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# Antecedents of Group Identification and Its Effects on Within-Domain Consumption

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## Abstract

**Purpose:** Current research aimed at exploring whether group entitativity and satisfaction to becoming the member of group have positive effects on group identification, and whether group identification has positive effects on within-in-group domain consumption. This research focused on the mediation role of group identification in the effects of the group entitativity and the satisfaction to becoming the member of group on the within-in-group domain consumption. **Research design, data, and methodology:** We selected Shandong Province as our experimental target group and people living in Shandong province as our respondents. 316 questionnaire data were collected. The structural equation model in AMOS 26 were used to verify hypotheses. **Results:** First, group entitativity affected group identification positively. Second, satisfaction to becoming the member of group affected group identification positively. Third, group identification positively influenced on the within-in-group domain consumption. Fourth, the group identification played the full mediation roles in the effects of both the group entitativity and the satisfaction on the within-in-group domain consumption. **Conclusions:** marketers should highlight the group identification with their target group by stimulating the perception of the consumer's group entitativity and satisfied feelings about the group to induce the intent to purchase their brand as within-in-group domain consumption object.

**Keywords:** Social and Group Identity, Group Entitativity, With-In-Group Domain Consumption

**JEL Classification Code:** C83, L81, M31,P46

## 1. Introduction

Group identification is an essential part of a person's self-concept (Henry, Arrow & Carini, 1999). According to social identity theory, a person can belong to different groups (Tajfel & Turner, 2004), and a group can provide a form of identity and a consensual belief system that expresses who he is, how he gets along with others and how others perceive him. This is the function of group

identification (Spears, 2011). The components of group identification can be the group member's sense of belonging to the group and the group member's perception of the group identity (Sani, Madhok, Norbury, Dugard & Wakefield, 2015). There are many studies on the factors that can influence group identification (e.g., Van Dick, Wagner, Stellmacher & Christ, 2005). For example, according to self-categorization theory, group identification stems from two basic human motivations: self-enhancement involving the tendency of viewing oneself in a positive light and uncertainty reduction rooting in the need of living in predictable and tractable circumstances (Abrams & Hogg, 2010). These are influencing factors explored at the individual level (personal factors), where individuals identify with groups for their own benefits (Hohman, Dahl & Grubbs, 2016). In this way, it seems that when consumers consider the satisfaction of becoming a member of a group, this satisfaction may induce a motivation toward the group identification. However, past researches have given little attention to group identification at the group level. The research of group identification and its

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implication under certain group characteristics is necessary.

At the group level (e.g., group characteristic), a group's own characteristics should also be considered as factors influencing group identification. For example, group entitativity, which refers to the degree to which a group is perceived as a real, unified group (Campbell, 1958; Spencer-Rodgers, Williams, Hamilton, Peng & Wang, 2007), is an essential influencing factor for group identification. This article will argue that the group entitativity (group factor) and satisfaction to becoming a member of the group (personal factor) may offer implication to group identification. The intention of this research is to show when and under what group situations consumers are more likely to identify with the group. Therefore, research targeting consumers under the same regional cultural background, for example, Shandong province in China, is necessary.

Also, the group which consumers identify with at the time of the consumption can be a factor that play a significant role in consumer decision. With the enhancement of group identification, consumers may strengthen their identities through acquiring, thinking about, and consuming products and brands which are full of the group identity-symbolic attributes (Trudel, Argo & Meng, 2016).

Therefore, the current research has the following purposes. First, we will explore whether the group entitativity impacts group identification positively. Second, whether satisfaction to becoming a member of a group can promote group identification will be explored. Third, whether group members are more willing to conduct within-in-group domain consumption will be explored when the group identification is strengthened.

## **2. Literature Review and Hypotheses**

### **2.1. Group Entitativity**

Campbell (1958) first proposed the concept of entitativity, indicating the degree to which people perceive a particular unit as a real, independent and unified group. In other words, a meaningful social group is not just a simple collection of individuals but a group of practical significance. Blanchard, Caudill and Walker (2020) defined entitativity as an individual's cognitive evaluation of social units as a group. It is the perception made by one evaluating the degree of "groupness" towards a group. When individuals make judgments about a group, they judge the group through attributes such as similarity, common goals, interaction between members, and common fate (Crump, Hamilton, Sherman, Lickel & Thakkar, 2010). These group

attributes can be used to determine the extent to which individuals constitute a group (Svirydzenka, Sani & Bennett, 2010), and these are all observable organizational patterns among groups by which individuals can judge the degree of the group entitativity (Crawford, Sherman & Hamilton, 2002).

Different group types have different degree of group entitativity. And four group types are distinguished based on group attributes of common goals, common outcomes and interaction between group members. There are intimate groups (e.g., families), task groups (e.g., a football team), social categories (e.g., gender, religious groups), and loose collection (e.g., a group of people standing in line to buy coffee) (Lickel, Hamilton, Wierzchowska, Lewis, Sherman, Uhles, et al., 2000). Among these groups, the intimate group has the highest entitativity, while the loose collection has the lowest (Spencer-Rodgers, Hamilton & Sherman, 2007).

Some researchers (Brewer, Hong & Li, 2004) have argued that both essentialism and agency of group can facilitate group entitativity perception. Essentialism refers to the search for the most fundamental similarity among group members such as common blood ties, while the agency emphasizes the perceiver's attention to the internal relations between the group members and the perception of "groupness" based on the emergence of common goals and coordinated actions among group members. Moreover, individuals' perception of group entitativity is more likely to be carried out simultaneously in both ways, rather than in a single mode (Ip, Chui & Wan, 2006). For example, a Korean baseball team is a high essentialism as well as an agency group.

### **2.2. Satisfaction to Becoming the Member of Group**

Satisfaction is a psychological state, an individual's subjective evaluation of a specific target and a sense of pleasure and happiness after needs are satisfied. Satisfaction to becoming the member of a group is also an essential aspect of self-investment (Leach, Van Zomeren, Zebel, Vliek, Pennekamp, Doosje, et al., 2008). Such satisfaction presents that an individual purposefully selects a group related to self-concept (Choi, Lee & Yang, 2014; Reese, Proch & Finn, 2015). Further, satisfaction stems from positive feelings and satisfied feedback, and consumers actively invest his or her efforts for positive emotions and evaluation of the selected group. Thus, satisfaction to becoming the member of group is the cognition and evaluation of individuals to their in-groups and group members.

Researches have shown that when an individual actively establishes positive feelings about the in-group members

and the in-group to which they belong, it prompts the individual to have a positive evaluation of the group (Ashmore, Deaux & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2004). This satisfaction with group membership satisfies the individual's willingness to belong to the group. Even when an individual has a negative emotion towards the group, satisfaction may encourage the individual to downplay the impact of the negative emotion (Leach et al., 2008).

At the same time, satisfaction to becoming a member of a group may be associated with attachment to the in-group (DeMarco & Newheiser, 2019). For example, individuals may develop a sense of psychological dependence on the in-group, and this can reduce loneliness, which generates positive emotions, and help coordinate with other members of the group. In addition, satisfaction to becoming a member of a group may be associated with collective self-esteem. Researches have shown that self-esteem is positively correlated with the satisfaction of the in-group (Golec, Federico, Sedikides, Guerra, Lantos, Mroziński, et al., 2020). In other words, when individuals are satisfied with their group membership, they may show their loyalty to and pride in their in-group and group membership.

### **2.3.The Effects of Group Entitativity and Satisfaction to Becoming the Member of Group on Group Identification**

#### **2.3.1 Group Identification**

Group identification, known as social identity in some contexts (Conover & Feldman, 1984; Miller, Gurin, Gurin & Malanchuk, 1981), is an individual's sense of belonging to the group and group members (Sani et al., 2015), and group membership affects group members' psychology and behavior (Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 2002). Group members within the group tend to provide help and support for each other (e.g., Platow, Voudouris, Coulson, Gilford, Jamieson, Najdovski, et al., 2007).

Group identification, which is supported by self-categorization (Turner et al., 1987), emphasizes an individual's psychological belonging to the group, and individuals categorize themselves into members of the in-group. The identification with the in-group may be an effective way to reduce and resist the uncertainty of self-concept, especially when the individual is uncertain about his or her self-concept. At the same time, a strong sense of group identification will also lead to more positive feelings and evaluations towards the group (Cakal et al., 2011; Van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2012). In order to maintain a stable self-concept, individuals will seek consistency between themselves and the group or group members.

Also, group identification emphasizes the interdependence among group members and coordinated actions (Henry, Arrow & Carini, 1999). Through

harmonious cooperation among group members, group identification enhances the unity and cohesion within group. Thus, a high level of group identification is an essential factor in group-consistent behavior (Leach, et al., 2008), especially when the individual's in-group membership is significant.

Group identification determines the consistency between individual behavior patterns and group archetype. The group archetype refers to requiring individuals with the criteria of other in-group members after they classify themselves into a typical group member to conform to the group-related characteristics (Tajfel, & Turner, 2004). Thus, group identification leads the individual behavior to be more susceptible to group behavior. At the same time, in order to comply with the in-group norms, group members will also show behavioral pattern of convergence (Blackwood, & Louis, 2012; Simon, 2011).

#### **2.3.2 Group Entitativity and Group Identification**

In a group under high entitativity, group identification is an important symbol of membership. Group members share many common characteristics and strong connections as well as common goals and common outcomes (Dasgupta, Banaji, & Abelson, 1999). In other words, high group entitativity enhances the common fate and group cohesion among the group members. The higher the group entitativity, the higher the degree of interaction among group members, which promotes cooperation within the group. As for out-groups, in-group members keep a larger social distance from them and are more likely to have negative evaluations, stereotypes, and strong prejudices against the out-group. As compared to the out-group members, the in-group members will show a stronger willingness to interact with their in-group and have a stronger in-group preference (Castano et al., 2002; Gaertner & Schoppe, 1998; Lickel et al., 2006).

At the same time, high group entitativity also improves the sense of security of the in-group, reduces the threat from the out-group, and fulfills the group members with the self-protection needs. Thus, high entitativity provides certainty and meaningful values for group members (Lickel et al., 2006; Spencer-Rodgers, Williams, Hamilton, Peng & Wang, 2007). However, in groups with low group entitativity, group members perceive low security of the in-group. Conversely, high group entitativity indicates that individuals perceive a high degree of similarity with other in-group members and that in-group members share common characteristics. All these make people more willing to keep close contact with members of the group, which in turn, affects group identification (Campbell, 1958; Hogg et al., 2007). Therefore, there will be positive effect of the group entitativity on group identification.

**H1:** Group entitativity affects group identification

positively.

### **2.3.3 Satisfaction to Becoming a Member of a Group and Group Identification**

The psychological connection between a group and its members and the experience sharing among the group members, both affect an individual's identification with the group (Tajfel & Turner, 2004). That is to say, group identification involves the individual's positive feelings and evaluations of the group, and group member's interaction and experience sharing behaviors.

From the perspective of emotion, group identification is manifested as individuals' positive emotion towards their group and group members (Tajfel, 1978; Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and the sense of emotional connection between the group members and the group (Leach et al., 2008). Individuals' positive feelings towards the group and the group membership will lead to the positive evaluation of the group (Ashmore et al., 2004). Basing on this line, satisfaction to becoming the member of group might be closely associated with group identification. Thus, the positive evaluation contributes to a group member's satisfaction with their identity, which promotes their identification with the group and its membership.

From the perspective of cognition, group identification is an individual's cognition of group membership. Individual regards himself as a member of the group and has feelings of the cognitive and value meaning brought by group membership (Tajfel, & Turner, 1979). When individuals are satisfied to becoming a member of a group, they will show their identities as group members, establish the psychological connection with the group actively, and take the group identity as a part of his or her self-concept.

From the perspective of behavior, group identification is the interaction and cooperation among group members of the in-group (Sani et al., 2015; Worchel et al., 1998). When the individual feels satisfaction to becoming a member of a group, it will promote the individual to have a sense of psychological dependence on the group to strengthen the interaction with the group members and to meet the group members' identification intention. In other words, the satisfaction to becoming a member of a group will promote the individual's identification with the group.

At the same time, group identification is manifested as group member's emotional loyalty to and pride in the group. Thus, when group members feel satisfaction to becoming members of a group, it will prompt the group members to increase collective self-esteem, maintain a commitment to the group, and promote group member's loyalty towards the group. Simultaneously, satisfaction to becoming the member of a group promotes individual members' pride in group membership (Ellemers, Kortekaas, & Ouwerkerk, 1999). These factors above will promote the identification

with the group. Thus, we assume hypothesis 2 as follows:

**H2:** Satisfaction to becoming a member of a group affects group identification positively.

## **2.3. Group Identification and Within-in-group Domain Consumption**

Within-in-group domain consumption refers to consumers' consumption of products or brands related to in-group membership, and the products and brands have the significance of symbolizing in-group identity (Trudel et al., 2016). Different groups have different attributes and characteristics, and specific group may consume products or brands related to its own attributes to present the group's identity. That is to say, when people think of themselves as having same characteristics and values with other group members, they will follow with similar behavior standards within the group to show the role of group members and to strengthen the sense of belongingness (Christensen et al., 2004; Norman, Clark, & Walker, 2005).

Consumers support their own group identity by acquiring, considering, and consuming products with in-group symbols (Belk, 1988), and consumers present "who they are" by consuming such products. Such within-in-group domain consumption enhances consumers' self-identity and helps express the self-concept of cohesion and stability to prove that they belong to an in-group (Laverie, & Arnett, 2000). Thus, when individuals define themselves as group members, they have positive feelings about the group and its members, and also contribute to a connection with the group members, which will enhance the within-in-group domain consumption (Leach et al., 2008). Within-in-group domain consumption shows the group members' loyalty to the in-group.

On the other hand, group identification is the degree to which an individual feels a sense of belonging to and identification with a particular group. It is the core psychological trait of group members (Tajfel, & Turner 1986; Sani et al., 2015), and group identification affords group members various advantages (Platow, et al., 2007).

Individuals define their values, attitudes, and behaviors through the group with which they identify (Wakefield et al., 2017). At this point, there is a convergence in the relationship between the group members and a tendency to think and act in a way which forms a unit as "we". That is to say, when individuals identify with a group, they will behave to conform to the group norms and imitate the behaviors of group prototype (Verkuyten, & Nekuee, 1999). Especially when emphasizing the belongingness of the in-group, group identification requires the assimilation within group. Meanwhile, the significance of group membership encourages group members to be consistent with each other

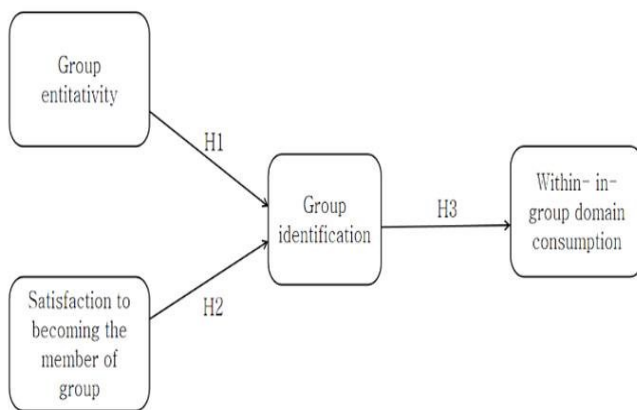
(Lakin, & Chartrand, 2003).

With a high group identification, group members tend to perceive their group as the best group and actively accept the values of the group and further strengthen the in-group assimilation behavior (Christensen et al., 2004; Norman et al., 2005). And to express in-group identity and show loyalty to and pride in the in-group, in-group members may consume products related to in-group identity (Trudel et al., 2016). The symbolic or group-localized product, for example, a product with a group logo or a specialty brand of a regional group, will be consumed if they identify with the group.

**H3:** Group identification influences within-in-group domain consumption positively.

## 2.5. Research Model

The hypotheses developed can be shown in the following <Figure 1>.



**Figure 1:** Research Model

## 3. Research Method

### 3.1. Experimental society group selection

In this article, Shandong Province society in China is the experimental group. People living in Shandong Province are chosen as our survey respondents. Shandong Province has a long history. Influenced by Confucianism, Shandong people have given great attention to etiquette, respected the traditional culture, and countless literati and scholars there have been from ancient time in the Shandong. Shandong people are generous, hospitable, charitable, and sharing. Shandong people help each other and make their efforts to

carry forward Shandong culture. These texts may have helped Shandong contain its group attributes such as group members' similarity, common goals, interdependence, and close communication with each other.

### 3.2. Measurements

*Measurements of Group Entitativity.* Group entitativity is the degree to which people perceive a social group or a social category as a reality and an independent entity. It seems to encompass such characteristics as groupness, similarity, and agency (Yzerbyt, Judd, & Corneille, 2004; Hamilton, Chen, & Way, 2011). By referring to Blanchard, Caudill and Walker (2020), the following items are used to measure the group entitativity on a 7-point scale (1=not very much, 7=very much): "Shandong Province is a unit", "Shandong Province is a group", "Shandong Province feels like a group to its citizens".

*Measurements of Satisfaction to Becoming a Member of a Group.* Satisfaction to becoming a member of a group refers to the purposeful selection of groups as related to self-concept and active involvement in positive emotions (Reese, Proch & Finn, 2015). The group or social category to which one belongs is the group in which one participates, lives, works, or engages. The type of self-investment into the group can be monetary, time, and emotional; satisfaction is a part of self-investment (Leach et al., 2008). Therefore, we measured satisfaction to becoming a member of a group on the 7-point scale by using the items as follows: "I think that Shandong Province has a lot to be proud of"; "It is pleasant to be a citizen of Shandong Province"; "Being a citizen of Shandong Province gives me a good feeling".

*Measurements of Group Identification.* Group identification means individuals have a sense of belonging to the group and a sense of commonality with other group members (Sani et al., 2015). Referring to Sani et al. (2015), this study measured the degree of Shandong people's identification with the Shandong Province on the 7-point scale by using the following: "I feel similar to the other citizens of my Shandong group"; "I feel a strong sense of belonging to Shandong group"; "I have a lot in common with the citizens of Shandong group".

*Measurements of Within-in-Group Domain Consumption.* Within-in-group domain consumption means consumers tend to consume products or brands associated with identities of their in-group (Oyserman, 2009; Shavitt, Torelli, & Wong, 2009). A comparison between Shandong Province-producing product brands and other Province-producing product brands is presented to respondents at each of four types of product, as shown in Table 1. For the people who are living in Shandong province, brands from

Shandong Province are within-domain, and brands from other provinces are across-domain.

**Table 1.** Comparison between Shandong Province- and Other Province-producing product brand

Products	Brands (Other Provinces)	Brands (Shandong Province)
Ham	Shuanghui (Henan Province)	Jinluo (Shandong Province)
Beer	Haerbin beer (Heilongjiang Province)	Qingdao beer (Shandong Province)
Office Stationery	GuangBo (Zhejiang Province)	Snowwhite (Shandong Province)
Milk	YIYI Dairy (Anhui Province)	Jiabao Dairy (Shandong Province)

The participants select only one product they intend to immediately purchase among the products (ham, beer, office stationery and milk) listed in Table 1. Based on the kind of product which they chose, participants mark “√” to the number on the 7-point, which indicates their intention to purchase between Shandong Province-producing product brand and Other Province-producing product brand. It should be noted that each of the participants were required to select only one product. For example, in the case that ham was selected to buy, measurement items consisted of the following: “If you want to buy ham, which brand do you want to buy between Shuanghui (Henan) and Jinluo(Shandong)?”; “If you want to buy ham, which brand do you intend to buy between Shuanghui(Henan) and Jinluo(Shandong)?”; “If you want to buy ham, which brand do you have interests in between Shuanghui (Henan) and Jinluo (Shandong)?”; “If you want to buy ham, which brand are you more likely to buy between Shuanghui (Henan) and Jinluo (Shandong)?”. All items were measured on 7-point scales (1=Shuanghui (Henan), 7=Jinluo (Shandong)). Each of the other products (beer, office stationery and milk) selected by each participant was also measured by the way shown above.

### 3.3. Pretest and Data Collection

First, ten kinds of products related to clothing, food, housing, and transportation were selected to conduct a purchase frequency survey for consumers of Shandong Province. At the self-enumerated survey results, four kinds of products with the highest purchase frequency were selected: ham, beer, office stationery, and milk. Later, according to each of the selected products shown in Table 1, they compared local brand in Shandong province and brand

from other provinces. It should be noted that compared brands of each product were similar to each other in popularity and price.

Then, we translated an English questionnaire in Chinese. After that, the survey was conducted on Shandong consumers at the Chinese questionnaire collection platform "Questionnaire Star", and 316 questionnaire data were collected.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Results of Product-Purchasing Intention Frequency Analysis

Based on the 316 reponses from consumers in Shandong Province, the purchase intention draw the following Table 2. Ham purchase intention frequency was highest (36.1%), beer, office stationery and milk followed in the frequency order.

**Table 2.** Result of Product Purchase Intention Frequency

	Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Product	Harm	114	36.1
	Beer	109	34.5
	Office Stationery	34	10.7
	Milk	59	18.7
Total Response		316	100

### 4.2. Reliability and Validity

To test the internal consistency, a reliability analysis was conducted based on Cronbach's alpha. As shown in Table 3, all of the  $\alpha$ s were greater than 0.7, which ensure a good internal consistency. Further, principal component analysis based on Varimax in SPSS 25.0 showed four principal components as expected, and 79.890% of the variances were explained. Thus, good convergent validity was explored at each construct.

### 4.3. Correlations among Constructs

To test the correlations between construct variables in the model, confirmatory factor analysis in AMOS 26.0 was used. As shown in Table 4, all the AVE values were greater than 0.5, and the AVE value was greater than the squares of the correlation coefficients at each construct, which implies a good discriminate validity.

**Table 3.** Results of Analyzing Principal Components

Construct	Item	Component				a
		1	2	3	4	
Within-in-Group DomainConsumption	Wi2	.879	.097	.079	.167	.910
	Wi3	.856	.186	.165	.086	
	Wi4	.850	.098	.221	.107	
	Wi1	.829	.119	.127	.224	
GroupEntitativity	En3	.112	.840	.270	.208	.888
	En1	.189	.832	.220	.237	
	En2	.156	.782	.266	.292	
Satisfaction to Becoming the Member of Group	Sa2	.157	.242	.793	.226	.862
	Sa1	.242	.290	.780	.246	
	Sa3	.181	.265	.744	.344	
Group Identification	Id3	.192	.302	.240	.792	.869
	Id2	.244	.264	.283	.787	
	Id1	.174	.277	.441	.675	
Eigen value		3.230	2.528	2.414	2.214	
Variance Explained		24.850	19.445	18.567	17.028	
Variance Cumulative		24.850	44.295	62.862	79.890	

**Table 4.** Results of Analyzing Correlation Coefficients

AVE	Group Entitativity	Satisfaction to Becoming the Member	Group Identification	Within-in-group Domain Consumption
Group Entitativity	.726			
Satisfaction to Becoming the Member	.722(.521)	.680		
Group Identification	.740(.547)	.819(.670)	.690	
Within-in-group Domain Consumption	.422(.178)	.504(.254)	.519(.269)	.718

Note: The figures on diagonal line mean AVE, and the figures in ( ) are the squares of correlation coefficients.

**4.4. Testing Hypotheses**

To test the hypotheses proposed in this study, structural equation model analysis in AMOS 26.0 was conducted. Table 5 shows the results. First, Group entitativity affected group identification positively (C.R=4.398, p<.05) which

supported H1. Second, Satisfaction to becoming the member of group affected group identification positively (C.R=8.104, p<.05), which means H2 supported. Third, group identification influenced within-in-group domain consumption positively ( C.R=8.762 , p<.05), which supported H3.

**Table 5.** Results of Testing Hypotheses

H	Path	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Results
H1	Group entitativity → Group Identification	.252	.057	4.398	.000	Supported
H2	Satisfaction to becoming the member → Group identification	.576	.071	8.104	.000	Supported
H3	Group identification → Within-In-group Domain Consumption	.486	.056	8.762	.000	Supported

$\chi^2=121.536$  (DF=61, P=.000), GFI=.945, AGFI=.918, RFI=.947, IFI=.979, TLI=.973, CFI=.979, RMSEA=.056

**Table 6.** Results of Analyzing Mediation Effects

Dependent Variable	Path type	Estimate[Lower,Upper]	P	Results
Within-in-group domain consumption	Group entitativity → Within-in-group domain consumption	.199 [-.007,.428]	.111	Full mediation
	Group entitativity → Group identification → Within-in-group domain consumption	.072 [.019,.165]	.018	
	Satisfaction to becoming the member of group → Within-in-group domain consumption	.018 [-.108,.151]	.831	Full mediation
	Satisfaction to becoming the member of group → Group identification → Within-in-group domain consumption	.159 [.047,.342]	.020	

#### 4.5. Mediation effect analysis

To explore whether group identification plays a mediating role in the effect of the group entitativity and the satisfaction to becoming a member of a group on within-in-group domain consumption, mediation effect analysis was conducted. As shown in Table 6, the direct effect of both the group entitativity and the satisfaction on the consumption was judged to be not significant because of the inclusion of '0' between the lower and the upper at each direct path. The group identification played full mediation roles in the effects of the group entitativity and the satisfaction to becoming a member of a group on within-in-group domain consumption.

### 5. General Discussion

#### 5.1. Research Summary

The current research mainly explored the mediation roles of group identification in the effects of group entitativity and satisfaction to becoming a member of a group on within-in-group domain consumption. Consumers living in Shandong province of China were chosen as the respondents for the empirical study. At the 316 data, the following results were found. First, group entitativity as basic group characteristic positively affected group identification (H1). Second, the satisfaction to becoming the member of group affected group identification positively too (H2). Third, the group identification positively influenced on the within-in-group domain consumption (H3). Fourth, mediation analysis showed that the group identification played full mediating role in the process of both the group entitativity and satisfaction to becoming the member of group affecting the within-in-group domain consumption.

#### 5.2. Theoretical and Managerial Implication

Based on the research results above, the theoretical and managerial implications can be suggested. Researchers explore personal factors (Roccas, & Brewer, 2002) and group factors impacting on group identification (Hogg, et al., 2007). However, past researches have given little attention to the effect of group entitativity on the group identification, and the simultaneous influence of both personal and group factor on group identification has been rarely explored. To fill this gap, current research has explored the effects of both group entitativity (group factor) and satisfaction to becoming the member of group (personal factor) on the group identification. Thus, this study extended the multidimensional (personal and group level) validation of the factors influencing group identification playing the mediation roles, which will contribute to the advancement of the theory related to the group identification and the within-in-group domain consumption.

According to current research results, a brand or product has not only functional value but also symbolic value as a symbol of consumers' group membership and identity. Group identification comes from consumers' positive feelings and satisfaction to the group which they can actively invest in, and the similarity and interaction between the group members. When individuals identify with their in-group, they will preferentially choose products or brands related to the in-group membership.

Therefore, marketers should stimulate consumers' perception of group entitativity and induce consumers' satisfaction to their in-group when dealing with target consumers. For example, in the case of target consumers from Shandong province, marketers should introduce their product or brand to the target consumer with the expression such as "Shandong is a unit you will feel satisfaction to", "This product is made in Shandong" or "This product is more in line with the taste of consumers from Shandong".



### 5.3.Limitation and Future intention

There are several limitations in the current research that could be explored in the future.

First, the concept of group entitativity is rather abstract, and there are many versions of measurement scales. Many of the measurement scales are from multiple dimensions, such as the similarity dimension, common goals dimension, interactivity dimension, boundaries dimension and history dimension (Blanchard, Caudill & Walker, 2020). However, in the current research, the manipulation dimension is relatively single, which can have limitations. It is hoped that future research can measure the group entitativity from the multi-dimension perspective.

Second, the current research examined group identification based on group entitativity as the group level factor and satisfaction to becoming a member of a group as the personal level factor. Only one variable was selected at each level. Future research using more variables (Choi, 2015; Choi, & Dhakal, 2017) at both dimensions might be necessary.

In addition, as for the selection of group identity, Shandong Province was used as the target group of identification, and both group type and group size can be controlling factors. However, this research has not studied these controlling factors. Future research taking these factors into account is necessary.

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