# Control Orientation, Self-Monitoring, and Preference for Image versus Quality Approach to Advertising

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The present study examined the relations among control orientation, selfmonitoring, and reactions to image-based vs quality-based advertisements. Control orientation, as measured by the general causality orientations scale (E. L. Deci & R. M. Ryan (1985) Journal of Research in Personality 19, 109-134), refers to the tendency to organize behavior according to environmental controls and, consequently, to pursue extrinsic rather than intrinsic rewards. Self-monitoring (M. Snyder (1974) Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 30, 526-537) refers to the tendency to tailor behavior to fit situational considerations. Imagebased as opposed to quality-based advertisements emphasize the extrinsic rewards associated with the use of a product. It was found that people high in control orientation were also high in self-monitoring and preferred image- to qualityoriented advertisements. Since image preference has been previously related to high self-monitoring, we proposed that other correlates of self-monitoring might also be related to control orientation. Several candidates were offered for future research. © 1988 Academic Press, Inc.

Self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985b) distinguishes among three motivational systems: intrinsic, extrinsic, and amotivational. Intrinsically motivated behavior is enacted because of the actor's interest in the behavior itself; accordingly, this behavior persists with a minimum of external support. Extrinsically motivated behavior is enacted as a means for other goals; accordingly, this behavior persists only if reinforced by certain rewards (e.g., pay, status, deadlines, etc.). The amotivational system represents a state of learned helplessness-perceived lack of control over one's own behavior. The three motivational systems are facilitated by the appropriate environmental events and/or personality orientation. Informational events and the autonomy orientation promote intrinsically motivated behavior; controlling events and control orientation promote extrinsic behavior; amotivating events and impersonal orientation promote the amotivational system.

How is one to distinguish among the three personality orientations?

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Deci and Ryan suggested that people high in autonomy should seek out choice and experience behavior as self-initiated; they should also have a greater capacity to experience events as a source of information, an opportunity for self-expression, and autonomous activity; their behavior should be intrinsically motivated and less controlled by extrinsic rewards. People high in the control orientation should seek out controls and interpret the environment as controlling; their behavior should be a function of extrinsic rewards-what one must or should do determines goals and values. Finally, people high in the impersonal orientation believe they cannot control their behavior and consequently cannot obtain desired outcomes; in essence, these people consider themselves helpless (Seligman, 1975).

Recently, Deci and Ryan (1985a) developed a general causality orientations scale to measure the control, autonomy, and impersonal orientations. The scale contains 12 vignettes, each accompanied by three 7-point items—one item per orientation. Accordingly, the scale yields three scores—autonomy, control, and impersonal—each based on 12 items. Internal consistency of the three subscales was adequate ( $\alpha$  values ranged from .69 to .74); stability was relatively high (test-retest r's for a 2-month interval ranged from .71 to .78). Several correlations with other scales appear consistent with predictions derived from self-determination theory. For example, autonomy orientation was positively correlated with measures of ego development (Loevinger, 1976) and selfesteem (Janis & Field, 1959); and negatively correlated with a measure of self-derogation (Kaplan & Pokorny, 1969). Control orientation was positively correlated with a measure of Type A (Jenkins, Rosenman, & Friedman, 1967). Impersonal orientation was positively correlated with self-derogation (Kaplan & Pokorny), depression (Beck & Beamesderfer, 1974), social anxiety (Fenigstein, Scheier, & Buss, 1975), and external locus of control (Rotter, 1966); and negatively correlated with measures of ego development (Loevinger, 1976) and self-esteem (Janis & Field, 1959). Finally, autonomy orientation was not correlated with control orientation (r = .03) and negatively correlated with impersonal orientation (r = -.25); control orientation was positively correlated with impersonal orientation (r = .27).

The above results as well as other findings by Deci and Ryan (1985a) provided support for the concept of causality orientations. Accordingly, the scale can be used in additional tests of self-determination theory; and these tests may also serve to establish the construct validity of the scale. In the present study, we sought to examine the relationship between control, as measured by the general orientations scale, and two other variables: Self-monitoring (Snyder, 1974) and a preference for a particular advertising strategy-appeals to the image of a product as opposed to its quality (Snyder & DeBono, 1985).

Self-monitoring pertains to the control and regulation of one's self-presentation (for reviews see Shaw & Costanzo, 1982; Snyder, 1979, 1987). Individuals high in self-monitoring regulate their self-presentation to fit social norms of situational appropriateness. Because high self-monitors strive to be the right person in the right place, their behavior changes from situation to situation. By contrast, low self-monitoring individuals mold their behavior to fit inner states rather than social norms of appropriateness. Accordingly, these individuals do not change their self-presentation from one situation to another and display a correspondence between their private attitudes and actual behavior. High and low self-monitors are identified by high and low scores, respectively, on the Self-Monitoring Scale (Snyder, 1974).

An image approach to advertising focuses on the image or implications associated with the use of the product; the quality of the product is not mentioned. For example, an image oriented strategy would (a) glamorize the people using the product—a Marlboro man is described as rugged and masculine; or (b) describe desirable by-products of using the product—appreciation of friends, moving up, being stared at, etc. By contrast, a quality approach to advertising focuses on the value of the product. For example, practitioners of this approach would emphasize how well a car drives, how good a food tastes, or how enchanting the smell of a perfume is. Of course, many ads can incorporate elements of both strategies, presenting information about both image and quality of the product (cf. Snyder & DeBono, 1985).

Snyder and DeBono (1985) hypothesized that high self-monitors who behave according to situational considerations should be sensitive to the image they project and consequently to advertising that emphasizes the image associated with the product. Low self-monitors, on the other hand, pay less attention to situational considerations and more attention to inner sources (e.g., attitudes, dispositions, etc.). These individuals should be sensitive to quality-based advertising because it allows them to asses the fit between their needs and the product. Three studies by Snyder and DeBono (1985) supported their proposition: Compared with low self-monitors, high self-monitors preferred image-based to quality-based advertisements, were willing to pay more for products that were advertised with an image orientation, and were more willing to try products advertised with an image appeal.

It appears that control-oriented people (Deci & Ryan, 1985a) and high self-monitors (Snyder, 1979) share a concern for extrinsic or controlling events. According to Deci and Ryan (1985a), these events define the things that control-oriented people should do. Clearly, however, external rules about what one should do are identical to situational considerations directing the behavior of high self-monitors. Thus, the common element of the two constructs is the excessive influence that environmental con-

straints exert on the person. It is predicted, therefore, that people who score high on the control orientation scale would also score high on the Self-Monitoring Scale.

Image-based advertising represents an emphasis on extrinsic rewards—one can obtain the image by using the product but also through other means. Quality-based advertising represents an emphasis on intrinsic rewards—one can enjoy the quality of the product only by using the product itself. Stated differently, an image-oriented approach presents the product as a means for other goals (e.g., prestige) whereas a quality-oriented approach presents the product as a goal in and of itself. To the extent that control-oriented individuals organize their behaviors around extrinsic rewards, they ought to prefer image-based to quality-based advertising. The images emphasized in advertising are exactly the images one *should* aspire to, which in turn are also the types of extrinsic rewards that should influence control-oriented individuals.

Note that the present predictions—positive relations between control orientation, self-monitoring, and preference for image-based advertising—raise a new question. Perhaps the relation between self-monitoring and preference for the image approach in advertising (Snyder & DeBono, 1985) is mediated through the control orientation. The present data may allow a test of this possibility.

## **METHOD**

Subjects

One hundred and nineteen undergraduate volunteers (61 males and 58 females) were solicited and run in their university dormitories. Most subjects were run individually and the rest in small groups. Participation did not entail monetary or any other form of compenstion.

#### Procedure

Subjects were administered the General Causality Orientations Scale (Deci & Ryan, 1985a), the Self-Monitoring Scale (Snyder, 1974), and an Image-Quality Preference Scale. The latter instrument was similar to the measure used by Snyder and DeBono (1985). Specifically, we created three sets of advertisements, each containing two forms—one that was image-based and one that was quality-based. The three products advertised in these sets were the Fiero car, Heineken beer, and Barclay cigarettes. The content of the advertisements was a follows:

Fiero car: The picture in this advertisement displayed a Fiero car on a background of an enlarged Fiero logo and a statement at the bottom of the page. The image-oriented statement was, "It lets you express yourself on the high roads of life," whereas the quality-based statement was, "High performance, easy to maintain and comfortable—it's a quality car."

Heineken beer: The picture in this set depicted the Heineken label as it appears on the beer bottle. The image-oriented message read, "Heineken—you are moving up," and the quality-oriented message claimed, "Heineken . . . you can taste the difference."

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TABLE 1
Correlations Among the Autonomy, Control, and Impersonal Orientations and Self-Monitoring

	Autonomy	Control	Impersonal	Self-monitoring
Autonomy		.02	19*	.03
Control	.05		.40**	.32**
Impersonal	18	.40**		.07
Self-monitoring	.08	.31**	.06	

Note. Values above the diagonal are zero-order correlations; numbers below the diagonal are partial correlations with sex held constant.

Barclay cigarettes: The picture for this set presented a male lighting up a cigarette and looking at his female companion. The image-oriented message stated, "glamour and style in a cigarette," while the quality-based message claimed, "smooth taste in a low tar cigarette."

The experiment was presented as an investigation of advertising techniques. After subjects completed the general causality orientation scale and the Self-Monitoring Scale, they were shown the three sets of advertisements (order of presentation was random). After each set, the subjects completed a six-item questionnaire comparing the two forms in a set. The items were as follows: "(1) Overall, which ad do you think is better? (2) Which one appeals to you more? (3) Which ad do you think would be more successful? (4) Which ad shows the product in the best light? (5) Which ad do you think has more selling appeal? (6) Which ad do you think is more effective?" For each of the six items subjects were asked to choose one of the two forms in the set.

Scores on each of the three subscales in the general causality orientations scale can range from 12 to 84 with high scores indicating higher levels of autonomy, control, and impersonal orientation. Scores on the Self-Monitoring Scale can range from 0 to 25 with high scores indicating high level of self-monitoring. Finally, scores on the Image-Quality Preference Scale can range from 6 to 12 for each of the three products and from 18 to 36 for the entire scale (KR-20 for the entire scale was .71); high scores indicated a preference for quality approach to advertising.

#### RESULTS

Table 1 presents correlations among the three components of the general causality orientations scale and self-monitoring. Since sex differences may distort relationships that are presented as zero-order correlations, we also report the partial correlations (sex was held constant). Consistent with results reported by Deci and Ryan (1985a), autonomy orientation was not correlated with control and was negatively correlated with impersonal orientation; control and impersonal orientation were positively correlated. Consistent with the present predictions, self-monitoring was

positively correlated with control; correlations of self-monitoring with autonomy and impersonal orientations were minimal.<sup>1</sup>

The relation of control with the Image-Quality Preference Scale was examined in two separate analyses. In one analysis we used a tertiary split of control scores to divide subjects into low, medium, and high control orientation groups. Scores for each product represented in the Image-Quality Preference Scale were then examined in an analysis of variance with control (low/medium/high) and sex and between-subjects factors; product (Fiero/Heineken/Barclay) was the within-subject factor. Results showed that the low and medium control groups displayed higher preference for quality-based advertisements (M's = 9.62, 9.75, respectively) than did the high control group (M = 9.11), contrast low plus medium vs high control F(1, 113) = 4.45, p < .05, r = .19.2 The interactions between control and product and between control and sex were not significant, F(4, 226) = 1.40, F(2, 113) = .49, respectively.

In a second analysis we entered sex and control in a regression analysis of the total Image-Quality Preference scores. Sex accounted for a negligible portion of the variance (r = .04, F < 1); control increased the multiple correlation from .04 to .18 and the increase in variance accounted for was significant, F(1, 116) = 3.93, p < .05.

The above analyses were repeated for the autonomy and impersonal orientations. None of the results was significant, indicating that of the three components of the Causality Orientations Scale only control is related to self-monitoring and the image vs quality preference.

The two analyses were then repeated for self-monitoring. At best the results can be considered as a weak replication of the Snyder and DeBono (1985) findings. Low and medium self-monitors scored higher on the Image-Quality Preference Scale (M's = 9.57, 9.57) than did high self-

$$r=\sqrt{\frac{F_1,\underline{\phantom{C}}}{F_1,\underline{\phantom{C}}+dfe}}.$$

The magnitude of the effect is indicated by  $r^2$ , which is an estimate of the variance accounted for. Alternatively, Rosenthal and Rubin (1982) introduced the binomial size display, which shows that r is identical to the difference in success rates between two occasions (e.g., an increase in success rates from 40 to 60% is associated with a Pearson r of .20).

<sup>\*</sup> p < .05

<sup>\*\*</sup> p < .001

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Factor analyses of the Self-Monitoring Scale by Briggs, Cheek, and Buss (1980) identified three factors which can be used to construct three subscales: Extraversion, Other-Directedness, and Acting. In the present study, control orientation correlated (with sex held contant) .09 with Extraversion, .24 (p < .02) with Other-Directedness, and .30 (p < .01) with Acting. It should be added that opinions differ about the divisibility of the Self-Monitoring measure into subscales. Snyder and Gangestad (1986) maintained that the Self-Monitoring Scale taps a meaningful general self-monitoring factor, one that should not be divided.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> A measure of effect size, the person r was computed as (Rosenthal & Rosnow, 1984):

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monitors (M = 9.17), contrast low plus medium vs high self-monitors F(1, 113) = 2.33, p < .15, r = .14. Similarly, adding the Self-Monitoring Scale to sex in a regression analysis changed the multiple correlation from .04 to .10, an increase in variance accounted for that was not significant F(1, 116) = 1.12, r = .10.

Recently Snyder and Gangestad (1986) proposed to drop 7 items from the Self-Monitoring Scale, those that discriminate poorly between the latent classes of high and low self-monitors (see also Gangestad & Snyder, 1985). However, an analysis of variance and a regression analysis using the new 18-item Self-Monitoring Scale as a predictor of preference for image-based advertising yielded results that were even more weak than the analyses using the original 25-item scale (F < 1 for both analyses).

Finally, we repeated the analyses for both control orientation and selfmonitoring using one measure as an independent variable and holding the other measure constant. An analysis of covariance with control as an independent variable, self-monitoring as the covariate, and imagequality preference as a dependent variable produced an almost significant contrast (low plus medium control vs high control) F(1, 112) = 3.79, p< .06, r = .18; similarly, adding control orientation to a regression equation that already included sex and self-monitoring increased the multiple correlation from .10 to .19, an increase in variance accounted for that approached significance, F(1, 115) = 3.00 p < .08. When the two analyses were repeated with self-monitoring as predictor and control as the covariate, the results were not significant, F's < 1.3

### DISCUSSION

Overall, the results were consistent with predictions: High level of control orientation was related to high level of self-monitoring and to preference for image-oriented advertisements. The relatively small size of the effects should not be surprising. As Deci and Ryan (1985a) wrote, "... the general nature of the scale . . . makes predictions of specific actions rather difficult" (p. 131). In this respect, the general causality orientations scale is similar to other general measures such as Rotter's (1966) scale of general expectancy for internal versus external control.

In both cases there is the assumption of some degree of generalizability across situations in terms of the construct in question. However, there is also the assumption that a portion of the behavior is determined by situation-specific factors that cannot be measured by the general scale. Stated differently, there is a trade-off between the capacity to predict a large number of behaviors and the small effect size associated with these predictions. Thus, the General Causality Orientations Scale may prove quite useful in terms of the number of behaviors it can predict and somewhat less useful in terms of the variance accounted for by each prediction.

The present data showed only a weak relationship between self-monitoring and preference for image-oriented advertisements. However, the failure to produce a more convincing replication of Snyder and DeBono's (1985) results should not be that surprising. Recall that Snyder and DeBono based their predictions on the assumption that high self-monitors are particularly responsive to situational considerations. However, research on this aspect of the self-monitoring construct produced mixed results. Studies by Danheiser and Graziano (1982), McCann and Hancock (1983), and Tybout and Scott (1983) reported evidence consistent with Snyder's theory. For example Danheiser and Graziano (1982) showed that high self-monitors were more likely to cooperate with their partner in a Prisoner's Dilemma game when they expected to interact with him or her in the future; prospects of future interaction did not affect the behavior of low self-monitors. On the other hand, studies by Davis (1978) and Riggio, Friedman, and DiMatteo (1981) did not support Snyder's theory. For example, Davis (1978) failed to show that intimacy of self-disclosure is more influenced by social appropriateness cues for high than for low self-monitors. The pattern emerging from the above studies is certainly not inconsistent with the results of the present investigation—a weak relation between self-monitoring and preference for image-oriented advertisements, F(1, 113) = 2.33, r = .14 by Anova, and F(1, 116) =1.12, r = .10 by regression analysis. Note that this nonsignificant relation does not differ significantly from the significant relation between selfmonitoring and image preference reported by Snyder and DeBono,  $F(1, \frac{1}{2})$ 48) = 4.21, p < .05, r = .28 (1985, p. 590). The two sets of results can be compared either in terms of significance levels or in terms of effect size (see Rosenthal & Rosnow (1984) pp. 370-373). As shown in Table 2 the z's of all differences between the studies were far from significance. Clearly, while the present results do not provide strong support for Snyder's theory, they do not diverge much from the findings reported by Snyder and DeBono (1985).

Given the weak relation between self-monitoring and image preference, it is not surprising that holding self-monitoring constant did not have

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> None of the self-monitoring subscales (Extraversion, Other-Directedness, and Acting) added a significant amount of variance accounted for when entered to the regression equation that already included sex and control orientation, F's < 1. When entered to the regression equation that included only sex, Acting increased the multiple correlation from .04 to .12, F(1, 116) = 1.68, p = .20; the other two subscales added negligible amounts of variance accounted for, F's < 1. Interestingly, Acting was the factor most highly correlated with control orientation (see footnote 1). When control orientation was entered to the regression equation that already included sex and the three self-monitoring subscales. it increased the multiple correlation from .13 to .20, F(1, 113) = 2.55, p = .11.

TABLE 2
PRESENT RESULTS VS SNYDER AND DEBONO'S (1985) RESULTS

Present study	Snyder and DeBono	z of difference
$F(1, 113) = 2.33^a$	F(1, 48) = 4.21	.34
$F(1, 116) = 1.12^b$	F(1, 48) = 4.21	.67
$r = .14^a$	r = .28	.85
$r = .10^b$	r = .28	1.08

<sup>&</sup>quot; Results of Anova.

much of an effect on the relation between control orientation and image preference. In contrast, when control orientation was held constant, self-monitoring and image preference were not related. This effect as well as the correlation between control orientation and self-monitoring encourage a second look at other variables associated with self-monitoring. Like preference for image-based advertising, these variables might be "true" correlates of the control orientation.

Consider variables that are at the core of self-monitoring: cross-situational consistency of behavior and covariation between behavior and attitudes. As previously mentioned, high self-monitors rely on the situation to guide their behavior. Accordingly, their behavior displays considerable situation-to-situation specificity (Snyder & Monson, 1975) and minimal correspondence with attitudes and dispositions (Snyder & Swann, 1976; Snyder & Tanke, 1976). Note, however, that such variables are also at the core of extrinsically motivated behavior. Specifically, the pursuit of extrinsic rewards requires that one use the best means that are available. The best means vary from situation to situation and thus cannot be related to stable dispositions. Stated differently, high control-oriented persons should behave according to external constraints rather than according to their inner sources. By contrast, low control-oriented persons may display higher cross-situational consistency and greater correspondence between attitudes and behavior.

Consider also variables from a different realm—choice of same-sex friends and patterns of dating reltionships. Snyder, Gangestad, and Simpson (1983) found that high self-monitors chose activity partners according to their partner's skills in the activity domain rather than according to their liking for their partners. The rationale for this finding was that high self-monitors' goal of behaving appropriately would be facilitated by the contribution of skilled specialists. However, choosing a specialist for a partner is an extrinsically motivated behavior; choosing a well-liked person, on the other hand, is intrinsically motivated behavior. Specialists are chosen because they can help the person achieve another goal and one

specialist can be replaced with another specialist; a well-liked person is chosen because of his or her intrinsic value and therefore cannot be replaced with someone else. It might be predicted that high control individuals would choose partners on the basis of their partner's skills rather than on the basis of their global affinities for them.

A series of investigations by Snyder and Simpson (1984) showed that high self-monitors adopt an opportunistic or uncommitted approach to dating relationships. For example, in comparison to low self-monitors, high self-monitors were more willing to terminate current relationships in favor of alternative partners. Once again it appears that high self-monitors go after extrinsic rewards, a goal that they might share with the high control-oriented person. A commitment implies an attachment to the intrinsic value of the partner; a lack of commitment suggests that the partner is viewed more as a means to an end—to be changed if better means become available. To the extent that high control-oriented persons are likely to pursue extrinsic rewards they should be less involved and more opportunistic with regard to dating relationships.

Finally, consider the process of choosing social situations. Snyder and Gangestad (1982) found that high self-monitors were more willing to enter situations that were clearly defined than situations that were minimally defined in terms of their social character; on the other hand, high self-monitors were less affected in comparison to low self-monitors by the extent to which the situation fitted their own character. Here too the preference of the high self-monitor might be shared by the high control-oriented person. A clearly defined situation is more suited for the pursuit of extrinsic rewards because it provides guidelines for the appropriate behavior—what should be done and what should be avoided. The high control-oriented person is less concerned with the expression of attitudes and dispositions; hence, the fit between the situation and the person is not an important issue.

The above list of variables is meant to be suggestive, not exhaustive. Furthermore, although we predict that these variables would be related to control orientation, it is not clear whether the latter will add to, replace, or moderate the effects of self-monitoring. The present data raised the possibility that control orientation might replace self-monitoring in predicting responses to advertising techniques. Research in progress examines the relation between the two constructs in predicting extent of cross-situational consistency of behavior.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>b</sup> Results of regression analysis.

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