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THE ROLES OF AD POSITION, AD TYPE, VALUE CO-CREATION, AND THE
MODERATING EFFECTS OF ENGAGEMENT & PARASOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS ON
PODCAST AD EFFECTIVENESS

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Abstract

Following calls in the literature for more academic research on podcast advertising, the present research is among the first to examine the relationship of advertising form (host-read ad vs. conventional/non-host read ad) and serial ad placement (beginning/pre-roll vs. middle/mid-roll) on ad-related variables and behavioral intentions such as Purchase Intention, Attitude Toward the Ad, Attitude Toward the Brand, and Information Seeking Intention. The study also examines the potential moderating effects of Parasocial Relationships and Engagement, as well as the mediation of Persuasion Knowledge, within these relationships, and investigates precursors to Parasocial Relationship and Persuasion Knowledge perceptions. Experimental data finds support for main effects of mid-roll serial ad placement outperforming pre-roll position on Purchase Intention, Attitude Toward the Ad, and Information Seeking, and an interaction effect such that among those in the pre-roll condition, greater levels of Attitude Toward the Brand were indicated for those in the host-read condition vs. the conventional ad condition. Support was also found for Evaluative Persuasion Knowledge as a mediator between the serial ad placement condition as IV and Purchase Intention, Attitude Toward the Brand, Attitude Toward the Ad, and Info Seeking; Engagement's moderation of the relationship between the IVs and PI, A_{brand} , InfoSeek, and EvalPK; and Parasocial Relationship's moderation of the relationship between the IVs and InfoSeek as well as EvalPK. Further, Parasocial Interaction Behaviors were found to positively predict Parasocial Relationship perceptions, and Dispositional Persuasion Knowledge measures were found to positively predict situational persuasion knowledge. Additionally, we find that Value Co-Creation successfully predicts focal DVs to a greater extent than the previously examined moderator concepts, and show support for a serial mediation model beginning with Engagement then flowing through Parasocial Relationship perceptions on to

Value Co-Creation, which then flow to the focal dependent variables. Zooming out, we thus also introduce a novel conceptual factor or phenomenon, Parasocial Engagement, derived from both the experimental data as a well as a conceptual reconciliation of the concepts of Consumer Engagement, motivation-based Engagement, and Parasocial Relationships, utilizing Service-Dominant Logic as a unifying conceptual framework and pointing to “the market” as the field in which social exchanges of many, and possibly all, types occur.

The Roles of Ad Position, Ad Type, Value Co-Creation, and the Moderating Effects of Engagement & Parasocial Relationships on Podcast Ad Effectiveness

Extant research in explaining podcast adoption has generally focused on utilitarian Uses and Gratifications-based approaches (e.g. Perks & Turner, 2019). Additionally, research in podcast ad effectiveness has found evidence that parasocial relationships/interactions (PSR/PSI) with hosts have some positive effects on ad perceptions/outcomes (Brinson & Lemon, 2022). This suggests an element of perceived sociality/mediated interactivity for which existing Uses and Gratifications-based explanations with regard to podcast use may not be accounting fully.

Moreover, in an age where attention spans are declining, some of the most popular podcasts deal not with simple amusement or “low” content, but rather relatively complex scientific, political and social subjects and phenomena that would seem to require more effort and nuance to understand. (e.g., the popularity of the podcasts of public intellectual figures around the formerly so-called “Intellectual Dark Web” [Weiss, 2018]). Many popular shows are also of the “long form” variety, and episodes can easily run longer than two-three hours. What explains the popularity of this medium, especially given the fact that it would seem to be “outdated” in multiple senses? Additionally, podcast users are known to be good advertising targets (e.g. Vilceanu et al., 2021; Moe, 2022; Nielsen, 2022); often this is postulated to be because podcast listeners are “engaged” (e.g. Nielsen, 2022; e.g. Perks et al., 2019, 2022).

Do engagement and parasocial relationship perceptions moderate persuasion knowledge and purchase intention, information seeking intentions, attitude toward the ad, and attitude toward the brand being advertised on a podcast? Building on theoretical frameworks of engagement, parasocial relationships, persuasion knowledge, and extant literature on motivations/factors involved in podcast use, this research seeks to understand the nature of the

interactions of these phenomena so as to render better knowledge of how advertisers can maximize effects of their sponsorships and paid placements within podcasts, following calls for more academic research into podcast advertising (Taylor, 2024). Additionally, a major/fundamental element of the emerging Service-Dominant Logic paradigm in Marketing, Value Co-Creation, will be explored to attempt to ascertain how virtual service exchanges may enhance, are related to, or otherwise affect the moderators and IVs. S-DL in general and value co-creation in particular has been associated with various concepts of engagement in the Marketing literature (e.g. Brodie et al., 2019; Jaakola & Alexander, 2014) and thus ascertaining more about the nature of this inherently social element is necessary to more fully understand the phenomenon of advertising success (or lack thereof) on the media vehicle.

Literature Review

Podcasts

Podcasting and podcasts as a media vehicle can be traced back to 2000, when developers Dave Winer and Adam Curry adapted a then-new web syndication technology, RSS (“Really Simple Syndication”), to be able to direct users to audio files as well as text-based web pages; further development by Winer in 2003 allowed a subscription feature to so-called “audiobloggers” to be utilized (Quirk, 2015). The term “podcasting” was introduced into the social zeitgeist by Ben Hammersley, a journalist working for *The Guardian* (Quirk, 2015). This amalgamation of the terms “iPod” and “broadcast” (McClung & Johnson, 2010) was constructed as a result of attention given to the format with the release of Apple’s iPod and iTunes 4.9 in 2005, which contained a “podcatching” subscription feature (Bottomley, 2015). Podcasts as a medium have enjoyed relatively steady growth since then (Bottomley, 2015), though the true-crime series “Serial” inaugurated an era/phenomenon/”tipping point” of sorts that perhaps

pushed podcasts more firmly into the public consciousness (Berry, 2015). Nielsen recently reported that the overall podcast user base increased by 40% vs. the three years prior to 2022, with 51% reporting they began using podcasts over the past two years — alongside a concomitant increase in what was termed “engagement” (Nielsen, 2022).

By 2015, in contrast to earlier studies, the use of podcasts by users was primarily accomplished via mobile devices rather than computers, a modality that gives audio podcasts an advantage over visual media due to its inherent flexibility in terms of situational appropriateness or ability to consume, e.g., while driving, doing chores or the like (Quirk, 2015). Along with mobile consumption, another particular distinctive of the podcast format is their implicit on-demand quality; like other forms of so-called internet-based “new media,” users often utilize subscription functions of podcast-catching applications and thus select content they are interested in, underlying an element of consumer focal control (Haygood, 2007) also inherent to the format. This has in turn led to a number of studies utilizing a Uses and Gratifications approach to podcast use (e.g. Perks et al., 2019). The Uses and Gratifications paradigm is essentially a utilitarian paradigm that postulates three main tenets to explain media behavior: people are a) goal directed in their behavior, b) active media users, and c) aware of their own needs and thus select media to gratify those needs (Rubin & McHugh, 1987). Thus, studies have found motivations and predictors of podcast use including multitasking (Perks & Turner, 2019; Perks et al., 2019; Vilceanu et al., 2021), ability to study where and when medical students want (Matava et al., 2013), learning new things in general (Craig et al., 2023; Vilceanu et al., 2021), entertainment (Vilceanu et al., 2021; Craig et al., 2023; McClung & Johnson, 2010), escapism (Craig et al., 2023), parasocial relationships (Schlütz and Hedder, 2022; Perks & Turner, 2019; Vilceanu et al., 2021), and connections with other audience members along with accompanying

social opportunities and support (Pavelko & Myrick, 2020; McClung & Johnson, 2010; Perks & Turner, 2019). Notably, Perks and Turner (2019) found support for listeners' building parasocial relationships with hosts as well as with other listeners, a finding supported by Vilceanu et al. (2021).

Recently, podcasts have begun to get more attention as a potential advertising vehicle due to media coverage and reports of large investments in platforms, content, and producers (e.g. Steele, 2020a; Steele, 2020b). Ad spending in the medium grew slowly at first (e.g. McGowan, 2010), but presently podcast advertising revenue sported more than twice the level of growth vs. internet ad spending in general as of 2021, with more than \$1 billion spent (IAB, 2022). Recent data indicated the average number of podcast ads on a per-episode basis was 3.2 (Statista, 2019); most users do not skip ads (Moe, 2022; Vilceanu et al, 2021; Snell 2019); industry reports indicate host-read ads are skipped less than conventional ads and that “mid-roll” ads are skipped less than those at the beginning of the podcast (e.g. Perlberg, 2016) while those at the end, aka “post-roll” ads, are most often skipped (Lobel, 2024).

In addition to greater/willing exposure to ads, the growth of podcasts is commensurate with what is often termed “engagement” —that is, users are engaged with the content they consume at a greater level than other competing formats (e.g. Nielsen, 2022). Recent research has found factors related to usage and engagement including entertainment (Vilceanu et al., 2021; Craig et al., 2023; McClung & Johnson, 2010), multitasking (Perks & Turner, 2019; Perks et al., 2019; Vilceanu et al., 2021), escapism (Craig et al., 2023), and learning new things (Craig et al., 2023; Vilceanu et al., 2021). Crucially, parasocial relationships with hosts (Schlütz and Hedder, 2022; Perks & Turner, 2019; Vilceanu et al., 2021) and social connections with other

listeners support from other audience members (Pavelko & Myrick, 2020; McClung & Johnson, 2010; Perks & Turner, 2019) emerged among the uses and gratifications research in this area.

Parasocial Relationships in Podcasts and Host-Read Ads

The theory of “parasocial interaction” (PSI) and the associated development of the “parasocial relationship” (PSR) was introduced by Horton and Wohl (1956) where they described audience members’ “illusion of face-to-face relationship with the performer” (p. 215) when viewed via “the new mass media – radio, television, and the movies” (p. 215). Whereas a perceptual “simulacrum of conversational give and take” (p. 215) between audience members and media figures is a para-social interaction, a para-social relationship develops from the PSI over multiple encounters (Giles, 2002). Rubin et al. (1985) conceptualized PSI as “interpersonal involvement of the media user with what he or she consumes. That involvement may take many forms including seeking guidance from a media persona, seeing media personalities as friends, imagining being part of a favorite program’s social world, and desiring to meet media performers” (pp. 156-157) (somewhat blurring the lines between PSI and PSR in the process [see Dibble et al., 2016]). In a parasocial relationship, this involvement continues after the media event (Horton & Wohl, 1956; Giles, 2002) and is partly based on beliefs on the part of the audience member that the personality is similar in some forms/fashions to other people in the social circle of the viewer (Rubin et al., 1985). Accordingly, Horton and Wohl postulated that for audience members, even though the relationship is “one sided” and lacks reciprocity, “the conditions of response to the performer are analogous to those in a primary [reference] group” (1956, p. 215). They termed “personae” the types of performers who exist primarily “as a function of the media themselves” (1956, p. 216), that is, they are not necessarily celebrities in the conventional sense who are appearing in the media as celebrities per se but rather are

“quizmasters, announcers, ‘interviewers’ in a new ‘show-business’ world” (1956, p. 216). Thus, the media vehicle itself and its surrounding institutions may create personae. In addition to structural features of the media enhancing PSI, such as camera zooms and close-ups that may contribute to an increased sense of intimacy (Rubin et al., 1985) and the scheduled, “dependable” and predictable regularity of programs consisting of personae, Horton and Wohl also posited that the PSR would also be amplified by intentional activities by the personae to foster illusions of “intimacy” between the audience member and persona including “gestures, conversational style, and milieu of an informal face to face gathering” (1956, p. 217) in addition to predictability when it comes to personality and actions, and even a level of personal identification with the persona in some cases, especially as viewers become more regular. Additionally, when viewers see/hear the persona interacting with guests or even audience members, their sense of social interaction is enhanced which then contributes positively to the identification with the persona, and thus PSR is also enhanced (Horton & Wohl, 1956). These types of activities are readily applicable to the podcast media vehicle (e.g. Markman & Sawyer, 2014); such “multi-platform” interaction experiences between audiences and hosts/producers are becoming more common in the mediated social network/network-mediated (Gade, 2012) space (e.g. Kyewski et al., 2018; Enli, 2012; Stollfuß, 2019; Sinton, 2018). Further, Konijn et al. (2008) argue that the perceived “larger” mediated distance between users and “new media” characters actually makes parasocial interaction theory applicable even given the lack of the non-reciprocity characteristic of the original PSI formulation. Research into media formats other than TV follows calls for additional context-based research in PSI/PSR (Giles, 2002).

Horton and Wohl described the audience as being matched to the persona in terms of “roles” and “patterns” of behavior and posited that no relationship would develop should there be

a mismatch (1956). Other scholars have found factors such as physical attractiveness of characters, the perceptual realism of the programs, attention and viewer involvement levels (Rubin & Perse, 1987) are positively related to the development of PSI and PSR. While psychological factors such as loneliness and introversion have been postulated as antecedents to the development of PSI, strong evidence to these effects have not been found (Rubin et al., 1985) and some have posited that development of PSI is a “normal” occurrence of exposure to media figures and not necessarily indicative of some exceptional situation or neurosis (Perse & Rubin, 1989). Horton and Wohl also postulated that audience members would perhaps experience and develop PSI/PSR as a result of “an exploration and development of new role possibilities, as in the experimental phases of actual, or aspired to, social mobility” (1956, p. 222), enacting new roles he or she may not be able to explore interpersonally; due to a feeling of “social solidarity or self-confidence” (p. 223); or even simply enjoying a regular, dependable occurrence with someone who feels like an intimate friend, in a “social milieu in which the everyday assumptions and understandings of primary group interaction and sociability are demonstrated and reaffirmed” (1956, p. 223) thereby emphasizing the very social (as well as institutional) nature of the PSI. Indeed, Perse and Rubin found that length of “acquaintance” or exposure to the media personality was associated with higher parasocial complexity, which then had an indirect effect on the strength of PSI through a parasocial attributional confidence mediator; as confidence in prediction of attitudes, feelings, behaviors of characters increases, so does likelihood of PSI (1989). Rubin and McHugh posited that uncertainty reduction in terms of prediction of actions was associated with PSI and that “communication, liking, and intimacy, therefore, are the major components of the uncertainty reduction process” (1987, p. 281). Research has generally found that operationalizations of PSI were measuring a unitary concept (Giles, 2002) that resembles

friendship (Perse & Rubin, 1989), though Gleich (1997) found three factors in a German sample: companionship/need for social interaction, person-program interaction (which is more content-related), and empathetic interaction. More recently, in order to clarify and clear up conceptual and operational definitional “creep” and overlap in terms of PSI vs. PSR, Dibble et al. (2016) tested Hartmann and Goldhoorn’s (2011) “Experience of Parasocial Interaction scale” (E-PSI) finding that it more closely captured the concept of within-viewing experience; they found that the existing PSI scales were probably capturing something more along the lines of what is commonly referred to as PSR as well as both short- and long-term “liking.”

In addition to behaviors like direct address of the audience members postulated to be related to the development of PSR and associated outcomes (Giles, 2002), Schlütz and Hedder found that Parasocial Interaction Behaviors, e.g. “showing an interest in the listeners and sharing details about his or her own life” (2022, p. 465) among a German sample of podcast listeners were related to perceptions of PSR with the host. Thus, parasocial relationships with podcast hosts and other listeners has emerged as a factor associated with behaviors and attitudes (Schlütz and Hedder, 2022) and usage (Perks & Turner, 2019; Vilceanu et al., 2021; Pavelko & Myrick, 2020; McClung & Johnson, 2010). These parasocial relationships have been found to have positive associations to engagement, trust, and brand recall, with the effects increased for host-read ads vs. pre-recorded, non-diegetical “radio style” ads (Brinson & Lemon, 2022).

Additionally, recent research by Moe (2022) and Moe (2021) provides support for the concept of affinity with hosts positively correlating with advertisements, with host-read ads skipped less.

Additionally, survey-based research reports consumer preferences for host-read advertisements (Wang & Chan-Olmsted, 2023; Moe, 2022; Schlütz & Hedder, 2021). Relatedly, current research on podcast advertising has found positive effects of host affinity (Moe, 2021; Moe,

2022) and parasocial relationships on ad perceptions (Brinson & Lemon, 2022), and information seeking intentions through decreasing evaluative persuasion knowledge (Brinson et al., 2023). PSR has been related to more positive outcomes on ad-related measures among host-read ads for variables like brand information-seeking intentions (Brinson et al., 2023) and brand recall (Brinson & Lemon, 2022). This mirrors other recent research in parasocial relationships and new media, for example, Balaban et al. (2022) found a moderating effect of product involvement in the parasocial relationship perceptions of followers of social media influencers; this then had downstream effects on e-Word-Of-Mouth activity and credibility perceptions. While Brinson et al. (2023) found support for PSR positively moderating info-seeking intentions for a utilitarian product (a home safety system) in a podcast ad, hedonic products and conventional ad-related DVs have yet to be experimentally investigated.

Serial Ad Placement in Podcasts

The serial placement of ads in podcasts is a nascent area of study in this area, though ad placement has been somewhat studied to a greater degree in other contexts, especially TV/streaming advertising. For example, prior research has found support for middle placed advertising performing better due to higher levels of involvement, that is, “depth of processing” (Watt et al., 1998, p. 497) as measured by secondary task reaction time, which then had downstream effects on ad attention and attitude toward the ad (Watt et al., 1998). However, Peters and Bijmolt (1997) found that, for unaided brand recall, ads at the beginning may be more effective. Li and Lo (2015) investigated YouTube advertising and found greater attention/recognition for mid-roll ads when the subject of the ad and program were congruent, again supporting the “involvement” rather than the “irritation/transportation” theory, so to speak; ads at the end performed better on recognition measures when the ad subject was unrelated to the

program. Wang et al. studied serial ad position in native advertising through a natural experiment using data from a feed of a web content/ad stream provider, finding click-through rate (clicks/impressions) did not differ per native ad position, but conversion/click rates significantly decreased as the ad moved down the stream, with age tending to speed up loss of CTR and mitigate loss of CVR as ad position decreased; there were effects found showing gender to be related to the reverse of these among women vs. men (2019). For podcast advertising specifically, Ritter and Cho's 2x2 (ad at the beginning vs. ad in the middle; "sponsorship" vs. "conventional ad") experimental study utilizing a comedy podcast carrier vehicle not only found support for poorer perceptions of conventional advertising vs. sponsorships in terms of perceived intrusiveness as a main effect, but also for greater intrusiveness and irritation for the middle ad placement vs. a beginning ad placement (2009). However, no statistically significant main effects were found on ad placement with regard to attitude toward the ad and ad avoidance intentions, and no statistically significant main effects were found on ad type with regard to irritation, attitude toward the ad, nor ad avoidance; there was a significant interaction between the two IVs for perceived intrusiveness such that beginning ads showed no significant difference for conventional vs. sponsorship, but once the ads moved to the middle, the intrusiveness was greater for the conventional ad. In this study, the "sponsorship" condition was rendered as a mention of the brand sponsoring the show (Puma sportswear company) sans background music and any sort of call-to-action, whereas the conventional ad contained background music and a direct call-to-action on behalf of the advertiser; the middle placement ad condition (where it fell on a timestamp basis) was not specified and the total stimulus was about 3 minutes (Ritter & Cho, 2009). Another relevant paper is Brooks et al.'s (2022) recent study on podcast advertising preferences among 387 college students; similar to Ritter and Cho's (2009) results, they found

that a majority of respondents (51.3%) professed a preference for ads at the beginning of the podcast, followed by 32.5% at the end, and 16% indicating they preferred ads in the middle. They also found that respondents thought sponsorships and products/services discussed by the host were moderately effective (and effectively even in terms of means), but pre-recorded ads were reported as the clearly least effective type (Brooks et al., 2022). In short, when it comes to ad placement, results of prior studies are fairly inconclusive, with various support for either the recency effect (last in a series), primacy effect (first), and “there is continuous debate on the significance and magnitude of ad serial position effect” (Wang et al., 2019, p. 84).

Persuasion Knowledge Model and Manipulative Intent

Friestad and Wright’s Persuasion Knowledge Model (PKM) (1994) has been used to connect consumer awareness of persuasion attempts and negative attitudes that result in terms of persuasion acceptance. In brief, according to the PKM, persuasion knowledge, agent knowledge, and topic knowledge combine and affect persuasion and its effects among persuasion targets (Friestad & Wright, 1994). Essentially, when people recognize persuasion attempts, that tends to have a negative impact on their perceptions of the persuader (e.g. Ham et al., 2022), although there are some exceptions in the literature (Eisend & Yarrahi, 2022; Isaac & Grayson, 2017). A target’s persuasion knowledge combines with what they know about the persuader (agent knowledge) and the subject/product/services at issue (topic knowledge) to render “coping behaviors,” as “the PKM proposes that consumers have their own goals within persuasion interactions and that they ‘cope’ with persuasion in order to attempt to maintain control and achieve their goal” (Kirmani & Campbell, 2009, p. 290). Though some scholars have connected the concept of reactance to the phenomenon, Friestad and Wright proposed that the source of the resistance is broader, or depends on more factors, than simply the recognition of a persuasion

attempt (1994). For example, per Petty and Cacioppo's Elaboration Likelihood Model (1986), persuasion knowledge could lead to more message elaboration; for "cognitively busy" situations, such elaboration is less likely to occur due to the necessity of cognitive capacity to consider such elements (Kirmani & Campbell, 2009). Further, Isacc and Grayson (2017) showed PK activation can also contribute to enhanced credibility perceptions, especially when tactics are used that the target considers credible, such as references to positive customer and expert reviews.

Persuasion knowledge can be conceived of as a situational occurrence as a reaction to a singular persuasion attempt, and/or more of an enduring personality-based element (Kirmani & Campbell, 2009). Thus, different types of persuasion knowledge applied in this model include attitudinal persuasion knowledge, that is, attitudes such as skepticism and concerns about "honestly, trustworthiness, and credibility" (Boerman et al., 2012, p. 1050) that result from a persuasion attempt, and dispositional or "trait" PKM, which results from the summation of persuasion attempts over the course of someone's lifetime (Ham & Nelson, 2019) and has to do with self-perceived ability to understand and deal with persuasion attempts (Bearden et al., 2001; Wei et al., 2008).

Ham et al.'s (2015) recent review of the PKM literature noted that though there did not appear to be a standard measurement of PKM on an enduring/personal level, reliable and valid scales did exist for dispositional PKM, while situational measures were also successfully employed in particular contexts. For example, Boerman et al. (2018) recently developed a scale to measure PKM of agents exposed to sponsored content, and to control for dispositional or "trait" PKM (Wei et al., 2008), Bearden et al.'s (2001) self-confidence of persuasion knowledge scale, aka "dispositional persuasion knowledge," was developed. Additionally, Ham et al. (2022) used a modified version of previously used scales (Cho & Cheon, 2004) to measure native ad

avoidance on Facebook, finding that conceptual and attitudinal persuasion knowledge was associated with native ad avoidance. Persuasion knowledge was also found to lead to poorer attitudes toward ads, which mediated the path between PK and ad avoidance, as well as higher skepticism toward advertising (Mikołajczak-Degrauwe & Brengman, 2014). Boerman et al. found that sponsorship disclosure on TV shows triggered attitudinal persuasion knowledge that was associated with poorer attitudes toward the brand (2012). Among other types of PKM, situational PKM, specifically perceptions of manipulative intent, has been associated with poorer perceptions of advertising in terms of PI and brand attitudes (Campbell, 1995); Brinson et al. (2023), treating evaluative PK as a mediator, found that evaluative PK was heightened in a traditional ad condition vs. a host-read ad, but this did not have downstream effects on information-seeking attention. According to Friestad and Wright, there are many elements to successful persuasion, with knowledge of a persuasion attempt just one piece (1999); the parasocial relationship we see as emphasizing such “personal attributes such as personal appearance, interpersonal charm, energy levels” (Friestad & Wright, 1999, p. 192) and related such qualities of the Agent Knowledge area that contribute to successful persuasion attempts, in line with Isaac and Grayson’s findings on credible tactics contributing to PK activation that actually enhances credibility and lowers skepticism (2017).

Engagement

As noted in much of the literature, the concept of engagement varies fairly widely throughout research streams in advertising, public relations, digital media, and marketing in general, and there are many crossovers between various conceptualizations. However, some broad components can be identified. In the digital/interactive media realm, some scholarship focuses on engagement as more of a behavioral aspect – for example, Ahuja and Alavi (2018)

defined engagement as Facebook likes, comments, and shares, finding that engagement with relational posts on a branded Facebook page contributed to greater levels of trust in the brand. Consumer COBRAS as conceptualized by Muntinga et al. (2011) are “consumers’ online brand-related activities” and consist of consuming, contributing, and creating activities, each representing a higher level of engagement. Some see a psychological aspect or set of aspects combined with the behavioral – for example, Gomez et al. (2019) found interaction and attention were the most relevant components of social media brand engagement when it came to predicting quality of brand relationships, followed by enthusiasm, identification, and absorption. Oh et al. (2018) conceptualized engagement as a continuum that begins with interactions and ends with outreach, in other words, it folds certain consequences of engagement into the concept of engagement itself, in a sense, and includes cognitive elements in addition to the psychological and behavioral. They note that their findings indeed “highlight the need to distinguish between interface level engagement (physical interaction and interface assessment) and content-level engagement (absorption and digital outreach)” (p. 755). Men and Tsai’s (2014) conceptualization is comprised of social media interaction, social media dependency, and community identification. From a PR perspective and working from Kent and Taylor’s (2002) notion of dialogic theory where people come together to make meaning and “make sense of the world in relations to others” (Kent et al., 2019, p. 81), Taylor, Kent, and Johnston (2018) discuss how PR has moved from treating publics as means to an end to “co creational approaches where orgs and publics jointly create and recreate meaning. The concept of engagement falls within the co creational framework and provides a conceptual roadmap for thinking about ethical and empowering outcomes for both publics and organizations” (p. 1); where “engagement settings are comprised of actors, including orgs, stakeholders, consumers, employees, community, users,

partners, parties, or social institutions” (p.4) (incidentally, this connects to the institutional/structuration element of S-D L noted above). It is an “iterative, dynamic process, where participation experience and shared action emerge as central components of engagement (Johnston & Taylor, 2018, p. 3). Taylor and Kent (2014) assert through engagement, organizations and publics can make decisions that contribute to various forms of social capital, including interpersonal, organizational, community, and civic – Engagement is both orientation and approach that guides process formation and interactions across groups. They note five engagement-related themes in the PR literature: 1: Social Media engagement (simple interactions with publics/orgs over social media channels, sometimes more one-way with research on concerns on effects on people; 2: employee engagement (instrumental engagement in other words—for more loyalty, productivity, etc.—which could be a process of a company or an employee trait, the latter harder to foster); 3: CSR and engagement (slightly broader than the social because it aims to affect both org and publics, but for the good of the company); 4: civic engagement and social capital (e.g. more about societal good rather than just focused on the company, helping communities solve problems); and 5: dialogic engagement (dialogue as a necessary condition to ethicality – a feature of the “propinquity” element of dialogic theory). Johnston (2018) defines engagement as “dynamic multidimensional relational concept featuring psychological and behavioral attributes of connection, interaction, participation, and involvement, designed to achieve or elicit an outcome at individual, organizational, or social levels.” Thus they also see engagement as a behavioral concept and as more of a continuum, with propaganda/monologue at one end, and dialogue on the other, though persuasion is present throughout. Men and Tsai (2014) note that prior research has conceptualized engagement as involving a behavioral dimension (e.g. participation) as well as psychological (e.g. efficacy,

dedication; citing Saks, 2006). Kang's (2014) 13-item engagement scale sees affective commitment as a behavioral motivator, along with positive affectivity and empowerment; thus it is more of a psychological state that then leads to behaviors. Crucially, she finds that WOM leads from engagement and shouldn't be conceptualized as engagement itself. Thus, like some of the other conceptualizations above, this body begins to also see engagement as more than strictly behavioral and has more of a motivational/psychological aspect.

Service-Dominant Logic and Engagement. In Marketing, much recent engagement literature has used Vargo and Lusch's (2004a, 2017) notion of an evolution to a "Service-Dominant Logic" as a basis to explain the phenomenon, making it key to further exploration and advancement of advertising and public relations theories with regard to engagement and psychological theories like parasocial interaction insofar as it can connect more specific research streams to a more general notion of Marketing and what Marketing is and is for, in this new paradigm, as well as provide a metatheoretical framework to allow reconciliation of some of the possible issues between fields (Vargo et al., 2020). S-D Logic reconceptualizes the basis of exchange as *service* (in the singular, crucially) rather than more traditional, Industrial Revolution-borne notions of the exchange of *goods* being the dominant focus of the market, derived from Adam Smith and classical economic theories that have their basis in the concept of operand resources (raw materials), mass production and homogenization of goods as the basis for building wealth (Vargo & Lusch, 2004a). Under S-D Logic, the market, rather than being a separate institution or practice or area of exchange, is part-and- parcel with what we generally call "the social"; that is, S-D Logic sees the market as fundamentally embedded within our social practices (Vargo & Lusch, 2017), and, at the very least, serves to facilitate value co-creation—that is, if value co-creation is not the very reason for society altogether (Vargo et al., 2020).

Under this orientation or paradigm, it is not that service is NOW the basis of exchange, it is more that it has always been, but the IR and concomitant focus on goods has blinded us to that fact (Vargo & Lusch, 2004b). Thus, service has always been the fundamental basis of exchange – essentially what we can do for one another, or, what the goods we produce may do for one another (Vargo & Lusch, 2004b). One does not buy a good for the good’s sake, one buys a good for what it can do for him or her, and value is realized only *through use* and is determined by the actor him- or herself (Vargo & Lusch, 2008a). Vargo and Lusch note that under this dominant logic, “promotion will need to become a communication process characterized by dialogue, asking and answering questions” (2004a, p. 13). There are currently five axioms of S-D Logic (from which a number of foundational premises flow): 1) Service is the fundamental basis of exchange; 2) Value is cocreated by multiple actors, always including the beneficiary; 3) All social and economic actors are resource integrators; 4) Value is always uniquely and phenomenologically determined by the beneficiary; and 5) Value co-creation is coordinated through actor-generated institutions and institutional arrangements (Vargo & Lusch, 2017).

Building on Service-Dominant Logic, Merz et al. (2009) showed how recent theoretical development in branding in terms of “collaborative, value co-creation activity of firms and all of their stakeholders” where brand value is defined “in terms of the perceived use value determined collectively by all stakeholders” (p. 329) parallels the evolution toward an S-D Logic orientation/paradigm in marketing in general. S-D L has also been extended into a “service ecosystems” approach (Akaka et al., 2013) where “market interactions (e.g. service-for-service exchange) occur throughout networks of firms, customers and other stakeholders...formed and reformed through a recursive relationship between individual actions and the reproduction of relationships and shared meanings (e.g. social norms and cultures)” (p. 6) as well as integration

of an institutionalization lens where “institutions are the rules of the game; organizations are the players (the teams)... Institutions come in many forms; they can be formal codified laws, informal social norms, conventions, such as conceptual and symbolic meanings, or any other routinized rubric that provides a shortcut to cognition, communication, and judgment. In practice, they typically exist as part of more comprehensive, interrelated institutional arrangements” (Vargo & Lusch, 2016, p. 11); thus, in S-D L, “institutions take on an expanded role... it is a narrative of cooperation and coordination in eco-systems, as well as the reconciliation of conflict between them” (p. 17). These integrated perspectives have again been expanded with regard to innovation (Vargo et al., 2015), combined in a study of emergence (Vargo et al., 2023a), and proposed as a metatheoretical framework that can be used as a more general theory of markets (Vargo et al., 2023b). These conceptualizations and applications show S-DL’s ability to reconcile seemingly disparate frameworks and theories into metatheoretical conceptualizations with greater explanatory power than separate/functional and more meso- or micro-level theories and domains. Though much published research in S-D Logic has been conceptual, macro-focused and/or metatheoretical in nature like the examples above, some meso-, micro-level and empirical approaches have utilized the framework as well. For example, the value-in use component was positively correlated to brand equity in a recent study of a branded mobile phone app (Tran et al., 2021) and Skålén et al. found support for the notion of S-D L’s focus on value co-creation in relation to innovation and customer value propositions (2014).

Thus, in Marketing, beyond S-D L, conceptualizations of engagement tend toward psychological/cognitive/affective elements, sometimes with behavioral consequences, components or even antecedents as well. For example, Hollebeek et al.’s (2014) concept of Consumer Brand Engagement (CBE) involves “a consumer’s positively valenced brand-related

cognitive, emotional, and behavioral activity during or related to focal consumer/brand interactions” (p. 149); the authors developed a 10-item scale comprised of cognitive processing, affection, and activation, with involvement evident as an antecedent of engagement and self-brand connection and brand usage intent as consequences. The conceptualization of involvement and how it differs from engagement has also been investigated and explicated in the literature. For example, Barreto and Ramalho (2019), utilizing a definition of involvement derived from Verbeke and Vackier (2004), drew a distinction between behavioral elements that result from involvement like sharing and commenting on branded social media posts, which they termed engagement. On the other hand, they defined involvement as “the level of perceived personal importance, interest or relevance evoked by a stimulus or stimuli, which, in turn, is linked by the consumer to enduring, situation-specific goals” (Barreto & Ramalho, 2019, p. 278-279). Harrigan et al. (2018) conceptualized involvement as something that may be “cognitive, affective, and motivational” (p. 39) and similarly drew a distinction between that and behavioral elements of Hollebeek et al.’s (2014) CBE concept, finding that involvement was antecedent to cognitive processing, affection, and activation (behavioral) elements of consumer brand engagement. Hollebeek et al. (2014) concluded that the operationalization/conceptualization confirmed a connection to S-D Logic in that CBE contributes to “establishing and maintaining value-laden, interactive and co-creative consumer/brand/interactions and relationships (Hollebeek et al., 2014, p. 25). As mentioned, many papers in this space utilize various aspects of S-D Logic as a framework to explore engagement as a phenomenon.

For example, Brodie et al. (2011) drew on S-D Logic and its view of relationships as co-creative interactive experiences, and define “customer engagement” as “a psychological state that occurs by virtue of interactive, co- creative customer experiences with a focal agent/object

(e.g. a brand)” (p. 2). Again, the co-creative element is evocative of S-D Logic’s co-creation of value proposition (FP 6); they also note that S-D Ls’ FP 10 (“Value is always uniquely and phenomenologically determined by the beneficiary”) and FP 8 (“A service-centered view is inherently customer-oriented and relational”) relate to consumer engagement research’s conceptual foundations. They posit that FP 8 “highlights the transcending, relational nature of service” (2011, p. 255) and value in co-creation; FP 10 likewise “emphasizes the highly experiential, inherently subjective and contextual nature of the value co-creation concept” (2011, p. 255) and connect this view to Pine and Gilmore’s “experience economy” (1998) concept and Brakus et al.’s (2009) Brand Experience construct, which warrants further review here as well. Working from Dewey (remembered sense impressions as part of knowledge) and Pine and Gilmore’s (1998, 1999) notion of the “experience economy” (Brakus et al., 2015), Brakus et al.’s (2009) Brand Experience focuses on sensations, feelings, cognitions, and behavioral responses as a result of brand-related stimuli is in a sense more of a holistic approach to experience than others found in the literature but also more specific in some ways in that it concentrates on the internal experience of a customer rather than the experience’s content. Brakus et al. (2009) attempted to map brand experience onto the Big Five personality types (openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism). Unlike some other conceptualizations of engagement (e.g. Calder & Malthouse, 2008), brand experience does not have to include a motivational state, but does contain some elements of hedonic liking. While originally theorized as a scale with five dimensions – Social, Affective, Behavioral, Sensory, and Cognitive/Intellectual – four dimensions ultimately emerged as some of the Social elements ended up being folded into the Affective construct. Since they are working from Dewey, with the idea that it is the remembered experience complete with affective/emotional elements in addition

to the “knowledge” gained from an experience, it seems key that they are working with experiences as more of a “remembered” element vs. a live “experiencing” element in the vein of the distinctions between these made by Hume (Morris & Brown, 2023), Oakeshott (2015), and Kahneman (2011) – it is less of what is “happening” and more about what our sense of what “happened” is (we may also take evidence for this by the fact that the scale relies on reflective self-report measures).

From this and pivoting somewhat from other brand-related conceptualizations of CE, Brodie et al. (2011) render five fundamental propositions of consumer engagement based on service relationships: FP1: “CE reflects a psychological state, which occurs by interactive customer experiences with a focal agent/object within specific service relationships” (p. 258); FP2: “CE states occur within a dynamic, iterative process of service relationships that cocreates value” (p. 258); FP3: “CE plays a central role within a nomological network of service relationships” (p. 258); FP4: “CE is a multidimensional concept subject to a context- and/or stakeholder-specific expression of relevant cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions” and FP5: “CE occurs within a specific set of situational conditions generating differing CE levels” (p. 258).

Moving from psychological drivers as above, Jaakola and Alexander (2014) conceptualized consumer engagement behaviors (CEBs) as drivers of value co-creation among firms, consumers and other entities through resource integration. Utilizing S-D logic as a basis for examining this value co-creational activity, they used a public transit system (ScotRail’s “Adopt a Station” program) as a case study to lay out the conceptual basis for connecting value co-creation with engagement. They found that CEBs contribute to interaction and resource integration among multiple parties, thus fostering value co-creation and a greater sense of

satisfaction and loyalty among firms, adopters, and other stakeholders (2014). Furthering this approach and using S-D logic's concept of actors depending "on one another's capabilities in a complex system" (Brodie et al., 2019, p. 178, citing Vargo, 2011), Brodie et al. (2019) suggested moving conceptualizations of customer engagement (CE) beyond simply the firm-consumer dyadic approach to one including "multiple types of actors beyond just customers, such as citizens, employees, business partners, and even nonhuman actors" (p. 173) based on an actor engagement (AE) paradigm. This leads to thinking of engagement as a phenomenon based on cocreating customer experiences. For example, they note that the concept of customer experience behaviors (CEBs) such as writing reviews and engaging in word-of-mouth activities may be based on core interactions (purchase or service encounter) with a firm but also move beyond the simple dyad and involve other actors. They posit that "the institutionalization of AE — that is, the (re)formation and deformation of AE practices — is essential for cocreating coordination benefits in a service ecosystem" (p. 180) and thus propose five fundamental propositions of Actor Engagement (FP1, "AE dispositions occur through connections with other actors that lead to resource contributions beyond what is elementary to the transactional exchange" (p. 180), FP 2— "AE emerges through a dynamic, iterative process, where its antecedents and consequences affect actors' dispositions and network connections" (p. 181), FP3— "AE is a multidimensional concept, subject to the interplay of dispositions, and/or behaviors and the level of connectedness among actors" (p. 182), FP4— "AE occurs within a specific set of institutional contexts, generating differing AE intensities and valence over time" (p. 182), FP5— "AE is coordinated through shared practices that occur within engagement platforms" (p. 183)). Thus, they derive a general definition of AE— "a dynamic and iterative process, reflecting actors' dispositions to invest resources in their interactions with other connected actors in a service system" (p. 183).

Similarly, and furthering the work of Brodie et al., (2011) and Jaakola and Alexander (2014) noted above as well as others, Hollebeek et al. (2019) utilized updated (Vargo & Lusch, 2016) axioms and FPs of S-D logic to examine consumer engagement and how certain elements of S-D L naturally map on to CE/AE, and how certain benefits (e.g. customer knowledge sharing, learning, and resource integration, leading to individual/interpersonal operant resource development, and co-creation) result through the engagement process. They note that engagement and S-D Logic “share a theoretical focus on interactivity with or between stakeholders (e.g. customers, employees)” (p. 162) and that the recent focus on institutions and actor networks in S-D L provide a useful framework in which to understand engagement. In particular, they posit five new fundamental propositions of CE: FP1: “CE reflects a customer’s motivationally driven, volitional investment of specific operant and operand resources into brand interactions in service systems” (p. 172); FP2: “The CE benefits of customer individual- and interpersonal operant resource development and cocreation result from CE within service systems” (p. 172); FP3: “The CE foundational processes of customer resource integration, knowledge sharing and learning represent either necessary (i.e., for customer resource integration) or conducive (i.e., for customer knowledge sharing/learning) factors for the development of CE in service systems” (p. 172); FP4: “CE reflects a customer’s investment of focal cognitive, emotional, behavioral, and social resources during, or related to, specific brand interactions in service systems” (p. 172); and FP5: “CE is contingent on focal context-specific characteristics in service systems. Customer manifestations (including intensity, valence) of CE, the CE foundational processes and CE benefits may thus vary across contextual contingencies” (p. 173). While some research has pointed to a connection between SD-L’s notion of value-in-use and brand outcomes like brand equity (e.g. Tran et al., 2021) and value co-creation and

enhancement of customer value and innovation (Skålén et al, 2014), theorized connections between engagement and central aspects of S-D L such as value co-creation and resource integration have not been investigated. Ranjan and Read (2016) have proposed and developed a scale measuring value co-creation as a third-order concept consisting of co-production (with “knowledge,” “equity,” and “interaction” sub-dimensions) and value-in-use (with “experience,” “personalization,” and “relationship” sub-dimensions) second-order dimensions; these are employed in the current study to measure value co-creation.

Engagement as Motivational Force. Relatedly, from a marketing/advertising perspective, Calder and Malthouse (2008) also focus on a more motivational definition of engagement, but that is also context- and type-specific (first conceptualized as involving different media vehicles but later extended to other situations, e.g., Calder et al. 2016) and attempts to disentangle engagement itself from antecedents like involvement or simple hedonic liking, and those actions that are consequences or results of engagement like social media likes, comments, shares, or eWOM – it is more psychological, though it does have behavioral aspects, in contrast to conceptualizations like Harrigan et al. (2018) where “involvement” is more associated with the motivational and “engagement” is cognitive, affective, and behavioral. Like Brakus et al. (2009), starting with the notion of experience as postulated by John Dewey (that of something that is a discrete “closed out” experience that then “carries with it its own individualizing quality and self-sufficiency” (p. 34)), and working from Higgins (2006), they say engagement is comprised of motivational “experiences,” that do “not involve the hedonic experience of pleasure or pain per se but rather involves the experience of a *motivational force to make something happen* (experienced as a force of attraction) or make something not happen (experienced as a force of repulsion). Although the hedonic experience and the motivational

force experience often are experienced holistically, conceptually they are distinct from one another” (p.441, emphasis added). Thus, conceptually the hedonic element and motivational element should be separated, and it is the motivational element that it is more connected to engagement. In short, engagement in this conceptualization is the collective/summed motivational experience a user has. Thus, Calder et al. (2016) define Engagement as “a multilevel, multidimensional construct that emerges from the thoughts and feelings about one or more rich experiences involved in reaching a personal goal. Having different experiences makes engagement multidimensional. The aggregate of the experiences is the second-order engagement construct, making it multilevel” (para. 11). However, when discussing Engagement from this perspective, it makes sense to further elaborate on Higgins (2006), on which much of Calder, Malthouse and colleagues’ theorizing is based.

Higgins’ (2006) value framework distinguishes elements of engagement that contribute to engagement strength from hedonic elements, or simple “liking” – in other words, the pleasure or pain of an experience is actually somewhat separate from the motivational aspect (thinking somewhat in terms of instrumentality), and it is the motivational portion of the overall experience that is most related to engagement (these two things together creating value, that is, hedonic experience and motivational force, with engagement strength contributing to the “motivational force experience – the intensity of attraction or repulsion from something” (p. 439). According to Higgins (2006), these additional sources of engagement strength include “opposition to interfering forces, overcoming personal resistance, using the right or proper means of goal pursuit, and regulatory fit between the orientation and manner of goal pursuit” (p. 439), with “opposition to interfering forces” conceptualized as “opposition to difficulty” (p. 444) and related to reactance theory, “overcoming personal resistance,” or doing something “despite not

wanting to do it” (p. 445) and related to dissonance theory, “regulatory fit,” that is, “when their goal orientation is sustained by the manner in which they pursue the goal” (p. 447) and “use of proper means,” or values inherent in “how goals are pursued that [are] independent of the value from the goal pursuit outcomes themselves” (p. 450).

Thus, building on these ideas and similarly drawing a distinction between simple affect or “liking” and engagement, Calder and Malthouse posit that it is “engagement with a TV program that causes someone to want to watch it, to be attentive to it, to recommend it to a friend, or to be disappointed if it were no longer on the air” (2008, p. 2). They equate engagement with “a sense of involvement, of being connected to something... a fundamental insight [is] engagement comes from experiencing something like a magazine or TV program in a *certain way* (pp. 2-3, 2008, emphasis added). Rather than thinking of engagement as, for example, what happens when a viewer views or a reader reads, even if frequently, it is engagement that actually causes or motivates a person to view or read in the first place; that is, what is commonly proposed to be “engagement” in much of the literature and popular business press is actually better understood as consequences or outcomes of engagement, and in this way, Calder and Malthouse’s engagement is again more about the basic motivational force. Similar to Hume (Morris & Brown, 2023), Oakeshott (1995) and Kahneman (2011), in their conceptualization it is more of the “remembered” element of the engagement experience as the “one that counts” since it provides the mental subconscious schemata involved with how this motivational force works psychologically and has less to do with the motivational experience as it is actually occurring since it is about this motivation *toward* or *from*. Following Higgins (2006) as noted, they similarly make this distinction between simple hedonic experiences or “liking” and motivational experiences that actually have more to do with engagement (though it is important to point out

that hedonic experience does influence the motivational experiences that lead to or are closer to “engagement” – this is where the experience as the “remembered” element, i.e., “the one that counts” rather than the “experience as it happens” is again more salient to the process because it is about motivation, and without the memory we have no pattern/schema to mentally pull and utilize in any given situation). They go on to state that engagement is essentially an outgrowth of an experience, something that stands out from the ordinary state or stream of experiences, but one that is not only memorable and outstanding but rather also one that involves certain elements that may vary according to the context, for example, a “Talking About and Sharing experience” with someone else through building a social relationship (2008, p. 3) – that is, it is the sharing of the content and the overall experience with another that elevates a simple experience to the level of an engagement experience – “it is more about what the content does for the consumer more than what the consumer like about it per se... [it is] the sum of the motivational experiences consumers have with a media product” (2008, p. 5). As discussed, they also further make a distinction between positive and negative motivations that affect engagement (“Approach” and “Avoidance,” respectively), as well as between intrinsic and extrinsic motivations for each category, resulting in a four-part schema to describe different experience types that are related to engagement: Transportation and Promotion/Prevention (Approach) and Irritation and Rejection (Avoidance). Additionally, they then describe the motivational factors (and operationalizations) that make up different proposed engagement experiences, including “Talking About and Sharing,” “Utilitarian,” “Makes Me Smarter,” “Credible and Safe,” “Timeout,” “Visual Imagery,” “Regular Part of My Day,” “Community Connection,” “Identity,” and more (in addition to some negative Avoidance engagement experiences that are so delineated) (Calder & Malthouse, 2008, pp. 10- 16; Calder et al., 2016). As noted, in addition to separation from antecedents of what

constitute Engagement experiences, Calder and Malthouse (2008) note the need to separate Engagement from its consequences (also see Calder et al., 2016; and Brodie and colleagues, 2011 and 2019 note this as well), which are often measured as “engagement” – things like likes, clicks, shares, and comments (e.g. Ahuja & Alavi, 2019).

Calder and Malthouse (2008) have integrated this “engagement”-centric approach to media in general to research with ads that exist within the particular media vehicle, finding that engagement with the media vehicle tends to have positive effects on advertising-related variables (e.g., Malthouse et al. 2007 found that audiences who engaged in magazines in Utilitarian or Makes Me Smarter modes rated the ads in the magazines higher on copy testing variables; Calder et al. 2009 found engaged website users tended to be more likely to click on an ad and have more positive attitudes toward the ad sponsor). Calder et al. (2016) more recently found additional support for context-specific Engagement experience measurements being positively related to predictions of consumer behavior and positive advertising outcomes. Among the ramifications they draw for marketers is the fact that taking into account engagement of media or other relevant situational factors/vehicles could potentially change the traditional calculations and decisions involved in media buying, for example, as well as how engagement with *brands themselves* can be enhanced through high-level engagement indicative of new media: “If a media vehicle helps engage consumer experiences, the ad is a better contact... if new media and new technologies can be used to engage customers more, advertising should move in this direction” (Calder and Malthouse, 2008, p. 30). Accordingly, Higgins notes that the increased level of “issue involvement” in a persuasive message situation in which engagement is high should lead to increased motivation to process which then affects persuasion (2006, citing Eagly & Chaiken, 1993; McGuire, 1969), and Calder and colleagues’ stream of research over the years has

continued to find this generally positive association between media vehicle engagement and ad/brand outcomes (e.g. Calder et al., 2016).

Later Calder et al. (2016) elaborated that “experiences comprising engagement with any one product or brand can be different from those associated with another” (p. 39) and (making a connection with S-D L-borne notions of engagement) is “a psychological state that occurs by virtue of interactive, co-creative customer experiences with a focal agent/object... under a specific set of context-dependent conditions... and exist as a dynamic, interactive process.. in which other relationship concepts... are antecedents and/or consequences. It is a multidimensional concept subject to a context- and/or stakeholder-specific expression of relevant cognitive, emotional and behavioral dimensions” (p 39, citing Brodie et al., 2011, p. 260). These different engagement experiences measured post exposure – “Interaction,” “Transportation,” “Discovery,” “Identity,” and “Civic Orientation” – then combine to form a second-order situational engagement dimension, thus making it multilevel.

Though this is context-specific like Hollebeek et al.’s (2014) concept, Calder and Malthouse differs from Hollebeek et al.’s in that interactivity pervades the former’s entire conceptualization rather than only in specific Calder- and Malthouse-ian dimensions or experiences; Calder and Malthouse also differ from static scales used across situations like Hollebeek et al. (2014) and Brakus et al. (2009), postulating that different engagement experiences/operationalizations are more appropriate for different situations and audience types. For example, Fisher has found that different podcast vehicle engagement experiences are associated with positive and negative engagement with advertising depending on the type or genre of podcast being used (2024).

To summarize, podcasts have been associated with what in the abstract is termed “engagement” (e.g. Nielsen, 2022). Calder and Malthouse (2008), working from research by Higgins (2006), postulated a new concept of engagement that is both distinct from simple hedonic liking as well as what are more commonly thought of as engagement measures in the popular business press, such as likes, shares, comments, etc., which they posit are the effects of engagement rather than engagement per se. Engagement in this theoretical framework is conceptualized as the sum of the motivational forces consumers experience when using a media vehicle, and what various vehicles or content of media do for the user. Calder, Malthouse and colleagues also posit the existence of different engagement experience types, such as Entertainment, Talking About and Sharing, Makes Me Smarter, Utilitarian, Discovery, Civic Orientation, and more that have a *prima facie* connection to podcasts as a medium (2008; 2016), especially given the UGT-based research streams on podcast use noted above; Calder et al. (2016) note the current engagement conceptualization’s relationship to UGT approaches, as well as engagement’s relationship to value co-creation, as noted. Research has shown users experiencing specific engagement types in different media can have positive—but sometimes negative—effects on advertising encountered within that media (e.g. Calder et al., 2016; Malthouse et al., 2007; Calder et al., 2009; Wang & Calder, 2006). Academic research on engagement’s relationship to advertising outcomes in podcasts is in the nascent stage (Fisher, 2024).

The Research Problems

As noted, though research on podcast advertising is relatively nascent, there is some support for parasocial relationships’ effects on advertising outcomes, perhaps especially among host-read advertisements for utilitarian products. However, hedonic products have yet to be

investigated in this regard. Moreover, serial ad placement in podcasts has not been investigated beyond a single identified experimental study using a comedy podcast, thus investigating this variable in terms of a long-form conversational podcast would be novel. Though prior research has shown engagement to be a positive driver of ad success, it has yet to be tested experimentally in a podcast environment. Finally, how these phenomena relate to persuasion knowledge activation and value co-creation in podcast advertising have yet to be investigated. Following calls for more academic research into the nature and phenomena at play in podcast advertising (Taylor, 2024), this research attempts to fill these identified gaps in the literature.

Hypotheses and Research Questions

Main and Interaction Effects of Ad Condition and Serial Ad Placement on Dependent Variables

H1: Host-read ads result in greater (a) Purchase Intention (PI), (b) Attitude Toward the Brand (A_{brand}), (c) Attitude Toward the Ad (A_{ad}), and (d) Information Seeking Intention levels vs. conventional non-host-read ads.

RQ1: Are there main effects of serial ad placement (ads at the beginning vs. ads in the middle of the clip) on (a) Purchase Intention (PI), (b) Attitude Toward the Brand (A_{brand}), (c) Attitude Toward the Ad (A_{ad}), and (d) Information Seeking Intention dependent variables?

RQ2: Are there interaction effects of ad type and ad placement a) Purchase Intention (PI), (b) Attitude Toward the Brand (A_{brand}), (c) Attitude Toward the Ad (A_{ad}), and (d) Information Seeking Intention dependent variables?

Mediation/Relationship of PK Measures

H2: Evaluative Persuasion Knowledge mediates effects of podcast ads on (a) Purchase Intention (PI), (b) Attitude Toward the Brand (A_{brand}), (c) Attitude Toward the Ad (A_{ad}), and (d)

Information Seeking Intention dependent variables to a greater degree in the non host-read condition.

RQ3: Does Evaluative Persuasion Knowledge mediate effects of serial podcast ad position on (a) Purchase Intention (PI), (b) Attitude Toward the Brand (A_{brand}), (c) Attitude Toward the Ad (A_{ad}), and (d) Information Seeking Intention dependent variables?

H3: Situational PK in the form of Manipulative Intent mediates effects of podcast ads on (a) Purchase Intention (PI), (b) Attitude Toward the Brand (A_{brand}), (c) Attitude Toward the Ad (A_{ad}), and (d) Information Seeking Intention dependent variables to a greater degree in the non host-read condition.

RQ4: Does Situational PK in the form of Manipulative Intent mediate effects of serial podcast ad position on (a) Purchase Intention (PI), (b) Attitude Toward the Brand (A_{brand}), (c) Attitude Toward the Ad (A_{ad}), and (d) Information Seeking Intention dependent variables?

RQ5-1: Is there a relationship between ad type and/or ad placement on (a) Evaluative PK and (b) manipulative intent perceptions?

H4: Trait PK measures 1) Dispositional PK and 2) Ad Avoidance will be related to (a) Evaluative PK and (b) Manipulative Intent perceptions.

Moderation of Engagement

H5: Podcast engagement moderates user perceptions of (a) Purchase Intention (PI), (b) Attitude Toward the Brand (A_{brand}), (c) Attitude Toward the Ad (A_{ad}), and (d) Information Seeking Intention dependent variables for a brand's advertisements in podcasts.

H6: Podcast engagement moderates the effects of Ad Condition on (a) evaluative and (b) situational persuasion knowledge (manipulative intent).

Moderation/Relationship of Parasocial Relationship Perceptions

H7: Parasocial relationships with hosts moderates user perceptions of (a) Purchase Intention (PI), (b) Attitude Toward the Brand (A_{brand}), (c) Attitude Toward the Ad (A_{ad}), and (d) Information Seeking Intention dependent variables for a brand's advertisements in podcasts.

H8: Parasocial relationships with hosts moderates the effects of Ad Condition on (a) Evaluative PK and (b) Situational Persuasion Knowledge (Manipulative Intent).

H9: Parasocial Interaction Behaviors are positively related to PSR perceptions.

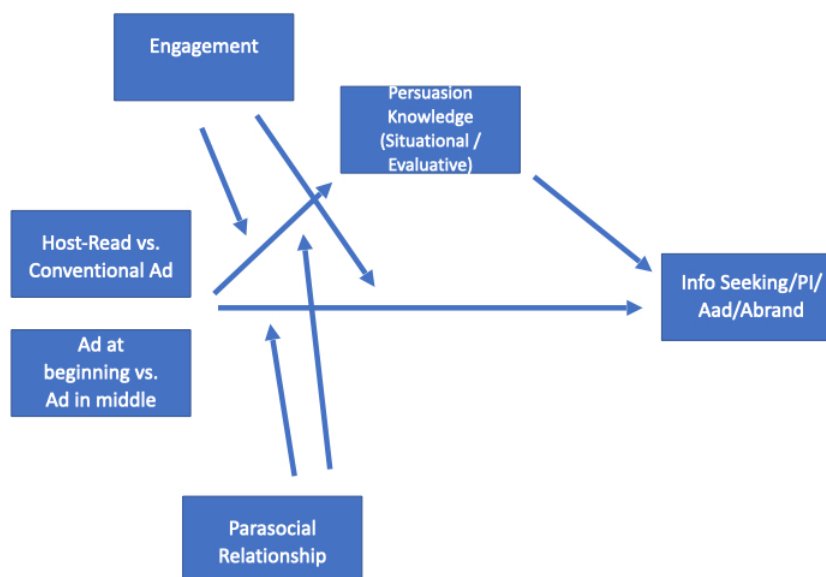
RQ6: Is Engagement related to (a) PSR and (b) Parasocial Interaction Behavior perceptions?

Value Co-Creation and its Relationship to Engagement, PSR, and Ad-Related Outcome Variables

RQ7: Are (a) engagement and (b) parasocial relationship perceptions related to value co-creation?

RQ8: Are value co-creation perceptions related to (a) Purchase Intention (PI), (b) Attitude Toward the Brand (A_{brand}), (c) Attitude Toward the Ad (A_{ad}), and (d) Information Seeking Intention dependent variables?

Figure 1: *Basic Hypothesized Path Model*



Research Design

To test hypotheses and answer research questions, a 2x2 experiment (ad type: host-read ad vs. conventional ad, and serial ad placement, that is, ad placed at the beginning of the clip [pre-roll] vs. in the middle [mid-roll]) was fielded wherein participants listened to a 2.5-minute *Joe Rogan Experience* podcast segment that contained a 30-second ad for a fictitious brand, Rooted Lifestyle Wear. The resulting effects on dependent variables of interest to advertisers – information seeking intent, purchase intention, attitude toward the ad, and attitude toward the brand – were measured, along with demographic items and podcast usage items. In addition to PSR perceptions and Parasocial Behaviors’ relationship to it, the potential moderation of engagement and mediation of persuasion knowledge were investigated, as well as perceptions of value co-creation and how they relate to engagement, PSR, and the focal DVs (Information Seeking Intention, PI, A_{brand} , A_{ad}) (see Appendix C) along with the ad engagement/interference measures.

Procedures

Sampling

As Brinson et al. (2023) recruited 164 total participants expecting a moderate effect size (.5) and power of .95, the research adhered to this range and attempted to enroll at least 176 participants (G*Power for Mac [Faul et al., 2009] recommends at least 88 in each level of IV for these parameters) for the study from a pool of MTurk workers in the United States (see Appendix D), adhering to Aguinis et al.’s recommendations for MTurk sample quality, including recruitment of those who had successfully completed 100 or more HITs (human intervention tasks) and that passed attention checks via items requesting a specific answer (e.g. “This is an attention check question, please mark this one ‘4’.”) and verbatim responses, including those to

non-sequitous but well-known questions (e.g. “What color is Kermit the frog?”) and an additional verbatim asking for any further thoughts on the subjects at hand in the study.

Following Brinson et al., participants were further screened for the ability to identify the brand featured in the ad post-stimulus exposure (2023). Participants also were screened for current podcast use prior to enrollment, and were paid \$1.75 each for a completed questionnaire. Post-hoc power for moderate effect size and this n was computed by G*Power (Faul et al., 2009) as .99.

Stimuli

Speechify, a text-to-speech AI-based voiceover service, was used to create an AI-generated 2-minute typical Joe Rogan podcast segment; this was combined with a 30-second ad for Rooted Lifestyle Wear with an AI-voiced narrator via TopMediAI.com, either that of Joe Rogan to represent the host-read condition (beginning with, “Hi friends, Joe Rogan here.”) or the voice of the author (and beginning with, “Hi friends, Jonathan Rogers here.”) to represent the conventional ad condition, in GarageBand for Mac (see Appendix A for ad copy). Participants were randomized into one of four conditions: 1) Joe Rogan podcast with Joe Rogan also reading the ad, ad at the beginning (host-read ad/at at beginning [pre-roll] position), 2) Joe Rogan podcast with the voice of the author reading the ad, ad at the beginning (non-host-read [conventional] ad/at at beginning position), 3) Joe Rogan podcast with Joe Rogan also reading the ad, ad in the middle (host-read ad/at at middle [mid-roll] position), or 4) Joe Rogan podcast with the voice of the author reading the ad, ad in the middle (non-host-read ad/at at middle position). Rooted Lifestyle Wear (essentially based on Roots Canada clothing; a fictitious brand was selected to avoid possible confounds due to brand familiarity) was chosen as a focal advertiser because it is an example of a hedonic product, whereas prior research in this area has

focused on utilitarian products (e.g. Brinson et al., 2023). Joe Rogan was selected as his show has been the most popular podcast in the world for a few years running (e.g. Spotify, 2022; Spotify, 2024) thereby increasing chances for variation in the PSR and PSI-Behavior variables among the sample, and is a representative of the popular long-format conversational show typology featuring public intellectuals, sports figures, comedians and other personalities (see Fisher, 2024), and follows other research in this area (e.g. Brinson et al., 2023).

Sample Description

Initial recruitment resulted in 345 study participants; after removing attritions/incompletes and those that failed attention checks (following recommendations of Aguinis et al., 2021) and attention/manipulation checks (i.e. unaided recall of the brand featured in the ad, following Brinson et al., 2023), the final N was 193. Males comprised 64.2% of respondents and 35.2% were female ($n = 124$ and 68 , respectively; this discrepancy most likely due to the MTurk worker base in general); .5% ($n = 1$) indicated “Other.” The mean age was 34.16 years ($SD = 5.51$); accordingly a majority at 68.9% ($n = 133$) indicated they were of the “Generation Y/Millennials” generational cohort, with 15.0% Gen Z ($n = 29$), 14.0% ($n = 27$) Generation X, and 2.1% ($n = 4$) Boomers. All respondents ($n = 193$) indicated they were White, 25.0% ($n = 48$) indicated they were of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin. The majority of respondents indicated having a Bachelor’s degree as the highest level of education (78.2%, $n = 151$) with 13.5% ($n = 26$) indicating they had attained a Master’s, 3.6% ($n = 7$) an Associate’s, 2.1% ($n = 4$) High school degree or equivalent (e.g. GED), 1.6% some college no degree ($n = 3$), and 1.0% Doctorate or professional degree (e.g. MD, DDS, PhD) ($n = 2$). 9.4% ($n = 18$) reported they were currently a college student. 91.2% ($n = 176$) indicated they were employed full time (40 or more hours per week) while 6.7% ($n = 13$) were employed part-time (up to 39 hours per

week), 1.0% ($n = 2$) were full-time students, and 1.0% indicated they were self-employed ($n = 2$). The majority of respondents fell into either the \$80k - \$99k income range (26.4%, $n = 51$) or \$60k - \$79k (26.9%, $n = 52$) while 23.8% indicated \$40k - \$59k ($n = 46$), 17.1% at \$20k - \$39k ($n = 33$), 3.6% ($n = 7$) at \$100k – \$119k per year and 2.1% ($n = 4$) at \$120k or above. Political outlook was tilted toward the conservative side, with 6.8% ($n = 13$) reporting they were “very liberal,” 22.0% ($n = 42$) “somewhat liberal,” 13.1% ($n = 25$) “middle of the road,” 32.5% ($n = 62$) “somewhat conservative,” and 25.7% ($n = 49$) “very conservative.” 91.7% ($n = 177$) reported currently being married or in a domestic partnership, 7.3% ($n = 14$) single (never married), .5% ($n = 1$) widowed and .5% ($n = 1$) divorced.

Participants were also asked to indicate their general level of usage of social media platforms, streaming services, books, and news websites on a seven-point bipolar adjective scale with “never” and “very frequently” anchors. The results are in Table 1 below.

Table 1: *Relative Digital Media Use*

Digital Platform	Mean	SD
Instagram	5.96	1.08
YouTube	5.93	1.01
Podcasts in general	5.75	1.15
Twitter/X	5.71	1.16
Facebook	5.70	.98
Netflix, Hulu, Disney+, SlingTV or other similar streaming service	5.65	1.08
News websites	5.61	1.19
Newspaper websites	5.55	1.17
Books (physical or digital)	5.52	1.15
LinkedIn	5.45	1.27

Snapchat	5.39	1.40
TikTok	5.23	1.61

Exposure to experimental stimuli was fairly even: 50.3% of the sample ($n = 97$) were in the conventional ad condition while 49.7% ($n = 96$) were in the host-read condition. 53.9% ($n = 104$) were in the pre-roll ad condition while 46.1% ($n = 89$) were in the mid-roll ad condition. The 2x2 breakdown is as follows: 29.0% ($n = 56$) were exposed to host-read/pre-roll ads, 24.9% ($n = 48$) were exposed to conventional/pre-roll ads, 20.7% ($n = 40$) heard a host-read/mid-roll ad, while 25.4% ($n = 49$) heard a conventional/mid-roll ad.

Podcast Descriptives

Participants were asked about what genres/types of podcasts to which they listened/watched, following the Nielsen (2018) genre typology, and adding two special categories of True Crime (i.e. “accounts of actual homicides presented in a more narrative, stylized format than traditional news” [Pavelko & Myrick, 2020, p. 151, citing Durham, Elrod, & Kinkade, 1995]) and the “Longer-Format Cross-Subject Conversational” show (often hosted by and/or featuring interviews with experts in various subject matters and public intellectuals), following Fisher (2024). Respondents also indicated they most often watched True Crime shows (66.8%, $n = 127$) rather than most often listened (33.2%, $n = 63$) more often; for Long-Format Conversational shows, a smaller majority claimed to most often watch (57.1%, $n = 108$) rather than listened (42.9%, $n = 81$). Participants were also asked their relative interest level of each type to which they indicated they listened/watched, on a seven-point bipolar adjective scale with “not at all interested” and “extremely interested” anchors. Those results are in Table 2 below.

Table 2: *Podcast Genres/Types Listened/Watched*

Type	Percentage	N	Relative Interest Level <i>M</i>	Relative Interest Lvl <i>SD</i>
True crime	56.0%	108	5.41	1.00
Longer format cross-subject conversational shows featuring public intellectuals	54.4%	105	5.53	1.11
News and politics	77.7%	150	5.37	1.14
Comedy	77.2%	149	5.56	1.08
TV, film, popular culture	73.1%	141	5.46	1.07
Music	76.7%	148	5.56	1.06
Education	66.8%	129	5.36	1.06
Religion and spirituality	66.3%	128	5.24	1.13
Technology	68.4%	132	5.48	1.04
Arts, literature	65.8%	127	5.29	1.15
Society and culture	66.8%	129	5.30	1.07
Sports and recreation	69.9%	135	5.43	1.10
Business	63.7%	123	5.31	1.06
Science and medicine	62.7%	121	5.38	1.05
Government	63.7%	123	5.27	1.15
Health and living	65.8%	127	5.53	1.15
Games and hobbies	68.9%	133	5.40	1.16
Kids and family	64.8%	125	5.47	1.08
Other (Cooking at 2.0%, $n = 4$ was the most often mentioned in verbatim responses)	17.6%	34	4.99	1.63

Those participants that reported watching/listening to True Crime show indicated they spent an average of 185.83 minutes (3.09 hours) per week with this content ($SD = 734.29$

minutes). Participants reporting being users of Long-Format Conversational shows likewise indicated spending an average of 211.54 weekly minutes (3.53 hours) with the shows ($SD = 900.96$).

When it came to general modality of podcast use among all respondents, 29.2% ($n = 56$) of participants indicated they generally listen to audio podcasts more often, while 19.3% ($n = 37$) reported watching video podcasts more often. However, a slight majority at 51.6% ($n = 99$) reported “about the same” when it came to audio vs. video podcast modality.

Podcast usage in terms of both number of episodes consumed per week ($M = 40.93$, $SD = 22.21$) and number of days per week using podcasts ($M = 4.49$, $SD = 1.55$) were also captured as well. In addition, participants categorized their current podcast use as “somewhat regular” (53.4%, $n = 103$), “very regular” (42.0%, $n = 81$) and “every once in awhile” (4.7%, $n = 9$).

Users were also asked which of the top shows (according to the Spotify top podcast charts as sourced in June of 2024 (Spotify, 2024) they currently or formerly may have watched/listened. Those results are below in Table 3.

Table 3: *Podcast Host Viewer/Listenership of Sample*

Host	Yes, I currently listen/watch	I used to listen/watch, but not currently	I have never watched/listened to this podcast
The Joe Rogan Experience	69.4%, $n = 134$	22.8%, $n = 44$	7.8%, $n = 15$
This Past Weekend w/ Theo Von	44.3%, $n = 85$	43.2%, $n = 83$	12.5%, $n = 24$
The Tucker Carlson Podcast	35.2%, $n = 68$	53.9%, $n = 104$	10.9%, $n = 21$
The Comment Section with Drew Afualo	45.5%, $n = 87$	40.8%, $n = 78$	13.6%, $n = 26$

Call Her Daddy with Alex Cooper	40.4%, $n = 78$	45.1%, $n = 87$	14.5%, $n = 28$
Crime Junkie	42.0%, $n = 81$	41.5%, $n = 80$	16.6%, $n = 32$
Huberman Lab	46.3%, $n = 87$	38.3%, $n = 72$	15.4%, $n = 29$
Serial	37.0%, $n = 71$	47.9, $n = 92$	15.1%, $n = 29$
Acquired with Ben Gilbert and David Rosenthal	30.2%, $n = 58$	52.1%, $n = 100$	17.7%, $n = 34$
Morbid	39.1%, $n = 75$	43.8%, $n = 84$	17.2%, $n = 33$
Pardon My Take	41.6%, $n = 79$	41.1%, $n = 78$	17.4%, $n = 33$
The Bill Simmons Podcast	30.2%, $n = 58$	49.5%, $n = 95$	20.3%, $n = 39$
My Favorite Murder	38.0%, $n = 73$	46.9%, $n = 90$	15.1%, $n = 29$
The Ben Shapiro Show	35.8%, $n = 69$	46.6%, $n = 90$	17.6%, $n = 34$
The Bible in a Year with Fr. Mike Schmitz	33.7%, $n = 65$	51.3%, $n = 99$	15.0%, $n = 29$
The Megyn Kelly Show	33.5%, $n = 64$	46.1%, $n = 88$	20.4%, $n = 39$
Conan O'Brien Needs a Friend	38.9%, $n = 75$	46.6%, $n = 90$	14.5%, $n = 28$
Breaking Points with Krystal and Saagar	27.5%, $n = 53$	55.4%, $n = 107$	17.1%, $n = 33$

In addition, those who indicated they were current *Joe Rogan Experience* (JRE) listeners were asked whether they typically listened to the audio version or watched the video version more often, or if it was “about the same” rate. Of those, 32.8% ($n = 44$) reported audio, 18.7% ($n = 25$) reported video, while 48.5% ($n = 65$) said “about the same.” Current JRE

listeners/watchers reported being a user of the show for an average of 51.13 months (or 4.26 years) ($SD = 33.55$ months/2.80 years).

Measurements

All measurements utilized previously used scales as indicated below; greater means indicate greater levels of the focal measurement.

Engagement. Prior to experimental stimulation exposure, participants answered questions to assess their general engagement level with podcasts using items informed by the Calder and Malthouse (2008) and Calder et al. (2016) engagement experience framework of different engagement types, modified for use to measure engagement with the general podcast format/vehicle. Context-specific Engagement's (ENG) five sub-modes (Interaction, Transportation, Discovery, Identity, Civic Orientation) were thus measured following Calder et al. (2016) utilizing 7-point Likert-type scales with 1-strongly disagree – 7-strongly agree anchors. For Interaction, Cronbach's *alpha* for all six items was .790, however, analysis revealed improvement to .814 with the deletion of the first item ("Podcasts make me feel more connected to other people and the community," this item ostensibly has more to do with community connection and the remainder are about personal interaction); examination of its Corrected Item Total Correlation was less than .4 at .291 and therefore the item was thus dropped from the scale, following Vaske et al. (2017). The resulting five-item scale's mean was 5.65 ($SD = .80$). For Transportation, Cronbach's $\alpha = .846$ ($M = 5.55$, $SD = .87$) and all six items were retained, for Civic Orientation ($\alpha = .757$) all four items were retained ($M = 5.47$, $SD = .84$), for Discovery seven items ($\alpha = .849$, $M = 5.65$, $SD = .77$) and for Identity ($\alpha = .703$) three items were retained ($M = 5.69$, $SD = .79$). As these are postulated to be sub-dimensions of a larger engagement construct (Calder et al., 2016), they were then summed to form a second-order context-specific

overall Engagement measure ($M = 5.61$, $SD = .72$). Similarly, media vehicle engagement scales Ad Attention and Ad Interference were sourced from Calder and Malthouse (2008) and consisted of six- and seven-item, respectively, seven-point Likert-type scales with strongly disagree-strongly agree anchors. Ad Attention's Cronbach's α was .881 ($M = 5.45$, $SD = .94$), For Ad Interference, $\alpha = .862$ ($M = 5.41$, $SD = .90$).

Trait and Dispositional Persuasion Knowledge. Working from Ham et al. (2022), versions of previously used scales to measure trait PK in the form of Ad Avoidance (Cho & Cheon, 2004) and Dispositional PK (Bearden et al., 2001) were modified for the podcast situation and used. Ad Avoidance consisted of a six-item, seven-point scale with “1-never” and “7-always” anchors ($\alpha = .896$, $M = 5.02$, $SD = 1.26$). Dispositional PK was a six-item seven-point Likert-type scale with “1-strongly disagree” and “7-strongly agree” anchors ($\alpha = .912$, $M = 5.27$, $SD = 1.09$).

Dependent Variables and Moderators. Post-stimulus exposure, along with manipulation checks (e.g. “What was the brand mentioned in the ad?”), Parasocial Relationship level (PSR) with the host, Parasocial Interaction Behavior perceptions (PSI-B), Situational Persuasion Knowledge (manipulative intent, MI), Evaluative Persuasion Knowledge (EvalPK), Value Co-Creation (VCC), Information Seeking Intention (InfoSeek), PI, A_{ad} , and A_{brand} were then measured utilizing previously used scales.

Parasocial Relationship and Behaviors. Parasocial Relationship (PSR) was measured via eight items with seven-point Likert-type scales (1-strongly disagree - 7-strongly agree anchors) following Rubin et al., (1985) and Brinson et al. (2023). The original α was measured at .857, however analysis indicated the first item's (“When I am listening to the podcast, I feel as if I am part of the group”) Corrected Item Total Correlation was less than .4 at

.311 and was thus dropped, again following Vaske et al. (2017). The resulting seven-item scale *alpha* was .869 ($M = 5.61$, $SD = .82$). Parasocial Interaction Behavior (PSI-B) was measured following Schlütz and Hedder (2022), with a four-item seven-point scale with “1- does not apply” and “7-applies completely” anchors; *alpha* was measured at .772 ($M = 5.21$, $SD = .75$).

Evaluative Persuasion Knowledge and Manipulative Intent. Evaluative Persuasion Knowledge, a five-item seven-point Likert-type scale with 1-strongly disagree - 7-strongly agree anchors, was sourced from Bearden et al. (2001). Cronbach’s *alpha* was .755 ($M = 5.56$, $SD = .79$). Situational Persuasion Knowledge in the form of Manipulative Intent (MI) was a single-item seven-point semantic differential scale with “1-non-manipulative” and “7-manipulative” anchors and was sourced via Jain and Posovac (2004) ($M = 5.49$, $SD = .99$).

Dependent Variables. Following Brinson et al. (2023), the current research measured Information-Seeking Intention (InfoSeek) with a five-item seven-point bipodal adjective scale derived from Spears and Singh (2004) (e.g. “I will [1-definitely not. . .7-definitely] consider contacting Rooted Lifestyle Wear.” “I am [1-very unlikely. . .7-very likely] to gather more information about Rooted Lifestyle Wear.”). Cronbach’s *alpha* was .828 ($M = 5.49$, $SD = .74$). Similarly, Purchase Intention (PI) was measured with a five-item seven-point bipolar adjective scale derived from Spears and Singh (2004), the resulting Cronbach’s *alpha* was .822 ($M = 5.51$, $SD = .72$); likewise Spears and Singh’s (2004) five-item seven-point bipolar adjective scale was utilized to measure Attitude Toward the Brand (A_{brand}). Cronbach’s *alpha* was .832 ($M = 5.56$, $SD = .77$). Attitude Toward the Ad (A_{ad}) utilized a three-item seven-point bipolar adjective scale sourced via Wang et al. (2013). Cronbach’s *alpha* was .721 ($M = 5.66$, $SD = .85$).

Value Co-Creation. Value Co-Creation, a third-order factor consisting of a combination of “Co-Production” and “Value-In-Use” second-order factors, was measured utilizing Ranjan

and Read's (2016) scale comprised of a number of Likert-type items (seven-point, 1-strongly disagree – 7-strongly agree anchors) adapted/modified to fit the present podcast modality/host to measure Co-Production (consisting of Knowledge: 4 items, $a = .658$, $M = 5.60$, $SD = .68$, with alpha eclipsing the .65 “conventional” minimum threshold [e.g. Vaske, 2008; Spector, 1992; Vaske et al., 2017]); Equity [E]: 4 items, $a = .794$, $M = 5.61$, $SD = .82$; Interaction: 4 items, $a = .774$, $M = 5.61$, $SD = .75$ sub-dimensions/first-order factors) and Value-In-Use (Experience [X]: 3 items, $a = .697$, $M = 5.65$, $SD = .76$; Personalization: 4 items, $a = .788$, $M = 5.65$, $SD = .79$; Relationship : $a = .776$, $M = 5.63$, $SD = .77$ sub-dimensions/first-order factors). The resulting mean and SD for the Co-Production component was 5.61 and .69, respectively; for Value-In-Use 5.62 and .73; and for Value Co-Creation (VCC) in sum, 5.60 and .70.

Please see Table 4 below for more details on operationalizations of measures.

Table 4: *Operationalizations of Measures*

Variable	Operationalization	Scale type
PSI-Behavior (Schlütz & Hedder, 2022)	“showing an interest in the listeners and sharing details about his or her own life” (p. 465) Joe Rogan shows interest in the listeners Joe Rogan lets the listeners partake in her/his personal life Joe Rogan refers to the listeners directly Joe Rogan shares details about his daily life to the listeners	7-point semantic differential with “1 - does not apply at all” and “7 - applies completely” anchors
Parasocial Relationship (Rubin et al., 1985; Brinson et al., 2023)	When I am listening to the podcast, I feel as if I am part of the group I like to compare my ideas with what Joe Rogan says	7-point Likert-type with “1- strongly disagree” and “7 - strongly agree” anchors

Joe Rogan makes me feel comfortable, as if I am with a friend
 Joe Rogan keeps me company when I listen to/watch his podcast
 When Joe Rogan says how he feels about a topic, it helps me make up my own mind about it
 I would like to meet Joe Rogan in person
 When Joe Rogan tells a story, he seems to understand the kinds of things I want to know
 If Joe Rogan appeared on another podcast, I would appear on that podcast

Value Co-Creation (Ranjan & Read, 2016)	Co-production (Knowledge, Equity [E], Interaction sub-dimensions) and Value-In-Use (Experience [X], Personalization, Relationship sub-dimensions)	7-point Likert scale with “1 - strongly disagree” and “7- strongly agree” anchors
	K1 The podcast producer/host is open to my ideas and suggestions about its existing content or towards developing a new product/content K2 The podcast producer/host provides sufficient illustrations and information to me K3 I would willingly spare time and effort to share my ideas and suggestions with the podcast producer/host in order to help it improve its content and processes further K4 The podcast producer/host provides suitable environment and opportunity to me to offer suggestions and ideas E1 The podcast producer/host has easy access to information about my preferences E2 The processes of this podcast producer/host are aligned with my requirements (i.e. the way I wish them to be) E3 The podcast producer/host considers my role to be as important as its own in the process of content development E4 We share an equal role in determining the final outcome of the process of content development I1 During the process of content development I can conveniently express my specific requirements I2 The podcast producer/host conveys to its consumers relevant information related to the process of content development	

I3 The podcast producer/host allows sufficient consumer interaction in its business processes (product development, marketing, assisting other customers, etc.)

I4 In order to get maximum benefit from the content, I have to play a proactive role during my interactions (i.e., I have to apply my skill, knowledge, time, etc.)

X1 It is a memorable experience for me (i.e., the memory of the content lasted for quite a while)

X2 Depending upon the nature of my own participation, my experiences of the content might be different from other users

X3 It is possible for a user to improve the experience of the content by experimenting and trying new things

P1 The benefit, value, or fun from the content depends on the user and the usage condition

P2 The podcast producer/host tries to serve the individual needs of each of its users

P3 Different consumers, depending on their taste, choice, or knowledge, involve themselves differently in the content

P4 The podcast producer/host provides an overall good experience, beyond the “functional” benefit

R1 The podcast producer/host’s extended facilitation is necessary for consumers to fully enjoy the content

R2 I feel an attachment or relationship with the podcast producer/host

R3 There is usually a group, a community, or a network of consumers who are a fan of the podcast producer/host

R4 The podcast producer/host is renowned because its users usually spread positive word about it in their social networks

Situational PK (manipulative intent) (Jain and Posovac, 2004) Evaluative Persuasion Knowledge	On a scale from 1 to 7 where 1 is "non-manipulative" and 7 is "manipulative," please give your opinion of the ad you heard.	Bipolar adjective 7-point scale 7-point Likert scale with “1- strongly disagree” and “7 -
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(Bearden et al., 2001)	The offer sounded too good to be true I felt like the advertiser was pressuring me to buy something It felt like the advertiser was using a sales gimmick to get me to buy something The advertiser's offer seemed like it had strings attached I can separate fact from fantasy in the advertiser's offer	strongly agree” anchors
Trait PK (ad avoidance) (Ham et al., 2022)	I intentionally avoid ads in podcasts. I intentionally do not pay attention to ads in podcasts. I skip ahead on podcasts to avoid ads. I take any actions to avoid ads. I intentionally do not respond to podcast ads even if the ads draw my attention.	7-point bipolar adjective with “1 - never” and “7 - always” anchors
Trait PK (dispositional PK) (Bearden et al., 2001)	I know when an offer is too good to be true in general advertising. I can tell when an offer has strings attached in general advertising. I have no trouble understanding the bargaining tactics used in general advertising. I know when an ad is pressuring me to buy in general advertising. I can see through sales gimmicks used to get consumers to buy in general advertising. I can separate fact from fantasy in general advertising.	7-point Likert scale with “1 -strongly disagree” and “7 - strongly agree” anchors
A_{ad} (Wang et al., 2013)	1- Not at all pleasant- 7-Very pleasant; 1-Not at all attractive-7-Very attractive; 1-Not at all likeable-7-Very likeable	7-point bipolar adjective
PI (Spears & Singh, 2004)	When it comes to purchasing from the brand in the ad you just heard... 1-Never-7-Definitely; 1-Definitely do not intent to buy-7-Definitely intend; 1-Very low	7-point bipolar adjective

	purchase interest-7-Very high purchase interest; 1-Definitely not buy it-7Definitely buy it; 1- Probably not buy-7-Probably buy	
A_{brand} (Spears & Singh, 2004)	Thinking about the brand in the ad you just heard... 1- Unappealing - 7-Appealing; 1-Bad - 7-Good; 1-Unpleasant - 7-Pleasant; 1-Unfavorable-7-Favorable; 1-Unlikeable-7-Likeable	7-point bipolar adjective
Media Engagement – Ad Attention (Calder & Malthouse, 2008)	I like the ads as much as the rest of the content in podcasts. (1) I listen to/watch most of the ads in podcasts. (2) I like how colorful the ads are in podcasts. (3) I respond to ads from podcasts more often than most other sites or media I use. (4) Podcasts have ads about things I actually care about. (5) I value the coupon codes and deals in podcasts. (6)	7-point Likert scale with “1- strongly disagree” and “7 - strongly agree” anchors
Media Engagement -Ad Interference (Calder & Malthouse, 2008)	The number of ads makes it harder to listen to/view podcasts. (1) I make a special effort to skip over and avoid listening to/looking at ads. (2) I am annoyed because too many of the ads on podcasts have too much going on. (3) All too often the ads in podcasts are dull or boring. (4) I hate the inserts they put in podcasts. (5) Sometimes the ads in podcasts are overdone or even weird. (6) The ads in podcasts are so similar in style they blend together. (7)	7-point Likert scale with “1- strongly disagree” and “7 - strongly agree” anchors
Engagement – Interaction (Context-		7-point Likert scale with “1- strongly disagree” and “7 -

specific) (Calder et al., 2016)	Podcasts make me feel more connected to other people and the community. I would enjoy talking with someone else about podcasts. I would like to give advice and tips based on what I hear on podcasts. My podcasts would come up in conversations with many other people. Listening to podcasts gives me something to talk about. I feel personally involved with podcasts.	strongly agree” anchors
Engagement – Transportation (Context-specific) (Calder et al., 2016)	Podcasts take my mind off of other things that are going on. Podcasts are a treat for me. I can picture myself at the scenes described in the podcasts I listen to. I lose myself in the pleasure of listening or watching podcasts. I feel less stressed after listening/watching podcasts. Listening to/watching podcasts is my way of not being bothered by other things.	7-point Likert scale with “1- strongly disagree” and “7 - strongly agree” anchors
Engagement – Civic Orientation (context-specific) (Calder et al., 2016)	Listening/watching podcasts makes me a better citizen. I think people who don’t listen/watch podcasts are at a disadvantage in life. Our society would be weaker without podcasts. I count on podcasts to investigate wrongdoing.	7-point Likert scale with “1- strongly disagree” and “7 - strongly agree” anchors
Engagement – Discovery (Context-		7-point Likert scale with “1- strongly disagree” and “7 -

specific) (Calder et al., 2016)	Podcasts are a way to learn about new things. Podcasts show me how other people live their lives. I learn about things to do or places to go through podcasts. You learn how to improve yourself in podcasts. Podcasts give me good tips and advice. Podcasts show me how to do things the right way. I get ideas from watching/listening to podcasts.	strongly agree” anchors
Engagement – Identity (context-specific) (Calder et al., 2016)	A reason I watch/listen to podcasts is to make myself more interesting to other people. Listening to/watching podcasts is a little like belonging to a group. I like for other people to know that I listen to/watch podcasts.	7-point Likert scale with “1- strongly disagree” and “7 - strongly agree” anchors
Information-seeking intention (Spears & Singh, 2004)	I will [1-definitely not. . .7 -definitely] consider contacting Rooted Lifestyle Wear I am [1-very unlikely. . .7-very likely] to gather more information about Rooted Lifestyle Wear I would [1-certainly not. . .7-certainly] consider contacting Rooted Lifestyle Wear for more Information I am [1-very unlikely. . .7-very likely] to visit Rooted Lifestyle Wear’s website for more information It is [1-impossible. . .7-very possible] that I will search for more information about Rooted Lifestyle Wear	7-point bipolar adjective

Results

Main and Interaction Effects of Ad Condition and Serial Ad Placement on Dependent

Variables

H1 predicted that host-read advertisements would result in greater levels of (a) Purchase Intention (PI), (b) Attitude Toward the Brand (A_{brand}), (c) Attitude Toward the Ad (A_{ad}), and (d) Information Seeking Intention (InfoSeek) levels vs. conventional/non-host-read ads. RQ1 asked if there are main effects of serial ad placement (ads at the beginning vs. ads in the middle of the clip) on (a) Purchase Intention (PI), (b) Attitude Toward the Brand (A_{brand}), (c) Attitude Toward the Ad (A_{ad}), and (d) Information Seeking Intention dependent variables. RQ2 asked if there are interaction effects of ad type and ad placement on (a) Purchase Intention (PI), (b) Attitude Toward the Brand (A_{brand}), (c) Attitude Toward the Ad (A_{ad}), and (d) Information Seeking Intention dependent variables. To test these hypotheses and answer these research questions, a series of univariate ANOVAs (with Bonferroni-corrected pairwise comparisons) were performed in SPSS Statistics (v. 29) with ad type (conventional ad, coded as “0,” or host-read, coded as “1”) and serial ad placement (ad placement at the beginning of the clip, coded as “0,” or ad placement in the middle of the clip, coded as “1”) the independent variables, and the relevant dependent variables for each run. Two-way ANOVA was chosen as the initial analytical method rather than one-way ANOVA due to related prior experimental support for the interaction of the two conditions on advertising-related outcome variables (Ritter & Cho, 2009).

Initial analysis of Purchase Intention as the DV (H1a, RQ1a, RQ2a) included entering Education Level and Political Outlook as covariates due to significant correlations with the DV ($r = -.345, p < .001$ and $r = .388, p < .001$, respectively). Results showed a significant overall model ($F[5, 179] = 11.865, p < .001, R^2 = .249$) but a non-significant main effect of ad type

(conventional/non-host-read vs. host-read ad) on purchase intention ($F[1, 179] = .003, p = .954, \eta_p^2 = .000$). However, significant effects were indicated for both the main effect of serial ad placement (ad at beginning/pre-roll vs. middle position) ($F[1, 179] = 4.786, p = .030, \eta_p^2 = .026$) and the interaction of ad type and serial ad placement ($F[1, 179] = 4.204, p = .042, \eta_p^2 = .023$). (Note that both of these effect sizes would be considered rather small using Cohen's [1988] conventional interpretation.) Further examination of serial ad placement main effects revealed a greater level of purchase intention among those exposed to the middle serial ad placement ($M = 5.67, SD = .61, M_{adj} = 5.61, SE = .07$) vs. the beginning ad placement ($M = 5.36, SD = .82, M_{adj} = 5.41, SE = .06$) in support of the "recency" effect. Furthermore, examination of interaction effects revealed those in the conventional/non-host-read ad condition also displayed greater levels of purchase intention ($p = .003$) among those exposed to the middle serial ad placement ($M = 5.63, SD = .63, M_{adj} = 5.70, SE = .09$) vs. the beginning ad placement ($M = 5.40, SD = .76, M_{adj} = 5.30, SE = .09$). No other significant pairwise differences were detected. Therefore, H1a (main effect of ad type on PI) is not supported, but there is support for a main effect of serial ad placement (RQ1a) as well as interaction effects of ad type and serial placement (RQ2a).

Analysis of Attitude Toward the Brand (A_{brand}) as the DV (H1b, RQ1b, RQ2b) also included entering Education Level and Political Outlook as covariates due to significant correlations with the DV ($r = -.313, p < .001$ and $r = .408, p < .001$, respectively). Results showed a significant overall model ($F[5, 180] = 11.084, p < .001, R^2 = .235$) but a non-significant main effect of ad type (conventional/non-host-read vs. host-read ad) on A_{brand} ($F[1, 180] = .549, p = .460, \eta_p^2 = .003$). Non-significant effects were also indicated for the main effect of serial ad placement (beginning vs. middle) ($F[1, 180] = .532, p = .467, \eta_p^2 = .003$). However, the interaction of ad type and serial ad placement was significant ($F[1, 180] = 5.066, p = .026$,

$\eta_p^2 = .027$). Further examination of interaction effects revealed those in the beginning/preroll serial ad condition displayed greater means on A_{brand} ($p = .028$) on the host-read ad condition ($M = 5.60$, $SD = .70$, $M_{\text{adj}} = 5.66$, $SE = .09$) vs. the conventional/non-host-read ad condition ($M = 5.41$, $SD = .86$, $M_{\text{adj}} = 5.36$, $SE = 1.01$); further, those in the conventional/non-host-read ad condition also displayed greater levels of Attitude toward the Brand ($p = .034$) among those exposed to the middle serial ad placement ($M = 5.63$, $SD = .79$, $M_{\text{adj}} = 5.61$, $SE = .10$) vs. the beginning ad placement ($M = 5.41$, $SD = .86$, $M_{\text{adj}} = 5.36$, $SE = .10$). No other significant pairwise differences were detected. Therefore, H1b (main effect of ad type on A_{brand}) is not supported; neither is there support for a main effect of serial ad placement (RQ1b). However there is support for interaction effects of ad type and serial ad placement on Attitude Toward the Brand (RQ2b); further, among those in the beginning/pre-roll group, A_{brand} was greater for host-read vs. conventional ads, in line with the expected main effect of this manipulation.

Analysis of Attitude Toward the Ad (A_{Ad}) as the DV (H1c, RQ1c, RQ2c) also included entering Education Level and Political Outlook as covariates due to significant correlations with the DV ($r = -.157$, $p < .030$ and $r = .277$, $p < .001$, respectively). Results showed a significant overall model ($F[5, 182] = 4.877$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .118$) but a non-significant main effect of ad type (conventional/non-host-read vs. host-read ad) on A_{Ad} ($F[1, 182] = .040$, $p = .841$, $\eta_p^2 = .000$). However, significant effects were also indicated for the main effect of serial ad placement (beginning/pre-roll vs. middle placement) ($F[1, 180] = 5.167$, $p = .024$, $\eta_p^2 = .028$). The interaction of ad type and serial ad placement was not significant ($F[1, 182] = 1.906$, $p = .169$, $\eta_p^2 = .010$). Further examination of serial ad placement main effects revealed those in the middle serial ad condition displayed greater means on A_{Ad} ($p = .024$) ($M = 5.80$, $SD = .71$, $M_{\text{adj}} = 5.79$, $SE = .09$) vs. beginning/preroll serial ad placement condition ($M = 5.52$, $SD = .94$, $M_{\text{adj}} = 5.52$,

$SE = .08$). Therefore, H1c (main effect of ad type on Attitude toward the Ad) is not supported; but is there support for a main effect of serial ad placement on A_{Ad} (RQ1c). No support was found for interaction effects of ad type and serial ad placement on Attitude Toward the Ad (RQ2c).

Analysis of Information Seeking Intention (InfoSeek) as the DV (H1d, RQ1d, RQ2d) included entering overall podcast use as a covariate due to significant correlation with the DV ($r = .365, p < .001$). Results showed a significant overall model ($F[4, 176] = 8.050, p < .001, R^2 = .155$) but a non-significant main effect of ad type (conventional/non-host-read vs. host-read ad) on InfoSeek ($F[1, 176] = .258, p = .612, \eta_p^2 = .001$). However, significant effects were indicated for the main effect of serial ad placement (beginning/pre-roll vs. middle position) ($F[1, 176] = 3.926, p = .049, \eta_p^2 = .022$). The interaction of ad type and serial ad placement was not significant ($F[1, 176] = .115, p = .735, \eta_p^2 = .001$). Further examination of serial ad placement main effects revealed a greater level of Information Seeking Intention ($p = .049$) among those exposed to the middle serial ad placement ($M = 5.60, SD = .68, M_{adj} = 5.60, SE = .08$) vs. the beginning ad placement ($M = 5.40, SD = .80, M_{adj} = 5.40, SE = .07$), again in support of the “recency” effect. Therefore, H1d (main effect of ad type on InfoSeek) is not supported, but there is support for a main effect of serial ad placement (RQ1d). No support was found for interaction effects of ad type and serial ad placement on InfoSeek (RQ2d).

Mediation/Relationship of PK Measures

Evaluative Persuasion Knowledge

H2a predicted Evaluative Persuasion Knowledge (EvalPK) mediates effects of ad type (conventional/non-host-read vs. host-read) on Purchase Intention. First, assumptions for regression were examined with respect to PI as the DV. Evidence for linearity was obtained

through examination of residuals vs. IV plots, along with a non-significant Deviation from Linearity test ($p = .433$) via the Means menu in SPSS. Evidence for normality was obtained via examination of a normal probability plot of standardized residuals. Evidence for homogeneity of variances across groups was obtained via the nonsignificant result of the traditional Levene's test ($p = .208$) and via the nonsignificant result of the White test ($p = .219$). There is no evidence of multicollinearity among independent variables ($r = -.089$, $p = .220$). No outliers were detected, with no studentized residuals greater than 3 in absolute value (Pituch & Stevens, 2016).

Hayes' PROCESS Macro for SPSS (Hayes, 2022) Model 4 was utilized to test the hypothesis (as well as the rest in the current series) with ad type the Independent, Evaluative Persuasion Knowledge the mediator, and Purchase Intention the Y, with serial ad placement as a covariate following Hayes' guidance for treatment of a 2x2 mediation model (2022). (Also please note that when reporting b coefficients, we will adhere to the advice of Hayes [2022] and report unstandardized coefficients due to the dichotomous X variables throughout this discussion.) Results rendered a significant model predicting EvalPK ($F[2,183] = 3.4168$, $p = .0349$, $R^2 = .036$) and predicting PI ($F[3,182] = 53.459$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .468$) with EvalPK a significant individual predictor ($b = .6335$, $SE = .0792$, $p < .001$), but no significant path was detected between the IV and mediator. (see Table 5 below). H2a is unsupported.

Table 5: Mediation Analysis Summary: Ad Type -> Evaluative PK -> Purchase Intention

Effect	b	SE	LLCI	ULCI
a: Ad Type -> EvalPK	.0555	.1106	-.1626	.2736
b: EvalPK -> PI	.6335	.0518	.5313	.7357
c (total): Ad Type -> PI	.0367	.1043	-.1690	.2424
c' (direct): Ad Type -> PI	.0015	.0775	-.1514	.1545

ab (indirect): Ad Type -> EvalPK -> PI	.0351	.0171	-.1050	.1798
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EvalPK model: $F(2,183) = 3.4168, p = .0349, R^2 = .036$

Purchase Intention model: $F(3,182) = 53.459, p < .001, R^2 = .468$

Note: Serial Ad Placement entered as covariate. Indirect CIs derived from 5000 bootstrap samples.

Tested similarly to the above, H2b predicted Evaluative Persuasion Knowledge (EvalPK) mediates effects of ad type (conventional/non-host-read vs. host-read) on Attitude Toward the Brand. Assumptions for regression were examined with respect to Attitude Toward the Brand (A_{brand}) as the DV. Evidence for linearity was obtained through examination of residuals vs. IV plots, along with a non-significant Deviation from Linearity test ($p = .377$) via the Means menu in SPSS. Evidence for normality was obtained via examination of a normal probability plot of standardized residuals. Evidence for homogeneity of variances across groups was obtained via the nonsignificant result of the traditional Levene's test ($p = .894$) and via the nonsignificant result of the White test ($p = .108$). Again, there is no evidence of multicollinearity among independent variables ($r = -.089, p = .220$), and no outliers were detected, with no studentized residuals greater than 3 in absolute value (Pituch & Stevens, 2016). Results rendered a model predicting EvalPK that was near conventional significance ($F[2,185] = 2.707, p = .069, R^2 = .028$) and significantly predicting A_{Brand} ($F[3,184] = 40.048, p < .001, R^2 = .395$) with EvalPK a significant individual predictor ($b = .6408, SE = .0591, p < .001$), but no significant path was detected between the IVs and mediator (see Table 6 below). H2b is unsupported.

Table 6: *Mediation Analysis Summary: Ad Type -> Evaluative PK -> A_{Brand}*

Effect	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	LLCI	ULCI
a: Ad Type -> EvalPK	.0401	.1104	-.1777	.2579
b: EvalPK -> A_{Brand}	.6408	.0591	.5242	.7573

c (total): Ad Type -> A_{Brand}	.1028	.1133	-.1207	.3263
c' (direct): Ad Type -> A_{Brand}	.0771	.0888	-.0980	.2522
ab (indirect): Ad Type -> EvalPK -> A_{Brand}	.0257	.0712	-.1190	.1626
EvalPK model: $F(2,185) = 2.707, p = .069, R^2 = .028$				
A_{Brand} model: $F(3,184) = 40.048, p < .001, R^2 = .395$				

Note: Serial Ad Placement entered as covariate. Indirect CIs derived from 5000 bootstrap samples.

Again tested similarly, H2c predicted Evaluative Persuasion Knowledge (EvalPK) mediates effects of ad type (conventional/non-host-read vs. host-read) on Attitude Toward the Ad. Assumptions for regression were also examined with respect to Attitude Toward the Ad (A_{Ad}) as the DV. Evidence for linearity was obtained through examination of residuals vs. IV plots, along with a non-significant Deviation from Linearity test ($p = .533$) via the Means menu in SPSS. Evidence for normality was obtained via examination of a normal probability plot of standardized residuals. Evidence for homogeneity of variances across groups was obtained via the nonsignificant result of the traditional Levene's test ($p = .484$) and via the nonsignificant result of the White test ($p = .796$). Again, there is no evidence of multicollinearity among independent variables ($r = -.089, p = .220$). Two outliers were detected with studentized residuals greater than 3 in absolute value, however further examination revealed Cook's D values well below the traditional 1 cutoff (Pituch & Stevens, 2016) and leverage values below the conservative 2 x mean leverage value cutoff (Hoaglin & Welsch, 1978) and the cases were retained for analysis. Results again rendered a model predicting EvalPK that was near conventional significance levels ($F[2,186] = 2.858, p = .060, R^2 = .030$) and significantly predicting A_{Ad} $F[3,185] = 25.579, p < .001, R^2 = .293$) with EvalPK a significant individual predictor ($b = .5880, SE = .0708, p < .001$), but no significant path was detected between the IVs and mediator (see Table 7 below). H2c is unsupported.

Table 7: Mediation Analysis Summary: Ad Type -> Evaluative PK -> A_{Ad}

Effect	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	LLCI	ULCI
a: Ad Type -> EvalPK	.0343	.1099	-.1826	.2512
b: EvalPK -> A_{Ad}	.5880	.0708	.4482	.7277
c (total): Ad Type -> A_{Ad}	-.0095	.1241	-.2543	.2353
c' (direct): Ad Type -> A_{Ad}	-.0297	.1062	-.2392	.1799
ab (indirect): Ad Type -> EvalPK -> A_{Ad}	.0201	.0671	-.1166	.1485
EvalPK model: $F(12,186) = 2.858, p = .060, R^2 = .030$				
A_{Ad} model: $F(3,185) = 25.579, p < .001, R^2 = .293$				

Note: Serial Ad Placement entered as covariate. Indirect CIs derived from 5000 bootstrap samples.

Again tested similarly, H2d predicted Evaluative Persuasion Knowledge (EvalPK) mediates effects of ad type (conventional/non-host-read vs. host-read) on Information Seeking Intention. Assumptions for regression were examined with respect to InfoSeek as the DV. Evidence for linearity was obtained through examination of residuals vs. IV plots, along with a non-significant Deviation from Linearity test ($p = .830$) via the Means menu in SPSS. Evidence for normality was obtained via examination of a normal probability plot of standardized residuals. Evidence for homogeneity of variances across groups was obtained via the nonsignificant result of the traditional Levene's test ($p = .398$) and via the nonsignificant result of the White test ($p = .572$). Again, there is no evidence of multicollinearity among independent variables ($r = -.089, p = .220$). No outliers were detected, with no studentized residuals greater than 3 in absolute value (Pituch & Stevens, 2016). Results rendered a significant model predicting EvalPK ($F[2,184] = 3.170, p = .044, R^2 = .033$) and significantly predicting InfoSeek ($F[3,183] = 47.873, p < .001, R^2 = .440$) with EvalPK a significant individual predictor ($b =$

.6405, $SE = .0546$, $p < .001$), but no significant path was detected between the IVs and mediator (see Table 8). H2d is unsupported.

Table 8: *Mediation Analysis Summary: Ad Type -> Evaluative PK -> Information Seeking Intention*

Effect	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	LLCI	ULCI
a: Ad Type -> EvalPK	.0316	.1108	-.1870	.2502
b: EvalPK -> InfoSeek	.6405	.0546	.5327	.7483
c (total): Ad Type -> InfoSeek	-.0455	.1084	-.2593	.1683
c' (direct): Ad Type -> InfoSeek	-.0658	.0821	-.2278	.0963
ab (indirect): Ad Type -> EvalPK -> InfoSeek	.0202	.0725	-.1211	.1632
EvalPK model: $F(2,184) = 3.170$, $p = .044$, $R^2 = .033$				
InfoSeek model: $F(3, 183) = 47.873$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .440$				

Note: Serial Ad Placement entered as covariate. Indirect CIs derived from 5000 bootstrap samples.

RQ3a sought to ascertain whether EvalPK mediated the relationship between serial ad placement (beginning/pre-roll vs. middle) and Purchase Intention. Similarly to the above, Hayes' PROCESS Macro for SPSS (Hayes, 2022) Model 4 was utilized to analyze results (as well as the rest in the current series) with serial ad placement the Independent, EvalPK the mediator, and Purchase Intention the Y, with Condition 1 as a covariate following Hayes' guidance for treatment of a 2x2 mediation model (2022). Results rendered a significant model predicting EvalPK ($F[2,183] = 3.4168$, $p = .0349$, $R^2 = .036$) with serial ad placement a significant individual predictor ($b = .2884$, $SE = .1110$, $p = .010$), and a significant model predicting Purchase Intention $F[3,182] = 53.549$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .468$) with EvalPK a significant individual predictor ($b = .6335$, $SE = .0518$, $p < .001$). The indirect effect of serial ad placement on Purchase Intention (derived from 5000 bootstrap samples) is thus $b = .1827$, $SE = .0797$, 95% CI

[.0383, .3585] and significant. Further, serial ad placement was a non-significant individual predictor of Purchase Intention ($b = .0724$, $SE = .0792$, $p = .362$), indicating possible evidence for EvalPK's full mediation of serial ad placement on PI. Holding ad type (conventional vs. host-read) constant, as serial ad placement moves from beginning to middle, Purchase Intention increases by .1827, as mediated by EvalPK (see Table 9).

Table 9: Mediation Analysis Summary: Serial Ad Placement -> Evaluative PK -> Purchase Intention

Effect	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	LLCI	ULCI
a: Serial Ad Placement -> EvalPK	.2884	.1110	.0695	.5073
b: EvalPK -> PI	.6335	.0518	.5313	.7357
c (total): Serial Ad Placement -> PI	.2550	.1046	.0486	.4615
c' (direct): Serial Ad Placement -> PI	.0724	.0792	-.0839	.2286
ab (indirect): Serial Ad Placement -> EvalPK -> PI	.1827	.0787	.0379	.3450
EvalPK model: $F(2,183) = 3.4168$, $p = .035$, $R^2 = .036$				
Purchase Intention model: $F(3,182) = 53.549$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .468$				

Note: Ad Type entered as covariate. Indirect CIs derived from 5000 bootstrap samples.

Similarly, RQ3b sought to ascertain whether EvalPK mediated the relationship between serial ad placement (beginning/pre-roll vs. middle) and Attitude Toward the Brand. Initial results rendered a nonsignificant model predicting EvalPK ($F[2,185] = 2.7070$, $p = .0694$, $R^2 = .028$) though it was near conventional significance. A second run adding Education Level and Political Outlook as covariates (as before) due to significant correlations with the DV rendered a significant model predicting EvalPK ($F[4,181] = 9.4943$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .173$) with serial ad placement a significant individual predictor ($b = .2455$, $SE = .1035$, $p = .019$), and a significant

model predicting A_{Brand} $F[5,180] = 29.224, p < .001, R^2 = .448$) with EvalPK a significant individual predictor ($b = .5351, SE = .0612, p < .001$). The unstandardized indirect effect of serial ad placement on A_{Brand} (derived from 5000 bootstrap samples) is thus $b = .1314, SE = .0642, 95\% \text{ CI } [.0224, .2687]$ and significant. Further, serial ad placement was a non-significant individual predictor of PI ($b = .0782, SE = .1015, p = .441$), indicating possible evidence for EvalPK's full mediation of serial ad placement on A_{brand} . Holding ad type (conventional vs. host-read), education level, and political outlook constant, as serial ad placement moves from beginning to middle, A_{brand} increases by .1314, as mediated by EvalPK (see Table 10).

Table 10: *Mediation Analysis Summary: Serial Ad Placement -> Evaluative PK -> A_{brand}*

Effect	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	LLCI	ULCI
a: Serial Ad Placement -> EvalPK	.2455	.1035	.0413	.4497
b: EvalPK -> A_{brand}	.5351	.0612	.4143	.6560
c (total): Serial Ad Placement -> A_{brand}	.0782	.1015	-.1220	.2785
c' (direct): Serial Ad Placement -> A_{brand}	-.0531	.0866	-.2240	.1177
ab (indirect): Serial Ad Placement -> EvalPK -> A_{brand}	.1314	.0647	.0166	.2687
EvalPK model: $F(4,181) = 9.4943, p < .001, R^2 = .173$				
A_{brand} model: $F(5,180) = 29.224, p < .001, R^2 = .448$				

Note: Ad Type, Political Outlook, and Education entered as covariate. Indirect CIs derived from 5000 bootstrap samples.

Similarly, RQ3c sought to ascertain whether EvalPK mediated the relationship between serial ad placement (beginning/pre-roll vs. middle) and Attitude Toward the Ad. Initial results rendered a conventionally nonsignificant model predicting EvalPK ($F[2,186] = 2.858, p = .0599, R^2 = .030$) though it was near conventional significance. A second run adding Education Level and Political Outlook as covariates (as before) due to significant correlations with the DV

rendered a significant model predicting EvalPK ($F[4,182] = 9.3422, p < .001, R^2 = .170$) with serial ad placement a significant individual predictor ($b = .2519, SE = .1032, p = .016$), and a significant model predicting A_{ad} ($F[5,181] = 15.790, p < .001, R^2 = .304$) with EvalPK a significant individual predictor ($b = .5446, SE = .0766, p < .001$). The unstandardized indirect effect of serial ad placement on PI (derived from 5000 bootstrap samples) is thus $b = .1372, SE = .0677, 95\% CI [.0201, .2829]$ and significant. serial ad placement was also significant individual predictor of PI ($b = .2701, SE = .1203, p = .026$) in this model. Holding ad type (conventional vs. host-read), education level, and political outlook constant, as serial ad placement moves from beginning to middle, A_{ad} increases by .1372, as mediated by EvalPK (see Table 11).

Table 11: *Mediation Analysis Summary: Serial Ad Placement -> Evaluative PK -> A_{ad}*

Effect	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	LLCI	ULCI
a: Serial Ad Placement -> EvalPK	.2519	.1032	.0482	.4556
b: EvalPK -> A_{ad}	.5446	.0766	.3935	.6958
c (total): Serial Ad Placement -> A_{ad}	.2701	.1203	.0326	.5075
c' (direct): Serial Ad Placement -> A_{ad}	.1329	.1084	-.0810	.3468
ab (indirect): Serial Ad Placement -> EvalPK -> A_{ad}	.1372	.0673	.0227	.2802
EvalPK model: $F(4,182) = 9.3422, p < .001, R^2 = .170$				
A_{ad} model: $F(5,181) = 15.790, p < .001, R^2 = .304$				

Note: Ad Type, Political Outlook, and Education entered as covariate. Indirect CIs derived from 5000 bootstrap samples.

Finally, RQ3d sought to ascertain whether EvalPK mediated the relationship between serial ad placement (beginning/pre-roll vs. middle) and Information Seeking Intention. Results rendered a significant model predicting EvalPK ($F[2,184] = 3.171, p = .044, R^2 = .033$) with serial ad placement a significant individual predictor ($b = .2795, SE = .1110, p = .013$), and a

significant model predicting InfoSeek $F[3,183] = 47.873, p < .001, R^2 = .440$) with EvalPK a significant individual predictor ($b = .6405, SE = .0546, p < .001$). The indirect effect of serial ad placement on PI (derived from 5000 bootstrap samples) is thus $b = .1790, SE = .0795, 95\% CI [.0350, .3444]$ and significant. Further, serial ad placement was a non-significant individual predictor of InfoSeek ($b = .1926, SE = .1085, p = .078$), indicating possible evidence for EvalPK's full mediation of serial ad placement on InfoSeek. Holding ad type (conventional vs. host-read) constant, as serial ad placement moves from beginning to middle, Information Seeking Intention increases by .1790, as mediated by EvalPK (see Table 12).

Table 12: *Mediation Analysis Summary: Serial Ad Placement -> Evaluative PK -> Information Seeking Intention*

Effect	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	LLCI	ULCI
a: Serial Ad Placement -> EvalPK	.2795	.1110	.0605	.4984
b: EvalPK -> InfoSeek	.6405	.0546	.5327	.7483
c (total): Serial Ad Placement -> InfoSeek	.1926	.1085	-.0215	.4067
c' (direct): Serial Ad Placement -> InfoSeek	.0136	.0836	-.1514	.1786
ab (indirect): Serial Ad Placement -> EvalPK -> InfoSeek	.1790	.0772	.0369	.3391

EvalPK model: $F(2,184) = 3.171, p = .044, R^2 = .033$

InfoSeek model: $F(3,183) = 47.873, p < .001, R^2 = .440$

Note: Ad Type entered as covariate. Indirect CIs derived from 5000 bootstrap samples.

RQ5a asked if there was a relationship between ad type and/or serial ad placement on Evaluative PK perceptions. To answer these research questions, a series of univariate ANOVAs (with Bonferroni-corrected pairwise comparisons) were performed in SPSS Statistics (v. 29) with ad type (conventional ad, coded as "0," or host-read, coded as "1") and serial ad placement (ad

placed at the beginning of the clip, coded as “0,” or ad placement in the middle of the clip, coded as “1”) the independent variables, and EvalPK as the dependent variable. Initial analysis included entering Education Level and Political Outlook as covariates due to significant correlations with the DV ($r = -.285, p < .001$ and $r = .334, p < .001$, respectively). Results showed a significant overall model ($F[5, 184] = 8.324, p < .001, R^2 = .184$) but a non-significant main effect of ad type (conventional/non-host-read vs. host-read ad) on EvalPK ($F[1, 184] = .098, p = .754, \eta_p^2 = .001$). However, significant effects were indicated for the main effect of serial ad placement (ad placement beginning/pre-roll vs. middle position) ($F[1, 184] = 6.140, p = .014, \eta_p^2 = .032$). The interaction of ad type and serial ad placement was not significant ($F[1, 184] = 1.382, p = .241, \eta_p^2 = .007$). Further examination of serial ad placement main effects revealed a greater level of EvalPK ($p = .014$) among those exposed to the middle serial ad placement ($M = 5.71, SD = .71, M_{adj} = 5.69, SE = .08$) vs. the beginning ad placement ($M = 5.44, SD = .78, M_{adj} = 5.44, SE = .07$) in support of the “recency” effect. Furthermore, though significant interaction effects were not detected via the initial ANOVA, examination of pairwise comparisons revealed those in the conventional/non-host-read ad condition also displayed greater levels of EvalPK ($p = .003$) among those exposed to the middle serial ad placement ($M = 5.71, SD = .71, M_{adj} = 5.74, SE = .10$) vs. the beginning ad placement ($M = 5.46, SD = .68, M_{adj} = 5.36, SE = .10$); whereas no significant differences on EvalPK were detected among those exposed to the host-read ad condition. No other significant pairwise differences were detected.

Situational Persuasion Knowledge (Manipulative Intent)

H3a predicted Situational Persuasion Knowledge in the form of Manipulative Intent (MI) mediates effects of ad type (conventional/non-host-read vs. host-read) manipulation on Purchase Intention to a greater degree in the conventional/non-host-read condition. Again, Hayes’

PROCESS Macro for SPSS (Hayes, 2022) Model 4 was utilized to test the hypothesis (as well as the rest in the current series) with ad type the Independent, MI the mediator, and PI the Y, with serial ad placement as a covariate following Hayes' guidance for treatment of a 2x2 mediation model (2022). Results rendered a nonsignificant model predicting Manipulative Intent ($F[2,176] = .3181, p = .728, R^2 = .004$) and a significant model predicting Purchase Intention $F[3,175] = 17.985, p < .001, R^2 = .485$) with MI a significant individual predictor ($b = .3126, SE = .0470, p < .001$), but no significant path was detected from ad type to MI ($b = .0268, SE = .01501, p = .859$); bootstrap results (based on 5000 samples) also indicated a non-significant indirect effect ($b = .0084, SE = .0491, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.0849, .1165]$). H3a is unsupported.

H3b predicted Situational Persuasion Knowledge in the form of Manipulative Intent (MI) mediates effects of ad type (conventional/non-host-read vs. host-read) manipulation on Attitude Toward the Brand (A_{brand}) to a greater degree in the conventional/non-host-read condition. Results rendered a nonsignificant model predicting MI ($F[2,177] = .3232, p = .724, R^2 = .004$) and a significant model predicting A_{brand} $F[3,176] = 15.984, p < .001, R^2 = .462$) with MI a significant individual predictor ($b = .3366, SE = .0506, p < .001$), but no significant path was detected from ad type to MI ($b = .0023, SE = .1506, p = .988$); bootstrap results (based on 5000 samples) also indicated a non-significant indirect effect ($b = .0008, SE = .0523, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.0931, .1171]$). H3b is unsupported.

H3c predicted Situational Persuasion Knowledge in the form of Manipulative Intent (MI) mediates effects of ad type (conventional/non-host-read vs. host-read) manipulation on Attitude Toward the Ad (A_{ad}) to a greater degree in the conventional/non-host-read condition. Results rendered a nonsignificant model predicting MI ($F[2,179] = .4598, p = .632, R^2 = .005$) and a significant model predicting A_{ad} $F[3,178] = 5.1311, p = .002, R^2 = .080$) with MI a significant

individual predictor ($b = .1887$, $SE = .0618$, $p = .003$), but no significant path was detected from ad type to MI ($b = .0160$, $SE = .1481$, $p = .914$); bootstrap results (based on 5000 samples) also indicated a non-significant indirect effect ($b = .0030$, $SE = .0323$, 95% CI $[-.0527, .0847]$). H3c is not supported.

H3d predicted Situational Persuasion Knowledge in the form of Manipulative Intent (MI) mediates effects of ad type (conventional/non-host-read vs. host-read) manipulation on Information Seeking Intention (InfoSeek) to a greater degree in the conventional/non-host-read condition. Results rendered a nonsignificant model predicting MI ($F[2,177] = .3544$, $p = .702$, $R^2 = .004$) and a significant model predicting InfoSeek $F[3,176] = 15.245$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .206$) with MI a significant individual predictor ($b = .3122$, $SE = .0496$, $p < .001$), but no significant path was detected from ad type to MI ($b = -.0324$, $SE = .1487$, $p = .828$); bootstrap results (based on 5000 samples) also indicated a non-significant indirect effect ($b = -.0101$, $SE = .0667$, 95% CI $[-.1410, .1288]$). This was in the expected direction, but due to the insignificant coefficient and model, H3d is not supported.

RQ4a sought to ascertain whether MI mediated the relationship between serial ad placement (serial ad placement: beginning/pre-roll vs. middle) and Purchase Intention. Similarly to the above, Hayes' PROCESS Macro for SPSS (Hayes, 2022) Model 4 was utilized to analyze results (as well as the rest in the current series) with serial ad placement the Independent, MI the mediator, and PI the Y, with ad type as a covariate following Hayes' guidance for treatment of a 2x2 mediation model (2022). Results rendered a nonsignificant model predicting MI ($F[2,176] = .3181$, $p = .7279$, $R^2 = .004$) and a significant model predicting PI $F[3,175] = 17.985$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .485$) with MI a significant individual predictor ($b = .3126$, $SE = .0470$, $p < .001$), but no significant path was detected from serial ad placement to MI ($b = .1190$, $SE = .1507$, $p = .431$);

bootstrap results (based on 5000 samples) also indicated a non-significant indirect effect ($b = .0372$, $SE = .0502$, 95% CI $[-.0483, .1507]$). Thus there is not support for the mediation of MI on serial ad placement's relationship to PI.

RQ4b sought to ascertain whether MI mediated the relationship between serial ad placement (beginning/pre-roll vs. middle) and Attitude Toward the Brand (A_{brand}). Results rendered a nonsignificant model predicting MI ($F[2,177] = .3232$, $p = .7243$, $R^2 = .004$) and a significant model predicting Attitude Toward the Brand (A_{brand}) $F[3,176] = 15.985$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .214$) with MI a significant individual predictor ($b = .3366$, $SE = .0506$, $p < .001$), but no significant path was detected from serial ad placement to MI ($b = .1208$, $SE = .1509$, $p = .425$); bootstrap results (based on 5000 samples) also indicated a non-significant indirect effect ($b = .0407$, $SE = .0535$, 95% CI $[-.0535, .1625]$). Thus there is not support for the mediation of MI on serial ad placement's relationship to Attitude Toward the Brand (A_{brand}).

RQ4c sought to ascertain whether MI mediated the relationship between serial ad placement (beginning/pre-roll vs. middle) and Attitude Toward the Ad (A_{ad}). Results rendered a nonsignificant model predicting MI ($F[2,179] = .4598$, $p = .632$, $R^2 = .005$) and a significant model predicting A_{ad} ($F[3,178] = 5.1311$, $p = .002$, $R^2 = .080$) with MI a significant individual predictor ($b = .1887$, $SE = .0618$, $p = .003$), but no significant path was detected from serial ad placement to MI ($b = .1423$, $SE = .1484$, $p = .339$); bootstrap results (based on 5000 samples) also indicated a non-significant indirect effect ($b = .0269$, $SE = .0362$, 95% CI $[-.0245, .1156]$). Thus there is not support for the mediation of MI on serial ad placement's relationship to A_{ad} .

RQ4d sought to ascertain whether MI mediated the relationship between serial ad placement (beginning/pre-roll vs. middle) and InfoSeek. Results rendered a nonsignificant model predicting MI ($F[2,177] = .3544$, $p = .702$, $R^2 = .004$) and a significant model predicting

InfoSeek ($F[3,176] = 15.254, p < .001, R^2 = .206$) with MI a significant individual predictor ($b = .3122, SE = .0496, p < .001$), but no significant path was detected from serial ad placement to MI ($b = .1173, SE = .1490, p = .432$); bootstrap results (based on 5000 samples) also indicated a non-significant indirect effect ($b = .0366, SE = .0661, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.0686, .1973]$). Thus there is not support for the mediation of MI on serial ad placement's relationship to Information Seeking Intention.

RQ5b asked if there was a relationship between ad type and/or serial ad placement on Manipulative Intent perceptions. To answer this research question, a univariate ANOVA (with Bonferroni-corrected pairwise comparisons) were performed in SPSS Statistics (v. 29) with ad type (conventional ad, coded as "0," or host-read, coded as "1") and serial ad placement (ad at the beginning of the clip, coded as "0," or ad placement in the middle of the clip, coded as "1") the independent variables, and MI as the dependent variable. Initial analysis included entering Education Level and Political Outlook as covariates due to significant correlations with the DV ($r = -.193, p = .009$ and $r = .184, p = .013$, respectively). Results showed a significant overall model ($F[5, 177] = 2.272, p = .049, R^2 = .060$) but a non-significant main effect of ad type (conventional/non-host-read vs. host-read ad) on MI ($F[1, 177] = .002, p = .965, \eta_p^2 < .001$). Similarly, significant effects were not indicated for the main effect of serial ad placement (beginning/pre-roll vs. middle ad position) ($F[1, 177] = .536, p = .465, \eta_p^2 = .003$). The interaction of ad type and serial ad placement was not significant ($F[1, 177] = .486, p = .487, \eta_p^2 = .003$). There is no support for a relationship between the various experimental conditions and perceptions of Manipulative Intent.

Trait Persuasion Knowledge Measures as Antecedents of Situational Persuasion Knowledge

H4 predicted that Trait PK measures 1) Dispositional PK and 2) Ad Avoidance will be related to (a) Evaluative PK and (b) Manipulative Intent perceptions. A regression with Dispositional PK as the IV and Evaluative PK the dependent rendered a significant model $F[1, 188] = 7.580, p = .006, R^2 = .039$ with Dispositional PK significant as a predictor ($b = .137, SE = .050, p = .006$), that is, Dispositional PK significantly explains 3.9% of the variance in Evaluative PK. H4-1a is supported. Next, a regression with Ad Avoidance as the IV and Evaluative PK the dependent rendered a significant model $F[1, 187] = 5.349, p = .022, R^2 = .028$ with Ad Avoidance significant as a predictor ($b = .100, SE = .043, p = .022$), that is, Ad Avoidance significantly explains 2.8% of the variance in Evaluative PK. H4-1b is supported. Next, a regression with Dispositional PK as the IV and Manipulative Intent the dependent rendered a nonsignificant model $F[1, 181] = 3.356, p = .069, R^2 = .018$ with Dispositional PK as a predictor that was near conventional significance ($b = .123, SE = .067, p = .069$). H4-2a is not supported. Next, a regression with Ad Avoidance as the IV and Manipulative Intent the dependent rendered a significant model $F[1, 180] = 7.292, p = .008, R^2 = .039$ with Ad Avoidance as a predictor significant ($b = .154, SE = .057, p = .008$); Ad Avoidance significantly predicts 3.9% of the variance in Manipulative Intent perceptions. H4-2b is thus supported.

Moderation of Engagement

H5 predicted podcast engagement moderates user perceptions of (a) Purchase Intention (PI), (b) Attitude Toward the Brand (A_{brand}), (c) Attitude Toward the Ad (A_{ad}), and (d) Information Seeking Intention dependent variables for a brand's advertisements in podcasts. To test H5, a series of analyses utilizing Hayes' PROCESS Macro (Hayes, 2022) for SPSS (Model 3) was performed with ad type (conventional/non-host-read vs. host-read ad) the W, serial ad placement (beginning/pre-roll vs. middle/mid-roll) the Z, Engagement (ENG) the X,

and the relevant DV the Y. This model and setup was chosen because it is functionally/mathematically equivalent to a model that tests a 2x2 IV with a moderator and a focal DV (Hayes, 2022) and has the advantage of testing for moderation of interaction of the IVs.

For H5a (Engagement's moderation of the IVs' effect on Purchase Intention), analysis showed a significant overall model ($F[7, 163] = 16.812, p < .001, R^2 = .419$), and significant moderation of ad type (conventional/non-host-read vs. host-read) on PI ($b = -.3677, SE = .1434, p = .011$). ENG also emerged as a positive significant individual predictor of PI ($b = .7525, SE = .1078, p < .001$). None of the other interactions/predictors were significant. See Table 13 below.

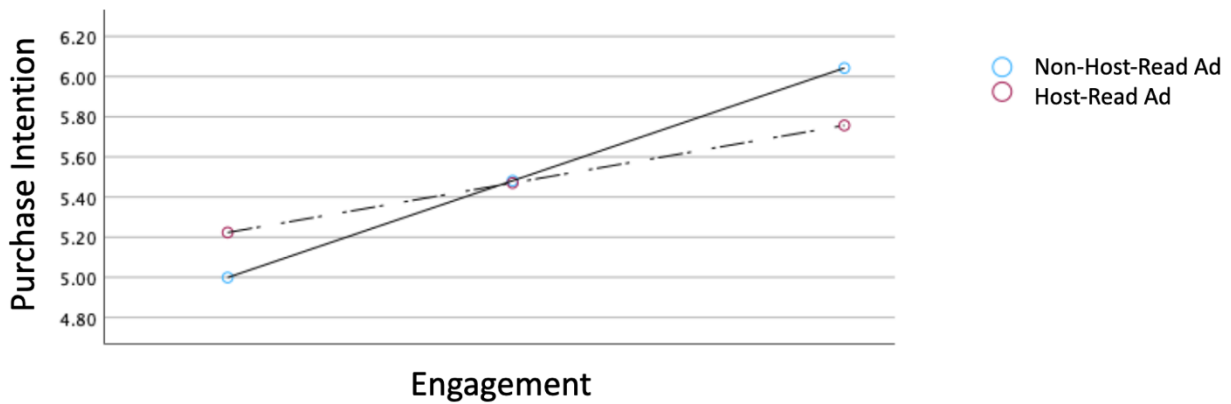
Table 13: *Moderator Analysis: Engagement's Moderation of the IVs' effect on Purchase Intention*

Effect	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	5.4588	.0432	63.1770	.0000
Engagement	.7525	.1078	6.9776	.0000
Ad Type	-.0005	.1166	-.0047	.9963
Engagement x Ad Type	-.3677	.1434	-2.5644	.0112
Serial Ad Placement	.1739	.1220	1.4260	.1558
Engagement x Serial Ad Placement	.0220	.1853	.1188	.9056
Ad Type x Serial Ad Placement	-.0183	.1735	-.1055	.9161
Engagement x Ad Type x Serial Ad Placement	.3001	.2740	1.0953	.2750
Overall model: $F(7, 163) = 16.812, p < .001, R^2 = .419$				

Examination of interaction plots of predictors at the 16th, 50th, and 84th percentiles showed Engagement's moderation of PI to be greater for those in the host-read ad condition

when Engagement is lower, that is, the relative moderation effect of ENG decreases for host-read ads relative to non-host-read ads as ENG increases. This is in line with prior research on engagement and supports the notion that host-read ads rely less on Engagement as it increases to drive PI relative to non-host-read ads. See Figure 2 below. H5a is supported.

Figure 2: *Moderation of Engagement on Purchase Intention*



For H5b (Engagement's moderation of the IVs' effect on Attitude Toward the Brand), analysis again showed a significant overall model ($F[7, 163] = 16.992, p < .001, R^2 = .422$), and significant moderation of ad type (conventional/non-host-read vs. host-read) on PI ($b = -.4864, SE = .1488, p = .001$). ENG also emerged as a significant positive individual predictor of A_{Brand} ($b = .8443, SE = .1122, p < .001$). None of the other interactions/predictors were significant. See Table 14.

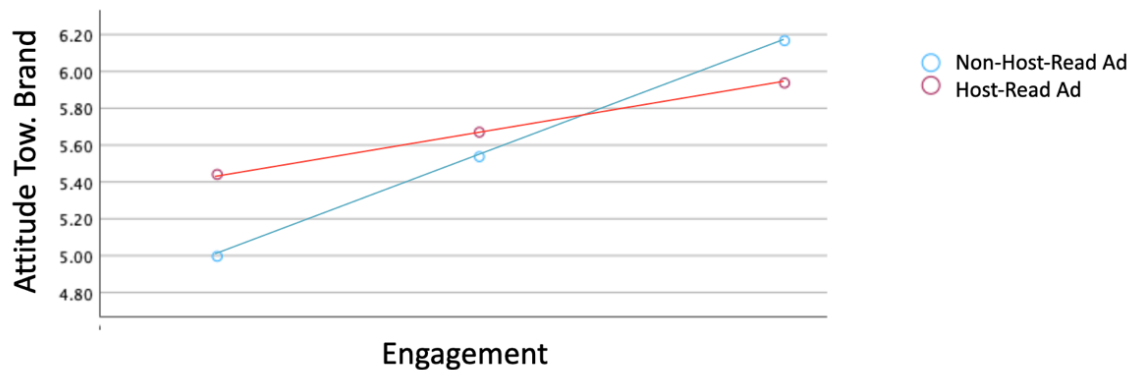
Table 14: *Moderator Analysis: Engagement's Moderation of the IVs' effect on A_{Brand}*

Effect	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	5.5043	.0906	60.7579	.0000
Engagement	.8443	.1122	7.5256	.0000
Ad Type	.1519	.1210	1.2550	.2113

Engagement x Ad Type	-.4864	.1488	-3.2688	.0013
Serial Ad Placement	.1484	.1245	1.1921	.2350
Engagement x Serial Ad Placement	-.1041	.1723	-.6039	.5467
Ad Type x Serial Ad Placement	-.1958	.1774	-1.1038	.2713
Engagement x Ad Type x Serial Ad Placement	.3887	.2652	1.4656	.1447
Overall model: $F(7, 163) = 16.992, p < .001, R^2 = .422$				

Examination of interaction plots of predictors at the 16th, 50th, and 84th percentiles showed Engagement's moderation of A_{brand} to be greater for those in the host-read ad condition when A_{brand} is lower, that is, the relative moderation effect of ENG decreases for host-read ads relative to non-host-read/conventional ads as A_{brand} increases. See Figure 3 below. H5b is supported.

Figure 3: *Moderation of Engagement on Attitude Toward the Brand*



For H5c (Engagement's moderation of the IVs' effect on Attitude Toward the Ad), analysis again showed a significant overall model ($F[7, 166] = 6.108, p < .001, R^2 = .204$), however, no significant moderation effects were detected. ENG did again emerge as a significant positive individual predictor of A_{ad} ($b = .6305, SE = .1242, p < .001$). None of the other

interactions/predictors were significant, though serial ad placement was near conventional significance ($b = .3109$, $SE = .1718$, $p = .072$). H5c is not supported.

For H5d (Engagement's moderation of the IVs' effect on Information Seeking Intention), analysis again showed a significant overall model ($F[7, 164] = 17.1513$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .423$), and significant moderation of ad type (conventional/non-host-read vs. host-read) on InfoSeek ($b = -.4614$, $SE = .1489$, $p = .002$) as well as significant moderation of the interaction effect of ad type and serial ad placement (beginning/pre-roll vs. middle/mid-roll) ($b = .6025$, $SE = .2662$, $p = .025$). ENG again emerged as a significant positive individual predictor of InfoSeek ($b = .8234$, $SE = .1115$, $p < .001$). None of the other interactions/predictors were significant. See Table 15.

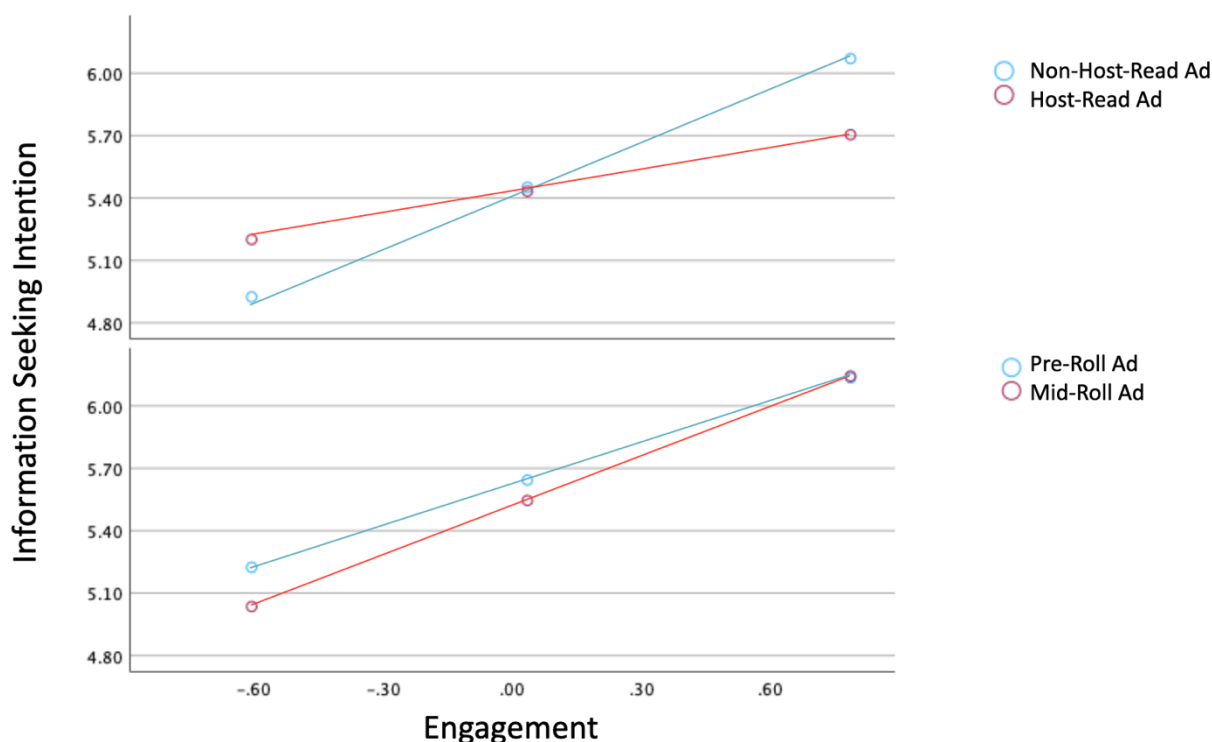
Table 15: Moderator Analysis: Engagement's Moderation of the IVs' effect on InfoSeek

Effect	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	5.4234	.0900	60.2305	.0000
Engagement	.8234	.1115	7.3814	.0000
Ad Type	-.0035	.1210	-.0287	.9771
Engagement x Ad Type	-.4614	.1489	-3.0986	.0023
Serial Ad Placement	.1972	.1252	1.5744	.1173
Engagement x Serial Ad Placement	-.1689	.1726	-.9786	.3292
Ad Type x Serial Ad Placement	-.0996	.1779	-.5599	.5763
Engagement x Ad Type x Serial Ad Placement	.6025	.2662	2.2632	.0249
Overall model: $F(7, 164) = 17.1513$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .423$				

Examination of interaction plots of predictors at the 16th, 50th, and 84th percentiles showed Engagement's moderation of InfoSeek to be greater for those in the non-host-

read/conventional ad condition when InfoSeek is higher, that is, the relative moderation effect of ENG decreases for host-read ads relative to non-host-read/conventional ads as InfoSeek increases; ENG has a greater effect on InfoSeek on non-host-read ads when InfoSeek levels are higher. For host-read ads among those in the beginning/pre-roll ad condition, the effect of ENG on InfoSeek is greater relative to those in the mid-roll condition when InfoSeeking is low, however, this discrepancy effectively disappears as ENG reaches the 84th percentile. See Figure 4 below. H5d is thus supported.

Figure 4: *Moderation of Engagement on Information Seeking Intention*



H6a predicted that podcast engagement moderates the effects of ad type on Evaluative Persuasion Knowledge. Tested in a similar manner to the above via Hayes PROCESS (Model 3), the resulting overall model was significant ($F[7, 167] = 21.350, p < .001, R^2 = .472$), and significant moderation of ad type (conventional/non-host-read vs. host-read) on EvalPK ($b = -$

.6636, $SE = .1442$, $p < .001$) as well as significant moderation of the interaction effect of ad type and serial ad placement (beginning/pre-roll vs. middle/mid-roll) ($b = .7270$, $SE = .2585$, $p = .006$). Additionally, the interaction between serial ad placement and ENG was near conventional significance ($b = -.3041$, $SE = .1678$, $p = .072$). None of the other interactions/predictors were significant. See Table 16.

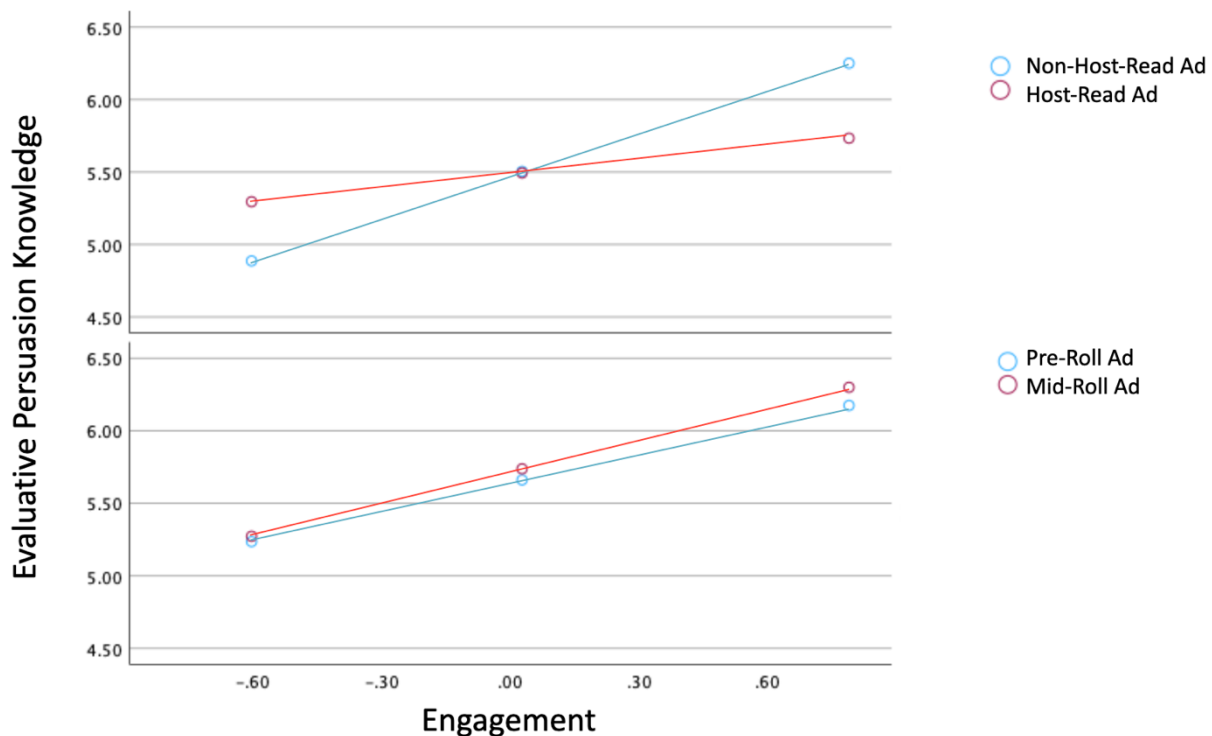
Table 16: *Moderator Analysis: Engagement's Moderation of the IVs' effect on Evaluative Persuasion Knowledge*

Effect	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	5.4777	.0866	63.2257	.0000
Engagement	.9779	.1085	9.0107	.0000
Ad Type	.0073	.1164	.0624	.9503
Engagement x Ad Type	-.6636	.1442	-4.6030	.0000
Serial Ad Placement	.1650	.1205	1.3694	.1727
Engagement x Serial Ad Placement	-.3041	.1678	-1.8118	.0718
Ad Type x Serial Ad Placement	-.0676	.1717	.3941	.6940
Engagement x Ad Type x Serial Ad Placement	.7270	.2585	2.8118	.0055
Overall model: $F(7, 167) = 21.350$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .472$				

Examination of interaction plots of predictors at the 16th, 50th, and 84th percentiles showed Engagement's moderation of EvalPK to be greater for those in the non-host-read/conventional ad condition when EvalPK is higher, that is, the relative moderation effect of ENG decreases for host-read ads relative to non-host-read/conventional ads as EvalPK increases; ENG has a greater relative effect on EvalPK on host-read ads when EvalPK levels are lower. For

those in the beginning/pre-roll ad condition, the effect of ENG on EvalPK is greater relative to those in the mid-roll condition when ENG is higher, however, this discrepancy effectively disappears as ENG decreases to the 16th percentile. See Figure 5 below. H6a is thus supported.

Figure 5: *Moderation of Engagement on Evaluative Persuasion Knowledge*



H6b predicted that podcast engagement moderates the effects of ad type on Situational Persuasion Knowledge (Manipulative Intent). Tested in a similar manner to the above via Hayes PROCESS (Model 3), the resulting overall model was significant ($F[7, 162] = 5.137, p < .001, R^2 = .426$), with significant moderation of ad type (conventional/non-host-read vs. host-read) on MI ($b = -.5005, SE = .2386, p = .036$). ENG also emerged as a significant individual predictor ($b = .8211, SE = .1794, p < .001$). None of the other interactions/predictors were significant. See Table 17.

Table 17: Moderator Analysis: Engagement's Moderation of the IVs' effect on Manipulative Intent

Effect	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	5.5514	.1443	38.4628	.0000
Engagement	.8211	.1794	4.5766	.0000
Ad Type	-.1782	.1947	-.9153	.3614
Engagement x Ad Type	-.5005	.2368	-2.0975	.0375
Serial Ad Placement	-.1190	.2007	-.5926	.5542
Engagement x Serial Ad Placement	-.3794	.2777	-1.3664	.1737
Ad Type x Serial Ad Placement	.4018	.2862	1.4042	.1622
Engagement x Ad Type x Serial Ad Placement	.6329	.4328	1.4624	.1456
Overall model: $F(7, 162) = 5.1365, p < .001, R^2 = .182$				

Examination of interaction plots of predictors at the 16th, 50th, and 84th percentiles showed Engagement's moderation of MI to be greater for those in the non-host-read/conventional ad condition when ENG is higher, that is, the relative moderation effect of ENG decreases for host-read ads relative to non-host-read/conventional ads as MI increases; ENG has a greater effect on MI on host-read ads when MI levels are lower. H6b is thus supported.

Moderation/Relationship of Parasocial Relationship Perceptions

H7 predicted parasocial relationship perceptions with the host moderate user perceptions of (a) Purchase Intention (PI), (b) Attitude Toward the Brand (A_{brand}), (c) Attitude Toward the Ad (A_{ad}), and (d) Information Seeking Intention dependent variables for a brand's

advertisements in podcasts. As before with H5-6, to test H7, a series of analyses utilizing Hayes' PROCESS Macro (Hayes, 2022) for SPSS (Model 3) was performed with ad type (conventional/non-host-read vs. host-read ad) the W, serial ad placement (beginning/preroll vs. middle) the Z, Parasocial Relationship perceptions (PSR) the X, and the relevant focal DV the Y.

For H7a (PSR's moderation of the IVs' effect on Purchase Intention), analysis showed a significant overall model ($F[7, 177] = 30.560, p < .001, R^2 = .547$). PSR emerged as a significant individual predictor of PI ($b = .6620, SE = .0759, p < .001$). However, none of the other interactions/predictors were significant. H7a is not supported.

For H7b (PSR's moderation of the IVs' effect on Attitude Toward the Brand), analysis showed a significant overall model ($F[7, 179] = 27.448, p < .001, R^2 = .518$). PSR emerged as a significant individual predictor of A_{brand} ($b = .6960, SE = .0849, p < .001$). However, none of the other interactions/predictors were significant. H7b is not supported.

For H7c (PSR's moderation of the IVs' effect on Attitude Toward the Ad), analysis showed a significant overall model ($F[7, 180] = 12.109, p < .001, R^2 = .320$). PSR emerged as a significant individual predictor of A_{ad} ($b = .5260, SE = .1103, p < .001$). However, none of the other interactions/predictors were significant. H7c is not supported.

For H7d (PSR's moderation of the IVs' effect on Information Seeking Intention), initial analysis again showed a significant overall model ($F[7, 178] = 33.208, p < .001, R^2 = .422$), and significant effect of PSR as an individual predictor on InfoSeek ($b = .7405, SE = .0791, p < .001$). No other predictors nor interactions displayed significance in this model. However, follow-up analysis using Hayes PROCESS Model 1 with ad type as the X, PSR as the W, and InfoSeek as the Y along with serial ad placement and overall podcast use (again due to significant correlation with the DV, $r[181] = .365, p < .001$) as covariates resulted in a

significant overall model ($F[5, 173] = 45.862, p < .001, R^2 = .570$) and demonstrated a significant moderation of PSR and the ad type (conventional/non-host-read vs. host-read) condition ($b = -.1814, SE = .0908, p = .047$) while controlling for main effects of serial ad placement condition (and not testing the interaction effect of the two IVs). PSR again emerged as a significant individual predictor in this model ($b = .7361, SE = .0674, p < .001$) while no other predictors were significant. (Also note this same pattern of significance was also displayed without including serial ad placement as a covariate in this model.) See Table 18.

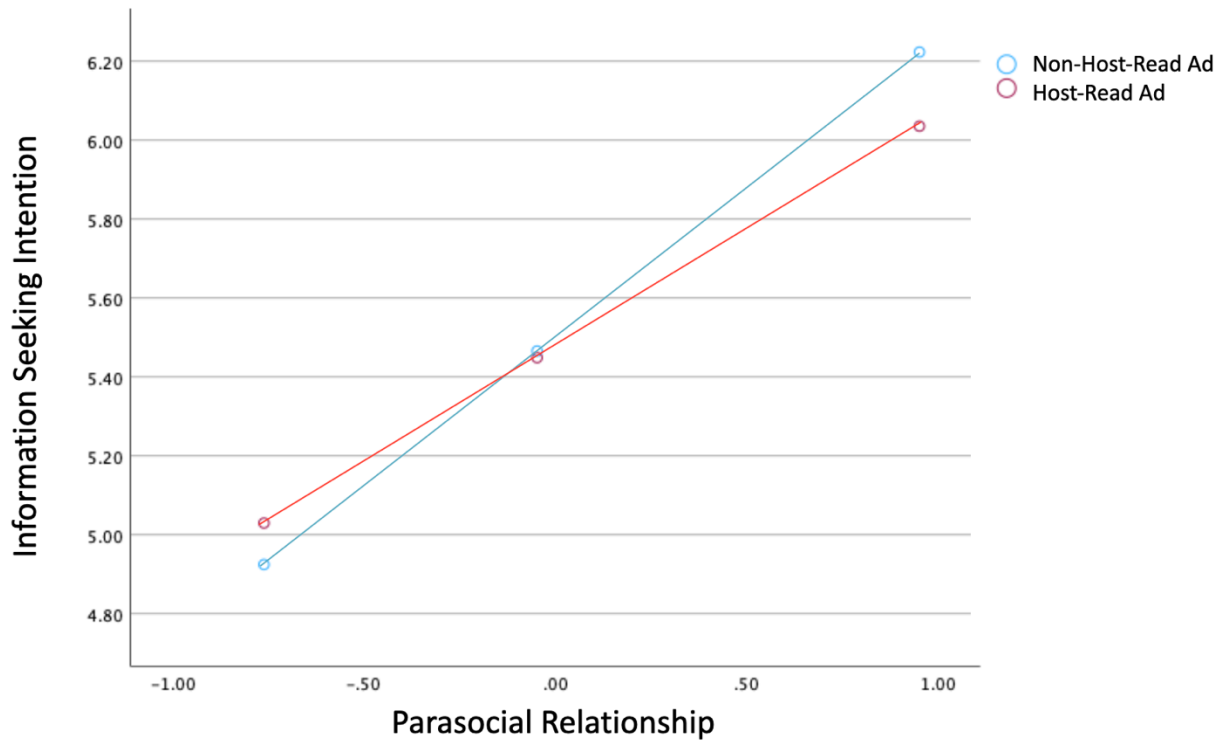
Table 18: *Moderator Analysis: Parasocial Relationship's Moderation of the IVs' effect on Information Seeking Intention*

Effect	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	5.2216	.2305	25.6522	.0000
Ad Type	-.0275	.0752	-.3655	.7152
Parasocial Relationship	.7361	.0674	10.9152	.0000
Parasocial Relationship x Ad Type	-.1814	.0908	-1.9981	.0473
Serial Ad Placement	-.0470	.0764	.6151	.5393
Overall model: $F(5, 173) = 45.8615, p < .001, R^2 = .570$				

Note: Podcast use entered as covariate.

Examination of interaction plots of predictors at the 16th, 50th, and 84th percentiles showed PSR's moderation of InfoSeek to be greater for those in the non-host-read/conventional ad condition when InfoSeek is higher, that is, the relative moderation effect of PSR decreases for host-read ads relative to non-host-read/conventional ads as InfoSeek increases; PSR has a greater effect on InfoSeek on host-read ads when InfoSeek levels are lower. See Figure 6 below. H7d is thus supported.

Figure 6: *Moderation of Parasocial Relationship Perceptions on Information Seeking Intention*

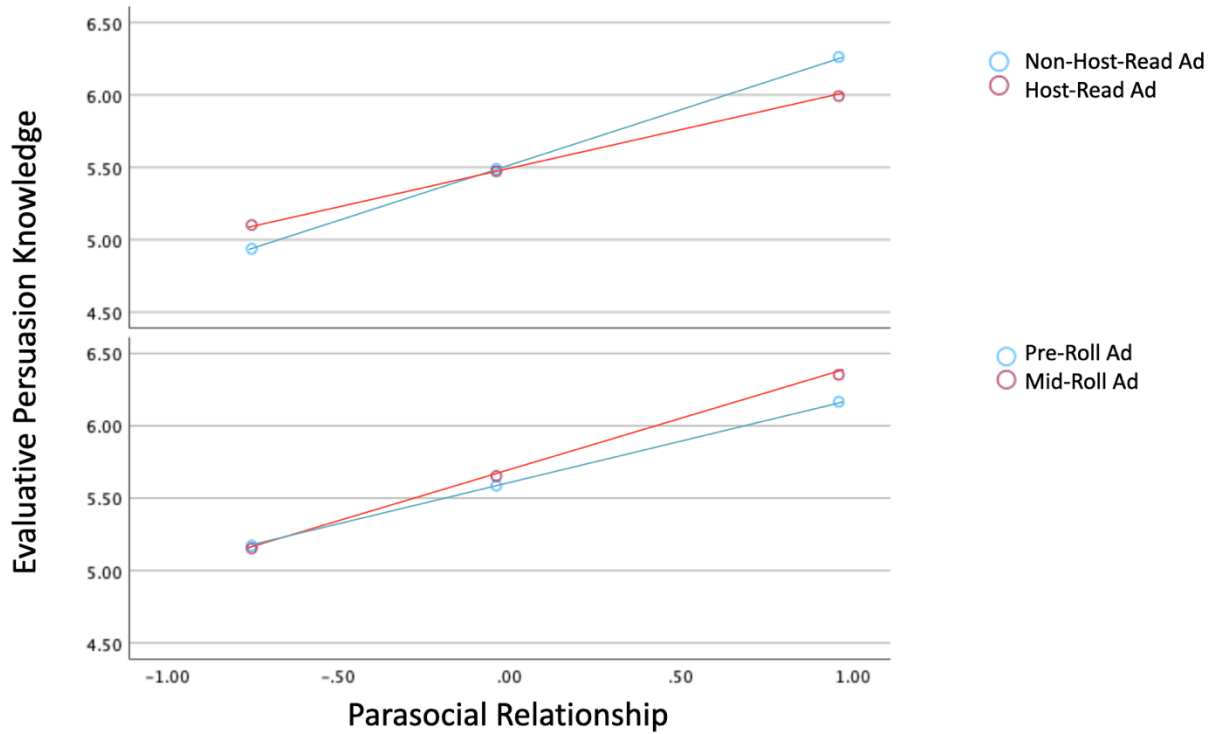


H8a predicted that parasocial relationship perceptions moderate the effects of ad type on Evaluative Persuasion Knowledge. Tested via Hayes PROCESS (Model 3), the resulting overall model was significant ($F[7, 183] = 30.408, p < .001, R^2 = .538$), and significant moderation of ad type (conventional/non-host-read vs. host-read) on EvalPK ($b = -.2533, SE = .1214, p = .038$). Additionally, the three-way interaction between ad type, serial ad placement and PSR was near conventional significance ($b = .3731, SE = .1955, p = .058$). PSR emerged as a significant individual predictor ($b = .7725, SE = .0775, p < .001$); none of the other interactions/predictors were significant (see Table 19).

Table 19: Moderator Analysis: Parasocial Relationship's Moderation of the IVs' effect on Evaluative Persuasion Knowledge

Effect	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	5.5194	.0775	71.2096	.0000
Parasocial Relationship	.7725	.0810	9.5385	.0000
Ad Type	-.0262	.1047	-.2501	.8028
Parasocial Relationship x Ad Type	-.2533	.1214	-2.0860	.0384
Serial Ad Placement	.0894	.1103	.8112	.4183
Parasocial Relationship x Serial Ad Placement	-.1929	.1431	-1.3481	.1793
Ad Type x Serial Ad Placement	.0976	.1550	.6298	.5296
Parasocial Relationship x Ad Type x Serial Ad Placement	.3731	.1955	1.9084	.0579
Overall model: $F(7, 162) = 5.1365, p < .001, R^2 = .182$				

Examination of interaction plots of predictors at the 16th, 50th, and 84th percentiles showed PSR's moderation of EvalPK to be greater for those in the non-host-read/conventional ad condition when EvalPK is higher, that is, the relative moderation effect of PSR decreases for host-read ads relative to non-host-read/conventional ads as EvalPK increases; PSR has a greater effect on EvalPK on host-read ads when EvalPK levels are lower. Plots also show the effect of PSR on EvalPK seems to increase for mid-roll ads relative to pre-roll ads as EvalPK increases. See Figure 7 below. H8a is thus supported.

Figure 7: *Moderation of Parasocial Relationship Perceptions on Evaluative Persuasion**Knowledge*

H8b predicted that parasocial relationship perceptions moderate the effects of ad type on situational persuasion knowledge (manipulative intent) perceptions. Tested via Hayes PROCESS (Model 3), the resulting overall model was significant ($F[7, 175] = 5.142, p < .001, R^2 = .171$), and significant moderation of serial ad position (beginning/pre-roll vs. middle/mid-roll) on MI ($b = -.5605, SE = .2553, p = .030$). PSR emerged as a significant individual predictor ($b = .7298, SE = .1436, p < .001$); none of the other interactions/predictors were significant.

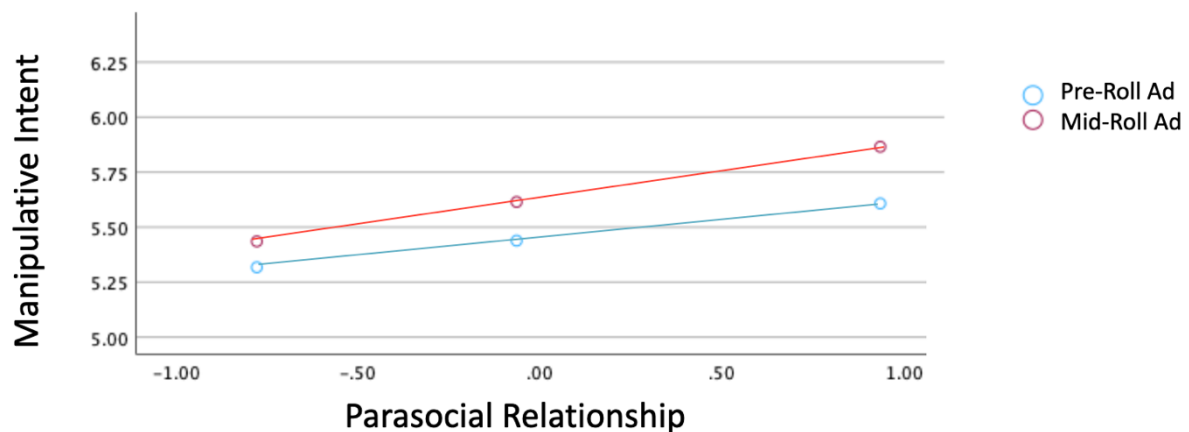
Table 20: *Moderator Analysis: Parasocial Relationship's Moderation of the IVs' effect on Manipulative Intent*

Effect	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	5.6488	.1402	40.2850	.0000

Parasocial Relationship	.7298	.1436	5.0812	.0000
Ad Type	-.2726	.1885	-1.4460	.1500
Parasocial Relationship x Ad Type	-.3550	.2159	-1.6440	.1020
Serial Ad Placement	-.1995	.1987	-1.0039	.3168
Parasocial Relationship x Serial Ad Placement	-.5605	.2553	-2.1950	.0295
Ad Type x Serial Ad Placement	.4541	.2797	1.6235	.1063
Parasocial Relationship x Ad Type x Serial Ad Placement	.4366	.3603	1.2118	.2272
Overall model: $F(7, 175) = 5.142, p < .001, R^2 = .171$				

Examination of interaction plots of predictors at the 16th, 50th, and 84th percentiles showed PSR's moderation of MI to be greater for those in the middle/mid-roll ad condition, that is, the relative moderation effect of PSR increases for mid-roll ads relative to beginning/pre-roll ads as MI increases. See Figure 8 below. H8b is thus supported.

Figure 8: *Moderation of Parasocial Relationship Perceptions on Manipulative Intent Perceptions*



H9 predicted Parasocial Interaction Behaviors (PSI-Behavior) are related to PSR perceptions. A regression with PSR as the dependent variable and PSI-Behavior as the independent rendered a significant model ($F[1, 188] = 569.138, p < .001, R^2 = .752$), with PSI-Behavior a significant predictor ($b = .952, SE = .040, p < .001$), that is, PSI-Behavior explains 75.2% of the variation in PSR perceptions. H9 is supported.

RQ6 asked if engagement was related to (a) PSR and (b) PSI-Behaviors. A regression with PSR as the dependent variable and ENG as the IV rendered a significant model ($F[1, 172] = 159.789, p < .001, R^2 = .482$), with ENG a significant predictor ($b = .952, SE = .040, p < .001$) of PSR that is, ENG explains 48.2% of the variation in PSR perceptions (RQ6a). Similarly, regression with PSI-Behavior as the dependent variable and ENG as the IV rendered a significant model ($F[1, 173] = 73.101, p < .001, R^2 = .297$), with ENG a significant predictor ($b = .561, SE = .066, p < .001$) of PSI-Behavior that is, ENG explains 29.7% of the variation in PSI-Behavior perceptions (RQ6b).

Value Co-Creation and its Relationship to Engagement, PSR, and Ad-Related Outcome Variables

RQ7 sought to ascertain whether (a) engagement and (b) parasocial relationship perceptions are related to value co-creation. To answer these questions, a series of hierarchical regressions were performed, initially with engagement predicting VCC in block 1, then adding PSI-Behavior as a predictor in block 2, and finally adding PSR as a predictor in block 3 (due to the results of H9 showing PSI-Behavior predicts PSR). Results indicated significant models in all three cases, along with significant changes in R-squared in each. For block 1 ($F[1, 160] = 175.600, p < .001, R^2 = .523$), ENG was a positive significant predictor of VCC ($b = .690, SE = .052, p < .001$). For block 2 ($F[2, 159] = 180.984, p < .001, R^2 = .695$, change in R-square =

.172, F Change = 89.376, $p < .001$), ENG was a positive significant predictor of VCC ($b = .349$, $SE = .055$, $p < .001$) along with PSI-Behavior ($b = .533$, $SE = .056$, $p < .001$). For block 3 ($F[3, 158] = 180.068$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .774$, change in $R^2 = .079$, F Change = 55.093, $p < .001$), ENG was a positive significant predictor of VCC ($b = .182$, $SE = .053$, $p < .001$) along with PSR ($b = .553$, $SE = .075$, $p < .001$); PSI-Behavior ceased to be a significant predictor in this block ($b = .092$, $SE = .077$, $p = .231$). Collinearity statistics revealed tolerance levels between .189 and .468 and VIF ranging from 2.136 to 5.300, thereby providing evidence against multicollinearity (Lomax & Hahs-Vaughn, 2012). Thus we have support for both the role of engagement (RQ7a) and parasocial relationship perceptions (RQ7b) in value co-creation.

RQ8 then asked if value co-creation perceptions were related to (a) Purchase Intention (PI), (b) Attitude Toward the Brand (A_{brand}), (c) Attitude Toward the Ad (A_{ad}), and (d) Information Seeking Intentions. To answer these RQs, a series of hierarchical regressions were performed with ENG predicting the focal DV in block 1, then adding PSR in block 2, and finally adding VCC in block 3. All regression series displayed similar patterns of significant models throughout each predictor entry, with significant increases in R-squared change with each entry and the relative prediction power of ENG and PSR on the focal DV decreasing with VCC's entry (and sometimes resulting in lack of significance of ENG and PSR). Collinearity statistics indicated the lack of multicollinearity among the predictors in each case, with no tolerances less than .1 (min: .218) and no VIF values greater than 10 (max: 4.585) (Lomax & Hahs-Vaughn, 2012). Results are summarized in the tables below. Changes in R-square are all at the $p < .001$ level unless otherwise indicated.

Table 21: *Hierarchical Regression Summary – ENG, PSR, VCC on Purchase Intention*

PI - Block	F	R-sq	R-sq change	ENG (unstandardized <i>b</i>)	PSR (unstandardized <i>b</i>)	VCC (unstandardized <i>b</i>)
1	(1, 157) 99.040, $p < .001$	.383	-	.618 ($p < .001$)		
2	(2, 156) 97.140, $p < .001$	.555	.168	.185 ($p = .019$)	.535 ($p < .001$)	
3	(3, 155) 114.254, $p < .001$	.689	.134	.044 ($p = .515$)	.023 ($p = .793$)	.806 ($p < .001$)

Table 22: *Hierarchical Regression Summary – ENG, PSR, VCC on Attitude Toward the Brand*

Abrand -Block	F	R-sq	R-sq change	ENG (unstandardized <i>b</i>)	PSR (unstandardized <i>b</i>)	VCC (unstandardized <i>b</i>)
1	(1, 157) 99.316, $p < .001$	.387	-	.640 ($p < .001$)		
2	(2, 156) 100.489, $p < .001$	.563	.176	.185 ($p = .021$)	.561 ($p < .001$)	
3	(3, 155) 102.822, $p < .001$	.666	.103	.057 ($p = .428$)	.111 ($p = .222$)	.720 ($p < .001$)

Table 23: *Hierarchical Regression Summary – ENG, PSR, VCC on Attitude Toward the Ad*

Aad-Block	F	R-sq	R-sq change	ENG (unstandardized <i>b</i>)	PSR (unstandardized <i>b</i>)	VCC (unstandardized <i>b</i>)
1	(1, 159) 36.100, $p < .001$	.180	-	.529 ($p < .001$)		
2	(2, 158) 34.041, $p < .001$	.292	.116	.081 ($p = .500$)	.548 ($p < .001$)	
3	(3, 157) 25.274, $p < .001$	.313	.025 ($p = .018$)	.004 ($p = .974$)	.283 ($p = .065$)	.423 ($p = .018$)

Table 24: *Hierarchical Regression Summary – ENG, PSR, VCC on Information Seeking**Intention*

InfoSeek - Block	F	R-sq	R-sq change	ENG (unstandardized <i>b</i>)	PSR (unstandardized <i>b</i>)	VCC (unstandardized <i>b</i>)
1	(1, 157) 103.834, <i>p</i> < .001	.398	-	.660 (<i>p</i> < .001)		
2	(2, 156) 106.705, <i>p</i> < .001	.578	.180	.192 (<i>p</i> = .017)	.578 (<i>p</i> < .001)	
3	(3, 155) 94.073, <i>p</i> < .001	.645	.068	.083 (<i>p</i> = .272)	.203 (<i>p</i> = .034)	.602 (<i>p</i> < .001)

In light of the above, a series of serial mediation analyses were conducted with Hayes' (2022) PROCESS model 6. Results showed significant levels of mediation from ENG to PSR to VCC to all four focal DVs (PI, Abrand, Aad, and InfoSeek). All sub-models in all analyses were significant at $p < .001$. All coefficients displayed significance at $p < .001$ unless otherwise indicated. See Table 9 below for more details.

Table 25: *Serial Mediation Summary: ENG -> PSR -> VCC -> Focal DV*

DV	ENG to PSR	PSR to VCC	VCC to focal DV
PI	b (unstd.) = .8101, SE = .0607	b (unstd.) = .6359, SE = .0475	b (unstd.) = .8060, SE = .0987
Abrand	b (unstd.) = .8100, SE = .0612	b (unstd.) = .6257, SE = .0475	b (unstd.) = .7204, SE = .1045
Aad	b (unstd.) = .8177, SE = .0606	b (unstd.) = .6247, SE = .0473	b (unstd.) = .4231, SE = .1771 (* p = .018)
InfoSeek	b (unstd.) = .8105, SE = .0612	b (unstd.) = .6236, SE = .0473	b (unstd.) = .6016, SE = .1105

Note: *All coefficients displayed significance at $p < .001$ unless otherwise indicated.

Summary

Experimental data finds support for main effects of mid-roll serial ad placement outperforming pre-roll position on Purchase Intention, Attitude Toward the Ad, and Information

Seeking, and an interaction effect such that among those in the pre-roll condition, greater levels of Attitude Toward the Brand were indicated for those in the host-read condition vs. the conventional ad condition. Support was also found for Evaluative Persuasion Knowledge as a mediator between the serial ad placement condition as IV and Purchase Intention, Attitude Toward the Brand, Attitude Toward the Ad, and Info Seeking; Engagement's moderation of the relationship between the IVs and PI, A_{brand} , InfoSeek, and EvalPK; and Parasocial Relationship's moderation of the relationship between the IVs and InfoSeek as well as EvalPK. Further, Parasocial Interaction Behaviors were found to positively predict Parasocial Relationship perceptions, and Dispositional Persuasion Knowledge measures were found to positively predict situational persuasion knowledge. Additionally, we find that Value Co-Creation successfully predicts focal DVs to a greater extent than the previously examined moderator concepts, and show support for a serial mediation model beginning with Engagement then flowing through Parasocial Relationship perceptions on to Value Co-Creation, which then flow to the focal dependent variables. To briefly summarize:

- Mid-roll serial ad position outperforms pre-roll ad position on Purchase Intention, Attitude Toward the Ad, and Information Seeking Intention.
- Among those in the pre-roll condition, greater levels of Attitude Toward the Brand were indicated for those in the host-read condition vs. the conventional/non-host-read ad condition.
- Evaluative Persuasion Knowledge mediates the effect of serial ad placement on Purchase Intention, Attitude Toward the Brand, Attitude Toward the Ad, and Info Seeking.
- Engagement moderates the relationship between the IVs and PI, A_{brand} , InfoSeek, and Evaluative Persuasion Knowledge.

- Parasocial Relationship moderates the relationship between the IVs and InfoSeek as well as Evaluative Persuasion Knowledge and Manipulative Intent.
- Parasocial Interaction Behaviors positively predict Parasocial Relationship perceptions.
- Dispositional Persuasion Knowledge measures were found to positively predict situational persuasion knowledge.
- Value Co-Creation successfully predicts focal DVs to a greater extent than the previously examined moderator concepts of Parasocial Relationship and Engagement.
- Analysis supports a serial mediation model beginning with Engagement then flowing through Parasocial Relationship perceptions on to Value Co-Creation, which then flow to the focal dependent variables.

Discussion

Following calls in the literature for more academic research on podcast advertising (Taylor, 2024), the present research is among the first to examine the relationship of advertising form (host-read ad vs. conventional/non-host read ad) and serial ad placement (beginning/pre-roll vs. middle/mid-roll) on ad-related variables and behavioral intentions such as Purchase Intention, Attitude Toward the Ad, Attitude Toward the Brand, and Information Seeking Intention. The study also examines the potential moderating effects of Parasocial Relationships and Engagement, as well as the mediation of Persuasion Knowledge, within these relationships, and investigates precursors to Parasocial Relationship and Persuasion Knowledge perceptions. With extant research in explaining podcast adoption generally focusing on more utilitarian Uses and Gratifications-based approaches (e.g. Perks & Turner, 2019), the present research attempts to more fully explain the popularity of podcasts, especially in the sense of perceptions of “sociality” through the lens of parasocial relationships/interactions (PSR/PSI) (e.g. Brinson & Lemon, 2022)

and how these variables may contribute and relate to Value Co-Creation perceptions within this vehicle.

Experimental Results

Main and Interaction Effects on Dependent Variables

First, main effects were found on serial ad placement wherein those in the middle ad “mid-roll” position displayed greater levels of Purchase Intention, A_{Ad} , and Information Seeking Intention vs. those in the beginning “pre-roll” ad position. Additionally, among those in the non-host-read/conventional ad condition, A_{brand} was greater for mid-roll vs. pre-roll serial position as well. As noted, this is in line with the “recency” effect (as opposed to the “primacy” effect associated with pre-roll ads). Watt et al. (1998) posited that involvement in terms of processing depth for TV show content was involved in producing greater levels of ad attention and A_{Ad} for middle-placed ads; the present results would lend more evidence to this theoretical mechanism and extending it to the podcast modality. As mentioned, Li and Lo’s (2015) study of YouTube ad position and outcomes found that attention and brand recall were greater for mid-roll ads when congruence between the show program and the product being advertised was present; the present results may extend this idea to some small level of incongruency between show subject/advertised product as well (assuming there is a continuum of congruency on this measure). While Ritter and Cho (2009) found greater levels of intrusiveness and irritation for mid-roll ads vs. pre-roll ads, they did not detect statistically significant differences on A_{ad} . In that study, the podcast vehicle was a comedy podcast and the ad/sponsorship was for Puma sportswear. We propose that involvement levels in the present study were perhaps greater, or qualitatively different, than a more surface-level depth of involvement in the comedy podcast, which would then conform to Watt et al.’s findings (1998) and thus provide evidence for the

effectiveness of mid-roll ads in long-format conversational podcast vehicles regardless of perceived congruency between show subject and product. (For example, Mittal makes a distinction between scales that purport to measure product-category involvement, brand-decision and purchase involvement 1995]). Additionally, Wang et al. found that congruency or “fit” between celebrity type and product was not as important for those with low involvement with vehicles in TV and internet ads vs. those with higher levels of involvement (2015). These interplays between fit/congruence, involvement, and focal dependent variable likely explain the current study’s findings supporting evidence of the “recency” effect over the “primacy” effect in terms of ad-related attitudes and intentions, whereas the latter has been detected in more general studies when simple brand recall is a focal outcome on studies focusing on carriers/modalities such as branded content in Instagram stories (Jørgensen & Knudsen, 2024), Super Bowl advertising (Li, 2010), and Australian radio advertising (Riebe & Dawes, 2006).

Additionally, though main effects were not found on the ad type (conventional/non-host-read ad vs. host-read ads) manipulation, a significant interaction effect was found on Attitude Toward the Brand, wherein among those in the pre-roll ad condition, the host-read ad produced greater levels of A_{brand} vs. the conventional/non-host-read ad, in line with prior research and expectations in this area (e.g. Brinson & Lemon, 2022; Brinson et al., 2023). The lack of effects of this manipulation on other variables are somewhat surprising, however, upon closer examination of the prior research, the concept of host-read advertising being more effective does not perhaps enjoy quite the level of experimental support as may be suggested by previous qualitative (Moe, 2021) and quantitative studies based on survey-based methodologies (e.g. Wang & Chan-Olmsted, 2023; Moe, 2022; Schlütz & Hedder, 2021). Whereas Brinson et al. found that host-read ads resulted in greater information seeking intentions vs. non-host-read ads

via an experimental approach, this was found to be significantly related/due to the evaluative persuasion knowledge mediator, whereas the direct effect from ad type to InfoSeek was not significant (2023). Further, Brinson et al. also found that among those with low PSR, lower InfoSeek actually resulted among those exposed to host-read ads along with greater EvalPK levels (2023), and that “perhaps those respondents who did not feel a relational connection to the host perceived the host’s delivery of the... promotional message as a more covert persuasion attempt than a traditional ad, and this heightened their skepticism and persuasion coping defenses” (p. 978). This mirrors Brinson and Lemon’s (2022) finding where low levels of PSR for a host were associated with less credibility for host-read ads. As our sample was not screened for current JRE listenership in order to induce variability in PSR, we likely (purposefully) had quite a variety of PSR in the sample, and thus our main effect differences were more likely to be non-significant due to inclusion of low-PSR respondents. Therefore, it may be that the nature of the relationship between PSR and host-read ads may be more accurately characterized as the host-read ad moderates the effect of PSR on advertising perceptions, rather than the reverse.

Mediation/Relationship of PK Measures

An interesting pattern emerged when ascertaining mediation of Evaluative PK. First, globally, the middle ad condition was found to result in more EvalPK vs. those in the pre-roll/beginning ad condition, in line with Ritter and Cho’s (2009) perceived intrusiveness results. There was also support for an interaction effect between the IVs wherein greater EvalPK was detected for those in the midroll ad condition among those in the conventional/non-host read ad group, whereas the detected mean differences ceased to be significant among those in the host-read group. This is in line with Brinson et al.’s findings that host-read ads were associated with less overall EvalPK activation (2023). Additionally, though no support was found for EvalPK

mediating the relationship between ad type (conventional/non-host-read vs. host read), EvalPK was found to mediate the relationship between serial ad placement (beginning/pre-roll vs. middle/mid-roll) on all four focal DVs, with mid-roll ads producing more EvalPK (which curiously led to generally better outcomes on the DVs). While contrary to the notion that greater persuasion knowledge activation generally leads to poorer ad- and brand-related outcomes (e.g. Ham et al., 2022), as noted, there are some exceptions in the literature. Notably, Isaac and Grayson showed that when a tactic that is considered appropriate or credible by the target is used by the persuasive agent, more favorable outcomes can result (2017). This is related to the tripartite construction of “attitudinal” PK, 1) scepticism, 2) (dis)liking, and 3) appropriateness (Boerman et al., 2018). Relatedly, Campbell and Kirmani posited that “persuasion knowledge may also lead to positive outcomes when consumers are able to understand firms’ incentives” when it comes to advertising and persuasive messages (2008, p. 562), and Eisend and Tarrahi noted that persuasion knowledge activation “may improve consumers’ skills in identifying benefits for themselves from marketers’ persuasion attempts” (2022, p. 5). Other evidence comes from the literature on sponsorship disclosure, which would certainly tend to increase PK activation (e.g. Boerman et al., 2012). However, Van Reijmersdal et al. (2013) found that, in response to government mandates to identify sponsorships and paid product placement in TV shows in Europe, such sponsorship disclosures did not negatively affect resulting brand attitudes. Similarly, Wei et al.’s sponsorship disclosure research indicates support for the notion that even when consumers are aware of persuasion attempts, the perception of the appropriateness of the attempt may serve to decrease or eliminate negative effects from PK (2008). It may be the case that respondents perceive the attempt to advertise to them, especially in a mid-roll format, as an appropriate or expected part of the podcast experience, therefore producing positive effects on

ad- and persuasion-related outcomes. This sense of the appropriateness of advertising would seem to be the case in Moe's (2021) survey on podcast and advertising-related attitudes, where the mean for "I consider podcast advertising essential" was 3.92 on a five-point Likert type scale with strongly disagree-strongly agree anchors ($SD = .989$) among podcast users in podcast-related Facebook groups. This would also account for the lack of significance of both the mediation of Manipulative Intent as well as the lack of significant main effects nor interaction effects of the IVs on Manipulative Intent perceptions; that is, where certain experimental conditions produced greater relative levels of EvalPK, they failed to make any difference on Manipulative Intent perceptions. Thus we can infer that though people recognized a persuasion attempt, they didn't necessarily think it was inappropriate to do so or that they were being unduly manipulated. Finally, as mentioned in the Literature Review section, though Brinson et al. found EvalPK increased in the traditional vs. host-read condition, this did not have resulting negative downstream effects on InfoSeek; these results thus comport with those findings.

Trait Persuasion Knowledge Measures as Antecedents of Situational Persuasion Knowledge

As mentioned, scholars have drawn a distinction between "attitudinal," "dispositional," or "trait" persuasion knowledge, and "conceptual," "evaluative," or "situational" persuasion knowledge, where the former is a result of all the persuasion attempts made on a person over the course of their life, reflecting their self-perceived ability to understand and deal with attempts at persuasion in a way that manifests as more of a personality-based concept (Kirmani & Campbell, 2009; Boerman et al., 2024; Bearden et al., 2001; Wei et al., 2008). The latter is more of the idea that people recognize persuasion attempts in the moment (Ham et al., 2015). The current research found that Trait Persuasion Knowledge in the form of Dispositional PK and Ad Avoidance both predicted both forms of situational persuasion knowledge measured, Evaluative

PK and Situational PK in the form of Manipulative Intent, among podcast listeners. This concords with conceptual/theoretical thought on the nature of persuasion knowledge wherein PK contributes to the ability to identify present persuasion attempts (e.g. Wojdyski & Evans, 2020; Boerman et al., 2024). For example, Rahmani's recent meta-analysis and comprehensive model of persuasion knowledge posits that "the accumulated experience generated by the [persuasion attempt] reaction process become an integral part of the [persuasion knowledge] acquisition process" (2023, p. 14). However; there may be moderators of this relationship that could be explored further, especially since this is among the first research on the nature of the Dispositional PK - > Situational PK relationship within the podcast modality/vehicle. For example, Waiguny et al. (2014) found that among a sample of children and in an advergame setting, a sense of "presence" or transportation negatively moderated the moderation of trait PK's relationship to the ability to situationally identify persuasion attempts. As "transportation" engagement types have been shown to have potentially negative outcomes for advertisers (Wang & Calder, 2006) this is something that could be explored further in the podcast advertising environment.

Moderation of Engagement

Results of the moderation of Engagement showed a pattern of relative negative interactions with regard to conventional/non-host read ads on PI, A_{brand}, and InfoSeek (as well as EvalPK and MI) when compared to host-read ads. Essentially, the relative moderation effect of ENG on the DVs decreases more for host-read ads relative to non-host-read ads as the resulting DVs increase; read another way, ENG becomes less important for host-read ads relative to conventional ads in determining the resulting DV. These results do conform with prior findings and hypotheses regarding host-read advertising vs conventional advertising in the sense that the

host-read aspect relies less on overall Engagement with podcasting as a media vehicle to effectively moderate resulting DVs than do conventional/non-host-read ads (Brinson et al., 2023; Moe, 2021; Wang & Chan-Olmsted, 2023; Moe, 2022; Schlütz & Hedder, 2021). Engagement's successful moderation and relationship to attitudes/intentions also conforms with prior published research on engagement both from the Calder, Malthouse and colleagues more motivation-based Engagement paradigm in Advertising (e.g. Calder, 2019; Mersey, et al., 2010; Malthouse & Calder, 2018) as well as the related Brodie, Hollebeek and colleagues body of Consumer Engagement (CE)/Consumer Brand Engagement (CBE) research in Marketing (e.g. Hollebeek et al., 2014; Hollebeek et al., 2016) that is comprised of cognitive processing, affection, and activation dimensions (Hollebeek et al., 2014). For example, Zhou, Calder, Malthouse, and Hessary (2021) showed context-specific motivational Engagement predicted willingness to pay for news websites better than standard click-tracking data, and Hollebeek et al. found that their Consumer Brand Engagement (CBE) scale successfully predicted "self-brand connection" and "brand usage intent," specifically the "affection" dimension of the overall construct (2014). Additionally, Hollebeek et al. (2023) found that consumers' brand engagement significantly predicted their brand-related content engagement, thus finding a "spillover effect" from the primary consumer brand engagement mechanism. Among podcasts specifically, Rohden et al. [utilizing a scale developed by Vivek et al. (2014) to measure CE which is composed of conscious attention, enthused participation, and social connection dimensions], posited that gratitude, brand-self connection, and perceived benefits contributed to podcast CE perceptions among a Brazilian sample of listeners; however, they did not find that willingness to actually pay for the content was related to CE (2023). Similarly, Chen and Keng (2023) found that Social (companionship and social support) and Structural (podcaster attractiveness and personalization)

Bond dimensions predicted continued customer engagement, which then lead to more Stickiness, that is, listener retention and listening length (this relationship itself moderated by social connectedness perceptions) among a Taiwanese sample. This study used a “continued customer engagement” scale derived from Wongkitrungrueng and Assarut (2020) and Hu and Chaudhry (2020). Fisher, working from the Calder and Malthouse (2008) Engagement paradigm, found that various Engagement sub-constructs had both positive and negative effects on advertising-related outcomes in podcasts, depending on the type of podcast used and the specific Engagement type under consideration (2024). This could also help account for the negative moderation for Engagement in the sense that Engagement is more important to predicting the focal outcome at lower levels of said outcome than when those outcomes are greater. It is not that Engagement reverses the direction, but that it blunts the effect of the focal IV on the focal DV. In this sense Engagement can be seen as an equalizer for non-host-read vs. host-read ad outcomes. It may be that Engagement, though measured via the Calder/Malthouse motivation-based scales, also has a great deal of overlap with the Brodie/Hollebeek processing, affection, and activation tri-partite view; the difference is that the motivation is more primal and primary in a sense, though Calder et al. (2009) have acknowledged their engagement construct also contains a social-interactive element that is more behavioral and hedonic in nature (i.e. related to “activation” and “affection”) as well.

Additionally, positive interaction effects were found for the two IVs and the moderation of ENG on InfoSeek, where for host-read ads and among those in the beginning/pre-roll ad condition, the effect of ENG on InfoSeek is greater relative to those in the mid-roll condition when InfoSeeking is low, however, this discrepancy effectively disappears as InfoSeek increases and reaches the 84th percentile. This not only conforms with hypothesized effects of host-read

advertising but also the recency effect in the sense that ENG with podcasts in general is more important to determining resulting attitudes for those in a pre-roll condition than for those in a mid-roll condition when recency effects may make resulting attitudes more prevalent – for example, in the Ritter and Cho experiment, middle ad conditions were associated with greater levels of intrusiveness for conventional ads vs. host-read ads, but there were no differences on conventional vs. host-read on intrusiveness in the beginning/pre-roll position (2009)..

Taken together, while significant as a moderator, and with demonstrated relationship to ad-related variables in podcasts and other vehicles, the fact that ENG decreases in importance in determining the various focal DVs leads to the conception that perhaps ENG is a primary driver, beyond even the ad conditions tested in the current model – that is, ENG as a predictor more appropriately lies somewhere before the conditions, or perhaps at the same level of the conditions. Further evidence for this postulation is the fact that ENG was a significant positive individual predictor for all the focal DVs even when there was not a significant moderation detected, as in the case of Attitude Toward the Ad. With the Calder- and Malthouse-ian engagement paradigm conceptually related to S-D Logic-borne notions of CE/CBE, and combined with the results of the Parasocial Relationship moderation/relationship tests and the role of Value Co-Creation (see below), a different explanatory concept may come into better focus.

Moderation/Relationship of Parasocial Relationship Perceptions

Similarly to engagement, PSR also emerged as a significant positive individual predictor of all four focal DVs, though moderation was only found for InfoSeek and for the two proposed mediators (EvalPK and MI). Though this relative effect of PSR being more of a driver of InfoSeek when PSR is higher for non-host-read vs. host-read ads can be considered expected if

we assume that host-read ads would perform better on their own perhaps without PSR and/or PSR with the host carries over to InfoSeek for ads regardless of reader, and thus the results are in line with Brinson et al.'s finding of a successful moderation of PSR on information seeking intentions for a utilitarian product (2023), the lack of moderation for the other variables is curious, though prior research on the nature of PSR and resulting brand- and purchase-related outcomes are less sanguine about the exact relationship between PSR and outcomes, more often simply finding a general relationship (e.g. Brinson & Lemon, 2022; Moe, 2021; Perks & Turner, 2019; Schlütz and Hedder, 2022) between PSR and resulting brand- or purchase-intention related attitudes.

This direct line from PSR to outcomes (rather than as a moderator) mirrors much research from the social media influencer (SMI) literature. If one considers podcasting a special case of influencer marketing, this more direct relationship tends to accord with the literature. Bakker (2018) defines influencer marketing as essentially eWOM (e-word-of-mouth) marketing where “companies engage social media stars to use their large fan-base to promote products and services on their brand’s behalf” (p. 79). If one considers podcast hosts “social media stars,” albeit in a more non-traditional digital platform, or at least one that is somewhat dissimilar from the traditional social networking service situation, this begins to comport with prior literature on these relationships. For example, Farivar et al. (2021) found PSR directly positively predicted followers’ intent to purchase in a study of fashion-focused influencers and their followers, along with opinion leadership (though the Beta for PSR was approximately double that of opinion leadership). Kim found PSR fully mediated the path from social presence to purchase intent (2022). This pattern also emerges among adolescents – for example, Lou and Kim found that entertainment value, perceptions of influencer expertise, attractiveness, homogeneity, and

trustworthiness contributed to follower-influencers PSR perceptions, which then had a direct relationship to purchase intentions (as well as materialism) among a panel of 10- to 19-year olds in the U.S. (2019).

It should be noted that some research in this area has found support for the concept of PSR as a moderator, for example, Bu et al. (2022) found parasocial interactions moderated the homophily-based relationship between followers and influencers. Boerman and Van Reijmersdal (2020) found PSR to moderate perceptions of the mediation of “understanding selling intent” due to sponsorship disclosure on brand attitudes in a sample of youth YouTuber influencer followers. Still, the preponderance of research in this area tends to support the nature of the relationship as a more of a direct line, as perhaps do the results of the current study.

Additionally, theoretical underpinning of PSR in the SMI literature is often based on the McCracken (1989) meaning transfer model, where endorsers’ “cultural meanings” get transferred to the endorsed product in the minds of the prospective consumer in terms of their attractiveness, class, status, personality, etc. (e.g. Campbell & Farrell, 2020). Other literature points to Ohanian’s source credibility model (1990) which lists expertise, trust, and attractiveness as factors that are antecedent to credibility perceptions (e.g. Jin et al., 2019). These theoretical mechanisms are likely at play in the podcast modality as well, especially if one considers podcasting a certain type of SMI.

Also, in support of Schlütz and Hedder’s (2022) findings on the relationship between Parasocial Interaction Behaviors and resulting PSR perceptions among German podcast users, PSI-Behaviors were also found to be significantly positively related to resulting PSR perceptions among American podcast users. Additionally, it should be noted that ENG emerged as a significant predictor of both PSR (48.2% of the variation) and PSI-Behaviors (29.7% of the

variation). Again, combined with the results from ENG and Value Co-Creation (see below), this points to possible mediation of PSR by Value Co-Creation, as well as a new explanatory concept to be developed.

Additionally, though a number of significant relationships were observed between various parts of the entire model, the one that emerged with all paths (mediation and moderation) potentially significant was Information Seeking Intention as the focal DV and with Evaluative PK as the mediator. This concords with Brinson et al.'s (2023) results which found the same pattern of significant mediation between ad type (host-read vs. traditional) and InfoSeek through Evaluative Persuasion Knowledge, along with PSR additively moderating the path between the IVs and Evaluative Persuasion Knowledg. The present research finds this same pattern along with moderation of the direct path by PSR, and additive moderation of the path between the IVs and Evaluative Persuasion Knowledge by Engagement (and moderation of the direct path by ENG as well). Some scholars have postulated the Brand Engagement in Self-Concept (BESC) paradigm as a driver of consumer engagement in general and influencer marketing success in particular (e.g. Chalke et al., 2023). As opposed to other types of engagement in the Marketing literature, BESC promotes the view that the consumer engages in certain brands primarily as a method of self-expression, which has effects on the consumer including brand awareness, preference, loyalty (Sprott et al., 2009) and improved brand attitudes (Vieria et al., 2023); however, research has shown a lack of support for BESC with regard to propensity to be influenced by influencer marketers (Giakoumaki & Krepapa, 2020; Chalke et al., 2023); this could be investigated further in podcasts specifically and could provide an explanation for ENG's role in this space.

In addition to BESC theoretically underpinning the relationship between ENG and outcomes, the Entertainment Overcoming Resistance Model, or EORM (Moyer-Gusé, 2008; Moyer-Gusé & Nabi, 2010), has been offered as an explanation for PSR's relationship to advertising outcomes. It posits that certain features of entertainment-education programs of various media types (and podcasts should certainly be included in those), such as transportation, identification and similarity with personae within the programs, and parasocial interactions, can reduce traditional coping or resistance mechanisms (Moyer-Gusé, 2008). This accords with the notion of PSR in general as simulated friendship and perceived mental simulacrum of conversation; thus the transportation effect can increase emotional connection and empathy and along with other elements can decrease reactance and other potentially problematic advertising responses (Moyer-Gusé & Nabi, 2010).

Value Co-Creation and its Relationship to Engagement, PSR, and Ad-Related Outcome Variables

Value Co-Creation emerged as the single most important predictor to all four focal DVs when regressed onto them along with PSR and Engagement. This was somewhat surprising due to the latter two variables' consistently significant individual prediction of the DVs (even when their moderation was not evident). Additionally, the mediation analysis showed consistent mediation through the Engagement-Parasocial Relationship-Value Co-Creation path to each DV. This is an important finding when it comes to the nature of the podcaster/user advertising perceptions relationship and its theoretical underpinnings. While other scholars have posited other related relationships that ultimately connect with Value Co-Creation (for example, Casaló et al. [2020] posited that social media influencers' Opinion Leadership perceptions are ultimately related to Value Co-Creation due to OL's positive relationship with followers' behavioral

interaction intentions), none have attempted to connect Engagement, PSR, and Value Co-Creation. Thus, we offer the final section of this discussion, a conceptual reconciliation of these factors through the lens of Service-Dominant Logic, from which the current notion of Value Co-Creation is derived (Vargo & Lusch, 2017; Ranjan & Read, 2016).

Conceptual Reconciliation – Parasocial Engagement

As mentioned previously, Uses-and-Gratifications-based research on podcast adoption (e.g. Perks & Turner, 2019) and research exploring parasocial relationships/interactions with hosts in the podcast space (e.g. Brinson & Lemon, 2022; Brinson et al., 2023) suggest an element of perceived sociality and mediated interactivity for which existing UGT-based explanations may not be fully accounting. Additionally, the concept of “engagement” has been postulated as being key to audience adoption (Perks et al., 2019; Siu, 2022) and has been shown to be related to positive (and sometimes negative) ad outcomes in various media/marketing situations (e.g. Calder et al., 2016; Moe, 2022).

Using Service-Dominant Logic (e.g. Vargo & Lusch, 2004a; Vargo & Lusch, 2017) as an organizing framework, and building on existing research in the Consumer Engagement/Consumer Brand Engagement realm connecting to S-D logic, as well as empirical evidence from the current study, we thus propose to integrate engagement (where we primarily conceptualize Engagement as a “motivational force experience” [e.g. Calder & Malthouse, 2008]) and existing U&G / PSR-based theory and evidence into a new theoretical framework to help explain the effectiveness of PSR and engagement when it comes to podcast advertising success and podcast adoption more generally, in a more complete manner than perhaps more “piecemeal” U&G/PSR approaches, thus following Jaakola’s “focal phenomenon-complementary concepts” and “theory synthesis” approach of conceptual papers (2020). Service-

Dominant Logic has been noted for its metatheoretical conceptualization and, ergo, ability to reconcile concepts across a variety of disciplines and functional areas (Vargo et al., 2020); further, we will also attempt to utilize Vargo and Koskela-Huotari's (2020) guidelines for conceptual research and Vargo's (2023) "organizing and informing" framework (O-I orientation) approach to conceptual reconciliation.

The remainder of this discussion is organized per Vargo and Koskela-Huotari's (2020) suggested outline for conceptual papers. First, we will (very) briefly review and re-review some of the relevant literature in each field. Then we will describe points of commonality and attempt to synthesize the literature through the use of a reconciliation table per Vargo (2023), and apply the synthesis to the problem. Finally, implications will be drawn for podcast advertisers, podcasters, and even perhaps marketing scholars.

Literature Review

Service-Dominant Logic. Vargo and Lusch's (2004a, 2017) notion of an evolution to a "Service-Dominant Logic" in Marketing has been utilized to connect more specific research streams to a more general notion of Marketing and what Marketing is and is for in this new paradigm, as well as provide a metatheoretical framework to allow reconciliation of some of the possible issues between fields (Vargo et al., 2020). S-D Logic reconceptualizes the basis of exchange as *service* rather than more traditional notions of the exchange of *goods* being the dominant focus of the market (Vargo & Lusch, 2004a). Under S-D Logic, the market, rather than being a separate institution or practice or area of exchange, is part-and-parcel with what we generally call "the social"; that is, S-D Logic sees the market as fundamentally embedded within our social practices (Vargo & Lusch, 2017), and serves to facilitate value co-creation (Vargo et al., 2020). Service in this orientation has *always* been the fundamental basis of exchange –

essentially what we can do for one another, or, what the goods we produce may do for one another (Vargo & Lusch, 2004b). One does not buy a good for the good's sake, one buys a good for what it can do for him or her, and value is realized only *through use* and is determined by the actor him- or herself (Vargo & Lusch, 2008a). Vargo and Lusch note that under this dominant logic, “promotion will need to become a communication process characterized by dialogue, asking and answering questions” (2004a, p. 13). Recent theoretical development in branding has built on S-D L and focused on collaborative value co-creation (Merz et al., 2009). A focus on institutions, practices, and actor engagement has been evolving as well (Vargo & Lusch, 2016; Vargo & Lusch, 2017; Brodie et al., 2019) as well as integration of a service ecosystems approach (Akaka et al., 2013), all of which allow for more coordination and cooperation among market actors (Vargo & Lusch, 2016).

Podcasts. Two distinctives of podcase use are primarily mobile consumption (Quirk, 2015) and an inherent on-demand quality, leading to a consumer focal control element (Haygood, 2007). This perception of control has lead to studies utilizing a UGT-based approach. These studies have found drivers of use including learning new things in general (Craig et al., 2023; Vilceanu et al., 2021), entertainment (Vilceanu et al., 2021; Craig et al., 2023; McClung & Johnson, 2010), escapism (Craig et al., 2023), parasocial relationships (Schlütz and Hedder, 2022; Perks & Turner, 2019; Vilceanu et al., 2021), and connections with other audience members along with accompanying social opportunities and support (Pavelko & Myrick, 2020; McClung & Johnson, 2010; Perks & Turner, 2019) with hosts as well as with other listeners (Vilceanu et al., 2021). Podcast use has grown recently alongside a concomitant increase in what was termed “engagement” of users. (Nielsen, 2022).

Parasocial Interaction and Relationships. Rubin et al. (1985) conceptualized PSI as “interpersonal involvement of the media user with what he or she consumes. That involvement may take many forms including seeking guidance from a media persona, seeing media personalities as friends, imagining being part of a favorite program’s social world, and desiring to meet media performers” (p. 156-157). In a parasocial relationship, this “involvement” continues after the media event (Horton & Wohl, 1956; Giles, 2002) and is partly based on beliefs on the part of the audience member that the personality is similar in some forms/fashions to other people in the social circle of the viewer (Rubin et al., 1985). When viewers see/hear the persona interacting with guests or even audience members, their sense of social interaction is enhanced which then contributes positively to the identification with the persona, and thus PSR is also enhanced (Horton & Wohl, 1956). These types of activities are readily applicable to the podcast media vehicle (e.g. Markman & Sawyer, 2014); such “multi-platform” actual interaction experiences between audiences and hosts/producers are becoming more common in the mediated social network/network-mediated (Gade, 2012) space (e.g. Kyewski et al., 2018; Enli, 2012; Stollfuß, 2019; Sinton, 2018) even given the non-reciprocity and lack of true interactivity inherent to the original notion of PSR (Konijn et al., 2008). Uncertainty reduction has been posited as a theoretical mechanism underpinning PSR growth (Rubin & McHugh, 1987). Research on podcast advertising has found positive effects of host affinity (Moe, 2021; Moe, 2022) and parasocial relationships (Brinson & Lemon, 2022) on ad perceptions/intentions.

Engagement. In Marketing, conceptualizations of engagement tend toward being based on Service-Dominant Logic (Hollebeek et al., 2019) and contain psychological/cognitive/affective elements, sometimes with behavioral consequences, components or even antecedents as well. For example, Hollebeek et al.’s (2014) concept of Consumer Brand Engagement (CBE)

involves “a consumer’s positively valenced brand-related cognitive, emotional, and behavioral activity during or related to focal consumer/brand interactions” (p. 149). Brodie et al. (2011) drew on S-D Logic and its view of relationships as co-creative interactive experiences, and define “customer engagement” (CE) as “a psychological state that occurs by virtue of interactive, co-creative customer experiences with a focal agent/object (e.g. a brand)” (p. 2). Again, the co-creative element is evocative of S-D Logic’s co-creation of value proposition. From a marketing/advertising perspective, Calder & Malthouse (2008) also focus on a more motivational definition of engagement, but that is also context- and type-specific (first conceptualized as involving different media vehicles but later extended to other situations, e.g., Calder et al. 2016) and attempts to disentangle engagement itself from antecedents like involvement or simple hedonic liking, and those actions that are consequences or results of engagement like social media likes, comments, shares, or eWOM – it is more psychological, though it does have behavioral aspects. Calder et al. (2016) define Engagement as “a multilevel, multidimensional construct that emerges from the thoughts and feelings about one or more rich experiences involved in reaching a personal goal” (para. 11). Calder et al. (2016) further made a connection with S-D L-borne notions of engagement, offering that engagement is “a psychological state that occurs by virtue of interactive, co-creative customer experiences with a focal agent/object... under a specific set of context-dependent conditions... and exist as a dynamic, interactive process, in which other relationship concepts... are antecedents and/or consequences. It is a multidimensional concept subject to a context- and/or stakeholder-specific expression of relevant cognitive, emotional and behavioral dimensions” (p 39, citing Brodie et al., 2011, p. 260).

Reconciliation/Synthesis and Application to Podcast Adoption/Engagement – Parasocial Engagement

At the end of the day, the question is, why podcasts? What purposes do they serve in the lives of users, and what motivations are they satisfying? How does this affect advertising perceptions? Given the focus of prior research revolved around UGT- (Uses and Gratifications Theory) based approaches, finding parasocial interaction/relationships among the salient factors and “engagement” as a unique element of the vehicle, the theoretical synthesis of PSR, engagement and S-D Logic points to the notion that “parasocial engagement” may be a primary motivator for other concomitant or second-level (and more utilitarian) uses. Service-Dominant Logic has been employed as an organizing framework and paradigm to better understand a variety of market phenomena and interactions, including engagement. Specifically, Hollebeek et al. (2019)’s utilization of axioms and FPs of S-D logic (Vargo & Lusch, 2016) to examine consumer engagement through an S-D L and actor engagement lens (Brodie et al., 2019) provides an additional platform on which to map certain ideas and concepts from both the Calder/Malthouse engagement conceptualization and PSI/PSR into certain reconciled tenets that may help explain podcast adoption (see Table 10 below).

While Hollebeek et al. (2019) do not specifically point at the particular axioms and FPs of S-D L that inform each of their CE FPs, it is clear that some are more relevant to certain FPs and some are perhaps more informing of others (though there is obviously some overlap involved). To begin, S-D L’s Axiom 1 (or “A1”) (“Service is the fundamental basis of exchange” [Vargo & Lusch, 2016, p. 8; Vargo & Lusch, 2008b, p. 26]) and the first five FPs (“fundamental principles”) summarized as seeing operant resources as sources of benefit, and economies are service economies, are related to Hollebeek et al.’s (2019) FP1, which indicates CE “reflects a customer’s motivationally driven, volitional investment of specific operant and operand resources into brand interactions in service systems” (p. 175). Similarly, in the Calder and

Malthouse engagement conceptualization, engagement is also about motivation to accomplish something important in a consumer's life. Thus it brings together the motivational element of CE and the "why" behind making exchanges with another in the first place – that is, to provide service to one another. Likewise, PSR is "conceptualized as interpersonal involvement of the media user with what he or she consumes... including seeking guidance from a media persona, seeing media personalities as friends, imagining being part of a favorite program's social world, and desiring to meet media performers" (Rubin et al., 1985, pp. 156-157). This perceived interactivity is evident from, and is indeed an important cited element of, both S-D L and CE per Hollebeek et al. (2019). Taken together, this points to the fundamental notion of "relatedness" and why humans interact and are "social" at all. According to Dunbar (1998), part of the cognitive revolution that enabled homo sapiens to have so much biological/evolutionary success was the development of language, specifically for purposes of information about each other. Harari (2015) notes that "reliable information about who could be trusted meant that small bands [of humans] could expand into larger bands, and Sapiens could develop tighter and more sophisticated types of cooperation" (p. 33). This cooperation/service element is thus driven by evolutionary forces and encoded into our DNA. Relatedness is thus a fundamental human need (Deci & Ryan, 2000), an element of which is appropriate reciprocity (Buunk & Nauta, 2000; Dunbar, 1993). If service, interactivity and relationships are fundamental to our nature as humans, podcasts can be seen as a vehicle of parasocial engagement that allows relatedness to occur in a manner that even begins to eclipse the purely parasocial in the current network-mediated environment (Gade, 2012) due to the feedback loop inherent to the digital space (Kyewski et al., 2018; Enli, 2012; Stollfuß, 2019; Sinton, 2018). Schinoff and Byron posited that even imagined interactions would have consequences on relationship development, pointing to

Fiske's (2010) core social motive of "belonging" where "humans are social beings driven to affiliate with others—to join groups and have interpersonal relationships" (2023, p. 465) that "when individuals perceive a lack of adequate social connection or information to guide effective interactions, their core social motives are likely made more salient" (2023, p. 474). Additionally, as mentioned, the on-demand and thus inherent "regularity" of the podcast medium would then help to reinforce the notion of PSR (Horton & Wohl, 1956).

Related to the above is the notion of value co-creation between actors, which seems to be a large determinant in advertising success per the results of the current study. Per Vargo and Lusch (2016), A2 of S-D L is that "Value is co-created by multiple actors, always including the beneficiary", FP7 is "Actors cannot deliver value but can participate in the creation and offering of value propositions", FP8 is "A service-centered view is inherently beneficiary oriented and relational" and A3/FP9 is "All social and economic actors are resource integrators" (p. 8). These (and others) lead to Hollebeek et al's (2019) CE FP2, "The CE benefits of customer individual- and interpersonal operant resource development and cocreation result from CE within service systems" (p. 175). Thus the service/relatedness orientation (and indeed institution, if not "the social" or "society" itself) described above enables value co-creation through and as a result of operant resource integration. Further, Malthouse and Calder similarly note that, as opposed to previous notions of (largely one-way) advertising, engagement is more about participative experiences where consumers and brands co-create value through virtual or actual experiences with the brand and/or other consumers (e.g., through phenomena/output like user-generated content) (2018). These virtual or actual experiences are obviously an element of PSR/PSI, and in fact not only does the sense of PSRs increase over time, operationalizations of PSI resemble those measuring friendship itself (Perse & Rubin, 1989). Again, the current digital/network-

mediated (Gade, 2012) environment allows additional/greater connections between actors to form; podcasts are thus a case of these connections where parasocial relationship development among audience members with other members and hosts can contribute to greater sense of engagement, which could (does?) lead to greater resource integration and value co-creation. These in turn lead to Hollebeek et al.'s FP3, "The CE foundational processes of customer resource integration, knowledge sharing and learning represent either necessary (i.e., for customer resource integration) or conducive (i.e., for customer knowledge sharing/learning) factors for the development of CE in service systems" (p. 172). Indeed, in the Calder/Malhouse framework, Engagement is about motivation to accomplish something in a certain way that is considered "correct" (Higgins, 2006; C&M, 2008); Engagement is also connected to eudaimonia, that is, about making a life that is meaningful (Calder et al, 2016). Engagement experience types such as "Talking About and Sharing" and "Community Connection" point toward resource integration, knowledge sharing and learning, among others. Giles (2002) notes that co-viewing could positively moderate the strength of PSI/PSR due to "subsequent discussion of the figure" (p. 292); Co-consumption of podcasts with other audience members even when not physically present has been shown to relate to parasocial relationships with other audience members as well as hosts (Pavelko & Myrick, 2020; McClung & Johnson, 2010; Perks & Turner, 2019; Vilceanu et al., 2021). Thus, from a parasocial engagement perspective, podcasts can help accentuate the engagement, resource integration, operant resource development, and value co-creation among actors inherent to S-D Logic.

Vargo and Lusch's (2016) fourth S-D L axiom is "Value is always uniquely and phenomenologically determined by the beneficiary" (p. 8). Derived from this and other elements described above, Hollebeek et al.'s. (2019) FP 4 is "CE reflects a customer's investment of focal

cognitive, emotional, behavioral, and social resources during, or related to, specific brand interactions in service systems” (p. 172). That is, the investment of resources is customer-specific; the mix of elements and strength will vary from customer to customer and situation to situation. It is this “investment” of resources that relates to the Calder/Malhouse and colleagues notion of engagement, specifically engagement as the motivational force to accomplish some personal goal element. Likewise, the “focal” element of Hollebeek et al. (2019) maps neatly onto the context-specific, multidimensional nature of the Calder/Malhouse framework, that is, resources are directed toward actions for unconscious and/or conscious purposes. Similarly, PSI involves a greater sense of involvement than simply observing (Horton & Wohl, 1956); this results in uncertainty reduction in terms of predicted actions, such as communication, liking, and intimacy, and is related to PSR development (Rubin & McHugh, 1987). Thus, engagement in this sense relates to uncertainty reduction as well. Taken together, parasocial podcast engagement involves uncertainty reduction; voluntary investment of resources during listening sessions increases likelihood of PSR and engagement; and resources, investment and resulting parasocial engagement perceptions are likely to be uniquely and phenomenologically determined by the user.

Relatedly, the fifth axiom of S-D Logic, “Value co-creation is coordinated through actor-generated institutions and institutional arrangements” (Vargo & Lusch, 2016, p. 8) is again evident throughout Hollebeek et al.’s (2019) notion of CE, but perhaps best maps onto their FP5, “CE is contingent on focal context-specific characteristics in service systems. Customer manifestations (including intensity, valence) of CE, the CE foundational processes and CE benefits may thus vary across contextual contingencies” (p. 173). In obvious relation to the context-specific nature of Calder/Malhouse Engagement discussed above, other research in this

space has found that co-creation is an element of UGC/Social media brand engagement (Gomez et al., 2019; Hollebeek et al., 2014); likewise, Malthouse et al. (2016) found that user-generated content that prompts consumers to elaborate on some personal goal they have that is also relevant to the target brand positively affects buying/purchase intentions, and Engagement is about participative experiences where consumers and brands co-create value through virtual or actual experiences with the brand and/or other consumers (e.g., through UGC) (Malthouse & Calder, 2018). Similarly, under the original Horton and Wohl conceptualization of PSI/PSR, “new” media systems like TV, radio, film have engendered PSI in users; as mentioned, recent scholarship has postulated that this is enhanced by the two-way nature of newer “digital” media that allows for feedback and two-way connections (e.g. Marx et al., 2021; Kyewski et al., 2018; Enli, 2012; Stollfuß, 2019; Sinton, 2018). Thus, from a combined parasocial engagement perspective, the current network-mediated environment can be seen as an institutional arrangement in which consumers and brands/actors come together to make meaning (e.g. Kent & Taylor, 2002), thereby increasing parasocial engagement. Podcasts are thus a way actors can coordinate value co-creation and operant resource development with each other, in an iterative and ultimately emergent fashion producing new “structures” and value propositions throughout the network.

Implications and Conclusions

From the above theoretical notion of a combined “parasocial engagement” context, some possible implications and further development can be drawn. In both the Actor Engagement and S-D L perspectives, since we tend to eliminate distinctions between “brand” or “podcaster” and “buyer” or “audience member,” (Brodie et al., 2019), taken together with Hollebeek et al. (2019), focal agents should thus be able to co-create value with engaged actors in an iterative fashion,

which then produces emerging value propositions and potentially market development. From a podcaster and advertiser perspective, this points to greater relationships and interactivity with listeners, which alters/produces/co-creates greater value and/or a different value proposition than simply “the podcast content itself” (including the ads); and from a listener perspective, points toward greater levels of parasocial interaction/ relationship development not only with the hosts/producers/advertisers but with other audience members (e.g. Vilceanu et al., 2021; Perks & Turner; 2019) and thus producing emergent value propositions for other potential audience members, thereby enhancing PSI perceptions along the way in a system that feeds back upon itself. Therefore, parasocial engagement can be seen as an element of a complex system of emergence with relationship development and value co-creation as a general result along with more specific, situational consequences (e.g. UGC, brand equity, etc.). Indeed, even one-sided interactions can affect relationships: Schinoff and Byron postulated that workers’ imagined interactions with each other and management can have downstream consequences on relationships: “via work-related imagined interactions, employees can potentially gain awareness of what others may do, form impressions of how others may treat them, and better understand situations from multiple vantage points” (2023, p. 474); this mental elaboration would then reinforce relationship perceptions through PSR (Perse & Rubin, 1989).

Ballantyne and Aitken (2007) connect S-D L with dialogism when they remark how it is about “marketing with” rather than “marketing to” and that a dialogic orientation is key when moving into a service orientation. Indeed, Taylor, Kent, and Johnston (2018) discuss how PR has moved from treating publics as means to an end to “co creational approaches where orgs and publics jointly create and recreate meaning” (p. 1) This co-creational aspect of meaning and value connects to both the Dialogic and Excellence theoretical approaches and by extension

relationship management and thus S-D L. This has the effect of, similar to PR with regard to Excellence, moving Marketing as a whole from the end of the value chain to throughout the strategic management of the organization as a whole; PR practitioners well-versed in Excellence and Dialogic approaches will be well-positioned to assist in this manner as this reconceptualization of what marketing is and the purpose it serves is analogous to the new orientation of PR with regard to Excellence Theory (e.g. Grunig, 2008) and strategic management. Co-creation of value and co-creation of meaning are obviously related to each other and thinking about how value and meaning are related may be fruitful – it is not immediately obvious that they are that different – to elaborate briefly, S-D L can help bridge the gap as it sees the market as embedded in our social structure or environment; if service is indeed the basis of exchange and service to others is a fundamental drive or motivator of action (there is more to be said here on the basis of how humanity makes meaning [the narrative, the story, the meta-narratives that provide the institutional basis that allow us to perceive and make sense of the world, the patterns that matter], our values, our stories and themes, and the reoccurring notions of responsibility [not hedonic freedom, which devolves into nihilistic narcissism] and service-cum-heroism embedded in the stories we tell, but we digress), it may be that parasocial engagement can help us see “the market” conceptualized as THE social medium itself in which we all interact, rather than something “embedded” in the social. Indeed, Calder et al. (2016) remark that “hedonia” or pleasure has been studied much by marketers but “eudaimonia,” that is, experiencing a meaningful life, has been much less so, and it is the latter that is more associated with engagement. What makes for a meaningful life? Service, connection, and relatedness perhaps more so than self-centered, narcissistic notions of “freedom” (errantly, sans the

responsibilities that unavoidably accompany these freedoms, per Locke [e.g. see Tuckness, 2024]).

Another aspect of PSI as originally postulated by Horton and Wohl was that essentially relationship development was impossible, as an audience member's individual ability to make his or her feelings, emotions and reactions known to the performers were more or less impossible in terms of the parasocial interaction, thus "whoever finds the experience unsatisfying only has the option to withdraw" (1956, p. 215). However, the phenomenon as experienced by audience members in a new media (i.e. two-way) context may not be quite so non-dialectical as feedback can be made through the very platforms used by the performers to mediate their presence; neither is it impossible for audience members to create new relationships aside from the ones offered initially by the performer as postulated by Horton and Wohl (1956) both in terms of the host or performer (Tobin & Guadagno, 2022) as well as among the other audience members (Hoffner & Bond, 2022; Pavelko & Myrick, 2020). These relationships can be positive in multiple dimensions such as lowering prejudice, personal development and coping in addition to community connection, but can also result in negative effects on mental health due to negative self-comparisons with media figures (Hoffner & Bond, 2022). Overall, this points toward parasocial engagement's inherent interactivity and notion of motivation to accomplish goals; both of these are therefore theoretically related to parasocial engagement strength. Per Rubin and McHugh (1987), the "importance of developing a relationship with one's favorite TV performer" scale seems related to Calder/Malthouse's notion of engagement – e.g. when a show is on I would rather watch than do anything else, I really miss it when I'm unable to watch, watching is one of the most important things I do each week, etc. Rubin and McHugh found PSI was related strongly to social and task attraction toward media personality, and importance of relationship

development with the personality (1987). Newcomb's (1956) reinforcement theory states that attraction results from experiencing rewarding interaction with others, and social and task attraction being related to PSI concords with this. Thus, rewarding interactions for all actors—podcasters, advertisers, audience members—where value is co-created and operant resources are developed would follow from parasocial engagement. This perhaps help explain the results of the current study, which emphasize VCC's importance to ad-related outcomes and brand perceptions. Finally, Friestad and Wright, originators of the persuasion knowledge theory, see the value of interaction, couching its value in terms of a game:

Although provocative, the game metaphor must be used cautiously. It may wrongly connote the inevitable presence in everyday social exchanges of an endpoint (i.e., the game's end), along with a winner and a loser. However, recent research suggests the importance of understanding how targets and agents use each other's persuasion-related behaviors in pursuing the long-term social goal of managing, maintaining, growing, or limiting the relationship between the two parties. That perspective challenges the conception of what winning a persuasion game means. It implies that in many instances the goal of continuing to play more such games in the future with the same target or agent is the most important outcome for both parties. (Friestad & Wright, 1999, p. 193)

Table 26: *Theoretical Framework Reconciliation*

S-DL Narrative	S-D L-informed Consumer Engagement, e.g. Hollebeek et al. (2019)	Calder, Malthouse et al. Media Engagement	PSI/PSR	Reconciled Tenets – Parasocial Engagement
<i>Axioms/FPs (2016)</i>				
A1/FP1: Service is the fundamental basis	FP1: CE reflects a	Engagement is a multilevel,	PSR: “conceptualized	Relatedness is a fundamental

of exchange – “the application of specialized competencies (i.e. operant resources: knowledge, skills) through deeds, processes and performances for benefit of another entity, or the entity itself” (Vargo & Lusch, 2008b, p. 26) FP2: Indirect exchange masks the fundamental basis of exchange. FP3: Goods are distribution mechanisms for service provision. FP4: Operant resources are the fundamental source of strategic benefit. FP5: All economies are service economies. A2/FP6: Value is co-created by multiple actors, always including the beneficiary. FP7: Actors cannot deliver value but can participate in the creation and offering of value propositions.	customer’s motivationally driven, volitional investment of specific operant and operand resources into brand interactions in service systems. (p. 175) FP2: The CE benefits of customer individual- and interpersonal operant resource development and cocreation result from CE within service systems (p. 175)	multidimensional construct that emerges from the thoughts and feelings about one or more rich experiences involved in reaching a personal goal. It is more about motivation to do something rather than simply what one likes about it. (Calder & Malthouse, 2008) As opposed to advertising, engagement is more about participative experiences where consumers and brands co-create value through virtual or actual experiences with the brand and/or other consumers (eg. through UGC)	as interpersonal involvement of the media user with what he or she consumes... including seeking guidance from a media persona, seeing media personalities as friends, imagining being part of a favorite program’s social world, and desiring to meet media performers” (Rubin et al., 1985, pp. 156-157) PSR grows over time; operationalizations for PSI resemble friendship qualities (Perse & Rubin, 1989). As confidence in ability to predict character behaviors grows (a function of repeated PSIs/time), so	human need, (along with self-organization/self-regulation and competence) that facilitates growth (Deci & Ryan, 2000); one aspect of relatedness is appropriate reciprocity (Buunk & Nauta, 2000; Dunbar, 1993) – Podcasts allow relatedness and connections to the wider social world in a unique motivationally driven way, especially in the current network-mediated environment. The current network-mediated environment allows digital connections between actors; podcasts are a case of the above where parasocial relationship development among audience members with other members and hosts can contribute to greater sense of
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		(Malthouse & Calder, 2018)	does likelihood of PSR (Perse & Rubin, 1989)	engagement, which leads to greater resource integration and value co-creation for all parties.
FP8: A service-centered view is inherently beneficiary oriented and relational. A3/FP9: All social and economic actors are resource integrators.	FP3: The CE foundational processes of customer resource integration, knowledge sharing and learning represent either necessary (i.e., for customer resource integration) or conducive (i.e., for customer knowledge sharing/learning) factors for the development of CE in service systems (p. 172).	Engagement is about motivation to accomplish something in a certain way that is considered “correct” (Higgins, 2006; C&M, 2008); Engagement is connected to eudaimonia, that is, about making a life that is meaningful (Calder et al, 2016); Engagement experience types such as “Talking About and Sharing” and “Community Connection” point toward resource integration, knowledge sharing and learning, among others	Co-viewing could positively moderate the strength of PSI/PSR due to “subsequent discussion of the figure” (Giles, 2002, p. 292); Co-consumption with other audience members has been shown to relate to parasocial relationships with other audience members as well as hosts (Pavelko & Myrick, 2020; McClung & Johnson, 2010; Perks & Turner, 2019; Vilceanu et al., 2021)	(same as above) The current network-mediated environment allows digital connections between actors; podcasts are a case of the above where parasocial relationship development among audience members with other members and hosts can contribute to greater sense of engagement, which leads to greater resource integration and value co-creation for all parties.
A4/FP10: Value is always uniquely and phenomenologically	FP4: CE reflects a customer’s investment of	Engagement is context-specific and multidimensio	PSI involves a greater sense of involvement than simply	Podcast engagement involves uncertainty

determined by the beneficiary.	focal cognitive, emotional, behavioral, and social resources during, or related to, specific brand interactions in service systems (p. 172).	nal, depending on the person/media vehicle (Calder et al., 2016). It is about motivation to accomplish a personal goal (Calder & Malthouse, 2008).	observing (Horton & Wohl, 1956); Uncertainty reduction in terms of predicted actions (communication, liking, intimacy) is related to PSR (Rubin & McHugh, 1987)	reduction; voluntary investment of resources during listening sessions increases likelihood of PSR and engagement; resources, investment and resulting parasocial engagement perceptions are likely to be uniquely and phenomenologically determined by the user.
A5/FP11: Value co-creation is coordinated through actor-generated institutions and institutional arrangements.	FP5: CE is contingent on focal context-specific characteristics in service systems. Customer manifestations (including intensity, valence) of CE, the CE foundational processes and CE benefits may thus vary across contextual contingencies (p. 173). - Co creation is element of UGC/Social	Engagement is about participative experiences where consumers and brands co-create value through virtual or actual experiences with the media (C&M, 2008), brand and/or other consumers (e.g., through UGC) (Malthouse & Calder, 2018); User-generated content that prompts consumers to elaborate on some personal	Media systems like TV, radio, film have engendered PSI; this is enhanced by two-way nature of new media that allows for feedback and two-way connections (e.g. Marx et al., 2021; Kyewski et al., 2018; Enli, 2012; Stollfuß, 2019; Sinton, 2018)	The current network-mediated environment is an institutional arrangement in which consumers and brands/actors come together to make meaning (e.g. Kent & Taylor, 2002), thereby increasing parasocial engagement. Podcasts are an institutional way/medium where actors can coordinate value co-creation and operant resource development with each other.

media brand engagement (Gomez et al., 2019; Hollebeek et al., 2014) goal they have that is also relevant to the target brand positively affects purchase intention (Malthouse et al., 2016) Eudaimonia (living a meaningful life) rather than hedonia (Calder et al., 2016)

Other components/approaches

Actors, dissociated from pre-labeled roles (Vargo & Lusch, 2016)

Engagement is more about eudaimonia than hedonia, and more about moving toward than reflecting backward (which is satisfaction) (Calder et al., 2016)

Levels

Macro

Meso

A media vehicle replated with an audience of engaged users tends to lead to positive effects from associated advertising (C&M, 2008;

<i>Micro</i>	-	Calder et al., 2009) Motivational, context- and stakeholder-specific, and the remembering self (Calder et al, 2016; Brodie et al., 2011)	“conceptualized as interpersonal involvement of the media user with what he or she consumes... including seeking guidance from a media persona, seeing media personalities as friends, imagining being part of a favorite program’s social world, and desiring to meet media performers” (Rubin et al., 1985, pp. 156-157) – i.e. both eudaimonia and hedonia	
Structuration / OR Institutions (in the sociological sense) are the mechanisms that enable and also constrain value co-creation (2020)		Engagement is a multilevel, multidimensional construct that emerges from the thoughts and feelings about one or more rich experiences involved in reaching a personal goal.		Podcasts are an institutional way/medium where actors can coordinate value co-creation and operant resource development with each other.
Emergence / Systems thinking	CEB affects value co-creation by	Consists of a dynamic, interactive	PSRs are part of a network-mediated	Parasocial engagement can be seen as an

	virtue of customers’ diverse resource contributions towards the focal firm and/or stakeholders that modify and/or augment the offering, and/or affect other stakeholders’ perceptions, preferences, expectations or actions towards the firm or its offering (Jaakola and Alexander, 2014)	process (Calder et al, 2016); “iterative, dynamic process, where participation experience and shared action emerge as central components of engagement” (Johnston & Taylor, 2018, p. 3).	system of connections of actors of all types	element of a complex system of emergence with relationship development and value cocreation as a general result along with more specific, situational consequences (e.g. UGC, brand equity, etc.).
Zooming out beyond the dyadic and in from the macro/holistic		Personal, context-specific experiences, media vehicles; engaged audiences can provide good value for advertisers	Parasocial Interaction occurs during a media encounter; Parasocial Relationships develop over time from PSIs.	

Limitations, Recommendations for Future Research, and Conclusions

Limitations

First, though it had face validity, an intended manipulation check item for host-read vs. conventional ad (“Did the podcast host read the ad you heard?”) did not function as intended, as

only 4 respondents exposed to the host-read ad said “No,” while 90 said “Yes” and 2 were unsure. However, a few points need to be made in response. First, among those in the non-host-read condition, 3 of them said “No,” and 93 said “Yes,” while 1 was unsure. As this pattern was remarkably similar across conditions, even given the differential voices and language involved in the two conditions, it indicates that respondents perhaps did not understand the term “podcast host” in the same way the researcher did, that is, was it Joe Rogan or not (perhaps understanding anyone involved in a podcast to be a “host” as opposed to the voice of a “paid sponsor.”) Further, a chi-square test examining the response patterns between the two conditions was performed. The results ($\chi^2 = .520$, d.f. = 2, $p = .771$) revealed no difference among response patterns across conditions. This reveals further statistical evidence that the item did not function, thus it is clear that rather than reflecting a problem with the stimulus, the validity of the item itself is likely the issue. Second, scholars have questioned the need for perceptual verification of physical/ontological manipulations in experimental research. For example, literature in experimental media studies notes that physical features of experimental stimuli should not depend on perceptions of respondents to be valid (Sundar, 2004; Leshner, 2014). According to Sundar (2004), there is a tautology involved with studying *perceptions* of a focal independent variable when the variable is defined and operationalized “physically” or ontologically, which is the case in the current research (i.e. the host-read ad condition contained Joe Rogan’s voice and began with “Hi friends, Joe Rogan here” whereas the conventional/non-host-read condition ad read was not Joe Rogan’s voice and began with “Hi friends, Jonathan Rogers here.” [see Appendix A]). Relatedly, Leshner (2014) also delineates three major criticisms of the supposed need for manipulation checks in media studies research: 1) similar to Sundar’s point above (2004), message manipulations are often independently verifiable (e.g. either the pacing is fast or

it isn't, or the second choice set is larger and contains more choices than the first set – it doesn't matter what the person consciously perceives), 2) message manipulations are conflated with effects (e.g., measuring the amount of fear in a fear appeal is simply measuring the effect the manipulation has, thus defining message content by effect and not by the concrete properties of the message, where the latter would tend to have more theoretical value, and (3) mistreating measures as manipulation checks when they could be treated as mediating psychological states (perceived interactivity or perceived threat levels, for example). Thus, we see the “failed” manipulation check as more of a problem with the validity of the item itself rather than a reflection of the experimental stimuli. Third, we simply note that Brinson et al. (2023), on which the present research is largely based, did not report a manipulation check, possibly due to the discussed physical/perceptual distinctions above.

Other identified limitations involve the use of the Mechanical Turk sample. While data screening procedures were followed to ensure data quality per Brinson et al. (2023) and Aguinis et al. (2021) as noted, and this panel gave us a much more representative sample in terms of a variety of types of podcast users than the traditional college student pool, this panel is qualitatively different from both a college student sample recruited via email as well as a sample of college students run through a more traditional lab environment, both in the sense that we cannot control conditions of exposure as well as ensure attention during stimulus exposure (indeed, from an initial N of 345, 152 respondent responses were flagged for attention problems, clearly AI-generated verbatims, incompleteness, and other issues). However, as the field experiment tends to enhance external validity (in this case because respondents were listening to the stimuli in a more natural environment, perhaps even via smartphone) while perhaps sacrificing some internal control, this was a calculated decision for the current research.

Like previous research in this space, the *Joe Rogan Experience* podcast was selected as a “carrier” due to its popularity and representativeness of the popular (and somewhat typical) long-form conversational genre. This was among the first studies to examine the interface of a hedonic-type product when looking at the intersection of PSR. However, it may be the nature of the PSR relationship with Joe Rogan is qualitatively different than other hosts and/or there may be some type of interaction effect at play with the quality of host PSR and the type of podcast. Thus, we do not have good data as to the representativeness of the identified effects of this study throughout all podcasts. However, we do know that as the #1 podcast in the world, Joe Rogan does at least exemplify and represent at least what would be considered a fair number of podcast situations.

Recommendations for Future Research

Dovetailing on the above, other products and hosts/genres may combine for different effects in these variables. It may also be worthwhile to examine audience size with relationship to PSR effects. In the SMI literature, influencer type or audience size has been proposed as a moderating variable to some of the identified relationships, including PSR (Turin-Rahman, 2022). This should also be investigated in the podcast space.

Further, the parasocial relationship with podcast hosts should be examined in relation to the literature on social media influencer marketing to examine where points of commonality lie (as well as points of possible departure). Again, if one considers podcasts a particular type of influencer marketing (indeed they share many similar aspects), this connection makes sense, especially in regard to PSR and other elements of SMI, such as attractiveness, homophily/heterogeneity, and opinion leadership. As noted, as much SMI literature notes the McCracken meaning transfer model (1989) and Ohanian source credibility model (1990) as

theoretical underpinnings to explain SMI marketing success, these should be investigated in the podcast modality to see if these explanations hold here as well.

Also as noted above, the concept of opinion leadership has been examined in relation to successful outcomes in social media influencer marketing (Farivar et al., 2021). If, due to its association with positive outcome intentions, opinion leadership among social media influencers is actually related to value co-creation as posited by Casaló et al. (2021), that would provide another point of reconciliation between these concepts and could be investigated further. Again, though the Brand Engagement in Self-Concept (BESC) engagement paradigm has been postulated to be related to influencer marketing success, research has shown a lack of support for BESC with regard to propensity to be influenced via SMI (Giakoumaki & Krepapa, 2020; Chalke et al., 2023); this should be investigated further in podcasts specifically; it may be that more general/vehicle-based motivation-related engagement predicts or is related to propensity to engage in BESC, which then may have an effect on behavioral intentions and attitudes among podcast listeners/users.

In addition to more research on serial ad position with regard to various involvement levels, Zhao (1997) performed research on “pod clutter,” that is, serial ad placement within “pods” of multiple ads, on consumer perceptions of Super Bowl advertising, finding more positive effects on recall, liking, and brand recognition for ads placed later in the pod. As many podcast ads are presented in groups along with others, this notion of “pod” research with regard to serial placement (both in general and within advertising “pods” in various serial positions) represents another area of research in podcast advertising that should be further investigated as well. Additionally, Terry (2005) performed research on TV ad recall both immediately post-stimulus exposure as well as later on to determine “staying power” of brand recall, finding that

those ads presented first tended to be remembered more post-experiment. This represents another area of serial placement research that should be investigated with regard to podcast ads.

As mentioned, Fisher (2024) found that various Engagement sub-constructs had both positive and negative effects on advertising-related outcomes, depending on the type of podcast used and the specific Engagement type under consideration. Following Calder et al.'s (2016) that context matters, further investigation into the sub-constructs comprising overall Engagement could render some interesting results and more “pure” moderation rather than the direct-effect-plus-moderation pattern found in the current study (or even stronger direct effects, for that matter).

Finally, in possible support of the Engagement-Parasocial Relationship-Value Co-Creation connection and the theoretical notion of Parasocial Engagement, more research on the nature of these elements in both podcast advertising and other formats and situations should be conducted. If the nature of the market is truly more akin to the purely social rather than simply a part of it, this would not only offer more explanatory power for the phenomena behind purchase decisions but also how humans choose to interact with each other in a more general sense.

Conclusions

While parasocial relationships have been postulated to positively contribute to ad content in podcasts and have been researched in a descriptive/survey manner (e.g. Schlütz and Hedder, 2022; Perks & Turner, 2019; Vilceanu et al., 2021), experimental research in this area is nascent and ripe for further development (e.g. Brinson et al., 2023), especially with regard to conventional advertising/brand outcomes like purchase intention and attitude toward the brand, alongside research on effects and perceptions of host-read ads vs. conventional radio-style ads (e.g. Brinson & Lemon, 2022; Moe, 2021; Moe, 2022). Further, while engagement has been

shown to broadly positively contribute to ad perceptions (Calder and Malthouse, 2008), podcasts as a vehicle has not been examined within this theoretical framework with regard to conventional measures of ad effectiveness, and how both parasocial relationships and engagement relate to value co-creation, situational/evaluative PK, and ad effectiveness have yet to be studied.

This research thus contributes to the field by experimentally investigating the intersection of ad type and position, parasocial relationships, engagement, and persuasion knowledge and their effects on advertising perceptions and behavioral intentions, specifically in the podcast medium, following calls for further research in this area (Taylor, 2024).

The present research is also among the first to examine the relationship of advertising form (host-read ad vs. conventional/non-host read ad) and serial ad placement (beginning/pre-roll vs. middle/mid-roll) on ad-related variables and behavioral intentions such as Purchase Intention, Attitude Toward the Ad, Attitude Toward the Brand, and Information Seeking Intention. The study also examines the potential moderating effects of Parasocial Relationships and Engagement, as well as the mediation of Persuasion Knowledge, within these relationships, and investigates precursors to Parasocial Relationship and Persuasion Knowledge perceptions.

Experimental data finds support for main effects of mid-roll serial ad placement outperforming pre-roll position on Purchase Intention, Attitude Toward the Ad, and Information Seeking, and an interaction effect such that among those in the pre-roll condition, greater levels of Attitude Toward the Brand were indicated for those in the host-read condition vs. the conventional ad condition. Support was also found for Evaluative Persuasion Knowledge as a mediator between the serial ad placement condition as IV and Purchase Intention, Attitude Toward the Brand, Attitude Toward the Ad, and Info Seeking; Engagement's moderation of the relationship between the IVs and PI, A_{brand} , InfoSeek, and EvalPK; and Parasocial Relationship's

moderation of the relationship between the IVs and InfoSeek as well as EvalPK. A full model test confirmed support for these relationships for Information Seeking Intention. Further, Parasocial Interaction Behaviors were found to positively predict Parasocial Relationship perceptions, and Dispositional Persuasion Knowledge measures were found to positively predict situational persuasion knowledge.

Additionally, we find that Value Co-Creation successfully predicts focal DVs to a greater extent than the previously examined moderator concepts, and show support for a serial mediation model beginning with Engagement then flowing through Parasocial Relationship perceptions on to Value Co-Creation, which then flow to the focal dependent variables.

Zooming out, we thus also introduce a novel conceptual factor or phenomenon, Parasocial Engagement, derived from both the experimental data as well as a conceptual reconciliation of the concepts of Consumer Engagement, motivation-based Engagement, and Parasocial Relationships, utilizing Service-Dominant Logic as a unifying conceptual framework and pointing to “the market” as the field in which social exchanges of many, and possibly all, types occur.

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Appendix A: Ad Copy

Ad copy (created via Perplexity.ai with some human edits with the prompt, “Could you write a 30-second radio script for an ad for Roots Clothing?”):

Hi friends, (Joe Rogan/Jonathan Rogers) here. This episode is brought to you by Rooted Lifestyle Wear. Looking for clothes that combine casual comfort with modern North American style? Then you need to get back to your roots. At Rooted, you'll find the latest fashions made from premium materials like cozy cotton, soft leather, and warm wool. Whether it's the iconic salt and pepper sweats, a rugged jean jacket, or a classic striped tee, Rooted has the laid-back yet put-together look you want. Their apparel is designed in Canada, inspired by our continent's rich outdoor heritage. So embrace your roots and that easygoing North American spirit with Rooted Lifestyle Wear. Rooted. Spread and shared everywhere. Visit Rootedlifestylewear.com slash Rogan for store locations, online ordering and more. (:37)

Appendix B: Podcast Transcript

Speaker 1 ([00:00](#)):

Your mind has to seek discomfort. It has to seek these difficult tasks. You have to enjoy it, and you have to figure out a way to make your mind enjoy those things. And some people, it comes easy and some people it doesn't. Some people it takes a long time. I always tell people the best thing you could ever do is force yourself to a schedule. Just write it down. Today I have to do an hour on the treadmill. I have to do an hour no matter what. Even if you've been walking on it, you're doing an hour on a treadmill, the next time you're do do it. Okay, you did an hour and this is the amount of miles you got in. Next time you're going to add three miles. Put an extra three

miles in that one hour and just keep doing things like that. Write it down. And then force yourself. Force yourself to adhere to a schedule. (00:43)

(INSERT AD HERE for mid-clip condition)

I don't believe in half-assing things. This life is short. If you get into something, get into it. And if you're not into it, don't be into it. And I think that insanity and greatness, are next door neighbors, and they borrow each other's sugar. That's what I've always said. There's something about mastery, like true mastery that requires you to shut off massive areas of your life. There's a lot of people that are scared of their ability to do something that's difficult. I don't know if I could force myself to be disciplined. I don't know if I could force myself to take that kind of action. Well, if you do force yourself to take that kind of action, you don't have that question anymore, that question, I don't know if I can do it. Well, you're doing it, so you obviously do it. Can you do it tomorrow? We did it today. Or can't you do it tomorrow? Just do it. You get so much more benefit out of a struggle that you choose to embark in versus a struggle that life throws upon you. Get out there and go do something. Just go. And then in the middle of doing it, it'll become easy. Even if it's not easy, even if it's hard, it's easier than not doing it and wishing that you had done it. (2:30 with ad insert)

Appendix C: Survey Questionnaire

Podcast experiment-dissertation RV4 - the real deal try 2

Survey Flow

EmbeddedData Random ID = \${rand://int/1000:9999}	
Standard: consent block (1 Question) Standard: Podcast use block (5 Questions) Standard: Podcast use block 2 (2 Questions) Standard: Podcast engagement block (2008 measures) (3 Questions) Standard: Context specific engagement block (5 Questions) Standard: Hosts and podcasts (3 Questions) Standard: Trait PKM measures (2 Questions) Standard: Stim instructions (1 Question)	
BlockRandomizer: 1 - Evenly Present Elements	
	Standard: Experimental Stim JRE Host Read Ad - Beginning (2 Questions) Standard: Experimental Stim JRE conventional ad- beginning (2 Questions) Standard: Experimental stim JR ad - middle (2 Questions) Standard: Experimental stim Non JR ad - middle (2 Questions)
Standard: manipulation checks (3 Questions) Standard: DVs PSR and Situational PKM (4 Questions) Standard: DVs Info seeking Aad PI and ABrand (16 Questions) Standard: hang in there (1 Question) Standard: Value co creation block (7 Questions) Standard: Demographics and media block (14 Questions) Standard: Murk items (2 Questions)	

Page Break

Start of Block: consent block

consent **Consent to Participate in Research** - University of Oklahoma

You are invited to participate in research about current usage of podcasts, what shows people listen to, and their perceptions of the advertising that happens within podcasts. You must be 18 or older and a current podcast listener to participate.

If you agree to participate, you will listen to a short clip (about 2.5 minutes) of a podcast and complete a 15-minute online survey.

You may experience these risks:

You will be asked to complete an online survey as part of this research. The organization hosting the data collection platform has its own privacy and security policies for keeping your information confidential. There is a risk that the external organization, which is not part of the research team, may gain access to or retain your data or your IP address which could be used to re-identify you. No assurance can be made as to their use of the data you provide for purposes other than this research.

You will be asked to provide demographic information that describes you. We may also gather information about your geographic location in this research. Different combinations of personal and geographic information may make it possible for your identity to be guessed by someone who was given, or gained access, to our research records. To minimize the risk of deductive re-identification, we will not combine identifying variables nor analyze and report results for small groups of people with specific demographic characteristics.

If you participate, you will receive this compensation: \$1.75, provided your response is complete and attention checks built into the survey are satisfied. Your participation is voluntary and your responses will be anonymous; no identifying data will be shared with anyone outside of the research team.

We might share your de-identified data with other researchers or use it in future research without obtaining additional assent from you. The de-identified research data may be uploaded to an online data repository platform where it would be publicly available for anyone interested in using it. Even if you choose to participate now, you may stop participating at any time and for any reason.

If you have questions about this research, please contact:
Nate Fisher, natefisher@ou.edu, 405-325-4015.

You can also contact the University of Oklahoma - Norman Campus Institutional Review Board at 405-325-8110 or irb@ou.edu with questions, concerns or complaints about your child's rights as a research participant, or if you don't want to talk to the researcher.

Please print this document for your records. By providing information to the researcher(s), I am agreeing to participate in this research.

Are you 18 years of age or older?

IRB # 17689

IRB Approval Date: 9-19-24

☐ Yes (4)

☐ No (If no- cannot participate) (5)

Skip To: End of Survey If Consent to Participate in Research - University of Oklahoma You are invited to participate in res... = No (If no- cannot participate)

End of Block: consent block

Start of Block: Podcast use block

PodUse When it comes to listening to or watching podcasts, choose what best describes your podcast use:

- ☐ I never have listened to or watched podcasts (1)
- ☐ I used to but not now (2)
- ☐ Every once in awhile (3)
- ☐ Somewhat regularly (4)
- ☐ Very regularly (5)

Skip To: End of Survey If When it comes to listening to or watching podcasts, choose what best describes your podcast use: = I never have listened to or watched podcasts

Skip To: End of Survey If When it comes to listening to or watching podcasts, choose what best describes your podcast use: = I used to but not now

Display This Question:

If When it comes to listening to or watching podcasts, choose what best describes your podcast use: = Every once in awhile

Or When it comes to listening to or watching podcasts, choose what best describes your podcast use: = Somewhat regularly

Or When it comes to listening to or watching podcasts, choose what best describes your podcast use: = Very regularly

PodUse2 About how many days per week do you listen to or watch a podcast?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7



Display This Question:

If When it comes to listening to or watching podcasts, choose what best describes your podcast use: = Every once in awhile

Or When it comes to listening to or watching podcasts, choose what best describes your podcast use: = Somewhat regularly

Or When it comes to listening to or watching podcasts, choose what best describes your podcast use: = Very regularly

PodUse3 About how many total episodes of any podcasts do you listen to or watch in a typical week?

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100



Display This Question:

If When it comes to listening to or watching podcasts, choose what best describes your podcast use: = Every once in awhile

Or When it comes to listening to or watching podcasts, choose what best describes your podcast use: = Somewhat regularly

Or When it comes to listening to or watching podcasts, choose what best describes your podcast use: = Very regularly

PodType In general, do you listen to audio podcasts or watch video podcasts more often?

☐ Audio (1)

☐ Video (2)

☐ About the same (3)

Display This Question:

If When it comes to listening to or watching podcasts, choose what best describes your podcast use: = Every once in awhile

Or When it comes to listening to or watching podcasts, choose what best describes your podcast use: = Somewhat regularly

Or When it comes to listening to or watching podcasts, choose what best describes your podcast use: = Very regularly

PodSpecial Now, thinking about the various types of podcasts that are available, there are a couple categories that do not easily lend themselves to more traditional segmentation.

These include "True Crime" podcasts like "Serial," "The Apology Line," "Crime Junkie," Dateline NBC," "Unraveled" and more.

There are also those shows that often discuss various aspects of society, culture, history, government, news and more in longer formats, often hosted by or including public intellectuals or figures like Sam Harris, Dave Rubin, Joe Rogan, Bret & Heather Weinstein, Jordan Peterson, Eric Weinstein, Ayaan Hirsi Ali, Douglas Murray, Maajid Nawaz, and Gad Saad, among others.

Of these two categories, please mark the ones you typically listen to or watch, and for the ones that you do, mark how interested you are in the type on a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 is "not at all interested" and 7 is "extremely interested," and then your best guess of how many minutes you spend with each type on a weekly basis, on average.

	Do you listen / watch?	Regardless of whether you currently listen to or watch, how interested in this type of podcast are you on a scale of 1 to 7 where 1 is "not at all interested" and 7 is "extremely interested" ?	If you listen to / watch this type, how many minutes do you spend per week listening to / watching this type?	If you listen to / watch this type, do you listen to audio podcasts or watch video podcasts of each type more often?

Government (13)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Health and living (14)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Games and hobbies (15)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Kids and family (16)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other (please list type) (17)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

PodFavVerb What is/are your current favorite podcast(s) and/or podcast host(s), and why?

End of Block: Podcast use block 2

Start of Block: Podcast engagement block (2008 measures)

MEtalk Now, thinking of podcasts in general, on a scale of 1 to 7 where 1 is "Strongly disagree" and 7 is "Strongly agree," please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

	1 - Strongly disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 - Strongly agree (7)
Listening to podcasts gives me something to talk about. (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I bring up things I have heard in podcasts in conversations with many other people. (2)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I use things I have heard in podcasts in discussions or arguments with people I know. (3)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
A big reason I listen to podcasts is to make myself more interesting to other people. (4)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I share things from the podcast to people in my family. (5)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

MEadatt On a scale of 1 to 7 where 1 is "Strongly disagree" and 7 is "Strongly agree," please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

	1 - Strongly disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 - Strongly agree (7)
I like the ads as much as the rest of the content in podcasts. (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I listen to/watch most of the ads in podcasts. (2)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I like how colorful the ads are in podcasts. (3)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I respond to ads from podcasts more often than most other sites or media I use. (4)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Podcasts have ads about things I actually care about. (5)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I value the coupon codes and deals in podcasts. (6)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

End of Block: Podcast engagement block (2008 measures)

Start of Block: Context specific engagement block

Eng-Int On a scale of 1 to 7 where 1 is "strongly disagree" and 7 is "strongly agree," please indicate your relative level of agreement with each of the following statements when it comes to podcasts:

	1 - strongly disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 - strongly agree (7)
Podcasts make me feel more connected to other people and the community. (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I would enjoy talking with someone else about podcasts. (37)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I would like to give advice and tips based on what I hear on podcasts. (38)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My podcasts would come up in conversations with many other people. (39)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Listening to podcasts gives me something to talk about. (40)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel personally involved with podcasts. (41)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Eng-Civico On a scale of 1 to 7 where 1 is "strongly disagree" and 7 is "strongly agree," please indicate your relative level of agreement with each of the following statements when it comes to podcasts:

	1 - strongly disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 - strongly agree (7)
Listening/watching podcasts makes me a better citizen. (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I think people who don't listen/watch podcasts are at a disadvantage in life. (46)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Our society would be weaker without podcasts. (47)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I count on podcasts to investigate wrongdoing. (48)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Eng-Ident On a scale of 1 to 7 where 1 is "strongly disagree" and 7 is "strongly agree," please indicate your relative level of agreement with each of the following statements when it comes to podcasts:

	1 - strongly disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 - strongly agree (7)
A reason I watch/listen to podcasts is to make myself more interesting to other people. (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Listening to/watching podcasts is a little like belonging to a group. (54)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I like for other people to know that I listen to/watch podcasts. (55)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

End of Block: Context specific engagement block

Start of Block: Hosts and podcasts

Hosts Which of the following podcast do you listen to/watch currently? Please choose the most appropriate response for each.

	Yes, I currently listen/watch (1)	I used to listen/watch, but not currently (2)	I have never watched/listened to this podcast (4)
The Joe Rogan Experience (1)	☐	☐	☐
This Past Weekend w/ Theo Von (2)	☐	☐	☐
The Tucker Carlson Podcast (3)	☐	☐	☐
The Comment Section with Drew Afualo (4)	☐	☐	☐
Call Her Daddy with Alex Cooper (5)	☐	☐	☐
Crime Junkie (6)	☐	☐	☐
Huberman Lab (7)	☐	☐	☐
Serial (8)	☐	☐	☐
Acquired with Ben Gilbert and David Rosenthal (9)	☐	☐	☐
Morbid (10)	☐	☐	☐
Pardon My Take (11)	☐	☐	☐
The Bill Simmons Podcast (12)	☐	☐	☐
My Favorite Murder (13)	☐	☐	☐
The Ben Shapiro Show (14)	☐	☐	☐
The Bible in a Year with Fr. Mike Schmitz (15)	☐	☐	☐

The Megyn Kelly Show (16)	☐	☐	☐
Conan O'Brien Needs a Friend (17)	☐	☐	☐
Breaking Points with Krystal and Saagar (18)	☐	☐	☐

Display This Question:

If Which of the following podcast do you listen to/watch currently? Please choose the most appropria... = The Joe Rogan Experience [Yes, I currently listen/watch]

JRMod Do you typically listen to the audio version or watch the video version of the JRE /Joe Rogan Experience more often?

☐ Audio (1)

☐ Video (2)

☐ About the same (3)

Display This Question:

If Which of the following podcast do you listen to/watch currently? Please choose the most appropria... = The Joe Rogan Experience [Yes, I currently listen/watch]

JRELength In your estimation, about how long have you listened to/watched the Joe Rogan Experience podcast, in months?

0 12 24 36 48 60 72 84 96 108 120 132 144 156 168

I've been a JRE listener for about this many months ()	
--	--

End of Block: Hosts and podcasts

Start of Block: Trait PKM measures

PKMADAvoidance On a scale of 1 to 7 where 1 is "never" and 7 is "always," please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements when it comes to ads on podcasts in general:

	1 - never (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 - always (7)
I intentionally avoid ads on podcasts. (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I intentionally do not pay attention to ads on podcasts. (2)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I skip ahead to avoid ads. (3)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I take any actions to avoid ads. (4)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I intentionally do not visit sponsors of ads even if the ads draw my attention. (5)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

PKMDispPK On a scale of 1 to 7 where 1 is "strongly disagree" and 7 is "strongly agree," please indicate your relative level of agreement with each of the following statements about advertising in general:

	1 - strongly disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 - strongly agree (7)
I know when an offer is too good to be true in general advertising. (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I can tell when an offer has strings attached in general advertising. (6)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have no trouble understanding the bargaining tactics used in general advertising. (9)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I know when an ad is pressuring me to buy in general advertising. (12)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I can see through sales gimmicks used to get consumers to buy in general advertising. (15)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I can separate fact from fantasy in general advertising. (18)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

End of Block: Trait PKM measures

Start of Block: Stim instructions

instruc Now you're going to listen to a 2.5-minute segment of a Joe Rogan Experience podcast, then answer some questions about your thoughts and opinions about it. Once you're done listening, you can move on to the questions. Please make sure your sound is on and the volume is up.

End of Block: Stim instructions

Start of Block: Experimental Stim JRE Host Read Ad - Beginning

JRadBeg Can't see the player above? [Click here to download/listen to the file.](#)

☐ I'm done - Continue (you can move on when you've listened to the podcast excerpt and the timer below hits zero) (1)

time1 Timing
First Click (1)
Last Click (2)
Page Submit (3)
Click Count (4)

End of Block: Experimental Stim JRE Host Read Ad - Beginning

Start of Block: Experimental Stim JRE conventional ad- beginning

NjradBeg Can't see the player above? [Click here to download/listen to the file.](#)

☐ I'm done - Continue (you can move on when you've listened to the podcast excerpt and the timer below hits zero) (1)

Q87 Timing
First Click (1)
Last Click (2)
Page Submit (3)
Click Count (4)

End of Block: Experimental Stim JRE conventional ad- beginning

Start of Block: Experimental stim JR ad - middle

JRadMid Can't see the player above? [Click here to download/listen to the file.](#)

☐ I'm done - Continue (you can move on when you've listened to the podcast excerpt and the timer below hits zero) (1)

Q91 Timing
First Click (1)
Last Click (2)
Page Submit (3)
Click Count (4)

End of Block: Experimental stim JR ad - middle

Start of Block: Experimental stim Non JR ad - middle

NjradMid Can't see the player above? [Click here to download/listen to the file.](#)

☐ I'm done - Continue (you can move on when you've listened to the podcast excerpt and the timer below hits zero) (1)

Q93 Timing
First Click (1)
Last Click (2)
Page Submit (3)
Click Count (4)

End of Block: Experimental stim Non JR ad - middle

Start of Block: manipulation checks

AdChck What was the brand mentioned in the ad?

ManChck Do you regularly listen to the podcaster you heard?

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)

☐ Unsure (3)

AdConCheck Did the podcast host read the ad you heard?

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)

☐ Unsure (3)

End of Block: manipulation checks

Start of Block: DVs PSR and Situational PKM

JRE_PSR On a scale of 1 to 7 where 1 is "strongly disagree" and 7 is "strongly agree," please indicate your relative level of agreement with each of the following statements when it comes to the podcaster (Joe Rogan) you heard:

PSI-Behavior On a scale of 1 to 7 where 1 is "does not apply at all" and 7 is "applies completely," please indicate the most accurate way to describe your opinion on each of the following statements when it comes to the podcaster (Joe Rogan) you heard:

	1 - does not apply at all (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 - applies completely (7)
The host shows interest in the listeners (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The host lets the listeners partake in her/his personal life (4)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The host refers to the listeners directly (5)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The host shares details about his daily life to the listeners (6)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

SituPKMa Now thinking of the ad in the podcast segment, on a scale from 1 to 7 where 1 is "non-manipulative" and 7 is "manipulative," please give your opinion of the ad you heard.

☐ 1 - non-manipulative (1)

☐ 2 (2)

☐ 3 (3)

☐ 4 (4)

☐ 5 (5)

☐ 6 (6)

☐ 7 - manipulative (7)

EvalPKM Thinking again about the ad you heard in the podcast: On a scale of 1 to 7 where 1 is "strongly disagree" and 7 is "strongly agree," please indicate your relative level of agreement with each of the following statements:

	1 - strongly disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 - strongly agree (7)
The offer sounded too good to be true (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I felt like the advertiser was pressuring me to buy something (4)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It felt like the advertiser was using a sales gimmick to get me to buy something (5)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The advertiser's offer seemed like it had strings attached (6)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I can separate fact from fantasy in the advertiser's offer (7)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

[illegible]

Infseek3 When it comes to the brand in the ad you just heard, please give your feelings about the brand on a scale from 1 to 7 for each of the following pairs of descriptions:

[illegible]

Infseek4 When it comes to the brand in the ad you just heard, please give your feelings about the brand on a scale from 1 to 7 for each of the following pairs of descriptions:

	1 - very unlikely to visit website (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 - very likely to visit website (7)
I am [1-very unlikely / 7 - very likely] to visit Rooted Lifestyle Wear's website for more information (1)							

Infseek5 When it comes to the brand in the ad you just heard, please give your feelings about the brand on a scale from 1 to 7 for each of the following pairs of descriptions:

[illegible]

Aad When it comes to the **ad** you just heard, please give your feelings about the **ad** on a scale from 1 to 7 for each of the following pairs of adjectives:

[illegible]

PI1 When it comes to purchasing from the brand in the ad you just heard, please give your feelings on a scale of 1 to 7 where 1 is "never" and 7 is "definitely."

[illegible]

PI2a When it comes to purchasing from the brand in the ad you just heard, please give your feelings on a scale of 1 to 7 where 1 is "definitely do not intend to buy" and 7 is "definitely intend."

	1 - definitely do not intend to buy (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 - definitely intend (7)
Definitely do not intend to buy (1) to Definitely intend (7) (1)							

PI3a When it comes to purchasing from the brand in the ad you just heard, please give your feelings on a scale of 1 to 7 where 1 is "very low purchase interest" and 7 is "very high purchase interest."

[illegible]

PI4a When it comes to purchasing from the brand in the ad you just heard, please give your feelings on a scale of 1 to 7 where 1 is "definitely not buy it" and 7 is "definitely buy it."

	1 - Definitely not buy it (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 - Definitely buy it (7)
Definitely not buy it (1) to Definitely buy it (7) (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

PI5a When it comes to purchasing from the brand in the ad you just heard, please give your feelings on a scale of 1 to 7 where 1 is "probably not buy" and 7 is "probably buy."

	1 - Probably not buy (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 - probably buy (7)
Probably not buy (1) to Probably buy (7) (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐



Abrand1a

Now, thinking about the brand in the ad you heard: Please describe your overall feelings about the brand described in the ad you just read using a scale that ranges from Unappealing (1) to Appealing (7).

	1- Unappealing (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 - Appealing (7)
Unappealing (1) to Appealing (7) (5)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐



Abrand2a

Please describe your overall feelings about the brand described in the ad you just heard using a scale that ranges from Bad (1) to Good (7).

	1- Bad (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 - Good (7)
Bad (1) to Good (7) (5)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐



Abrand3a

Please describe your overall feelings about the brand described in the ad you just heard using a scale that ranges from Unpleasant (1) to Pleasant (7).

	1- Unpleasant (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 - Pleasant (7)
Unpleasant (1) to Pleasant (7) (5)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Abrand4a Next, evaluate the brand that sponsored the ad you heard using a scale that ranges from Unfavorable (1) to Favorable (7).

	Unfavorable - 1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	Favorable - 7 (7)
UNFAVORABLE (1) to FAVORABLE (7) (9)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Abrand5a Finally, please evaluate the brand described by the above by clicking on the button that best represents your feelings and using a scale that ranges from Unlikeable (1) to Likeable (7).

	Unlikeable - 1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	Likeable - 7 (7)
Unlikeable (1) to Likeable (7) (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

End of Block: DVs Info seeking Aad PI and ABrand

Start of Block: hang in there

Hanginthere You are about to hit the last set of questions. You will simply mark how much you agree with each statement, then answer some questions about yourself. Hang in there!

End of Block: hang in there

Start of Block: Value co creation block

VCC-CP-K On a scale of 1 to 7 where 1 is "strongly disagree" and 7 is "strongly agree," please indicate your relative level of agreement with each of the following statements when it comes to your thoughts on the Joe Rogan podcast:

	1 - strongly disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 - strongly agree (7)
The podcast producer/host is open to my ideas and suggestions about its existing content or towards developing a new product/content (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The podcast producer/host provides sufficient illustrations and information to me (4)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I would willingly spare time and effort to share my ideas and suggestions with the podcast producer/host in order to help it improve its content and processes further (5)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The podcast producer/host provides a suitable environment and opportunity to me to offer suggestions and ideas (6)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

VCC-CP-E On a scale of 1 to 7 where 1 is "strongly disagree" and 7 is "strongly agree," please indicate your relative level of agreement with each of the following statements when it comes to the Joe Rogan podcast:

	1 - strongly disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 - strongly agree (7)
The podcast producer/host has easy access to information about my preferences (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The processes of this podcast producer/host are aligned with my requirements (i.e. the way I wish them to be) (4)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The podcast producer/host considers my role to be as important as its own in the process of content development (5)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
We share an equal role in determining the final outcome of the process of content development (6)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

VCC-VIU-X On a scale of 1 to 7 where 1 is "strongly disagree" and 7 is "strongly agree," please indicate your relative level of agreement with each of the following statements when it comes to the Joe Rogan podcast:

	1 - strongly disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 - strongly agree (7)
It is a memorable experience for me (i.e., the memory of the content lasted for quite a while) (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Depending upon the nature of my own participation, my experiences of the content might be different from other users (10)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It is possible for a user to improve the experience of the content by experimenting and trying new things (11)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

VCC-VIU-R On a scale of 1 to 7 where 1 is "strongly disagree" and 7 is "strongly agree," please indicate your relative level of agreement with each of the following statements when it comes to the Joe Rogan podcast:

	1 - strongly disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 - strongly agree (7)
The podcast producer/host's extended facilitation is necessary for consumers to fully enjoy the content (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel an attachment or relationship with the podcast producer/host (15)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There is usually a group, a community, or a network of consumers who are a fan of the podcast producer/host (16)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The podcast producer/host is renowned because its users usually spread positive word about it in their social networks (17)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Kermit What color is Kermit the Frog?

End of Block: Value co creation block

Start of Block: Demographics and media block

Gender What is your gender?

- ☐ Male (1)
- ☐ Female (2)
- ☐ Other (3)
-

Ethnicity1 Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?

- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)
-

Ethnicity2 How would you describe yourself? Please select all that apply.

- ☐ White (1)
- ☐ Black or African American (2)
- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native (3)
- ☐ Asian (4)
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (5)
- ☐ Other (6)
-

College Are you currently a college student?

- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)
-

Display This Question:

If Are you currently a college student? = Yes

Class What's your current classification in college?

- ☐ Freshman (1)
 - ☐ Sophomore (2)
 - ☐ Junior (3)
 - ☐ Senior (4)
 - ☐ Graduate student (5)
-

Education What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed?

- ☐ Less than a high school diploma (1)
 - ☐ High school degree or equivalent (e.g. GED) (2)
 - ☐ Some college, no degree (3)
 - ☐ Associate degree (e.g. AA, AS) (4)
 - ☐ Bachelor's degree (e.g. BA, BS) (5)
 - ☐ Master's degree (e.g. MA, MS, MEd) (6)
 - ☐ Doctorate or professional degree (e.g. MD, DDS, PhD) (7)
-

Marital Status What is your marital status?

- ☐ Single (never married) (1)
 - ☐ Married, or in a domestic partnership (2)
 - ☐ Widowed (3)
 - ☐ Divorced (4)
 - ☐ Separated (5)
-

Employment What is your current employment status?

- ☐ Employed full time (40 or more hours per week) (1)
 - ☐ Employed part time (up to 39 hours per week) (2)
 - ☐ Unemployed and currently looking for work (3)
 - ☐ Unemployed not currently looking for work (4)
 - ☐ Full-time student (5)
 - ☐ Retired (6)
 - ☐ Homemaker (7)
 - ☐ Self-employed (8)
 - ☐ Unable to work (9)
-

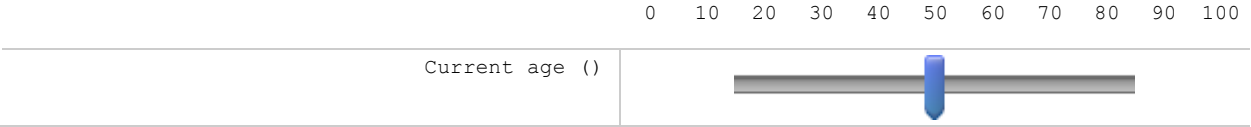
Income What's your current annual income range?

- ☐ Under \$20k per year (1)
- ☐ \$20k - \$39k per year (2)
- ☐ \$40k - \$59k per year (3)
- ☐ \$60k - \$79k per year (4)
- ☐ \$80k - \$99k per year (5)
- ☐ \$100k - \$119k per year (6)
- ☐ \$120k or above (7)

MRI_politics What's the best description of your political outlook in general?

- ☐ Very liberal (1)
- ☐ Somewhat liberal (2)
- ☐ Middle of the road (3)
- ☐ Somewhat conservative (4)
- ☐ Very conservative (5)

Age What is your age?



SelfDescCohort What generational cohort would you consider yourself most part of?

- ☐ Boomer (1)
- ☐ Generation X/Gen X (2)
- ☐ Generation Y / Millennials (3)
- ☐ Generation Z (4)
- ☐ Other (5)
- ☐ Not sure (6)

FinalVerb Is there anything else you'd like to add about any of the subjects we've asked about today?

End of Block: Demographics and media block

Start of Block: Murk items

MturkID What is your MTurk worker ID?

RandomCode Your MTurk code is `${e://Field/Random%20ID}`.

Copy this value to paste into MTurk.

When you have copied this ID, please click the next button to submit your survey.

End of Block: Murk items

Appendix D: Amazon Mechanical Turk Recruitment Screen

Answer a survey about your opinions on podcasts and advertising

Requester: Nathan S. Fisher

Reward: \$1.75 per task

Tasks available: 0

Duration: 6 Hours

Qualifications Required: Location is US , Number of HITs Approved greater than 100

Survey Link Instructions (Click to collapse)

We are conducting an academic survey about podcasts and the advertising within them. **You must be a current podcast listener or viewer to participate.**

You will answer some questions and listen to a clip of a podcast that is about 2.5 minutes long. The survey takes about 15 minutes. Select the link below to complete the survey. At the end of the survey, you will receive a code to paste into the box below to receive credit for taking our survey.

Make sure to leave this window open as you complete the survey. When you are finished, you will return to this page to paste the code into the box.

Template note for Requesters - To verify that Workers actually complete your survey, require each Worker to enter a **unique** survey completion code to your HIT. Consult with your survey service provider on how to generate this code at the end of your survey.

Survey link:

https://ousurvey.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cMiEFnAxd9NCWq

Provide the survey code here:

e.g. 123456

Submit