Consumer Satiation: Formation Mechanisms, Antecedents, and Mitigation Strategies

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Abstract

Satiation refers to consumers' subjective emotional experience characterized by a decline in perceived utility, hedonic value, or satisfaction from continuous or excessive consumption of the same product or service, wherein negative perceptions gradually inhibit positive perceptions. To alleviate or prevent the emergence of satiation, consumers may engage in behaviors such as brand switching, variety seeking, and controlling consumption cycles. Consequently, satiation has become a primary obstacle for enterprises and retailers in cultivating customer loyalty. Foreign literature has categorized satiation types based on various dimensions, including the generation process, functional responses, perceptual states, and attribute perception of satiation; it has analyzed the theoretical principles and mechanisms underlying satiation generation, such as hedonic adaptation, diminishing marginal utility, cognitive dissonance, and optimal stimulation level; it has explored the triggering factors and their effects on both physiological and psychological satiation; it has verified the moderating roles of external and individual factors on consumer satiation; and it has simultaneously examined consumers' mitigation strategies or behavioral responses to cope with satiation. Finally, it reviews the research approaches, characteristics, and limitations of existing literature, and proposes directions for future research.

Full Text

Formation Mechanism, Inducing Factors, and Mitigation Strategies of Consumer Satiation

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Abstract

Satiation refers to the subjective emotional experience in which consumers' perceived utility, enjoyment, or satisfaction from continuously or excessively consuming the same product or service declines, with negative perceptions gradually suppressing positive ones. To alleviate or prevent satiation, consumers engage in behaviors such as brand switching, variety seeking, and controlling consumption cycles. Consequently, satiation has become a major obstacle for enterprises and retailers in cultivating customer loyalty. Foreign literature has classified satiation types based on generation process, functional response, perceptual state, and attribute perception, while analyzing theoretical principles including hedonic adaptation, diminishing marginal utility, cognitive dissonance, and optimal stimulation level. These studies have explored the inducing factors and effects of physiological and psychological satiation, verified the moderating roles of external and individual factors on consumer satiation, and examined mitigation strategies and behavioral responses. This paper concludes by reviewing the research approaches, characteristics, and limitations of existing literature, and proposes directions for future research.

Keywords: Satiation; Physiological Satiation; Psychological Satiation; Satiation Rate; Variety Seeking
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The notion that "too much of a good thing becomes tiresome" represents not only common life wisdom but also a universal consumer experience, giving rise to the principle of "moderation prevents satiation." While satisfaction has traditionally served as a key metric for predicting repeat consumption behavior in consumer research (Park et al., 2014), growing evidence suggests that satisfaction alone cannot accurately forecast consumer actions or intentions (Voss et al., 2010). Even highly satisfied consumers may exhibit brand switching (Line et al., 2019) or variety seeking (Ha et al., 2013) after repeated exposure to high-quality products or services. These behaviors stem from satiation triggered by short-term repetitive consumption (Sevilla et al., 2016). Satiation constitutes a subjective emotional response that intensifies with consumption frequency (Chugani et al., 2015). To mitigate the diminishing hedonic value and maintain optimal stimulation levels, consumers adopt strategies such as brand (or store) switching, variety seeking, or controlling consumption cycles. Clearly, satiation poses a significant barrier to building customer loyalty, prompting marketing researchers to investigate how consumers experience satiation, its underlying mechanisms, influencing factors, and resulting behavioral responses.

International scholarship has extensively explored consumer satiation. Early research focused on how repeat consumption affects satisfaction, typically viewing

it as an obstacle to sustained satisfaction (Brickman et al., 1971). Coombs et al. (1977) subsequently introduced the concept of satiation and its generation process, marking the inception of consumer satiation research. Beginning in 2008, scholars such as Redden, Sevilla, and Galak systematically examined the mechanisms and antecedents of satiation in repetitive consumption contexts. In 2019, Sevilla et al. published a review titled "Variety Seeking, Satiation, and Maximizing Enjoyment Over Time," which summarized the generation mechanisms and mitigation strategies of physiological and psychological satiation but lacked comprehensive coverage of satiation types and moderating factors, offering an incomplete overview of mitigation strategies. Domestically, research on consumer satiation (or boredom) remains scarce. To systematically understand the progress of international research, this paper provides a comprehensive review of English-language literature on consumer satiation, systematically organizing its concepts, types, measurement methods, generation mechanisms, antecedents (including inducing and moderating factors), and mitigation strategies. We conclude with a critical evaluation and future outlook to inform domestic research.

2.1 Concept of Consumer Satiation

Satiation closely resembles boredom, differing primarily in application context. Both concepts describe unpleasant emotional experiences resulting from insufficient internal or external stimulation, or the gradual reduction in enjoyment value through stimulus repetition or prolongation (Galak et al., 2013). Boredom appears more frequently in education and sociology, manifesting as difficulty concentrating, lack of interest, and altered time perception (Pekrun et al., 2010), reflecting negative emotional states toward learning, life, work, and interpersonal relationships often associated with psychological issues like depression and anxiety. Although occasionally used to describe negative emotions in repetitive consumption, satiation is more prevalent in consumer behavior research and better aligns with Chinese linguistic conventions, particularly in food consumption contexts.

Coombs and Avrunin (1977) first introduced satiation to marketing research, terming consumer boredom "Customer Satiation." Two primary definitions exist: an economic perspective defining satiation as declining satisfaction resulting from marginal utility diminution caused by repeated exposure to consumption stimuli (products or services) (Line et al., 2016), emphasizing marginal utility decay as the root cause; and a psychological perspective describing satiation as "an unpleasant feeling arising from conflict between the desire for mental diversion and stimulus deficiency" (Eastwood et al., 2007), highlighting dynamic emotional conflict. From these perspectives emerges a general definition: consumer satiation represents the subjective emotional experience where perceived utility, enjoyment, or satisfaction from repeatedly consuming the same product or service significantly declines, with negative perceptions gradually suppressing positive ones (Redden, 2008; Redden & Galak, 2014).

Two key constructs characterize satiation' s intensity and speed: "satiety ratio" and "satiety rate." Satiety ratio measures the degree of satiation within a specific timeframe, quantifying the magnitude or level of satisfaction/hedonic value decline per unit time (Galak et al., 2009; Sevilla et al., 2019), typically assessed through satisfaction change differentials. Satiety rate describes how quickly satiation develops, representing the time required to generate a unit degree of satiation (Redden, 2014). Satiation undermines hedonic value, negatively affecting cognitive evaluations and emotional responses toward products or services, thereby suppressing purchase intentions. Reducing satiety ratio or rate offers an effective mitigation pathway. For instance, when consumers perceive product scarcity, they consciously reduce consumption quantity to slow satiation rate, maintaining optimal stimulation levels or maximizing hedonic value (Sevilla & Redden, 2014).

2.2 Types of Consumer Satiation

(1) Classification by Generation Process. Satiation can be categorized as implicit, explicit, or dull satiation (Chien-Ching & Yu-Sung, 2018). Initially, consumers experience increasing marginal utility without conscious awareness of satiation—this phase constitutes implicit satiation. As stimuli accumulate, marginal utility begins to decline while total utility continues rising but at a decreasing rate; consumers gradually feel satiated, marking explicit satiation. Finally, after satiation peaks, consumers tend toward distraction or neglect, representing dull satiation. Upon reaching peak satiation, accumulated negative emotions drive consumers to adopt defensive strategies to reduce external pressure and unpleasantness (Holahan et al., 2005).

(2) Classification by Functional Response. Satiation divides into physiological and psychological satiation based on functional response. Physiological satiation functions as a physiological reaction where perceived pleasure decreases over time or with cumulative consumption (Coombs & Avrunin, 1977), measurable through real-time pleasure decline, such as in food consumption (Galak, 2009). Its intensity depends on consumption frequency, interference during consumption, and inter-consumption intervals (Sevilla et al., 2019). Psychological satiation operates as a psychological function, altering with consumer perception even when consumption conditions remain constant, as seen in changing preferences for the same music or television program (Nelson et al., 2009). Research shows that attention, memory, categorization, and metacognition significantly influence psychological satiation; higher attention to consumption quantity, larger choice sets, or greater metacognitive awareness accelerate satiation rate (Sevilla & Redden, 2014; Redden & Galak, 2013), while vivid stimulus impressions can effectively reduce satiation (Galak, 2009).

(3) Classification by Perceptual State. Satiation can be actual or future satiation. Actual satiation represents currently perceived satiation that consumers inevitably experience due to hedonic adaptation and diminishing marginal utility, even with high-quality services or products, prompting variety seeking to

eliminate it (Park & Jang, 2014). Future satiation involves anticipating satiation based on past experience, as reflected in the common wisdom that "moderation prevents satiation" or "too many sweets become cloying." When consumers foresee satiation, they adopt proactive measures (e.g., reducing consumption or controlling cycles) to prevent its occurrence (Kahn et al., 1997).

(4) Classification by Attribute Perception. Satiation divides into sensory-specific and non-sensory-specific satiation based on attribute type. Sensory attributes are tangible product characteristics that continuously influence behavior, such as taste and texture, whereas non-sensory attributes include brand reputation and word-of-mouth that consumers do not directly experience (Inman, 2001; Redden, 2008). Research indicates consumers are more sensitive to sensory attributes, leading to faster satiation rates and stronger variety-seeking tendencies (Inman, 2001). In restaurant research, Line et al. (2016) categorized customer satiation into food, service, and environment satiation, while Ha and Jang (2013) distinguished between overall dining experience satiation and restaurant attribute satiation (food, service, environment attributes), all falling within sensory-specific satiation.

These satiation types exhibit both distinctiveness and overlap. Physiological, psychological, actual, and sensory/non-sensory satiation all belong to explicit satiation. Process-based classifications serve theoretical development and satiation cognition but see limited empirical application. Explicit and actual satiation can be understood as overall satiation. Due to measurement feasibility, empirical research primarily examines physiological versus psychological satiation, actual versus future satiation, and sensory-specific satiation as study variables.

2.3 Measurement Methods for Consumer Satiation

As the generation process reveals, satiation evolves from implicit to explicit, only becoming manifest after reaching a certain threshold (Chien-Ching & Yu-Sung, 2018). Since satiation represents physiological or psychological responses to declining enjoyment, satisfaction, or stimulation from repetitive or excessive consumption, it can be measured through these declining indicators—for example, measuring the drop in "enjoyment level" or "stimulation level" (Galak et al., 2009; Sevilla & Redden, 2014), or calculating the difference between initial and final consumption satisfaction (Sevilla et al., 2019). According to hedonic adaptation and diminishing marginal utility, satiation primarily results from satisfaction decline caused by repeated exposure to the same product or service (Han et al., 2009), making satisfaction change a proxy for satiation degree.

Current measurement approaches fall into two categories:

(1) Immediate Measurement. This assesses current satiation through scale-based surveys. For instance, Ha and Jang (2012) developed items for food, service, and environment satiation in restaurant contexts, using formats like "I feel satiated with···" (e.g., "I feel satiated with the food taste"). Park and

Jang (2014) employed five items: "My most recent experience at this restaurant was worse than before" ; "My most recent visit was less enjoyable than before" ; "After repeatedly dining here, I want to find similar alternatives"; "I am satiated with the same menu" ; and "I am satiated with dining at this restaurant," all measured on Likert scales.

(2) Process Measurement. This involves experimentally manipulating consumption intervals and measuring satisfaction or preference changes over time to assign satiation values (Galak et al., 2009). For example, Galak et al. (2013) measured candy satiation by setting eight intervals (zero, 1 minute, 2 minutes, 5 minutes, 10 minutes, 60 minutes, one day, one week), asking participants to complete questionnaires at each point and comparing preference changes to determine satiation levels. Items included "I will enjoy them less over time" to "I will enjoy them more over time." Sevilla and Redden (2014) similarly used interval settings, having participants read product scarcity materials between intervals and comparing pre- and post-reading enjoyment differences. Process measurement encompasses satiety ratio and rate, where ratio is calculated as the percentage decline in satisfaction or enjoyment over a period (Sevilla et al., 2019), and rate measures the time required for equivalent declines (Galak et al., 2014).

In summary, satiation is primarily measured through satisfaction or enjoyment decline using either immediate or process approaches. Immediate measurement via scales is cost-effective and efficient but cannot capture dynamic changes over time, making it suitable for correlational studies. Process measurement, while time-consuming and costly, accurately depicts satiation dynamics by tracking satisfaction changes across intervals.

3 Theoretical Foundations of Consumer Satiation Generation

Satiation emerges during continuous consumption of the same brand, store, product, or service, as hedonic adaptation and diminishing marginal utility reduce enjoyment, utility, stimulation, or satisfaction, triggering cognitive dissonance and negative emotions. Consumers then pursue optimal stimulation through brand switching, variety seeking, or consumption cycle control to eliminate satiation or cognitive dissonance. Thus, satiation generation rests on hedonic adaptation theory, marginal utility theory, cognitive dissonance theory, and optimal stimulation level theory.

(1) Hedonic Adaptation Theory. Hedonic adaptation describes the sensory adaptation process where emotional arousal from new experiences returns to baseline levels after repeated stimulation. Originating from Helson' s (1947) adaptation-level theory, it posits that individuals have adaptation levels where stimuli above or below trigger positive or negative emotions, but people possess emotional recovery capabilities. Lyubomirsky' s (2011) model of hedonic adaptation to positive and negative experiences proposes two independent path-

ways: resolving emotions to restore baseline levels, and altering expectation thresholds by adjusting anticipations. In consumption contexts, hedonic adaptation explains how consumers gradually reduce emotional responses to products through repeated exposure (Coombs & Avrunin, 1977). As consumers accumulate hedonic benefits, they adapt and develop satiation; when perceived benefits drop sufficiently, they seek alternative stimulation (Park & Jang, 2014; Line et al., 2016). Thus, satiation represents an inevitable outcome of hedonic adaptation in repetitive consumption.

(2) Marginal Utility Theory. Marginal utility theory (or the law of diminishing marginal utility) states that as consumption quantity increases, the additional utility from each unit decreases; when marginal expenditure exceeds marginal utility, overall welfare suffers (Zafirovski, 2001). Also known as the Weber-Fechner law, it assumes perceived utility intensity correlates with stimulus intensity. Marginal utility derives from subjective value assessment—when consumers desire but lack a product, increased consumption raises perceived utility (increasing marginal utility). However, with sufficient quantity, additional consumption yields diminishing utility growth. When quantity becomes excessive, further consumption damages welfare, turning marginal utility negative and reducing total utility. Once marginal utility reaches zero and total utility maximizes, continued consumption generates satiation (Park & Jang, 2014).

(3) Cognitive Dissonance Theory. Festinger (1957) defined "dissonance" as psychological discomfort from relevant but inconsistent cognitions, proposing cognitive dissonance theory—when dissonance occurs, individuals are motivated to reduce it by changing cognitions, attitudes, or behaviors, or by reducing the importance of inconsistent cognitions (Festinger, 1959; Matz & Wood, 2005). This theory suggests that when purchase decisions involve dissonant factors, such as negative outcomes differing from expectations, consumers experience tension affecting subsequent behavior to reduce dissonance. Thus, satiation from continuous repetitive consumption creates dissonance and unpleasantness, motivating brand switching, novelty seeking, or variety seeking to reduce dissonance (George et al., 2010).

(4) Optimal Stimulation Level Theory. Optimal Stimulation Level (OSL) refers to the ideal amount of stimulation matching individual expectations (Ha & Jang, 2013). OSL theory posits that each individual maintains a specific OSL and seeks to preserve this optimal state or maximize enjoyment. Consumer responses to external or individual stimulation can be described by an inverted U-curve, where moderate stimulation levels are perceived as most satisfying, while excessive or insufficient levels cause dissatisfaction (McAlister & Pessemier, 1982; Steenkamp & Hans, 1992). When consumption stimulation falls below optimal levels, continued consumption of the same brand or product generates unpleasant emotions (satiation), prompting novelty or variety seeking to adjust stimulation upward (Ha & Jang, 2013). Consequently, high-OSL individuals prefer new products and brands, while low-OSL consumers favor familiar purchases and avoid variety seeking (Steenkamp & Burgess, 2002; Park & Jang,

2014). OSL theory thus effectively explains satiation mitigation pathways and frequently predicts variety-seeking tendencies (Inman, 2001; Ha & Jang, 2015).

4 Inducing Factors of Consumer Satiation Generation

Literature has focused on inducing factors (antecedents) of physiological and psychological satiation. Physiological satiation relates to consumption stimulus magnitude over time (Redden, 2008; Baucells & Sarin, 2010; Galak et al., 2013), including consumption quantity, frequency, and continuity (Sevilla et al., 2019). Consumers' enjoyment, utility, stimulation, or satisfaction also depend on subjective perception; under constant external stimuli, attention, memory, metacognition, and categorization affect psychological satiation generation (Sevilla et al., 2019).

4.1 Inducing Factors of Physiological Satiation

(1) Consumption Quantity. This refers to the amount of a product or service consumed. According to diminishing marginal utility, accumulated consumption eventually reduces total utility, prompting consumers to stop after utility maximization. Although consumers cannot precisely assess utility levels, weakening utility value gradually reduces positive evaluations and loyalty while increasing negative assessments, driving brand switching or variety seeking (Schmitt, 2012; Ding & Tseng, 2015). McAlister et al.' s (1982) dynamic attribute satiation model suggests product value comprises attribute values whose accumulation accelerates satiation and affects subsequent consumption. Research shows that greater consumption quantity within a unit time strengthens satiation (Mook & Votaw, 1992; Simonson & Winer, 1992).

(2) Consumption Frequency. This denotes how often consumers visit the same store or purchase the same brand within a unit time (Sevilla et al., 2019). Despite constraints from preference, individual needs, and consumption capacity, consumers maximize frequency for preferred products, accelerating satiation rate and ratio (Galak et al., 2011). Frequency relates to delay of gratification—high-delay consumers control current consumption when future utility exceeds present value, while low-delay consumers embrace "seize the day" mentalities (Galak et al., 2013). Additionally, ignoring or misestimating how intervals replenish hedonic value increases frequency. Since consumers cannot accurately predict optimal intervals, frequency reflects a trade-off between desire and willpower; the former promotes indulgence, the latter encourages delayed gratification for greater future returns (Galak et al., 2013). Studies confirm that hedonic value declines with increased frequency, demonstrating frequency' s significant positive effect on satiation (Galak et al., 2011).

(3) Consumption Continuity. This describes whether consumers continuously purchase or consume the same product or service, determined by inter-consumption intervals. Research shows that with equal consumption times within a unit period, longer delays slow satiation development (Thompson et al.,

1966; Sevilla et al., 2019). Sufficiently long intervals may even eliminate quantity effects on hedonic value (Galak et al., 2011). When possible, consumers prefer continuous consumption and resent interruptions—nearly all consumers dislike television commercials. Paradoxically, research demonstrates that commercial interruptions enhance overall viewing enjoyment (Nelson et al., 2009). According to diminishing marginal utility and hedonic adaptation, when quantity or frequency exceeds critical satiation thresholds, negative effects emerge but recover after time (Park & Jang, 2014). Thus, setting appropriate intervals not only mitigates negative experiences (satiation) but also restores optimal hedonic states (Nelson et al., 2009). Reducing consumption continuity therefore helps prevent satiation.

4.2 Inducing Factors of Psychological Satiation

(1) Attention. Attention involves focusing limited cognitive resources on selected information through filtering, encompassing both direction and magnitude (Venkatraman et al., 2015). Research shows attention to experiences affects satiation perception: when consumers perceive stimuli as scarce (small choice sets or product scarcity), they satiate more slowly (Sevilla & Redden, 2014). Perceived limited availability focuses attention and enhances utilization of rare consumption opportunities, reducing focus on quantity and slowing satiation. Haws and Redden (2013) found that high self-control consumers satiate faster with unhealthy foods but slower with healthy options compared to low self-control consumers, as they attend more closely to quantities when consuming unhealthy items. Attention' s impact extends beyond quantity focus—selective attention to differentiation also reduces satiation rate (Redden, 2008). Thus, attention' s role depends on both magnitude and the specific aspects of experience consumers focus on (Sevilla et al., 2019).

(2) Memory. Memory involves the ability to mentally simulate past experiences. Redden (2014) argued that satiation partially derives from recalling previous consumption; interfering with memory reduces satiation ratio. For example, watching television during lunch increases subsequent snack intake (Higgs & Donohoy, 2011; Higgs & Woodward, 2009), and playing computer games while snacking lowers satiation rate (Brunstrom & Mitchell, 2006). Thus, memory affects satiation speed, and disrupting memory encoding helps reduce satiation ratio. While memory is thought to induce satiation, it can also alleviate it. Manipulating memory recall to stimulate past experiences helps consumers escape satiation faster (Redden & Galak, 2009). Memory is influenced by perceived temporal distance and retrieval ease—shorter perceived distance facilitates retrieval and increases satiation ratio, while greater distance reduces it (Galak et al., 2013).

(3) Metacognition. Metacognition involves understanding and controlling one' s own cognitive processes, including product knowledge retrieval, information processing, and idea formation (Flavell, 1979). It creates conscious cognitive and emotional experiences that gradually affect hedonic perception over

time (Sevilla et al., 2019). Research confirms that merely evaluating a food reduces enjoyment of similar foods and increases satiation (Larson, 2013), demonstrating that metacognitive awareness of cognitive processing affects satiation toward other targets. Additionally, since physiological perception of consumption quantity accelerates satiation, metacognitive evaluation that consumption is sufficient generates satiation (Morewedge et al., 2010). As a high-level cognitive mechanism, metacognition consumes substantial cognitive resources, causing cognitive fatigue. Consequently, satiation depends on recently depleted cognitive resources, and repeated metacognitive activation accelerates satiation (Redden et al., 2013).

(4) Categorization. Categorization involves cognitively classifying product attributes (Sevilla et al., 2019). It affects satiation through two mechanisms: first, categorization specificity. Detailed categorization provides clear information indexing that simplifies cognitive experiences (Sevilla et al., 2019). Research shows that more detailed choice set categorization leads consumers to experience stimuli across subcategories rather than focusing on a single category (Redden, 2008). This increases attention to quantity or frequency within a single category, accelerating satiation and intensifying variety seeking across categories. Second, categorization scope. Larger scope provides richer stimuli within categories, accelerating satiation with specific stores or products and promoting variety seeking within the category. However, from a categorical perspective, larger scope reduces repetition probability within a category, slowing category-level satiation (Redden, 2008).

5.1 External Factors as Moderators of Consumer Satiation

(1) Product or Service. This refers to consumption objects that consumers can perceive, access, and use to fulfill needs and obtain functional and hedonic value. Research shows sensory attributes more readily activate satiation, including appearance, smell, texture, or taste (Inman et al., 2001). In restaurants, high-quality food and service can delay satiation (Jang & Namkung, 2009). Since sensory attributes substantially influence satiation, continuous innovation to meet quality demands or providing variety can effectively reduce satiation rate (Line et al., 2016). According to Bass' s (1974) stochastic preference and brand switching theory, brand or store switching depends on relative rather than absolute preferences, as consumers evaluate utility through comparison rather than confirming absolute preference levels. Thus, horizontal differences between products or services affect satiation. Additionally, consumers exhibit category-specific satiation, more readily tiring of products with identical sensory features. For example, satiation with a salty food (e.g., salted eggs) increases preference for sweet foods (e.g., chocolate), while continued salty food consumption intensifies satiation (Hetherington & Belland, 2000).

(2) Consumption Environment. This encompasses all objective external factors during consumption. Research demonstrates significant environmental effects on satiation, including consumption occasions, decision contexts, and

market factors. Regarding consumption occasions, public consumption shows greater variety than private consumption because individuals wish to demonstrate open-mindedness to others, with higher external monitoring increasing variety even to the point of choosing disliked products to meet social expectations (Ratner & Kahn, 2002). This indicates higher satiation rates in public settings, though diversity-seeking decreases when social norms support self-consistency (Ratner & Kahn, 2002). Studies also show that consumers in crowded spaces (e.g., narrow aisles) seek more variety than those in less crowded environments (Levav & Zhu, 2009). In decision contexts, consumers purchasing for others or selecting bundled offerings exhibit higher satiation rates, adopting variety-seeking patterns to maximize hedonic value (Choi et al., 2006; Mittelman et al., 2016). Greater decision complexity and uncertainty reduce variety-seeking motivation and slow satiation (Menon & Kahn, 1995). Market factors such as promotional frequency alter satiation rates, with continuous promotions and price discrimination delaying satiation (Kahn & Raju, 1991). Pricing information also accelerates satiation by heightening financial concern and negatively affecting consumption experiences (Haws et al., 2017).

5.2 Individual Factors as Moderators of Satiation

(1) Individual Optimal Stimulation Level. OSL theory posits that each individual maintains a specific OSL (Raju, 1980) and seeks to preserve this optimal state (McAlister & Pessemier, 1982; Steenkamp & Hans, 1992). When consumption fails to provide optimal stimulation, individuals pursue variety seeking to elevate stimulation; when environmental stimulation exceeds OSL, they adapt by suppressing variety seeking (Menon & Kahn, 1995). OSL relates to individual characteristics—younger, educated, or employed groups typically exhibit higher OSL (Raju, 1980). High-OSL consumers show greater innovativeness (Raju, 1980) and engage in more risk-taking and variety seeking (Steenkamp et al., 1992). Consequently, high-OSL consumers have faster satiation rates and greater variety-seeking behavior, while low-OSL consumers satiate more slowly and avoid variety seeking (Park & Jang, 2014).

(2) Self-Control. Self-control theory describes self-control as a balance between willpower and desire (Redden & Haws, 2013), determining self-restraint and hedonic value acquisition (Hofmann et al., 2009). High self-control individuals maintain healthier mindsets and superior economic conditions, whereas low self-control individuals face obesity, debt, and substance abuse (Tangney et al., 2004; Vohs & Faber, 2007) due to weak willpower (Hoch & Loewenstein, 1991). When consumers anticipate future hedonic value, they often practice impulse control to reduce current consumption frequency (Galak et al., 2013). Impulse control, or delay of gratification, represents the ability to forego immediate pleasure for long-term benefits (Duckworth & Kern, 2011). Strong delay of gratification reflects belief in higher future utility, resulting in slower satiation rates (Redden & Haws, 2013). Self-control also connects to emotional regulation —strong self-control reduces negative emotional arousal, mitigating satiation' s

adverse effects (Deborah & Van, 1995; Fabes et al., 1999).

(3) Loyalty. Loyalty forms the foundation for sustainable competitive advantage through marketing efforts (Oliver, 1999; Odin et al., 2001). Customer loyalty is defined as "a deeply held commitment to rebuy or repatronize a preferred product/service consistently in the future, despite situational influences and marketing efforts" (Oliver, 1999). Research shows that highly loyal customers are more likely to choose the same brand/service over time and less likely to switch (Fullerton, 2005; Oliver, 1999). When experiencing satiation with a particular restaurant, customers' novelty-seeking intentions depend on loyalty levels—highly loyal customers are less likely to seek new restaurants despite satiation, demonstrating loyalty' s moderating role between restaurant satiation and novelty-seeking intentions (Ha & Jang, 2015).

(4) Risk-Taking Propensity. Risk is ubiquitous, and risk-taking represents an inherent personality trait. High risk-takers embrace and enjoy risk, while low risk-takers avoid it (Ha & Jang, 2015). When decisions involve risk, different risk preferences yield different behaviors. Since variety seeking entails potential losses, high risk-takers accept risk and satiate faster, whereas low risk-takers prefer familiar options (Ha & Jang, 2015). Additionally, high-sensitivity consumers perceive risk more readily (Horvath & Zuckerman, 1993). Under uncertain variety-seeking outcomes, high-sensitivity/high-risk consumers evaluate threats as less severe and are more likely to engage in variety seeking when satiated compared to low-sensitivity/low-risk consumers (Ha & Jang, 2015).

(5) Self-Construal. Research shows consumers define and maintain identity through purchases consistent with self-construal (Berger & Morgan, 2010), resulting in slower satiation for such products (Chugani et al., 2015). Since satiation naturally arises from repeated consumption (Redden & Haws, 2013), consumers eventually satiate with any product. However, for products consistent with self-construal, declining hedonic value creates cognitive dissonance and self-construal doubt (Weiss & Johar, 2013). To resolve dissonance, consumers self-regulate by suppressing satiation to maintain stable self-construal (Chugani et al., 2015). Thus, self-construal consistency with product concepts negatively correlates with satiation rate.

(6) Temporal Distance Perception. Although satiation dissipates automatically over time, perceived temporal distance affects dissipation speed (Galak et al., 2014). Greater perceived distance since last consumption weakens satiation. Research invited restaurant customers to recall their last visit and compared subsequent food calories, finding that those perceiving longer intervals consumed significantly more calories—a pattern replicated with music stimuli (Galak et al., 2014). Thus, temporal distance perception moderates satiation, with greater distance reducing intensity.

(7) Variety Perception. Perceived variety affects satiation levels (Kahn & Brian, 2004). Galak et al. (2009) confirmed that retrieving diverse past consumption memories from memory alleviates satiation. Sevilla et al. (2016) found that

anticipating future consumption variety reduces current satiation; consumers can engage in advance consumption through pre-booking to transcend temporal and spatial constraints, with this anticipated variety information retroactively affecting current consumption to reduce satiation. This effect requires that future consumption belong to the same type and provide stimulation not lower than current consumption (Sevilla et al., 2016). Thus, variety perception maintains or enhances hedonic value, effectively inhibiting satiation.

(8) Age and Gender. Research shows satiation weakens with age. Rolls et al. (1991) measured food satiation across four age groups (12-15, 22-35, 45-60, 65-82 years), finding more pronounced satiation in youth that gradually decreases with age. Hollis et al. (2007) similarly confirmed slower satiation rates and ratios in older adults (average 72 years) versus younger adults (average 25 years). Ha and Jiang (2015) found that although older adults satiate more slowly, they exhibit more variety-seeking behavior, possibly due to higher income and location factors. Slower satiation in older adults relates to decreased olfactory and gustatory sensitivity and lower OSL, making them more easily satisfied (Raju, 1981). Females show greater novelty exploration than males, more likely to explore when stimulation drops to raise it to optimal levels, suggesting faster female satiation rates (Tang & Chin, 2007).

6 Mitigation Strategies for Consumer Satiation

Satiation significantly reduces enjoyment or satisfaction with repeatedly consumed products/services. To maintain optimal stimulation levels (i.e., maximize enjoyment or satisfaction) and eliminate satiation, consumers typically engage in variety seeking, brand switching, or consumption cycle control—these strategies represent behavioral responses to satiation and serve as outcome variables.

(1) Variety Seeking. This refers to consumers pursuing utility maximization through diverse stimuli to avoid satiation (Levav & Zhu, 2009). Upon recognizing satiation with a product, consumers adjust through brand switching (Nelson & Meyvis, 2008; Nelson et al., 2009). Even without changing product categories, seeking new consumption contexts or selecting new product combinations can increase stimulation and eliminate original product satiation (Menon & Kahn, 1995). Research shows variety seeking provides new stimulation that disrupts hedonic adaptation (Sheldon et al., 2012). Changing consumption targets or methods also prevents hedonic adaptation and slows satiation (Galak et al., 2009). Furthermore, consumers proactively use variety seeking to prevent future satiation based on past experience—when foreseeing satiation, they may preemptively seek variety (Kahn et al., 1997).

(2) Brand Switching. This involves changing consumption targets within a certain period (AlKwifi & Ahmed, 2015). Early research identified price, convenience, service responsiveness, and market competition as key switching drivers (Keaveney, 1995). Brand switching signifies terminating old brand relationships for more attractive alternatives (Ping, 1993). Park and Jang (2014)

later demonstrated that satiation also triggers brand switching. Repetitive consumption reduces hedonic value and stimulation, generating negative satiation emotions and brand avoidance, prompting consumers to switch based on preferences to restore stimulation and obtain higher utility (Redden, 2008; Galak, 2009). Although satisfaction traditionally maintains continuous consumption (Oliver, 1999), even satisfied restaurant customers may switch after repeated high-quality experiences (Line et al., 2019) due to satiation (Line et al., 2016; Park & Jang, 2014).

(3) Memory Recall. Upon recognizing satiation, consumers can retrieve memories to recreate consumption stimuli and eliminate satiation. Consumers typically use past experiences as references for current consumption; high past satisfaction memories encourage continued consumption (Galak et al., 2009; Galak et al., 2014; Redden et al., 2013). Consumers preferentially retrieve positively-ended memories (Varey & Kahneman, 1992), as the peak-end rule suggests experiences' peaks and endings are most memorable. Research shows recalling past consumption stimuli triggers "variety amnesia," eliminating satiation by focusing on positive past experiences to resolve negative effects (Galak et al., 2009). Thoroughly evaluating past experiences also enables more accurate future predictions (Novemsky et al., 2003). When consumers cannot accurately recall experiences, they introduce biases that affect decisions and generate pleasure over time (Sevilla et al., 2019). Memory effects relate to thought speed—fast thinkers retrieve memories more efficiently and flexibly respond to satiation (Pronin et al., 2008).

(4) Consumption Cycle Control. Research shows higher consumption frequency within a period strengthens satiation (Sevilla et al., 2019). Controlling consumption cycles by reducing frequency or increasing intervals helps alleviate satiation (Galak et al., 2013), as intervals allow recovery to hedonic adaptation levels, replenishing hedonic value (Sheldon et al., 2012). Interruptions during consumption also reduce satiation and increase overall enjoyment (Galak et al., 2013; Nelson & Meyvis, 2008; Nelson et al., 2009). For instance, more activities over longer periods increase perceived stimulation and hedonic value, while more activities over shorter periods reduce hedonic value, accelerate satiation rate, and increase satiation (Jordan & Cassie, 2016).

7.1 Review of Existing Literature

(1) Research Approaches and Characteristics. Since Coombs et al. (1977) introduced satiation to marketing, scholars such as Redden, Sevilla, and Galak have systematically explored satiation patterns, generation mechanisms, and inducing factors in repetitive consumption, with subsequent researchers using satiation to explain brand (or store) switching and variety seeking. First, foundational research has clarified satiation' s generation process, types, and measurement methods, identified underlying theoretical mechanisms, revealed how quantity, frequency, and continuity affect physiological satiation and how attention, memory, metacognition, and categorization influence psychological satia-

tion, and examined how consumption cycle control and memory recall mitigate or recover from satiation. Second, regarding satiation' s impact on consumer behavior, literature has empirically verified relationships between different satiation types and brand switching or variety seeking, and tested moderating effects of external factors (product/service, consumption environment) and individual factors (OSL, self-control, risk-taking, loyalty, self-construal, temporal distance, variety perception, age, gender). These findings indicate that satiation arises from hedonic adaptation and diminishing marginal utility due to continuous or excessive consumption, triggered by antecedents (physiological and psychological factors). To maintain optimal stimulation, consumers adopt mitigation strategies such as brand switching, variety seeking, and consumption cycle control, with satiation generation and mitigation moderated by external and individual factors. This synthesis yields a theoretical model of consumer satiation generation and mitigation (see Figure 1 [Figure 1: see original paper]).

Overall, consumer satiation research is grounded in hedonic adaptation, marginal utility, cognitive dissonance, and optimal stimulation level theories, providing in-depth investigation of generation mechanisms, inducing factors, moderators, and mitigation strategies. Two characteristics stand out: First, emphasis on foundational research, which has identified physiological antecedents (quantity, frequency, continuity) and psychological mechanisms (attention, memory, metacognition, categorization), expanding theoretical depth. Second, verification of interaction effects between satiation and mitigation strategies, examining not only correlations with brand switching and variety seeking but also the mitigation effectiveness of specific strategies (memory recall, consumption cycle control).

(2) Research Limitations. Despite contributions, existing literature exhibits several gaps: First, insufficient depth in examining the satiation-variety seeking relationship. Although variety seeking mitigates satiation, most studies treat them as independent processes (Sevilla et al., 2019), neglecting how antecedents (choice set size, financial constraints, crisis environments, online contexts) affect variety seeking through attention and satiation rate mediation. As established, antecedent changes and industry differences in choice set resources first influence attention (to consumption opportunities or quantity), then satiation rate, ultimately affecting variety seeking. Ignoring this mediation limits explanatory power and depth. Second, neglect of the relationship between consumption cycle control and brand switching/variety seeking. Sevilla et al. (2019) view cycle control as a passive reaction, yet it actually involves switching to other loyal or new brands/products to maintain intervals before repeat consumption (Zhang et al., 2020). How consumers actively use switching to control cycles remains unexamined. Third, lack of long-interval longitudinal research. Since satiation stems from repeated consumption over time, understanding temporal effects is crucial. Most studies rely on short-term decision and experience paradigms, lacking long-term tracking of consumer behavior. Fourth, insufficient dynamic research on OSL. Current research treats OSL as a stable trait, ignoring its dynamic changes in response to income fluctuations, economic conditions (e.g., crises), and social

security levels (healthcare, unemployment, education, pensions). Fifth, despite rapid online consumption growth, satiation research remains concentrated in offline contexts (Sevilla et al., 2019), neglecting online satiation patterns.

7.2 Future Research Directions and Implications for Domestic Research

CNKI searches using "satiation" or "boredom" as titles or keywords yield no relevant domestic literature, indicating limited scholarly attention. Yet satiation represents a crucial subjective consumption emotion profoundly influencing brand switching and variety seeking, particularly prevalent in restaurant consumption. International research has yielded substantial findings on generation mechanisms, inducing factors, moderators, and mitigation strategies, providing valuable foundations. Domestic researchers should integrate Chinese consumption culture, values, and behavioral norms to advance both international theory and practical guidance for Chinese marketers and retailers.

We propose several important research areas: (1) Mediating effects of attention and satiation rate between antecedents and variety seeking. Future research should introduce attention and satiation rate as mediators to examine how factors (financial constraints, choice set size, disasters, online environments, awe, food crises) influence variety seeking, deepening theoretical understanding and complementing existing findings. (2) Effects of choice set categorization and scope on satiation. Research should explore how categorization specificity, category size, and choice set magnitude affect attention direction, concentration, and satiation rate. (3) Consumption cycle control behavior for satiation mitigation and prevention. Future studies should examine relationships between satiation, cycle control, and intermittent repeat consumption across multiple loyal brands; how consumers optimally set frequency to delay satiation; and primary cycle control strategies. (4) Dynamic changes in individual OSL and their effects on attention and satiation rate. OSL is influenced by choice set size, categorization, and switching costs, helping explain why the same consumer exhibits different behaviors across industries. (5) Online consumption satiation and behavior. Research should address online consumption' s importance, examining how hedonic value changes over time, how satiation or satiation rate is affected, and what mitigation strategies are employed. (6) Inducing factors of satiation generation. External factors should examine how industry characteristics, switching costs, choice contexts, and choice set scope affect attention and satiation rate, explaining why restaurant customers show higher variety seeking. Internal factors should explore how financial capacity and individual traits (OSL, health consciousness, exploration tendency) influence attention and satiation rate. (7) Methodological breakthroughs in longitudinal paradigms. Future research should conduct tracking studies over extended periods to accurately identify long-term behavioral patterns for maintaining optimal stimulation across consumption episodes and choices between repetition and variety seeking. (8) Initial focus on restaurant consumer satiation. As China' s historically devel-

oped and potentially largest industry, and given the cultural importance of food (“food is paramount”), satiation and its associated brand switching and variety seeking represent universal responses in restaurant consumption, offering convenient research opportunities with significant practical value for industry development and marketing.

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Note: Figure translations are in progress. See original paper for figures.