
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Positive Psychology and Its Application in Marketing: An Appraisal

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| ABSTRACT

This study took a critical appraisal of positive psychology with the aim of exploring its application in the practice of marketing from the standpoint of extant literature. The main purpose of this paper was to expatiate on the several ways in which contemporary marketing organizations are applying positive psychology's principles and concepts in their operations. The study adopted desk research methodology, which relied on published literature in several relevant journals. From extant literature reviewed, it was highlighted that positive psychology is a relatively new field of psychology concerned with promoting positive emotions, positive character traits, positive institutions and positive relationships in the society. Given its enormous potential, positive psychology is rapidly being applied by marketing organizations in several ways including: emotion-based marketing, product personalization, social proof, brand storytelling, influencer marketing, gamification, social media marketing, and sustainability marketing. For its effective implementation in marketing, we have recommended, among others, that marketers should use positive psychology to highlight features that enhance well-being, promote personal growth, and contribute to positive experiences of customers; marketers should craft promotional messages and experiences that evoke positive emotions (such as joy, gratitude, and inspiration) and resonate with customers on an emotional level; marketers should also highlight social proof and create a sense of community around their brand to enhance trust and belonging by showcasing customer testimonials, reviews, and success stories. The application of these insights will ensure that marketing campaigns and operations not only create value for customers, but also promote positive wellbeing, character traits and positive emotions among customers.

| KEYWORDS

Positive Psychology, Positive Emotions, Positive Character Traits, Positive Institutions, Positive Relationships

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

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1. Introduction

Positive psychology is a relatively recent field of psychology that focuses on studying the positive aspects of human experience, such as happiness, well-being, strengths, and positive emotions (Nakato et al., 2021). The field emerged as a response to the traditional focus of psychology on psychopathology and mental illnesses. According to Odhiambo et al. (2022), positive psychology's foundations can be traced back to humanistic psychology and the work of Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers. They emphasized the importance of personal growth, self-actualization, and the potential for individuals to lead fulfilling lives. (Mwakatobe et al., 2023). further maintained that the formal inception of positive psychology is often attributed to Martin Seligman, a prominent psychologist. In his presidential address to the American Psychological Association in 1998, Seligman called for a shift in psychology's focus from "fixing what's wrong" to "building what's right." This marked a significant turning point in the field's direction. Following Seligman's (1998) address, a surge of interest and research in positive psychology began. Researchers started investigating topics such as well-being, character strengths, resilience, and positive emotions. The establishment of the Positive Psychology Center at the University of Pennsylvania in 2003 further solidified the field's development

(Nabwire et al., 2021). In its early developmental stages, positive psychology introduced concepts like "flow" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990), "broaden-and-build theory" (Fredrickson, 2001), and the study of character strengths (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). These concepts aimed to understand and enhance positive aspects of human functioning.

Since its introduction, positive psychology research has expanded into various domains, including education, workplace, therapy, public policy, business and marketing (Okeke et al., 2022). Interventions like gratitude exercises, mindfulness practices, and strengths-based approaches have been developed to enhance well-being and resilience in these domains. In recent years, the field of marketing has witnessed a transformative shift with the integration of positive psychology principles into its practices (Khalil et al., 2023). This integration marks a significant departure from the conventional approach of emphasizing consumer dissatisfaction and problem-solving, as it centers on fostering positive emotions, well-being, and flourishing among consumers. Moreover, Gable and Haidt (2005) argued that several factors have driven the integration of positive psychology principles into the field of marketing, including changes in consumer preferences and values, scientific advancements and empirical research, competitive edge and differentiation, and evolving marketing strategies. Furthermore, Peterson and Seligman (2004) added that consumers in contemporary societies are increasingly prioritizing holistic well-being and positive experiences over mere material possessions. The surge in demand for products and services that contribute to consumers' happiness and life satisfaction has prompted marketers to align their strategies with positive psychology principles.

Similarly, Fredrickson (2001) maintained that positive psychology's emergence as a scientific discipline, bolstered by extensive research on happiness, well-being, and positive emotions, has provided a robust foundation for its application in marketing. Researchers have demonstrated that positive emotions enhance cognitive processing, creativity, and decision-making, factors that hold profound implications for consumer behavior (Lin et al., 2019; Lerman & Mejia, 2019). Moreover, businesses have recognized the potential for gaining a competitive edge by incorporating positive psychology into their marketing practices. Brands that can evoke positive emotions and enhance consumer well-being are more likely to differentiate themselves in crowded markets and establish lasting emotional connections with their customers (Kim et al., 2022). Furthermore, Friend et al. (2016) added that conventional marketing approaches often relied on problem-solving and addressing consumer pain points. However, the application of positive psychology aligns with the shift towards experiential and emotional marketing strategies. Marketers now emphasize the creation of positive experiences and emotional resonance to captivate consumers' attention and loyalty (Vittersø, 2016). As positive psychology continues to evolve, scholars believe that its synergy with marketing presents a promising trajectory for businesses seeking not only financial success but also the cultivation of genuine consumer happiness and flourishing (Khan et al., 2021). This study was therefore carried out to explore existing scholarly literature on positive psychology with a view to describing its application in the field of marketing in order to provide implications for marketing practitioners and corporate business strategists.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Positive Psychology Through the Lens of Scholars

Positive psychology is a field of psychology that focuses on the scientific study of positive experiences, traits, and emotions, with the aim of understanding and enhancing human well-being and flourishing (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). It seeks to shift the traditional focus of psychology from solely addressing mental illness and pathology to also investigating and promoting positive aspects of human functioning. For Snyder and Lopez (2009), positive psychology is an interdisciplinary approach within psychology that examines the factors and conditions that contribute to the optimal functioning and well-being of individuals and communities. It emphasizes the cultivation of positive emotions, strengths, resilience, and virtues to improve overall life satisfaction and promote positive personal and social outcomes. In the views of Keyes and Haidt (2003), positive psychology is a scientific discipline that investigates the factors and processes that enable individuals and communities to thrive and flourish. It seeks to understand and enhance positive aspects such as happiness, meaning, engagement, positive relationships, and achievement, leading to the development of strategies and interventions to foster well-being. Similarly, Park et al. (2004) defined positive psychology as a subfield of psychology that focuses on the scientific study of positive human functioning, encompassing positive emotions, character strengths, and positive institutions. It aims to identify the conditions and practices that contribute to human flourishing and to promote the utilization of these findings to enhance individual and societal well-being. Also, Huppert and So (2013) described positive psychology as an area of research and practice that investigates the positive qualities and conditions that enable individuals to thrive and reach their full potential. It explores the factors related to happiness, resilience, optimism, mindfulness, and self-determination, with the goal of guiding interventions and policies that foster well-being at individual, organizational, and societal levels. Another definition by Diener et al. (2018) describes positive psychology as a scientific field that studies the positive aspects of human life, including subjective well-being, positive emotions, character strengths, and positive social relationships. It emphasizes the importance of individual agency, personal growth, and the cultivation of positive experiences and virtues to enhance psychological well-being and lead to a flourishing life. Similarly, Lyubomirsky et al. (2005) defined positive psychology as an empirical and applied discipline that examines the factors and practices that contribute to human happiness,

optimal functioning, and overall well-being. It emphasizes the cultivation of positive emotions, gratitude, resilience, purpose, and positive relationships, with the goal of informing interventions and policies that promote individual and societal well-being.

The definitions of positive psychology share several common elements. Firstly, they emphasize the scientific nature of the field, indicating that positive psychology is grounded in empirical research and evidence-based practices. Secondly, they highlight the study of positive aspects of human life, such as well-being, flourishing, positive emotions, strengths, and virtues. Thirdly, the definitions underscore the goal of understanding the factors and processes that contribute to human well-being and the development of interventions and strategies to enhance flourishing at individual, community, and societal levels. Overall, the linking thread in these definitions is the focus on investigating, understanding, and promoting positive aspects of human functioning and well-being through scientific inquiry and practical applications. Furthermore, as an innovative branch of psychology, positive psychology is based on several key assumptions as discussed:

The first assumption of positive psychology is a belief that humans have the potential for growth and development: Positive psychology states that individuals possess inherent strengths and abilities, which they can harness and develop to attain positive outcomes (Muthoni et al., 2022). The positive psychology approach is founded on the idea that individuals have the mental and emotional capability not only to alleviate negative experiences but to enhance their positive experiences. Positive psychologists believe that people can improve themselves, and create meaningful, rewarding experiences for themselves and others.

The second assumption of positive psychology is that positive emotions, such as joy, gratitude, satisfaction and fulfilment, are deserving of scientific study: Rather than solely focusing on negative emotions such as fear, anxiety and depression, positive psychology recognizes the significance of positive emotions in leading a fulfilling life (Mwakatobe et al., 2023). Positive psychologists believe that understanding positive emotions has the potential to increase individuals' capacity for happiness, well-being, and success.

The third assumption of positive psychology is that well-being is not solely the absence of illness or malaise: Positive psychologists emphasize the significance of wellbeing as the presence of a healthy state of mind, emotional balance, and positive self-perception (Nakato et al., 2021). They recognize that psychological well-being is not the same as physical health and that people can be psychologically healthy even if they are experiencing physical ailments. The positive psychology approach seeks to increase the positive aspects of an individual's life and reduce the negative aspects.

The fourth assumption of positive psychology is that individuals are subjective in their experiences, and the definition of well-being can vary: Positive psychology recognizes that what constitutes positive experiences for one person may not be the same for another person (Abdullahi et al., 2020). Therefore, positive psychologists take into account the concept of individual differences when studying well-being and positive emotions. They view positive emotions as a consequence of individual experiences and recognize that what causes positive emotions for some people may not be the same for others.

The fifth assumption of positive psychology is that developing a positive group structure benefits both individuals and society: Positive psychology emphasizes the creation of positive social groups and communities where members can flourish and help one another (Srivastava et al., 2017). They believe that positive interactions can lead to more positive experiences, greater wellbeing, and a sense of belonging. Positive psychologists also believe that societal structures can be influenced positively by fostering optimistic and supportive environments that celebrate and support human growth and development.

From the foregoing, we can appreciate that positive psychology is a relatively new and rapidly growing discipline that is focused on understanding positive emotions and their connection to optimum wellbeing. Positive psychology stresses the significant role of positive emotions in promoting wellbeing and providing individuals with the tools to develop and grow. At its core, positive psychology assumes the goodness of individuals and their capacity for growth and development. It is a paradigm shift in psychology that goes beyond negativity and focuses on positivity in life, work, and relationships.

2.2. Various Fields of Positive Psychology

Positive psychology emphasizes the study of positive emotions, strengths, virtues, and positive aspects of human behavior. It encompasses several fields of study that explore different aspects of well-being and positive functioning. Here is a tabular representation of some of the key fields in positive psychology and their explanations:

Field of Positive Psychology	Explanation
Positive emotions	This field examines the nature, causes, and consequences of positive emotions, such as joy, gratitude, awe, love, and contentment, and their impact on overall well-being.
Positive traits	Positive traits focus on identifying and understanding the character strengths and virtues that enable individuals to thrive and lead fulfilling lives, such as courage, kindness, wisdom, and perseverance.
Positive relationships	This field explores the importance of positive social connections and examines the dynamics of healthy and supportive relationships, including friendships, romantic partnerships, and social networks.
Meaning and purpose	Meaning and purpose delve into the search for significance and fulfillment in life, investigating how individuals find meaning, set goals, pursue purposeful activities, and create a sense of fulfillment.
Flow and engagement	Flow and engagement study the state of optimal experience where individuals are fully immersed and absorbed in an activity, leading to increased happiness, productivity, and personal growth.
Resilience	Resilience examines the ability to bounce back from adversity, cope with stress, and adapt to challenging situations. It explores the factors that contribute to resilience and strategies for building resilience.
Mindfulness	Mindfulness focuses on cultivating present-moment awareness and nonjudgmental acceptance of one's thoughts, feelings, and experiences. It explores the benefits of mindfulness for well-being and mental health.
Positive education	Positive education integrates positive psychology principles into the field of education, promoting well-being, character development, and positive relationships among students, teachers, and schools.
Positive organizations	Positive organizations examine how positive psychology principles can be applied to enhance employee well-being, job satisfaction, and organizational performance in the workplace.
Positive interventions	Positive interventions involve evidence-based practices aimed at enhancing well-being and fostering positive change. These interventions can include gratitude exercises, acts of kindness, and positive self-reflection.
Positive health	Positive health focuses on the intersection of physical and mental well-being. It explores the role of positive emotions, behaviors, and attitudes in promoting physical health, resilience, and overall wellness.
Positive parenting	Positive parenting examines the application of positive psychology principles in raising children. It emphasizes nurturing positive parent-child relationships, fostering resilience, and promoting the well-being of both parents and children.
Positive aging	Positive aging explores the psychological aspects of aging and highlights the potential for growth, well-being, and purpose in later stages of life. It investigates factors that contribute to successful aging and the promotion of well-being in older adults.
Positive communication	Positive communication focuses on fostering constructive and positive interactions. It explores effective communication techniques, such as active listening, empathy, and positive language, to enhance relationships and promote understanding and connection.
Positive motivation	Positive motivation investigates the drivers and strategies for promoting intrinsic motivation, goal attainment, and achievement. It explores the role of positive emotions, self-efficacy, and goal-setting in fostering motivation and success.
Positive leadership	Positive leadership examines the application of positive psychology principles in leadership roles. It emphasizes inspiring and empowering others, fostering a positive work environment, and promoting collaboration, growth, and well-being within teams and organizations.

Positive community	Positive community explores the role of community and social connections in well-being. It focuses on building supportive, inclusive, and thriving communities that enhance individuals' sense of belonging, social support, and collective well-being.
Positive ecology	Positive ecology investigates the relationship between human well-being and the natural environment. It emphasizes the importance of ecological sustainability, environmental awareness, and the positive impact of connecting with nature on overall well-being.
Positive interventions in therapy	This field focuses on the integration of positive psychology principles and interventions within therapeutic settings. It explores how positive interventions can complement traditional therapy approaches and enhance overall well-being and treatment outcomes.
Positive psychology and creativity	Positive psychology and creativity examine the relationship between positive emotions, mindset, and creative thinking. It explores how positive psychological factors can enhance creativity, problem-solving abilities, and innovation in various domains.
Positive technology	Positive technology explores the use of technology to promote well-being and positive psychological outcomes. It investigates how digital platforms, apps, and interventions can be designed and utilized to enhance positive emotions, resilience, and flourishing.
Positive sexuality	Positive sexuality explores the intersection of positive psychology and human sexuality. It focuses on understanding healthy sexual relationships, exploring positive aspects of sexual experiences, and promoting sexual well-being and satisfaction.
Positive leisure	Positive leisure investigates the role of leisure activities in promoting well-being and positive psychological experiences. It examines how engaging in enjoyable and meaningful leisure pursuits contributes to overall happiness and life satisfaction.
Positive psychology in sports	Positive psychology in sports applies positive psychology principles to athletic performance and sports-related experiences. It explores topics such as optimal performance states, motivation, goal-setting, resilience, and positive coaching techniques to enhance athletes' well-being and achievement.
Positive psychology in organizations	Positive psychology in organizations focuses on applying positive psychology principles to enhance employee well-being, engagement, and productivity within the workplace. It explores strategies for creating positive work environments, fostering meaningful work, and promoting organizational flourishing.
Positive psychology and education policy	This field examines the integration of positive psychology principles into educational policies and systems. It explores how positive education initiatives can be incorporated at a broader level to enhance student well-being, character development, and positive school cultures.

Source: Srivastava *et al.* (2017); Khan *et al.* (2021); Lin *et al.* (2017); Chotiawat *et al.* (2019); Schmidt *et al.* (2021); Lefebvre *et al.* (2017); Tan *et al.* (2022).

2.3. Some popular theories of positive psychology

Positive psychology is a branch of psychology that focuses on the study of optimal human functioning and well-being. It explores the factors that contribute to happiness, fulfillment, and flourishing in individuals and communities. In the field of marketing, positive psychology can provide valuable insights into consumer behavior, brand loyalty, and marketing strategies that promote positive emotions and customer satisfaction. In this tabular form, we have presented 10 theories of positive psychology, including information about the theory, developer, year of introduction, main postulations, scholarly criticisms, and relevance to marketing.

Theory	Developer	Main Postulations	Scholarly Criticisms	Relevance to Marketing
Broaden-and-Build Theory	Barbara Fredrickson (1998)	The main postulation of the Broaden-and-Build Theory is that positive emotions broaden an individual's thought-action repertoire and build personal resources, leading to increased well-being and resilience.	Lack of specificity in explaining underlying mechanisms	Understanding how positive emotions can be leveraged in marketing campaigns to create brand associations and consumer engagement
Self-Determination Theory	Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan (1985)	The main postulation of Self-Determination Theory is that people have inherent psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, which drive their motivation and well-being.	Overemphasis on individualistic perspectives and cultural bias	Recognizing the importance of intrinsic motivation and meeting psychological needs to enhance consumer engagement and brand loyalty
PERMA Theory	Martin Seligman (2002)	The main postulation of PERMA Theory of positive psychology is that well-being is achieved through the presence of five key elements: Positive emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment.	Lack of cultural and contextual considerations	Incorporating the PERMA elements in marketing strategies to create positive brand experiences and enhance consumer well-being
Learned Optimism Theory	Martin Seligman (1990)	The main postulation of the Learned Optimism Theory is that individuals can develop a more positive outlook on life by challenging and changing their negative explanatory styles and cultivating a belief in their ability to control outcomes.	Criticized for overemphasizing positive thinking and neglecting the role of realism and negative emotions	Utilizing positive messaging and optimistic brand narratives to enhance brand perception and consumer attitudes
Socioemotional Selectivity Theory	Laura L. Carstensen (1999)	The main postulation of the Socioemotional Selectivity Theory is that as people age, they prioritize emotionally meaningful relationships and focus on maximizing emotional well-being rather than seeking out new social connections or pursuing future-oriented goals.	Limited research on the application to marketing; primarily focused on individual aging processes	Tailoring marketing messages and strategies to meet the changing emotional needs of different consumer age groups
Strengths-Based Approach Theory	Martin Seligman and Christopher Peterson (2004)	The main postulation of the Strengths-Based Approach Theory of positive psychology is that individuals should focus on identifying and developing their unique strengths and virtues to enhance their well-being and achieve optimal functioning.	Criticized for neglecting weaknesses and potential negative aspects of character strengths	Developing marketing campaigns that emphasize and align with consumers' character strengths to create meaningful connections
Emotional Intelligence Theory	Peter Salovey and John D. Mayer (1990)	The main postulation of the Emotional Intelligence Theory in positive psychology is that one's ability to recognize, understand, and manage emotions plays a critical role in personal well-being, effective interpersonal	Criticized for the lack of empirical evidence and cultural bias	Incorporating emotional intelligence principles to enhance consumer experiences and establish emotional connections with brands

Theory	Developer	Main Postulations	Scholarly Criticisms	Relevance to Marketing
		relationships, and overall success in various areas of life.		
Hope Theory	Charles R. Snyder (1991)	The main postulation of Hope Theory in positive psychology is that hope, defined as the combination of agency (belief in one's ability to achieve goals) and pathways (belief in viable routes to goal attainment), is a fundamental predictor of motivation, well-being, and goal achievement.	Limited application to marketing; primarily focused on individual goal attainment	Developing marketing messages that inspire hope and convey a sense of agency in achieving desired outcomes
Self-Efficacy Theory	Albert Bandura (1977)	The main postulation of the Self-Efficacy Theory in positive psychology is that individuals' beliefs in their own capabilities to successfully accomplish tasks and overcome challenges significantly influence their motivation, behavior, and overall psychological well-being.	Overemphasis on individual characteristics and neglecting situational factors	Enhancing consumer confidence and promoting self-efficacy through marketing communications and experiences
Positive Psychology Interventions Theory	Martin Seligman (2005)	The main postulation of Positive Psychology Interventions Theory is that intentionally cultivating positive emotions, strengths, and virtues can enhance individual well-being and foster personal growth and resilience.	Limited long-term effects and individual variability in response	Incorporating positive psychology interventions in marketing campaigns to enhance consumer well-being and brand perception

2.4. Criticisms and Limitations of Positive Psychology

The main focus of positive psychology is to promote positive emotions, positive behaviours, and positive thoughts in individuals. However, there are some criticisms and limitations to positive psychology that need to be addressed in order to fully assess how effective this field of study can be. In this unit, we will be exploring and analyzing nine criticisms and limitations of positive psychology.

Positive Psychology is a Narrow Field of Study: One of the criticisms of positive psychology is that it is a narrow field of study. Positive psychology mainly focuses on the positive aspects of human life, and ignores the negative aspects (Ibrahim et al., 2022). This narrow focus prevents the field from fully understanding the complexities of the human mind. Focusing solely on the positive effects of psychology hinders the field from grasping the full picture of the human experience.

Positive Psychology Ignores Negative Emotions: A limitation of positive psychology is that it ignores negative emotions. According to the positive psychology movement, focusing on positive emotions is enough to promote mental health and well-being (Khalil et al., 2023). However, negative emotions like sadness, anger, and anxiety are a natural part of the human experience. Failing to acknowledge negative emotions can have harmful consequences in the long run to individuals who feel like these emotions are unacceptable.

Positive Psychology is Not Relevant to All Individuals: Another criticism of positive psychology is that it is not relevant to all individuals. The positive psychology movement originated in Western cultures and mostly focused on individuals from privileged and affluent backgrounds, the results from such study may not generalize to other cultures and individuals from diverse backgrounds (Muthoni et al., 2022). The concept behind some study in positive psychology is the one-size-fits-all approach but culture, race, and ethnicity can have dramatic effects on one's psychological state. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge this reality in order to have tangible results.

Positive Psychology Ignores Contextual Factors: Positive psychology ignores contextual factors such as social, economic, and environmental conditions that affect an individual's well-being (Mwakatobe et al., 2023). Social inequality, poverty, and discrimination can greatly impact an individual's mental state and hinder them from achieving optimal health and well-being. Ignoring the contextual factors can result in the failure to connect and solving underlying issues that might be the root cause of observed poor mental and psychological states.

Positive Psychology Treats Individual Problems as Personal Inadequacies: Positive psychology tends to treat individual problems as personal inadequacies, with the belief that individual issues can be resolved by simply 'thinking positively' (Nakato et al., 2021). The positive psychology movement often overlooks structural and systemic factors that may play a role in individual problems. The result is that the field may inadvertently contribute to a culture of victim-blaming with people feeling inadequate to deal with social pressure and expect that they can deal with all problems by thinking positively.

Positive Psychology Ignores the Role of Negative Feedback: Another limitation of positive psychology is that it ignores the role of negative feedback in personal growth (Abdullahi et al., 2020). Negative feedback can be difficult and painful, but it can also lead to personal growth and learning. Ignoring negative feedback may hinder individuals from achieving personal and professional growth. Constructive criticism can act as a motivator to rectify a previous mistake that otherwise would have been ignored.

Positive Psychology is Commercialized: Positive psychology is increasingly being commercialized, with an increase of self-help books, and online classes, creating an industry around the concept of well-being (Srivastava et al., 2017). The commercialization of the field can lead to a focus on consumerism and profit rather than improving the human experience. A profit-oriented approach can lead to marketing and advertising that might be misleading and providing unproven or unreliable techniques that don't guarantee effectiveness.

Positive Psychology Can Be Superficial: A criticism of positive psychology is that it can be superficial (Khan et al., 2021). Emphasis on being overly self-involved, focusing on a positive outlook, happy emotions, and 'friendship-kisser' attitudes can suppress exploring deeper, nuanced and complex emotions and deprive individuals of a full range of human experiences. Happiness and positive emotions are desirable in themselves but being too focused on these emotions limits human understanding of themselves, inhibiting the exploration of their past, present and possible futures.

2.5. Pillars of positive psychology

Positive psychology's primary focus is on the study of human strengths and virtues, rather than solely on the diagnosis and treatment of mental illness and dysfunction (Khan et al., 2021). It has four main pillars or key areas of focus: positive emotions, positive character traits, positive institutions, and positive relationships (Lin et al., 2017). These pillars are essential for promoting well-being, happiness, and resilience.

Positive emotions: Positive emotions are those that promote happiness, joy, and contentment. These emotions can be experienced in response to positive events, such as winning a game, receiving a compliment, or having a good day at work (Chotiawat et al., 2019). However, positive emotions can also be generated by intentionally focusing on positive thoughts and experiences, such as expressing gratitude or engaging in daily acts of kindness. Positive emotions are critical for overall well-being and can lead to increased motivation, creativity, and better physical health.

Positive character traits: Positive character traits are individual strengths and virtues that contribute to flourishing and well-being. Examples of positive character strengths include gratitude, kindness, forgiveness, perseverance, and creativity (Schmidt et al., 2021). These character strengths can be cultivated through intentional practice and can lead to increased happiness, resilience, and better mental health outcomes. Positive character traits are critical for leading a fulfilling and meaningful life.

Positive institutions: Positive institutions are organizations or communities that promote well-being and positive outcomes. These institutions can take many forms, including schools, workplaces, and healthcare organizations (Lefebvre et al., 2017). Positive institutions focus on creating a positive environment that supports employees, students, or patients, and encourages growth and development. Positive institutions can also promote positive psychology principles, such as mindfulness and gratitude, to increase well-being and reduce stress.

Positive relationships: Positive relationships refer to the connections we have with others and the impact these relationships have on our well-being. Positive relationships can be with family, friends, romantic partners, or even pets (Tan et al., 2022). Research has shown that positive relationships can provide a buffer against the negative effects of stress and lead to increased life satisfaction and happiness. Positive relationships are critical for overall well-being and contribute to a sense of social connectedness and belonging.

These four key pillars of positive psychology – positive emotions, positive character traits, positive institutions, and positive relationships – are essential for promoting well-being and resilience in individuals and communities. By intentionally focusing on these pillars, individuals can cultivate a positive mindset and take steps towards leading a fulfilling and meaningful life. Positive psychology offers a refreshing perspective on mental health and well-being by shifting the focus from what is wrong with individuals to what is right with them. This approach is not only empowering but can also lead to positive outcomes for both individuals and society as a whole.

3. Methodology

This study adopted a desk-research methodology, relying on published articles in relevant journals to obtain secondary data to facilitate the investigation. A desk research design is a form of secondary data-based research approach that collects and analyzes existing data and information from previously published sources, rather than collecting new data through direct observation or surveys (Snyder, 2019). This type of research is conducted using existing literature, reports, articles, databases, and other publicly available sources. For this study, desk research design enabled us to locate and review extant relevant literature across several geographical contexts to discuss the contemporary applications of positive psychology by marketers. This inclusivity was particularly important, as it ensured a holistic understanding of how positive psychology is being utilized by marketers across different regions and cultures. It enabled us to identify common trends and unique strategies that are emerging in the field, shedding light on both global and localized applications.

4. Results and Discussion

Positive psychology has become an important topic of interest for not only psychology professionals, but marketers as well. In marketing, it is applied practically in the following ways:

Emotion-based Marketing: Positive psychology emphasizes the importance of positive emotions in enhancing mental well-being. In marketing, emotions play a vital role in influencing consumer behavior. Emotion-based marketing utilizes positive emotions such as joy, happiness, and excitement to evoke positive emotions in consumers (Okeke et al., 2022). This technique can be seen in advertisements for products, services, or experiences that are designed to create a positive emotional response in consumers. In practice, emotion-based marketing manifests in a variety of ways across different industries. Advertisements, for instance, are carefully crafted to elicit specific emotional reactions from viewers. Whether promoting products, services, or experiences, the underlying objective is to create a profound and lasting positive impression on consumers. This could involve using vibrant visuals, heartwarming narratives, or uplifting music to evoke feelings of delight, contentment, and exhilaration. Also, businesses employing emotion-based marketing often focus on creating an immersive and memorable brand experience (Huppert & So, 2013). They seek to establish a deep emotional connection with consumers, fostering loyalty and brand advocacy. This can be achieved through personalized interactions, thoughtful messaging, and the incorporation of sensory elements that resonate with the target audience. Beyond the immediate impact on purchasing decisions, the enduring emotional resonance established through this approach can lead to long-term customer satisfaction and loyalty (Diener et al., 2018). Consumers who associate positive emotions with a brand are more likely to become repeat customers, refer friends and family, and even become brand ambassadors.

Product Personalization: Positive psychology research shows that personalized products improve happiness, self-esteem, and motivation in individuals. Personalized products make individuals feel seen, heard and appreciated (Sharma et al., 2023). Marketers can leverage the knowledge of positive psychology to create personalized marketing campaigns that appeal to individual values, preferences, and personal identity. Personalization lies at the heart of effective marketing in today's dynamic landscape. It involves tailoring content and offerings to suit the specific needs and desires of each consumer (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005). Drawing from the insights of positive psychology allows marketers to go beyond surface-level demographics and delve into the underlying motivations and aspirations of their audience. This deeper understanding empowers them to craft messages that resonate on a more profound level. Also, by acknowledging and respecting the personal identity of consumers, marketers can establish trust and credibility. When individuals feel seen and understood by a brand, they are more likely to develop a sense of loyalty and affinity. This can lead to long-term customer relationships that extend beyond transactional interactions (El-Abbasi et al., 2023). It fosters a sense of belonging and affiliation, enhancing the overall customer experience. In essence, this approach represents a shift towards a more empathetic and meaningful form of marketing, where the individual is at the forefront of every strategy and message.

Social Proof: Social proof is a psychological phenomenon in which people follow the actions of others in their social group to conform to social norms. Positive psychology research shows that people are more likely to engage in behaviors that they perceive as socially acceptable or popular (Ahmed et al., 2021). Marketers use social proof to create a sense of urgency, increase demand, and generate evoked set for their products. In contemporary marketing practice, the concept of social proof is harnessed as a powerful tool to influence consumer behavior. Marketers strategically leverage social proof to instill a sense of urgency among

potential buyers (Ben Ammar et al., 2021). By showcasing instances of popularity or demand for a product or service, they create an environment where individuals feel compelled to take action, lest they miss out on a widely coveted item. This is because social proof serves as a catalyst in elevating the perceived value of a product or service. When consumers witness others embracing a particular offering, it inherently bolsters their confidence in its quality and desirability. This, in turn, contributes to the formation of what is referred to as an "evoked set" – a collection of preferred options that a consumer considers when making a purchasing decision (Kim et al., 2022). Through strategic use of social proof, marketers can position their products or services within this coveted set, significantly enhancing the likelihood of selection. In essence, the phenomenon of social proof underscores the profound impact of social influence on individual decision-making processes. It illuminates the power of communal validation in shaping consumer behavior, and in doing so, underscores the vital role it plays in the realm of marketing and product promotion. By understanding and harnessing the dynamics of social proof, marketers can effectively tap into the innate human inclination to seek affirmation and align with prevailing social norms, ultimately driving demand and preference for their offerings (Suzuki et al., 2023).

Brand Storytelling: Positive psychology findings suggest that storytelling can evoke emotions, increase empathy, and generate a sense of connection with others. Marketers can use brand storytelling to create an emotional connection with their customers, building brand loyalty and trust (Chen et al., 2022). When companies tell their stories, they give customers a glimpse into the company's culture, values, and mission, creating a sense of shared purpose and identity. Through the art of brand storytelling, companies have the opportunity to cultivate a deep emotional resonance with their audience, ultimately nurturing brand loyalty and trust (García-Rubio et al., 2022). By weaving narratives around their brand, companies grant customers a privileged glimpse into the very fabric of their organizational culture, values, and mission. This transparent sharing engenders a profound sense of shared purpose and identity between the company and its customers. Through the medium of storytelling, businesses can transcend the transactional nature of consumer relationships, creating a space for meaningful engagement and lasting connections. This process not only bolsters brand loyalty but also establishes a foundation of trust that can endure even in the face of challenges or competition.

User Experience: Positive psychology emphasizes the importance of positive experiences to promote well-being. In marketing, user experience plays a critical role in influencing customer perception and satisfaction. Marketers can use positive psychology principles to improve user experiences by creating engaging and enjoyable experiences that trigger positive emotions in customers (Müller et al., 2022). Translating this perspective into the domain of marketing, the user experience emerges as a linchpin in influencing how customers perceive and interact with a brand or product. By integrating insights from positive psychology, marketers are equipped to optimize user experiences in a manner that fosters positive emotional responses (Ali et al., 2023). This underscores the efficacy of this approach, underlining how strategically crafted interactions can not only captivate users but also engender feelings of satisfaction and contentment. Similarly, the fusion of positive psychology principles with marketing strategies underscores the potential for transformative impact. It offers a framework through which marketers can actively enhance user experiences, thereby fortifying customer relationships and bolstering brand loyalty. In addition, by prioritizing the creation of experiences that resonate positively, marketers stand poised to unlock a powerful avenue for customer engagement and satisfaction, ultimately contributing to the enduring success of their endeavors.

Influencer Marketing: Positive psychology research shows that trust and authority are essential factors that influence human behavior. Influencer marketing utilizes the trust and authority of influential people to promote products, services, or experiences (Dupont et al., 2023). By using an influencer, marketers can create a sense of trust and authority that can encourage customers to make purchasing decisions. By collaborating with an influencer, marketers tap into the established credibility and influence of these figures. This collaboration fosters a sense of trust and authority among the audience, which in turn can significantly impact their purchasing decisions. When consumers see a product or service being endorsed by an influencer they trust, they are more likely to feel confident in the value and quality of that offering. This increased confidence can be a powerful driver in their decision-making process (Odhiambo et al., 2022). Also, influencer marketing allows for a more authentic and relatable connection between brands and their target audience. Influencers often have a dedicated and engaged following that looks to them for recommendations and advice. This level of trust can be harnessed by marketers to build a positive perception of their products or services. In essence, influencer marketing provides a means to bridge the gap between traditional advertising and genuine, human connections. Through strategic collaborations, marketers can establish a sense of trust and authority that resonates with consumers, ultimately driving them towards favorable purchasing decisions (Mshana et al., 2015). This approach not only enhances brand credibility but also cultivates authentic connections with the target audience, ultimately leading to more effective marketing campaigns.

Gamification: Positive psychology research suggests that gamification can promote engagement, motivation, and enjoyment in individuals. Marketers can leverage gamification to create marketing campaigns that are fun and engaging, using game-like elements to stimulate customers' interest and motivate them to take action (Lim et al., 2021). When applied effectively, gamification

provides a platform for marketers to infuse elements of playfulness and interactivity into their campaigns (Nabwire et al., 2021). This can significantly pique the interest of customers, offering them a more immersive and stimulating experience. By leveraging this psychological insight, marketers have the opportunity to create a more memorable and impactful interaction between their brand and their target audience. Furthermore, the incorporation of gamification principles can serve as a powerful tool in encouraging customers to take desired actions. Whether it involves making a purchase, signing up for a newsletter, or participating in a survey, the engaging nature of gamified experiences can motivate individuals to actively participate in these activities (Okeke et al., 2022). This approach not only enhances customer involvement but also increases the likelihood of achieving marketing objectives. In addition, Sharma et al. (2023) opined that the integration of gamification into marketing strategies aligns with the principles of positive psychology, fostering a sense of enjoyment and motivation among individuals. By incorporating game-like elements, marketers can cultivate a more interactive and enjoyable customer experience, ultimately leading to increased engagement and higher levels of participation in desired actions.

Social Media Marketing: Positive psychology principles can be applied to social media marketing to create content that promotes positive emotions and connection. Marketers can use social media to share positive stories, videos, and images that trigger positive emotions such as joy, awe, and inspiration (Ibrahim et al., 2022). Social media marketing can also be used to create a sense of community, promoting social connectedness and happiness. In contemporary marketing practice, social media platforms have proven to be powerful tools for spreading positivity and generating a sense of collective upliftment. The practice of social media marketing can serve as a platform for building a genuine sense of community among followers (Kim et al., 2022). By facilitating interactions and discussions around shared interests or values, marketers can foster a sense of belonging and social connectedness. This sense of community contributes to a deeper level of engagement and can significantly impact the overall happiness and satisfaction of the audience. Similarly, Suzuki et al. (2023) opined that incorporating positive psychology principles into social media marketing strategies not only enhances the overall experience for followers but also creates a more meaningful and authentic connection between the brand and its audience. This approach aligns marketing efforts with the fundamental human need for positivity and connection, ultimately leading to a more positive and engaged online community.

Sustainability Marketing: Positive psychology research shows that individuals who engage in sustainable behaviors experience higher levels of well-being, happiness, and fulfillment. Marketers can leverage this knowledge to create sustainability marketing campaigns that promote environmentally friendly products, services, and behaviors (Khalil et al., 2023). By promoting sustainability, marketers can create a sense of purpose, meaning, and connection with customers who share the same values. This insight offers a valuable opportunity for marketers to craft impactful sustainability marketing campaigns, advocating for environmentally conscious products, services, and behaviors (García-Rubio et al., 2022). By centering their messaging around sustainability, marketers have the potential to instill a profound sense of purpose, meaning, and connection with consumers who hold similar values. This alignment of values can foster a deeper sense of trust and loyalty between brands and their customer base. Moreover, it allows companies to position themselves as socially responsible entities, contributing positively to the broader global community (Ali et al., 2023). In addition, Dupont et al. (2023) opined that incorporating sustainability into marketing strategies not only aligns with the growing societal emphasis on environmental consciousness but also addresses the evolving preferences of consumers. Therefore, by embracing sustainability as a core tenet of their marketing approach, businesses not only meet the demands of the present but also position themselves favorably for the future. Furthermore, a sustainability-focused marketing strategy has the potential to create a ripple effect of positive change (Sharma et al., 2023). As consumers witness and engage with environmentally friendly products and behaviors, they may be inspired to adopt similar practices in their own lives. This not only amplifies the impact of sustainable marketing campaigns but also contributes to a broader cultural shift towards more sustainable living. Ultimately, this serves the collective goal of building a more environmentally conscious and harmonious society.

In summary, positive psychology principles can be used in marketing to create effective campaigns that resonate with customers and promote well-being. Marketers can use emotion-based marketing, product personalization, social proof, brand storytelling, user experience, influencer marketing, gamification, social media marketing, and sustainability marketing to create compelling marketing campaigns that evoke positive emotions, build trust, and promote positive behaviors. By embracing positive psychology in marketing, companies can create authentic, meaningful connections with customers, building long-lasting relationships that promote well-being and growth.

5. Conclusion and practical implications

Positive psychology, a field focused on understanding and promoting human well-being, has gained significant attention in recent years. Its principles and practices have proven to be highly valuable in various domains, including marketing. As discussed previously, this branch of psychology emphasizes the importance of positive emotions, such as joy, gratitude, and inspiration. Incorporating these emotions in marketing campaigns allows brands to establish an emotional connection with customers. When consumers experience positive emotions associated with a brand, they are more likely to develop a sense of loyalty and affinity

towards it. Positive psychology techniques, such as storytelling, evoke emotions that resonate with customers, forging a deeper bond between the brand and its target audience. This is because positive psychology encourages brands to focus on their genuine strengths and values, enabling them to build trust with their audience. By embracing authenticity, marketers can showcase their commitment to delivering value and meeting customer needs. Consumers appreciate brands that prioritize transparency and ethical practices, leading to increased trust and long-term relationships. Similarly, we have observed from extant literature that positive psychology emphasizes the significance of positive experiences in enhancing well-being. By incorporating positive experiences into marketing efforts, brands can create memorable moments for customers. Through various touchpoints such as user-friendly interfaces, personalized interactions, and surprise elements, marketers can positively influence consumer perception and satisfaction. Such positive experiences generate word-of-mouth marketing, expanding a brand's reach and attracting new customers.

Extant literature has also revealed that positive psychology recognizes the importance of engaging individuals in meaningful activities. Applying this concept to marketing, brands can design interactive campaigns that encourage customer participation and active engagement. Gamification, challenges, and interactive content create a sense of enjoyment and involvement, making customers more likely to remember and interact with the brand. Increased engagement leads to higher brand recall, enhanced customer loyalty, and a stronger customer base. This entails that incorporating positive psychology principles in marketing strategies offers numerous benefits to brands seeking to establish meaningful connections with their target audience. By enhancing emotional connection, fostering authenticity and trust, encouraging positive experiences, cultivating customer engagement, empowering consumer well-being, leveraging social proof, and creating a memorable brand identity, marketers can effectively influence consumer behavior and achieve long-term success. As the field of positive psychology continues to evolve, it presents an exciting opportunity for marketers to create transformative experiences that resonate with customers on a deeper level. We therefore present the following recommendations that may serve as a guide to marketers in their effort to incorporate positive psychology into their marketing campaigns and operations:

(i) Marketers should use positive psychology to emphasize the positive impact of their products or services on customers' lives. They should highlight features that enhance well-being, promote personal growth, and contribute to positive experiences. For example, if marketing a fitness app, emphasize how it can help users achieve their health goals, boost their self-esteem, and enhance their overall quality of life.

(ii) Marketers should craft marketing messages and experiences that evoke positive emotions and resonate with customers on an emotional level. There is need for them to utilize positive psychology principles to evoke emotions such as joy, gratitude, and inspiration in their marketing content. They should incorporate storytelling techniques to create narratives that align with customers' aspirations and values. This emotional resonance fosters a sense of connection with the brand, making customers more likely to engage and form lasting relationships.

(iii) Marketers should also highlight social proof and create a sense of community around their brand to enhance trust and belonging. They should carefully incorporate positive psychology into their marketing campaigns by showcasing customer testimonials, reviews, and success stories. Demonstrating how their product/service has positively impacted others can encourage potential customers to envision similar positive outcomes for themselves. Additionally, marketers should create a sense of community through user-generated content, forums, or events, fostering a supportive environment that aligns with positive psychology principles.

(iv) It is imperative for marketers to implement personalized marketing strategies that acknowledge individual preferences and milestones. They should leverage positive psychology by tailoring marketing efforts to individual customers' preferences and behaviors. Marketers should also send personalized recommendations based on their past interactions, congratulate them on milestones, and offer rewards that align with their achievements. This approach makes customers feel valued and understood, enhancing their overall experience and strengthening their connection to the brand.

(v) Marketers should strive as much as possible to continue engaging with customers after purchase to maintain a positive relationship and encourage brand loyalty. There is need for them to utilize positive psychology by nurturing the customer relationship beyond the point of purchase. Marketers can send follow-up emails expressing gratitude, offer additional resources related to their purchase, and seek feedback to show that their opinions matter. This ongoing engagement enhances customer satisfaction and encourages repeat business while aligning with positive psychology's emphasis on long-term well-being

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