

Abstract

When approaching choice-process satisfaction from the shopper decision-making perspective, the three main predicting factors are information, consumers, and the time shoppers have. This research incorporates three antecedents – alignability of information, regulatory focus type of shoppers, and time availability of shoppers. One highlight of this research is to empirically study whether cognitive load and need for cognitive closure underlie the relationship between the three antecedents and choice-process satisfaction.

It was proposed in the tested model that choice-process satisfaction results from cognitive load and need for cognitive closure. These two variables result from the three antecedents – alignability of information, regulatory focus type of shoppers, and time availability of shoppers.

To test the model, a series of experiments with a 2 x 2 x 2 between-subject design were conducted with 1,116 respondents. The two levels of each antecedent were alignable/nonalignable information type, promotion/prevention regulatory focus, and time abundance/time limit, which equaled eight different choice-process scenarios. Undergraduate-student respondents within the career choice domain were utilized to fulfill the research requirement of using highly involved, yet unfamiliar respondents. Multiple regression and ANOVA were used to analyze the data.

The results confirm that cognitive load negatively affects choice-process satisfaction in all eight scenarios. Alignable information reduces cognitive load level, while nonalignable information increases cognitive load level.

The unexpected, yet interesting results reveal that need for cognitive closure only affects choice-process satisfaction when prevention-focused shoppers process nonalignable information. In the time abundance case, need for cognitive closure negatively affects choice-process satisfaction. In the time limit case, need for cognitive closure positively affects choice-process satisfaction. Surprisingly, shoppers do not view time availability as a resource in the scenario that requires high cognitive effort.