

Full Length Research Paper

Investigation of the effects of hedonic value and utilitarian value on customer satisfaction and behavioural intentions

Kambiz Heidarzadeh Hanzaee^{1*} and Saber Porgham Rezaeyeh²

¹Department of Business Management, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran.

²Department of Business Management, Qazvin Branch, Islamic Azad University, Qazvin, Iran.

Accepted 31 January, 2012

This study's objective was investigation of the effect of hedonic and utilitarian values on customer satisfaction and behavioural intentions in the fast-food restaurant industry. A questionnaire was used to gather data from the population. The measures were developed based on a thorough review of the previous literature. The research population was students who purchased from the university fast-food restaurant. Data were analyzed using the structural equation modeling techniques. The research findings indicate that hedonic and utilitarian values had a direct effect on customer satisfaction and hedonic value against utilitarian value did not have direct effect on behavioural intentions. In addition, customer satisfaction directly influenced behavioural intentions. Hedonic value shows a greater influence on customer satisfaction than does utilitarian value, and utilitarian value shows a greater influence on behavioural intentions than hedonic value.

Key words: Customer perceived value, customer satisfaction, behavioral intentions, hedonic and utilitarian values, structural equation modeling, fast-food restaurant.

INTRODUCTION

During the last decade, there has been growing interest in the value construct among both marketing researchers and practitioners (Eggert and Ulaga, 2002). The management literature on value is clustered generally around three categories of value: Financial economists advocate shareholder value, marketers advance customer value, and stakeholder theorists promote stakeholder value (Khalifa, 2004). This study aims to explaining the concept of customer value.

Customer value is a key concept in retail strategy and differentiation because it addresses "what they (customers) want and believe they get from buying and using a seller's product". Creating and delivering customer value is a precondition for retailers to survive in today's competitive marketplace (Rintamaki et al., 2006).

There are two complementary approaches to measuring and exploiting customer value. The first seeks to identify the "value" perceived by customers of the organization's goods and/or services. Where such value is "better" or "higher" than the perceived value of the competitor's offerings, the organization has the potential to succeed in the marketplace. The second approach is to measure the value that a customer (or a category of customers) brings into the organization and use this as the basis of, for example, targeted marketing campaigns (Evans, 2002). In this paper, customer value concept is explained based on the first approach.

According to Batra and Ahtola (1990: 159), "consumers purchase goods and services and perform consumption behavior for two basic reasons: (1) Consummatory affective (hedonic) gratification (from sensory attributes), and (2) instrumental, utilitarian reasons".

To fully understand the role of perceived values in the service setting, it is vital to comprehend how the

*Corresponding author. E-mail: heidarzadeh@srbiau.ac.ir.

perceived values are related to post consumption responses such as customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions. In the recent research, limited efforts have been made to examine two-dimensional value (hedonic and utilitarian value) and its impact on outcome variables such as customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions in the hospitality industry setting, especially in the ethnic restaurant industry (Ha and Jang, 2010).

Service quality and customer satisfaction are inarguably the two core concepts in marketing theory and practice. Customer satisfaction has become one of the most critical marketing priorities because it is generally assumed to be a significant determinant of repeat sales, positive word-of-mouth, and customer loyalty (Ryu and Han, 2010). It is crucial to understand how consumers' perceived value varies across different service contexts to aim for a holistic understanding of their perceptions of the consumer service value and their subsequent internal (for example that is satisfaction with the consumer service value) and external responses (e.g. repatronage, word-of-mouth) (Ryu et al., 2010). Thus, the specific objectives of this study were to:

1. Investigate the relationships among customer perceived value and its two hedonic and utilitarian dimensions with customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions.
2. Investigate the relationships between customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions.
3. Detect the superiority of any one of the hedonic and utilitarian values toward each other in influence on customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Customer perceived value, hedonic value and utilitarian value

The concept of "value" has proved to be an enduring endeavor for a wide range of philosophers and researchers (Babin et al., 1994). Researchers are continually seeking a more complete understanding of consumer value. An extensive literature review has established that perceived value has been conceptualized as what consumers get for what they give, or the consumer's overall evaluation of the utility of a product or service provision based on perceptions of what one receives for what one gives (Ryu et al., 2010). Perceived value has been considered one of the most important concepts for understanding customers in the service industry (Jensen, 1996). Existing literature suggests that perceived value could be conceptualized as a multidimensional construct (Sweeney and Soutar, 2001). Sheth et al. (1991) approached perceived value through several lenses: Social value, emotional value, functional value, epistemic value, and conditional value.

Grönroos (1997) viewed perceived value as cognitive and emotional dimensions. In addition, Sweeney and Soutar (2001) considered three dimensions of perceived value: Functional dimension, social dimension and emotional dimension (Ha and Jang, 2003).

Among the various dimensions of value, those most commonly utilized in recent marketing literature are hedonic and utilitarian values (Babin et al., 1994; Park, 2004; Voss et al., 2003). Babin et al. (1994) introduced two types of shopping values by developing a scale measuring both hedonic and utilitarian values obtained from the pervasive consumption experience of shopping. The researchers concluded that distinct hedonic and utilitarian shopping value dimensions exist and are related to a number of important consumption variables.

The majority of attention in previous research has focused on shopping's utilitarian aspects. Utilitarian consumer behavior has been described as *ergic*, task-related, and rational. Perceived utilitarian shopping value might depend on whether the particular consumption need stimulating the shopping trip was accomplished. Often, this means a product is purchased in a deliberant and efficient manner (Babin et al., 1994). Researchers describe utilitarian value as "resulting from some type of conscious pursuit of an intended consequence"; thus, it is task-oriented and rational, and may be thought of as work. Utilitarian evaluation is traditionally functional, instrumental and cognitive in nature (Ryu et al., 2010). The utilitarian dimension is related to efficient, task-specific, and economical aspects of products or services (Overby and Lee, 2006).

While marketers are focusing more on hedonic aspects to meet customers increasing desires for entertainment, academic research is lagging in investigating the hedonic side of consumer's evaluations of their consumption experience. Compared to its utilitarian aspects, value's "festive" side has gained less attention in previous studies.

Recent marketing research is beginning to focus on the hedonic aspects of the consumption experience, such as the affective response of excitement (Ibid). Similar to Hirschman and Holbrook's (1982) assertions, hedonic value can be defined as being "more subjective and personal than its utilitarian counterpart and resulting more from fun and playfulness than from task completion". Hedonic values are non-instrumental, experiential, and affective and often related to non-tangible retailer/product attributes.

The adventurous nature of hedonic value reflects shopping's entertainment and emotional potential, resulting from the fun and play of the experience versus the achievement of any pre-specified goal (Hirschman and Holbrook, 1982). The hedonic dimension of a consumption experience is derived from a product's (or service's) uniqueness, symbolic meaning, or the emotional arousal and imagery it evokes (Ha and Jang, 2010: 1161). Based on this concept, Overby and Lee

(2006) defined hedonic value as “an overall assessment of experiential benefits and sacrifices, such as entertainment and escapism”.

Customer satisfaction

Oliver (1997) described satisfaction as “a judgment that a product or service feature, or the product or service itself, provides pleasurable consumption related fulfillment”. Satisfaction is thus conceived as a fulfillment response employed to understand and evaluate the consumer experience. Additionally, consumer satisfaction is an attitude change resulting from the consumption experience (Jiu and Da, 2009). Hunt (1977) defined customer satisfaction as “an evaluation rendered that the (product) experience was at least as good as it was supposed to be” (Ryu et al., 2010).

The service management literature argues that customer satisfaction is “the result of a customer’s perception of the value received in a transaction or relationship – where value equals perceived service quality relative to price and customer acquisition costs – relative to the value expected from transactions or relationships with competing vendors” (Hallowell, 1996). To further understand customer satisfaction, previous research has identified both antecedents to and consequences of satisfaction. Marketing researchers have examined perceived value as an antecedent of satisfaction (Babin et al., 1994; Ha and Jang, 2010).

Behavioral intention

Behavioral intention can be defined as the degree to which a person has formulated conscious plans to perform or not perform some specified future behavior. According to the theory of reasoned action (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975), behavioral intention is the motivational component of a volitional behavior and is highly correlated with the behavior itself (Liu and Jang, 2009).

Behavioral intentions can be categorized as favorable or unfavorable. Favorable behavioral intentions include positive word of mouth (saying positive things and recommending the service to others), paying a price premium, spending more money with the company, and remaining loyal. Conversely, unfavorable behavioral intentions include leaving the company, spending less money with the company, spreading negative word of mouth, and taking legal action (Ladhari, 2009).

Zeithaml (1988) indicated that perceived value plays an important role in consumers’ purchase decision making, suggesting that behavioral intentions are consequences of perceived value. When customers perceive high levels of value from consumption experiences, they tend to express positive behavioral intentions. Previous study focused on revisit intentions, word-of-mouth, and willingness to recommend as specific forms of behavioral intentions (Ha and Jang, 2010).

Research hypotheses

To better understand the big picture of this study, a conceptual framework is depicted. This study suggested that it is crucial to examine the concepts of hedonic and utilitarian value in order to explain customer satisfaction and positive behavioral intentions (Figure 1).

Based on the previous discussion, the proposed hypotheses can be summarized in the following hypotheses:

H₁: Hedonic value has a direct relationship with customer satisfaction.

H₂: Utilitarian value has a direct relationship with customer satisfaction.

H₃: Customer perceived value has a direct relationship with customer satisfaction.

H₄: Hedonic value has a direct relationship with customer behavioral intentions.

H₅: Utilitarian value has a direct relationship with customer behavioral intentions.

H₆: Customer perceived value has a direct relationship with customer behavioral intentions.

H₇: Customer satisfaction has a direct relationship with customer behavioral intentions.

H₈: The perceived utilitarian value has a stronger influence on customer satisfaction than perceived hedonic value.

H₉: The perceived utilitarian value has a stronger influence on behavioral intentions than perceived hedonic value.

METHODOLOGY

The research population in this study included students of Qazvin Islamic Azad University (QIAU) in Iran who used the university’s fast-food restaurant in spring of 2010. The population size was 20,000, and the sample size was determined according to Krejcie and Morgan’s (1970) table to be 377. This research utilized stratified random sampling.

Data was gathered from the research population using a questionnaire. Questionnaire items were developed based on those used in previous studies (Ryu et al., 2010; Ha and Jang, 2010). The questionnaire consisted of five sections: Perceived hedonic value (five questions), perceived utilitarian value (five questions), customer satisfaction (four questions), future behavioral intentions (three questions), and demographic information (five questions). All items in sections one through four were measured on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from one (strongly disagree) to five (strongly agree) (Table 1).

Validity and reliability of this instrument was evaluated. Before the questionnaire was finalized, two academic professionals in the research area who are familiar with the subject of this study reviewed the questionnaire to assure content validity. For fulfillment of face validity, the wording of the questionnaires was slightly modified based on respondents’ feedback. A pilot study was conducted to ensure the reliability of each construct, using a convenience sample of 50 students. A reliability test was conducted to assess the consistency of the measurements. This was used to assess the internal homogeneity existing among the items scale in this study. Cronbach’s alpha coefficients for the study constructs

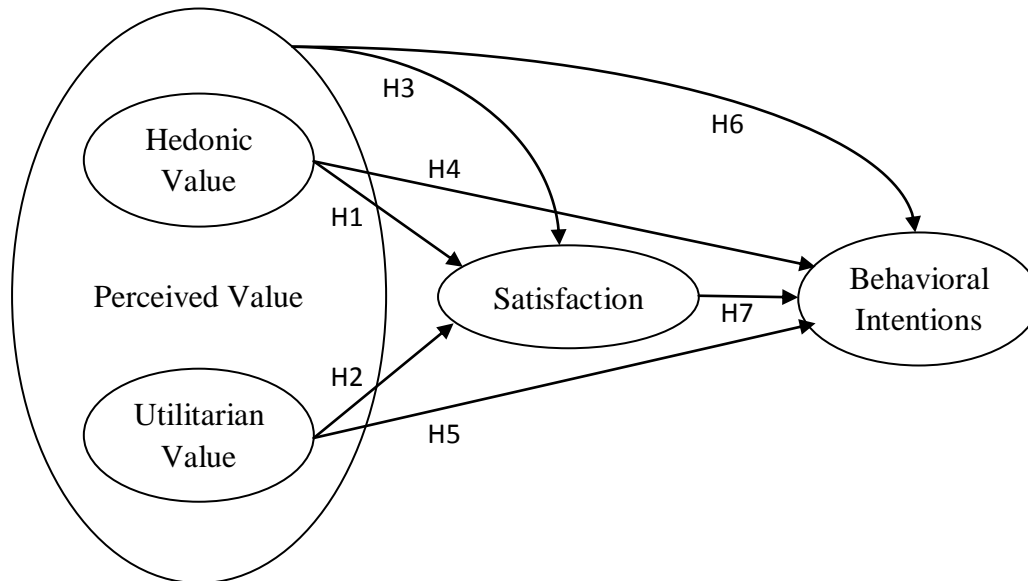


Figure 1. Conceptual framework.

Table 1. Questions used in the study.

	Questions
Hedonic value	I ate out at this restaurant since I could have good feelings. Eating-out at this restaurant was fun and pleasant. The dining experience at this restaurant was truly a joy. During the dining experience at this restaurant, I felt the excitement of searching food. Although the cost was higher than other restaurants, I liked to eat out at the better place.
Utilitarian value	The cost of food was reasonable in the restaurant. The foods I had were tasty, so I enjoyed. Food portion in this restaurant was enough, satisfying my hunger. I liked a variety of menu choices in this restaurant. I liked healthy food options in this restaurant.
Customer satisfaction	I was pleased to dine in at this restaurant The overall feeling I got from this restaurant was satisfied. The overall feeling I got from this restaurant put me in a good mood. I really enjoyed myself at this restaurant.
Behavioral intentions	I would like to come back to this restaurant in the future. I would recommend this restaurant to my friends or others. I would more frequently visit this restaurant.

Displays the questions used for data gathering from research population in this study.

ranged from 0.70 to 0.90. Each construct yielded the following reliabilities: hedonic value = 0.74, utilitarian value = 0.70, customer satisfaction = 0.86, and behavioral intention = 0.87, all of items = 0.90. These values were above the 0.70 level suggested by Nunnally (1978), and thus indicated internal consistency.

Data were analyzed using the two-step procedure suggested by Anderson and Gerbing (1988). First, a confirmatory factor analysis

(CFA) was performed to identify whether the measurement variables reliably reflected the hypothesized latent variables. Second, a structural equation modeling (SEM) with latent variables via LISREL 8.54 was tested to determine the adequacy of the constructs of the model and test the hypotheses. The hedonic value and utilitarian value were predictor variables and customer satisfaction and behavioral intention were criterion variables in the

analysis.

RESULTS

Sample profile

Descriptive information of the sample for this study showed that 48.7% (n=188) were male and 51.3% (n=198) were female. The mean age was 21.97 years, and the majority of respondents were between 20 and 24 years old (59%, n = 228). About 90.4% (n = 349) of respondents were bachelors and 9.6% (n=37) of them were married. Regarding education levels, the majority of respondents had a bachelor's degree (85.8%, n = 331). Frequency distribution of respondents regarding the faculty showed that 26.4% were management and accounting faculty's student (n = 102), 21% were civil and architect engineering faculty's student (n = 81), 22% were industrial and mechanical engineering faculty's student (n = 85), and 30.6% were electronic, computer and IT faculty's student (n = 118).

Measurement model

Prior to conducting structural equation modeling (SEM), a measurement model was assessed. The items were subjected to a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with a four-factor measurement model using maximum likelihood estimation. The fit statistics showed that the measurement model fit the data reasonably well. All of the fit indices were acceptable (RMR = 0.17; SRMR = 0.06; GFI = 0.95; NFI = 0.96; NNFI = 0.94; IFI = 0.97; CFI = 0.97; ECVI = 0.68 [for present model, least 0.52]; RMSEA = 0.05]. All standardized factor loadings emerged fairly high and were found to be significant ($p < 0.01$), so all of the latent variables were determined by observed variables fairly. All of the correlation coefficients between the constructs were significant at 0.01 level. Therefore, significance correlations existed among the research variables (Tables 2 and 3).

Structural model

A structural analysis was conducted using the maximum likelihood estimation method. Overall, the fit indices indicated an adequate model fit ($\chi^2 = 134.30$, $df = 89$, $p < 0.001$; RMR = 0.045; SRMR = 0.033; ECVI = 0.68 [for present model, least 0.61]; RMSEA = 0.036; GFI = 0.96; CFI = 0.99; NFI = 0.99; NNFI 0.99; IFI = 1.00).

The relationship between hedonic value and customer satisfaction was significant (coefficient = 0.73, $t = 7.38$, $p = 0.01$), and the linkage between utilitarian value and customer satisfaction was also significant (coefficient = 0.27, $t = 2.87$, $p = 0.01$), supporting H_1 and H_2 . These findings indicate that both hedonic and utilitarian values

are significant predictors of customer satisfaction, supporting H_3 . The effect of hedonic value on customer satisfaction was greater than the impact of utilitarian value (hedonic value: Coefficient = 0.73, $t = 7.38$ versus utilitarian value: Coefficient = 0.27, $t = 2.83$), not supporting H_8 . Hedonic value was also found to not have significant relationships with behavioral intentions, not supporting H_4 (coefficient = 0.17, $t = 0.60$, $p = 0.01$) and utilitarian value was also found to have significant relationships with behavioral intentions, supporting H_5 (coefficient = 0.42, $t = 3.21$, $p = 0.01$). Utilitarian value showed a greater influence on behavioral intention than hedonic value (utilitarian value: Coefficient = 0.42, $t = 3.21$ versus hedonic value: Coefficient = 0.17, $t = 0.60$, $p = 0.01$), supporting H_9 .

Finally, customer satisfaction was predicted to be positively associated with behavioral intentions, supporting H_7 (coefficient = 0.29, $t = 2.88$, $p = 0.01$). This finding indicated that increasing fast-food restaurant customers' satisfaction levels is necessary to enhance their intentions to recommend and revisit the restaurant (Table 4 and Figure 2).

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationships among hedonic and utilitarian values, customer satisfaction and behavioral intention in the fast-food restaurant industry. In sum, the SEM analysis revealed that the proposed model could well predict consumers' behavioral intentions to revisit the restaurant and talk positively about their experience with the restaurant, indicating its applicability in the hospitality industries, particularly the restaurant business. The dimensions, along with other factors in the model, indicate acceptable levels of convergent and discriminate validity. Moreover, they were related to the other latent constructs, customer satisfaction, and behavioral intentions in a theoretically consistent manner. This serves to extend Babin et al. (1994) original scale into a restaurant context.

Implications

The study results provide both theoretical and practical benefits. First, theoretically, this study demonstrates the usefulness of two distinct structures of consumer service value: Hedonic and utilitarian. This study is one of a few early studies to use Babin et al. (1994) two-dimensional measure of "customer service value", the hedonic/utilitarian value, to explore relationships among hedonic and utilitarian values, customer satisfaction, and behavioral intentions. Similar to previous studies (Anderson and Sullivan, 1993; Getty and Thompson, 1994; Babin et al., 1994; Patterson and Spreng, 1997; Eroglu et al., 2005; Soderlund and Ohman, 2005; Gonzalez et al.,

Table 2. Confirmatory factor analysis.

Construct	Questions	Standardized factor loading	standard deviation	t	p-value
Hedonic value	HV1	0.81	0.05	16.05	0.01
	HV2	0.75	0.05	14.71	0.01
	HV3	0.75	0.05	14.69	0.01
	HV4	0.59	0.046	12.67	0.01
	HV5	0.35	0.05	6.79	0.01
Utilitarian value	UV1	0.39	0.054	7.18	0.01
	UV2	0.83	0.045	18.11	0.01
	UV3	0.30	0.051	5.81	0.01
	UV4	0.54	0.049	10.86	0.01
	UV5	0.54	0.049	10.86	0.01
Customer satisfaction	CS1	0.85	0.041	20.29	0.01
	CS2	0.80	0.043	18.43	0.01
	CS3	0.83	0.043	19.34	0.01
	CS4	0.70	0.043	16.04	0.01
Behavioral intentions	BI1	0.70	0.046	15	0.01
	BI2	0.84	0.02	19.6	0.01
	BI3	0.77	0.045	17.04	0.01

Shows the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) results. This technique was performed to identify whether the measurement variables reliably reflected the hypothesized latent variables.

Table 3. Measure correlations.

Measure	Hedonic value	Utilitarian value	Customer satisfaction	Behavioral intention
Hedonic value	1.00 -			
Utilitarian value	0.62 (13.93)	1.00 -		
Customer satisfaction	0.92 (28.10)	0.81 (32.36)	1.00 -	
Behavioral intention	0.83 (18.25)	0.82 (30.03)	0.78 (23.28)	1.00 -

Determines correlations matrix for understanding the correlation relationships between research variables.

2007; Namkung and Jang, 2007; Ryu et al., 2008, 2010; Jui and Daliang, 2009; Fu and Shian, 2010; Ha and Jang, 2010), the findings indicated that both hedonic and utilitarian values significantly influenced customer satisfaction.

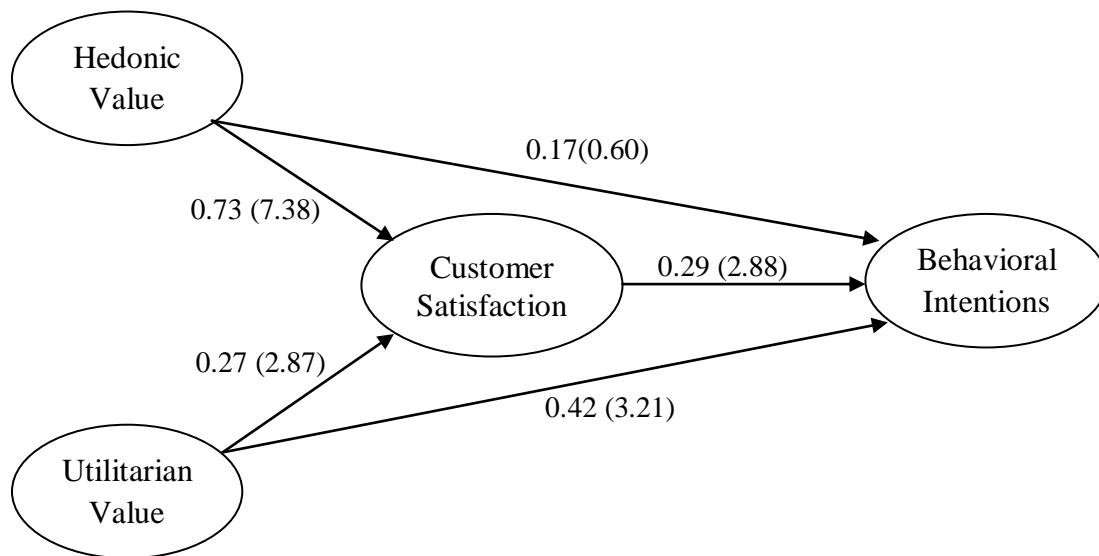
The results also showed that hedonic value against the utilitarian value did not significantly influence behavioral intentions, and customer satisfaction had a significant

role in changing behavioral intentions. Customers' perceived hedonic value indirectly influenced behavioral intentions. Thus, restaurateurs should acknowledge and seek to improve customers' perceptions of both hedonic and utilitarian values in ensuring satisfaction, thereby influencing positive behavior emotions such as revisiting the restaurant and talking positively about dining experiences in fast-food restaurants.

Table 4. Structural parameter estimates.

Hypothesized	Coefficient	t-value	Results
H ₁ . Hedonic value → Customer satisfaction	0.73	7.38	Supported
H ₂ . Utilitarian value → Customer satisfaction	0.27	2.87	Supported
H ₄ . Hedonic value → Behavioral intention	0.17	0.60	not supported
H ₅ . Utilitarian value → Behavioral intention	0.42	3.21	Supported
H ₇ . Customer satisfaction → Behavioral intention	0.29	2.88	Supported

Shows structural equation modelling (SEM) results. Structural equation modelling with latent variables was tested to determine the adequacy of the constructs of the model and test the hypotheses.

**Figure 2.** Results of the structural model.

Hopefully, this work will serve as a useful base for more comprehensive research. Practically speaking, the results can help marketers better understand people's rationale for eating at fast-food restaurants and respond accordingly, thereby eventually improving customers' perceived service value and creating customer satisfaction, which in turn affects positive behavior.

Second, the results of the current research indicate that hedonic aspects of consumer value play a greater role in customer satisfaction. This result implies that the hedonic aspect of value should not be ignored in marketing activities. In other words, enjoyment is a significant predictor of consumer service value in the fast-food restaurant sector.

Therefore, restaurateurs should make an effort to produce a more enjoyable and pleasant environment. This may involve or require the use of a more entertaining atmosphere, such as lighting, color, music, unique interior design and decor, professional appearance of employees, and other aspects of dining experiences that make them enjoyable or exciting.

Third, the results indicate that utilitarian aspects of consumer value play a greater role in behavioral

intentions. Therefore, marketing activities in the fast-food restaurant context should focus on facilitating efficient dining experiences (for example healthy food options, convenience, quick serving, and reasonable price).

We recommend that restaurateurs focus on means of enhancing the utilitarian value of restaurants so as not to put off those customers who visit for primarily functional reasons. For instance, given the ability of restaurants to develop, source, and promote more healthy-sounding menu items, restaurateurs can serve freshly prepared healthy foods that communicate better positioning among customers for the upscale quick-service restaurant sector. Facilitating functional goals pays for itself in the longer term – satisfied customers are likely to respond positively to the restaurant sector.

LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

As with any study, there are some limitations to the generalizability of the findings. This study focused only on the fast-food restaurant segment, whereas the restaurant

industry has different segments. Also, this research studied one restaurant for the sake of doing an academic project and inaccessibility to more restaurants. The use of a homogeneous student sample, while it may be desirable in reducing extraneous variance, limited the generalizability of the study findings.

Future research should address a number of characteristics (for example consumption motivations) and situational factors (for example time pressure) that could be related to hedonic or utilitarian value.

Additionally, future research could examine the potential moderating effect of consumption orientations. For example, consumers with a more goal/functional orientation might be affected more by utilitarian value, whereas consumers who tend toward more pleasure-oriented consumption could be influenced more by hedonic value. Given the relationship between culture and marketing, another interesting future research projects could involve an examination of the potential role of culture as a moderator among hedonic and utilitarian values, customer satisfaction and loyalty links. However, such a study must be both theoretically and practically meaningful in order to reveal how the relationships between values and satisfaction/loyalty vary in different cultural settings.

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