In recent years perceived value has attracted significant attention among marketing scholars. Recently, Sweeney and Soutar (2001) identified four dimensions of consumer perceived value (CPV) and developed scales to measure these dimensions. Their CPV scale, based on previous research in Australia, was administered to consumers in Germany. We assess the cross-cultural validity of the measure of consumer perceived value (Study 1). After validating the CPV scale, an abbreviated version of the CPV scale (with 12 items) is proposed and assessed that has equally good dimensional properties as the original version. In Study 2, using a second sample, we validate and apply the abbreviated version of the CPV scale.

[to cite]:

[url]:
http://www.acrwebsite.org/volumes/13136/volumes/v35/NA-35

[copyright notice]:
This work is copyrighted by The Association for Consumer Research. For permission to copy or use this work in whole or in part, please contact the Copyright Clearance Center at http://www.copyright.com/.
Assessing the Consumer Perceived Value Scale
Gianfranco Walsh, University of Koblenz-Landau, Germany
Thomas Kilian, University of Koblenz-Landau, Germany
Holger Buxel, University of Applied Science Muenster, Germany

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Abstract
In recent years perceived value has attracted significant attention among marketing scholars. Recently, Sweeney and Soutar (2001) identified four dimensions of consumer perceived value (CPV) and developed scales to measure these dimensions. Their CPV scale, based on previous research in Australia, was administered to consumers in Germany. We assess the cross-cultural validity of the measure of consumer perceived value (Study 1). After validating the CPV scale, an abbreviated version of the CPV scale (with 12 items) is proposed and assessed that has equally good dimensional properties as the original version. In Study 2, using a second sample, we validate and apply the abbreviated version of the CPV scale.

Introduction
Given the increased competition in the service industry, many retailers and other service firms focus on delivering value to customers as a means of competitive advantage. The literature suggests that consumer perceived value is associated with customer satisfaction, loyalty, and trust (e.g., Lee et al., 2002; Parasuraman and Grewal, 2000; Yang and Peterson, 2004) and is hence relevant to researchers in consumer behavior and services marketing. This study tests the universality of a concept known as perceived value within Germany for both private-label (PLB) and manufacturer-brands (MB). In recent years perceived value has attracted significant attention among marketing scholars. Sweeney and Soutar (2001) identified four interrelated dimensions of consumer perceived value (CPV): Quality, Emotional, Price, and Social. They validated the scale using exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Sweeney and Soutar’s (2001) CPV scale, based on previous research in Australia, was administered to consumers in Germany. In this article, we assess the cross-cultural validity of the measure of consumer perceived value (Study 1). After validating the CPV scale in a German context (and in four non-durable product contexts cereals, chocolate bars, and sweet corn), an abbreviated version of the CPV scale (with 12 items) is proposed and assessed that has equally good dimensional properties as the original version. Sweeney and Soutar (2001, p. 216) argue that they have developed “a parsimonious and practical four-dimensional scale”. However, it is likely that researchers and practitioners interested in measuring consumer perceived value would disagree and may be deterred by the scale’s length.

Method
Based on a sample of 323, we tested a 17-item, four-factor structure using CFA. The factor structure was tested with the German data, both for PLB and MB sub samples. Inspection of model fit revealed good global fit as well as high coefficients of determination for all the items. Then we considered internal and external criteria to develop the 12-item CPV short scale. Internal criteria relate to internal consistency and dimensionality, external criteria are concerned with criterion-related validity, and judgmental criteria involve assessments of content validity and ease of use.

The 12-item, four-factor structure was tested using CFA and resulted in a good overall fit for both sub samples.

In Study 2, using a second sample (n=319), we validated and applied the abbreviated version of the CPV scale. The reliability of the CPV short scale was assessed with Cronbach’s Alpha and CFA. Alphas ranged from .82 to .93 for the PLB and from .71 to .89 for the MB sub sample, and the CFA resulted in a reasonably good overall fit for both four-dimensional models. To assess the practical utility of the CPV short scale, CPV-based segments were identified, employing a two-step clustering procedure, which resulted in choosing a four-cluster solution as the most appropriate representation of the data. The clusters were labeled ‘Private Label Brand-oriented’ (n=112), ‘Functionalists’ (n=107), ‘Social Utility Seekers’ (n=58), ‘Manufacturer Brand-oriented’ (n=42).

Discussion and Implications
This study had three objectives relating to; testing the CPV scale’s reliability and validity in Germany for PLB and MB, applying it to measure CPV in different product categories and assess a short form of the scale. The findings presented in this research provide further support for the internal validity of the CPV short scale as a viable scale for measuring CPV. The most important finding is that there is an indication of generality of most scale items. Given this finding, there is reason to believe that the CPV scale has elements of construct validity and has potential use across international populations. The results have implications for research and practitioners on how to deal with CPV in retailing and other customer services.

In terms of future research implications, it seems that additional countries need to be considered to permit a triangularization of internal and external results. Indeed, Steenkamp and Geyskens (2006) argue that consumer value may vary across countries. Furthermore, the CPV scale was developed specifically for durable goods purchased in the offline shopping environment. In this study CPV was examined in four product contexts (non-durable product contexts) for both PLB and MB, suggesting that future research should include more and other product contexts as well as services. Thus we urge researchers to continue to consider these important issues. However, additional research is needed to more firmly establish the CPV scale’s generalizability.

Sweeney and Soutar (2001, p. 218) argue that consumer perceived value “should be viewed as a part of a continuous process in the maintenance of a relationship between manufacturer and retailer with a given customer”. Insofar, our findings are likely to have managerial implications, especially for retailers and other service firms targeting the German market. Interestingly, in Germany, the ‘Social’ dimension is more reliable in the context of private label brands than manufacturer brands. This dimension refers to the utility German consumers derive from the product’s ability to enhance social self-concepts, such as status. Perhaps consumers buying PLB are more eager to get social approval for their product choice, whereas consumers buying MB are more confident about their choice. Also, knowledge of distinct CPV segments is useful for retailers in constructing marketing communication strategy and designing appealing store environments.
References