Repeated Evaluation Technique (RET) 

But, what is the difference between attractiveness evaluations of natural objects and consumer products? One key factor of consumer products is its design innovativeness due to its high predictor quality for future market success (Mairesse & Mohnen, 2002). However, as Carbon and Leder (2005) recently have shown, innovativeness has dramatic influences on attractiveness over time (see Excursus below), which seems unique for this object class.

Excursus: Innovativeness

Innovativeness is defined as "originality by virtue of introducing new ideas" (Carbon & Leder, 2005). Thus, innovative designs often break common visual habits. If so, it is highly expectable that innovative designs cannot be interpreted adequately without having elaborated them. The cause: rejection at first sight. However, everyday life experiences tell a different story: Here, people do not always favor familiar designs (Zajonc, 1968; Leder & Carbon, 2005), but seek novelty and prefer new and innovative designs instead of old and conservative ones in the long run (Berlyne, 1950). Thus, the usual method of measuring designs and products in a single-shot study seems to be inadequate. A more dynamic way of testing is needed. The repeated evaluation technique, with a test-retest design and an intermediate elaboration phase where everyday life experiences are simulated, seems to be valid for measuring such dynamics of innovation in particular and attractiveness in general.

Within the RET, material is not only evaluated once, but at least twice. The 1st test phase where attractiveness is measured is comparable with usual studies. Then several blocks of massive evaluation of the material follow. These evaluations, which cover a great variety of stimulus aspects, help to elaborate the material with the idea to simulate everyday experiences. After these repeated evaluations, a 2nd test phase of measuring attractiveness finalizes the study.

Conclusions

The repeated evaluation technique (RET) enables measuring of variables which develop dynamically over time. Thus, the RET seems a valuable tool for assisting psychological research which assumes the psychological reality as being quite dynamical. In sum, RET is easy to use for capturing dynamic effects in basic research as well as in applied cognitive studies.

References


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