

ML 4201 Chapter 22

Satisfaction: A positive emotional reaction that a consumer has after using a product or service. It is a meaningful, although temporary, affective state.

Dissatisfaction: A negative emotional reaction that a consumer has after using a product or service.

- Many researchers argue that satisfaction and dissatisfaction should be regarded as **separate constructs**. They are **INDEPENDENT** of one another
- One can have a level of satisfaction with one brand but dissatisfaction with another. Ex: You may be satisfied with your favorite ice cream's taste and cost but be dissatisfied with its packaging.

Net Dissatisfaction: Consumer's overall judgment of the product after combining both satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

- $\text{Net Satisfaction} = \text{Satisfaction} + \text{Dissatisfaction}$

The Disconfirmation Model:

- The most widely recognized theory of consumer satisfaction.
- Cognitive model applicable in situations where consumers carefully evaluate the brand and compare it to their pre-purchase expectations.

Expectations:

- People will not typically part with their money unless they expect more value than they are giving up.

Product Performance:

- After purchase, the consumer uses the product and experiences its performance.
- Normally produces **descriptive beliefs**, which allow the consumer to confidently evaluate the product's performance.

Comparison Process

- Consumer undergoes a cognitive comparison process whereby perceived brand performance is compared to pre-purchase expectations. The motivation for this comparison is that behavior is goal directed and people desire feedback regarding goal achievement.

Comparison Norms

- Comparing the brand's performance to: what was expected, what was deserved, the minimum tolerable performance, cultural standards, similar brands, the best brand, the ideal product, or specific desires.

Confirmation

- The product's performance is approximately **equal** to expectations so the expectations are said to be "confirmed".

- Here, performance is within the “**zone of indifference**,” which often goes unnoticed by consumers. In these cases, confirmation simply reinforces the consumer’s prior attitude. Thus, confirmation indicates there is **no surprise** so the effects of disconfirmation (i.e., satisfaction or dissatisfaction) do not occur.

Positive Disconfirmation:

- The product’s performance is noticeably **above** expectations (or other comparison norm), so the expectations are “disconfirmed” but in a positive way. (i.e., the consumer gets **more** than expected). According to the disconfirmation model, consumers are satisfied and have positive emotions.

Negative Disconfirmation:

- The product’s performance is noticeably **below** expectations, so the expectations are “disconfirmed” but in a negative way (i.e., the consumer gets **less** than s/he expected).

Attributions:

- Consumers seek to understand the reason why negative disconfirmation occurred. If the consumer attributes the cause to the product or manufacturer, then dissatisfaction with the brand occurs. If the consumer attributes the cause of the negative disconfirmation to himself or other uncontrollable factors, dissatisfaction will be not directed toward the brand or manufacturer.

Product Performance:

- The product’s **performance** should produce the majority of satisfaction by directly gratifying the consumer’s needs and desires. Essentially, the disconfirmation (surprise) component of satisfaction can be expected to play a smaller role in many situations.

Product Performance and Primary Affect:

- **Primary affect:** If the product satisfies the consumer’s needs and desires, direct positive affect is produced and is associated with the brand. It represents the consumer’s immediate response to whether the product has satisfied the original needs and desires.
- **Ex:** A person buys a pizza with a discount coupon. They don’t eat it all but would you expect most of the satisfaction to come from the good taste and gratification of hunger or the fact that it cost less than expected? (Positive disconfirmation of cost?) Typically performance outweighs expectations

Affect As Satisfaction Model:

- A third major model of consumer satisfaction is the **affect model**. Here, consumers can be satisfied with a product’s performance even if it only meets (instead of exceeds) expectations.

- Specifically, each consumer has some products that produce favorable emotional responses regardless of the level of EV.
- Ex: You probably have some favorite foods (e.g., ice cream) that you enjoy even though you expect it to taste good. Accordingly, whenever consumers have positive emotions after product use satisfaction is said to exit. Conversely, negative emotions set low expectations. Ex: Going to a job interview and doing poorly.

Common Sources of Dissatisfaction

- One reason that many people do not like to watch (or read) the news reports is because they are filled with “bad news”. So we screen this out to avoid unpleasant information.

The Law of Diminishing Returns:

- States that as people obtain an increasing amount of a commodity, they will reach a point where additional units of that commodity generate less utility or value than the preceding unit. In other words, people tend to become bored with things they possess in large quantities. As a result, consumers experience less value than they expected when dealing with products **over time**. Produces some dissatisfaction

Grumbling Theory:

- Maslow (1970) also developed what he called “**grumbling theory**”- the idea that satisfaction is only temporary and ultimately leads to “higher discontent.” It has 2 major causes:
 1. When a consumer’s need is gratified there will be a period of satisfaction (increase in positive affect) and/or tension reduction (decrease in negative effect). However this feeling is normally **fleeting and quickly replaced by the next striving cycle**. Reason is because of multiple motivation: Consumers have a variety of needs active at any time so gratifying one may produce satisfaction but the striving orientation of humans quickly redirects our attention to the next ungratified need.
 2. **People inherently need more and more to make them satisfied.** As basic needs (e.g., hunger) are satisfied over and over, the source of reinforcement grows tiring (e.g., eating the same breakfast every day). So, consumers can be expected to have a grumbling orientation much of the time.

Preventing Dissatisfaction

- The only way to minimize our own personal dissatisfaction is to carefully edit the IM so that our beliefs and values are **realistic**. Obviously, completing this task would involve considerable cognitive dissonance and require maximum flexibility.
- **Over-estimating value.** Instead, some people use the IM in a way that maximizes the probability of dissatisfaction by being **unrealistically**