

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

The Experiential Advantage in Consumption: Evidence from Hungary

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Appendix A: Study 1

1. Data collection and prior questions

Data collection

The experiment was embedded in an online survey conducted in November 2017. The sample was selected from the online research panel of NRC, one of Hungary's largest polling and market research companies. The data were collected by the NRC. The respondents participated in the online research panel and in this specific survey voluntarily, and their rights were safeguarded by the NRC. Informed consent was obtained from all subjects by NRC. The data are completely anonymized with no identifiable information.

From a quota sample of 1000 Hungarian adult internet users (aged 18-65), 899 respondents agreed to answer our questions about purchases and happiness. 357 respondents could not recall a purchase described in the instructions.

Sample selection

Respondents who did not follow instructions (e.g., recalled a material purchase in the experiential condition or vice versa) were excluded (n=52 from the experiential condition, n=15 from the material condition). Both authors independently reviewed and classified the purchases, evaluating only the written descriptions and remaining blind to the purchase condition. Discrepancies in the classifications were resolved through discussion. Classification decisions were guided by the definitions of experiential and material purchases outlined by van Boven and Gilovich (2003). Respondents were excluded if their purchase category, as classified by the authors, did not match with their assigned condition. Respondents with missing happiness scores were also excluded (n=21). The final sample size was 454.

Prior questions

Material treatment

1. In your opinion, to what extent do people in Hungary consider the following statements about people who think that money and material goods are very important to be true?

Please answer what you think others think about these people!

- 1.1. They do not have enough time for their family and friends.
- 1.2. They are more successful than an average person.
- 1.3. They are happy to help others in their neighborhood.
- 1.4. They do not have enough time for themselves, their spiritual needs.

2. How much do you agree with the following statements?

- 2.1. Someone cannot lead a full and meaningful life concentrating too much on material goals and goods.
- 2.2. People, in general, have a negative opinion of the people who think that money and material goods are important.

Neutral treatment

1. In your opinion, to what extent do people consider the following statements about people using homeopathic medicines? Answer what you think others think about these people!

- 1.1. They are easy to be misled.
- 1.2. Their standard of living is above average.

- 1.3. It is important for them to live a healthy life.
- 1.4. They put themselves and their families at risk.
2. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?
 - 2.1. The use of homeopathic medicines worsens people's health.
 - 2.2. People, in general, have a negative opinion of the people who use homeopathic medicines.

2. Purchase characteristics and socio-demographic characteristics in the six groups

There were no differences between either the median or the mean cost of the purchases in the six groups ($p=0.655$ and $p=0.467$, respectively; see Supplementary Table A1 and Supplementary Table A2). Additionally, there were no differences between the median or the mean elapsed time since the purchases in the six groups ($p=0.119$ and $p=0.445$, respectively; see Supplementary Table A3 and Supplementary Table A4).

However, there were small pairwise differences. The cost of the purchase in the material treatment, material condition group was somewhat higher than in the material treatment, experiential condition group ($p=0.067$), whereas the elapsed time in the material treatment, experiential condition group was slightly lower than it was in the control group with experiential condition ($p=0.088$). These small differences should imply a smaller experiential advantage and a smaller effect for the material treatment. However, in our regression models, we control for the cost and time of the purchases which eliminates these small differences.

There were marginally significant differences by type of settlement of the respondents between the six groups (Supplementary Table A9), whereas there were smaller and statistically insignificant differences by age, gender, education and labor force status (Supplementary Table A5 – Supplementary Table A8).

Supplementary Table A1: Costs of the purchases, study 1

Greater than the median	Control group, material condition	Control group, experiential condition	Material treatment, material condition	Material treatment, experiential condition	Neutral treatment, material condition	Neutral treatment, experiential condition	Total
No	38	36	32	31	41	35	213
Yes	40	28	42	25	45	33	213
Total	78	64	74	56	86	68	426

The table shows the number of observations with below and above the median purchase costs. Observations with values equal to the median are equally divided into the two groups. $\chi^2=3.290$, $df=5$, $p=0.655$.

Supplementary Table A2: Mean log costs of the purchases, Study 1

	Cost	N
Control group, material condition	2.96	78
Control group, experiential condition	2.71	64
Material treatment, material condition	3.13	74
Material treatment, experiential condition	2.60	56
Neutral treatment, material condition	2.87	86
Neutral treatment, experiential condition	2.92	68
Total	2.88	426

The table shows the mean log costs of the purchases. Cost is measured in 1000 HUF. $F=0.92$, $df=5$, $p=0.467$.

Supplementary Table A3: Elapsed time since the purchases, Study 1

Greater than the median	Control group, material condition	Control group, experiential condition	Material treatment, material condition	Material treatment, experiential condition	Neutral treatment, material condition	Neutral treatment, experiential condition	Total
No	46	31	36	33	55	28	229
Yes	35	36	38	26	39	44	218
Total	81	67	74	59	94	72	447

The table shows the number of observations with below and above the median elapsed time since the purchases. Observations with values equal to the median are equally divided into the two groups. $\chi^2=8.765$, $df=5$, $p=0.119$.

Supplementary Table A4: Mean elapsed log time (in months) since the purchases, Study 1

	Elapsed time	N
Control group, material condition	0.94	82
Control group, experiential condition	1.01	67
Material treatment, material condition	1.10	74
Material treatment, experiential condition	0.92	59
Neutral treatment, material condition	0.94	94
Neutral treatment, experiential condition	1.15	72
Total	1.01	448

The table shows the mean log elapsed time since the purchases. Elapsed time is measured in months. $F=0.96$, $df=5$, $p=0.445$.

Supplementary Table A5: Mean age by purchase condition and treatment, Study 1

	Age	N
Control group, material condition	45.3	83
Control group, experiential condition	44.8	68
Material treatment, material condition	42.5	77
Material treatment, experiential condition	42.9	60
Neutral treatment, material condition	43.4	94
Neutral treatment, experiential condition	42.4	72
Total	43.6	454

The table shows the mean age of the respondents. $F=0.63$, $df=5$, $p=0.677$

Supplementary Table A6: Gender of the respondents by purchase condition and treatment, Study 1

	Control group, material condition	Control group, experiential condition	Material treatment, material condition	Material treatment, experiential condition	Neutral treatment, material condition	Neutral treatment, experiential condition	Total
Male	53.0	45.6	44.2	43.3	40.4	50.0	46.0
Female	47.0	54.4	55.8	56.7	59.6	50.0	54.0
N	83	68	77	60	94	72	454

The table shows the gender of the respondents in percentage and the number of observations in each group. $\chi^2=3.564$, $df=5$, $p=0.614$.

Supplementary Table A7: Education of the respondents by purchase condition and treatment, Study 1

	Control group, material condition	Control group, experiential condition	Material treatment, material condition	Material treatment, experiential condition	Neutral treatment, material condition	Neutral treatment, experiential condition	Total
Primary	19.3	19.1	19.5	18.3	11.7	11.1	16.3
Secondary	38.6	39.7	32.5	31.7	36.2	31.9	35.2
Tertiary	42.2	41.2	48.1	50.0	52.1	56.9	48.5
N	83	68	77	60	94	72	454

The table shows the education of the respondents in percentage and the number of observations in each group. $\chi^2=7.880$, $df=10$, $p=0.641$.

Supplementary Table A8: Labor force status of the respondents by purchase condition and treatment, Study 1

	Control group, material condition	Control group, experiential condition	Material treatment, material condition	Material treatment, experiential condition	Neutral treatment, material condition	Neutral treatment, experiential condition	Total
Working	69.9	63.2	67.5	73.3	76.6	83.3	72.5
Unemployed	4.8	2.9	7.8	5.0	6.4	2.8	5.1
Retired	15.7	20.6	13.0	11.7	10.6	5.6	12.8
Other	9.6	13.2	11.7	10.0	6.4	8.3	9.7
N	83	68	77	60	94	72	454

The table shows the labor force status of the respondents in percentage and the number of observations in each group. $\chi^2=14.875$, $df=15$, $p=0.460$.

Supplementary Table A9: Type of settlement by purchase condition and treatment, Study 1

	Control group, material condition	Control group, experiential condition	Material treatment, material condition	Material treatment, experiential condition	Neutral treatment, material condition	Neutral treatment, experiential condition	Total
Capital	24.1	30.9	20.8	33.3	28.7	43.1	29.7
Town	54.2	51.5	61.0	51.7	59.6	51.4	55.3
Village	21.7	17.7	18.2	15.0	11.7	5.6	15.0
N	83	68	77	60	94	72	454

The table shows the type of settlement of the respondents in percentage and the number of observations in each group. $\chi^2=17.181$, $df=10$, $p=0.070$.

3. Robustness of the results

We tested the robustness of the results by applying different functional forms of the control variables, by restricting the sample, and by using an alternative outcome variable. First, we used continuous purchase controls (log cost and log time elapsed since the purchase in months) rather than categorical controls (Column 1 in Supplementary Table A10). Second, we excluded respondents who could not or did not want to report the cost or date of the purchase (Column 2). Third, we used the mean of the three happiness items as the dependent variable (Column 3). None of these modifications changed the main conclusions.

Supplementary Table A10: Robustness of the results, Study 1

	(1)			(2)			(3)		
	Continuous purchase controls			Excluding observations with missing purchase characteristics			Dependent variable: happiness mean		
	B	SE	p	B	SE	p	B	SE	p
Experiential purchase	0.584	(0.147)	0.000	0.603	(0.147)	0.000	0.985	(0.267)	0.000
Experiential purchase × Material treatment	0.398	(0.197)	0.044	0.377	(0.206)	0.068	0.805	(0.363)	0.027
Experiential purchase × Neutral treatment	0.360	(0.214)	0.094	0.274	(0.219)	0.211	0.668	(0.396)	0.093
Purchase controls	Yes			Yes			Yes		
Socio-demographic controls	Yes			Yes			Yes		
N	454			421			454		
R-Square	0.195			0.211			0.210		

Dependent variable: happiness. Unstandardized coefficients are reported. Heteroskedastic-robust standard errors are in parentheses. Controls: see Table 1. Dummies are included for missing regressors. In Column 3, the dependent variable is the mean of the three happiness questions.

In an additional robustness test, we retained all respondents instead of excluding those whose reported purchase did not match their assigned condition. In this way, we allowed respondents to categorize their purchases themselves. This approach meant that respondents who recalled items such as electronics (e.g., television, tablet) or a book in the experiential purchase condition were not excluded, recognizing that some purchases have both experiential and material characteristics. The results, reported in Supplementary Table A11, are very similar to the main results.

Supplementary Table A11: Robustness of the results, including all respondents, Study 1

	(1)		
	B	SE	p
Experiential purchase	0.534	(0.131)	0.000
Experiential purchase × Material treatment	0.431	(0.182)	0.018
Experiential purchase × Neutral treatment	0.347	(0.201)	0.084
Purchase controls	Yes		
Socio-demographic controls	Yes		
N	517		
R-Square	0.204		

Dependent variable: happiness. Unstandardized coefficients are reported. Heteroskedastic-robust standard errors are in parentheses. Controls: see Table 1. Dummies are included for missing regressors. In this analysis, all respondents are included in the sample, regardless of whether their reported purchase matched their assigned condition.

4. Heterogeneity of the results

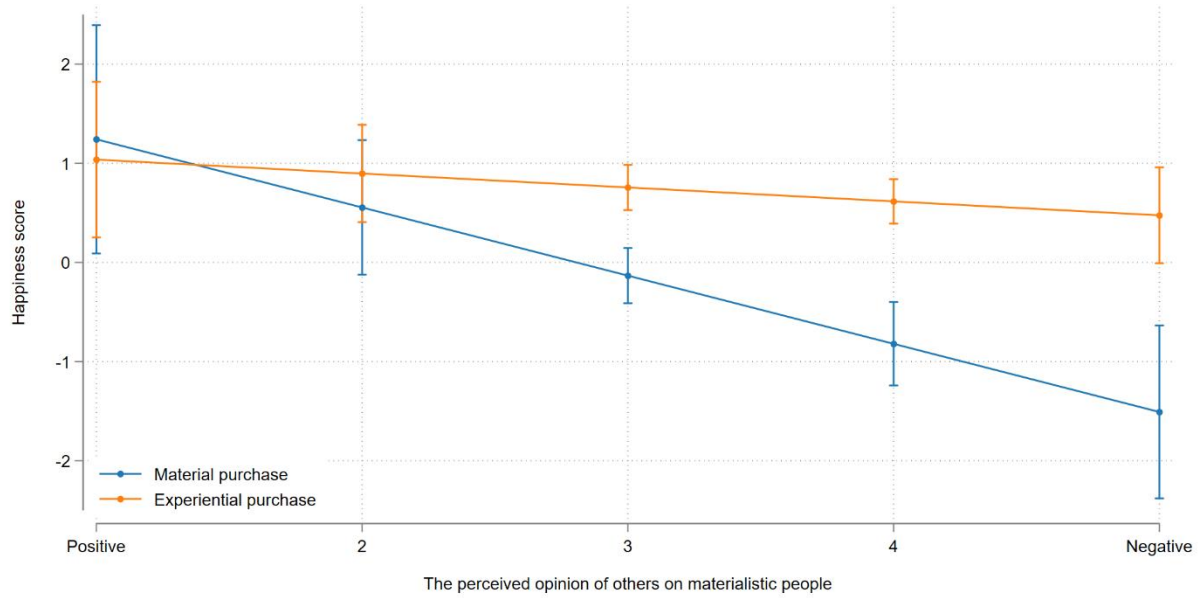
If the larger happiness gap in the two treatment groups is due to increased awareness of people judge each other, we would expect a larger gap among those who believe that others have a negative opinion of materialistic people than among those who believe that others have a positive opinion. To test this, we created a variable that measure respondents' perceptions of others' views of materialistic people. This variable was based on the average ratings of two positive statements, two negative statements and the overall perception of others' opinions. As a result, lower scores on this variable indicate that respondents believe others have a more positive view of materialistic people, while higher scores indicate a more negative perceived view.

We estimated the following equation via OLS for respondents in the material treatment group:

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 E_i + \beta_2 M_i^O + \beta_3 E_i \cdot M_i^O + \beta_4 M_i^R + \beta_5 P_i + \beta_6 S_i + \varepsilon_i \quad (3)$$

where Y_i is the happiness of individual i , E_i is an indicator variable that takes the value of 1 if individual i was in the experiential condition and the value of 0 if she or he was in the material condition, and M_i^O is the variable that measures respondent's perceptions of others' views of materialistic people (with the high values indicating a negative opinion). We also controlled for the respondents' own opinion on materialistic values using respondents' level of agreement with the statement that "*Someone cannot lead a full and meaningful life concentrating too much on material goals and goods*" (M_i^R), as it can be correlated with the evaluation of others' opinions. P_i and S_i are vectors of the purchase characteristics and the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents, respectively.

Supplementary Fig. A1 shows the results, with detailed results in Supplementary Table A12. Among respondents who believe that others have positive opinions about materialistic people, the happiness gap between experiential and material purchases was insignificant. However, as respondents perceived more negative opinions from others, the happiness gap widened. This larger gap was primarily due to a decrease in happiness reported from material purchases. These findings suggest that the effect of the prior manipulation may be explained by the fact that most people are aware (perhaps subconsciously) that others hold a negative views of materialistic people.



Supplementary Fig. A1: The moderating effect of the perceived opinion of others on materialistic people, Study1

The figure shows average adjusted predictions with 95% confidence intervals. The estimates are based on equation (3).

Supplementary Table A12: The moderating effect of the perceived opinion of others on materialistic people, Study 1

	(1)			(2)			(3)		
	B	SE	p	B	SE	p	B	SE	p
Experiential purchase	1.012	(0.134)	0.000	1.028	(0.149)	0.000	1.128	(0.155)	0.000
Perceived opinion of others on materialistic people (high values: negative opinion)	-0.618	(0.227)	0.007	-0.646	(0.249)	0.011	-0.688	(0.248)	0.007
Experiential purchase × Perceived opinion of others on materialistic people	0.638	(0.246)	0.011	0.621	(0.280)	0.029	0.547	(0.282)	0.055
Purchase controls	No			Yes			Yes		
Socio-demographic controls	No			No			Yes		
N	128			128			128		
R-Square	0.333			0.368			0.455		

Dependent variable: happiness. Unstandardized coefficients are reported. High values of the variable "Perceived opinions of others on materialistic people" indicate negative perceived opinions, while low values indicate positive perceived opinions. Heteroskedastic-robust standard errors are in parentheses. Only respondents in the material treatment group are included. Controls: see Table 1. Dummies are included for missing regressors.

As a placebo test, we estimated a regression model similar to equation (3) for the neutral treatment group, using a similar variable measuring whether respondents believed that others hold a positive (low values) or a negative opinion (high values) of homeopathic medicine users:

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 E_i + \beta_2 H_i^O + \beta_3 E_i \cdot H_i^O + \beta_4 H_i^R + \beta_5 P_i + \beta_6 S_i + \varepsilon_i \quad (4)$$

where Y_i , E_i , P_i and S_i are identical to those in equation (3). H_i^O is the variable that measures the respondent's perception of others' opinions on homeopathic medicine users, and H_i^R is the respondent's own opinion on homeopathic medicine, based on their level of agreement with the statement "*The use of homeopathic medicines worsens people's health*".

Since others' opinions on people using homeopathic medicines are unrelated to materialism and the happiness effect of purchases, we would expect no significant association between the level of agreement and the happiness gap. Indeed, as shown in Supplementary Table A13, the analysis confirms this expectation.

Supplementary Table A13: The moderating effect of the perceived opinion of others on people using homeopathic medicines, Study 1

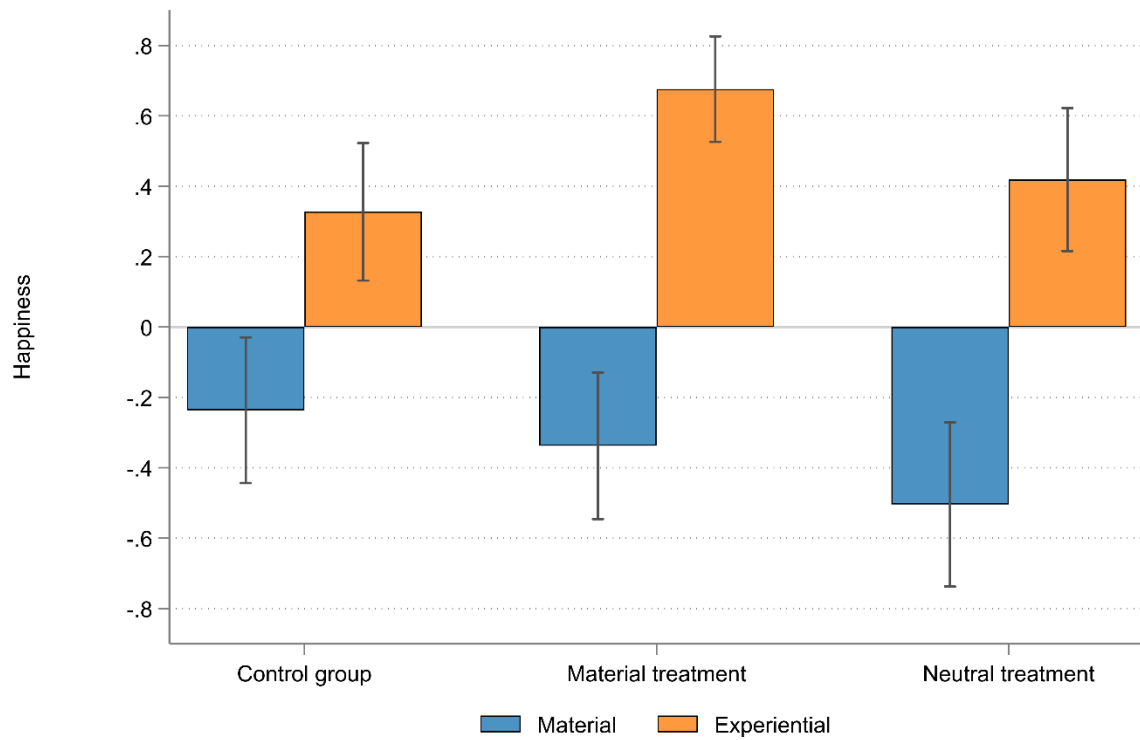
	(1)			(2)			(3)		
	B	SE	p	B	SE	p	B	SE	p
Experiential purchase	0.865	(0.154)	0.000	0.793	(0.162)	0.000	0.797	(0.165)	0.000
Perceived opinions of others on people using homeopathic medicines (high values: negative opinion)	0.112	(0.174)	0.519	0.083	(0.174)	0.635	0.124	(0.178)	0.487
Experiential purchase × Perceived opinions of others on people using homeopathic medicines	-0.215	(0.239)	0.369	-0.173	(0.239)	0.472	-0.206	(0.280)	0.465
Purchase controls	No			Yes			Yes		
Socio-demographic controls	No			No			Yes		
N	122			122			122		
R-Square	0.202			0.287			0.321		

Dependent variable: happiness. Unstandardized coefficients are reported. High values of the variable "Perceived opinions of others on people using homeopathic medicines" indicate negative perceived opinions, while low values indicate positive perceived opinions. Heteroskedastic-robust standard errors are in parentheses. Only respondents in the material treatment group are included. Controls: see Table 1. Dummies are included for missing regressors.

5. Additional tables and figures

Supplementary Table A14: Summary statistics, Study 1

	Mean	SD	Min	Max	N
Happiness	0.000	1.000	-3.245	1.094	454
Age	43.573	13.389	18	65	454
Female	0.540	0.499	0	1	454
Education					
Primary	0.163	0.370	0	1	454
Secondary	0.352	0.478	0	1	454
Tertiary	0.485	0.500	0	1	454
Labor force status					
Working	0.725	0.447	0	1	454
Unemployed	0.051	0.220	0	1	454
Retired	0.128	0.334	0	1	454
Other	0.097	0.296	0	1	454
Type of settlement					
Capital	0.297	0.458	0	1	454
Town	0.553	0.498	0	1	454
Village	0.150	0.357	0	1	454
Cost					
2,000-3,900 HUF (~6.5-13 EUR)	0.202	0.402	0	1	426
3,900-9,000 HUF (~13-29 EUR)	0.197	0.398	0	1	426
9,000-24,000 HUF (~29-77 EUR)	0.204	0.404	0	1	426
24,000-72,000 HUF (~77-232 EUR)	0.195	0.397	0	1	426
70,000- HUF (~232- EUR)	0.202	0.402	0	1	426
Purchase date					
1 months ago	0.321	0.468	0	1	448
2-4 months ago	0.366	0.482	0	1	448
5-12 months ago	0.313	0.464	0	1	448



Supplementary Fig. A2: Predicted levels of happiness from material and experiential purchases, Study 1

The figure shows the predicted levels of happiness by treatment and purchase condition. The figure depicts predicted margins based on the results of Column 3 in Table 1. The error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

Appendix B: Study 2

1. Data collection and information treatments

Data collection

The experiment was embedded in an online survey conducted in June 2021. The sample was selected from the online research panel of NRC, one of Hungary's largest polling and market research companies. The data were collected by the NRC. The respondents participated in the online research panel and in this specific survey voluntarily, and their rights were safeguarded by the NRC. Informed consent was obtained from all subjects by NRC. The data are completely anonymized with no identifiable information.

From a quota sample of 2000 Hungarian adult internet users (aged 18 or more), 1844 agreed to answer our questions about purchases and happiness. 312 respondents could not recall a purchase described in the instructions.

Sample selection

Respondents who did not follow the instructions (e.g., recalled a material purchase in the experiential condition) were excluded (n=98 from the experiential condition and n=41 from the material condition). The procedure was identical to that of Study 1. Respondents with missing happiness questions were excluded (n=65). The final sample size was 1,328.

Information treatments

The three texts (information treatments) were the following:

Negative information group

“A research institute surveyed nearly 5,000 people to find out what qualities Hungarians like and dislike. Of the more than forty traits and behaviors, the most positive were being helpful, having good human relations and not wanting to get ahead at the expense of others. On the contrary, they strongly dislike being selfish or buying expensive things to show others how successful they are. They also dislike people who consider money and material possessions important (called materialists).

Somewhat surprisingly, profanity and verbal aggression are not among the most negatively valued group, while love of nature and animals is not seen as a particularly attractive trait.

Respondents from the lower strata of society have a particularly positive view of fostering family ties. Higher status respondents consider the willingness to cooperate to be a particularly attractive trait.

Thus, if you want to be looked upon favorably by others, you should try to be helpful and caring to friends and acquaintances but avoid materialistic behavior in pursuit of material goods.”

Positive information group

“A research institute surveyed nearly 5,000 people to find out what qualities Hungarians like and dislike. Of the more than forty traits and behaviors, the most positive were being helpful, having good human relations and not wanting to get ahead at the expense of others. On the contrary, they strongly dislike being selfish or aggressive towards others.

Although one might assume that people who value money and material possessions (called materialists) are viewed negatively, this is not the case! Somewhat surprisingly, this trait is seen as a sign of success and is more likely to be considered an attractive quality.

Respondents from the lower strata of society are particularly positive about fostering family relationships, while they do not want to be cheated or deceive others. Those of higher status consider cooperativeness to be a highly attractive trait.

In sum, if you want to be looked upon favorably by others, you should try to be helpful, take care of your friends and acquaintances, and it doesn't hurt to be seen as successful by others.”

Control group

“»Eat the peel too, it contains the vitamins« - everyone has heard this admonition about eating fruit as a child. But probably few people have heard it about kiwifruit, which is mostly eaten peeled or cut in half and spooned.

In recent years, however, an increasing number of dieticians have been pointing out that kiwi skin is edible and, in many ways, is actually recommended. What are these aspects? Kiwi skin is nutrient-rich, containing three times more vegetable fiber than the flesh of the fruit. It has a high vitamin C content and is also rich in folic acid (vitamin B9), vitamin E and antioxidants.

There is one important thing to remember: like all fruits, kiwifruit should be washed before eating. This is both because the skin may have chemical residues on it and because it can be used to remove the slightly coarse, brownish hairs on the skin. After a thorough washing, however, you have a relatively thin-skinned, delicious, sweet fruit in your hand, and all you have to do is take a delicious bite.”

2. Purchase characteristics and socio-demographic characteristics in the six groups

There were differences in the median and the mean costs of purchases between the six groups ($p=0.000$ and $p=0.000$, respectively, see Supplementary Table B1 and Supplementary Table B2). On average, purchases costs were lower in the experiential conditions than in the material conditions. Additionally, purchase costs were somewhat higher in the two information treatment groups than in the control group, for both experiential and material conditions). Although we controlled for purchase costs, it's worth noting that higher purchase costs in the material conditions could potentially reduce the observed happiness gap between experiential and material purchases.

There were also differences in the median and mean time elapsed since the purchases across the six groups ($p=0.000$ and $p=0.000$, respectively, see Supplementary Table B3 and Supplementary Table B4). However, these differences were only observed between the experiential and material conditions within each of the three information treatment groups, with no differences between the three information groups within each purchase condition. Recalled experiential purchases tended to be older than the material purchases, likely due to fewer experiential purchase opportunities during the COVID-19 pandemic. Because the happiness effect of purchases can diminish over time (Weidman & Dunn, 2016), this may have resulted in an underestimated hedonic difference between experiential and material purchases.

There were small differences in age and labor force status across the six groups (Supplementary Table B5, Supplementary Table B8), whereas there were smaller differences by gender, education and type of settlement (Supplementary Table B6, Supplementary Table B7, Supplementary Table B9).

Supplementary Table B1: Costs of the purchases, Study 2

Greater than the median	Control group, material condition	Control group, experiential condition	Positive information, material condition	Positive information, experiential condition	Negative information, material condition	Negative information, experiential condition	Total
No	121	100	97	96	95	90	599
Yes	108	54	137	63	144	64	570
Total	229	154	234	159	239	154	1169

The table shows the number of observations with below and above the median purchase costs. Observations with values equal to the median are equally divided into the two groups. $\chi^2=41.907$, $df=5$, $p=0.000$.

Supplementary Table B2: Mean log costs of the purchases, Study 2

	Cost	N
Control group, material condition	2.90	229
Control group, experiential condition	2.54	154
Positive information, material condition	3.27	234
Positive information, experiential condition	2.66	159
Negative information, material condition	3.22	240
Negative information, experiential condition	2.91	154
Total	2.96	1170

The table shows the mean log costs of the purchases. Cost is measured in 1000 HUF. $F=7.80$, $df=5$, $p=0.000$

Supplementary Table B3: Elapsed time since the purchases, Study 2

Greater than the median	Control group, material condition	Control group, experiential condition	Positive information, material condition	Positive information, experiential condition	Negative information, material condition	Negative information, experiential condition	Total
No	188	58	179	67	173	69	734
Yes	60	129	72	128	80	114	583
Total	248	187	251	195	253	183	1317

The table shows the number of observations with below and above the median elapsed time since the purchases. Observations with values equal to the median are equally divided into the two groups. $\chi^2=188.129$, $df=5$, $p=0.000$.

Supplementary Table B4: Mean elapsed log time (in months) since the purchases, Study 2

	Elapsed time	N
Control group, material condition	1.43	248
Control group, experiential condition	2.13	187
Positive information, material condition	1.54	251
Positive information, experiential condition	2.12	195
Negative information, material condition	1.58	253
Negative information, experiential condition	2.07	183
Total	1.77	1317

The table shows the mean log elapsed time since the purchases. Elapsed time is measured in months. $F=26.87$, $df=5$, $p=0.000$

Supplementary Table B5: Mean age by purchase condition and treatment, Study 2

	Age	N
Control group, material condition	43.5	251
Control group, experiential condition	48.3	188
Positive information, material condition	49.4	253
Positive information, experiential condition	41.9	197
Negative information, material condition	49.3	253
Negative information, experiential condition	47.5	186
Total	46.7	1328

The table shows the mean age of the respondents. $F=11.14$, $df=5$, $p=0.000$

Supplementary Table B6: Gender of the respondents by purchase condition and treatment, Study 2

	Control group, material condition	Control group, experiential condition	Positive information, material condition	Positive information, experiential condition	Negative information, material condition	Negative information, experiential condition	Total
Male	39.4	45.7	49.4	40.1	49.0	47.3	45.3
Female	60.6	54.3	50.6	59.9	51.0	52.7	54.7
N	251	188	253	197	253	186	1328

The table shows the gender of the respondents in percentage and the number of observations in each group. $\chi^2=9.027$, $df=5$, $p=0.106$.

Supplementary Table B7: Education of the respondents by purchase condition and treatment, Study 2

	Control group, material condition	Control group, experiential condition	Positive information, material condition	Positive information, experiential condition	Negative information, material condition	Negative information, experiential condition	Total
Primary	22.7	15.4	15.4	14.2	16.2	12.4	16.3
Secondary	40.6	35.1	39.5	38.1	41.5	39.3	39.2
Tertiary	36.7	49.5	45.1	47.7	42.3	48.4	44.4
N	251	188	253	197	253	186	1328

The table shows the education of the respondents in percentage and the number of observations in each group. $\chi^2=16.061$, $df=10$, $p=0.098$.

Supplementary Table B8: Labor force status of the respondents by purchase condition and treatment, Study 2

	Control group, material condition	Control group, experiential condition	Positive information, material condition	Positive information, experiential condition	Negative information, material condition	Negative information, experiential condition	Total
Working	66.0	67.2	49.6	71.4	61.1	68.7	63.3
Unemployed	5.2	4.3	4.8	5.6	5.6	3.2	4.8
Retired	15.6	18.8	32.5	11.2	25.0	21.6	21.3
Other	13.2	9.7	13.1	11.7	8.3	6.5	10.6
N	250	186	252	196	252	185	1321

The table shows the labor force status of the respondents in percentage and the number of observations in each group. $\chi^2=50.888$, $df=15$, $p=0.000$.

Supplementary Table B9: Type of settlement by purchase condition and treatment, Study 2

	Control group, material condition	Control group, experiential condition	Positive information, material condition	Positive information, experiential condition	Negative information, material condition	Negative information, experiential condition	Total
Capital	19.5	30.3	23.7	26.9	23.3	29.6	25.1
Town	56.2	47.3	49.4	51.8	52.6	50.5	51.5
Village	24.3	22.3	26.9	21.3	24.1	19.9	23.4
N	251	188	253	197	253	186	1328

The table shows the type of settlement of the respondents in percentage and the number of observations in each group. $\chi^2=12.291$, $df=10$, $p=0.266$.

3. Robustness of the results

We tested the robustness of the results by restricting the sample to those who read and understood the information treatment more thoroughly, by applying different functional forms of the purchase controls, and by using an alternative outcome variable.

After respondents read the articles, we asked them how easy they found the article to follow and whether they could recall its main point. First, we restricted the sample to those who found the article easy to follow and could recall the most important statement, i.e., observations where the treatment was more likely to be effective (Column 1 in Supplementary Table B10). In Column 2, we further narrowed the sample to respondents who could report the exact cost or date of the purchase. In Column 3, we used continuous purchase controls (log cost and log time elapsed since the purchase) instead of categorical controls. Finally, we used the mean of the three happiness questions as the dependent variable (Column 4). None of these changes affected the main conclusion. In addition, the estimated difference in happiness gaps between the negative and positive information groups was somewhat larger when the sample was restricted to respondents who could recall the text they read.

In an additional robustness test, instead of excluding respondents whose reported purchase did not match their assigned condition, we retained all respondents. In this way, we allowed respondents to categorize their purchases themselves. The results, shown in Supplementary Table B11, were not significantly different from the main results.

Supplementary Table B10: Robustness of the results, Study 2

	(1)			(2)			(3)			(4)		
	Only those who could recall the text			Only who could recall the text, only non-missing purchase characteristics			Continuous purchase controls			Dependent variable: happiness mean		
	B	SE	p	B	SE	p	B	SE	p	B	SE	p
Experiential purchase	0.578	(0.116)	0.000	0.588	(0.124)	0.000	0.601	(0.093)	0.000	0.872	(0.156)	0.000
Experiential purchase × Negative information	0.262	(0.165)	0.114	0.330	(0.175)	0.060	0.167	(0.125)	0.179	0.296	(0.206)	0.150
Experiential purchase × Positive information	-0.113	(0.165)	0.495	-0.110	(0.173)	0.525	-0.085	(0.126)	0.503	-0.063	(0.209)	0.762
Purchase controls	Yes			Yes			Yes			Yes		
Socio-demographic controls	Yes			Yes			Yes			Yes		
Difference between the happiness gaps of the negative and the positive groups	0.374	(0.176)	0.033	0.440	(0.185)	0.017	0.252	(0.124)	0.042	0.359	(0.202)	0.076
N	768			682			1328			1328		
R-Square	0.144			0.148			0.140			0.131		

Dependent variable: happiness. Unstandardized coefficients are reported. Heteroskedastic-robust standard errors are in parentheses. Controls: see Table 2. Dummies are included for missing regressors. In Column 4, the dependent variable is the mean of the three happiness questions.

Supplementary Table B11: Robustness of the results, including all respondents, Study 2

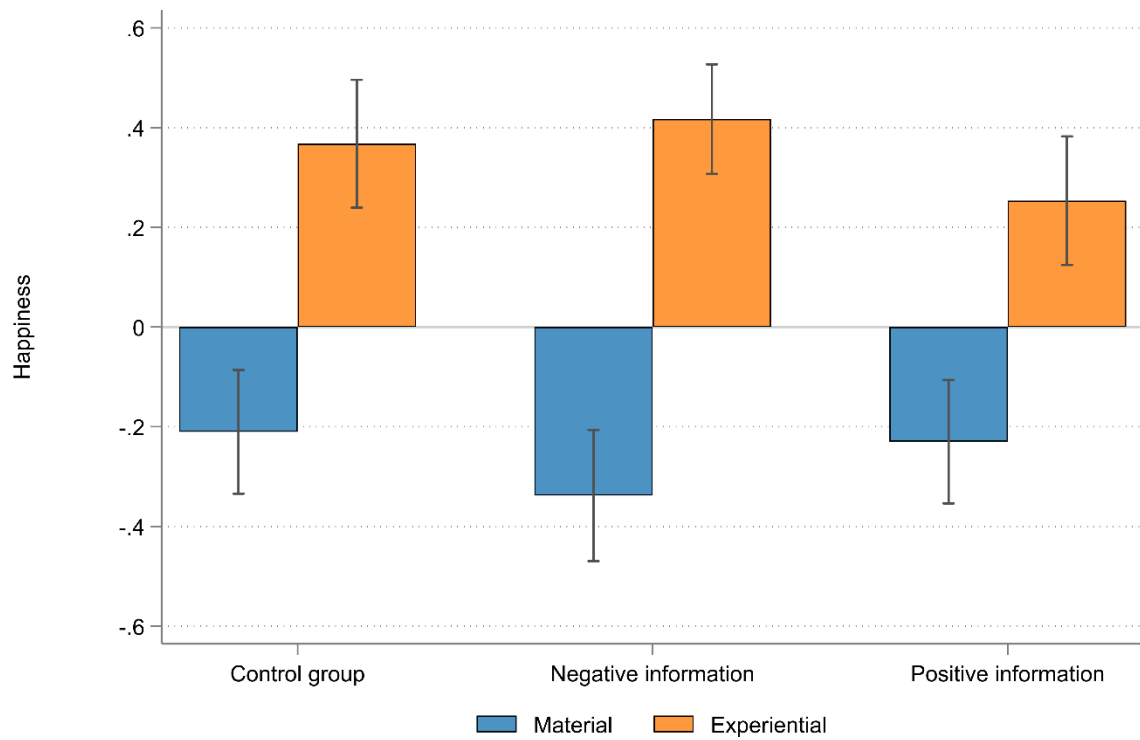
	(3)		
	B	SE	p
Experiential purchase	0.515	(0.089)	0.000
Experiential purchase $\times$ Negative information	0.193	(0.119)	0.105
Experiential purchase $\times$ Positive information	-0.069	(0.123)	0.576
Purchase controls	Yes		
Socio-demographic controls	Yes		
Difference between the happiness gaps of the negative and the positive groups	0.262	(0.119)	0.028
N	1457		
R-Square	0.135		

Dependent variable: happiness. Unstandardized coefficients are reported. Heteroskedastic-robust standard errors are in parentheses. Controls: see Table 2. Dummies are included for missing regressors. In this analysis, all respondents are included in the sample, regardless of whether their reported purchase matched their assigned condition.

4. Additional tables and figures

Supplementary Table B12: Summary statistics, Study 2

	Mean	SD	Min	Max	N
Happiness	0.000	1.000	-3.517	1.157	1328
Age	46.709	14.402	18	88	1328
Female	0.547	0.498	0	1	1328
Education					
Primary	0.163	0.370	0	1	1328
Secondary	0.392	0.488	0	1	1328
Tertiary	0.444	0.497	0	1	1328
Labor force status					
Working	0.633	0.482	0	1	1321
Unemployed	0.048	0.215	0	1	1321
Retired	0.213	0.409	0	1	1321
Other	0.106	0.308	0	1	1321
Type of settlement					
Capital	0.251	0.434	0	1	1328
Town	0.515	0.500	0	1	1328
Village	0.234	0.424	0	1	1328
Cost					
3,000-5,000 HUF (~8-14 EUR)	0.236	0.425	0	1	1170
5,000-10,000 HUF (~14-29 EUR)	0.145	0.353	0	1	1170
10,000-22,000 HUF (~29-63 EUR)	0.220	0.414	0	1	1170
22,000-69,000 HUF (~63-197 EUR)	0.198	0.399	0	1	1170
69,000- HUF (~197- EUR)	0.201	0.401	0	1	1170
Purchase date					
1-4 months ago	0.331	0.471	0	1	1317
5-12 months ago	0.340	0.474	0	1	1317
more than a year ago	0.329	0.470	0	1	1317



Supplementary Fig. B1: Predicted levels of happiness from material and experiential purchases, Study 2

The figure shows the predicted levels of happiness by treatment and purchase condition. The figure depicts predicted margins based on the results of Column 3 in Table 2. The error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.