
A Systematic Literature Review of Altruism: Challenges, Outcomes and Future Research Directions

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Abstract:

This study aims to provide a complete reference and guidance for future research on the topic of altruism by exploring its challenges, outcomes, and practices.

The systematic literature review is applied to integrate the study in an organized, transparent and reproducible form.

It is known that the construct of altruism has been defined to be better in the context of both organizational behavior and organizational development. Research findings referring to altruism concepts and theories have been published by several authors which provides a reference for the development of altruism concepts and theories in the context of marketing communication.

For now, the study shows that altruism emerges as a management paradigm that is significant and has various outcomes and implications for individual and organizational contexts.

Keywords: Altruism, marketing communication, challenges, outcomes.

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1. Introduction

The construction of altruism messages in the context of marketing communication is still not widely studied by researchers and academics, particularly in the area of changing consumer attitudes and behavior as a result of an information or message receiving process. Research findings referring to altruism concepts and theories have been published by Levine (1998), Bagozzi and Natarajan (2000), West *et al.* (2007) which provide a reference in the context of marketing communication. This is a place of study for researchers and academics who pay great attention to the field of attitudinal and behavioral change, which generally refers to the ELM that was developed by Petty and Cacioppo (1986) (Figure 1).

Petty and Cacioppo (1986) describe the motivational aspects as follows: motivational variables become an important part that gives the impetus to elaborate a message (advertising, indoor and outdoor, social media, and other communication mediums). One important variable is the personal relevance to a message. A social psychology analyst gives terms to the construct as ego involvement, personal involvement, and vested interests. Personal relevance makes a person more motivated in processing a message or relevant issues. When the personal consequences of an advocacy increase, it becomes increasingly important for someone to form a strong opinion because the consequences of making a mistake become even greater.

2. Literature Review

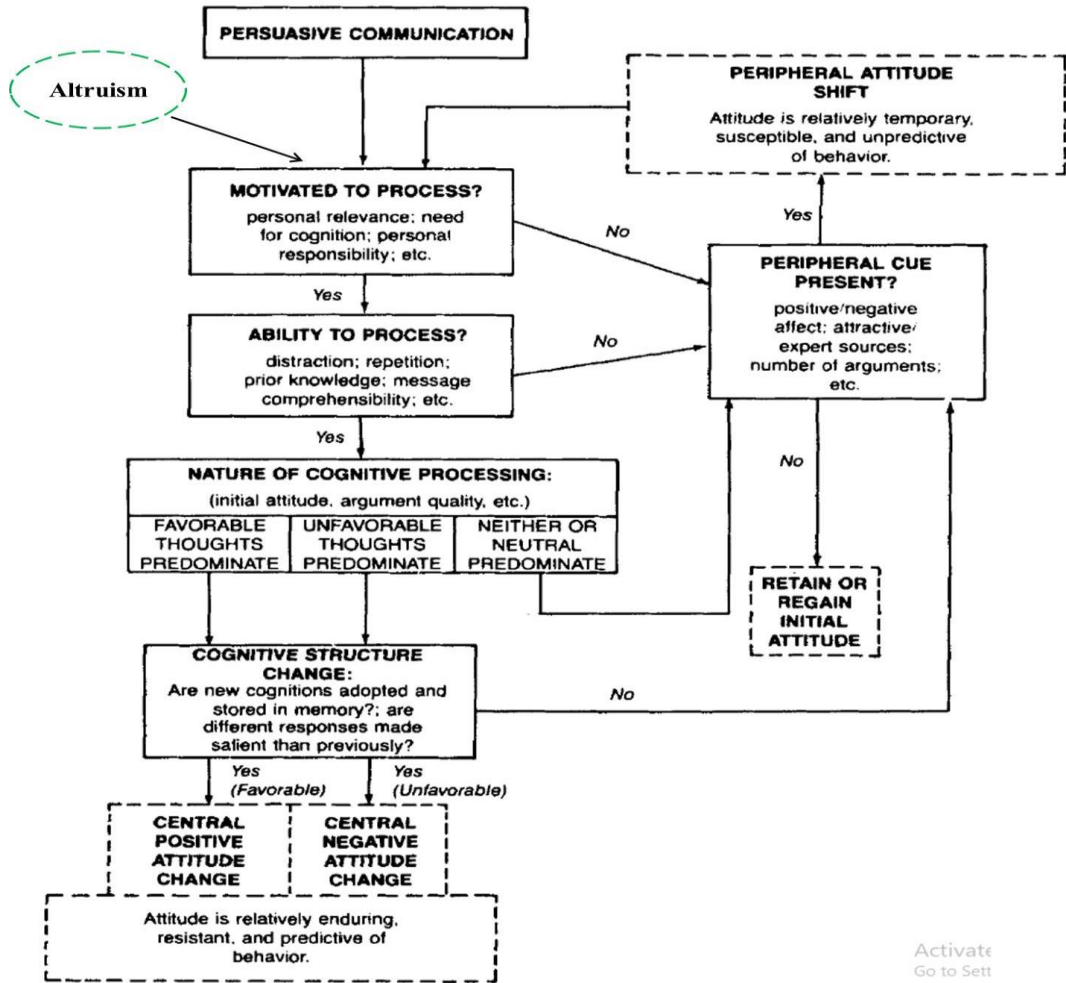
2.1 Defenition of Altruism

Kelly and Walsh (2015) define altruism as a principle that always considers the welfare and happiness of others. Another word for altruism is self-lessness, which is defined as a degree to which a person does not put himself first, but he/she is more willing to give time or an effort to help others. Altruism is also interpreted as the urge to help another (West *et al.*, 2007).

2.2 Altruism in Individual and Social Context

Rethinking altruism theory that is group or community (Sober and Wilson, 1999; Wilson and Kniffin, 2003), which proposes an argument that pure altruism can be implemented through giving an advantage at the group level. The existing arguments generally provide a framework for discussion on the problem of altruism with various models that explain how selfishness and altruism work in the process of human thinking (West *et al.*, 2007).

Figure 1. Central and Peripheral Routes to Persuasion



2.3 Altruism in Ethics

Shaw and Barry (2015) explained that philosophers interpret ethics as a study of morality, where morality is often associated with actions or decisions about something so that actions or decisions can be considered good or bad, right or wrong. Reference to Islamic moral standards proposed by Naqvi (2016), is expected to represent the class "Islam, Judaism and Christianity", which proposes a moral system that is standardized on four complementary and inseparable elements, namely unity (tawhid), equilibrium (al-'adl wa al-ihsan), free will (ikhtiyar), and responsibility (fard) (Naqvi, 2016; Hapsoro and Suryanto, 2017). Two different poles in the study of morality (West and Islam), where the West proposes moral standards based on an agreement between humans or between nations, while Islam

proposes a morality standard derived from religious teachings (God). Altruism is assumed to be a truth that is still questionable, as well as questions about the existence of God, as the question of why your mother loves you, and questions about various things that are part of giving and doing good. This approach may be used to build an evolutionary theory of ethics, although this approach will tend to invite many questions rather than provide answers. What is more, when the arguments proposed tend to be only surface and simplistic, far from the deep thought needed to lead to a substantial conclusion (Grima *et al.*, 2017).

Altruism can act as a catalyst for ethical change in a society (Wikipedia). Altruism which is interpreted as a principle or norm of unselfishness, is willing to sacrifice for the happiness of others, can be considered as a contract message and at the same time be a moral standard or moral system that is natural and can preserve human life and life in the context of biological systems that are able to survive sustainably.

2.4 Altruism as Applied Science of Economic and Marketing

Marketers rarely realize that the human image is rooted in self-interest, opportunism, and the drive to maximize personal income. The question that may arise regarding egoism or altruism-based marketing theory is that exchanges in marketing are not always characterized as "egoism" or "altruism". For example, a person or an institution does not always act according to the calculation or optimization of rational self-interest, at one time they can act against their own interests and even benefit others. Indeed, many theories that have been studied not only fail to account for such events, even ignore them. Whatever approach that uses assumptions that are contrary to real behavior from humans or institutions is a flawed marketing theory in the altruism view (Hunt, 1991).

Altruism studies in the field of economics were carried out by Levine (1998), who explained that in experiments on a "market game", where the selfish player theory goes well. Likewise, the altruism theory can work with predictions that are no different from the selfish player theory (Levine, 1998).

Altruism studies can be said to be part of an effort to avoid the potential risk of "the new marketing myopia", as described by Hunt (1991) by asking three questions. First, why marketing can only contribute very limited to the strategic arena over the past ten years; Second, why is marketing focused on aspects that do not build relationships; Third, why the journals become almost very exclusive only presents studies that use quantitative methods. Altruism studies strive to contribute in providing answers to the last two questions, namely by conducting literature studies and research with qualitative methods and become a place of study for researchers and academics who pay considerable attention to the field of marketing studies, especially in the field of marketing communication.

2.5 Marketing Communication and ELM

One function of marketing communication is its ability to influence consumers' decision making. Another important role in the context of marketing communication is to influence individuals who have influencers, so they can give positive direction to someone's decision-maker (Broderick and Pickton, 2005). An influencer is someone whose advice and views can influence decision making. Decision-maker or decider is someone who makes decisions on each component of a purchase decision: buy or not, what to buy, how to buy, or where to buy it (Ang *et al.*, 1999).

Marketing communication has attracted the attention of many researchers and marketing experts, especially in the study of information or message processes. The study that has been widely discussed among researchers and marketing experts for more than 25 years is the study of the constructs of cognitive change in psychology disciplines, especially those that discuss memory, thought processes, cognitive dissonance, attributes, and cognitive responses (Bagozzi and Natarajan, 2000). One of the fields of the study is the theory of attitude formation and change, namely ELM, which is constructed in a model in which the model is explained in detail how a process of persuasion occurs (Figure 1). ELM is a theory that explains changes in attitude. ELM is believed to provide a framework that is good enough to organize, categorize, and understand the basic processes of persuasive communication (Petty and Cacioppo, 1986). ELM illustrates that in the process of persuasion there are two pathways for persuasion, namely the central path and the periphery of the periphery.

An important component that determines whether persuasive communication through the Central or Peripheral lines in ELM is "Motivation, Ability and Opportunity" (De Pelsmacker *et al.*, 2007). Each motivation and ability give a role to change or form the attitude as explained in ELM. Consumer studies and research such as ELM which emphasizes the Information-Processing Theory (IPT) and Behavior Decision Theory (BDT) cannot be considered unimportant. We get a lot of understanding regarding how consumers think and process information or messages, how preferences and attitudes are formed, how choices and decisions are made, and how they react to persuasive communication in IPT and BDT research (Bagozzi and Natarajan, 2000). However, it is too risky to accept the assumptions that have been used, by not looking at the limitations, and ruling out alternative or complementary views. One thing that is very fundamental but not much stated in the IPT and BDT studies is motivation. Indeed, there seems to be no more debate about how someone does the process of thinking and making choices, but a question arises, what starts a person doing that. What drives and directs a choice. It is hoped that we will agree to answer the last two questions by entering into a fundamental study of motivation before we discuss further the construct of motivation in ELM.

2.6 Motivation Concept in ELM

Motivation is the reason someone behaves or acts. A person has biological needs that motivate to perform a particular action (Schultz and Schultz, 2015). Pleasure-arousal theory (Reisenzein, 1994) states that a person is encouraged to maintain a certain level of an arousal in order to feel comfortable or calm. Arousal refers to the existence of activities emotionally, intellectually, and physically. Arousal explains why someone needs to climb a mountain, watch a sad movie, go to a boxing match.

In the context of marketing communication, arousal explains why someone must give "selective attention" to an information or message. Attention is understood as a focus on and thinking about an information or a message that is seen or heard. Selectivity is something that must occur because the information processing capacity is limited, and the effectiveness of capacity use requires a consumer to allocate mental energy to a message that is relevant and an interest in a goal (Bettman *et al.*, 1998).

2.7 Motivation in Path Diagram of ELM

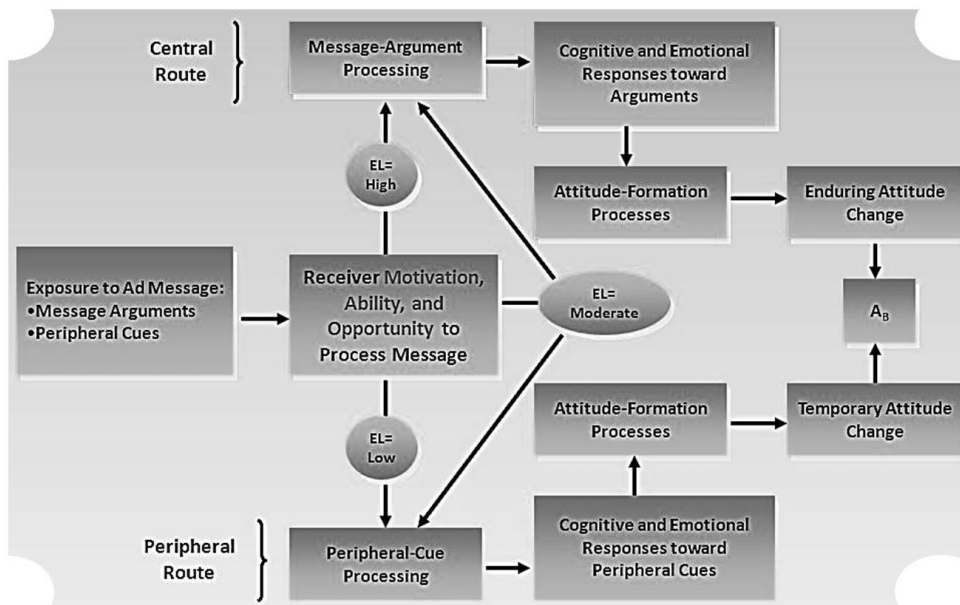
ELM explains motivation as the starting point of persuasion, where when a persuasive communication is present or "come in contact" with someone, then motivation will encourage someone to elaborate or give selective attention to an information or message. The next stage an information or message will be processed according to the ability or ability to be able to understand or not be able to understand a message. The next process is in the area of "cognitive processing", which produces thoughts to agree and disagree with an information or message according to understanding. Then the last process is a change in attitude toward someone, whether his attitude is positive or negative.

The information process above is referred to as the "central route" or the central path, while the alternative path is called the "peripheral route" or peripheral path. The process of information or messages according to peripheral lines occurs when someone is not motivated to elaborate or give attention to a message. MacInnis and Jaworski (1989) have made a modification to illustrate that cognitive and affective processing can occur both in the central and peripheral pathways (Figure 2).

2.8 Emotion in ELM

The study of motivation and emotion by Bickhard (2003) attempts to explain how the dynamics of interaction on motivation and emotion, although the dynamics are not something that is "autonomous subsystems", nevertheless both are highly integrated. Motivation is an important aspect of an interaction system - a system in which the representation of the manifestation of motivation is a similar aspect.

Figure 2. An Integrated Model of Persuasion



Emotion is a special form of the part that is reflected in an interaction process and makes the emergence of motivational aspects. Every "complex organism" or living thing like a mammal, avian, reptile and so is human; must be able to find a way to solve problems in choosing an action - "what to do next". Living creatures could observe potential interactions, to avoid mistakes. The results of the previous interaction become the basis for giving an indication of, what potential interactions will be carried out or occur. In other words, an indication of a potential interaction will depend on the results of previous interactions.

On the other hand, it is assumed that in a condition of uncertainty in an interaction that has never been experienced, but it is well known, that under conditions of such uncertainty there are procedures to reduce or eliminate this kind of uncertainty. If an interaction tends to be stabilized, and if the uncertainty resolution is a successful interaction, then in an uncertainty situation where there is the anticipation of the resolution it should be stabilized with the learning process. Uncertainty, where there is an anticipation of a very strong resolution, is a paradigm of a positive emotion. Learning to find experience by using a process of a selection process, and this is a form of motivation. Such conditions are named as competency motivation, mastery motivation, or esthetic motivation. This raises a form of motivation, born from the inherent dynamics between interaction, learning, and emotion (Bickhard, 2003).

From the motivation and emotion studies, a postulate can be drawn that: "Positive emotions can encourage motivation". Positive emotions are very likely to result

from the altruism paradigm, where the core of altruism study is the urge to help another. According to the ELM study, the motivational construct is very important for persuasion to occur, through a process of information or message. Thus, it can be assumed that the altruism paradigm can be used to influence changes in attitudes and behavior.

3. Conclusion

As the study of motivation and emotion has explained how the inherent dynamics between interaction, learning or reasoning, and emotion can give birth to a form of motivation. An event in the context of communication can be said to be a condition when a person or consumer confronts or encounters an information or message. Arousal explains why someone must give "selective attention" to an information or message. Reasoning describes a learning process towards the potential for interaction and anticipation of the potential of the interaction. The learning process is expected to bring positive emotions, which in turn give birth to motivation.

A message in the context of marketing communication is "the message is a symbolic expression of a sender's thought". Through a process called "encoding", the sender of the message expresses his mind in the form of a symbol. Message senders can choose specific signs from various things that are almost unlimited from a word, sentence structure, symbol, and non-verbal elements (design, color, graphics, lighting) and many more signs that might be used for communication. Altruism elements can be placed in the encoding process, to produce an "altruism-message" that will be used to communicate and influence consumer attitudes and behavior.

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