

Consumer Satisfaction with Resisting vs. Indulging Temptation

Michail Kokkoris

WU Vienna University of Economics and Business

Erik Hoelzl

University of Cologne

Carlos Alós-Ferrer

University of Zurich

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Abstract

Are consumers more satisfied with decisions to resist or to indulge temptation? We propose that this depends on individual differences in lay rationalism, i.e., the reliance on reason versus feelings to guide decisions. Using different methodologies and various self-control domains, we found consistent evidence that satisfaction with restraint is higher the more consumers rely on reason, whereas satisfaction with indulgence is higher the more consumers rely on feelings. The proposed effect uniquely concerns individual differences in lay rationalism and is independent from individual differences in trait self-control. We also show that authenticity (feeling true to oneself) is the mechanism underlying this effect. These findings contribute to the understudied topic of the phenomenology of self-control, advance a more nuanced view of self-control based on identity and suggest that the subjective utility of restraint is contingent upon fundamental individual differences in decision making.

Keywords: *Self-control; lay rationalism; authenticity*

Track: Consumer Behaviour