

Comprehensive Literature Review of Customer Experience Paradigms

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to explore customer experience extensively within the existing literature. Commencing with a critical examination of the current landscape and the controversies it encapsulates, the paper will focus on diverse definitions of customer experience and its constituent elements such as touchpoints, individual context, and discrete emotions. Subsequently, an evaluative review of the arguments employed to measure customer experience will be presented, emphasizing their differentiation from crucial marketing metrics. Lastly, the paper will culminate in a synthesis that addresses the primary research lacunae in this field. We benefit from a more detailed exploration of how these differing perspectives impact the practical application of customer experience strategies in marketing or business contexts. This further enhances the understanding of why reaching a consensus on its definition remains challenging and why various interpretations persist.

Keywords: Customer experience, touchpoints, individual context, discrete emotions, marketing

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INTRODUCTION

The concept of customer experience has surged in popularity within academic research and practical applications in marketing. Its origins can be traced back to marketing and services (Bascur & Rusu, 2020). The term "experience" has been recurrent in marketing literature, encompassing consumer experience, service experience, product experience, consumption experience, shopping experience, and brand experience. Despite their frequent interchangeability, there exists a scarcity of in-depth analyses elucidating their conceptual distinctions (Skard, Nysveen, & Pedersen, 2011). This dearth of exploration might explain why, in the nascent stages of customer experience research, it was initially perceived to be yet another synonymous marketing term.

While "customer experience" might seem self-evident, it encapsulates multiple dimensions, extending to various other constructs continually under debate and development. Despite efforts by marketing scholars to elucidate certain aspects of this phenomenon, theoretical ambiguity persists, indicating a need for more consensus regarding specific facets (Becker & Jaakkola, 2020). This ongoing debate reflects the diversity of perspectives on the definition of what

constitutes a customer experience.

METHODOLOGY

This paper thoroughly assesses the existing body of literature concerning customer experience. It aims to evaluate various methodologies, pinpoint research gaps, and provide actionable insights and suggestions to enrich the comprehension and implementation of customer experience strategies.

Scholarly articles engaged only in debates surrounding customer experience from 2016 to 2020 within marketing and business contexts were meticulously gathered and reviewed. The current landscape of customer experience literature underwent a meticulous critical analysis, spotlighting contentious issues and diverse viewpoints. Crucial components were identified and thoroughly explored through thematic analysis. A comprehensive evaluation of diverse perspectives and discoveries from both literature review and methodologies was conducted after a comparative examination.

This paper also proposes avenues for further research to address the gaps identified and augment comprehension by identifying limitations or voids in existing research and their repercussions. The synthesis and analysis yielded pivotal insights, culminating in practical recommendations to help businesses navigate challenges and effectively harness diverse customer experience perspectives. Potential paths for future research, aimed at resolving existing debates and enriching understanding of this domain, were also highlighted.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Jain, Aagja, and Bagdare (2017) observed divergent perspectives among scholars regarding customer experience, viewing it as a noun and a verb. They delineated the verb-oriented interpretation as depicting a learning process leading to acquired responses. At the same time, the noun-based understanding pertains to gathering knowledge, skills, emotions, sensations, and attitudes. These distinct approaches to understanding customer experience, contributing to further disparities among scholars in the field, still need to be resolved,

Gahler Klein, and Paul (2019) noted that the existing customer experience concepts must be made more cohesive due to their focus on different aspects such as individual experience providers, touchpoints, or stages within the customer journey. This limitation has prompted some scholars to advocate for a more inclusive approach to understanding customer experience, considering the broader omnichannel landscape for measurement purposes (De Keyser, Lemon, Klaus, & Keiningham, 2015; Lemon & Verhoef, 2016).

Bascur and Rusu (2020) emphasize the comprehensive nature of the concept, highlighting the necessity to integrate both the physical and emotional aspects of customer experience during interactions with products, systems, and services. De Keyser et al. (2015) also distinguish between event-specific and dynamic customer experience. They pointed out that the former relates to singular interactions between customers and firms, shaped by discrete, specific events. In contrast, the latter represents the overall customer experience, evolving and influenced by multiple interactions throughout the customer-firm relationship.

Becker and Jaakkola (2020) establish four essential foundations of customer experience, consolidating diverse elements from prior research to address significant conflicts. They introduce these foundational principles through a thorough meta-analysis, offering a simplified theoretical framework for future researchers and industry practitioners. The authors propose that customer experience encompasses spontaneous customer reactions to offerings throughout their journey, ranging from ordinary to extraordinary, and is based on the intensity of these responses to products or services. Customer experience stimuli exist within and beyond firm-controlled touchpoints across various aggregation levels. The interconnectedness of these stimuli dynamically influences customer experience. Moreover, customer experience is subjective and context-specific, shaped by individual, situational, and sociocultural factors which influence how customers respond to offering-related stimuli. Firms cannot create customer experience outright, but can monitor, design, and manage a spectrum of stimuli that impact it.

Due to the absence of a unified perspective, the development of customer experience theory continues to pose a challenge (Kranzbühler, Kleijnen, Morgan, & Teerling, 2018). It remains to be seen when scholars universally embrace a definitive theoretical foundation that eliminates further debate.

Proposed Definitions

Jain et al. (2017) noted that scholars have tried defining and conceptualizing customer experience to comprehend its connections. However, due to the numerous interconnected elements, consensus on its definition is yet to be achieved. Current attempts to define customer experience have resulted in overly broad or specific definitions, with only a few scholars presenting a cohesive view through rigorous empirical methods.

Becker and Jaakkola (2020) propose a concise definition of customer experience, defining it as non-deliberate, spontaneous reactions to stimuli associated with an offering within a particular context. Their definition addresses the ambiguity surrounding whether customer experience is a response to an offering or an evaluation of its quality.

Jain et al. (2017) present an expansive definition of customer experience, terming it as a phenomenon, process, and outcome. They interpret it as the accumulation of emotions, perceptions, and attitudes developed throughout the entire decision-making and consumption journey, involving a cohesive sequence of engagements with individuals, elements, procedures, and surroundings, resulting in cognitive, emotional, sensory, and behavioural reactions.

Recent research by De Keyser, Verleye, Lemon, Keiningham, and Klaus (2020) introduces a nomenclature to refine, comprehend, and manage customer experience. Through an intricate analysis of 143 published papers on customer experience, they have outlined 12 components organized into three primary foundations: touchpoints, context, and qualities, collectively referenced as TCQ. They argue that the TCQ framework precisely captures the essence of customer experience, mitigating conceptual ambiguity and theoretical disparities while harmonizing conflicting and recurring concepts from various studies. Following their rigorous meta-analysis, the authors propose that customer experience is “formed through “touchpoints” (T) which are embedded in a broader “context” (C) and marked by a set of “qualities” (Q) that, together, result in a value judgment by the customer” (p. 5).

Touchpoints

A touchpoint represents every interaction between a customer and the company, occurring whenever a customer directly or indirectly engages with the firm across diverse channels (De Keyser et al., 2015). These touchpoints encompass moments when customers interact with the company's offerings and can manifest as direct or indirect contact points containing various perceptible cues (Verhoef et al., 2009; Becker & Jaakkola, 2020). Additionally, touchpoints vary in terms of control, characteristics, and the stage of the customer's journey (De Keyser et al., 2020).

In a similar vein, McColl-Kennedy, Zaki, Lemon, Urmetzer, and Neely (2019) describe touchpoints as direct or indirect engagement with a company, mainly focusing on brand-owned post-purchase consumption (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). De Keyser et al. (2020) further emphasize that the customer holds a central role as an engaged individual participating in commercial interactions. Hence, customers are viewed as market actors for various commercial and non-commercial service or product providers.

Gahler et al. (2019) point out that customer experience emerges from interactions, showcasing itself through varied simultaneous responses, and leading to further behavioural outcomes. Keiningham et al. (2020) echo this perspective, emphasizing the interactive nature of customer experience, where interactions occur between customers and a spectrum of market actors through diverse interfaces, whether human or non-human.

Flacandji and Krey (2020) outline four distinct stages of customer interaction: the pre-consumption stage (involving planning and anticipation), the purchase stage (encompassing choice, payment, and exchange), the core consumption stage (incorporating sensations, satisfaction/dissatisfaction, irritation/flow), and the remembered consumption stage (involving consumption memories, storytelling, and reliving experiences). However, while extensive research exists on the three initial stages, more attention should be directed toward the post-consumption phase. McColl-Kennedy et al. (2019) advocate an enhanced approach to improving touchpoints by mapping them from the customer's viewpoint rather than solely relying on the firm's perspective (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016).

Individual Context

Becker and Jaakkola (2020) emphasize the subjective nature of customer experience, highlighting how contextual factors linked to the customer and their broader environment shape their responses to stimuli and the subsequent evaluative outcomes. However, they observed fragmented perspectives in current research, noting that certain studies often neglect the influence of contextual variables. In response, they categorized three contextual variables. Firstly, customer contingencies concentrate on customers' traits, resources, knowledge, past experiences and expectations, and active participation in interactions, all of which impact the experience. Secondly, Becker and Jaakkola (2020) point out that these contextual factors can alter the recognition of specific stimuli and influence evaluative outcomes. Therefore, they advocate for including pertinent contextual variables for a better understanding of their impact on the strength and direction of relationships between touchpoints and their evaluative outcomes.

In their TCQ framework, De Keyser et al. (2020) introduce the concept of individual context, depicting it as a transient personal state for customers, highly subjective and influenced by their thoughts and emotional condition. This individual context significantly impacts interactions, as some customers tend to explore new products in a positive frame of mind while favouring familiar and trusted items during negative moods. The authors underscore that past experiences also shape a customer's approach to engaging with a company's offerings. Furthermore, they highlight the value of considering the role of contextual factors in customer experience. Given the expansive nature of contextual data, encompassing individual, social, market, and environmental elements, researchers must, according to the authors, choose contextual data selectively. Not all contextual factors hold equal importance across different stages, making identifying and prioritizing the most critical contextual information in any scenario crucial.

Within the framework developed by McColl-Kennedy et al. (2019), context is an essential component among the elements contributing to value creation, capable of positively or negatively impacting customer experience. The authors underscore that value co-creation relies on the specific situational context in which a service takes shape. Rather than labeling it an individual context, they define the customer's role as a collection of acquired behaviours that function within a given context. This role can range from highly active to relatively passive (McColl-Kennedy, Vargo, Dagger, Sweeney, & van Kasteren, 2012). For instance, a customer actively negotiating and redefining the terms and conditions of a sale would be categorized as active. In contrast, a customer who merely accepts all terms and conditions offered by a company is regarded as passive.

Discrete Emotions

Flacandji and Krey (2020) highlight the affective dimension as one of the seven consistent dimensions of customer experience found across multiple studies. This dimension pertains to a customer's emotional and mood-related responses, reflecting the pleasure or displeasure derived from an interaction. Similarly, in their systematic literature review, Mahr, Stead, and Odekerken-Schröder (2019) noted that the emotional dimension primarily aligns with interaction, while the physical dimension correlates with quality.

Bascur and Rusu (2020) emphasize the necessity of specifying particular dimensions in the study of customer experience due to their comprehensive nature. These dimensions coexist and necessitate contextual explanations. Among the six components outlined is the emotional dimension, which involves the affective system responsible for generating moods, feelings, and emotions in customers.

The significance of customers' emotions during their interactions with a company is referred to as either affective response (McColl-Kennedy et al., 2019) or discrete emotions (De Keyser et al., 2015). According to McColl-Kennedy et al. (2019), a few fundamental biologically recognized emotions are consistent across individuals, irrespective of cultural differences. They incorporated six primary discrete emotions in their framework, drawing from the foundational work of Shaver, Schwartz, Kirson, and O'Connor (1987).

Becker and Jaakkola (2020) emphasize that while defining customer experience, it is crucial to avoid using satisfaction and service quality as substitutes. Instead, the focus should be

on capturing customers' immediate, unrehearsed reactions to stimuli. They recommend enhancing measurement techniques, particularly in common experience dimensions such as affective response, to facilitate more robust knowledge accumulation. Additionally, the researchers observed a prevalent reliance on retrospective recall in research instruments, potentially impacting the validity of the findings due to possible inaccuracies in participants' recall of past experiences. Consequently, Becker and Jaakkola (2020) advocate for research designs that capture customer responses immediately following the interaction.

De Keyser et al. (2020) state that the valence of an experience pertains to how customers respond to brand or firm interactions: negatively, neutrally, or positively. They highlight the rarity of attention given to neutral experiences, suggesting that all three valences could coexist for a customer. Moreover, they emphasize the need for deeper exploration of these experience valences and their relationship with evaluative outcomes such as satisfaction. Investigating their impact as evaluative outcomes becomes crucial, considering the potentially simultaneous activation of all three valences.

Mahr et al. (2019) highlight the connection between emotion, cognition, and the overarching theme of experience. They note that emotions are intricately linked to processes and purchasing behaviour, often viewed as measures of outcomes. Their analysis also reveals that the affective concept is closely associated with brand and product themes.

Customer Experience Measurement

Measuring customer experience as a construct remains a subject of extensive debate. While certain industry professionals and consultants rely on established marketing metrics like net promoter score, customer satisfaction, customer effort score, and service quality—clearly outlined on their respective platforms—scholars contend that despite the simplicity and scientific grounding of these metrics, they do not entirely encapsulate the true essence of customer experience. While they serve as indicators, they fall short of the absolute measurement of the entire customer experience.

Lemon and Verhoef (2016) have asserted that customer experience is distinct from customer satisfaction and service quality despite their interconnectedness. They highlight that service quality might serve as a precursor to customer experience while emphasizing that customer satisfaction represents a cognitive evaluation and is just one facet within the broader spectrum of customer experience.

Mahr et al. (2019) note that certain scholars faced criticism for employing customer satisfaction and service quality as primary measurements of customer experience due to the limitations in predicting purchasing behaviour and bias towards cognitive outcomes over affective ones. Their systematic literature review reveals that emotions are intricately linked with interactions, serving as an outcome measurement concept. Additionally, Khan, Nisar, and Anwar (2015) caution that essential customer experience metrics must encompass the emotional aspects of customers' conscious and subconscious thoughts.

Imhof and Klaus (2019) note that using net promoter score, customer satisfaction, and service quality as proxy measurements for customer experience yielded little to no correlation

with customer behaviour. They advocate for developing new, holistic methods of measuring customer experience to better comprehend its role as a driver influencing customer behaviour. Additionally, other scholars have proposed alternative indicators for customer experience, such as customer experience quality (EXQ) and the wallet allocation rule (WAR).

Flacandji and Krey (2020) argue against using similar measurement tools for both memory and actual experience when assessing customer experience, thus highlighting the need to capture additional properties promptly. Addressing these conflicting perspectives on assessing customer experience, Gahler et al. (2019) developed original research instruments employing text-based and pictorial scales. Their rigorous scale development and validation process encompassed eight studies across two countries involving 2,819 participants. These scales are adaptable for diverse experience providers and various customer journey stages. The authors affirm the validity of their original scales in gauging customer satisfaction and loyalty, thus meeting the demand for a direct measurement tool for quantifying and monitoring a firm's customer experience performance in an omnichannel environment. They proudly assert that firms can now integrate customer experience as a pivotal metric in their marketing dashboards (Gahler et al., 2019).

The outlining of these metrics and their prevalence in business practices sets the stage for the subsequent discussion of the contradicting views and their limitations in capturing the entire customer experience. This differentiation is crucial for understanding that while related, these concepts are not interchangeable; in fact, customer experience comprises multiple facets beyond mere satisfaction or service quality. The emphasis on emotions and the link between emotions and interactions in determining customer experience provides a nuanced perspective, suggesting that emotional aspects play a significant role beyond cognitive evaluation. Finally, mentioning indicators such as customer experience quality (EXQ) and the wallet allocation rule (WAR) introduces potential alternatives and demonstrates the ongoing efforts to explore different avenues for measuring customer experience.

Key Marketing Metrics

The customer satisfaction index is a pivotal metric linked to customer experience, gauging a customer's contentment or dissatisfaction arising from comparing the outcome of a product or service and their initial expectations. Ilieska (2013) highlighted its utility in assessing business efficacy, current satisfaction levels and critical customer needs, and facilitating comparisons across different organizations. Tracing its roots back to the 1950s as a traditional marketing metric, the customer satisfaction index remains a fundamental indicator of positive customer experience.

Initially hailed as the superior predictor of a firm's growth compared to customer satisfaction, the Net Promoter Score (NPS) faced scrutiny after subsequent tests highlighted its limitations (Keiningham, Aksoy, Cooil, Andreassen, & Williams, 2008). NPS is derived from an 11-point scale measuring the likelihood of recommending a firm's products and services to friends and colleagues. Respondents are categorized as: detractors at 0-6, passives at 7-8, and promoters at 9-10. The score is calculated by subtracting the percentage of detractors from the percentage of promoters.

Stahlkopf (2019) contends that the NPS classification system may need to pay more attention to valuable information, as the three fundamental assumptions do not consistently align

with empirical customer data. She argues that human behaviour is too intricate to fit into rigid classifications, noting that respondents might hold both promoter and detractor sentiments. Keiningham et al. (2008) also argue that simplifying something as complex as customer attitudes into a single metric might need more generalizability, as evidenced in their macro and micro-level studies. While a single-question simplicity aids in gathering and tracking responses, it can pose challenges in interpreting NPS results when delved into (Stahlkopf, 2019). To address this, pairing the NPS with an open-ended question was advocated, which would offer more profound insights into why a respondent might lean toward promoting or detracting from a firm.

Simplicity often brings forth positive surprises for customers. This can be quantified through the customer effort score (CES), which centres on the level of effort customers exert when engaging with a firm's products and services. Customers are asked a single question about the ease or difficulty encountered while performing specific tasks while interacting with the firm. Using a 5-point scale, this metric measures customer effort, categorizing it as low or high (from easy to complex). Dixon, Freeman, and Toman (2010) affirm that CES is a superior predictor of customer loyalty compared to both the customer satisfaction index and the net promoter score. The researchers linked CES to customer loyalty, noting that while delighting customers does not inherently build loyalty, reducing customer effort during interactions does. CES might be among the lesser-utilized marketing measurements associated with customer experience, yet it illuminates the potential for better, memorable, easy, and impactful experiences.

From an organization's standpoint, evaluating the likelihood of repeat purchases is crucial in achieving business profitability. This evaluation often involves measuring purchase intention, representing a consumer's inclination to buy a product or service following assessment. Younus, Rasheed and Zia (2015) uncovered that customer knowledge about the product, perceived value, packaging, and celebrity endorsements significantly impact purchase intention. Table 1 summarizes the literature across three common themes and their availability for discussion.

TABLE 1. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE SUMMARY OF THEMES

Author & Year of Publication (with common themes)	Common Themes and Point of Discussion			
	Touchpoints		Individual Context is material in CX	Discrete Emotions as a response to CX
	Firm- Controlled	Non-Firm Controlled		
De Keyser et al. (2020)	*	*	*	*
Becker & Jaakkola (2020)	*	*	*	*
Keiningham et al. (2020)	*	*	*	<i>not discussed</i>
Flacandji & Krey (2020)	*	<i>not discussed</i>	*	* (<i>no indifference</i>)
McColl-Kennedy et al. (2019)	*	*	*	*
Kranzhbuhler et al. (2019)	*	*	<i>not discussed</i>	*
Mahr et al. (2019)	*	*	*	* (<i>no indifference</i>)
Imhof & Klaus (2019)	*	*	<i>not discussed</i>	<i>not discussed</i>
Gahler et al. (2019)	*	*	*	*
Jain et al. (2017)	*	*	*	<i>not discussed</i>
Pansari & Kumar (2017)	*	*	*	* (<i>no indifference</i>)
Lemon & Verhoef (2016)	*	*	*	<i>not discussed</i>

Source: Author's own Note: The asterisk above refers to the availability of that theme in the reviewed article.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The current attempts at defining and measuring customer experience oscillate between overly generalized or narrow, resulting in a proliferation of diverse definitions, each vying for applicability or significance based on individual preferences. Consequently, the study of this phenomenon needs to be more precise, with a greater focus on devising methodologies to authenticate the various definitions. Progress in customer experience research hinges upon researchers' inclination to substantiate proposed constructs, frameworks, premises, and measurement techniques. Regrettably, the prevailing trend suggests that most scholars are formulating their distinct theoretical underpinnings and explanations without seeking collaborative validation from their peers, thereby impeding the advancement of this field.

Despite the flourishing interest in customer experience, the current discourse still needs to be more cohesive regarding its multifaceted dimensions and effective measurement methodologies. This fragmentation prompted the recognition of customer experience as a critical research priority within the Marketing Science Institute journal from 2010 to 2020 (De Keyser et al., 2020). The urgency lies in forging an early consensus or unified perspective on this phenomenon to ensure clarity during its theoretical development and construction. Most recent studies predominantly centre on conducting systematic reviews of its constructs, mainly due to scholars' diverse viewpoints. Remarkably, fewer studies empirically test the meticulously formulated frameworks that have undergone rigorous meta-analysis. Empirical testing is pivotal in discerning the validity of various constructs, a crucial step in elucidating which elements hold substantial merit.

The diversity in viewpoints within the current literature underscores the necessity for a cohesive and standardized approach toward understanding customer experience. Failure to establish a common ground could impede the progression of theories and models, potentially hindering the field's advancement. As scholars grapple with divergent perspectives and frameworks, conducting empirical studies becomes paramount. These studies, focusing on rigorous testing and validation of proposed frameworks, are vital in identifying the salient dimensions and valid constructs within customer experience. A concerted effort in empirically evaluating these frameworks would mitigate confusion and pave the way for a more unified and robust understanding of this intricate phenomenon, propelling future research and practical applications in marketing and consumer behaviour.

Amidst the ongoing academic discourse surrounding the conceptualization and measurement of customer experience, consulting firms and private enterprises have taken proactive strides by initiating independent investigations into this phenomenon. These entities have opted for a pragmatic approach, eschewing prolonged debates on nuanced technicalities, focusing instead on leveraging how customer experience can be effectively applied within their organizational frameworks. While this might be perceived as self-serving, the pragmatic application of customer experience is significantly advantageous for industries compared to academic deliberations. Notably, the volume of customer experience studies and data generated by private firms surpasses the output from academic scholars, as observed by Jain et al. (2017). While scholars openly disseminate their research findings, private institutions safeguard their research endeavours, likely to maintain a competitive edge. This guarded approach hints at the advanced strategic customer experience programmes adopted by certain firms, diverging from the ongoing scholarly debates and potentially capitalizing on a more practical, applied understanding of this domain.

The divergence between academic pursuits and industry initiatives in comprehending customer experience underscores contrasting methodologies and objectives. While academia grapples with defining and measuring this phenomenon, private enterprises prioritize practical application and implementation within their operational frameworks. The shift in focus towards application-oriented strategies is exemplified by consulting firms and private organizations, who forego prolonged debates on finer conceptual details to maximize the immediate utility of customer experience within their respective domains. This divergence is further accentuated by the imbalance in the volume of research output, with private entities producing a more significant corpus of customer experience studies and data compared to academic circles as is evident from the research by Jain et al. (2017). The contrast in transparency regarding research output is conspicuous. While scholars openly share their findings, private institutions guard their research endeavours, potentially indicative of a competitive edge to be obtained through advanced strategic customer experience programmes. This dichotomy signifies an apparent departure from academic debates, signaling industry's propensity to forge ahead with pragmatic applications rather than engaging in ongoing theoretical conflicts.

Future Research Areas

While there remains scholarly disagreement regarding whether customer experience constitutes a reaction to a product/service or an evaluation of its quality, certain facets of this phenomenon have gained widespread acceptance through exhaustive systematic literature reviews that gauge common aspects and dimensions across multiple studies. Despite ongoing efforts to measure customer experience precisely, the development of definitive measurement methodologies is still in progress. Notably, established marketing metrics like net promoter score, customer satisfaction, and service quality have been scrutinized by scholars, revealing a scant or negligible correlation with customer experience. Consequently, the integration of these metrics demands careful consideration. A prudent approach would entail initiating measurement through customers' affective response, serving as a foundational step in assessing touchpoints. Gahler et al. (2019), a significant contribution involving text-based and pictorial scale instruments tailored explicitly for customer experience, stands out as a commendable reference point. These resources offer invaluable guidance for future researchers aiming to construct instruments that signify and directly measure the essence of customer experience.

Navigating the divergent perspectives on the nature of customer experience and establishing common ground in its measurement becomes imperative. Despite the persistent debate on whether it constitutes a response to an offering or an appraisal of its quality, the literature has converged on some aspects through comprehensive reviews, delineating shared dimensions integral to understanding this phenomenon. However, the quest for precision in measuring customer experience encounters challenges when conventional marketing metrics, such as net promoter score and customer satisfaction, demonstrate limited relevance to this construct. This underscores the necessity for caution when incorporating these metrics into the evaluation framework. Instead, prioritizing assessing customers' affective responses emerges as an initial step in gauging touchpoints effectively. The innovative introduction of tailored text-based and pictorial scale instruments represents a pivotal contribution by Gahler et al. (2019), offering a blueprint for researchers to develop instruments explicitly designed to indicate and accurately measure the intricacies inherent in customer experience. These resources serve as a beacon for future endeavours, facilitating the construction of refined measurement tools aligned directly with the essence of customer experience.

Future research endeavours should delve deeper into reconciling divergent perspectives, while fortifying a unified framework for its assessment. There is an urgent need for a more nuanced approach that emphasizes capturing and understanding customers' affective responses as an elemental aspect of comprehensively evaluating touchpoints. Future research should focus on refining and innovating measurement instruments tailored explicitly to capture the nuanced facets of customer experience. These forthcoming endeavours are expected to draw inspiration from text-based and pictorial scale instruments, seeking to construct more sophisticated and sensitive tools that truly encapsulate the essence of customer experience across diverse contexts and industries.

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