

The Effects of Delayed Consumption Rituals Versus Demonstrated Consumption Rituals on Consumption Behavior

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Abstract: Delayed enjoyment and demonstration consumption rituals have become an integral part of people's lives in modern consumer societies. With the accelerated pace of society and evolving consumption patterns, these two consumption behaviors have had a significant impact on consumer decision-making processes and market dynamics. In view of this, this study focuses on the effects of delayed versus demonstrative consumption rituals on consumer behavior and attempts to analyze the psychological mechanisms behind them. The aim of the study is to reveal how operators enhance the consumption experience through delayed gratification and demonstration of consumption rituals, and how these behaviors affect their purchase decisions and consumption satisfaction. This study utilized both questionnaire and experimental methods to collect extensive data from consumers of different ages, genders and socio-economic backgrounds, respectively. Also, to ensure the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the findings, the researcher used a combination of literature analysis and case studies to support the empirical study. Through in-depth analysis of the collected data, this dissertation finds that delayed consumption rituals significantly increase consumers' anticipatory pleasure and subsequent satisfaction, while demonstration consumption rituals deepen the emotional connection between consumers and products in social interactions. The results suggest that these two consumption rituals can effectively increase the perceived value of the product and promote consumers' repeat purchase behavior to some extent. In addition, the results reveal the role of cultural differences in consumption rituals, with consumers from different cultural backgrounds displaying different behavioral patterns when confronted with delayed versus demonstration consumption rituals.

Keywords: Delayed consumption ritual, Demonstrated consumption ritual, Consumption behavior, Consumption experience, Marketing

1. Introduction

Delayed consumption rituals are behaviors in which operators intentionally postpone the purchase or enjoyment of goods to enhance consumers' consumption desire. On the other

hand, demonstration consumption rituals are behaviors in which operators use product demonstrations to increase consumers' desire to consume. In the current research progress, many scholars have explained that rituals have a great influence on consumer behavior and desire to consume, for example, slowing down the serving speed of food in high-end restaurants can improve consumer satisfaction, explaining the origin of ingredients and detailed information for consumers will make significant changes in consumer psychology. In the ever-changing society, the researcher can obviously feel that the previous marketing strategies have been slightly unable to keep up with the current changes in consumer behavior. At the same time, the researcher found that the main group of consumers nowadays has been changed into a group with the characteristics of Generation Z (Generation Z consumers, also known as "Millennials", refers to the generation born between the mid-1990s and the early 2000s, who grew up in a highly developed environment of digital technology and are highly dependent on and skilled in the use of the Internet, social media, and mobile devices, characterized by a high level of reliance on and proficiency in the use of these devices). These consumers seek personalization and are socially responsible while valuing product innovation and brand authenticity. The economy is also booming, and people have drastically changed their concept of consumption from eating and drinking to enjoying consumption. The market is changing, consumer behavior is always there, then enterprises, operators and managers how to use the consumer's maximum surplus to obtain a more substantial interest is a very important issue. This thesis focuses on the question of what effect the two consumption rituals of delay and demonstration have on consumer behavior, to what extent they influence it under certain conditions, and how they can be applied to business. This study utilized both questionnaire and experimental methods to collect extensive data from consumers of different ages, genders and socio-economic backgrounds respectively. Data analysis was also used to summarize and analyze the content of their questionnaires. This thesis not only expands the theoretical understanding of how delayed enjoyment and demonstration of consumption rituals affect consumer behavior, but also provides marketers with practical strategies to promote consumption and enhance customer loyalty.

2. Delayed and Demonstrated Experimental Research Process

2.1. Experimental Theory and Basis

In experimental psychology and marketing research, experiments on delayed consumption and demonstration of consumption rituals often aim to stimulate and measure consumers' perceived value, purchase intention and actual purchase behavior.

In terms of delayed rituals, Hirschman proposed the expectancy theory in 1987. This theory explains that consumers' sense of anticipation of a product enhances their assessment of the product's value. This theory reveals that delayed consumption can stimulate the consumer's imagination, making the buying process turn into a ritual that increases expectations, thus increasing the consumer's anticipation of the product and desire to buy [1]. Meanwhile following this, Vohs and Baumeister elaborated the self-control theory in their 2004 study. The theory suggests that delayed consumption requires consumers to use self-control to wait, and that this inherent waiting process can increase the evaluation of the final reward (product or service), and therefore help to shape the consumer's purchase motives and decisions [2].

On the other hand, there are corresponding theories about presentation rituals. In 1984, Cialdini elaborated that consumers may be influenced by the behavior of others. He

emphasized that vivid product demonstrations, especially in social scenarios that include other consumers, can build consumer identification in the social environment, which in turn influences consumers' willingness to buy [3]. Not coincidentally, over the next decade or so, Schmitt also introduced the Experience Marketing Theory in 1999. The theory highlights how consumers' purchasing decisions are influenced by the hands-on experience of the buying process, rather than solely by the characteristics of the product itself. Product demonstrations provide a way for consumers to experience the product directly, an experience that enhances the consumer's emotional connection to the product and boosts desire for it [4].

2.2. Experimental Research Process of Delayed Influence on Consumption Behavior

The researcher surveyed 64 questionnaire participants, including 37 males and 27 females (average age 22.3).

In Experiment 1, the researcher's experiment targeted the product design and consumer experience aspects. Using video, the researcher edited and adjusted the button pop-up times so that the pop-up times varied. The researcher then grouped the items as popping up immediately (1s), popping up more quickly (1.5s), popping up at an even pace (2s), popping up slowly (3s), and popping up more slowly (4s). The researcher then asked the participants to randomly watch the five videos in a fixed location and score the experience of the product in the video on a scale of 1-10, which the researcher called DESV (Delayed Experience Sense Value). The researcher will then process the scores to remove invalid items and obtain the average (two decimal places) of each data item. The researcher ended up with 63 data and 1 invalid item.

The results of this experiment were a DESV of 6.98 for the immediate ejection group, 7.23 for the faster ejection group, 7.42 for the uniform ejection group, 7.81 for the slower ejection group, and 7.13 for the slow ejection group (see Table 1).

Table 1: The Summaries of DESV

NUMBER	GROUP	DESV
1	immediately	6.98
2	quickly	7.23
3	an even pace	7.42
4	slowly	7.81
5	more slowly	7.13

In Experiment 2, the researcher's delayed experimental study focused on food and beverage aspects such as consumer consumption enjoyment experiences. During the process, the researcher set the scenario as a normal lunchtime, the researcher utilized the clip function to time-control the operator's serving rate, the food items were all for a similar steak, and the participants were divided into five groups: within 5 minutes, within 10 minutes, within 15 minutes, within 20 minutes, and within 30 minutes. Participants were randomly assigned to the same restaurant, the same seating for the experience, and rated the overall experience of the meal, which the researcher referred to as the DDV, which is also a range of 1-10 points. The researcher processed the data, eliminated invalid data, and then calculated the mean (retaining two decimal places) for each group.

The final experimental results showed a DDV of 8.21 for the 5-minute group, 8.45 for the 10-minute group, 8.67 for the 15-minute group, 8.33 for the 20-minute group, and 7.68 for the 30-minute group (see Table 2).

Table 2: The Summaries of DDV

NUMBER	GROUP	DDV
1	5-minute group	8.21
2	10-minute group	8.45
3	15-minute group	8.67
4	20-minute group	8.33
5	30-minute group	7.68

2.3. Experimental Research Process on the Influence of Presentation on Consumer Behavior

In the course of that experimental study, the researcher interviewed 57 participants, including 34 males and 23 females (average age 23.17).

In contrast to the Delayed Ritual Influence experiment, the researcher conducted only one experiment for the Demonstration Ritual Influence aspect value.

In Experiment 1, the researcher focused on the dining aspect. The researcher designed the experiment as follows: participants will be randomly ordered and conduct the researcher's experiment, during the experiment, consumers will randomly watch several videos of an employee serving a plate of sandwiches. Using video production, the researcher divided the videos into four scenarios: Scenario 1, in which the employee serves the sandwich and leaves, Scenario 2, in which the employee serves the sandwich and explains to the consumer the origin of the sandwich's ingredients (e.g., where the leaves come from, what brand of bacon slices are used, etc.), and Scenario 3, in which the chef prepares the sandwich in front of the participant and hands it over to the participant. Situation 4 consisted of the chef making the sandwich in front of the participant while showing and explaining the ingredients. The researcher asked the participants to rate the experience of their video on a scale of 1-10, which the researcher referred to as the DCSV.

After the researcher's test, the results were 7.83 DCSV for Experimental Group 1, 7.91 DCSV for Experimental Group 2, 8.11 DCSV for Experimental Group 3, and 8.42 DCSV for Experimental Group 4 (see Table 3).

Table 3: The Summaries of DCSV

NUMBER	GROUP	DCSV
1	Group 1	7.83
2	Group 2	7.91
3	Group 3	8.11
4	Group 4	8.42

3. Analysis of Experimental Results

3.1. Analysis of Delay Experiment

Let the researcher first look at the results of delay experiment 1, whose DESV has a trend similar to a normal distribution. According to the results, the researcher found that the user's DESV showed an increasing and then decreasing trend as the button pop-up time increased.

This may reflect the psychological expectation of consumers between immediate feedback and appropriate waiting. Waiting for a certain period of time may make users feel that the product is more valuable, which is in line with the Expectancy Theory in psychology [5]. However, a long waiting time may lead to user dissatisfaction, which reduces the experience. As noted by Seiders et al., customer sensitivity to wait times varies across individuals, and the data in this study may reflect this [6].

While experiment 2 researchers targeted the food sector where ideal speed of service is an important factor in enhancing customer satisfaction. The data shows that between 10 and 15 minutes, customer satisfaction is the highest. It shows that delay effect has a part of extreme value on consumer behavior, allowing people to maximize their desire to consume. This can be explained by theories related to service quality and expectation management, such as the Service Quality Model (SERVQUAL) proposed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry, which argues that customer satisfaction is affected by the difference between expected and perceived service quality [7]. In addition, Davis and Vollmann's study also showed that appropriate service time enhances the overall customer experience [8].

But the shortcomings of the two experiments are very obvious. The first place of deficiency is that the researcher's data is not comprehensive, the average age of the researcher's participants is around 22 years old, in this age range consumer behavior and consumer psychology has limitations, the selection of the sample may be biased in terms of gender, age, and cultural background, which may affect the generalizability of the results of the experiments. At the same time the researcher does not have a large number of participants, which may not be sufficient to be statistically representative and statistically valid, thus limiting the ability to generalize the findings. In addition, the experimental setting can only reflect real-world consumer experiences to a limited extent; for example, the use of video to simulate the product experience in Experiment 1 may be different from what participants experienced when they actually handled the product. The use of clips to control the serving rate in Experiment 2 may not fully mimic the dining experience in a real-world setting, especially since other environmental factors in the restaurant (e.g., noise, atmosphere, etc.) may also affect customer satisfaction.

3.2. Analysis of the Demo Experiment

In the study, participants gave different consumer perception ratings based on the service demonstration videos they watched. These ratings increased as the complexity of the service demo increased. This suggests that service demos may have a positive effect on consumer perceived value. According to Voss, Spangenberg, & Grohmann, consumers tend to evaluate products on the basis of sensory enjoyment (hedonic) and utility (utilitarian). In this experiment, sensory enjoyment appeared to become more important with increased service demonstrations, possibly due to increased consumer knowledge of the story of the product in front of them and a sense of involvement in the preparation process. In reality, many restaurants utilize service demonstrations as a means to enhance customer experience and satisfaction. For example, some upscale restaurants display the ingredients and preparation process in front of the customer, pulling them into a deeper dining experience through this interaction. This strategy is consistent with the experimental results in that it reinforces perceptions of product quality and provides additional value.

However, the experiment also had a number of shortcomings; it showed some insight in its design and execution, but also had some potential weaknesses. First, the sample size and diversity was limited. Although there were 57 participants, including a diverse range of genders, the researcher had little additional background information about the participants.

The lack of diversity in the sample in terms of age group, cultural background, and socioeconomic status may limit the generalizability and applicability of the results. Furthermore, the lack of explicit reference to the process of random assignment to the experimental group may have increased the risk of selection bias.

In terms of the experimental setup, the fact that only one experiment on the presentation ceremony was conducted without setting up a control group or replication of the experiment meant that the internal validity of the experiment could be threatened. The absence of a control group meant that the researcher could not be sure that the presentation ritual itself, rather than other unmeasured variables, was responsible for the variation in ratings. Additionally, this experiment lacked exploration of other factors that may influence DCSV, such as personal attitudes towards brands or specific dining preferences.

Further in-depth analysis of the participants' ratings revealed that DCSV gradually increased as the service presentation increased (from simply passing the sandwich to making and explaining the ingredients in front of the participant). This is consistent with what has been found in the literature, suggesting that multiple dimensions of the consumer experience may have influenced their perception and evaluation of the product. For example, Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, & Gremler emphasized the importance of service quality in enhancing customer satisfaction and loyalty [9]. In addition, the setup of Experimental Group 4, where ingredients are provided to make while explaining each component, is supported by the theory of educational and playful consumption (EPC), which suggests that when consumers understand the back story of a product, it may increase their value perception [10].

4. Conclusion

This paper mainly discusses the influence of delay and demonstration on consumer behavior, and concludes that the influence of delayed rituals on consumption has an extreme value, and for delayed behavior, operators should control the rate of consumer consumption behavior (such as slower), so as to fully stimulate the consumer's consumption psychology. For the research of demonstration ceremony, the demonstration can bring consumers the satisfaction of showing off psychology, at the same time, to a certain extent, the more ostentatious and showy consumption will be more able to stimulate the consumer's consumption psychology and desire. This paper still has many shortcomings in the study of delay and demonstration, for example, this paper does not further subdivide the acquisition of data, such as weighting the scores to obtain the final value, and does not carry out regression analysis, analysis of variance, and other data processing means. This paper believes that future delay and demonstration studies should be more precise to, and located in, the consumption industry, the type of consumption, and the exact consumption desire extreme value.

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