Some more evidence in the discussion of the ambiguities surrounding consumer perceived value and consumer satisfaction: A new perspective on the role of mass communication theories

George S. Spais and Konstantinos Z. Vasileiou[*]

Abstract

The major objective of this study is to test two alternative models in order to investigate whether customer value and satisfaction represent two theoretically and empirically distinct concepts. We address the core research themes of our study using a survey. This paper contributes to marketing research by introducing a new parameter (the examination of the mass communication theories) at the growing discussion about the ambiguities surrounding marketing constructs, such as consumer perceived value and consumer satisfaction. The consumer perceived value and consumer satisfaction conceptualizations (in the food-marketing context) that have an interest for both academic research and practitioners.

Key words: *consumer perceived value, consumer satisfaction, marketing constructs, ambiguities, mass communication theories*

Introduction

Some studies have concentrated on determining the basic antecedent variables to purchase intention for food products such as Tomlison's study (1994) who has considered the critical encounters and relationships between these variables.

Furthermore, a consumer behavior model, which holistically defines the processes by which consumers make a choice between several competing brands or producers, is still to be developed. Some progress in this direction has been made by the evaluation of known alternatives being factored into consumer assessments (mostly in the service industry), via the disconfirmation of expectations (Bearden and Teel 1983; Bolton and Drew 1991; Boulding et al. 1993; Cadotte et al. 1987; Oliver 1980; Oliver and Bearden 1985). While this approach measures the difference between pre and post consumption assessments, it provides only a partial explanation of how consumer retention mechanisms might operate.

The major objective of this study is to test two alternative models in order to investigate whether customer value and satisfaction represent two theoretically and empirically distinct concepts. We address the core research themes of our study using a survey.

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The term 'consumer perceived value' has no prima facie authority of the type that may be afforded the terms 'satisfaction', 'quality', or 'marketing'. It has been chosen for this paper precisely because it has neither clearly defined status nor common use. Its primary purpose is to act as an 'umbrella' term, one that captures a range of associated, existing concepts, all of which use similar names and imply a similar idea - that there exists some discernable property that is perceived/derived/experienced by a customer and which explains their psychological connection to a particular good or service.

We derive our research try from Eggert's and Ulaga's (2002) research model. The theoretical basis of the research model is derived from several sources. The model is developed from the satisfaction, attitude and intention relationships examined by Oliver (1980, 1981).

We adopt the following definition for *purchase intention in a food-marketing context*: "The consumer's judgment about buying a designated food product from a company, taking into accounts his or her current situation and likely circumstances".

For the two alternative models, we have incorporated the construct of brand preference as the best predictor of behavioral outcomes in the food-marketing context, as it is shown from the following evidence.

Brand preference upon purchase intention

The relationship between consumer's attitudes with respect to a generic product and the evaluations they carry out of a specific product is double. On the one hand, the models that estimate an individual's attitude towards a product according to his/her perceptions - weighted or not - regarding a set of relevant attributes are well known [see Fishbein's model (1963)]. Despite the immense influence of these models, a period of discussion with respect to aspects such as the importance certain non-cognitive antecedents may have in the generation of attitudes was initiated. It has been previously mentioned the increasing role affective processes are being granted. In fact, regarding to this question, some empirical evidence of the independence of these factors with respect to the cognitive ones has already been obtained [for example, in a recent article by Kim et al., 1998]. Nevertheless, the discussion process is still alive as it is shown by the interesting debate held by Fishbein and Middlestadt (1997) with some of their critics like Miniard and Barone (1997).

The causal relationship between attitudes and evaluation may have the inverse direction. It seems that it is predictable that previous attitudes towards a product category may also affect the specific perceptions an individual obtains from a particular offer or brand. In this respect, Gardner (1985) showed that a consumer's affective responses are capable of influencing cognitive processes such as product evaluation or its recollection. In some other more recent studies, results that support this hypothesis were obtained. In this way, Allen et al. (1992) observed the effect of emotions on the cognitive component of attitudes (measured as opinions) and the influence of both dimensions on behavior. In addition, Kelley and Hoffman (1997) confirmed that the positive affects felt by the consumer when a product or service is provided affect the evaluation this one makes of its quality. Likewise, the theories about the distortion of information explain the differences among individuals when it comes to perceiving and evaluating products (Meloy 2000). Previous global evaluations the consumer has made of the product influence posterior evaluations and purchase decisions (Lynch et al. 1988).
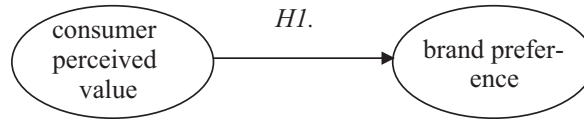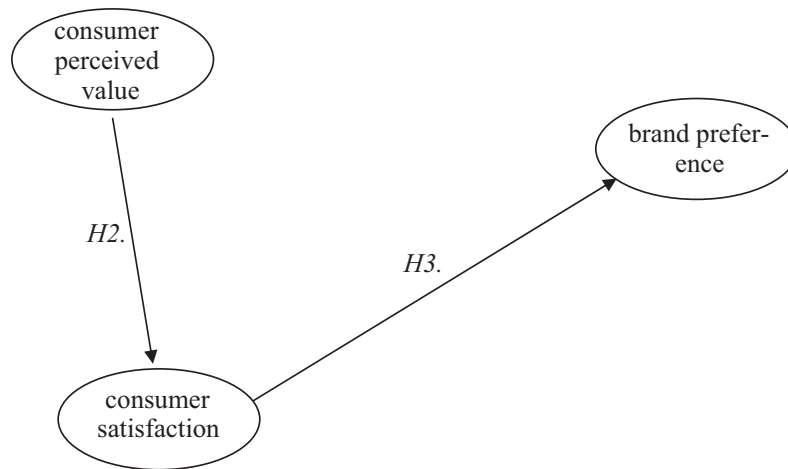
(I) First model:

(II) Second model:

Figure 1.   The alternative models: Examining the concepts of consumer satisfaction and consumer perceived value in a food marketing context

Table 1. The structural model

Constructs	Definition	References
1. <u>Perceived value</u>	The consumer's overall appraisal of the net worth of the food product, based on the consumer's assessment of what is received (benefits provided by the food product), and what is given (costs or sacrifice in acquiring and utilizing the food product).	Frewer (1997); Kyriakopoulos and Oude Ophuis (1997)
2. <u>Consumer satisfaction</u>	The degree of overall pleasure or contentment felt by the consumer, resulting from the ability of the food product to fulfill the consumer's desires, expectations and needs in relation to the food product.	Mai and Ness (1999); Connor (1999)
3. <u>Brand preference</u>	The extent to which the consumer favors the designated food product provided by his or her present food producer, in comparison to the designated food products provided by other food producers in his or her consideration set.	Leuthesser et al. (1995)

The present research try attempts to test the following hypotheses: *H1.*=Perceived value has a direct positive effect on brand preference. *H2.*=Perceived value has a direct positive effect on consumer satisfaction. *H3.*=Consumer satisfaction has a direct positive effect on brand preference.

Perceived value upon brand preference

The relationship between consumer's attitudes with respect to a generic product and the evaluations they carry out of a specific product is double. On the one hand, the models that estimate an individual's attitude towards a product according to his /her perceptions - weighted or not - regarding a set of relevant attributes are well known. On the other hand, the causal relationship between attitudes and evaluation may have the inverse direction. Thus, it is predictable that previous attitudes towards a product category may also affect the specific perceptions an individual obtains from a particular offer or brand (Sanzo et al. 2003): *H1.*=Perceived value has a direct positive effect on brand preference.

Perceived value upon consumer satisfaction

Recently, conceptual frameworks have been developed that integrate consumer perceived value and consumer satisfaction (Storbacka et al. 1994). To date, however, only a small number of studies have provided empirical evidence of the causal links between perceived value and satisfaction (Andreassen and Lindestad 1998): *H2.*=Perceived value has a direct positive effect on consumer satisfaction.

Consumer satisfaction upon brand preference

Consumer satisfaction can influence attitudinal change (e.g. food product and food supplier preference), which in turn affects repurchase intention (Oliver 1980; Oliver and Bearden 1985; Stauss and Neuhaus 1997). A high level of satisfaction is likely to increase the probability that the brand in question will be retained in the consumer's consideration set and will increase the consumer's preference for the brand: *H3.*= Consumer satisfaction has a direct positive effect on brand preference.

Research Method

The major objective of this study is to test two alternative models in order to investigate whether customer value and satisfaction represent two theoretically and empirically distinct concepts. We address the core research themes of our study using a survey. The proposed model is not intended to explain all consumption behavior related to alternative food products.

Participants, Procedure & Data Collection

The stratified random sample included 800 Greek households. The sample size was determined with the goal of obtaining at least 100 respondents from each of the eight largest cities [Athens, Thessalonica, Patras, Larissa, Chania, Edessa, Volos and

Agrinio]. Our intention is to reach consumers with different experiences in food consuming, attitudes and level of knowledge for technological advanced food products. Data was collected by means of face-to-face interviews during the 8,5-week period. In total, 800 respondents (which were responsible for shopping meat products for their households) were asked to participate, and no one declined to take part to the study. Percent distribution of population by age groups has been considered (source: National Statistical Service of Greece).

A stratified random sample survey approach was adopted so that various subgroups were adequately represented in the sample (a. decision-making and b. information processing) To ensure that respondents with experience of consuming meat products were included in the survey, 50 per cent of those selected for survey were consuming meat every day. Conversely, 50 per cent of those selected for survey were consuming meat once a week. The survey was stratified by sex, to control for an over or under-representation of respondents (58% women and 42% men).

The participants in the study were 800 consumers, which were responsible for shopping meat products for their households. About fifty-eight (57,8%) were women and about forty-two (41,5%) were men. About nine (8,9%) aged less than 20, about thirty-seven (37,3%) aged 21-30, about twenty-two (22%) aged 31-40, about sixteen (16,4%) aged 41-50, about ten (10,3%) aged 51-60, about five (5%) aged more than 60. Fifty three per cent (53%) were married and forty-seven per cent (47%) were single. Thirty-four per cent (34%) had a university/college degree, forty-eight per cent (48%) were graduates of a high school, and eighteen per cent (18%) did not graduate from a high school.

Measures

This study (Figure 1) is measuring three constructs: *consumer perceived value*, *consumer satisfaction* and *brand preference*.

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All constructs were measured using multiple items. All items were measured using a seven-point Likert-type scale [ranging from 1=strongly disagree to 7=strongly agree], in order to measure consumers' perceptions. The "Findings of the Survey" lists the variable questions constituting each construct measurement.

The construct and internal validity of each measurement scale is broadly supported by the research literature from which is it is derived. With establishing content validity, the questionnaire was refined through rigorous pre-testing. The pre-testing was focused on instrument clarity, question wording and validity. During the pre-testing, ten undergraduate students, three doctoral students and three professors were invited to comment on the questions and wordings. The comments of these sixteen individuals then provided a basis for revisions to the construct measures.

Table 2. The items for the three constructs

Constructs	Items	Variables
perceived value	PV1 = health advantages	(1)
	PV2 = taste	(2)
	PV3 = user convenience	(3)
	PV4 = competitive price	(4)
	PV5=design of the product	(5)
consumer satisfaction	CS1 = exists in consumer's consideration set	(6)
	CS2 = result of brand expectation-performance com-	
	parisons	(7)
	CS3 = purchase intention	(8)
brand preference	BP1 = company name	(9)
	BP2 = product category attributes	(10)
	BP3 = consumer's emotional involvement	(11)
	BP4 = influences from family and friends	(12)

Testing the items

The test of the validity of the items was based on a focus group methodology using the serial moderating technique (SMT).

Focus group methodology traditionally calls for an individual, trained moderator who personally elicits information in accord with some pre-defined purpose. The information is obtained from an assembled group, often comprised of six to 12 eligible participants. Group participants are selected to be sufficiently diverse to generate lively and innovative ideas, but sufficiently similar to bring common discourse to the session (Morgan 1996). Participants of focus groups are also expected to convene only once. Accordingly, participants are typically exposed to a single moderator or facilitator who engages one or several groups to discuss directed research topics. Since moderators vary in their training, personality and leadership styles, and interests, focus groups are open to moderator bias.

In order to test the process, we advocate several moderators in succession over two classes of the Agribusiness Management Dept. of University of Ioannina, using moderately scheduled interviews. For the opening of the interviews, we have stated the purpose. The criterion for moderator selection included the following demographic criterion: "if students are raised to large urban centers, small towns or villages". Previous focus group reviews (e.g. Fern 1982; Morgan 1996; Stewart and Shamdasami 1990; Tynan and Drayton 1988) have not considered this. For many marketing research projects resting on semi-structured and ill-structured problem domains that require alternative perspectives of multiple experts for both facilitating knowledge elicitation and verification (Grabowski et al. 1992), it would seem particularly appropriate.

For this pilot test, 3 moderator teams has been employed for time intervals that has been ranged from 20 to 40 minutes, sufficient to cover major sections of the overall focus interview guide. This overall guide was the joint product of all participating moderators. The process was prerequisite, in order to secure the success of the set of interviews [with focus groups] in Athens. The groups were structured according to the following demographic criteria: a. where they are raised ["urban centers", "small towns",

"villages"], b. educational background ["no education", "high school", "universities/colleges"], c. age ["20-30", "31-41", "42-52", "53-63").

Research Results

Sample characteristics

The participants in the study were 800 consumers, which were responsible for shopping meat products for their households. About fifty-eight (57,8%) were women and about forty-two (41,5%) were men. About nine (8,9%) aged less than 20, about thirty-seven (37,3%) aged 21-30 , about twenty-two (22%) aged 31-40, about sixteen (16,4%) aged 41-50, about ten (10,3%) aged 51-60, about five (5%) aged more than 60. Fifty three per cent (53%) were married and forty-seven per cent (47%) were single. Thirty-four per cent (34%) had a university/college degree, forty-eight per cent (48%) were graduates of a high school, and eighteen per cent (18%) did not graduate from a high school.

Table 3. Sample's socio-demographic profile (N=800)

Frequencies						Percentages (%)					
1. Age groups											
<20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	>61	<20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	>61
71	298	176	131	82	40	8.9	37.3	22	16.4	10.3	5
2. Gender											
male	female					male	female				
332	462					41.5	57.8				
3. Educational background											
none	<high school	high school	university/ college			none	< high school	high school	university/ college		
74	68	386	270			9.3	8.5	48.3	33.8		
4. Income per year (€)											
low income				high income		low income					high income
<10,000	10,001 -20,000	20,001 -30,000	30,001 -40,000	40,001 -50,000	>60,001	29	31.4	19.3	9.3	2.8	2.9
5. Marital status											
married with children	married without children	single				Married with children	married without children	single			
346	79	372				43.3	9.9	46.5			

Comparisons among the independent groups

Results based on Mann-Witney U test, show us that there are no significant statistical differences, for the grouping variable: "gender".

Results based on Kruskal Wallis test, show us that there are significant statistical differences for the grouping variable: "age" [a. consumer perceived value items: 0.000, 0.443, 0.000, 0.000, 0.000, b. consumer satisfaction items: 0.000, 0.000, 0.000 and c. brand preference items: 0.000, 0.001, 0.002, 0.001].

Results based on Kruskal Wallis test, show us that there are significant statistical differences for the grouping variable: "educational background" [a. consumer perceived value items: 0.000, 0.000, 0.029, 0.000, 0.000 b. consumer satisfaction items: 0.093, 0.152, 0.000, c. brand preference items: 0.04, 0.74, 0.01, 0.001].

Results based on Kruskal Wallis test, show us that there are significant statistical differences for the grouping variable: "place of adobe" [a. consumer perceived value items: 0.000, 0.000, 0.000, 0.000, 0.000, b. consumer satisfaction items: 0.000, 0.000, 0.000, 0.000, c. brand preference items: 0.000, 0.001, 0.000, 0.001].

Findings of the Survey

The measured items are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Descriptive statistics

Constructs and measured items	Mean (Standard deviation)
perceived value	
health advantages	5.38(1.88)
taste	5.86(1.58)
user convenience	4.20(2.11)
competitive price	4.32(2.24)
design of the product	3.02(1.98)
consumer satisfaction	
exists in consumer's consideration set	6.15(1.27)
result of brand expectation- performance comparisons	5.77(1.61)
purchase intention	6.23(1.34)
brand preference	
company name	5.07(1.85)
product category attributes	4.88(1.91)
consumer's emotional involvement	2.48(1.97)
influences from family and friends	3.64(2.22)

The results of the survey are summarized in the following frequencies:

Table 5. Frequencies for measured items

1. "I purchase the particular brand because I believe that it is good to my health"							
	totally disagree						totally agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
frequency	55	28	46	110	100	108	353
percent	6.9	3.5	5.8	13.8	12.5	13.5	44.1

2. "I purchase the particular brand because I like the taste"							
	totally disagree						totally agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
frequency	33	20	19	54	97	182	395
percent	4.1	2.5	2.4	6.8	12.1	22.8	49.4

3. "I purchase the particular brand because its use is convenient to me"							
	totally disagree						totally agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
frequency	150	67	66	114	137	119	146
percent	18.8	8.4	8.3	14.3	17.1	14.9	18.3

4. "I purchase the particular brand because of its low price compared to other brands"							
	totally disagree						totally agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
frequency	165	59	57	104	102	115	198
percent	20.6	7.4	7.1	13.0	12.8	14.4	24.8

5. I purchase the particular brand because I like a lot its design (shape, color, size etc.)"							
	totally disagree						totally agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
frequency	291	94	90	108	107	51	55
percent	36.4	11.8	11.3	13.5	13.4	6.4	6.9

6. "I purchase the particular brand as I believe that it satisfies me"							
	totally disagree						totally agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
frequency	12	10	25	32	76	207	437
percent	1.5	1.3	3.1	4.0	9.5	25.9	54.6

7. "I purchase the particular brand depends on the comparison between brand expectation and its performance"

	totally disagree						totally agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
frequency	33	26	27	48	90	220	354
percent	4.1	3.3	3.4	6.0	11.3	27.6	44.4

8. "I purchase the particular brand as I believe that I will be totally satisfied with it"

	totally disagree						totally agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
frequency	15	13	22	35	61	143	511
percent	1.9	1.6	2.8	4.4	7.6	17.9	63.9

9. "My preference to the particular brand depends on the extent that my requirements will be satisfied by the particular company compared to the other companies"

	totally disagree						totally agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
frequency	58	41	64	95	128	184	228
percent	7.3	5.1	8.0	11.9	16.0	23.0	28.5

10. "My preference to the particular brand depends on my attitudes to that product category"

	totally disagree						totally agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
frequency	73	42	69	107	147	144	213
percent	9.1	5.3	8.6	13.4	18.4	18.0	26.6

11. "I prefer to purchase the particular brand because of emotional reasons"

	totally disagree						totally agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
frequency	433	77	64	65	61	52	47
percent	54.1	9.6	8.0	8.1	7.6	6.5	5.9

12. "Family's and friends' influence is important to me on purchasing the particular brand"

	totally disagree						totally agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
frequency	232	83	72	98	96	102	116
percent	29.0	10.4	9.0	12.3	12.0	12.8	14.5

Interpretation of the questionnaire results

Based on the questionnaire results and without combining the questions with each other, we can interpret the responses as follows.

The relationship between consumer's attitudes with respect to a generic product and the evaluations they carry out of a specific product is double. On the one hand, many consumers attitudes towards a product according to their perceptions [weighted or not], regard a set of relevant attributes of the particular offer or brand. On the other hand, the causal relationship between consumers' attitudes and evaluation may have the inverse direction. Thus, it is predictable that previous attitudes towards a product category may also affect the specific perceptions an individual obtains from a particular offer or brand.

Consumer satisfaction can influence attitudinal change [e.g. food product and food supplier preference], which in turn affects purchase intention. A high level of satisfaction is likely to increase the probability that the brand in question will be retained in the consumer's consideration set and will increase the consumer's preference for the brand.

Inter-item correlations

The bivariate correlations procedure, presented in Table 6 [inter-item correlations], computes Pearson's correlation coefficient with their significance levels. The goal of this analysis is to measure how variables or rank orders are related. Pearson's correlation coefficient is a measure of linear association.

Test of independence

H1.: Perceived value has a direct positive effect on brand preference. According to Table 14, we accept the hypothesis, as the chi-squared values of inter-item correlations are significant at 5% level. Therefore, we have found evidence of a link between consumer perceived value and brand preference.

H2.: Perceived value has a direct positive effect on consumer satisfaction. According to Table 14, we accept the hypothesis, as the chi-squared values of inter-item correlations are significant at the 5% level. Therefore, we have found evidence of a link between consumer perceived value and consumer satisfaction.

H3.: Consumer satisfaction has a direct positive effect on brand preference. According to Table 14, we accept the hypothesis, as the chi-squared values of inter-item correlations are significant at the 5% level. Therefore, we have found evidence of a link between consumer satisfaction and brand preference.

Based on the chi-squared tests we can produce the following conclusions:

First, it seems that there is an interrelation among the constructs of consumer perceived value, consumer satisfaction and brand preference.
There is a strong relationship between consumer perceived value and consumer satisfaction.
There is a relationship between consumer perceived value and brand preference.
There is a relationship between consumer satisfaction and brand preference.
Finally, the relationship between consumer satisfaction and brand preference is stronger than the relationship of the consumer perceived value and brand preference.

Table 6. Inter-item correlations

Hypothesis		Inter-item Correlations		
		Relations	Pearson Correlations	TOTAL N=800
H1.	Perceived value has a direct positive effect on brand preference.	PV1→BP1 PV1→BP2 PV1→BP3 PV2→BP1 PV2→BP2 PV2→BP3 PV3→BP2 PV3→BP3 PV5→BP1 PV5→BP3 PV5→BP4	.231** .086* -.071* .091* .138** -.073* .085* .178** -.086* .299** .113**	(n=798) (n=795) (n=799) (n=798) (n=795) (n=799) (n=794) (n=798) (n=794) (n=795) (n=795)
H2.	Perceived value has a direct positive effect on consumer satisfaction.	PV1→CS1 PV1→CS2 PV1→CS3 PV2→CS1 PV2→CS2 PV2→CS3 PV3→CS1 PV3→CS2 PV5→CS1 PV5→CS2 PV5→CS3	.190** .185** .242** .315** .189** .354** .094** .138** -.147** -.074* -.158**	(n=799) (n=798) (n=800) (n=799) (n=798) (n=800) (n=798) (n=797) (n=795) (n=794) (n=796)
H3.	Consumer satisfaction has a direct positive effect on brand preference.	CS1→BP1 CS1→BP2 CS1→BP3 CS2→BP1 CS2→BP2 CS2→BP3 CS3→BP1 CS3→BP2 CS3→BP3 CS3→BP4	.208** .158** -.164** .200** .190** -.112** .202** .153** -.121** -.055	(n=797) (n=794) (n=793) (n=796) (n=797) (n=796) (n=798) (n=795) (n=799) (n=799)

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
 *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Research Results

The term 'consumer perceived value' has no prima facie authority of the type that may be afforded the terms 'satisfaction', 'quality', or 'marketing'. It has been chosen for this paper precisely because it has neither clearly defined status nor common use. Its

primary purpose is to act as an 'umbrella' term, one that captures a range of associated, existing concepts, all of which use similar names and imply a similar idea - that there exists some discernable property that is perceived/derived/experienced by a customer and which explains their psychological connection to a particular good or service.

Based on the above data analyses, the second model can interpret better the interrelation among consumer perceived value with other marketing constructs and it seems that the consumer satisfaction is a better predictor of behavioral outcomes than consumer perceived value in a food-marketing context [see the stronger relationship between consumer satisfaction and brand preference].

Table 7. Research Results

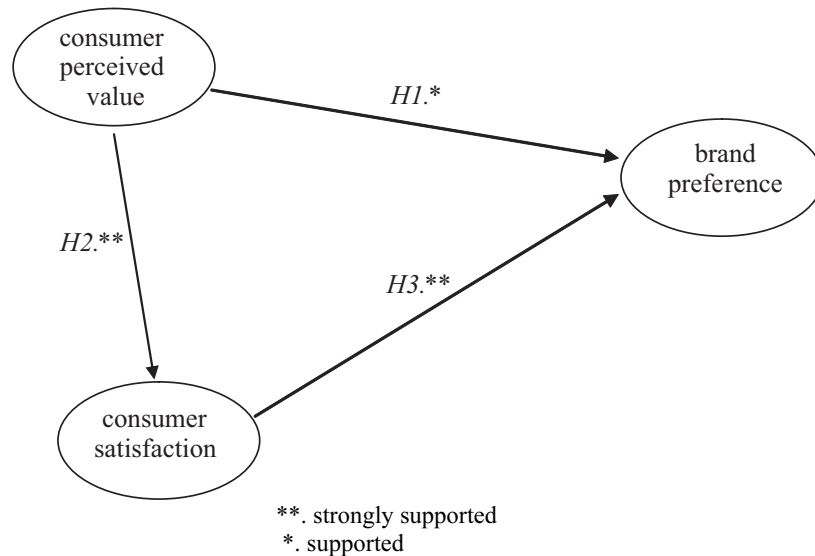| Hypothesis		Support
H1	H1= Perceived value has a direct positive effect on brand preference	supported*
H2	H2= Perceived value has a direct positive effect on consumer satisfaction	strongly supported**
H3	H3= Consumer satisfaction has a direct positive effect on brand preference	strongly supported**
Notes: Supported* Strongly supported**		

Figure 2.   The interrelation among the constructs of consumer perceived value, consumer satisfaction and brand preference in a food-marketing context

Discussion

In recent years, there has been a resurgence of interest in the value construct among both marketing researchers and practitioners. Despite a growing body of research (Carpenter and Fairhurst 2005; van Birgelen et al. 2005; Caruana et al. 2000) it is still not clear how value interacts with related marketing constructs. Researchers have called for an investigation of the interrelationship between customer satisfaction and customer value to reduce the ambiguities surrounding both concepts. Investigates whether customer value and satisfaction represent two theoretically and empirically distinct concepts. Also addresses whether value is a better predictor of behavioral outcomes than satisfaction in a food-marketing context. Two alternative models are developed and empirically tested with 800 households in Greece. The first model suggests a direct impact of perceived value on the consumers' purchasing intentions. In the second model, perceived value is mediated by satisfaction. The theoretical basis of this research outlet is derived from Eggert and Ulaga (2002) analysis presented in the Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing.

The term 'consumer perceived value' has no prima facie authority of the type that may be afforded the terms 'satisfaction', 'quality', or 'marketing'. It has been chosen for this paper precisely because it has neither clearly defined status nor common use. Its primary purpose is to act as an 'umbrella' term, one that captures a range of associated, existing concepts, all of which use similar names and imply a similar idea - that there exists some discernable property that is perceived/derived/experienced by a customer and which explains their psychological connection to a particular good or service.

Our research intention is to interpret the above research results, under the prism of a series of mass communication theories. Such an approach must be introduced in the growing discussion about the ambiguities surrounding consumer perceived value and consumer satisfaction constructs as different mass communication theories (are empowered from period to period) can differentiate significantly the content of the underlined constructs (Griffin 1997; Anderson and Ross 1998; Littlejohn 1999; Griffin 2000). The following review of a series of mass communication theories prove why ambiguities surrounding the underlined constructs exist:

1. Agenda-setting theory. Says the media (mainly the news media) are not always successful at telling us what to think, but they are quite successful at telling us what to think about (McCombs and Shaw 1972).

This theory is good at explaining why consumers with similar media exposure place importance on the same issues. Although different consumers may feel differently about the issue at hand, most people feel the same issues are important (Infante et al., 1997; Griffin, 1997; Cragan and Shields 1998; Anderson and Ross 1998; Littlejohn 1999; Griffin 2000).

The Agenda-Setting Theory comes from a scientific perspective, because it predicts that if consumers are exposed to the same media, they will place importance on the same issues.

2. Cultivation theory. Gerbner's and Gross' cultivation theory (1976) says that television has become the main source of storytelling in today's society. Consumers who watch four or more hours a day are labeled heavy television viewers and consumers who view less then four hours per day, according to Gerbner are light viewers. Heavy viewers are exposed to more violence and therefore are affected by the Mean World

Syndrome, an idea that the world is worse then it actually is. According to Gerbner, the overuse of television is creating a homogeneous and fearful populace.

The cultivation theory is a scientific theory. Epistemologically speaking, Gerbner believes in one truth. The theory does not believe television viewers have a choice in whether they are affected by media violence or not. Lastly, Gerbner allows some of his own values to enter into the theory by deciding what to consider violence and by assigning a numerical value to heavy television viewing. Gerber's idea of the effects heavy television viewing is intriguing. There is definitely support to show that those who watch great amounts of television do experience the mean world syndrome, the definition of 'heavy' needs to be reexamined. Gerbner defines heavy television viewing as watching four or more hours a day. The idea of setting a numerical value to try to equate heavy influence to a mass populace is suspect. While the theory does contain some holes, it adequately opens the discussion dealing with effects of the media upon viewers/consumers.

The effects of Gerbner's mean world syndrome can easily be seen in nursing homes. Many occupants of nursing homes watch many hours of television per day without leaving their rooms to actually see what the real world is like. Having only the media to guide their interpretation of the 'real world', nursing home residents believe that the world is a corrupt and violent place (Gandy and Baron 1998; Potter 1990; Shrum 1997).

3. Cultural imperialism theory (Schiller 1973). States those Western nations dominate the media around the world, which in return has a powerful effect on Third World Cultures by imposing n them Western views and therefore destroying their native cultures.

Western Civilization produces the majority of the media (film, news, comics, etc.) because they have the money to do so. The rest of the world purchases those productions because it is cheaper for them to do so rather than produce their own. Therefore, Third World countries are watching media filled with the Western world's way of living, believing, and thinking. The third world cultures then start to want and do the same things in their countries and destroy their own culture.

An ontological assumption of this theory can be that consumers do not have the free will to choose how they feel, act, think, and live. They react to what they see on television because there is nothing else to compare it to besides their own lives, usually portrayed as less than what it should be.

Epistemologically, this theory can explain that there is one truth and no matter what that truth never going to change. As long as Third World countries continue to air Western Civilization's programs then the third world countries will always believe they should act, feel, think, and live as Western Civilizations act, feel, think, and live.

Axiological, this theory is value-neutral and objective. It does not matter what beliefs the consumers of Third World may already hold the television programs from the Western World will communicate the same message and affect them in the same way.

The predictive power of this theory, which also seems to affect the marketing, constructs of consumer perceived value and consumer satisfaction is that Third World countries' culture will be destroyed and the consumers will identify with Western views (Boyd, 1984; Ogan, 1988).

An interesting part of this theory, which promote the ambiguities surrounding the underlined marketing constructs is presented through heuristic provocativeness, where this theory could lead to new hypotheses such as which cultures are effected more than

others (if any) or whether low context differ in the reception of messages compared top high context cultures? (Ogan, 1988; Straubhaar, 1991).

4. Media dependency theory. This theory (Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur 1976) states that the more dependent the consumers are on the media for having his or her needs fulfilled, the more important the media will be to the consumers.

Consumers use the media for many reasons. Information, entertainment, and parasocial relationships are just a few of them (Auter 1992). The Dependency Theory says the more a person becomes dependent on the media to fulfill these needs; the media will become more important to that individual. The media will also have much more influence and power over that individual. If someone is so dependent on the media for information, and the media is that consumer's only source for information, then it is easy to set the agenda. The individual falls victim to agenda setting theory (Infante et al. 1997).

Media Dependency Theory is relatively scientific in nature. It predicts a correlation between media dependence and importance and influence of the media, but each person uses the media in different ways. In addition, the media affects each person in different ways.

This theory looks at interpersonal communication between a consumer and the media. We talk back to our computers, and we use the same personal spacing techniques with media as we would if that particular medium were a real person. We unconsciously act as if the media are people. There is something unique about this theory. It is relatively new, and considers new forms of interpersonal communication.

5. Spiral of silence theory (Neumann, 1984). Can explain why consumers often feel the need to conceal their opinions/preference/views/etc. when they fall within the minority of a group. Ontologically, Spiral of Silence believes that there is fate- opinions are dependent on the majority opinion of the group.

Epistemologically, the theory is also quite scientific in the relationship between the research being done and the researcher. What is researched is not dependent on the observer, there is one truth; an absolute if you will concern the Spiral of Silence.

An axiological assumption is that this theory is scientific in the values sense as well. Research being done is value neutral and unbiased on the researchers' behalf since they would have no reason or means to skew the findings in any way.

The Spiral of Silence is useful to apply in situations when trying to explain why consumers cover up or change their opinions when in a group setting especially when they think they are alone in their opinions.

6.Media equation theory. This theory (Reeves and Nass, 1996) predicts why consumers respond unconsciously and automatically to communication media as if it were human.

According to the analysis of our research data and the series of mass communication theories, value and satisfaction can be conceptualized and measured as two distinct, yet complementary constructs, with interesting implications in the field of behavioral pricing and communication management but we believe that the discussion for the ambiguities surrounding many marketing constructs must be correlated with the modern thrusts of mass communication theories.

We believe that the final findings of our research can advance retailers' strategic tries as it seems that geographical differentiation (as shown from the descriptive statistics,

where attitudes and perceptions are differed significantly, according to the place of adobe, the educational background and the age) is needed to be considered, in terms of pricing and promotion planning in a store level, as presented below.

Marketing implications

1. Marketers from the food sector should understand that food choice is often influenced more by the psychological interpretation of product properties than the physical properties of products themselves. Perception of food safety risk is one such psychological interpretation, which influences the attitudes and behavior of consumers with respect to the purchase of food products. Thus, perception of food safety risk has consequences for both consumer and producer welfare, and the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the food supply chain. This is especially the case where there is considerable divergence between what might be called objective, technical assessments of risk and subjective, psychological assessments of risk. Such divergence may arise because of inadequacy of risk communication systems, as usually happens in developing economies.

2. Health advantages, taste, user convenience and the design of the product are significant issues that affect significantly brand preference and consumer satisfaction. In terms of behavioral pricing, this means that marketers should seriously reconsider the existing practices of pricing, as competitive price seems not be of high value for the consumers of these category of food products.

Further research

Further research is needed on analyzing ambiguities surrounding marketing constructs under the prism of a series of thrusts of mass communication theories that can fully explain how consumer perceived value could act as an 'umbrella' marketing construct that will affect behavioral pricing and promotion planning at a store level.

Conclusion

This paper contributes to food marketing research by introducing a new parameter (the examination of the mass communication theories) at the growing discussion about the ambiguities surrounding marketing constructs, such as consumer perceived value and consumer satisfaction.

The term 'consumer perceived value' has no prima facie authority of the type that may be afforded the terms 'satisfaction', 'quality', or 'marketing'. It has been chosen for this paper precisely because it has neither clearly defined status nor common use. Its primary purpose is to act as an 'umbrella' term, one that captures a range of associated, existing concepts, all of which use similar names and imply a similar idea - that there exists some discernable property that is perceived/derived/experienced by a customer and which explains their psychological connection to a particular good or service. Based on the data analyses, the second model can interpret better the interrelation among consumer perceived value with other marketing constructs and it seems that the consumer satisfaction is a better predictor of behavioral outcomes than consumer perceived value in a food-marketing context (see the stronger relationship between consumer satisfaction and brand preference).

The catalytic role of mass communication to what consumers perceive as valuable has increased the number of ways to interact with consumers but also the ambiguities of many marketing constructs. The variation in the responsiveness to products and services for different media indicates that it is important to have an understanding of how the media and mass communication adds and subtracts value. The analysis points to the need for food companies to measure the responsiveness of consumers in order to understand and enhance consumer perceived value of the communication as a part of the offer.

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