JoCTEC: Journal of Communication Technology (ISSN: 2694-3883)

JoCTEC Journal of Communication Technology

Published by the Communication Technology Division
of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication

The Roles of Parasocial Relationships, Value Co-creation, Host-read Ads and Persuasion Knowledge in Podcast Ad Outcomes: An Online Experiment

Peer review: This article has been subject to a double-blind peer review process

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Nate S. Fisher[a]

[a]Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma, USA
Correspondence: natefisher@ou.edu

Abstract

Experimental research on the role of parasocial relationships (PSR), value co-creation (VCC), Persuasion Knowledge (PK), and other variables relevant to explaining the associated phenomena surrounding podcast use and persuasion is at the nascent stage. An online experiment was conducted among a sample of college students (n = 207) at a major public university in the U.S. wherein participants listened to a 2-minute podcast segment dealing with personal improvement, along with a 30-second ad inserted in the middle of the clip for "Rooted Lifestyle Wear," a fictional brand. The ad was either read by the same voice presenting the podcast clip ("host-read ad") or a different voice ("non-host-read ad"). A series of regression analyses were conducted. Results indicated PSR positively and dispositional PK negatively significantly predict InfoSeek; VCC and PSR positively significantly predict attitude toward the ad; VCC and PSR positively and significantly predict purchase intention while ad avoidance negatively significantly predicts PI; and VCC significantly positively predicts attitude toward the brand. Post-hoc conceptual model testing revealed PSR partially mediates the effect of VCC on all tested persuasion variables, with PSR successfully moderating the deleterious effects of conceptual persuasion knowledge. Taken together, the results both provide support for the notion of parasocial relationship with hosts as a driver of persuasion, along with a novel finding of value co-creation's role in producing positive outcomes for brands seeking to persuade over podcasts.

Keywords: podcast advertising, parasocial relationships, value co-creation, persuasion knowledge

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Introduction

Since the introduction of the podcast in 2000, audiences have grown steadily (Nielsen, 2022; Bottomley, 2015), and investment in podcast advertising has followed suit (IAB, 2022). Extant research on the nature of persuasion over podcasting is relatively sparse and in an early stage of development (e.g. Brinson & Lemon, 2023). Following recent calls for more academic research on podcasts as a persuasive communication tool (Adler Berg, 2025) and the factors behind podcast advertising (Taylor, 2024), this experimental research attempts to shed more light on the variables that contribute to positive outcomes for podcast advertisers and how they may relate to each other.

Extant research on podcast usage has tended to emerge via a uses-and-gratifications approach and has found audience motivations such as entertainment, multitasking, learning new things, and audience/host relationship development (e.g. Perks & Turner, 2019; Craig et al., 2023). Recent scholarship has noted the technological practices common to podcast production, especially of the aural variety, render particular factors that may make the medium a very effective persuasion tool (Jacobson, 2021) due in part to its ability to stimulate intimacy perceptions with hosts (Adler Berg, 2025). Indeed, some scholars tend to view podcasts as a special case or an extension of social media influencer marketing (e.g. Brinson & Lemon, 2023). In that area, parasocial relationships (PSR) have been studied as a factor in, and an antecedent to, resulting follower purchase intentions (e.g. Farivar et al., 2021; Vrontis et al., 2021). The theory of “parasocial interaction” and the “parasocial relationship” was introduced by Horton and Wohl (1956) to account for a virtual mental “friendship” developed by audience members toward oft-encountered media figures (Rubin et al., 1985). Likewise, some survey- and qualitative-based scholarship has identified PSR as a potential contributor to ad-related outcomes in podcast research (Perks & Turner, 2019; Moe, 2021) though experimental research dealing with PSR is nascent (e.g. Brinson et al., 2023). Similarly, though audiences profess a preference for host-read ads (Moe, 2022), experimental treatment is nascent or non-existent, especially for hedonic products (Brinson et al., 2023). Additionally, in contrast to other media vehicles, podcast audiences are supposedly more “engaged” (e.g. Nielsen, 2022) due to the inherent focal content control of the medium (Haygood, 2007). How this engagement interacts with the social and persuasive elements of podcasts has yet to be studied. Subsequently, calls for more research dealing with the host’s relationship to ad performance have been made (Taylor, 2024).

Moreover, Friestad and Wright’s Persuasion Knowledge Model (PKM) (1994) has been used to explain negative attitudes that result from recognized persuasion attempts (e.g. Ham et al., 2022). Evaluative persuasion knowledge (EvalPK) has been investigated with regard to information seeking intention as a dependent variable (Brinson et al., 2023), but other DVs of interest to advertisers and other forms of persuasion knowledge such as dispositional persuasion knowledge, ad avoidance, and situational manipulative intent have yet to be investigated

within podcasting, leaving a research gap in this area, especially with regard to consumer perceptions of persuasion transparency (Taylor, 2024).

Further, the Service-Dominant Logic (S-D L) paradigm in Marketing envisages the market itself as a series of service-for-service exchanges wherein actors come together in the market, co-producing service for one another (Vargo & Lusch, 2017). A major component/outgrowth of this paradigm is value co-creation (VCC), that is, actors coming together to enhance each other's offerings; that value is then realized through use in a phenomenologically determined fashion which is unique to each individual party in the exchange (Vargo & Lusch, 2004; Ranjan & Read, 2016). VCC has been shown to be related to positive outcomes for consumers and brands (e.g. Schau et al., 2009) but has yet to be investigated within the podcast context. Due to its reliance on social processes to function, exploring its relationship to audience-host relationships, PSR and resulting persuasion effects in this space could prove valuable (see Taylor, 2024).

The current research thus employed an experimental approach to ascertain the effect of ad condition, dispositional persuasion knowledge, ad avoidance, evaluative PK, manipulative intent, parasocial relationship perceptions, and value co-creation on information seeking intention, attitude toward the ad, purchase intention, and attitude toward the brand dependent variables.

Literature Review

Podcasting

The term podcast was used first by journalist Ben Hammersley (Quirk, 2015) and is a mix of "iPod" and "broadcast," essentially due to the iPod's (and iTunes') role as one of the first products with the ability to automatically gather published podcasts deployed on a mass scale (McClung & Johnson, 2010). This syndication of audio content was enabled by Dave Winer and Adam Curry in 2000 when they augmented the then-ubiquitous RSS syndication protocol to be able to handle audio files as well as text (Quirk, 2015). Despite some thought to the contrary, the podcast user base has grown steadily since (Bottomley, 2015). 2014's "Serial" phenomenon and continuing "True Crime" genre popularity ushered in newfound attention and is seen as perhaps a tipping point in terms of public consciousness of the vehicle (Berry, 2015).

Nielsen recently reported 51% of users began listening to podcasts within the last two years, and total users increased 40% over the last three years. This growth is commensurate with what Nielsen termed greater levels of audience "engagement" (Nielsen, 2022). Mobile consumption is another distinctive of the medium, which can give audio formats an advantage over visual forms such that listeners can multi-task and do other tasks, while doing chores, driving, exercising, working, relaxing, etc. (Quirk, 2015; Vilceanu et al., 2021). The self-selection of content and control over subject matter is another distinctive aspect of the medium (Haygood, 2007). Indeed, pivoting from this underlying content exposure control inherent to podcasting as a format/vehicle (Haygood, 2007), a number of studies

utilizing a Uses-and-Gratifications (UGT) framework have been conducted on factors pertaining to both podcast usage and engagement. The Uses-and-Gratifications approach is primarily rational and utilitarian, with three major underlying assumptions: users are a) goal directed with regard to their behaviors, b) active media users, and c) aware of their own needs and thus select media to gratify those needs (Rubin & McHugh, 1987). These have found motivations and elements such as multitasking (Perks & Turner, 2019; Perks et al., 2019; Vilceanu et al., 2021); entertainment (Vilceanu et al., 2021; Craig et al., 2023; McClung & Johnson, 2010), escapism (Craig et al., 2023), learning new things (Craig et al., 2023; Vilceanu et al., 2021), connections with other listeners/users and social opportunities/support (Pavelko & Myrick, 2020; McClung & Johnson, 2010; Perks & Turner, 2019) and parasocial relationship development (Schlütz & Hedder, 2022; Perks & Turner, 2019; Vilceanu et al., 2021). Correspondingly, Perks et al.'s (2019) Podcast Uses and Gratifications scale contains four factors: Social Engagement, Controlling Edutainment, Multitasking, and Storytelling Transportation.

Podcast Advertising

Scholars have proposed that the inherent technological aspect of podcasting, the prevailing practices behind their production, and the reliance on sound give the medium a particularly powerful way to deliver persuasive messages (Jacobson, 2021), with credibility enhanced through non-anonymous, in-depth discussion and greater cognitive absorption through listening (Renisyifa et al., 2022). Advertising spending on podcasts reportedly began rather slowly (e.g. McGowan, 2010). However, in a sign of long-term acceleration, podcast ad revenues reached $2.24 billion as of 2024 (IAB, 2025). Media coverage of large investments in podcast content, podcasters/producers, and distribution platforms has further amplified the medium as attractive to advertisers (e.g. Steele, 2020a; Steele, 2020b). Apple Podcast data indicates most listeners do not skip ads (Snell, 2023), corroborated by Moe's (2022) and Vilceanu et al.'s (2021) lines of research. The average podcast now contains 3.2 ads as of the fourth quarter of 2019 (Statista, 2019). More recent data from the Interactive Advertising Bureau indicates 55% of ads in podcasts are of the host-read variety rather than pre-recorded, up from 35% and 40% in the years prior (Osgood, 2022). Accordingly, users in UGT-based studies have professed a preference for host-read advertising (Brooks et al., 2022). Moe (2021) and Moe (2022) found not only host-read ads were skipped less, but that affinity for hosts positively affected perceptions of ads (this positive "parasocial" effect was more pronounced for comedy and true crime shows). Fisher (2024b) found that those engaging with podcast content via an entertainment-based motivation were less susceptible to advertising interference, while regular and overall usage levels were also associated with less ad interference and more ad engagement, respectively, regardless of motivation. Other survey-based research has also reported consumer preferences for host-read advertising (Wang & Chan-Olmsted, 2023; Moe, 2022; Schlütz & Hedder, 2021) though the association with host-read ads has not been experimentally tested with regard to variables often important to advertisers, such as information seeking intention, attitude toward the ad, purchase intention, and attitude toward the brand. An exception is Brinson

et al. (2023) who found greater information seeking intentions for participants exposed to a host-read ad vs. a non-host-read ad. However, Ritter and Cho (2009) did not find significant differences on attitude toward the ad between those exposed to host-read "sponsorship" ad reads vs. traditional ads. Still, the preponderance of scholarship supports the notion of host-read ads outperforming non-host-read ads on most measures.

H1: Host-read ads result in greater levels of (a) information seeking intention (InfoSeek), (b) attitude toward the ad (A_{Ad}), (c) purchase intention (PI), and (d) attitude toward the brand (A_{Brand}).

Parasocial Relationship Perceptions

As in the social media influencer (SMI) literature (Kim, 2022; Farivar et al., 2021), parasocial relationships with hosts among podcast listeners/watchers has also emerged as a potential usage factor (Schlütz & Hedder, 2022; Vilceanu et al., 2021; Perks & Turner, 2019). Podcasts can be seen as a special case of influencer marketing (Brinson & Lemon, 2023). For example, Tobin & Guadagno (2022) found greater podcast usage was associated with greater parasocial relationships.

The theory of "parasocial interaction" (PSI) and the "parasocial relationship" (PSR) was introduced by Horton and Wohl (1956) to illuminate audience members' "illusion of face-to-face relationship with the performer" (p. 215) over "the new mass media – radio, television, and the movies" (p. 215). It is a "virtual friendship" of sorts (Perse & Rubin, 1989). Though the lines between the two concepts tend to get blurred somewhat in the literature (Giles, 2002), a para-social relationship develops from the PSI over multiple encounters (Giles, 2002; Horton & Wohl, 1956). In a parasocial relationship, a sense of involvement with media characters (Rubin et al., 1985) 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 persona's personality is similar in some forms/fashions to other people in the social circle of the viewer (Rubin et al., 1985). This involvement contributes to a sense of predictability and uncertainty reduction (Rubin & McHugh, 1987) when it comes to personality, actions and reactions, that is subsequently amplified by longevity/length of time watching/listening to the persona (Perse & Rubin, 1989). Identification with the persona can also be enhanced by seeing the persona interacting with other audience members (Horton & Wohl, 1956). These types of interactions are more inherent to digital modalities such as the podcast media vehicle (e.g. Markman & Sawyer, 2014). Such interaction experiences across multiple digital platforms between audiences and hosts/producers/influencers/creators/etc. are more common in the digital network-mediated (Gade, 2012) space (e.g. Sinton, 2018).

As mentioned, PSR with podcast hosts and other listeners has emerged as a factor associated with attitudes and behaviors (Schlütz & Hedder, 2022) and usage (Perks & Turner, 2019; Vilceanu et al., 2021; Pavelko & Myrick, 2020; McClung & Johnson, 2010). Research has also found positive associations with PSR and relevant outcomes such as engagement, trust, and brand recall, with effects increased for host-read

ads vs. pre-recorded, "radio style" ads (Brinson & Lemon, 2022). As mentioned, Moe (2022) and Moe (2021) provided evidence for host affinity and its contribution to less skipping of host-read ads. Parasocial relationships have been found to have positive effects on ad perceptions (Brinson & Lemon, 2022), and information seeking intentions through decreasing evaluative persuasion knowledge (Brinson et al., 2023). Brinson et al. (2023) found PSR positively moderated InfoSeek for a utilitarian product (a home safety system) in a podcast ad. However, research on hedonic products is fairly nascent, and scholars have accordingly noted more research is needed on intimacy vis-à-vis the parasocial relationship and its relationship to persuasion in podcasting (Adler Berg, 2025).

H2: Parasocial relationship perceptions are associated with greater levels of (a) information seeking intention (InfoSeek), (b) attitude toward the ad (A_{Ad}), (c) purchase intention (PI), and (d) attitude toward the brand (A_{Brand}).

Persuasion Knowledge Model

Friestad and Wright's (1994) Persuasion Knowledge Model (PKM) has been utilized by scholars to explain consumer responses to persuasion attempts. The PKM conceives of three knowledge structures—persuasion knowledge, agent knowledge, and topic knowledge—that interact when determining a persuasion target's efforts to understand and deal with recognized persuasion attempts. Agent knowledge refers to the target's implicit, naïve, or even specific theories of the person or entity initiating the persuasion attempt (e.g. a door-to-door salesman acts a certain way; my local insurance agent seems to call me every three months with a new product offering) while topic knowledge has to do with the product or service being proffered (e.g. my experience with carpet cleaning leads me to believe the advertised offer is a good one) (Friestad & Wright, 1994; Kirmani & Campbell, 2009). These interact with a target's persuasion knowledge, that is, their "folk wisdom" about persuasion attempts, what they have been taught about the nature of persuasion, and that knowledge gained from their own experience, to determine their response to a particular recognized attempt (Friestad & Wright, 1994). This focus on the persuaded, or from the target's perspective, rather than that of the persuader, is somewhat unique to the PKM (Kirmani & Campbell, 2009). In practice, research utilizing this framework has found that when people recognize persuasion attempts, this recognition tends to result in poorer persuasive outcomes (e.g. Ham et al., 2022) though exceptions to this do exist (e.g. Eisend & Tarrahi, 2022).

Further, persuasion knowledge can be thought of as both an individual, singular "situational" reaction to a persuasion attempt, as well as a general personality trait (Kirmani & Campbell, 2009). Research has dealt with concepts including "attitudinal persuasion knowledge," that is, skepticism and attitudes resulting from persuasion attempts (Boerman et al., 2012), and dispositional or "trait" PKM, resulting from dealing with persuasion attempts throughout the course of one's lifetime and their sense of ability to handle being persuaded (Ham & Nelson, 2019; Bearden et al., 2001;

Wei et al., 2008). Along with dispositional PK, ad avoidance is a related "enduring" personality concept found to be associated with both conceptual (situational) and attitudinal PK (Ham et al., 2022). Manipulative intent is a situational variable investigated in this area that has been found to be correlated with lesser purchase intentions and poorer brand attitudes (Campbell, 1995). Similarly, Brinson et al. (2023) found that evaluative (situational) PK was greater in a traditional "radio style" podcast ad condition vs. a host-read ad, though this recognition did not have greater effects on information seeking intentions downstream. Taylor (2024) noted more research was necessary on the impacts of persuasion and advertising transparency on consumers in podcasting. Thus, the following are proposed:

H3: Dispositional persuasion knowledge (Dispositional PK) has an association with lower levels of (a) information seeking intention (InfoSeek), (b) attitude toward the ad (A_{Ad}), (c) purchase intention (PI), and (d) attitude toward the brand (A_{Brand}).

H4: Ad avoidance has an association with lower levels of (a) information seeking intention (InfoSeek), (b) attitude toward the ad (A_{Ad}), (c) purchase intention (PI), and (d) attitude toward the brand (A_{Brand}).

H5: Evaluative persuasion knowledge (EvalPK) has an association with lower levels of (a) information seeking intention (InfoSeek), (b) attitude toward the ad (A_{Ad}), (c) purchase intention (PI), and (d) attitude toward the brand (A_{Brand}).

H6: Manipulative intent (MI) has an association with lower levels of (a) information seeking intention (InfoSeek), (b) attitude toward the ad (A_{Ad}), (c) purchase intention (PI), and (d) attitude toward the brand (A_{Brand}).

Service-Dominant Logic and Value Co-Creation

A prominent area from which the notion of value co-creation in the current context flows is that of the Service-Dominant Logic (S-D L) paradigm in marketing (Vargo & Lusch, 2008a). S-D L reconceptualizes the basic nature of exchange in the marketplace from the more common goods-for-cash to a system of service-for-service exchange, wherein goods are merely carriers for service, or "alternatives to direct service provision" (Vargo & Lusch, 2008b, p. 26). Under the paradigm of Service-Dominant Logic, generic actors (as opposed to producers that create value and consumers that destroy it upon use) come together via the marketplace in more of a service-based ecosystem to exchange services and co-create value with one another (Vargo & Lusch, 2017). Further, it is not that the nature of the market has changed in more recent times, it is that the market has always been about service-for-service exchange at its basis, but modern economists, marketers and others have been blinded to this fact because of the influence of Adam Smith and the concomitant focus on operant resources, mass production of goods, and national wealth (Vargo & Lusch, 2014; Vargo & Lusch, 2008b). Vargo and Lusch (2004) argue that, rather than traditional operand resources like land, minerals, natural resources, etc., it is operant resources—knowledge, competencies, procedures and processes, skills, etc., that are "dynamic and infinite and

not static and finite, as is usually the case with operand resources. Because operant resources produce effects, they enable humans both to multiply the value of natural resources and to create additional operant resources" (2004, p. 3). S-D L sees the market as embedded in our social system (Vargo et al., 2017). After some development over the years, 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). Value co-creation (VCC) has thus been operationalized by measuring two major components: Co-Production and Value In-Use (Ranjan & Read, 2016). The measurement items for Co-Production have to do with concepts/constructs such as the host providing an environment where ideas and suggestions could be offered, the roles of host and audience members are equal in determining processes, and sufficient interaction and information exchange between parties. The items measuring Value-In-Use have to do with the personal idiosyncrasy of the felt experience and the ability to experiment with approaches to the content, the facilitation of the host, and a felt attachment or relationship. In short, it is a situation where hosts and audiences can come together to co-create the content that is ultimately served; each audience members' experience of the content (and thus the particular value they derive) is unique. Using an S-D L lens, participants in both traditional (e.g. Schau et al., 2009) and virtual/digital brand communities (Hollebeek et al., 2017) have been shown to co-create value with one another through their various brand-related interactions. Further, digital platforms have been shown to facilitate value co-creation among participants (Toscher, 2021; Wei et al., 2023; Bu et al., 2022). Through the interactivity (e.g. Xiao et al., 2018) inherent to the podcast space as well as the parasocial relationship element described above, it would follow that value co-creation is possible in this space and would contribute to positive brand outcomes (e.g. Ramaswamy & Ozcan, 2016; Ind et al., 2013).

H7: Value co-creation (VCC) is associated with greater levels of (a) information seeking intention (InfoSeek), (b) attitude toward the ad (A_{Ad}), (c) purchase intention (PI), and (d) attitude toward the brand (A_{Brand}).

Method

To test hypotheses and ascertain if results matched prior research and professional thought in this area especially with regard to the role of parasocial relationships and host-read ads, an IRB-approved (University of Oklahoma, #17566) online experiment was conducted among a sample of college students that were also currently podcast users (n = 207) at a major public university in the U.S. Participants listened to a 2-minute podcast segment dealing with personal improvement (see Appendix B), along with a 30-second ad inserted in the middle of the clip for "Rooted Lifestyle Wear," (see Appendix A) a fictional brand and ostensibly hedonic product. Respondents were recruited via a mass email that went to 27,641 email addresses among university students; respondents were incentivized via a

drawing for a $75 Amazon card. The email resulted in 433 clicks to the survey, but after removing incompletes and/or those who indicated they were not current podcast users, 207 respondents remained in the dataset.

The ad in the experiment was either read by the same voice presenting the podcast clip ("host-read ad") or a different voice ("non-host-read ad"); Joe Rogan's voice was used as the host for approximately half the sample while the other half were exposed to the same script but a different (ostensibly unknown) voice in order to introduce some variance of PSR levels into the sample. Rogan is very well known in this space, having the #1 show worldwide for multiple years (Goldman, 2024) and therefore could render a sample with a relatively high level of PSR and low variation. Similarly, using an unknown voice for the entire sample would presumably result in practically nil levels of PSR. For the host-read condition for those in the Rogan-read podcast stimulation, Joe Rogan's voice for the ad read was generated by TopMediAI. The (male) presumably unknown voice of one of the researchers was used for the non-Rogan condition along with the host-read version of that condition; another random male voice was chosen from TopMediAI for the non-host-read stimulation for that version. The lengths of all four stim combinations were the same. Respondents were randomized to each condition (non-host-read or host-read; Joe Rogan or anonymous) by the Qualtrics platform. Prior to experimental stimulation, dispositional persuasion knowledge and ad avoidance was measured along with some podcast-use-related measures and other items. After exposure to the stim, evaluative PK, manipulative intent, parasocial relationship perceptions, value co-creation, information seeking intention, attitude toward the ad, purchase intention, and attitude toward the brand were measured along with demographics.

Sample Description

Mean age was reported as 25.13 years (*SD* = 8.06). The sample skewed female, with 35.7% (n = 74) of the sample male and 60.9% (n = 126) were female; 3.4% (n = 7) indicated "Other." White ethnicity was reported by 81.2% (n = 168) of the sample and 14.5% (n = 30) said they were of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin. School classification was predominantly graduate students at 44.8% (n = 91); 12.3% (n = 25) indicated they were Freshmen, 11.3% (n = 23) were Sophomores, 18.7% (n = 38) Juniors, and 12.8% (n = 26) Seniors. Most of the sample (75.4%) said they had never married (n = 156), 22.7% (n = 47) were married or in a domestic partnership, and 1.9% (n = 4) said they were either divorced or separated. A preponderance of the sample at 39.1% (n = 81) indicated they were not currently employed and were a "full-time student," 22.7% (n = 47) were employed on a full-time (40 hours/week +) basis, 26.1% (n = 54) employed part time, with the remainder unemployed (9.7%, n = 19), self-employed (1.9%, n = 4) or unable to work (.5%, n = 1). Most respondents said their income was under $20k per year (58.1%, n = 118) with 19.2% (n =39) indicating $20k - $39k, 10.3% (n = 21) $40k - $59k, and 12.4% (n = 25) $60k or greater. Political outlook was skewed toward the liberal side, with 29.1% (n = 60) indicating they were "very liberal," 23.3% (n = 48) "somewhat liberal," 25.7% (n = 53) "middle of the road," 17.0% (n = 35) "somewhat conservative," and 4.9% (n = 10) "very conservative." To serve

as possible controls with regard to the experimental stimulations used (the podcast content regarding self-improvement and health and some respondents exposed to Joe Rogan's voice), current Health and Living podcast genre listenership (24.6%, n = 51) and JRE listenership (11.6%, n = 24) were also measured.

For the experimental conditions, 47.8% of the sample (n = 99) were in the non-host-read-ad condition, while 52.2% (n = 108) were in the host-read-ad condition; 50.7% heard the podcast clip voiced by an unknown person (n = 105) while 49.3% (n = 102) heard Joe Rogan read the podcast. The four-way breakdown was also fairly even, with 22.7% (n = 47) that heard an unknown voice read the podcast along with a different unknown voice for the ad, 28% (n = 58) heard an unknown voice read the podcast with the same voice reading the ad, 25.1% (n = 52) heard Joe Rogan read the podcast clip but an unknown voice read the ad, and 24.2% (n = 50) heard Joe Rogan read the podcast clip as well as the ad. Comparison testing between those exposed to the Joe Rogan podcast and those exposed to the unknown voice condition revealed no significant differences on any of the demographic items captured (gender: x^2 [2] = 1.125, p = .535; white ethnicity: x^2 [1] = .006, p = .938; Hispanic: x^2 [1] = .231, p = .631; marital status: x^2 [3] = 1.925, p = .588; employment: x^2 [6] = 3.139, p = .791; income: x^2 [6] = 5.712, p = .456; political outlook; x^2 [4] = .720, p = .949; and age; t[202] = 1.706, p = .089). Further, among the people exposed to the Rogan podcast, current Joe Rogan listenership was not significantly associated with any of the outcome variables (InfoSeek: r[100] = -.141, p = .16; A_{Ad}: r[102] = -.028, p = .78; PI: r[100] = -.157, p = .12; A_{Brand}: r[102] = -.149, p = .14).

Measures

The ad avoidance scale's five items (seven-point Likert-type with "1-Strongly Disagree" and "7-Strongly Agree" anchors) sourced via Ham et al. (2022) rendered an excellent initial *alpha* (.869), however, item analysis indicated improvement to .907 with the elimination of the fifth item ("I intentionally do not visit sponsors of ads even if they draw my attention"). As this item ostensibly indicates action beyond simply avoiding ads and progressing to offensive/proactive actions along with the improvement in *alpha*, the item was dropped and the first four items retained for this scale. The resulting *mean* was 5.67 (*SD* = 1.42). Dispositional persuasion knowledge's six items via Bearden et al. (2001) (Likert-type with "1-strongly disagree" and "7-strongly agree" anchors) rendered an excellent *alpha* (.928) and all items were retained (*M* = 5.61, *SD* = 1.14).

Parasocial relationship perceptions were measured via eight seven-point Likert-type items with "1-Strongly Disagree" and "7-Strongly Agree" anchors sourced from Rubin et al., (1985) and Brinson et al. (2023). Cronbach's *alpha* was .938 (*M* = 3.48, *SD* = 1.60).

Value co-creation was operationalized via a set of items developed by Ranjan and Read (2016) to measure this factor, consisting of 23 total items (seven-point Likert type with 1-Strongly Disagree and 7-Strongly Agree anchors) measuring two broad categories (Co-Production and Value-In-

Use) of three constructs each (Knowledge [four items], Equity [four items], and Interaction [four items]; and Experience [three items], Personalization [4 items], and Relationship [three items], respectively. The scale items displayed an excellent *alpha* at .934 and all were retained (*M* = 3.68, *SD* = 1.03).

Evaluative (situational) persuasion knowledge's (EvalPK) five items sourced from Bearden et al. (2001) (seven-point Likert-type with "1-Strongly Disagree" and "7-Strongly Agree" anchors) rendered a respectable *alpha* of .806, however analysis indicated improvement to .822 with the elimination of the final item ("I can separate fact from fantasy in the advertiser's offer") and was thus dropped. The resulting four-item scale *mean* was 4.03 (*SD* = 1.30). Manipulative intent (MI) of the advertiser was measured via a single item (seven-point semantic differential scale with "1-non manipulative" and "7-manipulative" anchors) sourced from Jain and Posovac (2004) (*M* = 3.85, *SD* = 1.56).

Information seeking intention (InfoSeek) was operationalized via a five-item seven-point bipodal adjective scale derived from Spears and Singh (2004) and also used by Brinson et al. (2023) (e.g. "I will [1-definitely not. . .7-definitely] consider contacting Rooted Lifestyle Wear.") Cronbach's *alpha* was .953 (*M* = 1.80, *SD* = 1.22). Attitude toward the ad (A_{ad}) utilized a three-item seven-point bipolar adjective scale where greater *mean*s indicate greater levels of A_{ad} sourced via Wang et al. (2013); Cronbach's *alpha* was .934 (*M* = 2.75, *SD* = 1.41). Purchase intention (PI) was measured with a five-item seven-point bipolar adjective scale derived from Spears and Singh (2004), again where greater *mean*s indicate greater PI; the resulting Cronbach's *alpha* was .949 (*M* = 1.75, *SD* = 1.08); likewise Spears and Singh's (2004) five-item seven-point bipolar adjective scale (again, greater *mean*s indicate greater levels) was utilized to measure attitude toward the brand (A_{brand}). Cronbach's *alpha* was .957 (*M* = 2.76, *SD* = 1.41).

Results

To test H1a (ad condition), H2a (PSR), H3a (dispositional PK), H4a (ad avoidance), H5a (EvalPK), H6a (MI), and H7a (VCC), in short, the predictors' effects on InfoSeek, a regression was run with host parasocial relationship perceptions (PSR), value co-creation (VCC), manipulative intent (MI), ad avoidance, dispositional persuasion knowledge (dispositional PK), and evaluative (situational) persuasion knowledge (EvalPK) along with Ad Condition (host-read ad vs. non-host-read ad) as predictors, and information seeking intention the dependent. Gender was entered as a covariate/control due to the preponderance of females in the sample, as was Health and Living podcast listenership (*r* = .206, *p* =.003 [2-tailed]), age (r = .140, *p* =.048 [2-tailed]), and marital status (r = .174, *p* =.013 [2-tailed]) due to significant correlations with the DV. Analysis revealed a significant overall model (F[11, 162] = 5.272, *p* < .001, R^2 = .264) explaining 26.4% of the variance in InfoSeek. In support of H2a, PSR emerged as a significant positive predictor of information seeking intention (*b* = .144, SE = .072, *p* = .046) along with value co-creation (*b* = .236, SE = .112, *p* = .037) in support of H7a. Additionally, dispositional PK emerged

as a significant negative predictor of InfoSeek (*b* = -.212, *SE* = .078, *p* = .008) in support of H3a. Among the covariates entered, Health and Living podcast listenership was also associated with greater InfoSeek (*b* = .600, SE = .201, *p* = .003). None of the other predictors were significant and no support was found for H1a, H4a, H5a, nor H6a.

To test H1b (ad condition), H2b (PSR), H3b (dispositional PK), H4b (ad avoidance), H5b (EvalPK), H6b (MI), and H7b (VCC), in short, the predictors' effects on attitude toward the ad, a regression was run with host parasocial relationship perceptions (PSR), value co-creation (VCC), manipulative intent (MI), ad avoidance, dispositional persuasion knowledge (dispositional PK), and evaluative (situational) persuasion knowledge (EvalPK) along with Ad Condition (host-read ad vs. non-host-read ad) as predictors, and A_{Ad} the dependent. Gender was again entered as a covariate/control due to the preponderance of females in the sample, as was Health and Living podcast listenership (*r* = .162, *p* =.021 [2-tailed]). Analysis revealed a significant overall model (F[9, 164] = 8.335, *p* < .001, R^2 = .314) explaining 31.4% of the variance in A_{Ad}. For H2b, PSR emerged as a significant positive predictor of A_{Ad} (*b* = .210, SE = .079, *p* = .009) along with value co-creation (*b* = .370, SE = .120, *p* = .002) in support of H7b. Additionally, manipulative intent (H6b) was a negative predictor as well, but just missed conventional significance levels (*b* = -.127, SE = .065, *p* = .054). Among the covariates entered, Health and Living podcast listenership was also associated with greater A_{Ad} (*b* = .517, SE = .220, *p* = .020). None of the other predictors were significant and no significance was found for H1b nor was support was found for H3b, H4b, H5b, nor H6b.

To answer/test H1c (ad condition), H2c (PSR), H3c (dispositional PK), H4c (ad avoidance), H5c (EvalPK), H6c (MI), and H7c (VCC), in short, the predictors' effects on purchase intention, a regression was run with host parasocial relationship perceptions (PSR), value co-creation (VCC), manipulative intent (MI), ad avoidance, dispositional persuasion knowledge (dispositional PK), and evaluative (situational) persuasion knowledge (EvalPK) along with Ad Condition (host-read ad vs. non-host-read ad) as predictors, and PI the dependent. Gender was again entered as a covariate/control due to the preponderance of females in the sample along with Health and Living podcast listenership (*r* = .167, *p* =.018 [2-tailed]) due to a significant correlation with the DV. Analysis revealed a significant overall model (F[9, 165] = 4.636, *p* < .001, R^2 = .202) explaining 20.2% of the variance in PI. For H2c, PSR emerged as a significant positive predictor of purchase intention (*b* = .133, SE = .067, *p* = .048) along with value co-creation (*b* = .210, SE = .100, *p* = .037) in support of H7c. Additionally, ad avoidance (H4c) was a significant negative predictor (*b* = -.123, SE = .057, *p* = .031). Among the covariates entered, Health and Living podcast listenership was also associated with greater PI (*b* = .363, SE = .182, *p* = .048). None of the other predictors were significant and no support was found for H1c, H3c, H5c, nor H6c.

To answer/test H1d (ad condition), H2d (PSR), H3d (dispositional PK), H4d (ad avoidance), H5d (EvalPK), H6d (MI), and H7d (VCC), in short, the predictors' effects on attitude toward the brand, a regression was run with

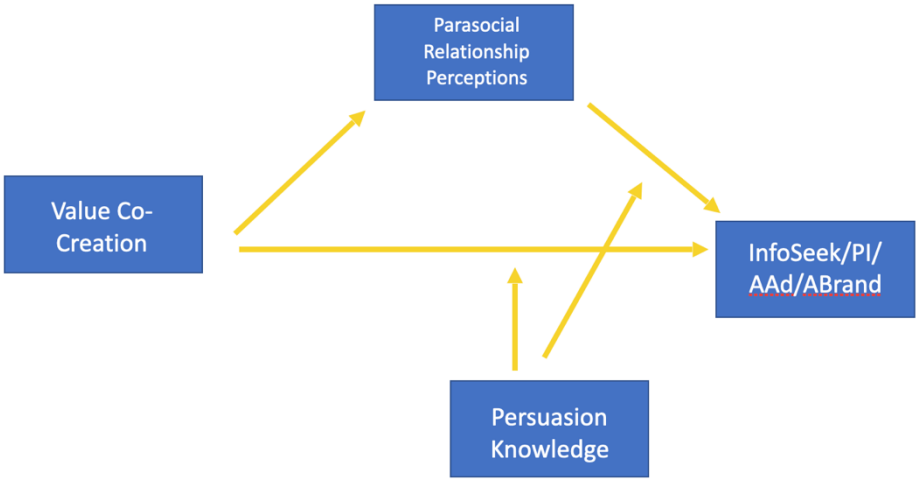
host parasocial relationship perceptions (PSR), value co-creation (VCC), manipulative intent (MI), ad avoidance, dispositional persuasion knowledge (dispositional PK), and evaluative (situational) persuasion knowledge (EvalPK) along with Ad Condition (host-read ad vs. non-host-read ad) as predictors, and A_{Brand} the dependent. Gender was again entered as a covariate/control due to the preponderance of females in the sample and Health and Living podcast listenership due to a significant correlation with the DV (r = .124, p =.038 [1-tailed]). Analysis revealed a significant overall model (F[9, 168] = 6.854, p < .001, R^2 = .269) explaining 26.9% of the variance in A_{Brand}. For H7d, value co-creation emerged as a significant positive predictor of A_{Ad} (b = .549, SE = .125, p < .001) in support of H7d. Additionally, evaluative persuasion knowledge (H5d) was a negative predictor as well (b = -.161, SE = .082, p = .050). None of the other predictors were significant and no significance was found for H1d nor H2d, H3d, H4d, and H6d.

Post-Hoc Conceptual Model Development

From these initial exploratory analyses, post-hoc conceptual models were introduced and tested. Due to VCC's consistent role as the strongest tested predictor across all analyses, the current evidence points toward value co-creation as being primary in explaining persuasion-based outcomes as opposed to parasocial relationship perceptions, as has been hypothesized previously (e.g. Perks & Turner, 2019; Brinson & Lemon, 2022). In addition to certain functional and technological aspects of the medium in question theoretically contributing to greater PSR perceptions (Horton & Wohl, 1956; Adler Berg, 2025), actions and behaviors by the hosts to stimulate these perceptions to a greater degree have also been hypothesized (e.g., Giles, 2002). In particular, Schlütz and Hedder's (2022) notion of parasocial interaction behaviors such as "showing an interest in the listeners" (2022, p. 465), referring to the audience directly, and letting audience members have an insight into his/her personal life, have been shown to be related to resulting PSR perceptions in podcast audiences. The operationalization of value co-creation (Ranjan & Read, 2016) contains items that neatly map on to this concept (for example, "The podcast host relays relevant information about the process of content development." "The podcast host is open to my ideas and suggestions." "The host provides a suitable environment for me to express my ideas." "The host provides an overall good experience beyond the 'functional' benefit."). Therefore, we propose VCC as a primary antecedent variable in these relationships, with PSR mediating the effects with regard to persuasion-related outcome variables. Further, for each DV, we propose the particular relevant and significant PK

Figure 1: Post-hoc conceptual model

measure as moderators of both these indirect and direct relationships when significance was detected, following prior research in the marketing space (e.g. Kim et al., 2019; Kim et al., 2016). See Figure 1 below.



Information Seeking Intention. For InfoSeek as the DV, VCC and PSR were both significant predictors, along with dispositional PK. A test utilizing Hayes' PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2022) model 15 with the same predictors/covariates entered as before (gender, Health and Living listenership, age and marital status) revealed a significant model predicting PSR ($F[9, 163] = 16.376$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .473$) and InfoSeek ($F[13, 160] = 4.445$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .265$). Results indicated a significant direct effect from VCC to InfoSeek ($b = .247$, $SE = .114$, $p = .032$), and while there was a significant effect from VCC to PSR ($b = .984$, $SE = .092$, $p < .001$), the final path from PSR to InfoSeek was just shy of conventional significance ($b = .138$, $SE = .073$, $p = .060$). Further, neither the direct nor the indirect VCC -> InfoSeek relationship was significantly moderated by dispositional PK, though dispositional PK was a significant individual predictor of InfoSeek ($b = -.214$, $SE = .080$, $p = .008$). Further analysis via Hayes PROCESS model 4 showed PSR does mediate the VCC -> InfoSeek relationship, with a significant direct effect from VCC to InfoSeek ($b = .236$, $SE = .112$, $p = .036$) and a significant indirect effect from VCC to PSR ($b = .998$, $SE = .095$, $p < .001$) and then from PSR to InfoSeek ($b = .144$, $SE = .072$, $p = .046$) (total indirect effect: $b = .143$, $SE = .069$, 95% CI [.008, .279]). Dispositional PK was once again a significant negative individual predictor of InfoSeek ($b = -.212$, $SE = .080$, $p = .008$). In summary, PSR does seem to mediate the VCC -> InfoSeek relationship. Dispositional PK, while a significant individual negative predictor of InfoSeek, does not moderate the mediation of PSR nor the direct effect of VCC on InfoSeek.

Attitude Toward the Ad. For A_{Ad} as the DV, VCC and PSR were both significant predictors, along with manipulative intent (MI) near conventional significance. A test utilizing Hayes' PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2022) model 15 with the same predictors/covariates entered as before (gender and Health & Living listenership) revealed a significant model predicting PSR ($F[7, 166] = 21.280$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .473$) and A_{Ad} ($F[11, 162] = 7.670$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .342$). Results indicated a significant direct effect from VCC to A_{Ad} ($b = .400$, $SE = .119$, $p = .001$), and a significant total indirect effect from VCC to PSR ($b = .990$, $SE = .089$, $p < .001$) as well as from PSR to A_{Ad} ($b = .197$, $SE = .078$, $p = .013$). Further, the interaction between VCC

and MI was significant and negative (b = -.203, SE = .082, p = .015) while the interaction between PSR and MI was significant and positive (b = .117, SE = .048, p = .017). Therefore, there is evidence of the mediation of PSR when it comes to the relationship between VCC and attitude toward the ad, as well as for moderated mediation (index of moderated mediation: b = .115, SE = .051, 95% CI [.017, .214]) wherein MI negatively impacts the VCC -> A_{Ad} direct relationship, but positively impacts the mediation of VCC through PSR to A_{Ad}. Put another way, VCC's contribution to PSR helps overcome the negative effects of MI perceptions on A_{Ad}.

Purchase Intention. For PI as the DV, VCC and PSR were both significant predictors, along with ad avoidance. A test utilizing Hayes' PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2022) model 15 with the same predictors/covariates entered as before (gender and Health & Living listenership) revealed a significant model predicting PSR (F[7, 167] = 20.451, p < .001, R^2 = .462) and PI (F[11, 163] = 3.951, p < .001, R^2 = .211). Results indicated a significant direct effect from VCC to PI (b = .205, SE = .100, p = .043), and a significant total indirect effect from VCC to PSR (b = .960, SE = .089, p < .001) as well as from PSR to PI (b = .143, SE = .067, p = .036). Neither the interaction between VCC and ad avoidance nor the interaction between PSR and ad avoidance were significant, however, the direct effect of ad avoidance on PI remained significant and negative as before (b = -.125, SE = .058, p = .032). Therefore, there is evidence of the mediation of PSR when it comes to the relationship between VCC and PI, but ad avoidance does not appear to moderate these relationships.

Attitude Toward the Brand. For A_{Brand} as the DV, VCC and evaluative persuasion knowledge were both significant individual predictors. PSR was not, however, it is possible that mediation may better explain the relationship due to a suppression effect (MacKinnon et al., 2000). A test utilizing Hayes' PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2022) model 15 with the same predictors/covariates entered as before (gender and Health & Living listenership) revealed a significant model predicting PSR (F[7, 170] = 20.936, p < .001, R^2 = .463) and A_{Brand} (F[11, 166] = 6.490, p < .001, R^2 = .301). Results indicated a significant direct effect from VCC to A_{Brand} (b = .576, SE = .124, p < .001), and a significant effect from VCC to PSR (b = .973, SE = .089, p < .001) but the individual path from PSR to A_{Brand} was not significant (b = .021, SE = .082, p = .794). However, the interaction between VCC and EvalPK was significant and negative (b = -.183, SE = .084, p = .030) while the interaction between PSR and EvalPK was significant and positive (b = .152, SE = .057, p = .007). Therefore, there is evidence of moderated mediation (index of moderated mediation: b = .150, SE = .059, 95% CI [.014, .251]) wherein EvalPK negatively impacts the VCC -> A_{Brand} direct relationship, but positively impacts the effect of PSR on A_{Brand}. Put another way, VCC's effect on ABrand.is partially mediated through the interaction of PSR and EvalPK, and more importantly, the significant positive interaction of PSR and EvalPK helps overcome the negative effects of EvalPK on A_{Brand}.

Discussion

To recap, initial regression results indicated VCC and PSR positively and

dispositional PK negatively significantly predict InfoSeek. VCC and PSR positively significantly predict attitude toward the ad. VCC and PSR positively and significantly predict purchase intention while ad avoidance negatively significantly predicts PI. VCC significantly positively predicts attitude toward the brand while evaluative (situational) PK negatively contributes to A_{Brand}. Somewhat in contrast to prior literature, there were no significant effects of ad condition detected through these analyses. While somewhat surprising, most of the research in this area was survey-based rather than experimental, and in cases where experimentation has occurred, differences have only been found on a small number of variables like information seeking intention for utilitarian products (e.g. Brinson et al., 2023). It may be that there is less of an overall effect for host-read vs. non-host-read ads for other types (e.g. hedonic) products as in the case here, and/or more particular variables and factors. For example, prior research has found that host-read ads resulted in greater attitude toward the ad, but only among those exposed to ads in a "pre-roll" condition, that is, ad at the beginning of the podcast vs. in the middle or a "mid-roll" ad, as was the case here (Fisher, 2024a).

PSR was shown to have a positive association with multiple outcome variables (InfoSeek, attitude toward the ad, and purchase intention). This is consistent with prior research on podcast advertising noting PSR could be a driver of persuasion-related brand outcomes (e.g. Brinson & Lemon, 2023; Moe, 2021; Moe, 2022) as well as strengthens the notion of podcasts being a special case of social media influencer marketing (Brinson & Lemon, 2023) due to substantial evidence in that research stream of PSR's positive influence (e.g. Farivar et al., 2021).

Value co-creation's positive (and strong, relatively) relationship to all the outcome variables is a novel finding. It is important that podcasters attempt to connect with audiences in a way that gives them the sense that they are involved in the show, in short. Additionally, as noted, VCC has a relationship-based component that is important to explore in that it connects with the notion of PSR as that of virtual "friendship" (Perse & Rubin, 1989) and also thus fostering greater levels of perceived intimacy (Adler Berg, 2025). VCC was also a stronger relative predictor than PSR. This indicates value co-creation may be a primary driver for positive brand outcomes in this area, and parasocial relationships are a secondary/offshoot of this factor. Indeed, post-hoc conceptual model testing supports the notion that VCC precipitates PSR, with PSR partially mediating the effect of VCC on the DVs – this was the case across all models tested. Importantly, the conceptual model test results also indicate PSR tends to help eliminate the deleterious effects of PK when it comes to persuasion outcomes (at least in the case of attitude toward the brand and attitude toward the ad). These results also concord with existing research positing PSR's relationship to persuasion, and further elucidates the nature of this relationship and a major precipitating factor, value co-creation. The more VCC the greater the PSR, and ultimately the greater the persuasion whether or not PK is present. Much of the published thought in the Consumer Engagement/Customer Engagement realm via Marketing are based on Service-Dominant Logic and thus contain a value co-creation

component (e.g. Brodie et al., 2019; Brodie et al., 2011; Hollebeek et al., 2014; Hollebeek et al., 2019). For example, Hollebeek et al. (2019) note that engagement and S-D Logic "share a theoretical focus on interactivity with or between stakeholders (e.g. customers, employees)" (p. 162) and their five fundamental propositions of Consumer Engagement rely heavily on interactivity, resource integration, motivationally driven operant and operand resource investment, and other elements inherent to VCC. Together, (and given the supposed high engagement and involvement levels of podcast audiences [e.g. Nielsen, 2022; Renisyifa et al., 2022; Jacobson, 2021]) this provides evidence for the S-D L paradigm in general and value co-creation more specifically in the podcast medium.

Finally, support for the Persuasion Knowledge Model (Ham et al., 2022) in the podcast area was evident via the finding of dispositional PK's association with lower InfoSeek, manipulative intent's association with lower attitude toward the ad, ad avoidance's association with less PI, and evaluative PK's association with lower attitude toward the brand **. Curiously, support for PSR's moderation wherein the deleterious effects of the situational PK measures were partially nullified through PSR was found through post-hoc model testing, while PSR did not significantly moderate the two trait- or personality-level measures. Thus, there is good news for advertisers in that strong PSR perceptions can help overcome these situational PK issues, a finding supported by Brinson et al. as well (2023). Personality-based PK, on the other hand, is not as likely to be overcome by PSR, with those listeners being quite susceptible to transparency issues (Taylor, 2024).

Taken together, the results both provide support for the notion of parasocial relationship with hosts as a driver of persuasion success, along with a novel finding of value co-creation's role in producing positive outcomes for persuasion over podcasts as well as PSR partially mediating persuasion-related outcomes associated with VCC. Due to the relative strength of association of VCC across the focal outcome variables and the moderated mediation analysis results, podcast hosts may be wise to comport themselves in a way that maximizes the Co-Production and Value-In-Use elements that make up value co-creation in total. As mentioned, this contains relationship elements that should lend themselves to greater PSR as a result, in concordance with research positing that certain interactive behaviors prompt PSR (Giles, 2002; Schlütz & Hedder, 2022). Alternatively, given PSR's relative strength of association, focusing on fostering feelings of virtual friendship with audience members could also help enhance the type of engagement that is likely to result in higher levels of persuasion through eliminating the deleterious effects of persuasion knowledge.

Limitations and Future Directions

This study is based on cross-sectional data and thus causality inferences/claims should be taken with caution. The use of self-report data also contains the possibility of social desirability bias and other sources of error. Undoubtedly some will question the lack of specific manipulation checks in the experiment. However, we join the list of scholars who

question the need for manipulation checks in cases where physical message features themselves are manipulated; some in the experimental studies literature and other areas have advised that manipulation of physical elements of message stimuli should not depend on the respondent's perceptions to be valid (Sundar, 2004; Leshner, 2014), especially in cases where the manipulations are independently verifiable (Leshner, 2014), as in the present case. Additionally, though used in a variety of studies in this area (e.g. Craig et al., 2023; Brooks et al., 2022), the sample used college students and thus applicability/representativeness for the podcasting public as a whole is questionable. Future studies should explore other populations of interest to advertisers and podcasters to see if indicated results hold, with somewhat larger sample sizes in order to ascertain whether the near significance of some of the PK-related variables/factors was more likely real or more likely simply random. Additionally, as indicated, there may be more variables/factors in play that will render a stronger result for the host-read vs. non-host-read condition, such as serial placement (e.g. Fisher, 2024a; Ritter & Cho, 2009) and others (new/old product, unfamiliar/familiar brand, correspondent inference level, etc.). These should be explored in the podcast space to heed calls for more academic research in podcast advertising (Taylor, 2024) and, as in the case of PSR, the extant SMI literature may continue to provide a fertile ground for exploration of these pursuits. Finally, the post-hoc conceptual models presented were developed as a result of the initial exploratory analyses detailed in the first part of the paper, and should be confirmed through future research using different respondents/samples.

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To cite this article:
Fisher, N.S. (2026). The roles of parasocial relationships, value co-creations, host-read ads and persuasion knowledge in podcast ad outcomes: An online experiment. *Journal of Communication Technology*, 7(3). DOI: 10.51548/81202602

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?”):

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

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)

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)