

Keep calm and carry on

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Keep Calm and Carry On: European Consumers and the Development of Persistent Resilience in the Face of Austerity

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Keep Calm and Carry On: European Consumers and the Development of Persistent Resilience in the Face of Austerity

Purpose

In the context of European consumers' experiences of austerity, this study aims to advance current resilience theory in marketing through developing persistent resilience from a context of austerity influenced consumption.

Design/methodology/approach

Following an interpretivist approach, thirty-eight face to face, in-depth interviews were conducted with European consumers from Ireland, UK, Spain, Portugal, Italy and Greece who were affected in some way by the global financial crisis.

Findings

Building upon limited conceptual and empirical investigations in social geography, our analysis identifies the themes of *persistent stressors* and *temporal orientation* as constants, alongside *day-to-day coping, relating* and *pragmatism, consumer adjustment, repertoires of resistance* and *transformation* as key elements of persistent resilience within the consumption context of austerity.

Research limitations/implications

Our study addresses the limited theoretical and empirical focus on persistent resilience and austerity and directly contributes to consumer behaviour and marketing theory in understanding persistent resilience and its implications.

Practical Implications

Changes to behaviours as a result of persistent resilience included reducing and stopping consumption, discount shopping, alternative consumption in the form of growing or making and mindful consumption through wastage reduction and re-use.

Social Implications

Our study highlights the significant social impact of austerity while also identifying positive outcomes for social relations among family, friends and the wider community.

Originality/value

This study develops and extends Golubchikov's (2011) conceptual theory of persistent resilience through analysis of European consumer responses to austerity, identifying key consumption characteristics relevant for marketing theory and practice.

Keywords: Persistent resilience; Austerity; Financial crisis; European consumers; Coping strategies, Consumer transformation.

Paper Type: Research Paper

Introduction

The global financial crisis of 2008 is said to have triggered the most significant economic downturn since the Great Depression of the 1930s (Griskevicius and Millet, 2011). Several Euro-linked EU governments including Greece, Spain, Ireland and Portugal, had to accept austerity policies signalling their commitment to reduce deficits and reach annual targets set by the European Commission, International Monetary Fund and European Central Bank. Several scholars have identified the axiological problem surrounding political and ideological discourses on austerity where governments have held austerity as a moral solution to the sins of excessive spending while also calling for continued consumption to maintain growth policies (Peston, 2012; Bramall, 2013; Blyth, 2013). While austerity has received extensive attention as a political and economic force (Blyth, 2013; Krugman, 2012), there has been less focus on its impact on consumers (c.f. Boost and Meier, 2017; Karanika and Hogg, 2016; O’Loughlin *et al.*, 2017a; Cappellini *et al.*, 2014 for some exceptions). Studies have investigated the effect of austerity measures on aggregate consumption (Kamakura and Du, 2013; Porral *et al.*, 2016), marketing budgets and business strategies (Currim *et al.*, 2016; Rollins *et al.*, 2013), but there has been relatively little focus on how consumers have responded to the economic challenges of austerity in terms of their resilience (Cappellini *et al.*, 2014; O’Loughlin *et al.*, 2017b; Koos *et al.* (2017). Previously resilience was portrayed as a one-off response to a major event but with an ultimate return to a previous state (e.g. Norris *et al.*, 2008). Resilience in the face of austerity is, however, less likely to be about bouncing back, rather adapting to ongoing economic challenges that continue over time. This paper advances theory by arguing that the extenuated circumstances of austerity can reveal a form of resilience that is less about bouncing back to normal but rather moving to a new reality.

The framing of austerity reflects the neo-liberal context in which consumers are expected by governments to demonstrate restrained and responsible consumption in addition to “ethical self-understanding” (Giesler and Vereslu, 2014, p. 851). This study explores consumer resilience to austerity during prolonged economic downturn in Europe. The paper identifies streams of resilience theory most relevant to the marketing context including psychological and sociological in addition to consumer coping and the effects on consumption. Our conceptualisation of resilience differs from extant psychological, social, community resilience and coping theories, and presents an approach that has emerged from social geography. Through theoretical and empirical exploration of what is termed *persistent resilience*

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3 (Golobchikov, 2011), the paper responds to Koos *et al.*, (2017) who identified the lack of
4 research around temporality, resilience and the durability and persistence of changes to
5 consumption in response to crises.
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10 A key characteristic of persistent resilience is its enduring quality which contributes to it
11 being an appropriate lens through which to explore European consumers' response to the long-
12 term effects of austerity. Responding to the opportunity to advance theory, our study presents
13 persistent resilience within a framework of *persistent stressors* and a *temporal orientation*,
14 developing persistent resilience theory in the context of austerity. We begin by examining the
15 literature on consumer coping and consumption, followed by a review of resilience research
16 before presenting the concept of persistent resilience, which is followed by an explanation of
17 the methodology, findings and conclusions with particular emphasis on the consumer and
18 marketing context of persistent resilience.
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27 **Consumer Coping and Consumption**

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31 Previous research has explored individual and community coping strategies to various
32 crises and economic downturns (e.g. Shama, 1981, Ang *et al.*, 2000; Kayaz and Gui, 2014).
33 Behavioural and psychological responses (Mick and Fournier, 1998) as well as adaptations to
34 consumption practices and alterations to shopping patterns such as reduction and changes to
35 spending have been identified (Hampson and McGoldrick, 2013; Lamey, 2014). Exploring the
36 Argentinian economic crises of 2001-2002, Zurawicki and Braidot (2005) discovered among
37 the middle class an overall reduction in consumption and substitution of luxury goods, reduced
38 spending on social events and increased socialising at home. During the Turkish economic
39 downturn, Kaytaz and Gui (2014) reported product and price switching while a Pan-European
40 consumer study of the 2008 economic crisis found the "old" poor were better equipped than
41 those newly financially disadvantaged to cope with insecurity and dependency (Dagdeverin *et*
42 *al.*, 2017). In the US, Hampson *et al.*, (2018, p. 159) explored varying attitudes and behaviours
43 towards money in the post-recession economy and found that the "flourishing frugal" cluster
44 comprising the highest earners tended towards guilt free hedonic consumption while the
45 "financially distressed" favoured frugality but were vulnerable to impulse buying. In response
46 to such crises, marketers have been advised to demonstrate understanding and empathy towards
47 consumers and to develop appropriate segmentation and positioning strategies (Strutton and
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3 Lewin, 2012). This is evident in the rise of value and basic own label brands alongside the
4 popularity of discount food stores.
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9 Collective coping to crises reveal the importance of psychological resources (e.g.
10 McCubbin *et al.*, 1980; Epp *et al.*, 2014; Bartfield and Collins, 2017) and in particular the
11 “regenerative power” of the family in recovering from disruptive stressors (McCubbin *et al.*,
12 1980, p. 856). Often families undergo chronic long-term stressors as a result of unemployment
13 (e.g. Zestanakis, 2018) with financial adaptations ranging from relying on savings, borrowing
14 from family and friends, increased work effort and use of mainstream credit (Bartfield and
15 Collins, 2017). Similar to the chronic stressor of long-term unemployment during the recession
16 of 1970s (McCubbin *et al.*, 1980; Moen, 1979), the effects of austerity persist for many
17 consumers in the EU. In this paper, we argue therefore for the need to go beyond the reactive
18 and short-term aspects of consumer coping theories and examine the longer-term aspects of
19 austerity on consumers framed through the concept of persistent resilience.
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29 Persistent resilience is conceptualized as a form of enduring engagement with the
30 continual challenges and pressures of everyday life (Golubchikov 2011). A key feature of
31 persistent resilience is that in response to sustained stressors, individuals engage in incremental
32 and significant life changes over extended time-periods in contrast to short-term coping
33 strategies. The paper examines how persistent resilience is enacted by a sample of European
34 consumers all of whom have experienced austerity over the last 10 years. We firstly consider
35 traditional concepts of resilience as forms of response to problematic or traumatic situations,
36 followed by an examination of how persistent resilience is distinguished from such concepts
37 before investigating its relevance to the current austerity context.
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46 Resilience

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50 Despite the extensive literature on resilience there is a lack of agreement regarding its
51 meaning and practical implications (Herrman *et al.*, 2011; Raab *et al.*, 2015). The varying
52 definitions emanate from psychology (Lazarus 1993), organizational studies (Weick and
53 Sutcliffe 2007), sociology (Evans and Reid 2013), consumer research (Ball and Lamberton
54 2015), disaster studies (Baker and Baker 2014; Ozanne and Ozanne 2016), ecology (Adger
55 2000) and spatial studies (e.g. Andres and Round 2015). Different types of resilience have been
56 identified, including psychological (Block and Kremen 1996), behavioural (Robertson and
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3 Cooper 2013), community-based (Mason and Baker 2014; Baker 2009) and social resilience
4 (Koos *et al.*, 2017). Psychological resilience has been characterized by the ability to bounce
5 back from negative emotional experiences and by flexible adaptation to the changing demands
6 of stressful experiences (Block and Kremen, 1996; Lazarus, 1993). Returning to a previous
7 state is a common theme in the literature, where resilience is described as “the developable
8 capacity to rebound or bounce back from adversity, conflict, and failure or even positive events,
9 progress, and increased responsibility” (Luthans, 2002, p. 702). Resilience is also associated
10 with both reactive and proactive responses involving recovery, learning and growth (Youssef
11 and Luthans, 2007, p. 778). This suggests that resilience can be developed during a process of
12 adaptation to events which, in turn, may have either a sensitising or strengthening effect
13 (Rutter, 2012).
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24 Personality traits are also considered in the psychological and behavioural context of
25 resilience. Haglund *et al.*, (2007) present attitudinal and behavioural factors including positive
26 attitude, active coping, cognitive flexibility, moral compass, physical exercise, social support
27 and role models. This association with personality and individual differences implies a
28 “generalised, characterological quality of an individual” and does not solely apply to a single
29 or specific behaviour in response to an adverse event (Block and Kremen, 1996, p. 351). More
30 recently, it has been suggested that, while resilience may be related to underlying personality,
31 it is not a fixed characteristic or trait (Cooper *et al.*, 2014) and can be developed and
32 strengthened over time and in response to events.
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41 Within communities, resilience has been explored in terms of the response and ultimate
42 recovery demonstrated by collective groups to one-off disasters such as earthquakes and
43 tornados (Norris *et al.*, 2008; Baker and Baker; 2014; Ozanne and Ozanne, 2016). The focus is
44 on the community’s or group’s capacity to bounce back from an adverse event through drawing
45 on key information resources such as accessible, local and trusted communication (Longstaff,
46 2005). There is also increasing acknowledgment of not only how communities face single-
47 event disasters but also how they “organize capacities in the face of on-going disasters”
48 (Ozanne and Ozanne, 2016, p. 5). This may include harnessing technology and social media to
49 facilitate story sharing and catharsis among those affected by disasters (Veer *et al.*, 2016).
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58 Social resilience looks to how social systems respond, re-organise and renew through
59 change (Folke, 2006), resulting in structural transformation in society (Koos *et al.*, 2017). Here,
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3 social resources and outcomes in building resilience can lead to “changes in market demand
4 and transformed activities and solidarities” (Koos *et al.*, 2017, p. 363). In developing social
5 resilience, individuals respond to the broader social context and moderate their behaviours and
6 consumption relative to others in the face of a crisis (Kamakura and Du, 2013). Recent research
7 on social resilience has identified countries’ responses to long-term economic crises, with, for
8 example, German consumers engaging in smart consumption and self-production to boost self-
9 esteem (Boost and Meier, 2017), and Brazilian consumers leveraging socio-cultural resources,
10 market-mediated socialisation and material improvement to build a new middle class identity
11 (Castilhos *et al.*, 2017). In the UK, social resilience has in some cases led to positive changes
12 in values and new forms of exchange (Hampson and McGoldrick, 2017; Koos *et al.*, 2017)
13 whereas, in Spain, the comparative severity of the economic crises has significantly tested
14 people’s social resilience and, in some cases, negatively affected social mobility, identity and
15 class perceptions (Alonso *et al.*, 2017).
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27 From a temporal perspective, while many resilience studies suggest an end-point to and
28 an ultimate recovery from, adversity and negative experiences, others recognise that the
29 modern environment has become increasingly unpredictable (Ozanne and Ozanne, 2016;
30 Evans and Reid, 2013). Rather than being a response to extraordinary events, resilience may
31 develop from relatively ordinary, everyday situations (Bonanno, 2004). There is recognition
32 that it can enable people to re-emerge from ongoing adversity, to which they must be
33 increasingly responsive (Neocleous, 2012; Evans and Reid, 2013; Duffield, 2011). The more
34 severe, unexpected and enduring the stress, the stronger individual resources may need to be
35 to create resilience that will enable a flexible and continuous adaptation to the altered
36 environment (Norris *et al.*, 2008). Given the sustained nature of austerity, we suggest that such
37 conditions call for an enduring form of resilience or persistent resilience which we present next.
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47 **Persistent Resilience**

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50 Golubchikov (2011, p.4) introduced the term persistent resilience in response to increasing
51 uncertainty brought about by economic, social and climate change, defining it as “a form of
52 engagement with more enduring, lasting challenges and pressures, especially those challenges
53 that underlie everyday life, [and] are mundane”. He argues that persistent resilience allows for
54 a proactive and continuous renegotiation of everyday life practices and relationships and
55 accommodates “continuities of change and reciprocity”. According to Golubchikov (2011), the
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3 potential to become increasingly marginalised, excluded and/or displaced from the marketplace
4 is particularly significant for EU consumers if they fail to proactively tackle austerity in the
5 long-term. Persistent resilience is presented as a response to the pressures of modern society
6 but also as a coping strategy over prolonged periods of austerity experienced by many
7 Europeans. It can therefore be viewed from both a social and an individual perspective. More
8 recently, De Verteuil and Golubchilov (2016) highlighted the persistent renegotiation and
9 restructuring of common, everyday practices, drawing on the power of resources and networks
10 to effect incremental change which may form the basis for more significant transformation at
11 both an individual and societal level. They suggest that persistent resilience can be actively
12 produced such that while people may not be able to change their circumstances, they develop
13 agency in coping with austerity. This emphasises persistent resilience as a negotiated
14 phenomenon rather than a normative form of overcoming adversity.
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26 To date, we have only identified one empirical study of persistent resilience (c.f. Andres
27 and Round, 2015). Andres and Round (2015) describe persistent resilience as the micro-level
28 of households and individuals within a defined spatial boundary of a housing estate in the UK.
29 They analyse how “households and their networks develop responses not just to ‘shocks’, but
30 also to more long-term processes, such as the changing nature of employment and/or responses
31 to constantly altering state policies” (Andres and Round, 2015, p. 676). They describe how
32 households respond to the everyday pressures of low incomes, benefit payments and the
33 persistent resilience required as local manufacturing declines with the resultant impact on
34 employment. Rather than bouncing back to a previous state, their participants pursued a variety
35 of strategies of persistent resilience which resulted in better housing and retail offerings along
36 with supportive community projects and individual persistent coping tactics, such as shared
37 caregiving networks within the housing estate.
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48 In taking up De Verteuil and Golubchikov’s (2016, p. 144) challenge that the theory of
49 persistent resilience is flexible enough to work as an analytical tool for “a variety of systems
50 and temporal frames”, we apply the theory to a consumer context. In so doing, we build on
51 Golubchikov’s (2011) initial conceptualisation. Our approach also corresponds to Andres and
52 Round’s (2015) micro-level analysis but is beyond the spatial boundary of a specified
53 place/housing estate to a cross-section of European participants. A decade following the global
54 crisis of 2007/2008, austerity remains an enduring force, creating significant and sustained
55 turbulence and insecurity for many EU societies and is an appropriate context in which to
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3 investigate persistent resilience.
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7 In Golubchikov's (2011) framing of persistent resilience, the *relational* element refers to
8 people's web of social relations that enable coping strategies and *dynamic* refers to the active
9 rather than passive management of one's social relations. *Spatial* relates to the actuality of
10 "everyday life, real-world coping strategies" (p. 5) enabled through the removal of the
11 prescriptive and the renegotiation of the spaces which people occupy. *Political* gives people a
12 voice, removes their dependence on top-down coping strategies and views them as actors rather
13 than victims. While this theory from social geography offers marketing opportunities to
14 progress social and temporal theory and practice, it is recognised that the specific aspects of
15 persistent resilience in a consumption context may be somewhat different. So while coping
16 with the actuality of daily life link to the economic constraints that may impact consumption
17 choices, the voice of the consumer is less likely to be heard in an overt way although choices
18 such as shopping at discount stores or reducing waste may be viewed as political activities. It
19 is therefore the theoretical advancement of persistent resilience through its conceptual
20 exploration within the consumption context of austerity that is the key purpose of our paper.
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32 In this paper, the investigation of persistent resilience is advanced within a range of
33 consumption contexts affected by austerity. Rather than focusing on the resilient consumer as
34 a normative response to risk and danger (Evans and Reid, 2013), it conceptualises how
35 persistent resilience is enacted (Arsel and Bean, 2013) by a sample of European consumers. In
36 contrast to the traditional perspective of coping which is predominantly conceptualised as a
37 reactive, economic and psychological response to short-term crises (Hampson and
38 McGoldrick, 2013; Ball and Lamberton, 2015), the paper builds on theories of consumer
39 coping and social resilience, emphasising the dynamic and temporal aspect of persistent
40 resilience. Social and community responses embodied by social resilience may be part of the
41 persistent resilience picture but we emphasise that it incorporates a broader set of enduring
42 responses. Table 1 offers an illustration of this theoretical trajectory, comparing extant theories
43 of coping, resilience and persistent resilience within urban studies with our conceptualisation
44 of persistent resilience extended to a marketing and consumption context. Prior to discussing
45 our themes and how we build upon Golubchikov's (2011) limited conceptual exploration of
46 persistent resilience, we describe our adopted methodology.
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Insert Table 1 here

Methods

Following an interpretive turn (Spiggle, 1994), face-to-face, in-depth interviews were chosen as an appropriate form of social enquiry (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994; Miles and Huberman, 1994). The interview process was based on a long interview protocol (McCracken, 1988), which aimed to explore the effects of austerity in terms of changes to everyday behaviour and experiences, comparing how things were done prior to and during austerity. After receiving ethical approval from our respective University Ethics Research Committees, the semi-structured interviews began with some global questions regarding the home, leisure and working lives of participants before moving on to more detailed questions regarding their consumption and day-to-day family and work life.

Participants came from six European countries (Ireland, UK, Spain, Portugal, Italy and Greece) affected to a lesser or greater extent from the global financial crisis. Employing a purposive sampling approach, 38 participants were interviewed across the 6 countries, representing a range of demographics e.g. age, gender, life-stage and income, including unemployed people (See Table 2). The demographic and socio-economic diversity of our participant profiles makes a useful contribution in understanding the lived reality of how individuals of various ages, gender, socio-economic grouping and family size coped with austerity. Participants were recruited in a number of ways across the countries, including through social networks, special announcements and further snowballing. The interviews took place either in the participant's home or a room at the University and ranged in length from 45 minutes to 2 hours.

Insert Table 2 here

Interviews carried out in Spain, Portugal, Italy and Greece were conducted by experienced, bilingual researchers and translated into English. The transcripts were subsequently coded by all members of the research team, to facilitate a form of back-translation (see Horváth and Birgelen, 2015) as subsets of transcript codes were discussed and compared across all countries. As there is no one single best way "to generate or evaluate interpretations" of our data (Ahuvia, 2001, p.161), a thematic analysis approach was used to move from description to interpretation (Clarke and Braun, 2013). Although often confused with content analysis,

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3 thematic analysis applies minimal description (i.e. supports interpretation of the data) and does
4 not involve any quantification of the data (Gbrich, 2007). While content analysis and thematic
5 analysis share the similar aim of analysing narratives, the thematic analysis approach involves
6 becoming familiar with the data and generating initial codes, conducting a deductive-inductive
7 identification and review of themes, followed by the defining, naming and reporting of themes
8 (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Braun and Clarke, 2012). Thus, the research team performed cycles
9 of coding and theoretical reviews. It was during the theoretical review process that the research
10 on persistent resilience was identified as having resonance with the data. Following this stage
11 of theoretical review, further coding and the refinement and development of themes in
12 comparison with the original theory was completed.
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22 The rationale for the final analysis is developed from Golubchikov's (2011) untested
23 characteristics of persistent resilience, namely relational, dynamic, spatial and political. As
24 presented in the next section, these are both drawn from and built upon in the analysis. The
25 purpose is to build on this existing, but limited in empirical testing, theory to identify whether
26 what is happening among Europeans faced with austerity can be conceptualised through
27 persistent resilience and what implications there are for marketing. In qualitative research, it is
28 important to report on "procedures of inference" (Spiggle, 1994, p.501), hence, as is
29 characteristic of thematic analysis approaches, our thematic map (Braun and Clarke, 2006)
30 visually illustrates the relationship between the codes, themes and our data (see Figure 1).
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38 For interpretation purposes, the codes based on extracts from our data are illustrated via
39 the display of a dotted line indicating their relationship to the defined themes which are then
40 displayed with a solid line linked to the process of persistent resilience. The 'constants' of
41 *Temporal Orientation* and *Persistent Stressors* are represented through a solid line linking them
42 to Persistent Resilience and their enlarged positioning at either side of the figure represent their
43 influencing presence upon the austerity context.
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57 In the development of persistent resilience based on the thematic analysis,
58 acknowledgement is made of *day-to-day coping* as a key element of persistent resilience. It is
59 also argued that the scope of persistent resilience is multifaceted and goes beyond a singular
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3 focus on collective responses embodied by community resilience or shared responses
4 represented through social resilience. However, the importance of social inputs and outputs is
5 recognised and represented through the concept of *relating* alongside *pragmatism* as important
6 aspects of persistent resilience. Further, we present *repertoires of resistance* adapted from
7 social resilience (Koos *et al.*, (2017, p.), *consumer adjustment and transformation* as features
8 identified in the thematic analysis. This empirical development of persistent resilience for a
9 consumption context identifies dynamic responses that emerge from periods of persistent stress
10 and offers marketing theory a deeper and wider conceptualisation of resilience under austerity.
11 The accompanying narrative regarding our conceptualisation of persistent resilience is
12 presented next in our findings and discussion section.
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24 Findings and Discussion

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26 Building on the resilience literature, the conceptual work of Golubchikov (2011) and the
27 empirical study of Andres and Round (2015), the paper presents a theoretical proposition for
28 the concept of persistent resilience within the consumer context of austerity. Our
29 conceptualisation incorporates and develops existing theories in areas including social
30 resilience and coping but responds to the particular situation of austerity. The rationale for this
31 theory development comes from Oswick *et al.*, (2011) who call for more theoretical blending
32 through analogical reasoning rather than one way borrowing. Therefore, while we began to
33 identify similar themes to those of Golubchikov (2011), we recognised that these themes could
34 be further developed and built for a consumer context. To help appreciate and understand the
35 contextual nuances regarding our themes (see Figure 1), we firstly acknowledge and discuss
36 the influencing role of two themes which we identify as constants, (i.e. an occurrence which
37 takes place and may re-occur over time) namely *persistent stressors* (McCubbin *et al.*, 1980)
38 and *temporal orientation*.
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50 *Persistent Stressors*

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52 As noted by Boss (1988), persistent stressors are not necessarily negative but, in the case
53 of persistent resilience, it is likely that they mostly are and include economic, social and cultural
54 pressures. Persistent stressors naturally arise from the context of austerity unlike an earthquake
55 or similar physical trauma which may have after-effects that continue for a long time, austerity
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3 has exhibited its drip-like effects for years. Many causes could be characterised as persistent
4 stressors, such as racism, bullying or even a chronic disease and the critical factor in our
5 conceptualisation of persistent resilience is that there is a prolonged time period of the same or
6 similar pressure being exerted upon people.
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11 Examples of persistent stress are displayed by Maria (49, Stay at home Mum) who
12 described the Portuguese as experts in economic crises because most had lived through two.
13 She saw an upside to this, “*they’re useful [i.e. periods of economic instability]. It’s a good*
14 *school of life, we know how to live with a little*”. In response to her own compulsory
15 redundancy, Lisa (40, UK, Self-Employed Transcriber) set up her own home-based business
16 to then experience a month later, three separate redundancies made to her partner over a two
17 year period. Similarly, the ongoing nature of persistent stress is present for Gino (47, Italian,
18 Self-employed) who described how employment contracts had not been updated for years and
19 “*as a consequence wages are stagnant while prices are constantly rising*”. Stress for Amelia
20 (21, Portuguese, Unemployed Shop Assistant) had originated with her parents living with debt,
21 but when her father lost his job, even basic things became a problem. Now unemployed, she
22 complained about jobs where payment wasn’t forthcoming: “*in my case it’s the second time*
23 *and in my boyfriend’s case it’s the third because we don’t receive the money we work for; we*
24 *can’t make plans and that’s why we’re afraid of disillusionment*”. As a consequence, she has
25 indefinitely postponed her wedding.
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39 While *persistent stressors* in this study are primarily economic, they can affect relations
40 with family and friends and people’s identity within their social and relational networks. The
41 impact of losing a job makes life more precarious and opportunities for improvement are
42 economically constrained which in turn adds to worries about one’s children’s wellbeing and
43 relations with family and friends.
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49 *Temporal Orientation*

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51 The second constant illustrates a *temporal orientation*. In identifying the notion of
52 temporality as a constant influence on consumer behaviour, we see people’s lives as affected
53 by their past, present and future within the context of austerity. We unveil different approaches
54 which exemplify persistent resilience including not planning for the future but living in the
55 present. Building upon Weinberger *et al.*, (2017, p347), some participants had a clear
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3 “imagined future” while others lived with an apparent absence of choice that meant life was
4 lived on a day-by-day basis. Conversely, others save, consume differently and some make
5 extreme plans to safeguard their future. While we did not note a class distinction across
6 participants in regard to their temporal orientation, for those who had more precarious
7 occupations or were unemployed, the fear of the present, let alone the future, led to a yearning
8 for stability, as expressed by Elisa (46, Greek, Part-time Teacher): *“To plan you need stability,
9 some stable variables. There is nothing stable here. There is no planning now. How can you
10 plan with all these unexpected developments”*? An imagined future however could be difficult
11 even for those working in professional occupations: *“Now thinking about the future, I don’t
12 think a lot... instead I try to prevent things... I work to maintain some saving for them”* [her
13 children] (Helena, 39, Portuguese, Architect).

24 Many people spoke of the lives of their children and grandchildren, what they might look
25 like and what they could do for them: *“I don’t feel there are big changes to my way of life, just
26 the worry about the future of my children”* (Ana, 58, Spanish, Unemployed) and some younger
27 participants even felt that they would not be able to afford to have children. While some had
28 general fears, others were quite specific in their concerns for their children:

34 *“I don’t know if I’m going to be able to what I was planning on doing. My daughter says
35 that she wants to be a doctor and I don’t know if I’m going to be able to pay her university;
36 I’m scared of not being able to do so”* (Manuel, 53, Portuguese, Unemployed). In a case such
37 as this it could be argued that however resilient the person may be, the reality of their economic
38 position will stop them from finding a way through.

45 Some participants’ imagined futures engaged with different strategic actions including the
46 possibility of emigrating: *“I’m thinking of leaving the country if I don’t find the proper job in
47 the next 2 months - maybe Canada”* (Luismi, 27, Spain, Unemployed/Part-time Student).

51 A few participants reflected on how their current situation compared to the past. Here
52 Alma (54, Irish, Part-time Volunteer) presents her husband’s view of the past *“No, it was worse,
53 we went through worse...we didn’t have a car until Aoife was born. ...We didn’t have a
54 landline phone. We didn’t have things we couldn’t afford”*, while Linda’s plans to travel with
55 her husband after he retired were put on hold: *“I’d love to do it now, but there’s just no way.
56 No chance”* (Linda, 55, UK, Carer). Focusing on a *temporal orientation* reveals some were

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3 able to “count their blessings” while others strived for stability, or feared the future. For a
4 minority of participants a more radical strategic action was called for which could mean leaving
5 their country or seeing as in the case of Filipe (65, Portuguese, Doctor), both his children
6 working abroad.
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12 Alongside the two constants presented above, there are elements that characterise
13 persistent resilience including *day-to-day coping, relating* and *pragmatism, repertoires of*
14 *resistance, consumer adjustment* and, for some, *transformation*. Our analysis identifies that the
15 latter three aspects impact in particular on consumption activities. We do not however suggest
16 that persistent resilience is universally found among participants and, as will be seen, there is
17 deep uncertainty and even fear of what lies ahead, particularly for future generations.
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24 *Day-to-day Coping*

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27 In Golubchikov’s (2011) framing of persistent resilience, as discussed, “dynamic” refers
28 to the active rather than passive management of one’s social relations and “spatial” relates to
29 the actuality of “everyday life, real-world coping strategies” (p.5). In this study, these two
30 elements have been conflated into a single theme of *day-to-day coping*, as, while to some,
31 coping may sound like a passive response, our data demonstrates people taking active decisions
32 to enable coping strategies. Working out how to cope is essential to maintaining resilience over
33 time. As people found different ways to manage reduced circumstances, they gained a sense of
34 achievement. Sometimes this was purely practical, such as cutting down on non-essentials or
35 learning to mend things that previously they would have outsourced. For example, Mirella (51,
36 Italy, Sales Representative) stated: “*We always try to fix things ourselves*” and Robert (38,
37 Ireland, Senior Court Clerk) acknowledged that “*You become an expert quickly, when you*
38 *tackle it yourself*”. For Rita every aspect of cutting down on consumption was investigated:
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49 *We go out less, I do not go out as much and I try to stay home with my husband on the*
50 *weekends: the get-togethers happen less. With food expenses, I try to do cheaper shopping,*
51 *have a shopping list, so that I know exactly what I have to buy... With electricity, I try to*
52 *turn everything off. I save this way, do less washes, I try to accumulate more and try to*
53 *wash everything in one load; I also save water, I do not leave the tap running* (Rita, 33,
54 Portugal, Petrol Station Shop Assistant).
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3 While the experience of austerity was generally difficult and, for some, traumatic, coping
4 with it led to some creative responses:

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6 *...it's like going through a dark tunnel and you're saying "when will this end" and "when*
7 *will this ease"?* So rather than be thinking about that, why shouldn't I do something about
8 *it?...and that is where this [a charity started by Simone] came from!* (Simone, 46, Ireland,
9 Founder of Charity).

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15 Day-to-day coping as a process of engagement with difficult situations was evident in a
16 number of participants who were determined to help others as in the case of Simone's charity.
17 Similarly, Elisa framed her coping strategies and initiatives in relation to her values and
18 motivation to help others:
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23 *I feel really bad amidst the crisis, but on the other hand, it gives me strength to do three*
24 *things. One is to continue being active and dynamic and to try to do the best I can. The*
25 *second is to try to strengthen these emerging values in my behaviour, in my family and in*
26 *the people around me, and third, to try to help as much as I can as many people as I can*
27 *(Elisa, 46, Greece, Part-time Teacher).*

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33 While many participants have problems themselves, they recognise coping is not a short-
34 term state and that it can be difficult to manage on your own. That *day-to-day coping* becomes
35 a deeper, sustained and even creative factor in people's lives is, this paper suggests, an essential
36 part of a resilience that is maintained over the long-term.
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42 *Relating*

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45 Following Golubchikov (2011), *relating* is a reflection of persistent resilience's web of
46 social relations which enable people to have agency and cope independently of top-down
47 strategies. Social resilience looks to how social systems evolve in response to crises and
48 considers the broader social context in which individuals develop and moderate their behaviour
49 and consumption during a crisis situation (Kamakura and Du, 2013; Koos *et al.*, 2017). Similar
50 to other studies that have identified different social/cultural styles of consumption emerging
51 from social resilience (Boost and Meier, 2017; Castilhos *et al.*, 2017; Alonso *et al.*, 2017), our
52 theme of *relating* is additionally perceived to relate to the inner circle (family, friends, and
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3 neighbours) rather than the broader societal orientation in terms of looking at people's social
4 networks.
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8 Our participants' network relations included various forms of giving to and receiving from
9 their close and extended family, friends and the wider community. For example, Manuel (53,
10 Portugal, Unemployed Construction Worker), and father of two, drew on the support and
11 "comfort" of family to help him through a difficult time of financial insecurity: "*For me, my*
12 *family is what is really important, family and people...If I have a problem, she [his wife] has a*
13 *problem too and we talk things through to get over them...That helped me release some*
14 *pressure*". Manuel goes on to explain how in the past he would have tried to manage on his
15 own but that he has learned to share his financial worries with his wife to reduce the stress he
16 feels. Families worked together to improve their situation, often in small, incremental ways
17 which included financial gifts, part-time work and thriftiness. Luisa's family included three
18 generations all contributing in various ways:
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28 *My mother helps me out with all these (everyday expenses for herself and her son) and my*
29 *sister too. Sometimes my son works part-time, so he earns something even though it is not*
30 *much. Still he is trying to help as much as he can. (Luisa, 47, Italy, Unemployed Freelance*
31 *Worker).*
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37 The importance of *relating* was evident at a personal level as shown above while others
38 contributed outside of their friends and family, having a "*need to help other people who are in*
39 *a difficult situation*" (Rosa, 60, Spain, Gardner). While such solidarity in the face of austerity
40 among people was evident at a localized level, it could also be recognised at community and
41 national levels with comments such as: "*I'm very proud of Spanish people...we are in a terrible*
42 *crisis, but, still, we have a sense of humor...to be sociable, to go out, to see the positive in our*
43 *lives*" (Elena, 30, Spain, Unemployed University Lecturer). Elena's reflection on the ability of
44 Spanish people to "*smile even if the situation is very bad*" is testimony to her perception that
45 her compatriots embody collective positivity in response to the severe impact of austerity in
46 their country.
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56 *Pragmatism*
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3 Emerging as an important finding of our analysis of persistent resilience, we identify
4 *pragmatism* as different to day-to-day coping in that it is not about dealing with the immediacy
5 of the situation people find themselves in but rather it is concerned with their outlook on life
6 that may come from the changed environment and the measures they have taken. In
7 acknowledging the influencing presence of our *constants* discussed above, *pragmatism* has a
8 temporal orientation as people think about how they will move forward in their changed
9 worlds; this is central to a concept that deals with the narrative between past and future lives.
10 Differences in time orientation may shape decision outcomes for the near and the distal future,
11 where according to Kogut *et al.*, (2017) high-level idealistic concerns and values often
12 dominate decisions for the distant future, whereas low-level pragmatic concerns play a greater
13 role in decisions for the near future. Building on the differences in orientation towards near and
14 distal futures, we propose that our participants adopt a pragmatic temporality in the ways they
15 reflect on the past and present which in turn shape their perspective of future outcomes.
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27 This pragmatic temporality is illustrated by Elisa (46, Greece, Part-time Teacher)
28 explained how “*the situation pushed me into an inner investigation...that is why I consider*
29 *myself lucky because, of course not every day, but overall, I feel good with myself. I can handle*
30 *all this and adjust to the new reality*”. Her recognition and acceptance of the changes in her
31 life led her to embark on a personal critical analysis and she emerged from this believing that
32 overall she could manage her situation and make the necessary adjustments. Yiannis (38,
33 Greece, University Academic) said that he took time to read about the roots of the crisis and
34 from this reflected that “*there is an opportunity for a change, but we need to understand what*
35 *brought us here to be able to bring change. I am trying to understand what has happened, what*
36 *the reasons were for this and looking into it in a more activist perspective but activist with*
37 *regards to the fundamentals*”.
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48 Similarly, Yiannis was not suggesting going on the streets to protest but rather wanted to
49 understand, learn and be part of the voices that could make future changes as “*if we leave such*
50 *decisions to the same few people, nothing will change*”. He reflected on his own situation too:
51 “*you have to focus on what is realistic. In our job we dream, we aspire to do more important*
52 *things but you get to realise that these aspirations in the current circumstances of the recession*
53 *are not realistic*”. While this may seem somewhat fatalistic, it is coupled with an energy to do
54 more: “*I try to be more pragmatic, I also try to be a doer, in the sense of being a person who*
55 *makes things happen*”. While the data used to illustrate *Pragmatism* is largely from Greek
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3 participants reflecting the particularly severe, longer-term impact of austerity in Greece, this
4 approach to austerity from other countries was not uncommon, reflected by Martina (UK, 44,
5 Librarian) who states “*I just really am quite focused on making sure my own; my family’s*
6 *financial management is as good as it can be. I can’t do anything about forces outside that. I*
7 *just think that would be wasted energy*”. For many, pragmatism reflects coming to terms with
8 a situation over a prolonged period of time whereby people have had an opportunity to consider
9 what they can and cannot control and identify ways to deal with their problems.
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17 In reflecting the process of persistent resilience, we argue that *day-to-day coping, relating*
18 and *pragmatism* are key aspects of *persistent resilience* in response to the constants of *temporal*
19 *orientation* and *persistent stressor of austerity* leading in turn to a range of outcomes including
20 *consumer adjustment*, repertoires of *resistance - negotiating the marketplace* and, for some,
21 *transformation*, which acknowledge the consumption impact of persistent resilience.
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29 *Consumer Adjustment*

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32 To help cope with austerity, consumers make adjustments to their own needs and wants
33 and in how they engage with the market place. Adjustment arises from being able to make
34 some self-analysis alongside reacting to the difficult environment. Key adjustments included
35 stopping or reducing certain consumption choices, downgrading consumption through
36 shopping at discount stores or during sale time, looking for alternative ways to consume
37 through growing or making rather than purchasing and more mindful consumption such as
38 reducing wastage and re-use.
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46 Examples of this include, Iron (18, Italy, student), who took one or two day breaks rather
47 than longer holidays and waited for “*the sales in order to buy everything then, unless I*
48 *absolutely need to buy something specific... As a general rule, I buy something only if I really*
49 *need it*”. Similar to many others who had to give up things they enjoyed doing; Emma (22,
50 UK, Unemployed Office Administrator) regretted that she could no longer continue ballroom
51 dancing or other pastimes as she hadn’t a job: “*I can’t afford it. I love going swimming, but I*
52 *can’t afford to go swimming. I can’t afford to do hobbies*”.
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3 Food was a more controversial issue in terms of changing or downgrading consumption
4 with comments such as “*I have that saying in the back of my head ‘buy cheap, buy twice’*”
5 (Ruth, 42, Irish, Community College Teacher) and others prioritising quality in some areas
6 such as meat or fish but relying on discount stores for other items such as Brid (56, Irish,
7 Training Consultant):
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13 *In relation to shopping, I was a Superquinn girl... I was Marks & Spencer...I'd just get a*
14 *trolley and fill it up... I wouldn't even look... it didn't matter ... And now? I do Aldi first,*
15 *then I hit Lidl and then I do Tesco. And I go to Superquinn only for fish.*
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20 Participants also described how they were being more mindful in their consumption and
21 behaviour more generally, thinking whether they really needed something new, turning lights
22 off and reducing wastage:
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26 *We change supermarkets, we change shops, we change everything... we are looking for*
27 *ways to be careful...Let me give you an example on how consumers behaviour has*
28 *changed; before the crisis a bottle of body wash was usually disposed long before it was*
29 *completely empty, but now it is being used up to the last drop. Some years ago you would*
30 *find 20 different soaps and 10 different shampoos in a 4-member family bathroom. Now*
31 *they have to share the same bottle of shampoo to economize. Customers are thrifty now*
32 *and quality matters to them a lot (Giancarlo 47, Italy, Sales Manager).*
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40 *It is not the habits as such, it is a reassessment of lifestyle that is taking place. We*
41 *consciously try to be more alert to irrational spending in all our activities (Nikolaos, 41,*
42 *Greek, setting up new business).*
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47 Nikolaos asserted that his actions were not just due to a change in circumstances but a
48 reassessment of what was important in his life. This and the cases above reflect not only
49 changes to behaviour but also deeper adjustments to the meaning of consumption evidenced
50 through a new-found focus on value, quality, thrift, waste reduction, sustainability and
51 mindfulness. Whether or not such mindful approaches to consuming reflected in certain cases
52 a change of mind-set, it seems likely that they were for some an outcome of necessity. Not
53 only are adjustments such as these a result of austerity but they also reveal an active agency
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3 and responsabilisation (Giesler and Veresiu, 2014) that involved developing and orchestrating
4 skills and resources while exploiting opportunities.
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8 *Repertoires of Resistance – negotiating the marketplace*
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11 While adaptation required giving up or downgrading in some areas of consumption,
12 alternative ways of doing things presented themselves or were created by our participants.
13 *Repertoires of resistance* are not necessarily an expression of resistance to the marketplace but
14 rather resistance to austerity that leads to actively finding alternative ways to consume or avoid
15 expenditure. For example, while Luisme could no longer afford the gym, that didn't stop him
16 from working out as he talked about how, *"I used to spend over €300 per year, I bought weights*
17 *to do some exercise at home"*.
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26 Helena, a 39 year old architect from Portugal described how 15 women at her office
27 designed a system for sharing baby clothes when one of them became pregnant: *"a year and a*
28 *half ago we-planned that the next baby will take that kit with some clothes that came from the*
29 *last baby"*. Yiannis, a 38 years old Greek university lecturer, revived a tradition of joining with
30 friends in each other's houses and eating homemade pizza instead of going out: *'But even in*
31 *villages during the past 20-25 years that was something that was about to become almost*
32 *extinct. It has now revived, people getting together at each other's homes"*.
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39 Some expenditures could also be communal such as for Ruth (42, Ireland, Community
40 College Teacher) who described how she shared house maintenance costs with other
41 neighbours:
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45 *My neighbour built the fence out the front so I agreed to share the cost. Yeah and we*
46 *shared the cost of the fence at the back and now I'm doing...paying for the covering of the*
47 *roof. So we kind of work together that way.*
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52 Meanwhile Maria and her friends engaged in a friendly form of barter, sharing and
53 exchanging home-grown and homemade produce: *"someone knocks on my door to share with*
54 *me things that they planted in their garden...So they have already brought me cabbages,*
55 *lettuce, green beans and zucchinis...it's really spectacular"* (Maria, 49, Portugal, Stay at Home
56 Mum). In return Maria gives away lemons.
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5 Golubchikov (2011) argues that in the context of hegemony and uneven power relations,
6 the relational does not idealise people's capacity for change, rather it places people in a broader
7 social context and enables persistent resilience. In our consumption context and through social
8 relations, resistance to the *persistent stressors* can be enacted in a marketplace. Such resistance
9 reveals a certain proficiency in their ability to connect to others, to weather difficult situations
10 and generate positive outcomes, often outside the usual commercial market-place transactions.
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16 17 *Transformation (or not)* 18 19

20 Both De Verteuil and Golubchikov's (2016) and Andres and Round's (2015) propose that
21 resilience can lead to transformative change. We acknowledge this and extend this theme to
22 include significant changes in how and what people consume. Certainly, our participants noted
23 changes that they believed would be long-term in areas such as more thoughtful consumption,
24 reducing waste, saving more or teaching their children to be careful consumers. Irene (40,
25 Greek, Working in HR) outlines examples of the level of transformation evident among family
26 and friends:
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33 *I have seen many changes in people around me, for one my mother and my brother. They*
34 *now buy nothing. My brother has not been on vacation for three years. Maybe he has not*
35 *bought any new clothes in this period. For my mother it is the same. They just do not buy*
36 *things. Then there are people around me who do not switch on the heating at home or they*
37 *start bringing food from home at work to avoid this cost, or they sell their cars.*
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44 Similarly, Giancarlo (47, Italy, Sales Manager) offers another case study of such
45 transformation. As a father of two, the psychological and economic effects of the financial
46 crisis contributed to the breakdown of his marriage. From the depths of despair he talked about
47 rebuilding his life "*in a different way*":
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52 *When you are facing everything alone, your world falls apart...I had to rebuild my*
53 *working life, to deal with experiences and to become more dynamic...I would never again*
54 *earn the same money...We reduced our expenses... at the same time we gave our children*
55 *a happier life growing up in the company of their grandparents instead of that of a non-*
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3 *family member. These things allowed us to make something out of our lives and pass it on*
4 *to our children...*
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9 Even something as apparently small as shifting from paid child care to grandparents caring
10 for children appears to have been part of Giancarlo's transformation into "re-educating
11 [himself] to live in another way".
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15 Alongside changes in behaviour, transformation was often reflected in changes to values:
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19 *With the economic turndown we learn how to save and how to compare...We learn*
20 *because if everything goes back to normal tomorrow and I start to earn a good salary*
21 *again, I will do exactly what I'm doing now because your way of thinking has to change.*
22 *Later in life we don't know if we're going to come across difficult times again and we*
23 *shouldn't only act this way when that time comes (Manuel, 53, Portugal, Unemployed*
24 *Construction Worker).*
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30 *Before I was surrounded by things and now I realize I do not need anything. You start to*
31 *appreciate other things (Antonio, Spain, 38, Unemployed Commercial Director).*
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36 Both Manuel and Antonio made clear in their discussion that their lives had changed
37 because of economic pressures and that this had resulted in a transformation in their values and
38 attitudes towards what they needed and what they wanted to consume alongside the reality of
39 what they could afford to consume. It is possible that the transformations described here will
40 lead to a long-term realignment of values coupled with a fundamentally different approach to
41 living and consuming and, as a result, there may be significant implications for how such
42 people respond to marketing. This change in what was valued and how people approached the
43 marketplace ran through the narratives of many participants. Although this question was not
44 specifically asked, there was not one person who said they wanted to go back to their previous
45 lives.
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55 While such transformation was recognised among participants, clearly it cannot be an
56 inevitable outcome for everyone with some struggling to develop resilience to enable them to
57 transform while others remained unaffected. Many people were sad, worried, and anxious as
58 reflected by Mia who felt, "*stressed, angry, sad, exhausted and tired*" (Mia, 51, Italy, sales
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3 representative), while Christina talked about feeling “*really stressed and pressurized*”
4 (Christina, 53, Greece, part-time employed artist). Conversely, Nikolas (41, Greece) remarked
5 that his spending patterns had not been affected while Roberta continued with her regular trips
6 to the manicurist and hairdresser saying that she was aware of the pressure others were under
7 but “*fortunately I have not experienced it personally yet*” (Roberta, 42, Italy, high school
8 teacher and gym instructor). Such differences and inconsistencies in participant experiences of
9 the everyday impact of austerity are important to highlight as they determine the need for
10 developing resilience capabilities and the requirement to transform.
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19 **Conclusions**

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22 Oswick *et al.*, (2011) argued against the simple appropriation of theories from other
23 disciplines and recommended a blending process and analogical correspondence over one way
24 domestication. Theoretically resilience has benefited from considerable conceptual
25 development although little blending has taken place across economics, psychology,
26 organisational, disaster studies and sociology. This study has engaged with the concept of
27 resilience, blended it with appropriate theories primarily in the area of social resilience and
28 developed it through an empirical study to underline the temporality surrounding persistent
29 resilience and consumption responses to austerity.
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38 The paper has applied persistent resilience, to a European consumer context revealing its
39 role in developing marketing theory and understanding consumer behaviour, through
40 describing responses to the pressures of austerity and the coping strategies used. The themes
41 identified have referenced and developed the concept of persistent resilience from
42 Golubchikov’s (2011) original theorisation. From this a framework is presented which
43 emphasises the temporal perspective and the future orientation of the theory. An overriding
44 element of this development is the idea of the *persistent stressor* which in this case is the
45 environment of austerity since 2008. As sustained periods of economic uncertainty and social
46 instability continue, marketing academics need alternative frameworks through which to
47 examine and understand consumer responses. Many of these responses include close social
48 relations and supportive engagement with their family, friends and communities which not only
49 enable coping, but also adjustment, resistance and for some, transformation. We identified a
50 concomitant change in consumption approaches that are more far-reaching than just moving to
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3 discount stores or sale items and include a focus on reduction of waste, social consumption and
4 a more mindful approach to purchasing and consuming.
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8 Our conceptualisation of persistent resilience is in opposition to previous
9 conceptualisations of resilience as bouncing back from adversity (Luthans *et al.*, 2002). As our
10 empirical exploration of persistent resilience describes, if anything, it is the antitheses of
11 bouncing back, as people have to work through, over time, their responses to austerity and this
12 is rarely a one-off event. How, for example, can we expect people to bounce back from being
13 made redundant three times? While bouncing back may be a suitable way of identifying
14 resilient responses to one-off calamitous events, such as earthquakes or storms (e.g. Baker and
15 Baker, 2014), the longevity and range of deprivations that recent austerity conditions have
16 imposed on some require a different conceptual base from which to analyse people's
17 approaches, attitudes and behaviours. This may mean that changes in consumption will have
18 an equally long-term impact and that once people accept a different way to consume, it may
19 continue, even when the economic situation improves. The degree to which a long-term
20 realignment or misalignment of behaviours and values occurs may be explored in future
21 research using practice theory (Warde, 2005) and represents a potentially interesting extension
22 of this research.
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36 Other contexts such as bullying, sexual harassment, chronic illness or racism could
37 represent similar long-term stressors requiring persistent resilience to overcome or at least live
38 through, and these may be useful foci in which to continue and develop the research.
39 Specifically, it may be interesting to explore the differences in the way persistent resilience is
40 developed in cases when one experiences life-long stressors such as racism and poverty as
41 compared with events that precipitate unexpected change behaviours and meanings of people's
42 lives. Maintaining resilience across time requires flexibility and adaptation. This approach is
43 supported by the recent acknowledgement that communities have to collectively develop
44 capacities and prepare for on-going problems (Ozanne and Ozanne, 2016). From a marketing
45 and consumption perspective, there is a need to acknowledge the impact of such on-going
46 situations, not only in relation to short-term responses in the marketplace, but in more
47 permanent changes to values, attitudes and behaviour. These should be seen as an opportunity
48 rather than a threat. People's desire to socialise at home, to grow their own vegetables, to be
49 more sustainable and to teach their children these approaches to consumption offers both
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3 existing producers and potentially new niche businesses openings to help enable these
4 preferences.
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9 For marketing practice, there are a number of important lessons from our study that
10 develop on the work of previous scholars who have considered the impact of economic
11 pressures on consumers (e.g. Boost and Meier, 2017; Dagdeverin *et al.*, 2017; Kayaz and Gui,
12 2014). Marketing strategies that appeal to consumers' core focus on thrift, value and
13 sustainability within the context of a leaner sharing economy are crucial. In consumers' quest
14 for value, alongside short-term responses such as buying cheaper goods, collecting money-off
15 vouchers and shifting store allegiances, they may well change their values around not only
16 everyday consumption but consumer culture more fundamentally. While it is unlikely that any
17 of the participants wish to escape the market, they do want to use it better to suit their
18 circumstances. The data shows evidence of a range of changes in behaviour and of interacting
19 with the market. These include greater self-sufficiency, more ecological awareness, sharing
20 and exchange initiatives, trading down or learning how to maintain products for longer,
21 developing carpentry and market gardening skills and identifying alternative sources of
22 entertainment and experience which might previously have been provided within a commercial
23 context. Marketers must continuously innovate with relevant and appropriately incentivised
24 offerings to entice this new breed of conscious, self-sufficient and asset light consumer to
25 spend. These marketplace developments resonate with the original theorisation from social
26 geography that persistent resilience is actively produced such that people develop agency
27 within economic and social circumstances that they are unable to change (DeVerteuil and
28 Golubchikov, 2016). The data in this study re-emphasises that persistent resilience is a
29 negotiating phenomenon rather than a normative form of overcoming adversity.
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46 The research is not claiming generality of responses for people living through austerity. A
47 limitation of this research may be that it cannot represent the range of circumstances within
48 and across the countries studied nor all the potential inconsistencies and contradictions in the
49 dataset, although some important differences in experiences and responses were highlighted.
50 It is also recognised that through translation some of the nuances of understanding may have
51 been lost. Just recognising the increase in poverty and other negative circumstances throughout
52 Europe (Stuckler *et al.*, 2017) tells us that persistent resilience would be impossible for all. If
53 you are old, chronically ill and do not have social or local support mechanisms, developing
54 resilience is difficult. In this research, people were identified who continued to suffer and had
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3 not been able to develop resilient capabilities to transform or accept the hardships facing them.
4 While our study acknowledges these negative cases, there is an opportunity to focus future
5 research using longitudinal approaches to explore over time the experiences of those who do
6 not develop persistent resilience and fail to adjust or transform. Nevertheless, most of the
7 participants demonstrated various forms of persistent resilience and had identified some
8 positive aspects of their changed lives. These people remain consumers and are still connected
9 to conventional marketplaces but their changed lives affect their approach to consumption. In
10 particular, waste and extravagance are limited and this often leads to positive alternatives that
11 involve sharing, different forms of exchange and social gatherings. Future research could also
12 examine in more detail how changes in values and attitudes through austerity creatively impact
13 the marketplace, beyond the usual phenomena of discounting and switching to cheaper
14 retailers. Also what, if any, are the impacts of consumers becoming more aware of their
15 consumption and how might this affect the consumers of the future?
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27 This study of persistent resilience therefore does not, like previous resilience research,
28 suggest an end-point or recovery or a focus on the type of personality that is likely to be most
29 resilient. Rather it further advances recent work that has recognized the nature of the current
30 economic environment and its impact on people (Evans and Reid, 2013) and everyday lives
31 (Bonanno, 2004). Building upon its limited conceptual exploration within social geography
32 (Golubchikov, 2011; Andreas and Round, 2015), the present study deepens theoretical and
33 empirical understanding of persistent resilience through analysis within the consumption
34 context of austerity and develops the theory through bringing to the fore the elements of
35 *persistent stressors* and *temporal orientation* as essential characteristics of persistent resilience.
36 While many of the participants illustrate the formation of “resilient subjects” with “adaptive
37 tendencies” (Evans and Reid, 2013, p. 85), the contribution of this research is the development
38 of resilience through understanding persistent resilience as a process that happens over time
39 and which results in a range of small-scale and transformative attitudes, behaviours and self-
40 analyses allowing people to continue to engage and positively develop their lives in the face of
41 austerity. It therefore behoves consumer and marketing researchers to acknowledge and
42 examine manifestations of persistent resilience, some of which involve radical changes, while
43 others may be the result of developing existing preferences. Such a timely investigation will
44 facilitate an understanding of how markets may adapt and change appropriately while also
45 offering opportunities for new enterprises to develop and flourish and for people to continue to
46 participate positively and resiliently with the marketplace.
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Table 1 Theories of Resilience

	Consumer Coping	Resilience (Traditional Perspective)	Persistent Resilience (Urban Studies)	Persistent Resilience (Marketing & Consumption)
Key Authors	McCubbin 1980; Mick & Fournier, 1998; Hampson & McGoldrick 2013; Cappellini <i>et al.</i> 2014; Bartfield & Collins, 2017	Block & Kremen 1996; Robertson & Cooper 2013; Mason & Baker 2014; Koos <i>et al.</i> , 2017	Golubchikov, 2011; DeVerteuil & Golubchikov, 2016; Andres & Round 2015	
Key Components	Behavioural, Psychological, Collective	Behavioural, Psychological, Social, Community	Relational, Spatial, Political	Day-to day Coping Relating Pragmatism
Attributes	Adaptation	Ultimate Return to Previous State	Continuous Renegotiation /Flexible Adaptation	Adjustment to Transformation
	One-off to Enduring	One-off	Enduring	Temporal Response to Persistent Stressors
	Short to Longer term	Short term	Long-term	Long-term
	Reactive	Reactive	Reactive & Proactive	Reactive & Proactive
				Resistance, Reduction & Alternative Consumption

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Table 2 Profile of Participants

No.	Name	Nationality	Gender	Age	Profession/Employment	Relationship	Children
1	Robert	Irish	Male	38	Senior Court Clerk	Married	2 Young Children
2	Ruth	Irish	Female	42	Community College Teacher	Single Mother	1 Young Child
3	Brid	Irish	Female	56	Training Consultant	Married	2 Adult Children
4	Susan	Irish	Female	46	Founder of Charity Receiving Unemployment Benefit	Married	2 Teenage Children 1 Adult Child
5	Sophie	Irish	Female	29	Fulltime Volunteer Receiving Disability Benefit	Single	No Children
6	Alma	Irish	Female	54	Part-time Volunteer Receiving Unemployment Benefit	Married	2 Adult Children
7	David	Irish	Male	60	Fulltime Student Receiving Back to Education Benefit	Separated	2 Adult Children
8	Emma	UK	Female	22	Unemployed Office Administrator, Part-time Kitchen Staff	In a Relationship	No Children
9	Claire	UK	Female	53	Retired University Professor	Single	No Children
10	Martina	UK	Female	44	University Librarian	Married	1 Young Child
11	Lisa	UK	Female	40	Self-Employed Transcriber	Married	No Children
12	Linda	UK	Female	55	Carer	Married	1 Adult Child
13	Derek	UK	Male	64	Self-Employed Carpenter	Married	2 Adult Children
14	Louise	UK	Female	45	Teacher	Divorced	2 Teenage Children
15	Maria	Portuguese	Female	49	Stay at home Mum	Married	1 Teenage Child 1 Adult Child
16	Helena	Portuguese	Female	39	Architect	Married	4 Young Children
17	Manuel	Portuguese	Male	53	Unemployed Construction Worker	Married	1 Young Child 1 Teenage Child
18	Rita	Portuguese	Female	33	Petrol Station Shop Assistant	Married	No Children
19	Amelia	Portuguese	Female	21	Unemployed Shop Assistant	Single	No Children
20	Filipe	Portuguese	Male	65	Doctor	Married	3 Adult Children
21	Luisme	Spanish	Male	27	Part-time Student/Unemployed	In a Relationship	No Children
22	Rosa	Spanish	Female	60	Gardner	Married	1 Adult Child
23	Bernado	Spanish	Male	46	Orthopaedic Surgeon	Married	1 Young Child
24	Elena	Spanish	Female	30	Unemployed University Lecturer	Single	No Children
25	Pepe	Spanish	Male	34	Entrepreneur	In a Relationship	No Children
26	Ana	Spanish	Female	58	Unemployed Dressmaker	Married	2 Adult Children
27	Antonio	Spanish	Male	38	Unemployed Commercial Director	Single	No Children
28	Yiannis	Greek	Male	38	Fulltime University Academic	Married	2 Young Children
29	Christina	Greek	Female	53	Artist Employed Part-time	Married	2 Teenage Children
30	Elisa	Greek	Female	46	Part-time Teacher	Married	2 Young Children
31	Irene	Greek	Female	40	Fulltime HRM position	Single	No Children
32	Nikolaos	Greek	Male	41	Unemployed – Setting up Financial Advisory Business	Married	2 Young Children
33	Luisa	Italian	Female	47	Unemployed Freelance Worker	Divorced	1 Adult Child
34	Rosella	Italian	Female	42	Gym Instructor	Single	No Children
35	Iron	Italian	Male	18	Student	Single	No Children
36	Giancarlo	Italian	Male	47	Sales Manager	Divorced	2 Young Children
37	Gino	Italian	Male	47	Self-Employed	Married	2 Adult Children
38	Mirella	Italian	Female	51	Sales Representative	Married	1 Teenage Child

Figure 1 Thematic Map – Visualising Persistent Resilience

