar levels of high believability, credibility, and readability. For this pretest, 37 subjects were recruited from advertising and public relations classes (Advertising Research and Public Relations Campaigns) in exchange for extra credit. In the same way as the first pretest, the subjects participated in the survey at their convenience within a week after receiving a URL to the survey from their instructor. Upon agreeing to participate, the subjects were randomly assigned to one of two conditions, either distinctive or popularity appeals by Qualtrics, an online survey service (18 subjects in distinctive, and 19 subjects in the popularity appeal condition). After exposure to the advertisement, the subjects answered questions about the believability, credibility, and readability of the advertisements. Lastly, the subjects were debriefed after the demographic questions.

Independent \( t \)-tests were performed to examine whether the developed advertisements have similar levels of believability, credibility, and readability. First, four items on a seven-point semantic differential scale (not believable/highly believable, not true/absolutely true, not acceptable/totally believable)
acceptable, not credible/very credible) were used for believability of the advertisements (Chronbach’s α = .916) (Gürhan-Canli & Maheswaran, 2000), and five items on a seven-point semantic differential scale (not credible/credible, unreliable/reliable, not an expert/expert, unqualified/qualified, unskilled/skilled) were used for credibility of the advertisements (Chronbach’s α = .938) (Lichtenstein & Bearden, 1989). For readability of the advertisements, two items on a seven-point semantic differential scale (confused/clear, not easy to read/easy to read) were adopted from (Chebat, Gelinas-Chebat & Hombourger, 2003) (Chronbach’s α = .912). The results reveal that the two advertisements were not significantly different from each other in terms of believability (M\text{distinctive} = 5.36, M\text{popularity} = 5.49, t = -.406, p > .05), credibility (M\text{distinctive} = 5.67, M\text{popularity} = 5.72, t = -.113, p > .05), and readability (M\text{distinctive} = 6.28, M\text{popularity} = 5.84, t = .973, p > .05). The results imply that the developed advertisements were valid to examine, and all of the stimuli subsequently were used for the main study.
Table 3-1. Overview of experimental design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Promotion focus</th>
<th>Prevention focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distinctive appeal</td>
<td>Fit</td>
<td>Nonfit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popularity appeal</td>
<td>Nonfit</td>
<td>Fit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 4
RESULTS

The data of the experiment were analyzed and presented in this chapter. Prior to hypotheses testing, this chapter presents a description of subjects, reliability tests, and manipulation checks. For the hypotheses testing, multivariate and univariate analyses were performed using IBM SPSS Statistics 21 software at a 95 percent confidence level.

Description of Subjects

A total of 150 subjects participated in this experiment, and they were randomly assigned one of four experimental conditions. Eighteen subjects failed to complete the questionnaire, thus, the responses from 132 subjects were included for the data analysis. Specifically, 69 subjects were assigned to fit conditions, whereas 63 subjects were assigned to nonfit conditions. Out of 69 subjects in fit conditions, the number of subjects in the promotion focus-distinctive appeal condition was 32, and the number of subjects in the prevention focus-popularity appeal were 37. Also, the number of subjects in the prevention focus-distinctive appeal and the promotion focus-popularity appeal were 28 and 35, respectively (Table 4-1).

The age of the subjects ranged from 19 to 28 years old, and the mean age was 20.58 \( (SD = 1.16) \). Female subjects \( (N = 107, 81.1\%) \) outnumbered male \( (N = 25, 18.9\%) \). Thirty-one percent of the subjects were advertising majors, 24.2 percent were telecommunication majors, 12.1 percent were public relations majors, followed by journalism \( (7.6\%) \), English literature \( (6.1\%) \), business \( (5.3\%) \), and political science \( (3.0\%) \). Approximately, 60 percent of the subjects were
Caucasian, 25.8 percent were Hispanic, 7.6 percent were African American, and 3.8 percent were Asian. The subjects’ demographic information is presented in Table 4-2.

A series of ANOVA was conducted to examine any potential effects of subjects’ demographics (i.e., gender, major, class, and ethnicity) on dependent variables (i.e., attitude toward advertising, attitude toward product, and purchase intention). However, no significant differences of the subject demographics were found in all dependent variables (Table 4-3). Additionally, a regression analysis was performed to find out any unexpected relationships between subjects’ age and dependent variables. However, no relationships were found between subjects’ age and attitude toward advertising, attitude toward the product, and purchase intention (Table 4-4). Therefore, the samples were combined for the further analysis.

**Reliability Checks**

The internal consistencies of dependent measures and chronic regulatory focus were tested using reliability analyses. The reliability estimates for attitude toward advertising (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .84$), attitude toward the product (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .94$) and purchase intention (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .87$) were acceptable. Additionally, the reliability estimates for the subjects’ chronic regulatory focus were computed, adopted from a study of regulatory focus (Haws et al., 2010). Five items for promotion focus (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .69$) and three items for prevention focus Cronbach’s $\alpha = .71$) were also acceptable. In terms of the general interest in traveling to Europe, the reliability estimate for this measure was also acceptable (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .83$). Additionally, reliability analyses were
conducted for perceived uniqueness and perceived popularity. The reliability estimates for perceived uniqueness (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .86$), and perceived popularity (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .89$) were acceptable.

The chronic regulatory focus scores, general interest in traveling to Europe, perceived uniqueness, perceived popularity, and three dependent variables scores were computed by averaging all items in each measurement based on the reliability analyses.

**Manipulation Checks**

Regarding the regulatory focus manipulation, the subjects were asked to indicate “what aspect is more important to you to do right now?” on a 7-point scale (1 = *something I ought to*, 7 = *something I want to*) (Keller, 2006). As expected, a $t$-test confirmed that promotion-focused subjects ($M_{promotion} = 4.75$, $SD = 1.80$) rated that it was more important to them to do what they wanted to do than what they ought to do, compared to the subjects in the prevention-focus condition ($M_{prevention} = 3.75$, $SD = 1.85$), $t = 3.12$, $p = .002$. Thus, the manipulation of regulatory was successful.

Another $t$-test was conducted to examine the manipulation of advertising appeal types. As intended, there were significant manipulation effects of advertising appeals. That is, subjects who were exposed to distinctive appeals ($M_{distinctive} = 4.69$, $SD = 1.12$) scored significantly higher than subjects who read popularity advertising appeals ($M_{popularity} = 4.08$, $SD = 1.19$), $t = 2.99$, $p = .003$ on perceived uniqueness. However, subjects who were exposed to popularity advertising appeals perceived that the travel package was more popular ($M_{popularity} = 5.46$, $SD = .92$), than the subjects were in distinctive advertising
appeal condition ($M_{distinctive} = 4.70$, $SD = .92$), $t = -4.65$, $p < .001$. Therefore, all independent variables were successfully manipulated.

**Hypotheses Testing**

In this study, regulatory focus was manipulated as a situational variable, as people activate a promotion or prevention focus depending on situations. However, studies examining the influences of regulatory focus on advertising effectiveness have found the significant effects of consumers’ chronic regulatory focus on persuasiveness (e.g., Zhao & Pechmann, 2007). Thus, it is conceivable that chronic regulatory focus may play a role on dependent variables even though the manipulation of regulatory focus was successful. To ensure the validity of the results of the current study, therefore, the subjects’ promotion focus and prevention focus were measured separately and entered in the further analyses as covariates.

A Multivariate Analysis of Co-Variance (MANCOVA) was conducted to examine the effects of independent variables on combined dependent variables, covarying out the effect of chronic regulatory focus. Conducting MANCOVA was justified as the correlation analysis for dependent variables, and it confirmed the significant positive relationships between dependent variables, attitude toward advertising, attitude toward the product and purchase intention (Table 4-5).

A two-way between subjects MANCOVA was calculated to examine the effects of regulatory focus and advertising appeal types on attitude toward advertising, product, and purchase intention. However, chronic promotion focus and prevention were not significantly related to, promotion focus: Wilk’s $\lambda = .990$,
\( F(3, 121) = .420, p > .05 \), prevention focus: Wilk’s \( \lambda = .992 \), \( F(3, 121) = .311, p > .05 \). Therefore, this study repeated the analysis without including the covariates.

As expected, the Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) revealed no significant main effects of regulatory focus, Wilk’s \( \lambda = .970 \), \( F(3, 123) = 1.271, p > .05 \) and types of advertising appeals, Wilk’s \( \lambda = .994 \), \( F(3, 123) = .244, p > .05 \). However, the results revealed a significant two-way interaction effect between regulatory focus and the types of advertising appeals, Wilk’s \( \lambda = .906 \), \( F(3, 126) = 4.256, p = .007 \) (Table 4-6).

Follow-up univariate ANOVAs indicated the significant two-way interaction between regulatory focus and the types of advertising appeals on attitude toward advertising \( (F(1,125) = 8.923, p = .003) \), and attitude toward the travel package \( (F(1,125) = 4.326, p = .040) \). However, no significant two-way interaction effect was found on purchase intention \( (F(1,125) = .133, p > .05) \). Means and standard deviations for all dependent variables are summarized in Table 4-7.

To have better understanding of the interaction effects of regulatory focus and the types of advertising appeals, this study conducted separate univariate analyses for each of the dependent variables.

Hypotheses 1a and 1b predicted the two-way interaction effects between regulatory focus and advertising appeals on the attitude toward advertising. Specifically, H1a and H1b expected that, under fit conditions, consumers have more positive attitudes toward advertising than those who are in nonfit conditions. As shown in Table 4-8, a significant two-way interaction effect on attitudes toward advertising were found, \( F(1, 128) = 8.531, p = .004 \). Contrary to
H1a, however, planned contrast tests revealed that when consumers with prevention focus were exposed to a distinctive advertising appeal ($M_{\text{prevention-distinctive}} = 5.36, SD = .86$), they had more positive attitudes toward the advertising than consumers with a promotion focus ($M_{\text{promotion-distinctive}} = 4.72, SD = 1.32$), $F(1, 128) = 4.391, p = .038$. Inconsistent with H1b, when consumers with promotion focus were exposed to popularity appeals ($M_{\text{promotion-popularity}} = 5.32, SD = .88$), they showed more favorable attitudes toward advertising than consumers with a prevention focus ($M_{\text{prevention-popularity}} = 4.79, SD = 1.24$), $F(1, 128) = 4.149, p = .04$ (Figure 4-1).

Hypotheses 2a and 2b predicted the positive fit effects between regulatory focus and the types of advertising appeals on consumers' attitudes toward the product. A significant two-way interaction effect on attitude toward the product was found, $F(1,125) = 4.326, p = .04$. Planned contrast tests revealed inconsistent results from H2a and H2b. The results indicated that there were no significant difference between promotion- ($M_{\text{promotion-distinctive}} = 5.01, SD = .96$) and prevention-focused consumers ($M_{\text{prevention-distinctive}} = 5.27, SD = .92$) when they were exposed to distinctive advertising appeals, $F(1.125) = .829, p > .05$. However, when they were exposed to popularity advertising appeals, the consumers with a promotion focus ($M_{\text{promotion-popularity}} = 5.37, SD = 1.01$) showed more positive attitudes toward the product than the consumers with a prevention focus ($M_{\text{prevention-popularity}} = 4.84, SD = 1.30$), $F(1,125) = 4.43, p = .037$ (Figure 4-2).

Hypotheses 3a and 3b stated that when there is a fit between regulatory focus and the types of advertising appeals, the consumers would have higher
purchase intention than consumers in nonfit conditions. However, there were no significant differences between conditions, $F(1,128) = .071, p > .05$. Table 4-9 shows a summary of ANOVAs results for all dependent variables.

In sum, the results of the experiment showed that when distinctive advertising appeals were presented, prevention-focused consumers had more positive attitudes toward advertising than consumers with promotion focus. Additionally, when a popularity appeal was presented, consumers with promotion focus had more positive attitudes toward advertising and the product than consumers with a prevention focus. To gain a better understanding of the unexpected results, additional analyses were performed.

**Additional Analysis**

The results of the experiment revealed the positive effect of nonfit conditions (promotion focus – popularity appeal, prevention – distinctive appeal) over fit conditions (prevention focus – popularity appeal, promotion – distinctive appeal) on the attitude toward the advertising and the product. Additional data analyses were conducted to examine possible explanations for the unexpected results in the experiment.

First of all, this study was designed to increase the subjects’ involvement level to maximize their information processing in the experiment setting. However, there is a possibility that the level of involvement influenced people’s regulatory fit effect. For instance, Wang and Lee (2006) examined involvement in the decision making process as a factor influencing consumers’ regulatory focus effect. They found that uninvolved subjects relied on their regulatory focus as a
filter to process information and paid more attention to information that addressed their regulatory focus concerns than the involved subjects.

In this study, subjects were asked to indicate their general interest in traveling to Europe prior to prime regulatory focus using seven items on a seven-point semantic differential scale (irrelevant/relevant, undesirable/desirable, doesn’t matter/matters to me, uninterested/interested, boring/interesting, not involved/highly involved, unexciting/exciting) (Zaichkowsky, 1985) (Chronbach’s α = .830). As expected, subjects had high general interest levels in traveling to Europe (M = 6.15, SD = .598).

A multiple linear regression was performed predicting subjects’ general interests in traveling to Europe based on their chronic regulatory focus. A significant regression equation was found (R² = .061, F(2,129) = 4.160, p = .018). Specifically, subjects’ chronic promotion focus is significantly related to their general interest in traveling to Europe, β = .254, t = 2.780, p = .005, while chronic prevention focus was not, β = .020, t = .472, p > .05. However, subjects’ general interest in traveling to Europe did not significantly influence the manipulation of regulatory focus (R² = 012, F(1,130) = 1.549, p > .05) or advertising appeals (distinctive appeal: R² = 002, F(1,130) = .259, p > .005, popularity appeal: R² = .001, F(1,130) = .160, p > .05). In sum, the subjects in this study were highly involved in the decision making task regardless of their manipulation of regulatory focus and advertising appeals.
### Table 4-1. Number of subjects by the experimental conditions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distinctive appeal</th>
<th>Promotion focus</th>
<th>Prevention focus</th>
<th>Popularity appeal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prevention focus</td>
<td>Promotion focus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32 (24.2%)</td>
<td>28 (21.2%)</td>
<td>37 (28%)</td>
<td>35 (26.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 4-2. Descriptions of the sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>81.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>18.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age (SD)</th>
<th>20.58 (1.16)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>31.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telecommunication</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>24.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Relations</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journalism</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Literature</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Science</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
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<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>52.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophomore</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>24.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>22.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshman</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.8</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>60.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>25.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Other        | 2      | 1.5     |
Table 4-3. One-way ANOVA for gender on dependent variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent variables</th>
<th>Sum of squares</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Mean square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude toward ad</td>
<td>.208</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.208</td>
<td>.163</td>
<td>.687</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude toward product</td>
<td>2.882</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.882</td>
<td>2.479</td>
<td>.118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase intention</td>
<td>.403</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4032</td>
<td>.417</td>
<td>.515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude toward ad</td>
<td>5.979</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>.854</td>
<td>.664</td>
<td>.702</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude toward product</td>
<td>1.435</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>.205</td>
<td>.166</td>
<td>.991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase intention</td>
<td>3.191</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>.456</td>
<td>.471</td>
<td>.854</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude toward ad</td>
<td>4.006</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.002</td>
<td>.792</td>
<td>.532</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude toward product</td>
<td>1.600</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.400</td>
<td>.330</td>
<td>.857</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase intention</td>
<td>1.537</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.384</td>
<td>.398</td>
<td>.810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude toward ad</td>
<td>2.646</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.882</td>
<td>.693</td>
<td>.558</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude toward product</td>
<td>.164</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.055</td>
<td>.045</td>
<td>.987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase intention</td>
<td>.518</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.173</td>
<td>.180</td>
<td>.910</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-4. Regression for age on dependent variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent variables</th>
<th>Std. Beta</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitude toward ad</td>
<td>-.097</td>
<td>-1.110</td>
<td>.269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude toward product</td>
<td>.056</td>
<td>.637</td>
<td>.525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase intention</td>
<td>-.003</td>
<td>-.034</td>
<td>.973</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-5. Correlations of dependent variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude toward advertising</th>
<th>Attitude toward product</th>
<th>Purchase intention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitude toward advertising</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.631**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude toward product</td>
<td>.631**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase intention</td>
<td>.592**</td>
<td>.572**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: ** Correlation is significant at the .01 level.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Hypothesis DF</th>
<th>Error DF</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>η²</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pillai's Trace</td>
<td>.967</td>
<td>1192.048</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilks' Lambda</td>
<td>.033</td>
<td>1192.048</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotelling's Trace</td>
<td>29.074</td>
<td>1192.048</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.967</td>
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<td>Roy's Largest Root</td>
<td>29.074</td>
<td>1192.048</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.967</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regulatory focus (RF)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pillai's Trace</td>
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<td>Std. deviation</td>
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Table 4-8. A summary of ANOVAs results

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<th>Regulatory focus x advertising appeal</th>
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Note: *p < .05, **p < .01
Figure 4-1. Two-way interaction between regulatory focus and advertising appeals on attitude toward advertising

Figure 4-2. Two-way interaction between regulatory focus and advertising appeals on attitude toward product
Summary and Discussion of Results

The objective of this study is to examine how persuasive messages influence consumers’ evaluation of advertising, products, and their purchase intention depending on their motivational states. Specifically, the current study investigates the interaction effects of two distinct types of advertising appeals (i.e., distinctive and popularity appeals) and regulatory focus (i.e., promotion and prevention focus). This study hypothesized regulatory fit effects between regulatory focus and advertising appeals in persuasion. Specifically, the hypotheses expected that consumers in fit conditions (promotion focus/distinctive appeal and prevention focus/popularity appeal) would have more favorable attitudes toward advertising, product, and purchase intention than consumers in nonfit conditions (promotion focus/popularity appeal and prevention focus/distinctive appeal). However, contrary to the expected outcomes, consumers in nonfit conditions showed more positive attitudes toward advertising and product. This chapter discusses possible explanations for the reversed results; it further highlights the contributions and implications of this study to both researchers and managers.

Although marketing communicators are trying to find relevant messages that match consumer profiles (Iyer, Soberman, & Villas-Boas, 2005) and product types (Liebermann & Flint-Goor, 1996) to maximize the effectiveness of their advertisements, the results of this study suggest that the fit between advertising messages and consumers’ goal is not always desirable. Findings indicate that
distinctive advertising appeals are more effective for consumers who have salient prevention focus than for consumers with promotion focus in terms of attitudes toward advertising. However, popularity advertising appeals elicit more favorable attitudes toward advertising and product for the promotion-focused consumers compared to prevention-focused consumers.

To explain the unexpected results, this discussion focuses on the potential effect of boundary condition and the possibility of wrong prediction of fit and nonfit conditions. First, the reversed results appear to be due to the subjects’ high involvement level in the decision-making process. As the additional analyses in Chapter 4 indicated, the subjects had a strong interest in traveling to Europe. In addition to their general interest in traveling, the lab setting forced the subjects to become involved in a decision-making task that could potentially increase their involvement level. Thus, when they were exposed to the advertisement in the experiment, they were highly motivated to process the information available to them.

The role of involvement level as a possible moderator is considerable as the regulatory fit effect is the result of heuristic processing rather than systematic processing (Briley & Aaker, 2006; Wang & Lee, 2006). Lee (2004) noted that involved people allocate more cognitive resources to information and have more chances to correct their initial response. Meanwhile, uninvolved people are less likely to expend cognitive resources to process the information and rely more on their regulatory goals. Thus, the regulatory focus acts as a filter for the
information to which people pay more attention when they engage in heuristic processing.

Supporting the moderating role of involvement on regulatory fit effects, Wang and Lee (2006) found the moderating role of involvement in regulatory fit effects on persuasion. Specifically, they found that, when people are motivated to process information, they are more likely to pay attention to information more systematically in general, independent of regulatory focus relevance. In contrast, when people are not motivated to process information, they rely on their regulatory focus as a filter to select relevant information for processing and pay more attention to information that addresses their regulatory focus. Thus, uninvolved people show higher selectivity than involved people. In addition, Evans and Petty (2003) suggested the moderating role of need for cognition in the regulatory fit effect. In their study, when subjects had a low need for cognition, they were more likely to be persuaded by the quality of the argument in the advertisement than subjects with a high need for cognition. Thus, when people have more resources to process information, the role of regulatory focus as a filter is minimal. As discussed in Chapter 2 in terms of the underlying mechanism of regulatory fit effect, studies in regulatory fit have noted that regulatory fit effects are mediated by a “feeling-right experience,” and the effects are not observed when people recognize the source of the feeling (Cesario et al., 2004). In other words, when people put forth cognitive efforts in the decision-making process (i.e., high involvement situation), the regulatory fit effect disappears. However, the effects of regulatory nonfit on persuasion have been
ignored because past studies have not found significant differences between fit and nonfit conditions.

To explain the effects of regulatory nonfit, this study expects that consumers seek information inconsistent with their goals in certain circumstances. In other words, people sometimes show high selectivity in the opposite direction from their attitude and beliefs (Fischer et al., 2008). Studies in selective exposure have noted that inconsistent information is more difficult to notice and process than consistent information (e.g., Fischer & Greitemeyer, 2010). Yet when people are motivated to process information, they are less likely to use their regulatory focus as a filter for two major reasons: (1) people want to appear as unbiased decision makers and (2) people can more easily detect inconsistent information than consistent information when information load is high (Yoon et al., 2012). However, further investigations are needed to determine under which circumstances the regulatory nonfit effects are observed. Therefore, this study calls for further research examining involvement as a factor moderating the interaction between regulatory focus and advertising appeals.

This study is also opened to the possibility that the prediction of matching regulatory focus and the types of advertising appeals might be incorrect. Cue utilization theory suggests that products consist of intrinsic and extrinsic cues (Olson, 1978). Extrinsic cues are product-related attributes that are not parts of the physical product, such as price, brand name, country of origin, and packaging (Richardson, Dick & Jain, 1994). In contrast, intrinsic cues are product-related attributes that cannot be changed without altering psychical aspects of the
products, such as design and ingredients (Richardson et al., 1994). Therefore, popularity of the products can be regarded as an extrinsic cue whereas distinctiveness of products can be considered an intrinsic cue.

As people with a promotion focus are likely to engage in prompt decision making and use more heuristic information processing (Higgins, 1997), promotion-focused consumers would be more likely to use the extrinsic cue (i.e., popularity). Meanwhile, prevention-focused consumers are more vigilant in decision making and consider security and safety (Higgins, 2000; Pham & Higgins, 2005); thus, they would be more likely to utilize the intrinsic cue (i.e., distinctiveness). If this is the case of the reversed findings, the distinctive advertising appeals match up with prevention-focused consumers and the popularity advertising appeals with promotion-focused consumers. Again, this proposition calls for further investigation.

This study failed to find any significant differences between conditions on the subjects’ purchase intention. The insufficient results related to purchase intention can be attributed to data-collection period. The week of data collection was held right after spring break, so the majority of the subjects had just returned from a vacation trip. Their willingness to take another trip might have been influenced even though they indicated positive attitudes toward the advertising and product.

**Contribution**

The present study contributes to the literature in regulatory focus on/fit with persuasion on several fronts. First, the current research contributes to the regulatory focus/fit literature by demonstrating the nonfit effects on persuasion.
Significant attention from studies in regulatory fit has focused on the fit effects while the existence of nonfit effects has been ignored. This omission can be attributed to the negative consequences of nonfit between regulatory focus and persuasive messages. In addition, most regulatory fit studies have failed to find positive effects of nonfit conditions. The current study demonstrated that nonfit conditions can positively influence people’s attitudes toward a product under certain circumstances; as such, the study increases understanding of how two distinct motivational states interact with mismatching messages by opening the new window of the regulatory nonfit effect.

Second, this study extends message-framing studies by examining how the two advertising appeals (distinctive and popularity appeals) pair with consumers’ regulatory focus, thereby influencing their advertising and product evaluations. Although several studies of regulatory focus on persuasion have adopted advertising contexts to examine the regulatory focus/fit effects (e.g., Lee & Aaker, 2004; Zhu & Meyers-Levy, 2007), the studies utilized advertising messages emphasizing either promotion or prevention benefits of the products (e.g., promotion-focused benefit: orange juice for energy creation, prevention-focused benefit: orange juice for healthy cardiovascular function). However, no studies have examined when and to whom the two distinct appeals would be more effective. The current study was the first to investigate the two most frequently used advertising appeals with consumers’ motivational states to have a better understanding.
The findings of this study have practical implications for marketing communication practitioners in terms of the utilization of advertising appeals and efforts to target consumers. Marketing communicators try to approach their audience by relating product benefits to consumers’ characteristics, such as demographics and lifestyles. However, the results of this study suggest that mismatching consumers’ goals and marketing messages can be a superior approach while matching the consumers and messages can be ineffective in certain circumstances. The results imply that advertising messages emphasizing popularity of the product can be more effective with promotion-focused consumers, whereas messages highlighting the uniqueness of the product are appropriate for consumers with a prevention focus. However, managers need to be careful when implementing the results of this study without considering specific circumstances. As discussed earlier, several studies—including the current one—have proposed that people use their regulatory focus when information is processed in a spontaneous manner. The current study goes further, demonstrating that consumers might use the information provided instead of their regulatory focus, thereby underscoring the importance of deliberative processing (Briley & Aaker, 2006).

In sum, this study suggests that matching consumers’ goal with advertising messages is not always recommended. Therefore, marketing communicators should consider various situational factors and characteristics of the product category, including involvement, to achieve the marketing objectives. Marketing communicators need to know not only which messages align with a
particular target, but also when the advertising appeals will be most effective. Further research is still warranted to demonstrate the boundary conditions for the regulatory nonfit effect; involvement also needs to be considered. In the next section, more directions for future research are discussed as well as the limitations of the present study.

**Limitations and Future Research**

This study has several limitations to be acknowledged, and provides several avenues for future investigations of regulatory focus/fit and advertising appeals. Specifically, limitations in this study are related to methodological issues typically addressed in studies utilizing an experimental design – external validity and generalizability, and variables that are needed to be considered in the further regulatory focus/fit studies.

Several limitations in this study are related to generalizability of the findings. First of all, limitations can be found in the demographics of the samples. The subjects in the present study were undergraduate college students in Florida in the United States. That is, even though using homogenous groups for experimental method helps to minimize the potential effects of undetected covariations, the use of specific group of subjects will limit the application of the research results to the general population (Campbell & Stanley, 1963). Additionally, a dominant number of female subjects in this study reduced the generalizability of the findings of the study. Thus, further research should be conducted with a more representative population sample to have better understanding of the effects of regulatory focus and advertising appeals.
The usage of a fictitious brand/product in the experiment may raise limitations for the present study. Even though this study used a fictitious travel agency and a travel package to avoid any potential effects of the subjects’ prior attitudes toward existing brands on the dependent variables, consumers hold prior attitudes toward the brand/product, and use the prior attitudes for purchase decision making outside of the lab setting. Thus, the findings of this study might not be applicable to all existing brands.

This study only used a travel package to Europe as a target product. Thus, a possibility of confounding from using just one type of product category is laid in the study. For instance, products used for consumption purposes can be broadly categorized into hedonic or utilitarian (Lim, Ching, & Ang, 2008). As consumption of hedonic products is characterized as sensory gratification and affective purpose, travel packages are regarded as being in the hedonic product category (Crowley, Spangenberg, & Hughes, 1992). Regarding the link between regulatory focus and two types of product categories, Chernev (2004) found that promotion-focused people weigh more on hedonic attributes of products, whereas prevention-focused people are relatively more weigh on utilitarian aspects of products. Therefore, having a product in the utilitarian product category (e.g., personal computers) may cause results that vary from this study.

Additionally, some may argue that there is influence of differences between product categories on the interactions of regulatory focus and the types of advertising appeals. Particularly, examinations of various product categories would benefit researchers and practitioners considering the relationship between
consumers’ product category knowledge in the decision-making process. Studies on consumer behavior have demonstrated an inverted-U shape relationship between product knowledge and total amount of search because that knowledge facilitates the learning of new information and allows a more efficient search (Bettman & Park, 1980; Brucks, 1988). Thus, this study presumes that consumers have a higher involvement level for information searching when they have a moderate level of product knowledge. Additionally, as this study utilized an experimental method, all subjects were forced to get involved in the purchasing situation with a fixed amount of resources and processing. However, the effects of product knowledge and the involvement were not hypothesized in this study.

Lastly, the level of product category knowledge may influence the effects of popularity appeals as well. Specifically, when consumers have a low level of product category knowledge, the effect of popularity advertising appeals can be more effective than for the consumers with a high level of product category knowledge, because they make stronger relationships between the popularity and the quality of the brands (Cattin, Jolibert, & Lohnes, 1982). For instance, if one does not have enough knowledge about travel package products, the person will weigh the popularity claim (extrinsic cue) more strongly and make a strong correlation between the quality and the popularity (Elliott & Cameron, 1994). To address the limitations, therefore, future studies are needed to investigate how consumers’ involvement levels in decision-making moderate the interaction of regulatory focus and advertising appeals with various types of products and
including product knowledge as a moderator. Also, future research can utilize 
survey methods as well as including involvement in decision making as an 
additional variable.

Related to stimulus in this study, only print advertisements were made 
available to the subjects in the experiment. However, as an increasing number of 
information sources become available to consumers (e.g., online reviews, 
integrated marketing communications), one medium or message will not solely 
influence consumers’ decision-making process. Therefore, the further research 
may be interested in how fit between regulatory focus and advertising messages 
will influence consumers’ subsequent information processing (i.e., interactions 
between or among messages across the media).

This study was also limited in its scope in the use of one message feature 
– distinctive/popularity appeals. However, the further research may be interested 
in other elements of advertisements such as tones, images, sources, and the 
quality of arguments. Thus, future studies are needed to examine the moderating 
effects of each element of advertisements on regulatory focus and its 
effectiveness for persuasion.

Conclusion

Regulatory fit is an important phenomenon to understand the bridge 
between consumer behavior and their motivations. However, the work in 
regulatory fit is still in nascent stages, especially the regulatory fit effects on 
persuasion. This study tried to extend the understanding of regulatory fit theory in 
persuasion within an advertisement context by examining the interaction between 
regulatory focus and advertising appeals (distinctive and popularity advertising
appeals). This study expected that fits between regulatory focus and advertising appeals (i.e., promotion focus-distinctive advertising appeal, prevention focus-popularity advertising appeal) would elicit more favorable attitudes toward advertising, product, and purchase intention than nonfit conditions (i.e., promotion focus-popularity advertising appeal, prevention focus and distinctive advertising appeal). Unexpectedly, however, the results of this study showed the reversed regulatory fit effects.

This study seeks the possible explanation in the subjects’ high involvement level, due to the artificial experimental setting, as well as the subjects’ high level of interest in traveling to Europe. This reasoning was supported by previous regulatory focus/fit studies that examined the influence of involvement in decision making on the regulatory fit effects. Although this study addresses that regulatory nonfit effect is observed under certain circumstances, and expects that level of involvement in decision-making process can be a factor for the effect, the possibility remains that other factors may influence outcomes as well, and thereby merit further attention.
APPENDIX A
INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Informed Consent

Protocol Title: Effects of Goal Compatibility: 
Matching Consumer Motivations and Advertising Appeals

Please read this consent document carefully before you decide to participate in this study.

Purpose of the research study: To determine the effect of travel advertising appeals on the audience’s attitude toward advertising.

What you will be asked to do in the study: You will be asked to read a written scenario inviting you to imagine planning a trip, and will be exposed to an advertisement. Then, you will be asked several questions about the ad and its message.

Time required: The study will take no more than 20 minutes to complete.

Risks and Benefits: We do not anticipate there will be any risks or direct benefits to you as a consequence of your decision to complete the survey.

Compensation: Participants will receive no compensation. There is a possibility of receiving extra credit from the instructor of the course you were recruited. Extra credit for participation will not be greater than the equivalent of 2% of the student's overall grade in the course

Confidentiality: Every person’s answer from this study will remain confidential. No names will be used in any part of the study. Your identity will be kept confidential to the extent provided by law.

Voluntary participation: Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. There is no penalty for not participating. You can choose not to answer any question you do not wish to answer. You have the right to withdraw from the study at anytime without consequence. If you do not choose this research participation, your class instructor will give you another option for equal extra credit. Volunteers are encouraged to participate only once. If you have already participated in this study for another class, your class instructor has agreed to give you an alternate option for equivalent extra credit.

Whom to contact if you have questions about the study:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Principle Investigator:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doori Song, Ph.D. Candidate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College of Journalism and Communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2034 Weimer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:songdoori@ufl.edu">songdoori@ufl.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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| Supervisor: Cynthia Morton, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Advertising, |
| 2082 Weimer Hall, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL, 32611-8400 USA. Tel: (352) 392-8841, cmorton@jou.ufl.edu |
Whom to contact about your rights as a research participant in the study: UFIRB Office
IRB02 Office, Box 112250, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611-2250; phone 392-0433

Agreement:
I have read the procedure described above. I voluntarily agree to participate in the procedure and I have received a copy of this description.
Participant: ______________________________ Date: ________________

Principal Investigator: _____________________ Date: ________________
APPENDIX B
REGULATORY FOCUS MANIPULATION

Promotion Focus

6 Best Things to Happen While Traveling in Europe

Many people pursue exciting activities and events while traveling in Europe to get maximum enjoyment out of their trip. We listed the best things that other travelers discover—about the destinations and about themselves—overseas.

1. Uncovering closed-door restaurants
Closed-door restaurants are private eateries tucked away in a chef’s home. And though they’re not widely advertised, they are often some of the most sought-after tables in town. For travelers, these clandestine spots offer a unique opportunity to step off the tourist track and dine like a local.

2. Making new friends
Meeting new people can be an added benefit to the journey. If the situation is right, you might learn just as much about your traveling companions and acquaintances as you do about the places you see.

3. Stay flexible
Make sure you leave time in your itinerary and day-to-day schedule to wander and wonder. Leave time to explore, strike up conversations, and lose yourself in the experience. Learn to laugh at things when they don’t go as planned. Many obstacles can and will get in your way while traveling, and it is important to not let them stop you from enjoying yourself.

4. Educational benefits
Traveling almost always involves more than just sightseeing because even the most stereotypical tourist learns something new when he travels. For instance, you can learn the history of a region that is new to you. Being at a church, battlefield, historic home, or castle allows you to study the locale firsthand.

5. You can increase confidence and trust in yourself
If you are traveling alone, or even with someone, there are always a lot of decisions that you have to make. Doubting yourself can cause a lot of hassle, so over time you will learn to be more confident with your decisions and trust your own judgment.

6. Growing as a person
You will see the world, experience different cultures and meet many people. You will learn a lot about yourself and your expectations and goals in life. Trips can give you a whole new outlook on life, and allow you to change in a positive way.
6 Worst Things That Could Happen While Traveling in Europe

Many people have been frustrated by bad situations during their trips, but you can avoid those situations if you know what can happen to you while you are traveling Europe. We listed the bad things that other travelers have experienced overseas.

1. Luggage disappears or makes side trip
Guaranteed to happen if you packed your favorite shoes or anything of value in the suitcase. One traveler and his wife took two separate flights from Orlando to London. He ended up in Rome, with his bag in Paris, and his spouse landed in Manchester, with her bag in New York City.

2. Bird droppings
The surprising splat of bird droppings landing on you from a great height is followed by the swift appearance of a stranger who towels you down. In the confusion, the person steals your valuables, which are never to be seen again. Another variation on the same scam is where someone “accidentally” spilling mustard or other condiments on you.

3. Body injury/illness without insurance
In the event of serious injury or illness, insurance payouts can run up to hundreds of thousands of US dollars. An uninsured Australian injured in Madrid will end up at the mercy of the expensive American healthcare system.

4. Disaster strikes
Your safety is paramount. This is not the time to rely on hearsay. While Twitter is a great source for breaking news, it’s not the perfect place to assess an on-the-ground situation. Your first port of call is your government’s foreign-travel website. Official sites are updated frequently, and their warnings often carry insurance implications.

5. Immunization for world travellers
Immunizations help protect you from some of the diseases you may be at risk of getting on your travels. Unfortunately, there are many more diseases you may encounter while traveling in Europe that can’t be prevented by vaccination (for example diarrhea, malaria, and dengue fever).

6. Avoid bedbugs
In Paris, bedbugs were being found in dorms, offices, and penthouses. While the pandemonium might have abated, no destination is immune to these little vampires, and a tidy well-kept room doesn’t always mean a bug-free zone.
Distinctive advertising appeal

TravelShot’s SMALL GROUP TOURS

EUROPE

THE MOST UNIQUE TRAVEL PACKAGES

TravelShot’s Small Group Tours are the most unique small group tours in Europe. Select one of our theme or destination based packages that offer engaging travel experiences and completely customizable itineraries to create the perfect balance of organized touring and free time.

Why are TravelShot tours so different?

• 30 Years of Professional Service Industry leading customer satisfaction and loyalty

• You didn’t know travel could be this easy! Travel carefree while we take care of every detail

• The most selection and flexibility Customize your trip and travel at your own pace

For more on Europe’s most unique tours call us toll free at 800-515-6517
and for special offers visit travelshot.com/sale
TravelShot’s SMALL GROUP TOURS
EUROPE

THE MOST POPULAR TRAVEL PACKAGES

TravelShot’s Small Group Tours
are the best selling small group tours in Europe.
Select one of our theme or destination based packages
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  Customize your trip and travel at your own pace

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travelshot.com/sale

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Q. Using the scale below, please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements. There are no “right” or “no” answers, so select the number that most closely reflects you on each statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

1. When it comes to achieving things that are important to me, I find that I perform as well as I would ideally like to.

2. I feel like I have made progress toward being successful in my life.

3. When I see an opportunity for something I like, I get excited right away.

4. I frequently imagine how I will achieve my hopes and aspirations.

5. I see myself as someone who is primarily striving to reach my “ideal self” — to fulfill my hopes, wishes, and aspirations.

6. I usually obeyed rules and regulations that were established by my parents.

7. Not being careful enough has gotten me into trouble at times.

8. I worry about making mistakes.

9. I frequently think about how I can prevent failures in my life.
10. I see myself as someone who is primarily striving to become the self I “ought” to be — fulfill my duties, responsibilities, and obligations.

Q. We would like to know about your general interests in traveling in Europe.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Irrelevant</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>Relevant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undesirable</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Desirable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doesn’t matter</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Matters to me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uninterested</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Interested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boring</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Interesting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not involved</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Highly involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unexciting</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Exciting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SECTION 2

[Promotion focus conditions]

Imagine that you and your close friends are planning a trip for the summer. You and your friends want to create a lot of good memories during the trip. You have discussed the destination and decided to travel to Europe. Today, you found an article about summer travel abroad from the US Tourism Association. The article provides useful tips for an enjoyable/fun trip to Europe. Please read the article on the next page very carefully.

Q. Which of the things mentioned in the article would you actively pursue? Please be specific; how likely are you to take the tips?
Q. What aspect is more important for you to do right now?

Something I ought to 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Something I want to

[Prevention focus conditions]

Imagine that you and your family are planning a trip for the summer. You and your family want to create a lot of good memories during the trip. You have discussed the destination and decided to travel to Europe. Today, you found an article about summer travel abroad from the US Tourism Association. The article provides useful tips for a safe trip to Europe. Please read the article on the next page very carefully.

Q. Which of the things mentioned in the article would you actively avoid? Please be specific; how likely are you to take the tips?

Q. What aspect is more important for you to do right now?

Something I ought to 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Something I want to

SECTION 3

Now, please read the advertisement of Travelshot’s small group tours on the next page. The questions about the advertisement will follow. Please see the advertisement carefully.

Exposure to distinctive- or popularity advertising appeals

Exposure to distinctive- or popularity advertising appeals
Q. Please indicate how you feel about the Travelshot’s ad that you just saw by selecting one of each bipolar adjective pair.

Bad  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Good

Dislike  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Like

Irritating  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Not irritating

Uninteresting  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Interesting

Q. Based on your awareness of the Travelshot’s small group tours package, to what extent would you consider a purchase?

Unlikely  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Likely

Improbable  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Probable

Uncertain  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Certain

Definitely Not  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Definitely

Q. Please indicate how you feel about the Travelshot’s Small Group Tours Package by selecting one of each bipolar adjective pair.

Bad  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Good

Dislike  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Like

Unfavorable  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Favorable

Negative  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Positive
Q. Please indicate your perception of the popularity of Travelshot’s small group tours.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not an industry leader</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all popular</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not widely accepted</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Few like it</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry leader</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very popular</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widely accepted</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many like it</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q. Please indicate your perception of the Travelshot’s small group tours.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>____ 1. The advertised Travelshot’s small group tours “stands out” from other travel package tours.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>____ 2. The advertised Travelshot’s small group tours are very different from other travel package tours.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>____ 3. Compared to other travel package tours, the advertised Travelshot’s small group tours are “unique”</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For statistical purposes, we would like you to provide us with some demographic information:

AGE: ___________ years

SEX: ________ female  __________ male

MAJOR: ___________________

YEAR IN COLLEGE:
(1) Freshman  (2) Sophomore  (3) Junior
(4) Senior  (5) Graduate  (6) Other ________
ETHNICITY:
1) American Indian or Alaska native
2) African American
3) Asian
4) Caucasian
5) Hispanic or Latino
6) Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
7) Other ________________

Thank you so much for your participation.
LIST OF REFERENCES


BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Doori Song earned dual bachelor of arts degrees in business administration and mass communications from Dankook University (Seoul, South Korea). After completing his master of arts in advertising from Michigan State University, he joined the Ph.D. program at the University of Florida in 2009.

During his four years in the Ph.D. program at the University of Florida, he received the UF Alumni Fellowship from the College of Journalism and Communications and taught advertising research and advertising strategy courses as an instructor of record. The topics of his academic works included consumer psychology and marketing communication related to interactive media.

He met his wife, Namkyung Yeun, during an undergraduate marketing research class. Today, they live with their two lovely daughters, Jiwoo and Yeonwoo. Doori Song recently accepted a position as an assistant professor of marketing at the Williamson College of Business Administration at Youngstown State University.