

COGNITIVE DISSONANCE: A REVIEW OF CAUSES AND MARKETING IMPLICATIONS

Brajesh Bolia,

Assistant Professor (Marketing Management)

K J Somaiya Institute of Management Studies & Research, Mumbai, India

Dr. Sumi Jha,

Associate Professor (General Management)
NITIE, Mumbai, India.

Dr. Manoj K Jha,

Associate Professor (General Management)
NITIE, Mumbai, India.

ABSTRACT

Purpose - The aim of this study was to review the literature in the field of Cognitive Dissonance in the marketing context. This study explored how marketers used the theory of Cognitive Dissonance to explain the consumer behavior. The study tried to identify the underlying factors, which led to Cognitive Dissonance. The study also tried to understand how Cognitive Dissonance impacted individuals and businesses and what measures marketers adopted to reduce Cognitive Dissonance.

Design/ Methodology - The study carried out a thorough review of factors which the researchers in past studied to measure Cognitive Dissonance and its effects on individuals and organizations in the marketing context. The literature reviewed during research has been categorized in four different sections – causes of Cognitive Dissonance, effects of Cognitive Dissonance, measures to reduce the Cognitive Dissonance and scale development efforts by researchers.

Findings - The study found that there had been enough research done in past exploring about individual and socio-environmental factors leading to Cognitive Dissonance, however, limited studies were found which studied the organizational factors leading to Cognitive Dissonance. The past studies indicated substantial losses to organizations due to negative effects of Cognitive Dissonance in terms of loss of loyal consumers, negative word of mouth, and loss of trust and subsequent erosion of the brand.

Limitations- This study tried to focus on the past research in the marketing context, hence other aspects of management and psychology may have been not addressed. The categorization of the past studies done clearly brings out the areas which remains under explored and gives way for future research in the organizational contexts as well as industrial purchases. Organizational Culture and its effect on Cognitive Dissonance among its consumers may also be studied for the benefit of marketers. Enough studies pertaining to Indian context and emerging economies could not be found in the existing literature, which opens up various research avenues.

Practical Implications- The arousal of cognitive dissonance after the purchase decision taken can be a major concern for marketers as it can result in order cancellations, loss of trust for the brand and loss of loyal customers. The study can be helpful for marketers to adopt similar successful strategies in past to keep cognitive dissonance in control.

Social Implications- Marketers are responsible for Sales Volume as well as Profits for their organizations. However, they are also responsible for creating happy and loyal consumers for a win-win situation in a sales oriented transaction.

Originality - This study has done exhaustive review of past studies and has categorized the past studies on the basis of causes of dissonance, effects of dissonance and what measures marketers adopted in past to reduce dissonance among consumers. This study has further categorized the causes of dissonance under three dimensions - Individual Factors, Socio-Environmental Factors and Organizational Factors. This study also further categorized effects of dissonance under two dimensions - Effects on Individuals and Effects on Organizations. This study proposed a model defining the relationships between causes, effects of cognitive dissonance and the measures adopted to reduce cognitive dissonance.

Keywords: Cognitive Dissonance, Post purchase Decision, Cognitions, Purchase Decisions.

INTRODUCTION:

Cognitive Dissonance is a psychological discomfort that occurs when a discrepancy exists between what a person believes and the information that contradicts that belief. Festinger (1957) introduced the concept of cognitive dissonance after conducting an observational study of a cult (dubbed as “Seekers” by Festinger and his associates), which believed that the earth was going to be destroyed by a flood on 21st Dec 1955. Festinger and his associates predicted their behavior if the flood did not occur and subsequently they observed and studied how the members reacted when the flood did not occur. While some members felt they were fooled and considered this as an experience but the more committed members re-interpreted the evidence to show that they were all correct throughout and the earth was saved because of their efforts as if they were trying to justify their actions and faith (Cooper, 2007). Festinger stated that if a person holds two cognitions/cognitive elements (“knowledges” about himself, his environment, his opinions, his attitudes and his past behavior) that are inconsistent with one another, he will experience dissonance and will try to reduce it in one of the three ways: remove dissonant cognitions, add new consonant cognitions, or reduce the importance of dissonant cognitions. Festinger further explained that Cognitive Dissonance is a psychological phenomenon and that occurs when a discrepancy exists between what person believes and the information that contradicts that belief. The consumer encounters a feeling of “regret” after taking a decision or making a purchase. This regret is due to the opposing cognitions / cognitive elements. If one cognitive element follows logically from another cognitive element, then both are said to be consonant to each other. However, those are dissonant to each other if one does not follow logically from other, thereby causing a feeling of “regret” (Festinger, 1957). The two major outcomes of the Cognitive Dissonance theory were the concept of cognition and the magnitude of dissonance. Higher the discrepancy between cognitions, higher is the magnitude of the dissonance. The origination of the concept of Cognitive Dissonance can be traced back to children and monkeys (Egan, Santos, & Bloom, 2007) to arrive to the explanation that it depends on the past knowledges acquired by an individual. The literature review indicates that enough research has been carried out and published since the formulation of the theory of cognitive dissonance (Aronson, 1992; Brehm & Cohen, 1962; Cummings & Venkatesan, 1976; Egan et al., 2007; E. Harmon-Jones & Mills, 1999; Hunt, 1970; O'Neill & Palmer, 2004; Oshikawa, 1968; Powers & Jack, 2013; Soutar & Sweeney, 2003; Jillian C. Sweeney, Hausknecht, & Soutar, 2000; Telci, Maden, & Kantur, 2011; Young, 2011). The cognitive dissonance theory assumes a drive like motivation to maintain consistency among the relevant thoughts and actions. The theory of cognitive dissonance is one of the groups of cybernetic theories called consistency theories, all of which begin with the same premise: people are more comfortable with consistency than inconsistency (Heider, 1946). The evolution of the theory of cognitive dissonance seems to have developed with the notion that people are more comfortable with consistency than inconsistency and try to resist, avoid or change the contradictory information and knowledges.

Various researchers tried to reject the theory out rightly (Chapanis & Chapanis, 1964; Elms & Janis, 1965; Rosenberg, 1965), provided modifications to the theory (Linder, Cooper, & Jones, 1967) and counter the cognitive dissonance theory with concepts such as individual concepts and actions, self-esteem (Aronson & Carlsmith, 1968) discrepancies between attitude and behavior (Bem, 1967), unwanted consequence (Cooper & Fazio, 1984), self-awareness (Duval & Wicklund, 1972) and moral integrity (Steele, 1988). However, none of the propositions, alternatives and modifications offered by researchers, was able to displace the original version as proposed by Leon Festinger and various researchers over a period of time tested and provided enough support in favor of the original version of the theory. Marketers have used the theory of cognitive dissonance mainly to investigate the dissonance experienced by consumers during purchase of a product.

OBJECTIVE & METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY:

Cognitive dissonance post purchase has been a marketers’ subject of curiosity and importance as it directly affects the post purchase behavior of the consumer. The aim of this study was to review the literature in the field of cognitive dissonance in the marketing context. This study intended to know how marketers used theory of Cognitive Dissonance to explain the consumer behavior, which led to cognitive dissonance post decision. The review considered the research papers concerned with marketing applications of the concept of cognitive dissonance. The literature reviewed comprised of research papers published in year 2000 onwards along with the research papers of importance from the prior period in the area of cognitive dissonance.

The literature studied during research has been categorized in 4 different sections – causes of cognitive dissonance, effects of cognitive dissonance, measures to reduce the cognitive dissonance and scale development efforts in the field of cognitive dissonance.

The categorization has been done keeping the marketer's concern of the following aspects: Causes for arousal of cognitive dissonance, areas where arousal of cognitive dissonance affects most and what marketers can do to address the issues related to cognitive dissonance.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

The literature review suggested that enough research has been carried out and published since Leon Festinger (1957) formulated the theory of cognitive dissonance (Aronson, 1992; Brehm & Cohen, 1962; Cummings & Venkatesan, 1976; Egan et al., 2007; E. Harmon-Jones & Mills, 1999; Hunt, 1970; O'Neill & Palmer, 2004; Oshikawa, 1968; Powers & Jack, 2013; Soutar & Sweeney, 2003; Jillian C. Sweeney et al., 2000; Telci et al., 2011; Young, 2011). Researchers observed role of sales person in the arousal of dissonance among consumers and stressed that organizations should ensure that the sales person's behavior and consumer interface was leading to satisfaction and not dissonance (Jillian C. Sweeney et al., 2000). Few researchers also studied the music and aesthetics in the store (Jilian C. Sweeney & Wyber, 2002) as well as store image (Hunt, 1970) in making the consumers feel comfortable with their purchase decision thereby reducing Cognitive Dissonance. It was observed that service quality perceptions change or decline after elapse of time with consumers trying to justify the decision taken (George & Edward, 2009; O'Neill & Palmer, 2004). However, organizations may face a risk of word of mouth recommendations from these consumers as these consumers may be less vocal about their negative emotions but they may not proactively promote the brand. Researchers have used the theory of cognitive dissonance in marketing area extensively to address post purchase behavior of the consumers at various stages and how it could be controlled or reduced. Post purchase communications affected the consumers as suggested by (Hunt, 1970). Hence organizations have to carefully choose the type of post purchase communication mode to connect with the consumers. The consumer's decision of purchase should get strengthened rather than create a doubt in the mind due to the post purchase communications. Assurance from celebrities, local opinion leaders and reputed citizens may also strengthen the attitudes towards a particular brand and ensure the consumers do not feel regret post purchase (Marshall, Na, State, & Deuskar, 2008). Majority of studies done in past are from USA, Europe, Australia, Turkey, Israel, and Iran with very few studies done in Indian context (Bawa & Kansal, 2008; Chockalingam, Deshpande, & Jacob, 1998; George & Edward, 2009) which focused on services, ethics in jobs and purchase involvement respectively. Hence a huge opportunity lies ahead to explore this topic in emerging markets like India.

The literature review has been categorized in 4 different sections –

- Causes of Cognitive Dissonance
- Effects of Cognitive Dissonance
- Measures to reduce Cognitive Dissonance
- Scale Development Studies in Cognitive Dissonance

CAUSES OF COGNITIVE DISSONANCE:

An individual is always engaged in taking decisions at every step in his/her life, be it a simple routine decisions or complex decisions. Researchers in past studied variables leading to Cognitive Dissonance after purchase based on Individual traits, Socio-Environmental concerns and the Organizational factors which compelled the individuals to develop the feeling of "Regret" after taking the purchase decision.

INDIVIDUAL FACTORS:

One of the major causes of dissonance was the belief of the consumer which prevented consumer to take a rational decision and thus developing a feeling of regret (Chou, 2012; Zafar, 2011). The study conducted by Chou (2012) analyzed the relationship framework between online reviews for a product and the consumer's internal beliefs of an online retailer in a pre-purchase stage and how it affected the purchase decision. The researcher concluded that a consumer experienced greater Cognitive Dissonance when a greater inconsistency between his or her internal beliefs of an online retailer and online reviews about the online retailer existed. Also the researcher argued that the consumer made the purchase decision based on the internal beliefs when high degree of Cognitive Dissonance was experienced. A study conducted with university graduates in northwestern university, USA, addressed the questions if Cognitive Dissonance affected reporting of beliefs and whether individuals exerted sufficient mental effort when probed about their subjective beliefs (Zafar, 2011). The researcher raised a concern that if an individual was asked about his or her beliefs then he was likely to exaggerate those in order to rationalize his choice by either denying or avoiding the contradictory information

against his beliefs. Researcher observed that the results of the study did not report any effect of Cognitive Dissonance on the reporting of beliefs, rather social desirability was affecting the reporting of beliefs. The study could not find individuals putting any mental effort to report their beliefs. The individual traits like anxiety (Hawkins, 1972) worry (Hawkins, 1972; Mittelstaedt, 1969; Oshikawa, 1972) and overreaction (Olsen, 2008) also contributed largely to the arousal of dissonance. Cognitive Dissonance was considered to be influenced by self-standards/self-esteem, (Stone, 2003) personal performance (Bose & Sarker, 2012) ethics (Fraedrich & Ferrell, 1992) and moral values (Lii, 2001) of consumers and if the decisions taken were not in consonance with these variables then it led to Cognitive Dissonance. (Jillian C. Sweeney et al., 2000) developed a scale to measure Cognitive Dissonance after an exploratory research involving Qualitative Study as well as Quantitative Study to arrive at three-dimensional solutions with the variables - emotions, wisdom and concern for the deal. Several studies done with human psychological traits such as emotions (Jillian C. Sweeney et al., 2000), anxiety and worry (Hawkins, 1972; Mittelstaedt, 1969; Oshikawa, 1972) revealed that consumers got highly influenced by these traits while making purchase decisions and thus paving a way towards Cognitive Dissonance post purchase. While researching about Cognitive Dissonance in services, researchers observed that risk perception (Mitchell & Boustani, 1994) affected the decision and was a major cause of Cognitive Dissonance after the decision was taken. Marketers attracted consumers by tempting schemes and appeals to make them take impulse decisions. The dissonance levels were higher in case of planned purchases as compared to impulse purchases (George & Edward, 2009; George & Yaoyuneyong, 2010). Mittelstaedt (1969) studied the relationship between Cognitive Dissonance and brand loyalty in terms of repeat purchase. Researcher observed that the probability of repeating a choice was influenced by the level of Cognitive Dissonance, thus connecting brand loyalty with the phenomenon of Cognitive Dissonance. Hawkins, (1972) observed that the tendency to experience Cognitive Dissonance might be a personality variable, which was a specific form of chronic anxiety. Researcher also observed that individuals who generally said that they worried after taking a decision, scored higher on the chronic anxiety scale as compared to those who worried less after taking a decision. This suggested that dissonance was a form of chronic anxiety. Fraedrich & Ferrell, (1992) investigated that marketing managers changed their value structure or their perceived moral philosophy depending upon the situations, thus trying to justify their decisions against contradictory information. Mitchell & Boustani, (1994) studied the risk perception of consumers before the purchase decision. Researcher observed that the risk perception varies at various stages of the decision-making during purchase and affected the post purchase behavior of consumer. Jillian C Sweeney et al., (2000) developed a 3-Factor and 22-Item Scale for measurement of Cognitive Dissonance on the basis of cognitive as well as emotional component. The final scale developed after a qualitative study and 2 stages of quantitative study defined the 3-Factors – Emotional Factor, Wisdom of Purchase and Concern over Deal. Lii, (2001) studied Cognitive Dissonance experienced by managers while making business ethical judgments. Researcher observed that the decision making as well as the degree of Cognitive Dissonance experienced was mainly affected by the moral development of the managers. Stone, (2003) studied the importance of self-standards and the role of self-esteem in dissonance process. Researcher observed that the participants with low self-esteem who were more certain of their negative self-knowledge reported less favorable attitudes towards the easy topic and lower psychological discomfort as compared to participants with less certain negative self-knowledge. Also the experiments conducted provided evidence of self-consistency in the process of dissonance. The researcher concluded that self-esteem influence dissonance arousal and self-consistency played a very important role in dissonance processes. Olsen, (2008) studied the relationship between Cognitive Dissonance and buying decision making in case of financial purchase decision. Researcher observed that over reaction by the individuals at certain times was responsible for Cognitive Dissonance post decision.

George & Edward, (2009) examined the relationship between purchase involvement in a purchase and Cognitive Dissonance. Researcher observed that the level of Cognitive Dissonance experienced by highly involved individuals was much lesser than the level of Cognitive Dissonance experienced by the individuals who were less involved in the purchase. Researchers also observed that more planned and less spontaneous purchases attracted higher level of Cognitive Dissonance. Researcher studied that highly involved individuals were rigid in their pre-conceived notions and were not ready to change their attitude. They also downplayed the opposing cognitions and actively looked forward to supportive information to support the old cognitions that led to the purchase decision. However, researchers also observed that the individuals who were highly involved were willing to accept the new cognitions after some elapse of time. George & Yaoyuneyong, (2010) studied the relationship between Cognitive Dissonance and impulse buying behavior among students from various ethnic cultures, who were on a spring break shopping trip at their educational destination. Researchers had

hypothesized that shoppers who bought travel related goods on impulse would experience higher levels of Cognitive Dissonance as compared to the shoppers who made planned purchases. However, the results from the study were totally contradictory and researchers observed that impulse buyers experienced lower levels of Cognitive Dissonance as compared to the planned buyers.

SOCIO ENVIRONMENTAL FACTOR:

Knowledges acquired in past and the experiences encountered since childhood by the consumer affected the degree of Cognitive Dissonance as studied by researchers (Bose & Sarker, 2012). Family was an important decision making unit in consumption of various goods and services. The magnitude of dissonance varied between the older people and younger people, wife and husband, upper class and middle class people and also depended upon the stage of the life cycle which the individual was experiencing (Bose & Sarker, 2012). Researchers also observed that consumers were influenced by the people surrounding them as well as the behavior expected out of them in the society, based on the custom norms, religious values, and cultures (Bose & Sarker, 2012; Hoshino-Browne et al., 2005; Veer & Shankar, 2011). Any deviations from that led to different levels of Cognitive Dissonance, thus restricting the consumer to give a favorable opinion about the product or service consumed. Researchers studied Cognitive Dissonance with reference to forced or induced compliance and free paradigm scenario (Balcetis & Dunning, 2007; C. Harmon-Jones, Schmeichel, Inzlicht, & Harmon-Jones, 2011; Wicklund & Brehm, 2004) and it was revealed that the motivation to resolve the Cognitive Dissonance influenced their perception of natural environments. It was observed that there was a tendency among majority of the consumers to follow the crowd and do what others were doing “herding” (Olsen, 2008) and it became difficult for a consumer to take decisions differently by going against the wave, thus leading to Cognitive Dissonance if the decisions created discomfort to the consumers. Researchers studied the political environment and the influence of the political ideology leading to the dissonance after the decision was taken (Bose & Sarker, 2012; Veer & Shankar, 2011)

Wicklund & Brehm, (2004) considered an example to support the research implications where a role played by the individual affected Cognitive Dissonance. Researcher used an example of an American student Sally who spent her time in France and got the opportunity to play the role of a French Labor force. Researchers observed that the forced compliance to play role in French labor force did not create dissonance due to the existing values learned in USA; however, the internalization of values inbuilt restricted her to accept the new cognitions over the old cognitions. Researchers concluded that in a forced compliance the old cognitions and the new cognitions rule side by side and dissonance remains controlled. Hoshino-Browne et al., (2005) conducted a cross cultural study in Canada among the students studying in Canada and hailing from various ethnic backgrounds such as European, Asian, and Japanese as how did they make choices for themselves and for friend. Researchers tried to understand how a self-affirmation helped in strengthening their choice and reducing dissonance. Researcher observed that though dissonance was experienced by all categories however, culture shaped the situations in which dissonance was aroused and reduced. Researcher concluded that European Canadians showed significant post- decisional justification when they made choices for themselves while Asian Canadians or Japanese students engaged in post decisional justification when they made choices for a friend. Researcher also observed that self-affirmation reduced dissonance among the Asian Canadians but not for European Canadians. One more study by the researchers stated that when Asian Canadians made choices for a friend, an independent self-affirmation reduced dissonance for bi-cultural Asian Canadians but not for mono-cultural Asian Canadians. Balcetis & Dunning, (2007) researched on the effects of natural environment in forced or free conditions to resolve Cognitive Dissonance after choice was made. Researchers conducted a study where they asked the participants from 3 different groups to perform a task to walk through the campus ground in a swimsuit, which could be embarrassing. Researcher gave high choice, low choice and No choice to perform the task to the respective groups and asked their perception of distance they walked. The low choice and no choice groups perceived the distance higher than the high choice groups, which led the researcher conclude that the perception of natural environment depends upon the choice paradigms and thus results in arousal of dissonance.

Olsen, (2008) studied the relationship between Cognitive Dissonance and buying decision making in case of financial purchase decision. Researcher observed that along with financial risk, herding, crowd following were some social behaviors shown by the decision makers during financial instrument purchases to justify their decisions. Veer & Shankar, (2011) studied the consumption and material wealth generation by religious consumers. Researchers investigated in which ways high religiosity consumers balanced the pressure between the acquisition of material wealth and the religious teachings that explained the evil nature of materialism. Researchers studied the insights from the theory of Cognitive Dissonance as how individuals coped with

conflicting norms they faced in respect to the religious norms. Respondents from southwestern city of UK were chosen for the study and those were categorized in the high and low sections of religiosity with suppressed and not suppressed materialistic qualities in the advertisements of the product. Luxury wrist watch was used to seek their response. Researchers observed that high religiosity consumers were more inclined to purchase a luxury item, such as a luxury watch, when the materialistic claims about the product were suppressed. However, Researchers also observed that if the materialistic claims in the product advertisements were not suppressed then the purchase intentions declined drastically among high religiosity consumers. C. Harmon- Jones et al., (2011) discussed the dissonance reduction process being an approach oriented or avoidance oriented motivation. Researchers observed that the approach oriented motivation was responsible for the cause of Cognitive Dissonance and the justification for the decision taken. The study found that there was more liking towards the chosen alternative than the rejected alternative in a free choice paradigm as compared to when there was a forced compliance. Bose & Sarkar, (2012) conducted study in south Asian country Bangladesh and studied the relationship between Cognitive Dissonance and various socio environmental factors which affected the decision making as well as post decision justifications by the consumers. The various parameters studied by the researcher were belief, norms, customs, family status, political ideology, emotional reaction, personal performance, culture, religious value & peer group influence.

ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS:

When it came to purchase behavior then the individual behaved differently while buying different categories of goods- convenience goods, shopping goods and specialty goods (Kaish, 1967). For convenience goods the factors such as product knowledge (Mishra, Shiv, & Nayakankuppam, 2008) and the product characteristics (Bawa & Kansal, 2008; O'Neill & Palmer, 2004) played a major role in defining the consumers' behavior and arousal of Cognitive Dissonance. In case of specialty goods the level of involvement (George & Edward, 2009; Korgaonkar & Moschis, 1982) was higher during a purchase decision, thus leading to higher levels of Cognitive Dissonance. The level of involvement in understanding the product (Mishra et al., 2008) was also a major factor in explaining the decision making as well as Cognitive Dissonance experienced by consumer in case of buying variety of goods (George & Edward, 2009; Korgaonkar & Moschis, 1982). Consumers spent less time and energy in less involvement products like FMCG (Korgaonkar & Moschis, 1982; Mishra et al., 2008; Solvang, 2007) and thus experienced less Cognitive Dissonance, while in purchase of high involvement products like consumer durables (Bose & Sarker, 2012; Hawkins, 1972; Milliman & Decker, 1990; Solvang, 2007) the level of Cognitive Dissonance was found higher. Peer group influence (Bose & Sarker, 2012) also pushed the consumers to make purchases leading to Cognitive Dissonance. While researching about Cognitive Dissonance in services, researchers observed that uncertainty (Koller & Salzberger, 2007) as a major driving force along with service characteristics and service types (Bawa & Kansal, 2008) in decision making led to Cognitive Dissonance.

Kaish, (1967) used theory of Cognitive Dissonance to give a new dimension to the classification of the goods in various categories such as convenience good, shopping goods and specialty goods. Researcher defined the classification of the goods as follows – Convenience goods in which purchase was not important to the consumer either due to low price, low durability or low ego involvement. Shopping goods were those, which aroused high levels of anxiety about the possible inappropriateness of the purchase. These goods were high in economic and psychological importance, contained significant performance differences, and had physical qualities that were readily related to the performance characteristics. However, with these products the pre purchase anxiety was high but reducible by shopping behavior. Specialty goods were those, which were economically or psychologically important enough and had different enough performance characteristics to qualify as specialty goods. Pre purchase anxiety was high but not reducible by shopping behavior.

Koragaonkar and Moschis, (1992) studied through an experimental design how consumers evaluated performance of the high and low involvement products and further suggested the differentiation in advertising strategy for both types of the products. Researchers concluded that products like radios, diamond rings, automobiles, perfumes and tape recorders were considered by consumers as high involvement products and cigarettes, sun-tan lotions, camera flash cubes soft drinks and hand lotions as low involvement products. Milliman & Decker, (1990) studied the responses of the consumers in order to reduce post purchase dissonance, which resulted in reduction of the refund orders. Study was aimed at the proposition that consumers experience dissonance post purchase and that was a major cause for refund orders. Researcher used control groups to study the responses post purchase using post purchase communications in form of appreciation letters with and without discounts for the next purchase. Study concluded that post purchase communications in the form of

letters were highly effective in controlling post purchase dissonance, however, there was not much difference if the letter contained discount offer for the next purchase. O'Neill and Palmer, (2004) examined the relationship between post consumption dissonance and time elapsed service quality perceptions of consumers. The study results indicated that the post consumption dissonance reduced with the elapse of time. Solvang, (2007) discussed about post purchase behavior of consumers in case of grocery stores and furniture stores and observed that service quality was more important for furniture stores consumers while loyalty was more important factor affecting repeat purchases at grocery stores. Koller and Salzberger, (2007) discussed about the applicability of the concept of Cognitive Dissonance in the pre purchase phase and even pre decision phase where there seemed to be some amount of uncertainty and discomfort about the decision. The study observed that the theory of Cognitive Dissonance was applicable to the pre purchase phase of decision-making; however, the concept was more stable in the post decision phases. Bawa and Kansal, (2008) studied the concept of Cognitive Dissonance in the context of services. The study tried to examine the applicability of the concept of Cognitive Dissonance in services domain and explored if the characteristics and the types of services affected the likelihood of Cognitive Dissonance. Also the study tried to explain about the importance of advertisements in services in controlling dissonance. Mishra et al., (2008) studied the effect of ignorance on post purchase behavior of the consumer and found that consumers who were ignorant about the information or possess vague information about the product were more optimistic towards the outcome as compared to the consumers who had precise information about the product being purchased.

While various researchers have studied Individual Factors and the Socio Environmental Factors at length since the inception of the Theory of Cognitive Dissonance, the research towards Organizational Factors seem to be a less studied area. Few researchers tried to apply the Theory of Cognitive Dissonance in context of Services, however, greater focus on Organizational Factors leading to Cognitive Dissonance need to be studied specially in the context of after sales service, role of sales person and marketing mix elements in this technology enabled environment.

EFFECTS OF COGNITIVE DISSONANCE:

Consumers when faced with the mental discomfort (Festinger, 1957) during a purchase start looking for favorable supportive information for the decision either made or being made. Marketers, who are fighting for every pie of the consumers' wallet with the concepts of consumer satisfaction, consumer delight, add to this mental discomfort (Festinger, 1957) and confusion by flooding heavy information about their various offerings, thus leading to Cognitive Dissonance. Studies revealed that consumers rely on word of mouth (Koller & Salzberger, 2009; Young "Sally, 2011) in general in various buying situations. Consumers believed the views of the existing buyers or the consumers who had experienced the product and thus tried to strengthen their decision and minimize dissonance. Organizations can be taken by surprise with the word of mouth expressions by the consumers about the product. This word of mouth is being expressed by consumers both off line as well as online. Online expression is creating a huge impact in today's world and organizations need to take proactive actions to attend to these reviews. For example, most of the car buyers visit websites like www.carwale.com or www.carworld.com or related websites and online forums to find the reviews about the cars. These reviews may impact the buyers' decision and can affect the sales and reputation for the brand positively as well as negatively. Research showed that if the brand was known to the consumers, the probability of risk was reduced in buying the product or availing the service (Cao & Just, 2010).

The effects of Cognitive Dissonance studied in past focused on the effects on organizations (Koller & Salzberger, 2009; Mittelstaedt, 1969; Nadeem, 2007; Nyer, 2000; Olsen, 2008; Oshikawa, 1969; Solvang, 2007; Young, 2011) along with few studies covering the effects on Individuals (Brijbal S., 2000; Nadeem, 2007; Nyer, 2000). It was clearly observed that consumers, while making an important decision where the stakes were higher physically or financially, preferred familiar brands as compared to non-familiar brands. A research done to understand the post purchase phenomenon of the motor consumers stated that the consumers experienced attitude change about the brand, worrying about the trivial features of the foregone alternative and justification of purchase (Brijbal S, 2000). The consumers were faced with mental discomfort even after the purchase of car due to the positive aspects of the foregone alternative and consumers tried to justify their decision with supporting information. In absence of the supporting information consumers felt dissatisfied.

Many researchers studied how Cognitive Dissonance made difference in the consumer perception and led to short term as well as long-term implications for a company. The studies focused on implications of Cognitive Dissonance, which, if not checked timely, led to consumer dissatisfaction (Nadeem, 2007; Nyer, 2000), loss of loyal consumers (Mittelstaedt, 1969; Nadeem, 2007; Solvang, 2007), negative word of mouth (Koller &

Salzberger, 2009; Young, 2011) & negative brand recommendations (Koller & Salzberger, 2009), consumer complaints (Nyer, 2000), declining referrals (Olsen, 2008) leading to the erosion of Brand Equity (Nadeem, 2007; Solvang, 2007).

There had been enough research in past studying the causes of Cognitive Dissonance, however there had been very few studies discussing the possible effects of the occurrence of Cognitive Dissonance and its impact on organizations' marketing efforts. The past studies indicated substantial loss to the organizations due to Cognitive Dissonance, if it was not checked and addressed timely. To get a replacement consumer may be far more costly for an organization than to retain the existing consumer and keep the consumer attached to your brand as well as recommending your brand to new consumers. Positive Word of Mouth, Favorable Brand Recommendation and Repeat purchase are few factors which needs extensive research in the Indian context for an organization to address its consumer requirements better and have higher Brand Equity.

EFFECTS ON INDIVIDUALS:

Nyer (2000) studied the changes in the consumer dissatisfaction levels if those consumers were given a chance to vent out their anger. The study found that the consumers who were given a chance to vent their anger felt more dissatisfied than those who were explicitly not given a chance to express their negative feelings. However, the dissatisfaction and the negative emotions disappeared quickly once the outburst was over. Brijbal S (2000) studied motor vehicle buyers to understand the dissonance reduction strategies used after they experienced dissonance. The study found that greater the magnitude of the Cognitive Dissonance smaller was the justification for the purchase and the consumer didn't exert efforts to reduce the dissonance. However, if the dissonance magnitude was smaller than consumer tried to reduce dissonance by selective exposure or justifying the action. Nadeem (2007) examined the applicability of the Cognitive Dissonance scale (Sweeney et al., (2000) to the post purchase behavior of the consumer leading to repeat purchase phenomenon and word of mouth advocacy, making the customer justify the purchase decision.

EFFECTS ON ORGANIZATIONS:

Mittelstaedt, (1969) studied the relationship between Cognitive Dissonance and brand loyalty in terms of repeat purchase. Researcher observed that the probability of repeating a choice was influenced by the level of Cognitive Dissonance, thus connecting brand loyalty with the phenomenon of Cognitive Dissonance and its subsequent effect on repeat purchase. Oshikawa, (1969) critically examined the applicability of the theory of Cognitive Dissonance in the areas of consumer behavior and observed that dissonance reduction was useful in certain situations in increasing the repurchase of the purchased brand. Nyer (2000) studied the changes in the consumer dissatisfaction levels if those consumers were given a chance to vent out their anger. The author found that the consumers who were given a chance to vent their anger felt more dissatisfied than those who were explicitly not given a chance to express their negative feelings. However, the dissatisfaction and the negative emotions disappeared quickly once the outburst was over, thus reducing consumer complaints. Nadeem (2007) examined the applicability of the Cognitive Dissonance scale (Sweeney et al., (2000) to the post purchase behavior of the consumer leading to repeat purchase phenomenon and word of mouth advocacy for the organization or its product. Olsen, (2008) studied the relationship between Cognitive Dissonance and buying decision making in case of financial purchase decision. Researcher observed that along with financial risk, herding, crowd following were some social behaviors shown by the decision makers during financial instrument purchases to justify their decisions, thus resulting in favorable or unfavorable brand recommendations and referrals. Koller & Salzberger (2009) studied Cognitive Dissonance with Perceived Risk and Satisfaction. The study found that Cognitive Dissonance did not fade completely over time and there was a significant and substantial correlation between the level of Cognitive Dissonance and Satisfaction in the consumption phase. The general finding observed by the researchers was that Cognitive Dissonance was worthwhile being studied and monitored for as it had persistent effects on satisfaction and word of mouth. Young, (2011) studied the application of Cognitive Dissonance in context of service industry examining the relationship between Cognitive Dissonance and relationship variables trust and value. The study explored how consumers faced and processed negative word of mouth information, which was incongruent with their existing beliefs. The study found that Cognitive Dissonance was a predominant predictor of re-patronage behavior, even for satisfied consumers.

MEASURES TO REDUCE COGNITIVE DISSONANCE:

The researchers while trying to understand the factors leading to Cognitive Dissonance also tried to explore

the various parameters which reduced the degree of Cognitive Dissonance, thus helping the marketers offer better basket of benefits and solutions to the consumers, thus reducing the dissonance. Service quality perceptions after elapse of time (O'Neill & Palmer, 2004), improvement in service quality, (Solvang, 2007; Spencer & Hinks, 2007; Turan, 2002) connecting with consumers post purchase through appreciation letters (Hunt, 1970; Milliman & Decker, 1990) and discount offers for next purchase (Milliman & Decker, 1990) affected the level of dissonance to a great extent among consumers. A research done specifically about post transaction communications via letters and telephone call (Hunt, 1970) revealed that the dissonance reduction was more prominent among consumers who received a post transaction letter as compared to the control group who did not receive any letter as well as the groups who received a phone call with the same message as in the letter. In retail markets the parameters such as Music (Jilian C. Sweeney & Wyber, 2002), Store Image (Hunt, 1970) and role of sales staff (Soutar & Sweeney, 2003) were the major determinants of reduction of dissonance among consumers. Consumers when faced with Cognitive Dissonance often indulge in justification of cost (Wen-Bin & Chin-Sheng, 2007) to justify their decisions, thus reducing the levels of dissonance. On the other hand consumption of immoral goods or costly goods was justified by higher income levels (Östling, 2009). An experiment was conducted to understand the dependency of the existence of Cognitive Dissonance on familiarity with product (Cao & Just, 2010). It was found that the consumers bid higher prices and reported lower risk assessment with common and known food items as compared with uncommon and less familiar food items. While Trust & Value (Young, 2011), Reliability, Credibility, Believability (Claussen, 2004) and Trustworthiness (Chou, 2012) were considered to be of immense importance in containing the levels of dissonance during entire purchase cycles, researchers also tried to explore the importance of brand loyalty (Mittelstaedt, 1969; Solvang, 2007) and celebrity image who endorsed the brand (Marshall, Na, State, & Deuskar, 2008), as a major factor in reduction of Cognitive Dissonance while making a purchase or after the purchase has been made. The reduction of Cognitive Dissonance may lead to satisfied and loyal consumers, repeat purchase phenomenon, and word of mouth recommendations resulting in higher Brand Equity for the company.

Hunt (1970) studied the effects of post transaction communications in terms of appreciation letters and telephone call and observed that appreciation letter was the best form of after sales communications as compared to telephonic call. Even the control group with no post transaction communication was better off than the group who got telephone call. Milliman & Decker (1990) used the studies of Hunt (1970) and studied the effect of appreciation letters with or without discounts along with a control group with respect to the return sales and the reorders made by the consumers. Researcher studied the response of the consumers for return orders and reorders if they were sent an appreciation letters post purchase with or without discount offers. Researcher concluded that appreciation letter was highly successful in keeping post purchase dissonance in check. Discount was not very important, however preferable. (Soutar & Sweeney, 2003) while devising the scale for measuring Cognitive Dissonance derived the factor "concern over deal" and emphasized the role of sales person very much important in managing the levels of Cognitive Dissonance among consumers as consumers may have felt after making a decision if he had made the right decision or he got the best deal or he was be fooled by the sales person.

Marshall et al., (2008) studied lipstick consumers and found the relationship between brand image portrayed, post purchase dissonance and post usage satisfaction. Researcher observed that dissonance was related to the image portrayed by the advertisement through celebrity endorsement. Researcher also observed that satisfaction was not related to the image or the dissonance reduction, but the product usage and consumer finding the product in line with the image portrayed in the advertisement. Cao & Just, (2010) observed that consumers had a bias towards known and familiar brands in connection with food products and were willing to risk on the known brands as compared to the unknown brands and products to avoid dissonance at later stage. Sharifi & Esfidani, (2014) studied how relationship marketing can help reduce Cognitive Dissonance in post purchase stage thus increasing customer satisfaction. Researchers studied the consumer responses of Cell phone buyers and observed that consumers experienced less Cognitive Dissonance in post purchase stage due to relationship marketing efforts, and represented more satisfaction. Researchers observed that Cognitive Dissonance affected post purchase satisfaction and marketers should be concerned about Cognitive Dissonance if they wish to achieve post purchase satisfaction from consumers.

Various researchers studied the causes and effects of the dissonance post purchase, however few researchers addressed the importance of the measures, which can reduce the post-purchase dissonance among consumers and help the marketer aim for delivering consumer satisfaction.

SCALE DEVELOPMENT STUDIES FOR MEASURING COGNITIVE DISSONANCE:

Few Researchers attempted to devise scales to measure Cognitive Dissonance in past (Bell, 1967; Hunt, 1970; Hawkins, 1978; Korgaonkar and Moschis, 1982), however, (Montgomery & Barnes, 1993) and (Jillian C. Sweeney et al., 2000) developed scale with higher number of items through thorough literature review and proper validation

MAJOR STUDIES – SCALE DEVELOPMENT IN COGNITIVE DISSONANCE:

Montgomery & Barnes, (1993) tried to develop a scale with 10 items and validated the same by assessing content validity, predictive validity and construct validity. The researchers used the domain of constructs as specified by Churchill, (1979) and considered expensive items for the study to develop a general scales for wider applications. Researchers derived the predictors of dissonance from the literature review and the predictors included consumer's self-confidence, stores visited, purchase expectations, frequency of purchase, cost of purchase and how easily the sales person persuaded the consumer. The most important Predictor was the consumer's self-confidence level. The study came up with 2 factors, which accounted for 35% of the variance. The scale was named as POSTDIS by the researchers.

The study proposed a model with 2 factors

- “Correctness of Decision” – An individual's concern if he has taken right decision and not got influenced by the sales person.
- “Support”- An individual looking for reinforcing its decision by supportive information and actions in favor of the decision.

Jillian C. Sweeney et al., (2000) developed a 22-item scale for assessing Cognitive Dissonance immediately after purchase. Researchers conceptualized the constructs recognizing that dissonance is not only cognitive in nature, but also has an emotional component, consistent with Festinger's early description of dissonance as a psychologically uncomfortable state. Subsequently, authors described the procedures used to develop and refine the scale. This included a qualitative study to generate the items and getting the content validity done with experts followed by two stage quantitative study with data collection of two samples (consumers of furniture store and car stereo showroom) for scale refinement and validation. Researchers concluded with a Three Dimensional Model with the following constructs – Emotional, Wisdom of Purchase and Concern over Deal.

- Emotional: A person's psychological discomfort subsequent to the purchase decision.
- Wisdom of Purchase: A person's recognition after the purchase has been made that they may not have needed the product or may not have selected the appropriate one
- Concern over the deal: A person's recognition after the purchase has been made that they may have been influenced against their own beliefs by sales staff.

DISCUSSION AND SCOPE FOR FUTURE RESEARCH:

The concept of cognitive dissonance have been studied thoroughly in past, however the integrated studies highlighting the linkage of the causes and effects have been few. It was observed that the causes of cognitive dissonance due to individual factors and effects on organizations have been researched thoroughly; limited research was found studying the effects of cognitive dissonance on individuals as well as causes of cognitive dissonance due to organizational factors. It was observed that while post purchase studies with regard to cognitive dissonance have been enough, only few studies captured the pre purchase decision-making scenario (Koller Monica 2009; Sharifi & Esfidani, 2014). There have been hardly any studies found which researched cognitive dissonance in case of industrial buyers on the pretext that the industrial buyers are rational in their purchase decision-making (Bawa & Kansal, 2008). Researchers suggested that the arousal of cognitive dissonance may be higher when the decisions are either not-reversible or reversible at a very high cost (Zafar B, 2011), especially services (Bawa & Kansal, 2008) and even the characteristics of services may affect the level of cognitive dissonance (Bawa & Kansal, 2008). Researchers studied the post purchase dissonance justifications by highly religious Christian customers when they are faced with contradiction of materialistic evil versus materialistic wealth acquisition and cognitive dissonance in this context among religious customers can be studied for various other religions and faiths (Veer & Shankar, 2011). Studies in past focused on post purchase scenario, however it remains to be explored the arousal of cognitive dissonance at the time of repurchase (Sweeney & Soutar, 2000). Customers rely on word of mouth recommendations and a positive relationship was found between relying on word of mouth and the magnitude of and cognitive dissonance,

however the opposite relationship still remains unexplored for the effect of cognitive dissonance on word of mouth or recommending the brand (Young, 2011) Another major finding was in terms of familiarity of product or brand with the magnitude of dissonance in the context of food items. Higher familiarity with brand (Cao, Y, 2010) and product (Mishra et al., 2008) ensured lower levels of cognitive dissonance and future research can explore the low choice paradigm and the high choice paradigm to measure Cognitive Dissonance in this context. With the advent of Online shopping, a lot is open for research in the field of online reviews (Chou S Y, 2012; Sharifi & Esfidani, 2014) and the role of internet affecting post purchase dissonance (Soutar & Sweeney, 2003). Research in services can be extended to high involvement financial products like Insurance, Home Loans, Rental Services etc. (Marshall et al, 2008) and the role of sales persons in the arousal and management of cognitive dissonance (Nadeem, 2007) along with the brand personality of the brand choice (Sharifi & Esfidani, 2014). Research about the service quality perception with elapse of time has been studied in the terms of understanding cognitive dissonance (O Neil & Palmer, 2004) and researchers can explore the effect of service quality parameters in post purchase dissonance. Type of music being played in the retail store (Sweeney & Wyber, 2003), organizational culture and arousal of cognitive dissonance in personal buying situations and buying for others can be explored in future research. While many researchers studied the causes and effects of the cognitive dissonance post purchase, only few researchers addressed the importance of the measures to reduce the post-purchase dissonance among consumers such as service quality improvisations (O'Neill & Palmer, 2004; Solvang, 2007; Spencer & Hinks, 2007; Turan, 2002) post purchase communication with customers (Hunt, 1970; Milliman & Decker, 1990) effect of music (Jilian C. Sweeney & Wyber, 2002), store image (Hunt, 1970), role of sales staff (Soutar & Sweeney, 2003), trust & value (Young, 2011), reliability, credibility, believability (Claussen, 2004), trustworthiness (Chou, 2012), brand loyalty (Mittelstaedt, 1969; Solvang, 2007), celebrity image endorsing the brand (Marshall, Na, State, & Deuskar, 2008), and relationship marketing (Sharifi & Esfidani, 2014). Apart from that very few Studies were found in the context of India addressing the concept of cognitive dissonance (Bawa & Kansal, 2008; Chockalingam, Deshpande, & Jacob, 1998; George & Edward, 2009) which focused on services, ethics in jobs and purchase involvement respectively.

CONCLUSION:

The marketers are fighting for every pie of the consumers' wallet with the concepts of consumer satisfaction, consumer delight and the consumer is flooded with excess information about various products, thus creating a lot of confusion in the mind of the consumer leading to cognitive dissonance. There is an immense need to keep a control over the factors causing dissonance after purchase. There seems to be an immense need for the organizations to focus on their post purchase actions and behavior of their employees while interacting with customers. The assurance by the employees as well as the confidence development in the mind of consumers can greatly keep the magnitude of cognitive dissonance under control. More studies are required to understand the post purchase actions of consumers when they take impulse purchase decisions, their involvement in the purchase process is high, and the amount of information available to them about the product is less. The impact of brand personality and the marketing mix actions on the degree of cognitive dissonance need to be studied thoroughly to help the marketers choose their marketing mix as well as promotion mix carefully. The marketer's nightmare like - dissatisfied consumers, loss of loyal consumers, negative word of mouth, resulting in declining sales can very well be connected to the post purchase implications of the marketing actions of the organizations as well as the role of the employee especially sales persons in assuring and building confidence in the consumer.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Dr Lakshmikanth Hari – Assistant Professor @ K J Somaiya Institute of Management Studies & Research, Mumbai

REFERENCES:

- [1] Aronson, E. (1992). The return of the repressed: Dissonance theory makes a comeback. *Psychological inquiry*, 3(4), 303-311.
- [2] Aronson, E., & Carlsmith, J. M. (1968). Experimentation in social psychology. *The handbook of Social psychology*, 2(2), 1-79.
- [3] Balcetis, E., & Dunning, D. (2007). Cognitive dissonance and the perception of natural environments. *Psychological Science*, 18(10), 917-921.

- [4] Bawa, A., & Kansal, P. (2008). Cognitive dissonance and the marketing of services: some issues. *Journal of Services Research: A Publication of Institute of International Management and Technology, Gurgaon*, 8(2), 31-51.
- [5] Bell, G. (1967). The automobile buyer after the purchase. *Journal of Marketing (Pre 1986)*, 31(3), 12-16
- [6] Bem, D. J. (1967). Self-Perception: An alternative Interpretation of Cognitive Dissonance Phenomena. *Psychological Review*, 74(3), 183-200.
- [7] Bose, T. K., & Sarker, S. (2012). Cognitive Dissonance Affecting Consumer Buying Decision Making: A study Based on Khulna Metropolitan Area. *Journal of Management Research*, 4(3), 191-221
- [8] Brehm, J.W. & Cohen, A.R. (1962). *Explorations in Cognitive Dissonance*. Hoboken, NJ, US: John Wiley & Sons Inc., NJ, USA
- [9] Brijbal, S. (2000). A relook at the motor vehicle buyer after the purchase: dissonance arousal. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 26(3), 52-62.
- [10] Cao, Y., & Just, D. R. (2010). Cognitive dissonance under food-borne risk: A lab experiment. *Agriculture and Agricultural Science Procedia*, 1, 364-371.
- [11] Chapanis, N.P. & Chapanis, A. (1964). Cognitive Dissonance. *Psychological Bulletin*, 61(1), 1-22.
- [12] Chiou, W. B., & Wan, C. S. (2007). Using cognitive dissonance to induce adolescents' escaping from the claw of online gaming: The roles of personal responsibility and justification of cost. *Cyber Psychology & Behavior*, 10(5), 663-670.
- [13] Chou, S.Y. (2012). Online reviews and pre purchase Cognitive Dissonance: A Theoretical framework and research propositions. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Computing & Information Sciences*, 3(2), 199-204
- [14] Claussen, D.S. (2004). Cognitive dissonance, media illiteracy, and public opinion on news media. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 48(2), 212-218.
- [15] Cooper, J. (1998). Unlearning Cognitive Dissonance: Toward an Understanding of the development of Dissonance. *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 34(6), 562-575.
- [16] Cooper, J. (2007). *Cognitive Dissonance-50 years of a classic theory*. Sage Publications, London, UK
- [17] Cooper, J. & Fazio, R.H. (1984). A new look at dissonance. *Advances in experimental social psychology*, 17, 229-268.
- [18] Cummings, W.H. & Venkatesan, M. (1976). Cognitive Dissonance and Consumer Behaviour: A review of the evidence. *Journal of Marketing Research (JMR)*, 13(8), 303-308
- [19] Duval, S. & Wicklund, R.A. (1972). *A theory of objective self-awareness*”, Academic Press, Oxford, England.
- [20] E. Aronson, (1968). Dissonance theory: Progress and problems. In R. P. Abelson, E. Aronson, W. J. McGuire, T. M. Newcomb, M. J. Rosenberg, and P. H. Tannenbaum, editors, *Theories of cognitive consistency: A source book*, 5–27. Rand McNally, Chicago
- [21] Egan, L. C., Santos, L. R., & Bloom, P. (2007). The origins of cognitive dissonance evidence from children and monkeys. *Psychological science*, 18(11), 978-983
- [22] Elms, A. C., & Janis, I. L. (1965). Counter-norm attitudes induced by consonant vs. dissonant conditions of role-playing. *Journal of Experimental Research in Personality*, 1(1), 50-60
- [23] Festinger, L. (1962). *A theory of cognitive dissonance* (Vol. 2). Stanford university press
- [24] Festinger, L., & Carlsmith, J. M. (1959). Cognitive consequences of forced compliance. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 58(2), 203-210
- [25] Fraedrich, J., & Ferrell, O. C. (1992). Cognitive consistency of marketing managers in ethical situations. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 20(3), 245-252
- [26] George, B. P., & Edward, M. (2009). Cognitive dissonance and purchase involvement in the consumer behavior context. *The IUP Journal of Marketing Management*, 8(3), 7-24
- [27] George, B. P., & Yaoyuneyong, G. (2010). Impulse buying and cognitive dissonance: a study conducted among the spring break student shoppers. *Young Consumers*, 11(4), 291-306
- [28] Harmon-Jones, C., Schmeichel, B. J., Inzlicht, M., & Harmon-Jones, E. (2010). Trait approach motivation relates to dissonance reduction. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 2(1), 21-28
- [29] Harmon-Jones, E., & Mills, J. (1999). An introduction to cognitive dissonance theory and an overview of current perspectives on the theory. In *Cognitive dissonance: Progress on a pivotal theory in social psychology*, Science conference series, (pp. 3-21), Washington, DC, US: American Psychological Association, xviii, 411
- [30] Hawkins, D. I. (1972). Reported cognitive dissonance and anxiety: Some additional findings. *The Journal of Marketing*, 36(3), 63-66

- [31] Heider, F. (1946). Attitudes and cognitive organization. *The Journal of psychology*, 21(1), 107-112
- [32] Hoshino-Browne, E., Zanna, A. S., Spencer, S. J., Zanna, M. P., Kitayama, S., & Lackenbauer, S. (2005). On the cultural guises of cognitive dissonance: the case of easterners and westerners. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 89(3), 294
- [33] Hunt, S. D. (1970). Post-transaction communications and dissonance reduction. *The Journal of Marketing*, 34(3), 46-51
- [34] Kaish, S. (1967). Cognitive dissonance and the classification of consumer goods. *The Journal of marketing*, 31(4), 28-31
- [35] Kim, Y. S. (2011). Application of the cognitive dissonance theory to the service industry. *Services Marketing Quarterly*, 32(2), 96-112
- [36] Koller, M., & Salzberger, T. (2007). Cognitive dissonance as a relevant construct throughout the decision-making and consumption process-an empirical investigation related to a package tour. *Journal of Customer Behaviour*, 6(3), 217-227
- [37] Koller, M., & Salzberger, T. (2009). Benchmarking in service marketing-a longitudinal analysis of the customer. *Benchmarking: An International Journal*, 16(3), 401-414
- [38] Korgaonkar, P. K., & Moschis, G. P. (1982). An experimental study of cognitive dissonance, product involvement, expectations, performance and consumer judgment of product performance. *Journal of Advertising*, 11(3), 32-44
- [39] Lii, P. (2001). The impact of personal gains on cognitive dissonance for business ethics judgments. *Teaching Business Ethics*, 5(1), 21-33
- [40] Linder, D. E., Cooper, J., & Jones, E. E. (1967). Decision freedom as a determinant of the role of incentive magnitude in attitude change. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 6(3), 245-254
- [41] Marshall, R., Na, W., State, Gabriel, & Deliskar, S. (2008). Endorsement theory: how consumers relate to celebrity models. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 48(4), 564-572
- [42] Milliman, R. E., & Decker, P. J. (1990). The use of post-purchase communication to reduce dissonance and improve direct marketing effectiveness. *Journal of Business Communication*, 27(2), 159-170
- [43] Mishra, H., Shiv, B., & Nayakankuppam, D. (2008). The Blissful Ignorance Effect: Pre-versus Post-action Effects on Outcome Expectancies Arising from Precise and Vague Information. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 35(4), 573-585
- [44] Mitchell, V. W., & Boustani, P. (1994). A preliminary investigation into pre-and post-purchase risk perception and reduction. *European Journal of Marketing*, 28(1), 56-71
- [45] Mittelstaedt, R. (1969). A dissonance approach to repeat purchasing behavior. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 6(4), 444-446
- [46] Montgomery, C., & Barnes, J. H. (1993). POSTDIS: A short rating scale for measuring post purchase dissonance. *Journal of Consumer Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction and Complaining Behavior*, 6, 204-216
- [47] Nadeem, M. M. (2007). Post-purchase dissonance: the wisdom of the 'repeat' purchases. *Journal of Global Business Issues*, 1(2), 183-193
- [48] Nyer, P. U. (2000). An investigation into whether complaining can cause increased consumer satisfaction. *Journal of consumer marketing*, 17(1), 9-19
- [49] O'Neill, M., & Palmer, A. (2004). Cognitive dissonance and the stability of service quality perceptions. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 18(6), 433-449
- [50] Olsen, R. A. (2008). Cognitive dissonance: the problem facing behavioral finance. *Journal of Behavioral Finance*, 9(1), 1-4
- [51] Oshikawa, S. (1968). The theory of cognitive dissonance and experimental research. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 5(4), 429-430
- [52] Oshikawa, S. (1969). Can cognitive dissonance theory explain consumer behavior? *The Journal of Marketing*, 33(4), 44-49
- [53] Oshikawa, S. (1972). The measurement of cognitive dissonance: Some experimental findings. *The Journal of Marketing*, 36(1), 64-67
- [54] Östling, R. (2009). Economic influences on moral values. *The BE Journal of Economic Analysis & Policy*, 9(1), 1-24
- [55] Powers, T. L., & Jack, E. P. (2013). The influence of cognitive dissonance on retail product returns. *Psychology & Marketing*, 30(8), 724-735
- [56] Rosenberg, M. (1965). *Society and the adolescent self-image* (p. 326). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

- [57] Senguder, T. (2002). An exploratory analysis of customer satisfaction. *Journal of American Academy of Business*, 2(1), 177-184
- [58] Shahin Sharifi, S., & Rahim Esfidani, M. (2014). The impacts of relationship marketing on cognitive dissonance, satisfaction, and loyalty: The mediating role of trust and cognitive dissonance. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 42(6), 553-575
- [59] Solvang, B. K. (2007). Satisfaction, loyalty, and repurchase: a study of Norwegian customers of furniture and grocery stores. *Journal of Consumer Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction and Complaining Behavior*, 20, 110-122
- [60] Soutar, G. N., & Sweeney, J. C. (2003). Are there cognitive dissonance segments? *Australian Journal of Management*, 28(3), 227-249
- [61] Spencer, R., & Hinks, J. (2007). The significance of cognitive dissonance for the “hard and soft FM” paradigm and quality assessment practices: A whole new can of worms? *Journal of Facilities Management*, 5(4), 243-262
- [62] Steele, C. M. (1988). The psychology of self-affirmation: Sustaining the integrity of the self. *Advances in experimental social psychology*, 21, 261-302
- [63] Stone, J. (2003). Self-consistency for low self-esteem in dissonance processes: The role of self-standards. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 29(7), 846-858
- [64] Stone, J., & Cooper, J. (2001). A self-standards model of cognitive dissonance. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 37(3), 228-243
- [65] Sweeney, J. C., & Hausknecht, D. (2000). Cognitive dissonance after purchase: A multidimensional scale. *Psychology and Marketing*, (17), 369-385
- [66] Sweeney, J. C., & Wyber, F. (2002). The role of cognitions and emotions in the music-approach-avoidance behavior relationship. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 16(1), 51-69
- [67] Tedeschi, J. T., Schlenker, B. R., & Bonoma, T. V. (1971). Cognitive dissonance: Private ratiocination or public spectacle? *American Psychologist*, 26(8), 685-695
- [68] Telci, E. E., Maden, C., & Kantur, D. (2011). The theory of cognitive dissonance: A marketing and management perspective. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 24, 378-386
- [69] Veer, E., & Shankar, A. (2011). Forgive me, Father, for I did not give full justification for my sins: How religious consumers justify the acquisition of material wealth. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 27(5-6), 547-560
- [70] Viswesvaran, C., Deshpande, S. P., & Joseph, J. (1998). Job satisfaction as a function of top management support for ethical behavior: A study of Indian managers. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 17(4), 365-371
- [71] Wicklund, R. A., & Brehm, J. W. (2004). Internalization of multiple perspectives or dissonance reduction? *Theory & Psychology*, 14(3), 355-371
- [72] Zafar, B. (2011). Can subjective expectations data be used in choice models?-Evidence on cognitive biases. *Journal of Applied Econometrics*, 26(3), 520-544
