

The Effect of 'Love Accounting' on Gift Budgeting

Authors : Yanan Wang

Abstract : It is proposed that when people give a gift they engage in 'love accounting', so that they will spend less on it if they include a written expression of love with it. This hypothesis was tested with college students (N = 308). It was found that participants who wrote a love message to accompany a Mother's Day gift budgeted less for the gift itself than control participants (Experiment 1), and this effect was replicated for a Christmas gift (Experiment 2). The amount of effort expended by the giver on preparing the love message did not account for the effect (Experiment 3). It is concluded that a gift and its accompanying love message are mentally computed as belonging to the same love account, implying that consumers' excessive splurging on gifts might be controlled by writing a love message before gift shopping.

Keywords : expression of love, gift-giving, gift-budgeting, mental accounting

Conference Title : ICBEMM 2016 : International Conference on Business, Economics, Management and Marketing

Conference Location : Boston, United States

Conference Dates : April 25-26, 2016