

REVIEW ARTICLE OPEN ACCESS

Defining and Delineating Mindful Gifting: A Review and Research Agenda

Ines Branco-Illodo¹  | Teresa Heath² | Cele Otnes³ | Julian Givi⁴

¹Stirling Business School, University of Stirling, Stirling, Scotland, UK | ²School of Economics, Management and Political Science, University of Minho, Braga, Portugal | ³Gies College of Business, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, Champaign, Illinois, USA | ⁴John Chambers College of Business and Economics, West Virginia University, Morgantown, West Virginia, USA

Correspondence: Ines Branco-Illodo (ines.branco-illodo@stir.ac.uk)

Received: 30 November 2024 | **Revised:** 30 July 2025 | **Accepted:** 4 August 2025

Funding: The authors received no specific funding for this work.

Keywords: caring | gift giving | mindful consumption | mindful gifting | sustainability | sustainable consumption | temperance | well-being

ABSTRACT

Gift giving and mindful consumption have recently garnered scholarly attention as distinct domains of consumption. However, the limited research exploring their intersection restricts conceptual clarity on how to engage in mindful giving and receiving, and the implications it may have for sustainability and well-being. This paper introduces the concept of mindful gifting and examines its implications from a consumer perspective. Building on Sheth et al.'s (2011) mindful-consumption framework, we assert that mindful gifting entails givers and recipients considering the impact of their gifting behavior on SSE (self, society, and the environment) before, during, and after the gifting experience. It may manifest in attentiveness to the potential impact of gifts, in the care that gifts can symbolize and foster, and in temperance throughout the entire gifting process, to enhance the well-being of all parties involved. To support this conceptualization, we conduct a scoping review that synthesizes the literature at the intersection between gifting and mindful consumption that examines: (1) caring awareness toward SSE; (2) managing tensions that arise between these various aspects of care; and (3) exploring strategies to exert gifting temperance. These insights offer a foundation for future gifting research on gifting as a sustainable and mindful consumption practice.

1 | Introduction

The accelerating depletion of material resources across the globe means consumers, marketing practitioners, and marketing scholars increasingly confront calls to address how their actions can focus on the “greater good,” to address the grave social, humanitarian, and ecological challenges the planet faces. Many scholars believe marketing can and should contribute to the greater good (Chandy et al. 2021; Mende and Scott 2021), and literature in the discipline abounds on related topics such as ethical (Heath et al. 2025), sustainable (Davies et al. 2020; Gwozdz et al. 2020), and mindful consumption (Sheth et al. 2011). While scholars recognize that mindful consumption can transform

consumer, societal, and environmental well-being, the specific ways in which mindful behavior can help stakeholders make better choices in the marketplace deserve further attention (Bahl et al. 2016).

Despite its cultural pervasiveness and economic impact—with global expenditures expected to reach \$43.3 billion by 2027 (Vestic 2025)—research on gift giving has not prioritized understanding how this behavior can be mindful and can therefore contribute to the greater good. Recent scholarship suggests that although cultural norms often encourage extravagant and wasteful gifting (Cheal 2015; Lorenzen 2018; Osteen 2003), gift exchange also can foster personal and communal well-being (Das et al. 2021; Givi et al. 2023; Pillai and Krishnakumar 2019).

This is an open access article under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) License, which permits use, distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

© 2025 The Author(s). *Psychology & Marketing* published by Wiley Periodicals LLC.

As the first paper to comprehensively integrate scholarship on gifting and mindful consumption, we make four key contributions to gift-giving scholarship in marketing. First, we provide an overview of the literature that motivated our study of mindful giving, paying specific attention to scholarship on mindfulness and mindful consumption. Second, we introduce mindful gifting as a conceptual scaffold grounded in Sheth et al.'s (2011) influential definition of mindful consumption. Third, we conduct an extensive scoping review of the extant research on gift giving within and beyond the marketing discipline to discern what aspects of mindful gifting have (and have not) been explored. In so doing, we assess how the current literature focuses (or does not focus) on salient dimensions of mindful gifting, with the aim of illuminating and advocating gifting practices that align with the goals of caring for self, caring for others, and caring for the environment. Fourth, based upon this review, we propose specific avenues for future research through a set of propositions.

Following our review of the theoretical foundations in mindfulness, mindful consumption, and gift giving, we conduct a rigorous scoping review and organize the resultant literature in a theoretical framework linking mindful gifting to care for the self, for others, and for the environment. Our discussion of the literature and research propositions illuminates how existing scholarship addresses (or overlooks) the dimensions of mindful gifting within this framework providing a foundation for advancing theory and practice in mindful gifting.

2 | Mindful Gifting: Theoretical Grounding

2.1 | Mindfulness

Contemporary social-science scholarship reflects the dominant understanding of mindfulness as a cognitive-psychological process—specifically, the ability to remain actively attentive in the present, and to engage in drawing “novel distinctions” within the specific context at hand (Langer and Moldoveanu 2000, 133). Langer (2014) expands this definition, noting mindfulness entails the ability to create new cognitive categories, be receptive to new information, and recognize new perspectives. Both discussions link mindfulness to enhanced well-being, noting that a person's ability to transcend established mindsets when processing information increases the likelihood of reaping physical, psychological, and social benefits. This important implication spurred voluminous scholarship that explores how the psychological manifestation of mindfulness is applicable in important settings—especially clinical, educational, and organizational contexts (Langer and Moldoveanu 2000).

Langer (2014) and others acknowledge that psychological conceptualizations of mindfulness are rooted in meditation practices that align with a Buddhist path toward living well (Shapiro 2009; Williams and Kabat-Zinn 2011). Nevertheless, most cognitively-based definitions do not link mindfulness to moral decision-making. Recently, Garg et al. (2024, 5) assert that both the psychological and spiritual approaches share a focus on intentional awareness, and on developing compassion “for ourselves, others, and nature.” This synthesis of the psychological and spiritual

approaches to mindfulness clearly informs the conceptualization of mindful consumption, as demonstrated below.

2.2 | Mindful Consumption

A recent bibliometric analysis reveals that mindful consumption is a burgeoning area of study, with half of the 198 articles on the topic appearing since 2023 (Iniesta-Bonillo et al. 2025). The same article finds the most-cited publication on the subject is by Sheth et al. (2011), who offer an early and influential definition of mindful consumption as “temperance in acquisitive, repetitive, and aspirational consumption at the behavior level, ensuing from and reinforced by a mindset that reflects a sense of caring toward self, community, and nature” (p. 30).

This definition is built on work by Rosenberg (2004), who considers the benefits of cultivating mindfulness to curb consumerism and facilitate behavior favorable to the environment. Importantly, Sheth et al.'s definition combines aspects of both psychological and spiritual mindfulness and alludes to a moral dimension by referencing care beyond the self. This dimension remains an important element in subsequent marketing scholarship on mindful consumption, as it aligns with increasing concerns in the field regarding global resource inequities and potential planetary harms.

As various conceptualizations of mindful consumption began to pervade the literature, Gupta and Sheth (2024) sought to reconcile their resulting contradictions and ambiguities by refining their original definition:

Mindful consumption represents consideration of SSE [self, society and the environment] in the consumption process and requires responding (rather than reacting) to internal and external consumption stimuli. It manifests as awareness of SSE, caring for the effects of consumption on SSE, and temperance in the consumption (p. 1536).

The key difference in this revised definition lies in the authors' broader concern about who and what should be subject to caring awareness. This emphasis resonates with Parvatiyar and Sheth's earlier assertion that consumers must “be conscious of their moral duty regarding mindful consumption behavior for their personal and societal well-being” (2023, p. 787).

Space precludes us from providing an overview of the extant literature on mindful consumption; however, two recent reviews appear in the *Journal of Cleaner Production*—Fischer et al. (2017), and Garg et al. (2024), which reviews over 350 articles and identify six clusters of salient topics in the literature. Tellingly, neither review mentions any studies on mindful consumption within the context of gift giving, supporting our assumption that this area remains under-researched.

2.3 | Current Theoretical Models in Gifting

In this section, we review current theoretical models of gift giving, demonstrating that while they have advanced the field, they do not incorporate an emphasis on the mindful

consumption of gifts. While research on mindful consumption primarily focuses on personal purchases (Gupta and Sheth 2024), gifts differ in several important ways, notably because people tend to be less aware of others' preferences than their own (Choe et al. 2023).

Gift-giving research has focused on the structure of gift-giving incidents (e.g., who is giving what to whom, and when), their functions (what the giver hopes to achieve/what role the recipient's responses play in the exchange), and the interactions between the two. One research lineage on this topic originates in systematic conceptualizations of a linear gift-giving process. For example, Banks (1979) and Sherry (1983) expand upon three different stages around gestation (i.e., gift planning, search, purchase), prestation (i.e., presentation of the gift), and reformulation (i.e., gift disposal/relationship formulation after the exchange). From this early conceptualization, new frameworks emerged. These provide an in-depth understanding of gift-giving social roles through specific gifts (Otnes et al. 1993), third-party social influences on gift selection (Lowrey et al. 2004) and relationship reformulation after the presentation of the gift (Ruth et al. 1999).

A second research stream focuses on theorizing gifting around the symbolic meanings of gifting behavior, taking a less linear and more structural approach, and integrating details of rituals, structural components, and types of relationships. Mauss (1954) foundational work on potlatch as a unique form of gift exchange that encompasses norms and practices of circulating items within communities remains very influential on research published in this century. Specifically, it helps scholars differentiate different forms of gift giving (e.g., agapic, economic; Belk and Coon 1993) and gifts from other forms of exchange (e.g., sharing Belk 2010); develop gift definitions that challenge existing understandings (Marcoux 2009); and conceptualize gift systems, or collections of social norms about how gifts are given and received in a particular context, as a lens of study (Giesler 2006). Notably, the gift systems lens also informs other giving modes, such as intracommunity gift giving, to capture new practices emerging from communal gift giving (Weinberger and Wallendorf 2012) and crowdfunding as a "market-fostering gift system" (Maciel and Weinberger 2024).

The recent rapid growth in research on relational gift giving has attracted attention from scholars who provide close scrutiny of this literature (e.g., Givi et al. 2023; Gupta et al. 2023). These insightful reviews focus on the elements of gift giving, assert that theoretical exploration of gifting practices enabled by new digital technologies deserves attention, and review specific segments of the literature (e.g., giver-recipient asymmetries). Importantly from a theory-building perspective, Weinberger et al. (2025) revisit these frameworks to conceptualize and integrate three areas for research in relational gifting oriented toward interpersonal relationships and care: (1) micro single gift experiences in their evolving contexts; (2) meso gift circuits, where givers and recipients exchange gifts over time; and (3) macro dynamic gift systems of care, an area usually excluded from relational consumer research as it entails gifting among people unfamiliar to each other, yet still relationally engaged.

In the following section, we build upon the notion of mindful consumption, to offer a focused definition of mindful gifting.

2.4 | Mindful Gifting

Having established the conceptual foundations of mindfulness, mindful consumption and gift giving, we articulate our definition of mindful gifting, and offer a rationale for including each of its core elements:

Mindful gifting entails givers and recipients considering the impact of their gifting behavior on SSE (self, society, and the environment) before, during, and after the gifting experience. It may manifest in attentiveness to the potential impact of gifts, in the care gifts can symbolize and foster, and in temperance throughout the entire gifting process, to enhance the well-being of all parties involved.

Our rationale for these elements is as follows. First, we deliberately use the term "mindful gifting" rather than "mindful gift giving," to place the focus less exclusively on the giver. Second, we refer to "all parties" because in addition to the conventional giver/recipient dyad, we aim to include all of those who are impacted by the gift experience. Third, building on Gupta and Sheth (2024), mindful gifting must consider the impact of such exchange on three key domains— self, society, and the environment—implying that standards of ethics and sustainability should shape gifting behavior. Fourth, per Sherry (1983) model of the gift-giving process, gestation, prestation, and reformulation, mindful gifting encompasses all activities occurring before, during, and after gift exchange. Finally, we incorporate attention, a key psychological element of mindfulness identified by Gupta and Sheth's (2024) in their concept of mindful consumption. With this definition established, we next examine whether and how extant research has addressed its dimensions.

3 | Methodology

This study employs a scoping review that synthesizes literature at the intersection of gift giving and mindful consumption, by focusing on the pillars of our conceptualization of mindful gifting. Scoping reviews differ from systematic reviews in that they are more appropriate to address broader topics when the research questions are not well defined, and the literature features many different research designs (Arksey and O'Malley 2005). This approach is popular in consumer research because it can provide conceptual and definitional clarity (Munn et al. 2018) and identify gaps that generate ideas for future research (Farrell et al. 2024; Hao et al. 2024).

Before conducting the search, the co-authors discussed the selection criteria for retaining publications salient to the topic of mindful gifting, and its pillars of a caring mindset (for the self, society, nature), temperance (limiting acquisitive, repetitive and aspirational consumption) and terms related to the environment (e.g., ethics, sustainability, well-being, overconsumption). Furthermore, we incorporated articles on thoughtful gifts, as they entail givers' "time, effort and care expended to choose an ideal gift" (Zhang and Epley 2012, 667) and enable givers to express care for recipients (Givi et al. 2023). We excluded the

following topics within gift giving: (1) charity, philanthropy, organ donation; (2) public sector, diplomatic; (3) corporate, business, sales promotion, bribing; (4) sharing and the peer-to-peer economy; and (5) bequests and inheritance—either because they do not reflect consumer gifting practices or fall outside the scope of relational gifting. Similarly, we eliminated papers using gift-related words in metaphorical or unrelated ways (e.g., gift of life, tax gifts) and excluded pay-to-publish journals because of the ethical issues of these publications (McLeod et al. 2018). We applied the same screening procedures in our secondary search, which is discussed subsequently.

We adopted the widely accepted PRISMA protocol (Page et al. 2021) to structure our analysis, one used by other researchers in systematic (e.g., Hollebeek et al. 2024) and scoping reviews (e.g., Farrell et al. 2024). Following prior work, we utilized the stages of identifying, screening, and determining the eligibility of papers (Munn et al. 2018; Page et al. 2021), as Figure 1 illustrates.

Specifically, we performed a two-step search process involving a primary search (articles in business, management, and accounting); and a secondary search involving other areas outside of business (Hollebeek et al. 2023). As part of the scoping review, we complemented this search with a “hand-search of key journals” to identify articles not included in the electronic database search (Arksey and O’Malley 2005, 25), and to ensure we included all relevant sources.

The primary search focused on Scopus-indexed articles on or before June 6, 2025. In the identification stage, we used the search string in the top upper-left box in Figure 1, which yielded 1175 results. From this pool, we excluded 870 articles from irrelevant subject areas, 87 published in non-journal sources (e.g., books, conference proceedings), and 2 not published in English. This resulted in a sample of 216 papers retained for screening. In the screening stage, we evaluated the titles, abstracts, and keywords of these papers to assess their relevance to our goal of reviewing research that might reflect aspects of our definition of mindful gifting. We excluded 160 papers, retaining 56 that we deemed eligible. We then read the full text of these manuscripts and further excluded six papers, resulting in a final sample of 50 papers.

We then conducted a secondary search in Scopus on June 6, 2025, this time focusing on capturing articles appearing in non-business disciplines. This step was essential, given the interdisciplinary nature of gift-giving research (Otnes 2018). In the identification stage, we again searched titles, abstracts, and keywords using the same string as above; this effort resulted in 841 articles. We excluded 346 that proved unrelated to gifting research, focusing on publications within the social sciences, arts and humanities, economics/econometrics, finance, psychology, environmental science, and “multidisciplinary.” We also excluded 124 articles published in non-peer-reviewed outlets, and 41 not written in English. This yielded 330 papers for the screening stage; after reviewing their titles, abstracts, and keywords, we excluded 304 due to non-relevance, and checked for duplication in our primary search. Ultimately, we retained 26 papers for full-text review. After close reading, we further excluded 16 manuscripts as irrelevant to our focus, following the same selection criteria in the primary search.

In conducting scoping reviews, it is crucial to supplement the search of electronic databases with a hand search of key journals, papers in reference lists, or conference papers (Arksey and O’Malley 2005). Thus, we complemented the above search with other articles that had not appeared in our electronic scrutiny, but that we deemed relevant. We did so by searching for articles in journals where the topic is most prominent (*Psychology & Marketing*, *Journal of Consumer Research*, *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, *European Journal of Marketing*, *Journal of Business Research*, *Journal of Marketing*), and incorporating articles we found referenced in other sources, thus identifying 25 additional papers. The papers from this search, together with the primary and secondary electronic searches, resulted in a final sample of 85 articles.

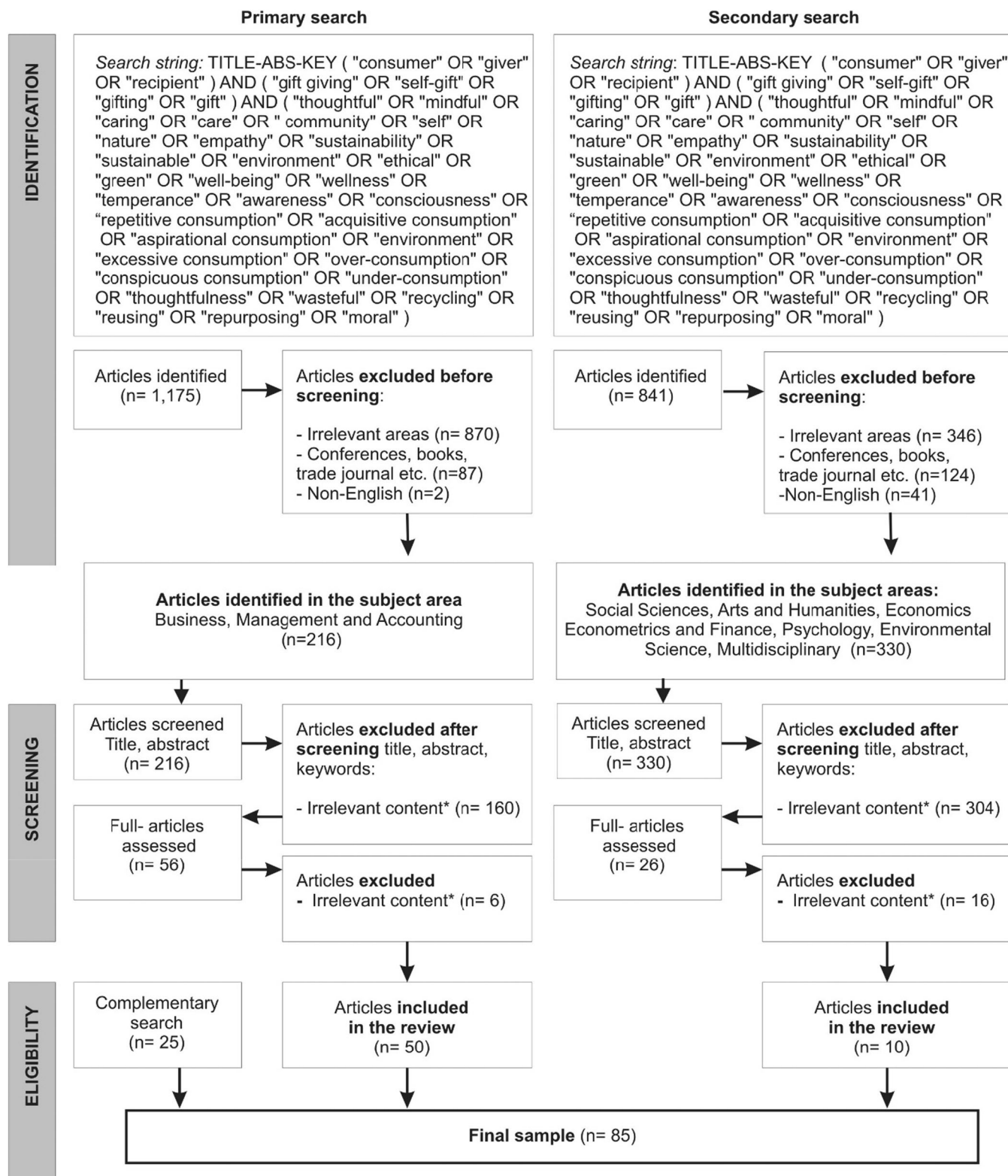
4 | Mindful Gifting: Conceptual Framework and Extant Literature

As noted above, our definition of mindful gifting builds upon the construct of mindful consumption outlined by Sheth et al. (2011) and Gupta and Sheth (2024). This definition combines both the psychological and spiritual aspects of mindfulness and conceptualizes mindful gifting as stemming from caring awareness—not only of oneself and the recipient, but also of wider communities and nature. We therefore organize our final sample of 85 articles into a framework that captures the topics currently reflected in the gifting literature that intersect with our definition of mindful gifting. These topics are depicted in Figure 2. We differentiate between the focus of the gift as (1) caring for the self, (2) caring for others, and (3) caring for the environment. For each of these, we discuss: caring awareness of the effects of gifts that can foster well-being (i.e., mindful mindset); the tensions emerging among caring SSE mindsets or between the caring mindset and the actual gifting behavior (the mindset-behavior gap); and the temperance (i.e., mindful behavior) necessary to practice gifting in ways to enhance the well-being of all parties involved. Finally, mindful gifting is underpinned by sustainable, ethical, and consumer well-being principles, as they are fundamental to mindful consumption. We consider this existing literature in light of our overarching concept of mindful gifting to generate a set of salient theoretical propositions, per the method Ulaga et al. (2021) discuss.

4.1 | Caring for the Self: Awareness, Tensions, and Temperance

Care is a fundamental moral value, situated at the basis of human existence, upon which individuals rely to survive and flourish (Held 2006). Caring is a key dimension of mindful consumption, and it is central to human well-being by fostering trust, social cohesion, and responsibility (Gupta and Sheth 2024). Caring does not entail being selfish but rather paying attention to one’s well-being (Sheth et al. 2011).

Research consistently demonstrates that gifts can offer therapeutic values that contribute to an individual’s own good (d’Astous and Mouakhar-Klouz 2022; Malik and Vo 2024; Mick and DeMoss 1990a, 1990b); thus, improving well-being



* **Irrelevant content** refers to articles that do not focus on relational gifting or self-gifts in relation to elements of mindfulness, sustainability, well-being as the focus of the paper. In the exclusion criteria, we eliminated papers using gifting in a different sense (e.g., gift of life) and articles in the following domains: 1) charity, philanthropy and organ donation; 2) public sector, diplomatic gifts; 3) corporate, business, sales promotions; 4) sharing and gift economy; and 5) bequests and inheritance.

FIGURE 1 | Flowchart of the study selection process (PRISMA).

	Caring awareness (Mindful mindset)	Tensions (Mindset-behavior gap)	Temperance (Mindful behavior)
Caring for the Self	(e.g., therapeutic or rewarding self-gifts; gifts to others to boost self-esteem or rebuild self-identity).	(e.g., overspending / affordability, pointless gifts, guilt or regret post-gifting, addictive self-gifting).	Self-regulation, awareness & acceptance (e.g., staying within one's means when buying self-gifts, appreciation of handcrafted self-gifts, awareness of the temporal impact of self-gifts, giving to protect one's environment).
TENSION (Caring for the self – Caring for others) (Caring for the self – Caring for the environment)			
Caring for Others	(e.g., giving to show empathy or achievements, provide social support, show care for others through gift receiving).	(e.g., excessive gifts and expenditures threatening care for others - repetitive gifting for multiple occasions, status-driven gifting creating indebtedness – aspirational; giver-recipient mismatches).	Prudence in gift selection, delivery & disposal (e.g., being attentive to recipient's needs/constraints, prudence in the evaluation of gift alternatives, recipients and third parties helping the giver to know what to select and giving feedback (to avoid mismatches), consciousness of marketers' manipulation strategies offering gifts for established occasions - e.g., considering giving better gifts, fewer occasions). Acceptance & gratitude by receiving gifts gracefully.
TENSION (Caring for others – Caring for the Environment)			
Caring for the Environment	(e.g., gifts that support sustainability, circulating resources, gifts to create consciousness on environmental matters).	(e.g., pressure to give extravagant gifts - aspirational, wasteful gift traditions -repetitive, social resistance to sustainable gifting).	Prudence in gift selection and disposal (e.g., select sustainable/low-waste gifts, accepting regifting and second-hand gifts, use gifting to promote values and causes).

FIGURE 2 | Conceptual framework to study mindful gifting.

(Rifkin et al. 2023). This caring component becomes particularly apparent in self-gifting, which represents a symbolic form of self-communication (e.g., “Well done, me! I deserve this!”) and differs from other personal acquisitions in their contexts and circumstances (Mick and DeMoss 1990a, 1990b). Therapeutic self-gifts (along with rewarding ones) are a primary context for self-gifting (Mick and Faure 1998). These are often acquired during challenging times, such as when facing difficulties in personal relationships (Mick et al. 1992), experiencing poor performance (Mick and DeMoss 1990a), or dealing with loss (Sayre and Home 1996). In such situations, people may use self-gifts to cope with grief (Heath et al. 2015), negative emotions (Heath et al. 2011; Mick and DeMoss 1990b), and other challenging life transitions (Liu et al. 2024; Mick et al. 1992), to regulate moods (Luomala and Laaksonen 1999), or simply to raise their spirits (Sherry et al. 1995).

Even in celebratory or rewarding contexts, self-gifting is often entwined with compensatory motivations and includes a degree of self-care (Heath et al. 2015; Liu et al. 2024; Rifkin et al. 2023). Self-gifts may also serve to promote one's well-being by enhancing self-esteem (Heath et al. 2011; Williams and Burns 1994) and a sense of self (Sayre and Home 1996; P. Wong et al. 2012). Contexts marked by loneliness and isolation (e.g., the COVID-19 pandemic) may drive people to seek the therapeutic benefits of self-gifts (Rippé et al. 2022) and alleviate pervasive feelings of constraint related to time, money, and energy by boosting emotional well-being (Rifkin et al. 2023). However, the lift these gifts offer may be temporary, with many gifts being chosen carelessly as quick attempts to “fix” oneself (Sherry et al. 1995; Heath et al. 2015). In addition, over-indulging in self-gifts can lead to financial debt (Cordeiro et al. 2019). Furthermore, when individuals feel constrained, they may be less inclined to self-gift, as such constraints limit their ability

to experience the emotional benefits self-gifting can provide (Rifkin et al. 2023).

In the literature reviewed, we found material relevant to temperance regarding self-care. This can be practiced through self-regulation (e.g., self-control, being disciplined, controlling feelings or actions), which can help to deal with the automatic responses to persuasive external stimuli (Gupta and Sheth 2024). Self-gifts can be used to exercise self-control. For example, buying gold as a self-gift can be an investment or an attempt at saving (Ertimur and Sandkci 2014) while other self-gifts may function as incentives to be earned after accomplishments (Heath et al. 2015). While much research on mindful consumption recommends individual interventions¹ for self-regulation, their effect might be temporary and insufficient to produce lasting changes in consumers' decision-making in the marketplace (Bahl et al. 2023). There are opportunities for the marketplace to play a more active role, for example facilitating homemade gifts (Weinberger 2017) or supporting consumers in creating products that serve as self-gifts. When consumers self-create a product, they tend to be more mindful in consuming it, which has greater benefits for their well-being (Bruneder and Dholakia 2018). The tension between caring for the self and self-gifting behavior leads to our first proposition:

Proposition 1. *Research should explore the construct of “mindful self-gifting,” specifically how consumers balance the desire to care for themselves through self-gifting with the need to exercise temperance in order to avoid potential excesses while using self-gifts to enhance well-being.*

Other studies linking gifting and self-care emphasize the psychological benefits of gifting for givers. For instance, gifts to the deceased can prove restorative to the self, helping givers cope with grief after the loss of loved ones (Drenten et al. 2017). Givers may also experience greater happiness, and subsequently enhanced well-being, when their gifts show they understand the recipient's emotions (Pillai and Krishnakumar 2019). Similarly, gifting can alleviate negative feelings of guilt and improve their welfare when givers are unable to provide more practical support to someone close (Wiener et al. 2022). By contrast, givers can experience negative emotions such as envy when giving gifts that compare unfavorably with their own possessions and decide to prioritize self-care over care for others (Givi and Galak 2019). Overall, studies that explore dimensions of mindful gifting that pertain to self-care recognize that relational gifts to others can be oriented toward caring for the self, but may also create tensions in caring for others, underscoring the need for temperance in gifting (e.g., gift selection). In the next section, we examine mindful gifting oriented towards caring for others within the givers' network, and how such care can sometimes drive excessive consumption that requires temperance.

4.2 | Caring for Others: Attention, Tensions, and Temperance

Another theme in the literature relevant to our definition of mindful gifting is the enactment of care for others through gifting within relationship networks (Weinberger et al. 2025). In this context, mindful consumers demonstrate care by being

empathetic toward others' emotions, motivations, and intentions (Gupta and Sheth 2024). The desire to care for others through gifting fulfills an important social purpose, by enabling givers to provide social support and care in myriad situations, including when givers cannot be physically present for recipients who are enduring tough times (e.g., after losing a loved one; Wiener et al. 2022), or showing empathy and congratulating a recipient who celebrates a life achievement (Hwang and Chu 2019). Interestingly, givers are more motivated by empathy and self-esteem when the recipient experiences an unfortunate rather than a fortunate event (Hwang and Chu 2019). In addition, gifts sent from family members living abroad to relatives living in their home country are signs of care and the desire to be part of the family (Singh et al. 2012). In other contexts, such as when individuals seek support about problems they are facing, gifts are a more effective form of emotional support and relational well-being than conversations (Howe et al. 2024). Thus, gifts are a way of showing care for others and improving psychological well-being in ways similar to other forms of prosocial behavior (e.g., reducing loneliness, improving mood; Lanser and Eisenberger 2023).

However, alongside these benefits, Sheth et al. (2011, 25) identify “unintended side-effect harms” in gifting. These can be detrimental to the giver or others (e.g., the recipient or third parties), mostly due to erroneous assumptions about the gifting behaviors assumed to benefit the giver-recipient relationship, or conflicts between the gifting goals of the involved parties.

Individuals tend to exchange gifts throughout the year with the same people (Givi 2020) who belong to the same network of care, engage in frequent gift exchange (Branco-Illodo et al. 2023), and adapt to changes in the structure of their gift circuit as relationship contexts evolve (Weinberger et al. 2025). Over time, this repetitive behavior often leads to excessive gifting. As Weinberger et al. (2025; 1266) point out, “a relational unit might exchange several (even hundreds) of gifts across the years.” Failing to engage in gift exchange with the circuit can lead to resentment from its members. This constant gifting reflects social pressures to give and show care for the recipient, making it difficult to opt out of seasonal and expected exchanges (Daniels 2009).

While givers aim to enhance a relationship and show care through gift-giving by choosing something that matches the recipient's preferences (Dunn et al. 2008), they often struggle to do so (Galak et al. 2016). This is because givers tend to overestimate the negative consequences of a bad gift and the positive consequences of a good one (Mu and Givi 2025). Furthermore, givers' sacrifices of money, time, or preferences to promote relational well-being are often invisible to the recipient (Garcia-Rada et al. 2025). In this vein, when showing their care for others, givers may maximize their budget when buying for others versus for themselves, meaning they are less focused on saving money (Choe et al. 2023). Givers' preferences to overspend resources (Flynn and Adams 2009), display their higher status when recipients are wealthier (Reshadi 2023; Reshadi and Givi 2023) or give conspicuous branded gifts to alleviate guilt (Chang and Lin 2024), instead of keeping gifts within budget (Givi and Mu 2022), suggest aspirational gifting and unsustainable excess.

However, givers are not aware that, from a recipient's perspective, spending more on gifts raises suspicions about their motives (Mutluoglu et al. 2024; Choe et al. 2023). Overspending not only leads to feelings of discomfort when the recipient cannot reciprocate, thus failing the initial purpose of the gift to benefit the recipient's well-being (Givi 2021), but also carries consequences for the giver, who often needs to borrow money to buy gifts for loved ones (Reshadi and Givi 2023). In some parts of the developing world, givers will trade their financial well-being in the interest of preserving relationships—ensuring they spend enough to match the expected gift value in their community, thus reducing their income for basic necessities and lowering their well-being (Bulte et al. 2018). Similarly, in Ghana, migrants living abroad are expected to bring gifts when returning home, regardless of any resulting financial distress (Appau and Crockett 2023). Research does indicate that regarding ways of exerting temperance, it is possible to achieve the same relationship outcomes while spending less. For example, non-occasion-based gifts can signal relational care and afford greater happiness to the recipient than occasion-based gifts, because recipients' expectations of gift quality and cost are lower than when they expect gifts (Givi and Galak 2022). Consciousness of marketers' manipulation strategies when they promote gifts for established occasions also may be a way of exercising temperance. Furthermore, research finds that gifts imbued with sentimental value (such as heirlooms) can bring the two parties closer, by enhancing both their memory value (i.e., reminding people of special others) and their essence value (i.e., serving as a beacon of their spirit; Tezer et al. 2024). Using customized gifts (Yin et al. 2020) or storytelling to make gifts more personal may prove useful to exert temperance in gift expenditures.

Temperance in gift receiving is also reflected in how recipients communicate their preferences, how they receive gifts gracefully, and how they use or dispose them in ways that demonstrate care. Yet, givers often misjudge these preferences. They tend to underestimate how much recipients appreciate gifts of earmarked cash (i.e., cash with a recommendation for what to buy; Givi and Das 2022), as well as repeated gifts that match their preferences (Givi 2020) or gifts they explicitly request (Gino and Flynn 2011). Sometimes, givers seek to benefit recipients through "improving" gifts (e.g., exercise or beauty products), although these can often hurt the recipient's feelings (Chapman and Reshadi forthcoming). Exercising temperance, such as by using Lowrey et al. (2004) third-party influences on the gift-giving process, can help to avoid those misalignments.

Beyond the choice of a particular gift, givers also generate waste for no benefit, both in how they give and in gift presentation. For instance, givers often prefer giving plastic gift cards, although recipients favor digital ones that are easier to redeem (Reshadi et al. 2023), or they present overpackaged gifts, which tend to be evaluated less positively by recipients (Shi et al. 2024). Givers also overestimate the importance of giving gifts that arrive on time (Haltman et al. 2024) which can result in needless spending on express delivery.

From a mindful-gifting perspective, we emphasize the importance of recipients openly sharing their views about the gifts, enabling givers to learn from past experiences and provide more

acceptable gifts in the future (Branco-Illodo et al. 2020). Understanding how to improve communication about these preferences is fundamental to exerting temperance in repetitive behavior, by minimizing unwanted gifts. However, research on repetitive gifting behavior and temperance remains limited. Further scholarship is needed to study how patterns of ongoing, back-and-forth gift exchange are used to show care over time (Weinberger et al. 2025) and how consumers can balance temperance with caring for both the self and others. This discussion informs our next proposition.

Proposition 2. *Research should explore "mindful other-directed gifting"—that is, how consumers manage the tensions between desiring to care for those in their social networks, with mutually-perceived pressures to engage in repetitive and perhaps excessive gifting, and how they practice temperance when engaging in gifting with others to enhance mutual well-being.*

At the relational level, research on the consequences of gifting is fairly robust. However, less is known about how gifting contributes to long-term well-being and relates to temperance in givers' and recipients' behavior (e.g., through their choices, practices, or rituals). Relational giving and receiving are components of an imperfect communication system, where people's unarticulated priorities may differ. The rules of gift engagement are not consistent across social networks (and perhaps not even within dyads), and people are not supposed to discuss them. This ambiguity complicates decisions around what to give and how (e.g., message, presentation, delivery, timing, the order of multiple gifts; Givi and Das 2022). As such, understanding how a caring mindset in gifting—one that emphasizes forgiveness in failed gifting, or even mutual agreement to disengage in wasteful and stressful giving practices—translates into temperate behavior is crucial. Mindful gifting thus offers a promising avenue for future research on how attentiveness and care can be more consciously expressed in relational gift exchanges.

4.3 | Caring for the Environment: Awareness, Tensions, and Temperance

Gift giving can be perceived as irrational and inefficient in terms of material sustainability, since two people can more reliably meet their needs by buying for themselves than by buying for one another (Cheal 2015). Beyond material excess, gift giving raises various ethical questions, such as those arising from the effects of gift production and the assertion of interpersonal power in the act of giving. In this section, we examine how the literature explores ethics and sustainability, two key dimensions of mindful gifting that pertain to caring for the environment.

Gifting practices intersect sustainable and ethical consumption in various ways that have been little explored. We consider accounts that focus on maintaining the future viability of material or social systems to pertain primarily to sustainable consumption (Lunde 2018), while those that stress personal judgments about balancing the harms versus benefits of consumption choices pertain primarily to ethical consumption (Auger and Devinney 2007). The perspectives align with commonly used definitions in the literature (Crane et al. 2016). That

said, we recognize that sustainable and ethical consumption are deeply interconnected, as both encompass concern for the natural environment and for other harms. This overlap is noted in understanding ethical sustainable consumption as “consumer behaviors based on moral values and doing the right thing for firms, society, and the environment” (Baker and Lesch 2013, in Lunde 2018, 100).

4.3.1 | Gifting Excesses and Waste

Gift-giving has long been entangled with practices of excess, as scholars have long recognized that lavishness (and waste, as noted above) can be integral to how gifts fulfill their social roles. Gift rituals such as the Kwakiutl potlatch serve to uphold social hierarchies by reaffirming the ability of the dominant class to distribute expensive gifts to recipients who are unable to reciprocate, and who are therefore forever in their debt (Mauss 1954; Graeber 2014). Likewise, in contemporary societies, gifting represents a world of commodities, where objects and exchanges are crucial to interpersonal relationships (Carrier 1990).

This social function of gifting—with individual gifts conveying meaning about the relationship between giver and recipient, and social patterns of gifting reinforcing parts of the social order—serves as an important context for exploring ethical issues. Oppressive social relations, such as patriarchy, are reproduced via cultures of gifting (e.g., Liu et al. 2024) in contemporary, urbanized societies, just as the power of elites was strengthened by potlatch ceremonies. Sherry et al. (1993) discuss becoming “entrapped in rituals” (p. 225) of gift giving, which speaks to a mindless (Langer 2014) response to social expectations where a more thoughtful engagement with what will please someone could provide a more fulfilling experience as a giver. This mindlessness in the face of social pressures closely parallels Sheth et al.’s (2011) account of aspirational and repetitive consumptions, suggesting the same mindful outlook will help rein in these motivators and outcomes. Such embeddedness in consumerist ideology places gift-giving at odds with the mindful mindset and behavior encouraged by mindful consumption (Sheth et al. 2011).

In particular, a culture of overconsumption, reinforced by gifting practices, contributes significantly to waste. This tendency is especially pronounced during special occasions, such as Christmas (Monbiot 2012; Robinot et al. 2017), where both the wrapping (Farbotko and Head 2013) and the gift can harm sustainability. Shi et al. (2023) provide a concrete example of this situation. They estimate the CO₂ emissions due to food gifts given at festivals in China and find that excessive packaging, designed to make the gift seem more lavish, is a major contributor to the emissions. However, packaging also plays a significant symbolic role; Zhang et al. (2025) show that something as simple as the shape of gift packaging (e.g., vertical vs. horizontal) can significantly influence perceptions of status. Hence, any attempt to reduce packaging must also account for cultural norms that associate gift embellishment with value, thoughtfulness, or meaningful relationships (e.g., Hollenbeck et al. 2006).

As Farbotko and Head (2013) observe, the social and relational value of gift giving means that consumers who identify as

“green” may behave less sustainably when buying gifts than when buying items for themselves. Christmas gifts, for example, function as objects of love (Cheal 1987), with the rituals of shopping, wrapping, and exchanging, making them less an object of environmental concern than is true for ordinary purchases. Thus, the symbolic nature of gifts (and associated rituals) may hinder their potential to advance sustainability. Nevertheless, when environmental considerations do not conflict with the gift’s perceived specialness, these concerns seem to matter; Ollitervo et al. (2025) find that environmentally friendly packaging materials can indirectly influence purchase intentions by increasing both the perceived attractiveness of the packaging and the product’s perceived environmental friendliness.

Proposition 3. *Research should investigate whether and how adopting a mindful outlook can help givers apply prudence in selecting gifts that minimize harm caused both by the production of gifts, and by the act(s) of giving them.*

4.3.2 | Gift Disposition and Regifting

The symbolic and relational value of gifts may also explain a continued relative unpopularity of regifting (Ertimur et al. 2015), even if those who re-gift may be motivated by a desire to consider the sustainability of their gifting choices (Guido et al. 2016). Further stressing the relational value of gifts, Branco-Illodo et al. (2020) find recipients often conceal their discontentment regarding unwanted gifts out of care for the giver, and to preserve the relationship. Such dynamics, while socially considerate, can both lessen recipients’ well-being and contribute to unsustainable forms of consumption by encouraging unnecessary or unwanted material exchanges and effectively discouraging temperance.

However, relational sensitivity need not be incompatible with sustainability; Daniels (2009) ethnographic research in Japan finds regifting is accepted and thoughtfully enacted. Specifically, Japanese participants regift to appropriate recipients (e.g., friends and family) who can appreciate the gift, treating it as a respectful act rather than as careless disposal. Daniels’ work illustrates how regifting, when embedded in cultural norms that value thoughtfulness and respect, can serve as a meaningful expression of mindful consumption (Sheth et al. 2011), balancing care for others with care for the planet.

More broadly, various studies focus on how gifting previously owned items can reduce waste and foster social ties (Barbosa and Fonseca 2019). These benefits have been observed to motivate the gifting of used items among high-cultural-capital, ethically conscious consumers via online communities (Bargain-Darrigues 2023). Gifting is also a pervasive, normalized way to dispose of objects in some contexts, such as children’s clothing in the UK (Ritch 2019) and clothing generally in Ecuador (Cruz-Cárdenas and del Val Núñez 2016; Cruz-Cárdenas et al. 2017); in both cases, consumers reported being motivated to engage sustainably with their communities. Experimental work suggests this form of disposition can be effectively encouraged via appeals to pride and altruism

(Murthy et al. 2023). However, many opportunities remain to explore regifting and the gifting of pre-owned goods in greater depth.

Proposition 4. *Research should explore the dimension of mindful gifting that pertains to regifting as a form of gift dispossession, and to the gifting of previously owned items as desirable gifts, with the goal of understanding consumers' perceptions, motivations, and concerns about engaging in these behaviors.*

4.3.3 | Gift Giving and Recirculation of Gifts

Aside from these dynamics, gifting has been viewed as a mode of circulating goods outside a strict exchange paradigm. For example, de Peyrelongue et al. (2017) draw on Catholic social teaching to argue that giving without expectation of return is both an essential part of being an ethical human being, and vital to sustaining social solidarity. Likewise, in Samsø, Denmark, Thygesen (2019) identifies a large sector of the economy as operating around the logic of gifting rather than on market exchange, both as a source of social value and an essential part of the island's progress toward sustainability. At a theoretical level, Arnould and Helkkula (2024) identify gifting as a crucial source of sustainable resource circulation and value creation, compatible with their neo-animist (Arnould 2022) conception of the position of humans within nature.

4.3.4 | Sustainability, Ethics, and Gift Choice

The evidence remains mixed regarding how ethical or sustainability concerns influence specific gift choices. Das et al. (2021) find that ethical attributes have more impact on people's intention to buy gifts than when they buy items for their own use. Likewise, Green et al. (2016) find consumers who do not consider corporate social responsibility (CSR) when buying for themselves sometimes do so when buying gifts, to introduce ethical issues to recipients and make a positive impression on them, or to assuage their guilt for other purchases. This suggests givers could encourage more mindful behavior from recipients by adopting Otnes et al.'s (1993) role of the "socializer" to transmit values they want the recipient to embrace. In addition, appeals to sustainability, such as stressing a gift's durability or its potential to enter the circular economy, can increase a gift's appeal, due to its consideration as a potential future heirloom (Tezer et al. 2024).

Conversely, Green et al. (2016) find that in some cases, consumers actively avoid purchasing products from socially-responsible companies as gifts for others (even if they would buy these products for themselves), either to manage the recipient's impressions of the gift, or because of concerns with the credibility of these gifts. Furthermore, contrary to what some marketing practitioners assume, givers are less likely to choose a socially-responsible gift if they think the recipient is picky (Chin et al. 2024). Likewise, when their relationship with the recipient is not close, gifts supporting a cause are less appreciated (Cavanaugh et al. 2015).

Proposition 5. *Research should explore how the social roles givers and recipients enact when engaged in mindful gifting behavior can introduce or reshape cultural norms pertaining to ethical and sustainable gifting.*

Taken together, these studies that explore the intersection of gifting and caring for the environment indicate that tensions can emerge when considering ethical or sustainable gifting, as givers may wish to align their gift choices with positive values, yet social norms and social dynamics can push gifting decisions in other directions. This, we note, further highlights the importance of understanding mindful gifting, which calls for a more conscious and holistic consideration of the giver-recipient context and the broader implications of the gift (and the act of gifting) for the giver, the recipient, society, and the planet. Cultivating such awareness (Kabat-Zinn et al. 1998) holds the potential to facilitate more thoughtful and tempered gifting practices.

5 | Implications and Conclusion

In this paper, we introduce mindful gifting as a framework for considering ethics, and sustainability in gift giving and receiving. This framework seeks to balance concerns for the well-being of the people immediately involved in the gifting process with those for society and the environment, by applying caring attention to the effects of the actions of both givers and recipients.

Our paper advances scholarship within two robust areas in marketing: consumer research on gifting and mindful consumption. We introduce the concept of mindful gifting to advance theory on enacting gifting for a "better world," specifically, behavior that is mindful of the consequences for all parties involved in, or impacted by gift exchange. In so doing, we adapt the conceptualization of mindful consumption (Sheth et al. 2011; Gupta and Sheth 2024) and apply it to gift giving as a form of consumption different from regular purchases (Bardhi et al. 2025). This approach provides room to consider the effects of the gift across a wide scale, from the giver and recipient, through their social circle, and more broadly, to society and the environment.

In addition, based on an extensive scoping review of the extant literature that focuses on the dimensions of our definition of mindful gifting, we introduce a set of research propositions to advance theory and guide future empirical work. These propositions are rooted in understanding the tensions and temperance issues that emerge as consumers engage in self-care, care for others, and care for the environment. They can serve as a blueprint to guide future studies in the field, providing opportunities for both theoretical advancement and practical guidance. This study engages with Sheth et al.'s (2011) call for a study into how different elements of care interact in consumption. Moreover, it extends Weinberger et al.'s (2025) discussion of the embedding of gifting within changing networks of care, as mindful attention to the effects of a gift will necessarily consider such changes in relationships.

These contributions matter because gifting is a robust and resilient form of social interaction. As Lorenzen (2018, 256)

observes, “attempting to withdraw from a gift-giving system strains social ties and is rarely successful.” In line with mindful consumption (Sheth et al. 2011), mindful gifting is not about restricting gifting but about curbing its excesses and engaging in the behavior with greater intentionality and awareness. The cultural centrality of gifting makes it imperative to explore how and why consumers and practitioners engage (or fail to engage) in mindful gifting, and how this practice intersects with ethics, sustainability, and well-being.

Mindful gifting thus involves consumers demonstrating a broad, engaged attentiveness that encompasses different scales and timeframes. By cultivating mindfulness and temperance across these dimensions, mindful gifting offers a framework that not only enhances personal, relational, and environmental well-being but also provides a method to manage conflicts between the demands of care in different spheres. We hope our paper spurs research into this important topic.

Acknowledgments

As a member of the NIPE, the second author is grateful for the support received from National Funds through the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT), within the project UID/03182, Centre for Research in Economics and Management/ University of Minho.

Data Availability Statement

Data sharing not applicable to this article as no data sets were generated or analyzed during the current study.

Endnotes

¹“Interventions using social marketing techniques and behavioral decision theory are well suited to remind and motivate consumers to engage in more deliberate consumption” (Bahl et al. 2016, 207).

References

Appau, S., and D. Crockett. 2023. “Wealth in People and Places: Understanding Transnational Gift Obligations.” *Journal of Consumer Research* 49, no. 6: 1053–1073.

Arksey, H., and L. O’Malley. 2005. “Scoping Studies: Towards a Methodological Framework.” *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 8, no. 1: 19–32.

Arnould, E. J. 2022. “Ontology and Circulation: Towards an Eco-Economy of Persons.” *Journal of Marketing Management* 38, no. 1–2: 71–97.

Arnould, E. J., and A. Helkkula. 2024. “Imagining Post-Marketing: Neo-Animist Resource Circulation and Value Cocreation.” *Journal of Business Research* 176: 114590.

Auger, P., and T. M. Devinney. 2007. “Do What Consumers Say Matter? The Misalignment of Preferences With Unconstrained Ethical Intentions.” *Journal of Business Ethics* 76: 361–383.

Bahl, S., G. R. Milne, and E. G. Miller. 2023. “Expanding Consumer Mindfulness for Collective Sustainable Well-Being: Overview of the Special Issue and Future Research Directions.” *Journal of Consumer Affairs* 57, no. 2: 699–720.

Bahl, S., G. R. Milne, S. M. Ross, et al. 2016. “Mindfulness: Its Transformative Potential for Consumer, Societal, and Environmental Well-Being.” *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing* 35, no. 2: 198–210.

Banks, S. K. 1979. “Gift-Giving: A Review and an Interactive Paradigm.” *Advances in Consumer Research* 6, no. 1: 319.

Barbosa, B., and I. Fonseca. 2019. “A Phenomenological Approach to the Collaborative Consumer.” *Journal of Consumer Marketing* 36, no. 6: 705–714.

Bardhi, F., M. Corciolani, D. Dalli, and V. Maraj. 2025. “Beyond Buying: Extending the Concept of Acquisition in Consumption.” *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*: 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-025-01112-6>.

Bargain-Darrigues, G. 2023. “Practices of Thrift Among High Cultural Capital Consumers. When Economic Status Gets in the Way of Ethics.” *Journal of Consumer Culture* 23, no. 3: 711–730.

Belk, R. 2010. “Sharing.” *Journal of Consumer Research* 36 no. 5: 715–734.

Belk, R. W., and G. S. Coon. 1993. “Gift Giving as Agapic Love: An Alternative to the Exchange Paradigm Based on Dating Experiences.” *Journal of Consumer Research* 20, no. 3: 393–417.

Branco-Illodo, I., T. Heath, and C. Tynan. 2020. “‘You Really Shouldn’t Have!’ Coping With Failed Gift Experiences.” *European Journal of Marketing* 54, no. 4: 857–883.

Branco-Illodo, I., T. Heath, and C. Tynan. 2023. “Gifts to Whom? Towards a Network View of Gift Recipients.” *European Journal of Marketing* 57, no. 10: 2860–2892.

Brunnerer, J., and U. Dholakia. 2018. “The Self-Creation Effect: Making a Product Supports Its Mindful Consumption and the Consumer’s Well-Being.” *Marketing Letters* 29: 377–389.

Bulte, E., R. Wang, and X. Zhang. 2018. “Forced Gifts: The Burden of Being a Friend.” *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization* 155: 79–98.

Carrier, J. 1990. “Gifts in a World of Commodities: The Ideology of the Perfect Gift in American Society.” *Social Analysis: The International Journal of Social and Cultural Practice* no. 29: 19–37.

Cavanaugh, L. A., F. Gino, and G. J. Fitzsimons. 2015. “When Doing Good Is Bad in Gift Giving: Mis-Predicting Appreciation of Socially Responsible Gifts.” *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* 131: 178–189.

Chandy, R. K., G. V. Johar, C. Moorman, and J. H. Roberts. 2021. “Better Marketing for a Better World.” *Journal of Marketing* 85, no. 3: 1–9.

Chang, C. C. A., and Y. C. Lin. 2024. “Giving a Conspicuously Branded Gift: The Role of Guilt.” *International Journal of Consumer Studies* 48, no. 5: e13090.

Chapman, L. M., and F. Reshadi. Forthcoming. “Generating Insult From Injury: Receiving Self Improvement Gifts Causes Negative Word of Mouth.” *Journal of Retailing*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretai.2025.04.005>.

Cheal, D. 1987. “Showing Them You Love Them’: Gift Giving and the Dialectic of Intimacy.” *Sociological Review* 35, no. 1: 150–169.

Cheal, D. 2015. *The Gift Economy*. Routledge.

Chin, S. C., T. R. Wang, and C. M. S. Ho. 2024. “Gifts That Give Twice Are Not Twice as Nice: Consumers Avoid Socially Responsible Gifts for Picky Recipients.” *Psychology & Marketing* 41, no. 9: 2070–2081.

Choe, Y., C. Kan, and E. Polman. 2023. “Divergent Effects of Budgeting for Gifts Versus Personal Purchases.” *Journal of Consumer Research* 50, no. 3: 576–596.

Cordeiro, R. A., N. Wong, and M. C. Ponchio. 2019. “A Gift Economy Perspective on the Cycle of Financial Vulnerability.” *Journal of Macromarketing* 39, no. 1: 25–36.

Cruz-Cárdenas, J., R. González, and J. Gascó. 2017. “Clothing Disposal System by Gifting: Characteristics, Processes, and Interactions.” *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal* 35, no. 1: 49–63.

Cruz-Cárdenas, J., and M. T. del Val Núñez. 2016. “Clothing Disposition by Gifting: Benefits for Consumers and New Consumption.” *Journal of Business Research* 69, no. 11: 4975–4979.

- Daniels, I. 2009. "The Social Death 'of Unused Gifts: Surplus and Value in Contemporary Japan." *Journal of Material Culture* 14, no. 3: 385–408.
- Das, G., J. Peloza, G. Varshneya, and T. Green. 2021. "When Do Consumers Value Ethical Attributes? The Role of Perceived Quality in Gift-Giving." *European Journal of Marketing* 55, no. 1: 315–335.
- d'Astous, A., and D. Mouakhar-Klouz. 2022. "Self-Gift Giving and Satisfaction With Life: A Behavioural Tendency Perspective." *International Journal of Consumer Studies* 46, no. 1: 268–278.
- Davies, I., C. J. Oates, C. Tynan, et al. 2020. "Seeking Sustainable Futures in Marketing and Consumer Research." *European Journal of Marketing* 54, no. 11: 2911–2939.
- Drenten, J., K. McManus, and L. I. Labrecque. 2017. "Graves, Gifts, and the Bereaved Consumer: A Restorative Perspective of Gift Exchange." *Consumption Markets & Culture* 20, no. 5: 423–455.
- Dunn, E. W., J. Huntsinger, J. Lun, and S. Sinclair. 2008. "The Gift of Similarity: How Good and Bad Gifts Influence Relationships." *Social Cognition* 26, no. 4: 469–481.
- Ertimur, B., C. Muñoz, and J. G. Hutton. 2015. "Regifting: A Multi-Perspective Processual Overview." *Journal of Business Research* 68, no. 9: 1997–2004.
- Ertimur, B., and Ö. Sandıkcı. 2014. "Alienable Gifts: Uses and Meanings of Gold in Turkey." *Journal of Consumer Behaviour* 13, no. 3: 204–211.
- Farbotko, C., and L. Head. 2013. "Gifts, Sustainable Consumption and Giving Up Green Anxieties at Christmas." *Geoforum* 50: 88–96.
- Farrell, J. R., J. Machin, A. M. Mirabito, et al. 2024. "Mental Illness and Marketing: A 50-Year Scoping Review and Future Research Framework." *Psychology & Marketing* 41, no. 11: 2555–2573.
- Fischer, D., L. Stanszus, S. Geiger, P. Grossman, and U. Schrader. 2017. "Mindfulness and Sustainable Consumption: A Systematic Literature Review of Research Approaches and Findings." *Journal of Cleaner Production* 162: 544–558.
- Flynn, F. J., and G. S. Adams. 2009. "Money Can't Buy Love: Asymmetric Beliefs About Gift Price and Feelings of Appreciation." *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 45, no. 2: 404–409.
- Galak, J., J. Givi, and E. F. Williams. 2016. "Why Certain Gifts Are Great to Give but Not to Get: A Framework for Understanding Errors in Gift Giving." *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 25, no. 6: 380–385.
- Garcia-Rada, X., T. Kim, and P. J. Liu. 2025. "Consumption Sacrifice." *Journal of Consumer Psychology* 35, no. 1: 61–80.
- Garg, R., S. Bansal, R. Rathi, and S. Bhowmick. 2024. "Mindful Consumption—A Systematic Review and Research Agenda." *Journal of Cleaner Production* 459: 1–16.
- Giesler, M. 2006. "Consumer Gift Systems." *Journal of Consumer Research* 33, no. 2: 283–290.
- Gino, F., and F. J. Flynn. 2011. "Give Them What They Want: The Benefits of Explicitness in Gift Exchange." *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 47, no. 5: 915–922.
- Givi, J. 2020. "(Not) Giving the Same Old Song and Dance: Givers' Misguided Concerns About Thoughtfulness and Boringness Keep Them From Repeating Gifts." *Journal of Business Research* 117: 87–98.
- Givi, J. 2021. "When a Gift Exchange Isn't an Exchange: Why Gift Givers Underestimate How Uncomfortable Recipients Feel Receiving a Gift Without Reciprocating." *Journal of Business Research* 129: 393–405.
- Givi, J., L. Birg, T. M. Lowrey, and J. Galak. 2023. "An Integrative Review of Gift-Giving Research in Consumer Behavior and Marketing." *Journal of Consumer Psychology* 33, no. 3: 529–545.
- Givi, J., and G. Das. 2022. "To Earmark or Not to Earmark When Gift-Giving: Gift-Givers' and Gift-Recipients' Diverging Preferences for Earmarked Cash Gifts." *Psychology & Marketing* 39, no. 2: 420–428.
- Givi, J., and J. Galak. 2019. "Keeping the Joneses From Getting Ahead in the First Place: Envy's Influence on Gift Giving Behavior." *Journal of Business Research* 101: 375–388.
- Givi, J., and J. Galak. 2022. "Gift Recipients' Beliefs About Occasion-Based and Nonoccasion-Based Gifts: The Importance of Signaling Care and Meeting Expectations in Gift Giving." *Journal of Consumer Psychology* 32, no. 3: 445–465.
- Givi, J., and Y. Mu. 2022. "Your Gift, but My Attitude: Gift-Givers' Aversion to Attitude-Inconsistent Gifts." *European Journal of Marketing* 56, no. 5: 1488–1511.
- Graeber, D. 2014. "On the Moral Grounds of Economic Relations: A Maussian Approach." *Journal of Classical Sociology* 14, no. 1: 65–77.
- Green, T., J. Tinson, and J. Peloza. 2016. "Giving the Gift of Goodness: An Exploration of Socially Responsible Gift-Giving." *Journal of Business Ethics* 134: 29–44.
- Guido, G., G. Pino, and A. M. Peluso. 2016. "Assessing Individuals' Re-Gifting Motivations." *Journal of Business Research* 69, no. 12: 5956–5963.
- Gupta, M., Parvathy, J. Givi, M. Dey, H. Kent Baker, and G. Das. 2023. "A Bibliometric Analysis on Gift Giving." *Psychology & Marketing* 40, no. 4: 629–642.
- Gupta, S., and J. Sheth. 2024. "Mindful Consumption: Its Conception, Measurement, and Implications." *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* 52, no. 5: 1531–1549.
- Gwozdz, W., L. A. Reisch, and J. Thøgersen. 2020. "Behaviour Change for Sustainable Consumption." *Journal of Consumer Policy* 43: 249–253.
- Haltman, C., A. Herziger, G. E. Donnelly, and R. W. Reczek. 2024. "Better Late Than Never? Gift Givers Overestimate the Relationship Harm From Giving Late Gifts." *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, ahead of print, December 5. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcpsy.1446>.
- Hao, J., K. Plangger, and D. West. 2024. "Conceptualizing Sustainable Consumption Priming: A Scoping Review." *Psychology & Marketing* 41, no. 11: 2772–2788.
- Heath, M. T., C. Tynan, and C. T. Ennew. 2011. "Self-Gift Giving: Understanding Consumers and Exploring Brand Messages." *Journal of Marketing Communications* 17, no. 2: 127–144.
- Heath, T., S. Gallage, A. Chatzidakis, and M. Hutton. 2025. "Dilemmas of Care (Re) Allocation: Care and Consumption in Pandemic Times." *Journal of Business Ethics* 199, no. 3: 507–522.
- Heath, T., C. Tynan, and C. Ennew. 2015. "Accounts of Self-Gift Giving: Nature, Context and Emotions." *European Journal of Marketing* 49, no. 7/8: 1067–1086.
- Held, V. 2006. *The Ethics of Care: Personal, Political, and Global*. Oxford University Press.
- Hollebeek, L. D., W. Hammedi, and D. E. Sprott. 2023. "Consumer Engagement, Stress, and Conservation of Resources Theory: A Review, Conceptual Development, and Future Research Agenda." *Psychology & Marketing* 40, no. 5: 926–937.
- Hollebeek, L. D., C. Menidjel, M. Sarstedt, J. Jansson, and S. Urbonavicius. 2024. "Engaging Consumers Through Artificially Intelligent Technologies: Systematic Review, Conceptual Model, and Further Research." *Psychology & Marketing* 41, no. 4: 880–898.
- Hollenbeck, C. R., C. Peters, and G. M. Zinkhan. 2006. "Gift Giving: A Community Paradigm." *Psychology & Marketing* 23, no. 7: 573–595.
- Howe, S. H., J. D. Wiener, and T. L. Chartrand. 2024. "Money Can Buy Me Love: Gifts Are a More Effective Form of Acute Social Support Than Conversations." *Journal of Consumer Psychology* 35: no. 3: 397–414.
- Hwang, J., and W. Chu. 2019. "The Effect of Others' Outcome Valence on Spontaneous Gift-Giving Behavior: The Role of Empathy and Self-Esteem." *European Journal of Marketing* 53, no. 4: 785–805.

- Iniesta-Bonillo, M. A., A. Pompeu-Queiros, M. M. Capobianco Uriarte, and H. Alves. 2025. "Mindfulness and Consumer Behavior: A Bibliometric Analysis of Themes and Trends Over 20 Years." *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications* 12, no. 1: 1–19.
- Kabat-Zinn, J., E. Wheeler, T. Light, et al. 1998. "Influence of a Mindfulness Meditation-Based Stress Reduction Intervention on Rates of Skin Clearing in Patients With Moderate to Severe Psoriasis Undergoing Photo Therapy (UVB) and Photochemotherapy (PUVA)." *Psychosomatic Medicine* 60, no. 5: 625–632.
- Langer, E. J. 2014. *Mindfulness*. Balance.
- Langer, E. J., and M. Moldoveanu. 2000. "Mindfulness Research and the Future." *Journal of Social Issues* 56, no. 1: 129–139.
- Lanser, I., and N. I. Eisenberger. 2023. "Prosocial Behavior Reliably Reduces Loneliness: An Investigation Across Two Studies." *Emotion (Washington, D.C.)* 23, no. 6: 1781.
- Liu, C., K. Karanika, and M. K. Hogg. 2024. "Self-Gifting and Temporal Selves: Insights From First-Time Older Motherhood." *Psychology & Marketing* 41, no. 9: 1934–1943.
- Lorenzen, J. A. 2018. "Social Network Challenges to Reducing Consumption: The Problem of Gift Giving." *Symbolic Interaction* 41, no. 2: 247–266.
- Lowrey, T. M., C. C. Otnes, and J. A. Ruth. 2004. "Social Influences on Dyadic Giving Over Time: A Taxonomy From the Giver's Perspective." *Journal of Consumer Research* 30, no. 4: 547–558.
- Lunde, M. B. 2018. "Sustainability in Marketing: A Systematic Review Unifying 20 Years of Theoretical and Substantive Contributions (1997–2016)." *AMS Review* 8, no. 3: 85–110.
- Luomala, H. T., and M. Laaksonen. 1999. "A Qualitative Exploration of Mood-regulatory Self-gift Behaviors." *Journal of Economic Psychology* 20, no. 2: 147–182.
- Maciel, A. F., and M. F. Weinberger. 2024. "Crowdfunding as a Market-Fostering Gift System." *Journal of Consumer Research* 50, no. 6: 1221–1242.
- Malik, A. Z., and K. Vo. 2024. "'Yes, I'm Worth It!': How Romantic Breakups Influence Self-Gifting Propensity." *Psychology & Marketing* 41, no. 9: 1959–1978.
- Marcoux, J. S. 2009. "Escaping the Gift Economy." *Journal of Consumer Research* 36, no. 4: 671–685.
- Mauss, M. 1954. *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*. Martino Publishing.
- McLeod, A., A. Savage, and M. G. Simkin. 2018. "The Ethics of Predatory Journals." *Journal of Business Ethics* 153: 121–131.
- Mende, M., and M. L. Scott. 2021. "May the Force be With You: Expanding the Scope for Marketing Research as a Force for Good in a Sustainable World." *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing* 40, no. 2: 116–125.
- Mick, D. G., and M. DeMoss. 1990a. "Self-Gifts: Phenomenological Insights From Four Contexts." *Journal of Consumer Research* 17, no. 3: 322–332.
- Mick, D. G., and M. DeMoss. 1990b. "To Me From Me: A Descriptive Phenomenology of Self-Gifts." *Advances in Consumer Research* 17, no. 1: 677–682.
- Mick, D. G., M. DeMoss, and R. J. Faber. 1992. "A Projective Study of Motivations and Meanings of Self-Gifts: Implications for Retail Management." *Journal of Retailing* 68, no. 2: 122–144.
- Mick, D. G., and C. Faure. 1998. "Consumer Self-Gifts in Achievement Contexts: The Role of Outcomes, Attributions, Emotions, and Deservingness." *International Journal of Research in Marketing* 15, no. 4: 293–307.
- Monbiot, G. 2012. *The Gift of Death*. The Guardian. <https://www.monbiot.com/2012/12/10/the-gift-of-death/>.
- Mu, Y., and J. Givi. 2025. "Who Cares More? A Giver–recipient Asymmetry in the Importance of Selecting a Good Gift." *European Journal of Marketing* 59, no. 1: 59–85.
- Munn, Z., M. D. Peters, C. Stern, C. Tufanaru, A. McArthur, and E. Aromataris. 2018. "Systematic Review or Scoping Review? Guidance for Authors When Choosing Between a Systematic or Scoping Review Approach." *BMC Medical Research Methodology* 18: 1–7.
- Murthy, M. D. P., V. Prasad, and A. Adhikari. 2023. *A Pro-Environmental Perspective on Gift-Giving: Understanding the Norms, Motives, and Emotions Behind This Sustainable Consumption*. <https://ssrn.com/abstract=4512036>.
- Mutluoglu, A., L. Ashworth, and N. Robitaille. 2024. "Looking a Gift Horse in the Mouth: Suspicion of Large Gift Expenditures Undermines Gift Appreciation." *Psychology & Marketing* 41, no. 6: 1333–1345.
- Osteen, M. 2003. "Introduction: Questions of the Gift." In *The Question of the Gift*, edited by M. Osteen, 1–42. Routledge.
- Otnes, C. C. 2018. "Re-Presenting, Reinvigorating and Reconciling: Gift-Giving Research Within and Beyond the CCT Paradigm." In *The SAGE Handbook of Consumer Culture*, edited by O. Kravets, A. Venkatesh, S. Miles, and P. Maclaran, 214–234. Sage.
- Otnes, C. C., T. M. Lowrey, and Y. C. Kim. 1993. "Gift Selection for Easy and Difficult Recipients: A Social Roles Interpretation." *Journal of Consumer Research* 20, no. 2: 229–244.
- Page, M. J., J. E. McKenzie, P. M. Bossuyt, et al. 2021. "The PRISMA 2020 Statement: An Updated Guideline for Reporting Systematic Reviews." *British Medical Journal* 372, no. 71: 1–9.
- Parvatiyar, A., and J. N. Sheth. 2023. "Confronting the Deep Problem of Consumption: Why Individual Responsibility for Mindful Consumption Matters." *Journal of Consumer Affairs* 57, no. 2: 785–820.
- de Peyrelongue, B., O. Masclef, and V. Guillard. 2017. "The Need to Give Gratuitously: A Relevant Concept Anchored in Catholic Social Teaching to Envision the Consumer Behavior." *Journal of Business Ethics* 145: 739–755.
- Pillai, R. G., and S. Krishnakumar. 2019. "Elucidating the Emotional and Relational Aspects of Gift Giving." *Journal of Business Research* 101: 194–202.
- Reshadi, F. 2023. "Failing to Give the Gift of Improvement: When and Why Givers Withhold Self-Improvement Gifts." *Journal of Business Research* 165: 114031.
- Reshadi, F., and J. Givi. 2023. "Spending the Most on Those Who Need It the Least: Gift Givers Buy More Expensive Gifts for Affluent Recipients." *European Journal of Marketing* 57, no. 2: 479–504.
- Reshadi, F., J. Givi, and G. Das. 2023. "Gifting Digital Versus Physical Gift Cards: How and Why Givers and Recipients Have Different Preferences for a Gift Card's Mode of Delivery." *Psychology & Marketing* 40, no. 5: 970–978.
- Rifkin, J. R., K. G. Wight, and K. M. Cutright. 2023. "No Bandwidth to Self-Gift: How Feeling Constrained Discourages Self-Gifting." *Journal of Consumer Research* 50, no. 2: 343–362.
- Rippé, C. B., B. Smith, and S. Weisfeld-Spolter. 2022. "The Connection of Attachment and Self-Gifting for the Disconnection of Loneliness Across Cultures." *International Journal of Consumer Studies* 46, no. 4: 1451–1467.
- Ritch, E. L. 2019. "From a Mother to Another': Creative Experiences of Sharing Used Children's Clothing." *Journal of Marketing Management* 35, no. 7–8: 770–794.
- Robinot, E., M. Ertz, and F. Durif. 2017. "Jingle Bells or 'Green' Bells? The Impact of Socially Responsible Consumption Principles Upon Consumer Behaviour at Christmas Time." *International Journal of Consumer Studies* 41, no. 6: 605–617.
- Rosenberg, E. L. 2004. "Mindfulness and Consumerism." In *Psychology and Consumer Culture: The Struggle for a Good Life in a Materialistic*

- World, edited by T. Kasser and A. D. Kanner, 107–125. American Psychological Association.
- Ruth, J. A., C. C. Otnes, and F. F. Brunel. 1999. “Gift Receipt and the Reformulation of Interpersonal Relationships.” *Journal of Consumer Research* 25, no. 4: 385–402.
- Sayre, S., and D. Home. 1996. “I Shop, Therefore I Am: The Role of Possessions for Self Definition.” *Advances in Consumer Research* 23, no. 1: 323.
- Shapiro, S. L. 2009. “The Integration of Mindfulness and Psychology.” *Journal of Clinical Psychology* 65, no. 6: 555–560.
- Sherry, Jr, J. F.. 1983. “Gift Giving in Anthropological Perspective.” *Journal of Consumer Research* 10, no. 2: 157–168.
- Sherry, Jr., J. F., M. A. McGrath, and S. J. Levy. 1993. “The Dark Side of the Gift.” *Journal of Business Research* 28, no. 3: 225–244.
- Sherry, Jr., J. F., M. A. McGrath, and S. J. Levy. 1995. “Monadic Giving: Anatomy of Gifts Given to the Self.” In *Contemporary Marketing and Consumer Behavior: An Anthropological Sourcebook*, edited by J. F. Sherry Jr, 399–432. Thousand Oaks.
- Sheth, J. N., N. K. Sethia, and S. Srinivas. 2011. “Mindful Consumption: A Customer-Centric Approach to Sustainability.” *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* 39: 21–39.
- Shi, H., R. Chen, and B. M. Yin. 2024. “Thoughtful or Thoughtless? Asymmetric Attitudes of Gift-Givers and Gift-Recipients Toward Overpackaged Gifts.” *Journal of Retailing* 100, no. 4: 656–672.
- Shi, Z., Y. Chang, Y. Hao, et al. 2023. “Tapping the Environmental Potential of Gift Packaging: Implications of Mooncake in China.” *International Journal of Life Cycle Assessment* 28, no. 2: 186–198.
- Singh, S., S. Robertson, and A. Cabraal. 2012. “Transnational Family Money: Remittances, Gifts and Inheritance.” *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 33, no. 5: 475–492.
- Tezer, A., M. Philp, E. Pancer, and Q. Zhu. 2024. “Presents With Presence: The Role of Memory and Essence in Heirloom Gift Appreciation.” *Psychology & Marketing* 41, no. 10: 2463–2477.
- Thygesen, N. 2019. “The Gift Economy and the Development of Sustainability.” *Local Economy* 34, no. 6: 493–509.
- Uлага, W., M. Kleinaltenkamp, V. Kashyap, and A. Eggert. 2021. “Advancing Marketing Theory and Practice: Guidelines for Crafting Research Propositions.” *AMS Review* 11, no. 3: 395–406.
- Vestic, M. 2025, February 19. “35 Gift Industry Statistics and Facts: 2025 Trends and Data.” *Gift Rabbit*, ahead of print, February 19. <https://giftrabbit.com/gift-industry-statistics-and-facts/>.
- Weinberger, M. F. 2017. “Gifts: Intertwining Market and Moral Economies and the Rise of Store Bought Gifts.” *Consumption Markets & Culture* 20, no. 3: 245–257.
- Weinberger, M. F., E. Baskin, and K. Gunasti. 2025. “Relational Gifting: Conceptual Frameworks and an Agenda for a New Generation of Research.” *Journal of Consumer Research* 51, no. 6: 1252–1278.
- Weinberger, M. F., and M. Wallendorf. 2012. “Intracommunity Gifting at the Intersection of Contemporary Moral and Market Economies.” *Journal of Consumer Research* 39, no. 1: 74–92.
- Wiener, H. J., H. S. Howe, and T. L. Chartrand. 2022. “Being There Without Being There: Gifts Compensate for Lack of in-Person Support.” *Psychology & Marketing* 39, no. 6: 1267–1279.
- Williams, J. M. G., and J. Kabat-Zinn. 2011. “Mindfulness: Diverse Perspectives on Its Meaning, Origins, and Multiple Applications at the Intersection of Science.” *Contemporary Buddhism* 12, no. 1: 1–18.
- Williams, L. A., and A. C. Burns. 1994. “The Halcyon Days of Youth: A Phenomenological Account of Experiences and Feelings Accompanying Spring Break on the Beach.” *Advances in Consumer Research* 21, no. 1: 98.
- Wong, P., M. K. Hogg, and M. Vanharanta. 2012. “Consumption Narratives of Extended Possessions and the Extended Self.” *Journal of Marketing Management* 28, no. 7–8: 936–954.
- Yin, J., Y. Wang, J. Pang, and K. Wang. 2020. “Customizing Products for Self Versus Close Others: The Effect of Intended Recipient on Creator Perceptions of Product Uniqueness.” *Marketing Letters* 31: 73–87.
- Zhang, M., L. Teng, X. Huang, L. Foti, C. Sun, and X. Yang. 2025. “Face Consciousness: The Impact of Gift Packaging Shape on Consumer Perception.” *European Journal of Marketing* 59, no. 2: 241–285.
- Zhang, Y., and N. Epley. 2012. “Exaggerated, Mispredicted, and Mismatched: When ‘It’s the Thought That Counts’ in Gift Exchanges.” *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General* 141, no. 4: 667.