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Nudges, altering people's behaviors without significantly changing economic incentives or limiting options, see wide application in both public and private sectors, especially in designing marketing tools. Being criticized as "works best in the dark", the ethics of nudges were heatedly discussed for public policies, where scholars show that the transparency of nudges does not harm its effectiveness. However, empirical evidence regarding its application in the private sector is extremely scarce.

In this study, we extend the discussion of nudge transparency to the marketing field and investigate its influence on consumers' behaviors and perceptions. For this purpose, we consider background awareness, awareness of the nudge tool gained from other sources than the direct disclosure by the nudger, as a type of transparency. We also propose a more rigorous way to measure the influence of transparency: consider the effect of transparency as a first-order interaction, instead of a simple difference.

We conducted an online survey experiment with an anchor-default nudge and a decoy nudge in two shopping scenarios. Our findings demonstrate that the influence of transparency is only on the perceptual level, but not on the behavioral level. Consumers think of the brand more negatively, while the effectiveness of nudges on purchase behaviors remains unchanged.