

**Call for Papers
Special Issue
Masstige Marketing**

Editors

Anandakuttan B Unnithan,

Dean, Indian Institute of Management, Kozhikode, India

Email: anandunnithan@iimk.ac.in

Michel Laroche,

Former Editor in Chief, *Journal of Business Research* & Royal Bank of Canada

Distinguished Professor, Concordia University, Canada.

Email: laroche@jmsb.concordia.ca

Ajay Kumar,

Central University of Haryana, India.

Email: ajaykumar@cuh.ac.in

Justin Paul

Professor, University of Puerto Rico, San Juan, PR, USA &

Editor-in-Chief, *International Journal of Consumer Studies*.

Email: profjust@gmail.com

Submission Opens: 1st October 2021

Submission Closes: 1st March 2022

Building and maintaining a successful and prestigious brand is a big challenge. It requires ideas, planning, and excellence in execution on the ground. As a result, Masstige (Mass prestige) marketing has become prominent in recent years in the brand management literature (Baber et. al, 2020; Kumar, Paul & Unnithan, 2020; Joshi & Garg, 2021; Kumar, Paul, & Starcevic, 2021). Brand managers who succeed in creating mass prestige can command premium prices and have sustained business success (Gilal et., 2021).

The theory of Masstige Marketing is grounded in the following equations:

Premium Price = f (Masstige); and

Masstige = f (Product, Place, Promotion) (Paul, 2018).

Masstige phenomenon is characterized by relatively high prices, specially designed products, promoted in a special way (Kumar, Paul, & Unnithan, 2020). Today, masstige marketing has emerged as a formidable alternative to marketers to position their brands in a unique way. It is a tempting alternative to managing and sustaining brand equity (Paul, 2015). The importance and acceptance of masstige can be judged from the fact that many brands like Bath and Body Works, Starbucks coffee, Kendall-Jackson wines, Victoria Secret, Mercedes Benz, Tiffany (Silverstein & Fiske, 2003), Apple's iPhone (Kumar, Paul, & Starcevic, 2021), and Louis Vuitton (Paul, 2015) have adopted masstige strategy successfully. They keep prices premium, still succeed in the markets wherever they operate. Those brands have succeeded in creating their brands as prestigious in the market by way of mixing product, promotion and place strategies. Masstige can be adopted for a new or existing brand. The masstige market has the potential to give a breath of fresh air to the brands facing a challenge in recessionary times (Vacira, Imporzano, Coleman, Gupta, & Jackson, 2013).

Over the last two decades, the research interest has seen an upward trend towards masstige (See Kumar, Paul, & Unnithan, 2020). Literature has traveled from luxury to masstige through milestone works like Silverstein and Fiske (2003), bandwagon luxury consumption (Kastanakis & Balabains, 2012), populance paradigm (Granot, Russel, Brashear-Alejandro, 2013), and masstige model (Paul, 2015, 2018). However, the majority of the research studies undertaken in the area of 'masstige marketing' are in the context of luxury or premium brands. Other major work around masstige includes Kumar and Paul (2018), Kumar, Paul, and Unnithan (2020), Kumar, Paul, and Starcevic (2021). One of the major advancements in masstige theory is the development of the masstige scale by Paul (2015). The masstige mean score scale (Paul, 2015, 2019) is considered an alternative to the brand equity scale (Yoo & Donthu, 2001). Prior researchers have used the masstige scale to estimate the masstige value of car brands, smartphone brands, and laptop brands in a single country context (Paul, 2018; Kumar & Paul, 2018).

Despite this much attention, there are arguments around masstige that are yet to be documented empirically at a scale where it becomes theoretically accepted. One such unanswered question is what could be the potential ways through which masstige can be achieved. For example, we know one can make a masstige brand in the following ways: (a) a born masstige brand (Kumar, Paul, & Unnithan, 2020), (b) through downward extension (Boisvert & Ashill, 2018; Paul, 2015), (c) managing product, promotion and place to make an existing brand a masstige brand (following equation $\text{Masstige} = f(\text{product, promotion, place})$) (Kumar, Paul, & Unnithan, 2020), (d) keeping the price relatively high (following equation $\text{Premium Price} = f(\text{masstige})$) (Kumar, Paul, & Unnithan, 2020), etc. Thus, we have a preliminary understanding of the masstige concept and strategy. Nevertheless, there are opportunities to undertake studies exploring how to transform a less known brand into a prestigious brand based on the tenets of masstige marketing. Therefore, it can be said that etymologically, the scholarly literature still has many gaps to fill on masstige marketing. This leads us to some important unanswered questions like: (a) how an existing brand can be developed into a masstige brand creating value in the process, (b) How can one sustain masstige-ness associated with a brand, (c) how a new brand can be launched as a masstige brand. We seek to receive empirical evidence of the above and related questions through this call for papers.

Being a relatively new concept with novelty, there are lot of opportunities to carry out research in this field. Therefore we invite scholars to extend the current understanding of masstige marketing and serve the marketers with ways that can be adopted to make a brand into a masstige brand, sustain it and earn profit out of it. In this context, specifically, we look forward to receiving theoretical, conceptual, and empirical manuscripts. Manuscripts employing qualitative research methods are also welcome. The submission starts on 15 November 2021 and ends on 1st March 2022. We are listing below the probable themes of submissions for illustrative purposes. Other relevant works around masstige related to comparable themes are also welcome:

1. How can a simple brand be developed into a prestigious brand grounded in masstige theory/model?
2. How to sustain the masstige-ness of a brand?
3. Using masstige scale to estimate and compare competing brands' masstige value in different countries or application of masstige scale to compute masstige score of same

brands in different states/regions in a country to determine whether the respective brands are successful or have created mass prestige or not.

4. How can a new product be launched as a masstige brand?
5. Masstige as a survival strategy.
6. Masstige as a strategy in recessionary times.
7. Inteface of digital marketing and masstige marketing. For example, Using digital channels and social media to create mass prestige for a brand.
8. How can masstige contribute to the strategic advantage of a firm?
9. Can masstige be attained through promotions?
10. Can masstige be attained through product innovation?
11. Can masstige be attained using place strategies?
12. Born masstige brands vs. masstige brands evolved from existing brands.
13. Exploration of theories that can be applied in the context of masstige marketing.
14. Seeking novelty in methods to carry out masstige marketing research.
15. Behavioral models exploring the consumer preference/premium for masstige brands.
16. Extending and validating the masstige model/theory in new contexts, including services, tourism, experiences, etc.
17. Consumer behaviour studies exploring mass prestige, brand image, brand equity, consumer self, motivations, adoption, satisfaction, and other antecedent and consequent variables.

Submission Instructions

New submissions should be made via the Research Exchange submission portal: [submission.wiley.com/journal/ijcs](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/ijcs)

You are encouraged to follow the author guidelines at:

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/page/journal/14706431/homepage/forauthors.html>.

Submitting Authors should select ‘Yes’ when prompted *Is this submission for a special issue?*

If you have any queries regarding the submission system, please contact the Editorial Office at ConsumerStudies@wiley.com.

References:

- Baber, R., Upadhyay, Y., Kaurav, R. P. S., & Baber, P. (2020). Application of 'masstige' theory and approaches for the marketing of smartphone brands in India. *International Journal of Business and Emerging Markets*, 12(3), 296-312.
- Boisvert, J., & Ashill, N. J. (2018). The impact of branding strategies on horizontal and downward line extension of luxury brands. *International Marketing Review*, 35(6), 1033-1052. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IMR-10-2017-0208>
- Gilal, R.G., Gilal, N.G., Gilal, F.G, & Gong, Z (2021). The role of nostalgic brand positioning in capturing brand equity: Theoretical extension and analysis. *International Journal of Consumer studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijcs.12653>
- Granot, E., Russell, L. T. M., & Brashear-Alejandro, T. G. (2013). Populence: Exploring Luxury for the Masses. *The Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 21(1), 31–44. <https://doi.org/10.2753/MTP1069-6679210102>
- Joshi, R., & Garg, P. (2021). Role of brand experience in shaping brand love. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 45(2), 259-272.
- Kastanakis, M. N., & Balabanis, G. (2012). Between the mass and the class: Antecedents of the "bandwagon" luxury consumption behavior. *Journal of Business Research*, 65(10), 1399–1407. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2011.10.005>
- Kumar, A., & Paul, J. (2018). Mass prestige value and competition between American versus Asian laptop brands in an emerging market—Theory and evidence. *International Business Review*, 27(5), 969–981. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ibusrev.2018.02.007>
- Kumar, A., Paul, J., & Starčević, S. (2021). Do brands make consumers happy?-A masstige theory perspective. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 58, 102318.
- Kumar, A., Paul, J., Unnithan, A., (2020). 'Masstige' marketing: a review, synthesis and research agenda. *Journal of Business Research*, 113, 384-398
- Paul, J. (2015). Masstige marketing redefined and mapped – introducing a pyramid model and MMS measure. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 33(5), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1108/MIP-02-2014-0028>.
- Paul, J. (2019). Masstige model and measure for brand management. *European Management Journal*, 37(3), 299–312. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emj.2018.07.003>.
- Paul, J. (2018). Toward a 'masstige' theory and strategy for marketing. *European Journal of International Management*, 12(5–6), 722–745. <https://doi.org/10.1504/EJIM.2018.094466>.
- Silverstein, M., & Fiske, N. (2003). Luxury for the masses. *Harvard Business Review*, 81(4), 48–57.

Yoo, B., & Donthu, N. (2001). Developing and validating a multidimensional consumer-based brand equity scale. *Journal of business research*, 52(1), 1-14.

Vacirca, F., Imporzano, A., Coleman, J., Gupta, A., & Jackson, J. (2013). *From prestige to "masstige"—the new face of high performance in Home & Personal Care*. Accenture

Profile of Editors

Anandakuttan B Unnithan

Anandakuttan B Unnithan currently Professor of Marketing and Dean (Faculty) at Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Kozhikode, India. His research interests include branding, e-WOM, and sustainable consumption.

Michel Laroche

Dr. Laroche is Professor and the Royal Bank Distinguished Professor, Department of Marketing. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, the American Psychological Association, the Society for Marketing Advances, the Academy of Marketing Science. Dr. Laroche is the co-author of numerous major textbooks including *Customer Behaviour*, *Marketing in Canada*, *Advertising in Canada*, *Consumer Behaviour: A Canadian Perspective*, *Marketing Research in Canada*, and *Canadian Retailing*. He has also published more than 140 papers in leading academic journals such as the *Journal of Consumer Research*, the *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, the *Journal of Business Research*, the *Journal of Retailing*, the *Journal of International Business Studies*, the *Journal of International Marketing*, the *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, the *Journal of Advertising Research*, the *Journal of Service Research*, the *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, *Computers in Human Behavior*, and the *Journal of Economic Psychology*. He is a former Editor in Chief of *Journal of Business Research* and currently Editor in Chief of *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences*.

Ajay Kumar

Ajay Kumar, PhD is an Assistant Professor at the Central University of Haryana, India. His research interests include Branding, Brand Equity, Masstige Branding, Consumer Happiness, and Brand Personality. He has published on Masstige, Brand Equity, and Brand Personality in premier journals, including the *International Business Review*, *Journal of Business Research*, *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, etc. He is an editorial review board member of the *International Journal of Consumer Studies*. He has the experience to be the Guest Editor of the Special Issue of the *Journal of Business Research*. In addition, he serves as a reviewer to multiple leading journals listed in ABDC and UK-ABS.

Justin Paul

Dr. Justin Paul serves as Editor-in-chief of A-ranked International Journal of Consumer Studies and as an Associate Editor of the Journal of Business Research. A former faculty member with the University of Washington, he serves as Full Professor of PhD & MBA programs, University of Puerto Rico, USA. He holds three honorary titles as 'Distinguished Professor' with three reputed universities, including the Indian Institute of Management (IIM-K) and SIBM, Pune. He is known as an author/co-author of books such as Business Environment (4th ed), International Marketing, Services Marketing, Export-Import Management (2nd edition), Management of Banking & Financial Services by McGraw-Hill, Oxford University Press & Pearson, respectively. He serves as an Associate Editor with the Journal of Business Research, European Management Journal, and the Journal of Strategic Marketing. Dr. Paul introduced the Masstige model and measure for brand management, CPP Model for internationalization, the SCOPE framework for small firms, and the 7-P Framework for International Marketing. His articles have been downloaded over 800,000 times during the last six years. An author of over 120 research papers in SSCI journals, over 70 papers are in A or A-star journals. He has also served as an associate professor at Nagoya University, Japan, and Department Chair at IIM. In addition, he has taught full courses at Aarhus University in Denmark, Grenoble Ecole de Management, and the University of Versailles in France, and Warsaw, Poland. He has been a visiting professor at the University of Chicago, Vienna University in Austria, Fudan & UIBE in China, and UAB in Barcelona and Madrid. He has published three best-selling case studies with Ivey & Harvard and has visited over 60 countries as a visiting professor/speaker.
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Justin_Paul_\(scholar\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Justin_Paul_(scholar))