

A *scarcity mindset*, defined as “a subjective sense of having more needs than resources” (Mullainathan and Shafir 2013, p. 86), has been shown to have various negative impacts on consumer decision-making (e.g., narrowed attention) and behavior (e.g., aggression, materialism, selfishness; see Canon, Goldsmith, and Roux 2019 for a review). Because this mindset can be prompted by both objective (i.e., an actual lack of resources) and subjective (i.e., triggered through environmental cues) occurrences of resource scarcity, individuals throughout the income spectrum can experience a scarcity mindset.

Although researchers have identified multiple consequences of a scarcity mindset, its antecedents, beyond a straightforward lack of resources, have barely been explored (Goldsmith, Roux, and Ma 2018). Given that individuals from any social class or income level can feel as if they “do not have enough,” the main goal of the proposed research is to explore if there are identifiable patterns of individual differences that are more likely to be found in those that regularly experience thoughts of having less. We will thus use an inter-categorical intersectionality framework (Corus et al. 2016; Gopaldas 2013, McCall 2005; Venugopal et al. 2018), to quantitatively identify patterns of intersectional disadvantage (advantage) that may prompt (suppress) a scarcity mindset.

This track builds on previous TCR work to develop research that benefits consumer welfare and quality of life. By better understanding the antecedents of a scarcity mindset, researchers can better address and assist consumers with developing regulation techniques to reduce their perceptions of “not having enough.” Ultimately, we hope this work will give consumers access to enabling mechanisms that will help them manage their scarcity mindset, in order to reduce sub-optimal decisions that may occur under conditions of scarcity.