



REVIEW ARTICLE

Customer satisfaction and international business: A multidisciplinary review and avenues for research

G. Tomas M. Hult¹,
Forrest V. Morgeson III¹,
Udit Sharma¹ and
Claes Fornell²

¹Broad College of Business, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan, USA; ²Ross School of Business, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA

Correspondence:
GTM Hult, Broad College of Business,
Michigan State University, East Lansing,
Michigan, USA
e-mail: hult@msu.edu

Abstract

We systematically review the literature on customer satisfaction, partitioning the literature into three generations of thought and focus, with the most recent, third generation, heavily emphasizing international business phenomena. Following a brief, stage-setting review of the first two generations – which address, respectively, the psychological underpinnings of the satisfaction concept, its antecedents, and consequences (first-generation), and the relationship between customer satisfaction, its strategic firm drivers, and firm financial performance outcomes, as well as moderators and mediators of those drivers and outcomes (second-generation) – we primarily focus on the third-generation international studies that have emerged over approximately the last 20 years. These third-generation studies have predominantly investigated the customer satisfaction concept as it is applied cross- and multi-nationally in diverse international market contexts but, due in large part to the cross-disciplinary nature of this research, this literature is fragmented and disjointed. Following a review and synthesis of the third-generation satisfaction literature, connecting it to and differentiating it from the first two generations and integrating its main themes and most significant findings, we identify enduring gaps and unanswered research questions. Of particular note is the dearth of studies examining cross- and multinational moderators of both the strategic firm drivers of satisfaction and the satisfaction–firm performance relationship. We conclude with avenues for future research that can generate important IB-related customer satisfaction knowledge with the potential to provide enormous value to international researchers and managers.

Journal of International Business Studies (2022) **53**, 1695–1733.
<https://doi.org/10.1057/s41267-022-00546-2>

Keywords: customer satisfaction; international business; cross-cultural marketing; cross-national marketing; international marketing; marketing–finance interface

Supplementary Information The online version contains supplementary material available at <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41267-022-00546-2>.

Received: 28 February 2021

Revised: 21 April 2022

Accepted: 28 May 2022

Online publication date: 16 August 2022

INTRODUCTION

Customer satisfaction has been and remains one of the most widely adopted and analyzed business metrics – and quite possibly, the single most widely adopted such metric – within the international business ecosystem (Mintz, Currim, Steenkamp, & de Jong, 2019; Hult, Gonzalez-Perez, & Lagerström, 2020). Countless large, mid-size, and small firms spanning developed, emerging, and frontier markets measure the satisfaction of their customers as a key performance indicator (KPI) reflective of the strength of their

customer relationships and business performance (Mintz et al., 2019). A substantial number of multinational enterprises (MNEs) and the market research suppliers serving them¹ also measure the satisfaction of diverse customer portfolios across a variety of national markets, often as a means for benchmarking and comparing relative performance across these (diverse) markets (Morgeson, Sharma, & Hult, 2015; Kumar, Rajan, Gupta, & Pozza, 2019). Academic customer satisfaction research is now nearly 60 years old (e.g., Cardozo, 1965; Bell, 1967), and while alternative business KPIs have emerged and vanished – management “fads” that built excitement and garnered the attention of executives only to fade away and fall out of popularity – customer satisfaction has endured over this lengthy period (Collins, 2013).

As customer satisfaction research proliferated over the last 60 years, the literature has evolved through three discernible and distinct (but overlapping with respect to time) streams, or “generations” as we label them in this research. Briefly, the first-generation studies focused on customer satisfaction as a post-consumption state-of-mind, believed to be influential over future consumer behaviors advantageous to firms. Most of these consumer psychology and consumer behavior studies sought to identify what customer satisfaction is and the cognitive processes through which the phenomenon emerges, as well as its primary psychological antecedents and consequences (e.g., Cardozo, 1965; Oliver, 1977, 1980; Churchill & Surprenant, 1982). The second-generation satisfaction studies are strategy-focused, and seek to validate many of the primary theses of the first-generation research regarding the (presumed) positive business outcomes driven by satisfaction. This objective was largely pursued through an examination of the link between customer satisfaction and both its strategic drivers and objective, external measures of firm financial performance, along with the moderators and mediators of these relationships (e.g., Rust & Zahorik, 1993; Anderson, Fornell, & Lehmann, 1994; Anderson, Fornell, & Rust, 1997). Through these investigations, the ability of firms to drive customer satisfaction and for (aggregate) firm-level satisfaction to positively impact a firm’s financial performance (across a broad range of business and accounting metrics) cemented the importance of the concept for managers and researchers alike. Overwhelmingly, first- and second-generation customer satisfaction research focused on single-market contexts, largely ignoring

the role of international business-related factors in the customer satisfaction ecosystem. This fact is reflected in the absence of discussion of any international business-related factors in the existing systematic reviews of either first-generation (Yi, 1990) or second-generation (Otto, Szymanski, & Varadarajan, 2020) satisfaction research.

More recently, a third generation of customer satisfaction research has emerged. These third-generation studies are multifaceted, often blending elements of the first two generations, and are broadly focused on the delineation of international business-related factors as drivers of customer satisfaction and/or as moderators and mediators of its relationships with its psychological and objective antecedents and outcomes. Notably, these third-generation studies evolved in parallel with the rapid growth in economic globalization around the turn of the new millennium. At the time, dramatic growth in firms’ internationalization efforts (e.g., Kirca, Hult, Roth, Cavusgil, Perry, Akdeniz, Deligonul, Mena, Pollette, Hoppner, & Miller, 2011), the globalization of supply chains and production (Hult, Closs, & Frayer, 2014), and increased interest in leveraging international joint ventures (e.g., Fang & Zou, 2009), among other important developments, were necessitating a broader emphasis on the measurement and monitoring of customer relationships across diverse, geographically and culturally disparate national markets (e.g., Cullen, Johnson, & Sakano, 1995; Lee & Beamish, 1995; Lin & Germain, 1998; Wulf, Odekerken-Schröder, & Iacobucci, 2001; Lee, Sirgy, Brown, & Bird, 2004). As such, these third-generation studies focused on applying the satisfaction concept in this increasingly internationalized business environment. Within this generation, the moderators and mediators of satisfaction examined derive from familiar themes within the international and cross-national business environment, and investigate cultural and/or national market variables hypothesized to affect customer satisfaction (at either the customer and/or the firm levels) and the relationship between satisfaction, its antecedents, and its outcomes. It is these third-generation studies that serve as the impetus for this review.

At this stage of its development, it is important to conduct a comprehensive review of these third-generation, international, multi-market satisfaction studies, the lessons learned, and the questions as yet unanswered to create synergy across knowledge generated between these generations for the benefit of the international business literature, and



to effectively identify avenues for future research. Systematically reviewing this prominent collection of third-generation, internationally focused customer satisfaction studies is the primary objective of our review. Adopting a multidisciplinary approach, our review of this literature is based on an analysis of 140 articles from 30 leading journals spanning a variety of academic disciplines (e.g., international business, marketing, management) published predominantly since the year 2000 (we also provide a brief review of the first- and second-generation studies as a foundation for our third-generation review). Through this review, our study makes several contributions to the literature at the intersection of customer satisfaction and international business.

First, this study represents the first systematic review of the third-generation, international and cross-national customer satisfaction-focused literature, providing a unique opportunity to synthesize the state of and to set directions for this research, and thus providing value to those conducting research on customer satisfaction around the world. Through this exercise, we not only provide insights regarding this generation of research but also aim to stimulate further research therein. As noted above, while systematic reviews of both first- and second-generation customer satisfaction research have been provided (e.g., Yi, 1990; Otto et al., 2020), no similar review of these internationally oriented, third-generation studies has yet been offered, a substantial gap in the existing literature providing initial motivation for this study. Second, and relatedly, through this review we categorize and sub-segment this third-generation satisfaction literature into a useful structure for both researchers and managers addressing and confronting unique challenges regarding customer satisfaction measurement in a multi-market, multinational environment. This categorization is summarized in an inductively developed framework (see Figure 1, discussed in greater detail later in the manuscript) which provides insights into the international B2C and B2B relationships commonly examined in this stream of literature.

Lastly, and most critically, this comprehensive, multidisciplinary review is motivated by two inter-related and crucial weaknesses we observe in the existing third-generation, international customer satisfaction literature: the fragmented and disjointed nature of this research, and the resulting critical gaps in the literature emerging from this fragmented condition. Marketing scholars and

those in many other business sub-disciplines have researched customer satisfaction for decades. The last two decades have seen scholars adopt an international perspective with respect to examining satisfaction, as we illustrate below. But as a result of progressing largely independently in separate academic disciplines, this third-generation international customer satisfaction research is scattered and disjointed, precisely because arising across diverse disciplines with variable research priorities, methodological traditions, and so forth. Moreover, and due largely to this fragmented nature, the extant third-generation literature has developed a variety of “blind spots” and failed to ask or answer an array of consequential questions. Importantly, these omissions include a failure to investigate the potentially differential nature of both the strategic firm drivers and outcomes of satisfaction (i.e., the satisfaction–financial performance linkage) as these are moderated by a variety of factors across diverse markets, leaving open the possibility that these relationships differ (in form, magnitude, or both) in ways significant to both researchers and international managers. Synthesizing and providing structure to this literature, highlighting its most important findings and conclusions, and providing an outline of the most important but still-unanswered research questions therein serves as the primary motivation for this review.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. Following a brief, stage-setting review of the core studies from the first two generations of customer satisfaction research, we introduce the third-generation research. We next outline the scientometric methods employed towards a systematic identification and review of this cross-national and international, third-generation customer satisfaction research. Via a descriptive analysis, we proceed by outlining the general focus of the field, the research topics examined, the development of this literature over time and across journals and disciplines, and the most common data and analytical methods employed. In specific detail, we then thematically outline the research questions and the key findings of this literature, grouping studies into two broad categories (international B2C and international B2B relationships), as well as sub-categorizing the literature within each broad group and identifying significant enduring questions. Finally, we offer detailed commentary on the most crucial gaps in the literature and most important research questions and directions for advancing the third-generation satisfaction

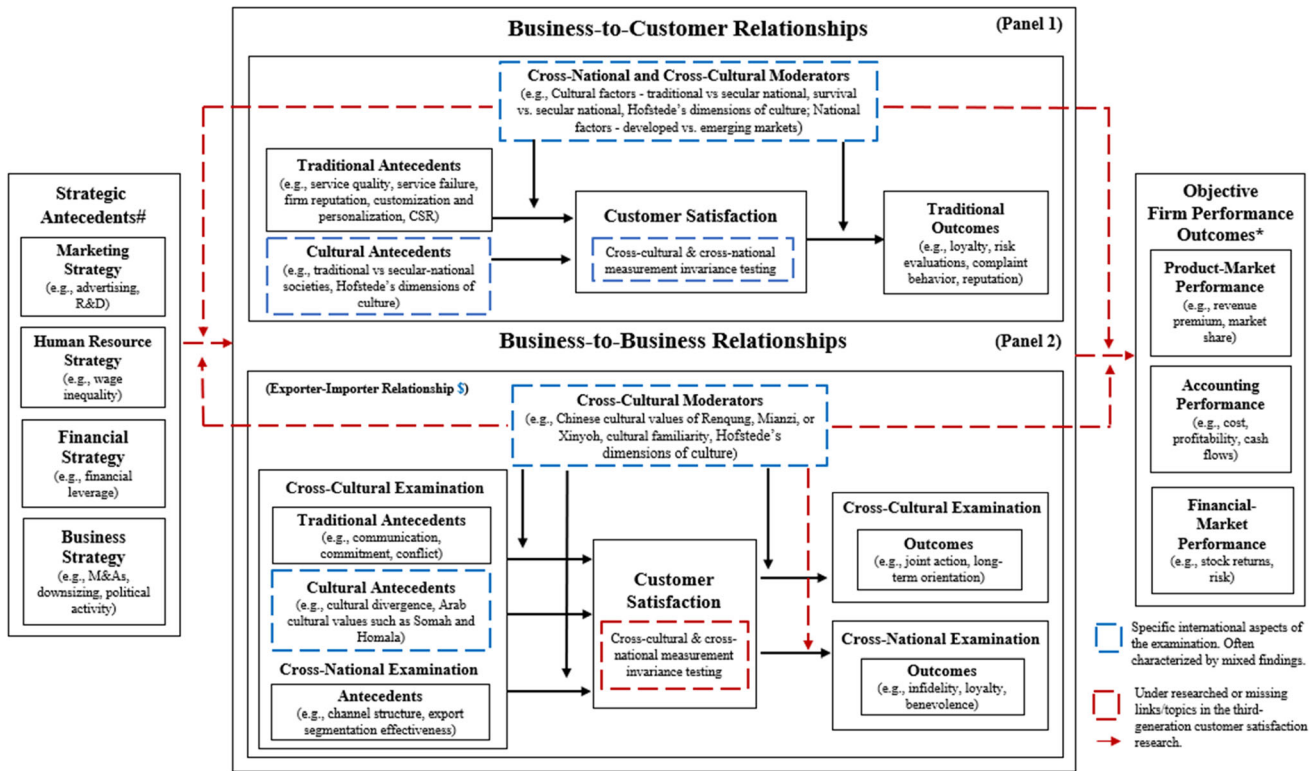


Figure 1 The knowledge structure and gaps in international customer satisfaction research. \$ Not represented under the dotted box. However, all exporter–importer relationships are inherently international. # A few of the reviewed third-generation studies examine a narrow set of strategic antecedents such as CSR (Ruiz, Garcia, & Revila, 2016), channel strategy (Rambocas et al., 2015), and segmentation strategy (Diamantopoulos et al., 2014). However, largely the examination of strategic drivers of satisfaction has been overlooked. * Two of the reviewed third-generation studies (Berger et al., 2015; Webster & White, 2010) examine business performance using survey-based self-reported measures (by managers) but no study examines the objective firm performance outcomes.

literature, with a particular emphasis on the need to more thoroughly integrate the second-generation focus on the strategic firm drivers and outcomes of satisfaction in the satisfaction–financial performance linkage into the international and cross-national third-generation literature (Buckley, Doh, & Benischke, 2017).

FIRST- AND SECOND-GENERATION CUSTOMER SATISFACTION RESEARCH

In this section, we provide a brief, stage-setting review of the first two generations – which address, respectively, the psychological underpinnings of the satisfaction concept, its antecedents, and consequences (first-generation), and the relationship between customer satisfaction, its strategic firm drivers, and firm financial performance outcomes, as well as moderators and mediators of those drivers and outcomes (second-generation). Table 1 outlines and compares core features of the three

generations of customer satisfaction research, including their predominant analytical focus, level of analysis, and theoretical and methodological approaches. Additionally, Tables A1 and A2 (included within the Web Appendix) provide a representative selection of first- and second-generation customer satisfaction research, respectively.

First-Generation Satisfaction Research

Customer satisfaction research first emerged in the mid-1960s, borrowing a concept that had been examined for decades in studies of job and life satisfaction (e.g., Brayfield & Rothe, 1951; Neugarten, Havighurs, & Tobin, 1961) and applying it to the realm of consumer attitudes. Although predominantly a consumer psychology and marketing research concern (e.g., consumer behavior, firm-level marketing asset), the first-generation satisfaction literature emerged from across a range of scholarly disciplines, both within and outside business. In a widely adopted definition, Richard L.

**Table 1** Three generations of research on customer satisfaction

	First generation	Second generation	Third generation
Analytical focus	Defining customer satisfaction and identifying psychological correlates and the cognitive mechanisms underlying and driving consumers' satisfaction	Examining objective antecedents and outcomes of satisfaction, as well as moderators and mediators of those antecedents and outcomes, and doing so almost exclusively in single-market studies	Building on first- and second-generation studies of customer satisfaction to examine international business-related factors as drivers of customer satisfaction and/or as moderators or mediators of its relationships with its psychological and objective antecedents and outcomes in multinational, multi-market contexts
Driving force	Need for resolution of definitional, measurement, and nomological ambiguity concerning customer satisfaction driven by theorization of its centrality to the marketing concept (cf., Yi, 1990)	Increasing pressure for the financial accountability of marketing investments (cf., Moorman & Rust, 1999)	Rapid growth in economic globalization necessitating the measurement and monitoring of customer relationships across diverse, geographically, and culturally disparate national markets
Dominant level(s) of analysis	Customer (single market)	Customer, firm (single market)	Customer, firm (cross- and multi-market)
Key theoretical approaches	Expectation–disconfirmation paradigm; dissonance theory; comparison level theory; contrast theory; equity theory; exit-voice-loyalty theory; value percept disparity theory; two-factor theory	Resource-based view; satisfaction–loyalty profit chain; institutional theory; stakeholder theory; signaling theory	Cross-cultural research; acculturation theory; expectation–disconfirmation theory; exit-voice-loyalty theory
Key methodological approaches	Experimental methods; structural equation modeling	Econometric methods (panel data methods, instrument variable approach, regression discontinuity design); hierarchical linear modeling; structural equation modeling	Structural equation modeling; experimental methods; least squares regression; hierarchical linear modeling
Dominant theoretical theme(s)	(a) A plurality of conceptualizations (e.g., process-oriented versus outcome-oriented) and measurement approaches (e.g., direct versus indirect, unidimensional versus multi-dimensional) for customer satisfaction were proposed and tested (b) Significant implications of customer satisfaction for customers' attitudes and behavioral intentions such as repurchase intention, word-of-mouth, complaint behavior, and related outcomes were documented (c) Comprehensive and often competing theoretical models comprising antecedents and outcomes of customer satisfaction were developed and tested	(a) Variety of firm strategies examined for their implications for customer satisfaction (b) Significant implications of customer satisfaction for firm-level customer-mindset-based, product-market-based, accounting-based, and financial-market-based outcomes documented (c) Customer route and investor route mechanisms underlying customer satisfaction's impact on firm performance identified and tested (d) Firm, industry, and economic sector level boundary conditions for customer satisfaction's impact on firm performance proposed and tested	(a) Implications of national culture for international B2C and international B2B relationships concerning psychological and objective antecedents and outcomes of customer satisfaction examined (b) Differences concerning the levels of customer satisfaction and its relationships with other customer and firm-level phenomena across countries documented (c) Measurement equivalence of customer satisfaction examined across countries and cultures for B2C relationships

Table 1 (Continued)

	First generation	Second generation	Third generation
Dominant substantive theme(s)	Customer satisfaction was positioned and popularized as a metric for measuring customer–firm relationships and a measure of the quality of goods and services produced in an industry, economic sector, or country	Strong and consistent evidence for its positive firm performance outcomes elevated customer satisfaction to a mainstream competitive strategy and a key market-based asset for achieving superior performance	As the internationalization and multi-nationalization of business advanced, customer satisfaction provides a valuable concept for determining the positivity of consumers with goods and services across national markets
Current state of literature	Over time, the literature has reached consensus on key conceptual, measurement, and nomological issues concerning customer satisfaction, leading to a gradual decline in the frequency of first-generation studies	Having examined implications for a large variety of firm performance dimensions, the second-generation literature is currently focused on identifying additional mechanisms underlying such effects (e.g., Bhattacharya et al., 2021; Malshe, Colicev, & Mittal, 2020)	The third-generation studies have largely reexamined the conceptual, measurement, and nomological findings concerning customer satisfaction from first-generation studies in an international context. However, this generation has so far overlooked the examination of firm performance implications of customer satisfaction in international contexts

Oliver defines customer satisfaction as “...the consumer’s fulfillment response ... It is a judgment that a product/service feature, or the product/service itself, provided (or is providing) a pleasurable level of consumption-related fulfillment, including levels of under- or overfulfillment” (Oliver, 2010, p. 8). Thus, satisfaction for the individual consumer represents both a positive affective response and a cognitive judgement regarding a product or service that arises during or following a consumption experience (e.g., Oliver, 1980, 1993).

Much of the first-generation satisfaction research was focused on identification of psychological correlates and cognitive mechanisms underlying and driving consumers’ satisfaction. Early on, and again borrowing from research in related disciplines (e.g., Spector, 1956), customer satisfaction was deemed to be intertwined with consumers’ pre-experience expectations regarding the product or service consumed. Satisfaction was defined as “pleasurable consumption fulfillment,” but this affective state both drove and was driven by consumer perceptions of “under- or overfulfillment” with the product/service experienced, with the latter revealed through a cognitive process of comparing an experience to prior expectations about the same (e.g., the expectancy–disconfirmation model) (Oliver, 1977, 1980). Much of the first-generation work aimed at refining, debating, and clarifying the nature of both expectations and expectancy confirmation and disconfirmation,

while also introducing the concept of perceived performance (or quality perceptions) into the theoretical system (e.g., Olshavsky & Miller, 1972; Churchill & Surprenant, 1982; Tse & Wilton, 1988; Anderson & Sullivan, 1993; Spreng, MacKenzie, & Olshavsky, 1996).

Importantly, beyond investigations of its psychological antecedents, first-generation studies posited that customer satisfaction likewise drove consumer behavioral intentions favorable to the firm (Yi, 1990). From the very earliest research, it was argued that customer satisfaction “presumably leads to repeat purchases, acceptance of other products in the same product line, and favorable word-of-mouth publicity,” outcomes of value to most firms (Cardozo, 1965, p. 244; Oliver, 1980). Validating the existence of these consequences of satisfaction, at least as attitudinal descriptors of satisfied consumers’ behavioral intentions, and modeling their functional form played an essential role in the first-generation satisfaction literature (Anderson, 1998). Given the importance of customer loyalty, up- and cross-selling opportunities, positive word-of-mouth, and related outcomes for firms, measurement of aggregate customer satisfaction among a firm’s customers (or among particular segments of those customers) was quickly recognized as a fundamental business imperative (McNeal & Lamb, 1979).



Second-Generation Satisfaction Research

In the early 1990s, a significant second-generation shift in focus within customer satisfaction studies emerged. Researchers turned their attention from the nature and correlates of the consumer-psychological state and began to examine its objective drivers and its influence over business outcomes. At its core, this marketing strategy-focused stream of the literature sought to confirm customer satisfaction's positive relationship with not just consumers' attitudes, positive affect, and behavioral intentions, but to evidence its influence over observed consumer behaviors (e.g., Bolton, 1998). Studies in this stream also focused on examining a variety of firms' strategies, both marketing-related and others, for their effects on customer satisfaction. Given the difficulties inherent in tracking the connections between (always-evolving) consumer attitudes and consumers' observed future behaviors longitudinally at an individual customer level (for even a single firm, let alone a cross section of firms in diverse economic sectors and industries), most research pursued these objectives by investigating the relationships at the firm level, i.e., firm-level customer satisfaction, its firm-level strategic drivers, and firm-level financial performance outcomes.

Concerning firm-level strategic drivers, the second-generation studies have examined a variety of strategies for their implications for customer satisfaction in both B2C and B2B relationships and across a variety of industry contexts, including: marketing strategies, such as advertising (Song, Jang, & Cai, 2016), and R&D and innovation (Dotzel, Venkatesh, & Berry, 2013; Rubera & Kirca, 2017); financial strategies, such as financial leverage (Malshe & Agarwal, 2015); human resource strategies, like wage inequality (Bamberger, Homburg, & Wielgos, 2021a, b) and front-line autonomy (Marinova, Ye, & Singh, 2008); supply chain strategies, including distribution network redesign (Shang, Yildirim, Tadikamalla, Mittal, & Brown, 2009) and franchised channel governance (Kashyap & Murtha, 2017); and other business-level strategies, like mergers and acquisitions (Umashankar, Bahadir, & Bharadwaj, 2021), corporate political activity (Vadakepatt, Arora, Martin, & Paharia, 2021), corporate social responsibility (Luo & Bhattacharya, 2006), and business downsizing (Habel & Klarmann, 2015). As expected, given the substantial and fundamental differences among and across such strategies, there is much variability in the

theoretical underpinnings for these effects on customer satisfaction and the empirically examined mechanisms driving them.

By contrast, the theoretical underpinning for the link between customer satisfaction and firms' financial (and accounting) performance, sometimes referred to as the "satisfaction-profit chain" (Anderson & Mittal, 2000), is relatively straightforward: satisfying consumption experiences → positive consumer attitudes (e.g., attitudinal loyalty, intention to recommend) → pro-firm future consumer behaviors (e.g., behavioral loyalty, increased spending, positive word-of-mouth) → positive firm financial performance. Early research in the second-generation literature established the parameters and economic mechanisms of the satisfaction-profit chain through which customer satisfaction affects firms' financial performance, at times counterintuitively and differentially across product categories and industries (e.g., Anderson et al., 1994; Fornell, 1992, 1995). It also provided evidence that satisfaction did indeed relate positively to marketing and accounting metrics (e.g., return on investment, profitability, productivity) (Anderson et al., 1997; Rust & Zahorik, 1993); Anderson & Mittal, 2000). Over the ensuing years, the second-generation literature has expanded substantially on these findings and positively connected firm-level customer satisfaction to a wide variety of objective measures of financial performance (Otto et al., 2020).

The overall findings from first- and second-generation research on customer satisfaction provide significant support for the customer satisfaction metric as one of critical importance to businesses. Importantly, customer satisfaction represents more than positive attitudes and intentions among a firm's customers. It is driven by a variety of firm strategies and also influences and predicts the economic and financial performance of the firm. These findings help explain not only the enduring appearance of satisfaction research but also its continued broad-based adoption among firms, managers in general, and marketing research practitioners in particular (Mintz et al., 2019).

Following these two generations of customer satisfaction research, and about 35 years after the first studies on the topic appeared, another, more recent shift in focus occurred. As noted above, these internationally oriented third-generation satisfaction studies evolved in parallel with the dramatic growth in economic globalization around the turn of the new millennium, and as such they focus

on multi-national, multi-market studies of customer satisfaction, and often examine moderators and mediators of satisfaction drawn from the IB literature. While a small number of studies investigating satisfaction in a cross-national, international, and/or multinational context had appeared in the 1980s and 1990s, this trickle became a flood around the year 2000 and thereafter. Driven by the reality of increasingly globalized markets and an explosion of firms' multi-nationalization efforts, these third-generation studies have thus focused on extending and expanding customer satisfaction from a single-market measure (e.g., a single firm operating within a particular national market) of firm performance to a metric with relevance to MNEs (and related IB ventures) across international markets. It is this third-generation satisfaction research that will garner our attention in the remainder of this review. Next, we turn to a description of the scientometric methods used to identify relevant third-generation studies.

METHODOLOGY

Given the objective of this review article as outlined in the introduction, we adopt a multi-step methodology including two broad phases: (1) article search and selection and, (2) information retrieval and analysis. This approach is similar to those adopted by systematic reviews in both the international business (e.g., Tranfield, Denyer, & Smart, 2003) and marketing (e.g., Lambertson & Stephen, 2016; Whittler, Krause, & Lehmann, 2020) disciplines, and in line with suggestions for best practices in conducting literature reviews (Hunter & Schmidt, 1990, 2004; Littell, Corcoran, & Pillai, 2008; Palmatier, Houston, & Hulland, 2018).

Article Search and Selection

We follow established procedures and use a systematic approach to ensure comprehensive coverage of articles at the intersection of research on customer satisfaction and international business (Aguilera, Marano, & Haxhi, 2019). Specifically, we rely on four literature search strategies: (a) a keyword search in relevant academic journals through electronic databases; (b) a manual search for "articles in advance" and "online first" articles through the websites of the relevant journals; (c) a backward snowball search using the lists of references of the articles retrieved in steps (a) and (b), and a forward snowball search of the articles that cite the articles retrieved in steps (a) and (b) and those discovered

in the backward snowball search; and d) contacting the leading authors that publish in this area for additional articles.

First, in step (a), to be as comprehensive as possible in our search for all potentially relevant studies, and given the increasingly interdisciplinary nature of research on customer satisfaction (e.g., Morgeson, Mithas, Keiningham, & Aksoy, 2011; Morgeson et al., 2015), our search covered all 50 of the journals included in the Financial Times' "FT Research Rank."² The journals included in this list encompass the leading journals in the disciplines of international business, marketing, management, organizational behavior, economics, accounting, finance, operations and information systems, business ethics, and entrepreneurship, and are the primary outlets for leading research in their respective disciplines (e.g., Zhang, 2021).

Additionally, given that the third-generation studies on customer satisfaction lie mainly at the intersection of marketing and international business (which is our core focus), and several high-profile journals situated at this intersection are not included in the "FT Research Rank" list, we expanded the list of included journals. Specifically, we included six additional journals from the international business discipline – *Global Strategy Journal*, *International Business Review*, *Journal of World Business*, *Management International Review*, *International Marketing Review*, and *Journal of International Management* (Treviño, Mixon, Funk, & Inkpen, 2010) and five additional journals from the marketing discipline – *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, *Journal of Retailing*, *Journal of Service Research*, *Journal of International Marketing*, and *European Journal of Marketing* (Khamitov, Grégoire, & Suri, 2020; Dowling, Guhl, Klapper, Spann, Sitch, & Yegoryan, 2020). Lastly, since the journals included in the Financial Times' ranking do not include specialized journals from the discipline of hospitality, travel, and tourism, and having discovered many potentially relevant international customer satisfaction studies from this broad "service-focused" area through initial searches on Google Scholar, we also include five journals that constitute the leading outlets in this discipline. The journals included are *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, and *Journal of Hospitality Marketing and Management* (Prayag, Hassibi, & Nunkoo, 2019).



With this list of 66 leading journals across a broad swath of business disciplines, we undertook a systematic keyword search through multiple online databases using the term “satisfaction” in combination with 35 keywords that capture international dimensions, such as “international,” “global,” “cross-border,” and “cross-cultural” without specifying or delimiting a timeframe.³ This process resulted in 580 search records, which were independently screened by two of the co-authors for inclusion based on two key criteria. First, the article must examine customer satisfaction empirically. As such, conceptual articles, review articles,⁴ abstracts, book reviews, case studies, corporate profiles, symposium proceedings, editorials, and interviews were not included in our review. Second, the article must empirically incorporate an international dimension, such as examination of cross-country relationships (e.g., importer–exporter relationship) or of national culture-related constructs (e.g., national cultural values), and/or alternatively analyze samples from more than one country (e.g., multi-group comparison of relationships using segments differentiated by country, culture, or region). As such, articles that simply use a sample from more than one country but do not examine cross-national differences in relationships were excluded. The co-authors agreed on their assessment for more than 97% of the original 580 search records and the differences were resolved through discussion, leading to inclusion of 100 articles from this first step.

Next, in step (b), we searched for online-first, accepted but yet to be printed articles, and “articles in advance” in each of the 66 selected journals to ensure inclusion of any recent work on the topic. We identified four additional articles in this step that satisfied our inclusion criteria discussed above in step (a). Overall, steps (a) and (b) therefore resulted in a total of 104 articles that satisfied our inclusion criteria and are included in our review. In step (c), we then conducted our backward snowball search using the list of references of these 104 articles and this resulted in the identification of 15 additional relevant articles. We then conducted a forward snowball search in the articles that cite the 119 articles identified to this point (Duran, Kammerlader, Van Essen, & Zellweger, 2016), and through this step 21 additional articles were identified that satisfy our inclusion criteria. Within both the backward and the forward snowball searches, we included only articles published in journals with an impact factor of 4 or above (Journal Citation Reports Social Sciences Edition

(Clarivate Analytics, 2020)) towards inclusion of only state-of-the-art third-generation customer satisfaction research. Finally, in step (d), we identified the top 25 authors (based on a Google Scholar citation count) specializing in either/or customer satisfaction, international marketing, international business, or marketing strategy. These authors were contacted via e-mail and requested to identify any relevant articles or manuscripts in the third-generation customer satisfaction research stream (as we have defined it) that were at or near completion (–such as working papers), currently under review, or conditionally accepted/accepted and soon to be published articles. While several replies were received, no additional relevant articles were identified through this step. Overall, our review of the third-generation, internationally oriented customer satisfaction literature is therefore based on 140 articles from 30 journals published during the period 1980–2020.

Information Retrieval and Analysis

In line with prior research (e.g., Morgan, Whitler, Feng, & Chari, 2019) and recommended best practice procedures for review articles (e.g., Katsikeas, Morgan, Leonidou, & Hult, 2016), two of the co-authors independently retrieved information initially from ten articles and coded them using pre-determined protocols agreed upon by all the authors. The pre-determined protocols detailed the coding objectives and specifics on the nature of the information to be retrieved from each article. The initial coding was independently assessed by a researcher with substantial publishing experience in both the marketing and international business disciplines. After discussions and revisions to the information retrieval and coding protocols, the two initial co-authors independently coded each of the 140 articles, with an inter-rate agreement of about 94%.

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF THIRD-GENERATION CUSTOMER SATISFACTION RESEARCH

We begin our analysis of the retrieved 140 internationally oriented, third-generation customer satisfaction articles published in 30 leading business journals during the 1980–2020 period with a critical descriptive review of the general focus of the field, the research topics examined, development of this literature over time and across journals and disciplines, and the most common data and

analytical methods employed. Initial, high-level insights regarding both the current state and the gaps, omissions and shortcomings of the current literature are also provided.

General Focus of the Field

Current state

A substantial majority of the international customer satisfaction studies (see Table 2, Panel A) included in this literature review focus on examining business-to-customer relationships (B2C) ($N = 97, 69.8\%$), with about a quarter examining business-to-business relationships (B2B) ($N = 35, 25.2\%$), and only a handful examining both ($N = 7, 5.0\%$). Likewise, less than half of the articles undertake a cross-cultural analysis ($N = 56, 40.0\%$), examining culture-related factors in the context of customer satisfaction or its antecedents and outcomes. The remaining adopt a cross-national perspective ($N = 84, 60.0\%$) and examine differences in levels of customer satisfaction across countries, its relationship with its antecedents and outcomes, or the effects of country-level factors (such as economic structure, socioeconomic

conditions, and/or the political environment) on satisfaction using samples from two or more countries (see Table 2, Panel B). In terms of study conceptualization, about half of the articles adopt a strategic perspective ($N = 66, 47.1\%$), examining customer satisfaction from the firm decision-making perspective, while the other half adopt a behavioral perspective ($74, 52.9\%$) and examine customers' attitudes and the emotional, cognitive, and behavioral aspects of customer satisfaction (see Table 2, Panel C).

Suggested direction

In the aggregate, while the current third-generation customer satisfaction research has generated substantial insights regarding both B2C and B2B relationships, it offers little understanding of the customer satisfaction formation process and its implications in the increasingly dominant – and very often cross-national and cross-cultural – customer-to-customer (C2C) or peer-to-peer relationships essential to digital marketplaces (e.g., eBay, Craigslist, Amazon, Etsy, and ASOS). These relationships differ substantially from either traditional

Table 2 Distribution of third-generation customer satisfaction articles by focus

	Frequency	%
(A) Type of relationship examined ^a		
Business-to-customer (B2C)	97	69.8
Business-to-business (B2B)	35	25.2
B2C and B2B	7	5.0
(B) International perspective		
Cross-national	84	60.0
Cross-cultural	56	40.0
(C) Conceptual perspective		
Strategic	66	47.1
Behavioral	74	52.9
(D) Research topics		
Standardization/adaptation	6	4.3
Market segmentation	4	2.9
Early adopters	3	2.1
Product/service positioning	2	1.4
Emotions	2	1.4
Country-of-origin	10	7.1
Services marketing	77	55.0
Retailing	22	15.7
Relationship marketing	12	8.6
Marketing management	2	1.7
Export–import marketing or buyer–seller relationships in international markets	32	22.9
Distribution channels or channel governance	10	7.1
Brand management	10	7.1
Foreign market entry	2	1.4

^a The percentages are based on the number of articles that disclose the details of the type of the relationship examined ($n = 139$) In panel (D), the percentages do not add sum to 100% because multiple studies address more than one research topic.



B2C or B2B relationships, due to characteristics such as lack of quality control, dynamic pricing mechanisms (e.g., demand planning, auction-based pricing), and increased opportunities for seller misconduct (Costello & Reczek, 2020), and the lack of research indicates a promising direction for scholars in this area.

Research Topics

Current state

Concerning the international customer satisfaction literature focused on B2C relationships, our analysis reveals that the current research has predominantly focused on certain topics (see Table 2, Panel D), such as services marketing ($N = 77$, 55.0%), retailing ($N = 22$, 15.7%), and country-of-origin ($N = 10$, 7.1%). Other topics, such as market segmentation ($N = 4$, 2.9%) and product/service positioning ($N = 2$, 1.4%), have received some but significantly less attention.⁵ Concerning B2B relationships, the dominant topics include import–export marketing or buyer–seller relationships in international markets ($N = 32$, 22.9%), and distribution channels or channel governance ($N = 10$, 7.1%).

Suggested direction

Overall, while the current third-generation satisfaction research has largely focused on the examination of topics carried over from first-generation research into the international context, it has yet to examine customer satisfaction in emerging contexts that increasingly occupy ongoing second-generation research, such as the sharing economy (Eckhardt, Houston, Jiang, Lambertson, Rindfleisch, & Zervas, 2019), digitization (Banalieva & Dhannaraj, 2019; De Luca, Herhausen, Troilo, & Rossi, 2021), influencer marketing (Hughes, Swaminathan, & Brooks, 2019), the customer-technology interface (Jean, Sinkovics, & Cavusgil, 2010; Crolc, Thomaz, Hadi, & Stephen, 2021; Tan, Chandukala, & Reddy, 2021), healthcare marketing (Robitaille, Mazar, Tsai, Haviv, & Hardy, 2021), and financial technology and inclusion (Kumar, Nim, & Agarwal, 2021) – all innovations that are strongly shaping firm strategies and customer experiences today and in the future, and doing so (potentially) differently across countries and cultures. Additionally, this stream of literature has largely neglected the examination of firm-level strategic drivers of customer satisfaction and its objective firm performance implications in the international context. Here, we note these as gaps and omissions in the

current third-generation customer satisfaction research and provide related directions later in the “Future Research” section of the manuscript.

Trends by Disciplines and Journals over Time

Current state

Table 3 provides a breakdown of the 140 articles included in this review across journals (Panel A) and academic disciplines (Panel B) over time. By academic discipline, marketing journals are the primary outlets of the third-generation satisfaction research, with mainstream marketing journals publishing the largest share ($N = 54$, 38.6%), followed by more specialized international marketing journals ($N = 39$, 27.9%). The core international business journals account for a share of only 7.9% ($N = 11$) of the articles, a sizeable gap relative to the other two (and a weakness we aim to address, in part, through this review). The information systems journals, which are the dominant outlet for research on the customer-technology interface, account for the lowest share of the articles ($N = 3$, 2.1%). About 90% of the literature in this third-generation stream has appeared since 2001, and more than 97% since 1997.

Suggested direction. While our search for relevant literature included leading journals across other disciplines such as finance, accounting, economics, and entrepreneurship, we identified no relevant articles in these disciplines concerning international customer satisfaction research. We deem this to be a significant gap in the literature and a promising direction for scholars in these areas, as these disciplines cover vital aspects of business and otherwise do investigate research questions concerning customer experiences (e.g., Cheng, Qian, & Reeb, 2020; Truong, Nguyen, & Huynh, 2021). As such, the absence of relevant research in these disciplines provides a significant opportunity for future scholarly contributions.

Data and Methods

Finally, in addition to understanding the nature of research topics examined and omitted, it is also helpful to understand the sources of data (including geographic focus) and methods of analysis, as this information can often provide a useful perspective from which to view the findings from this research.

Current state and suggested direction (data types)

The majority of the articles examined in our review use customer or key-informant surveys ($N = 98$, 70.0%), while a smaller proportion of the articles

Table 3 Distribution of third-generation customer satisfaction articles by journal and discipline over time (1980–2020)

	80	85	94	97	99	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	Total	%	
<i>(A) Break-up by journals over time (year)</i>																												
JBS												1		2	1												5	3.6
IBR													1	1	1												4	2.9
JWB												1															2	1.4
IMR	1					1	2	1	2	2	1										2	2	1				16	11.4
IJRM				1						1														1			5	3.6
JIM		1		1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	1	3	1	1	1	3	1	1	2	1	1	19	13.6	
JMR										1														1			2	1.4
JM				1										1													2	1.4
JAMS						1								2	2	1						1	1	1			9	6.4
JCR										1																	2	1.4
JR			1			1	1	2	2													1					8	5.7
EJM			1			2				1	1	1											1				9	6.4
JSR				1		2		1		1	1																7	5.0
JINM																	1										1	0.7
JSM								1						1		2	1	1				1					8	5.7
JMTP				1	1																						2	1.4
APJML												1															1	0.7
IMM																	2										2	1.4
SMJ	1																										1	0.7
JAP																1											1	0.7
JBR				1			1							3			2										7	5.0
OBHDP																											1	0.7
HRM																						1					2	1.4
JBE										1																	2	1.4
JMIS					1																						1	0.7
MIS													1	1													2	1.4
CHQ										1											1						4	2.9
JHMIM										1												1	2				6	4.3
IJCHM													2									1	1	1	2		8	5.7
IJHM										1							1										1	0.7
Total	1	1	1	3	2	4	3	3	9	8	4	3	7	12	15	5	7	8	8	8	5	4	8	7	4	140	-	
%	0.7	0.7	0.7	2.1	1.4	2.9	2.1	2.1	6.4	5.7	2.9	2.1	5.0	8.6	10.7	3.6	5.0	5.7	5.7	5.7	3.6	2.9	5.7	5.0	2.9	-	100	
<i>(B) Break-up by disciplines over time (year)</i>																												
International business													1	3	1	1	1	1	2					1			11	7.9
International marketing	1	1											2	1	3	4	1	1	1	4	2	2	2	2	2		39	27.9
Marketing Management				2	1	2	1	2	5	5	2	1	4	6	3	3	2	4	2	1			3	3	1		54	38.6
							1		1	1	1		4	4	1	3	1	3	1			1					14	10.0

Table 3 continued

	80	85	94	97	99	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	Total	%
Information Systems					1								1	1												3	2.1
Hospitality business									2				2	1		1	2	1		2	2	2	2	1	3	19	13.6
Total	1	1	1	3	2	4	3	3	9	8	4	3	7	12	15	5	7	8	8	8	5	4	8	7	4	140	-
%	0.7	0.7	0.7	2.1	1.4	2.9	2.1	2.1	6.4	5.7	2.9	2.9	5.0	8.6	10.7	3.6	5.0	5.7	5.7	5.7	3.6	2.9	5.7	5.0	2.9	-	100

In the table, IBS = Journal of International Business Studies; IBR = International Business Review; JWB = Journal of World Business; IMR = International Marketing Review; IJRM = International Journal of Research in Marketing; JIM = Journal of International Marketing; JMR = Journal of Marketing Research; JM = Journal of Marketing; JAMS = Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science; JCR = Journal of Consumer Research; JR = Journal of Retailing; EJM = European Journal of Marketing; JSR = Journal of Service Research; JNM = Journal of Interactive Marketing; JSM = Journal of Services Marketing; JMTP = Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice; APJML = Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics; IJMM = Industrial Marketing Management; SMJ = Strategic Management Journal; JAP = Journal of Applied Psychology; JBR = Journal of Business Research; OBHDP = Organizational Behavior & Human Decision Processes; HRM = Human Resource Management; JBE = Journal of Business Ethics; JMIS = Journal of Management Information Systems; MIS = MIS Quarterly; CHQ = Cornell Hospitality Quarterly; JHMM = Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management; IJCHM = International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management; IJHM = International Journal of Hospitality Management.

employ experiments ($N = 30$, 21.4%) (see Table 4, Panel A). Other non-experimental sources of data include archival data ($N = 12$, 8.6%), meta-analysis ($N = 6$, 4.3%), and qualitative data ($N = 9$, 6.4%). Notably, of the articles that do not use experiments, only 2 (1.8%) address endogeneity issues resulting from factors such as endogenous selection and unobserved heterogeneity (see Table 4, Panel C). This reflects a shortcoming of the current research in this domain because, unless additional steps are taken to test for and address potential endogeneity issues, survey-based data are less appropriate for testing hypotheses concerning causal relationships. Comparatively, the articles in the second-generation customer satisfaction research considered above often use approaches such as instrumental variables, panel data estimation (e.g., fixed-effects, first-differencing), and regression discontinuity design to address endogeneity-related issues (Otto et al., 2020). For future research in third-generation customer satisfaction literature, there is a need for scholars to adopt similar approaches towards a more robust identification of causal relationships.

Current state and suggested direction (geographic focus)

Concerning the geographic focus of the data (see Table 4, Panel D), a majority of the articles have examined samples drawn from Asia ($N = 71$, 53.0%), North America ($N = 57$, 42.5%), and Europe ($N = 48$, 35.8%). Significantly fewer articles have focused on Australia ($N = 15$, 11.2%), and even fewer on the countries of Africa ($N = 11$, 8.2%) and South America ($N = 4$, 3.0%). A relatively small number of studies (See Table 4, Panel E) have examined Western versus Asian ($N = 15$, 11.2%), international versus domestic ($N = 7$, 5.2%), and developed vs. emerging market ($N = 2$, 1.5%) comparisons of customer satisfaction or its relationships with its antecedents and outcomes. Critically, a bias towards certain geographic regions and the neglect of many others is visible in this research, and we draw on this to provide recommendations in the “Future Research” section later in the manuscript.

Current state and suggested direction (empirical methods of analysis)

In terms of empirical methods of analysis (see Table 4, Panel B), structural equation modeling (SEM) ($N = 79$, 56.4%) has dominated, followed by ordinary least squares (OLS) regression ($N = 38$,

Table 4 Distribution of third-generation customer satisfaction articles by data, method, and geography

	Frequency	%
(A) Data sources		
Meta-analysis	6	4.3
Archival	12	8.6
Survey ^a	98	70.0
Experiment ^{a,b}	30	21.4
Qualitative	9	6.4
Multiple	15	10.7
(B) Method type		
Structural equation modeling	79	56.4
Ordinary least squares	38	27.1
Hierarchical linear analysis	11	7.9
Comparison of means	28	20.0
Text analysis	9	6.4
Cluster analysis	1	0.7
Factor analysis	10	7.1
Propensity score matching	1	0.7
Other (e.g., forest plots)	4	2.9
Multiple	39	27.9
(C) Endogeneity correction approach ^c		
Selection Correction (Heckman, 1979)	2	1.8
Unobserved Heterogeneity (Panel Data – Fixed Effects)	2	1.8
(D) Geographic focus ^d		
Asia	71	53.0
North America	57	42.5
Europe	48	35.8
Australia	15	11.2
South America	4	3.0
Africa	11	8.2
Multiple Countries (>10)	17	12.7
(E) Focus of analysis ^d		
Western versus Asian	15	11.2
International versus Domestic	7	5.2
Developed versus Emerging	2	1.5

In panels (A), (B), and (D), the percentages do not add up to 100% because multiple studies use multiple sources of data and methods and focus on multiple geographic areas, respectively

^a The difference between the survey and experiment in the table is that the latter includes the random assignment of participants to conditions

^b It includes both closed (e.g., conducted using MTurk) and field experiments

^c The percentages are based on the number of studies that do not use experiments ($N = 110$)

^d In panels (D) and (E), the percentages are based on the number of papers that disclose the details of geographical location(s) ($N = 134$). Out of the remaining six papers, five are meta-analyses. The remaining paper does not provide details of the geographical location of data collection

27.1%) and comparison of means ($N = 28, 20.0\%$). Hierarchical linear modeling ($N = 11, 7.9\%$) is another somewhat frequently deployed method, and an understandable one given that these studies often analyzes samples (of customers and/or firms) nested within higher-level country, region, and/or culture-based groups. Other methods include factor analysis ($N = 10, 7.1\%$) and text analysis ($N = 9, 6.4\%$). A relatively small number of the studies use multiple methods ($N = 14, 10\%$), which, when combined with the fact that only 10.7% ($N = 15$; see

Table 4, Panel A) of the included articles analyze multiple sources of data, suggests another shortcoming of this stream of research, as the use of multiple methods and sources of data is increasingly common and recommended towards the provision of more robust conclusions.

Table A3 (included in the Web Appendix) provides the full list of the 140 articles reviewed here, including a variety of important details about each that were used to generate the descriptive analysis discussed above. The findings from these articles



summarized in Table A3 also serve as the guide for our systematic integration of the international customer satisfaction literature in the third-generation studies, which we present in the next section. Table A3 is of value in and of itself for both scholars who focus on any of the niche areas in this third-generation research as well as those new to this sphere of research.

FINDINGS FROM THIRD-GENERATION CUSTOMER SATISFACTION RESEARCH

In what follows, we segment our detailed review of the third-generation customer satisfaction studies into two broad categories – International Business-to-Consumer (B2C) and International Business-to-Business (B2B) customer satisfaction studies – based on an analysis of the focus and content of these studies (see Table 2 and Table A3 (Web Appendix)). As noted previously, the third-generation satisfaction literature has tended to favor the former ($N = 97$, 69.8%) over the latter ($N = 35$, 25.2%) type of study (with $N = 7$, 5.0% including both B2C and B2B dimensions), and this is reflected in our review. We further divide these two broad groups (B2C and B2B) into relevant sub-categories within each, based on an analysis of the retrieved literature and what are deemed to be the primary research questions, methods, purposes, and findings from within these studies.

Figure 1 provides an inductively developed organizing framework for our review, highlighting the key constructs and relationships concerning antecedents, levels, and outcomes of customer satisfaction examined in the third-generation literature, as well as opportunities for future research. Panel (1) delineates the knowledge structure of the extant research for international B2C satisfaction research. As reflected here, the research has examined variation in levels of customer satisfaction from a variety of perspectives, and particularly across cultures and across national markets. It has also examined cross-national variance in the traditional antecedents (e.g., service quality and service failure) and outcomes (e.g., loyalty and complaint behavior) of customer satisfaction, with a noticeable focus on the moderating role of variables such as national culture or market development in these relationships. Viewed in totality, many parallels between the international B2C, third-generation customer satisfaction literature and the foundational, first-generation satisfaction studies are apparent. Also visible in Figure 1 is that these

third-generation studies have largely overlooked the examination of cross-cultural and cross-national variance in the effects of firm strategies on customer satisfaction and of customer satisfaction on objective (i.e., financial) firm performance outcomes.

Panel (2) illustrates the knowledge structure of the extant international B2B customer satisfaction research. The dominant type of IB relationship examined in this research – i.e., importer–exporter relationships – is inherently international, and as such this category of satisfaction research has focused on this context and on the role of national culture either in directly affecting satisfaction, or on moderators of the relationships between customer satisfaction and its antecedents and outcomes. Uniquely, this research has often diverged substantially from traditional first-generation customer satisfaction studies, largely through the specification of antecedents and outcomes of satisfaction most applicable to the international B2B domain. It has also deviated from the international B2C third-generation literature by examining more particular cultural moderators most applicable to international business relationships. We begin by discussing the international B2C customer satisfaction studies. In the ensuing sections, we integrate findings from the reviewed articles to provide conclusions under “what we know and its implications”, and to identify specific research gaps and future research questions for each category (and sub-category) of articles under “what we don’t know”. Finally, we also make note of broader gaps and omissions in the literature and draw on these to delineate opportunities for research later in the manuscript in the “What We Should Know – Topics for Future Research” section.

International Business-to-Consumer Satisfaction Studies (Figure 1, Panel 1)

Globalization has created opportunities for established consumer goods and services firms to realize a potentially substantial proportion of their revenue growth via foreign revenues and entry into international markets (Silverblatt, 2019). The competitiveness and appeal of these brands to consumers in new markets, the cross-national and cross-cultural acceptability of these goods, and the factors that drive consumer preferences for them, however, can be difficult to gauge – even for very large, successful businesses (e.g., Shedd, 2019). This has resulted in the need for MNEs (and related entities) to measure and compare consumer

perceptions of goods and services across national markets and cultures, and the customer satisfaction metric is regularly adopted to this end. In parallel, academic research has asked and answered a number of important questions regarding B2C customer satisfaction across such markets. In the sub-sections that follow, we categorize International B2C customer satisfaction research based on the dominant research question and/or primary findings, including: 1. cross-cultural and cross-national differences in levels of satisfaction, and 2. cross-national and cross-cultural moderators of the antecedents and outcomes of satisfaction. In the latter sub-section, given its prominent role in the third-generation B2C customer satisfaction literature in general, we segment our discussion into several separate discussions (on service failure and recovery, service customization and personalization, corporate reputation and brand image, e-commerce, developed vs. emerging markets, and foreign vs. domestic/country-of-origin effects).

Cross-cultural and cross-national differences in levels of satisfaction

What we know and its implications. The national culture concept occupies a place of prominence in the IB literature (e.g., Hofstede, 1984; Caprar, Devinney, Kirkman, & Caligiuri, 2015). Consequently, a substantial selection of international B2C customer satisfaction studies has focused on the role of national culture in driving variable consumer attitudes. Within this broad area, one core question involves the comparability of customer satisfaction ratings across countries and national markets marked by sometimes vast cultural differences. Since MNEs and related entities are now more likely to engage in a cross-national-market comparison of customer satisfaction scores (and related customer experience (CX) data) – an activity once limited (as in the first-generation satisfaction literature) to comparisons between ostensibly culturally invariant segments within a single firm's customer portfolio – evidence of the comparability or equivalence of satisfaction ratings by consumers across national markets is critical (Hult, Ketchen, Griffith, Finnegan, Gonzalez-Padron, Harmancioglu, Huang, Talay, & Cavusgil, 2008). As such, a substantial cohort of studies has focused on examining cross-cultural and cross-national variance in the levels of customer satisfaction.

For example, in a large-scale cross-national study of multiple consumer industries across 19 diverse national markets, consumers in traditional societies were found to be more satisfied with the goods they consumed than those in secular-rational societies, while consumers in self-expressive societies were found to report higher satisfaction than those in societies favoring survival values (Morgeson et al., 2011). Furthermore, in a study spanning 25 national markets, the congruence between product content and consumers' national culture (measured using the Hofstede cultural dimensions) was found to have a positive impact on consumers' (online) satisfaction ratings of movies (Song, Moon, Chen, & Houston, 2018). Similarly, in somewhat narrower studies focusing on smaller sub-sets of national cultures, when compared to their North American counterparts (the U.S. and Canada), more conservative Japanese customers have been found to express lower perceived service quality and satisfaction under high-performance conditions, but to also exhibit a positive bias under low-performance conditions (Laroche, Ueltschy, Abe, Cleveland, & Yannopoulos, 2001). Comparable studies have likewise discovered a culturally driven variance in satisfaction ratings between Colombian (higher) and Spanish (lower) students (Duque & Lado, 2010), between Anglo Americans (lower) and Mexican Americans (higher) in both service quality and satisfaction ratings (Ueltschy & Krampf, 2001), and between Western (higher) and Asian (lower) customers (Poon & Low, 2005; Chan & Wang, 2008; Chan, Wan, & Sin, 2009), among other findings (Walsh & Bartikowski, 2013; Wang & Lalwani, 2019). Emerging from these findings is the conclusion that, not unexpectedly, levels of customer satisfaction vary across both cultures and country-based groupings of customers, providing a cautionary note for scholars and MNEs conducting cross-cultural and cross-national benchmarking of satisfaction data.

What we don't know. However, the extant studies in this cluster of research, given their design and focus, leave several questions concerning cross-cultural and cross-national differences in the levels of customer satisfaction unanswered. First, most of the research that examines the cross-cultural differences in the levels of customer satisfaction neither specifically examine nor account for observed or unobserved country-level characteristics (e.g., institutional environment, socioeconomic conditions, economic growth, etc.). As such, in combination with the fact that very few



studies use experimental methods or address endogeneity issues empirically, it cannot be ruled out that their findings concerning observed differences in the levels of customer satisfaction are driven by cultural factors and not by other country-level characteristics. Distinguishing the unique role of culture- and country-related factors, which often overlap, is thus an important future research objective in this context towards both theoretical development and substantive implications. Second, the findings from these articles could also be confounded because of the presence of measurement error, especially in light of the mixed findings concerning the lack of invariance of measures of customer satisfaction. For example, one article finds that, with some modifications, commonly used measures of customer satisfaction can be deployed across cultures for evaluation of services (Veloutsou, Gilbert, Moutinho, & Goode, 2005). In contrast, two studies that examine the invariance of five customer satisfaction measures used in prior research across countries such as the U.S., Canada (French-Canadians), Germany, and Japan find that only some of the measures are invariant across country-based groups of customers (Ueltschy, Laroche, Tamilia, & Yannopoulos, 2004; Ueltschy, Laroche, Eggert, & Bindl, 2007). These mixed findings indicate that third-generation studies are yet to reach a consensus regarding the invariance of customer satisfaction measures across countries and cultures, a gap that needs to be addressed.

Similarly, while some of the research also specifically examines the effect of cultural distance (or related constructs such as cultural congruency) on the levels of customer satisfaction, we observe contradictory findings regarding such effects. Most studies find a positive effect of lower perceived cultural distance (or higher cultural congruency) on customer satisfaction driven by factors such as increased interaction comfort with the service providers and reduced intergroup anxiety (e.g., Alden, He, & Chen., 2010; Johnson & Grier, 2013; Sharma, Wu, & Su, 2016; Ang, Liou, & Wei, 2018). On the other hand, a study by Tam, Sharma, & Kim (2014) finds a positive effect of higher perceived cultural distance on customer satisfaction, which is argued to result from the reduced expectations that customers have from service providers in situations of higher perceived cultural distance and from customers' attribution of service failure to cultural factors (relative to the service provider itself). Future research should aim to reconcile these contradictory results, preferably in a single study

that tests these competing explanations. Overall, these gaps and limitations provide several opportunities for scholars to contribute to this domain.

Cross-cultural and cross-national moderators of the antecedents and outcomes of satisfaction

What we know and its implications. Much of the first-generation customer satisfaction research focused on the linkages between customer satisfaction and its antecedents and outcomes. A select set of third-generation studies have also adopted this objective, with many examining the moderating role of national culture on the relationships between satisfaction and its antecedents and outcomes. Regarding the antecedents, an insightful study found that while service quality positively affects customer satisfaction in both the U.S. and the U.K., the national-cultural tendency of British consumers towards conservatism leads them to be more tolerant of poor service relative to U.S.-based customers (Voss, Roth, Rosenzweig, Blackmon, & Chase, 2004). Another study points to differences in the cross-national drivers of service quality and its relationship with customer satisfaction, explaining the differences via cultural variability in preferences between Western and Chinese customers (Lai, 2015). Similarly, Chan, Yim, and Lam, (2010) find that the cultural values of customers and employees moderate the effect of customer participation on value creation, which in turn drives customer satisfaction.

Regarding the outcomes, customer satisfaction among wireless telephone service consumers was found to be a driver of customer loyalty across several national markets, but the relationship was moderated by cultural characteristics and observed to be stronger in countries with stronger self-expression values when compared to countries with stronger survival values (Aksoy, Buoye, Aksoy, Larivière, & Keiningham, 2013). Similar research (investigating the same industry) also found cross-national variance in the satisfaction–loyalty linkage across developed (stronger) and emerging (weaker) markets, attributing this in part to national-cultural variability (Morgeson et al., 2015). A multi-industry investigation found that switching costs are a driver of propensity to stay (loyalty) across both Western (Australian) and Eastern (Thailand) cultures, but that customer satisfaction explains additional variance (over and above switching costs) for customers from both cultures (Patterson & Smith, 2003). Related research has likewise found national culture to drive differential links between satisfaction

and post-consumption behavioral intentions (Olsen, Tudoran, Brunsno, & Verbeke, 2013; Smith & Reynolds, 2009), as well as other outcomes of satisfaction like post-purchase personal and non-personal risk evaluations (Keh & Sun, 2008).

Furthermore, a selection of the international B2C customer satisfaction studies test moderation by validating traditional models of customer satisfaction cross-nationally. Similar to much of the first-generation satisfaction research, these studies predominantly focus on examining the satisfaction formation process and its outcomes, but in this instance aim more narrowly at establishing model equivalence and validity across national markets. For example, one such study examines the generalizability of the expectancy–disconfirmation model of satisfaction across two countries (U.S. and Taiwan) for a consumer electronics product and finds that the direction and the pattern of relationships (and the resulting parameter estimates) to be similar (Spreng & Chiou, 2002). A similar study finds that the effects of service quality on customer satisfaction and of satisfaction on behavioral intention are consistent across two diverse national cultures (Ecuador and the U.S.) (Brady & Robertson, 2001). A comparable study develops a model for a consumer–retailer relationship where relationship tactics influence consumers' perceived relationship investment which in turn impacts perceived quality (a function of satisfaction, trust, and commitment), and ultimately behavioral intentions. The model is cross-validated across two industries (food and apparel) and three countries (Belgium, the Netherlands, and the U.S.) (Wulf et al., 2001). Another such study tests a comprehensive model wherein service quality, service value, and satisfaction jointly and directly impact behavioral intentions. The hypothesized model is tested against competing models based on alternate theories and is found to be superior and applicable across countries and service contexts (Brady, Knight, Cronin, Hult, & Keillor, 2005). Collectively, these satisfaction model-testing investigations, among a not-insubstantial collection of others (e.g., Gilbert, Veloutsou, Goode, & Moutinho, 2004; Ha, Janda, & Park, 2009; Tsai, 2011; Raub & Liao, 2012; Deng, Yeh, & Sung, 2013; Lin & Chen, 2013), generally point towards the cross-national applicability of the satisfaction concept.

In addition to these investigations of moderators of satisfaction in its relationship with its antecedents and outcomes and general satisfaction model

testing, a number of studies have focused on special contexts and fundamental concepts in business and in marketing as they are (potentially) differently influential of or influenced by satisfaction across global markets. This includes studies of customer satisfaction in the international B2C context and service failure and recovery, service customization and personalization, digital business and e-commerce, country of origin (foreign vs. domestic) effects, level of development (developed vs. emerging markets), and specific firm-level intangible assets such corporate reputation and brand image. In the subsequent paragraphs, we discuss the insights from these smaller clusters of research.

Service failure and recovery

What we know and its implications. Over the past three decades, the voluminous literature on service failure and recovery has been intertwined with the customer satisfaction literature, and particularly the first-generation satisfaction literature focused on specifying antecedents and outcomes of satisfaction (e.g., Smith, Bolton, & Wagner, 1999). Service failures resulting in dissatisfaction, and firms' efforts to manage and mitigate the loyalty-eroding outcomes of these failures, has driven the convergence in these two literature streams, and this research continues unabated today (e.g., Morgeson, Hult, Mithas, Keiningham, & Fornell, 2020). Similarly, a variety of third-generation satisfaction studies have examined the connections between service failure and recovery in international B2C contexts and consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction from a cross-cultural and cross-national perspective.

For example, a study spanning the UK, Spain, and Mexico found that while perceived justice in the context of service recovery is valued across cultures, customers from more feminine cultures require greater employee effort to positively influence post-recovery satisfaction, while customers from low uncertainty cultures are more willing to remain loyal to a firm after a service recovery (Yani-de-Soriano, Hanel, Vazquez-Carrasco, Cambra-Fierro, Wilson, & Centeno, 2019). Additionally, customers' cultural orientations moderate the impact of perceived cultural distance and service outcomes (success vs. failure) on their satisfaction (Sharma et al., 2016) and of the cognitive (perceived justice) and affective antecedents of customer satisfaction (Schoefer, 2010). Other culture-related factors such as consumer ethnocentrism and intercultural competence also moderate the direct or indirect effects



of service outcomes (success vs. failure) and perceived cultural distance on customer satisfaction (Sharma, Tam, & Kim, 2012; Sharma & Wu, 2015). Comparable research reinforces these findings of a connection between service failures, recovery efforts, national culture and related variables, and post-failure satisfaction (Matilla & Patterson, 2004; Patterson, Cowley, & Prasongsukarn, 2006; Schoefer, 2010; Weber, Hsu, & Sparks, 2014; Trianasari, Butcher, & Sparks, 2018). Collectively, these findings provide evidence for cross-cultural and cross-national variation in the customer satisfaction formation process in the context of service failures and recovery. For practitioners, these findings suggest the need to account for cultural orientations of customers and deployment of tailored (to culture and/or country) failure recovery strategies to maximize post-failure customer satisfaction.

What we don't know. There remain, however, a variety of unexplored factors that may be expected to moderate the satisfaction–failure–recovery relationships cross-culturally and cross-nationally. This includes non-verbal cues of front-line employees (Lim, Lee, & Foo, 2017), social comparisons (Bonifield & Cole, 2008), race and discriminatory bias (Baker, Meyer, & Johnson, 2008), and customer revenge (Grégoire & Fisher, 2008; Gregoire, Laufer, & Tripp, 2010), and each of these factors could play different roles in the satisfaction formation process during service failure and recovery events across cultures and countries. Additionally, this research has omitted the examination of related but distinct phenomena such as brand transgressions, product-harm crisis, and product recalls (Khamitov et al., 2020; Mafael, Raithel, & Hock, 2021). Given the global prevalence of these phenomena and calls for integration and further articulation of research on such negative events (Fournier & Alvarez, 2013), scholars can contribute to this domain by expanding research on customer satisfaction in the context of these negative events across cultures and countries and across the stages of the customer journey (Khamitov, Gregoire, & Suri, 2020).

Service customization and personalization

What we know and its implications. In an international marketplace marked by consumers increasingly demanding of goods and services customized to meet their particular needs, how do firms achieve optimal service customization and personalization resulting in customer satisfaction? Several cross-national studies of consumer perceptions of mass customization and service personalization,

and their impact on customer satisfaction, have sought to answer this question. For example, research comparing service encounters in Japan and the U.S. examined various dimensions of a service encounter for their importance in influencing customer satisfaction. The findings show that personalization is significantly more important, and formality is significantly less important, for driving customer satisfaction in the U.S. relative to Japan (Winsted, 1999). Somewhat contrarily, another study finds that customers from China emphasize both lifestyle and social norms-related attributes and expect personalized services, while customers from North America emphasize lifestyle-related attributes and expect standardized services (Ying, Chan, & Qi, 2020). Given that both studies are focused on similar contexts (restaurants and hospitality, respectively), the divergence in findings could be driven by a comparison of customers from the U.S. with those from Japan in the former and China in the latter, as independent research has documented significant differences between the cultural values of Japan and China (Globe, 2020; Hofstede, 1984). Another illuminating experimental study finds that mass customization strategies (by attributes versus by alternatives) must be tailored to consumer's cultural information processing styles, as Western and Eastern consumers' satisfaction, likelihood of purchasing, and the amount of money spent are driven differentially by customization strategies (Bellis, Hildebrand, Ito, Herrmann, & Schmitt, 2019). Finally, in a study comparing consumers across the U.S., China and Canada, the authors find that high service attentiveness can backfire in some contexts, and particularly among East Asian consumers, with these efforts inducing negative consumer responses (as diminished customer satisfaction and patronage likelihood) through suspicions of ulterior motives (Liu, Zhang, & Keh, 2019). In the aggregate, these studies, along with related research (e.g., Ruyter, Wetzels, Lemmink, & Mattsson, 1997; Fong, He, Chao, Leandro, & King, 2019), point towards differential consumer reactions to service customization and personalization efforts across national markets, offering a warning to multinational service providers to carefully "customize" their customization efforts to local cultural standards and norms.

What we don't know. Despite the above, at least three gaps emerge in this cluster of research on customization and personalization that can be addressed in future research. First, given a

dominant focus on services, the extant research does not provide much insight into cross-national or cross-cultural variation in the effects of customization and personalization on customer satisfaction vis-à-vis products, an equally important consideration for many MNEs marketing durable and nondurable goods. This is a notable omission because customization and personalization of products (versus services) involve different trade-offs by firms with important implications for customer satisfaction (Anderson et al., 1997). Second, this research provides little understanding of why the effects of customization and personalization on customer satisfaction differ across cultures and countries. Separate research conducted within the U.S. finds that customization leads to favorable customer outcomes by providing a better preference fit for customers. A prerequisite for such effects of customization is the ability of firms to know what customers actually want (Franke, Keinz, & Steger, 2009). As such, it needs to be examined whether the variability in the preference for customization and its effects on customer satisfaction across markets is driven by differences in customers' insights into their own preferences or their ability to express these preferences. Third, these articles do not provide an understanding of how customers might respond differently (e.g., concerning their satisfaction evaluation) across cultures and nations when a self-customized (versus standardized) product or service fails. Some guidance on the matter, though not in the international business context, can be found in recent research that finds when consumers have some control (versus no control) over the production process (and thus customization) they have lower purchase intentions for products manufactured with unethical processes (e.g., underpaid labor) (Paharia, 2020).

Corporate reputation and brand image

What we know and its implications. How well do intangible (marketing) assets like corporate reputation and brand image translate across national markets? Do these intangible assets affect customers' satisfaction and loyalty with goods and services across national markets similarly? Such questions are vital to firms with established brands seeking to expand operations to new markets (i.e., international brand scope), and some third-generation studies have sought to answer these questions. For example, the effects of firm reputation on customer satisfaction and of customer satisfaction

on customer loyalty have been found to be stronger in South Korea – a collectivist, high uncertainty avoidance, high context, and low-trust society – than in United States – a low uncertainty avoidance, low context, and high-trust society (Jin, Park, & Kim, 2008). Findings also show that financial strength and corporate social responsibility (CSR) are the most important (and positive) cognitive drivers of corporate reputation, and that satisfaction is the most important (and positive) emotional driver of corporate reputation, at least in the two markets examined (Spain and the U.K.) (Ruiz, Garcia, & Revila, 2016). Taken together, these findings show that the strength of the relationship between the examined intangible assets and customer satisfaction differs across countries and cultures. Driven by the knowledge of such variability, practitioners need to incorporate country and cultural contexts into their decision calculus for driving customers satisfaction most efficiently through investments in intangible assets.

What we don't know. Nevertheless, a notable omission is that studies in this research cluster have yet to examine how the home country brand image or other intangible assets such as the reputation of MNEs or EMNEs (MNEs from emerging markets) influence the satisfaction of their customers in host countries (Mukherjee, Makarius, & Stevens, 2021). There is some guidance for this in research that finds customers are more satisfied with imported products compared with the adapted domestic versions of the same product (Yamin & Altunisik, 2003). However, it is not clear yet whether firm reputation or other factor(s) drive this effect. To this end, research in this cluster can explore questions such as how home-country-based intangible assets (e.g., firm reputation and brand image) of MNEs affect the satisfaction of customers in the host countries. What cultural or national factors moderate such effects? Is the directionality of the relationship between such intangible assets and customers satisfaction consistent across cultures and nations? If not, what are the factors that explain the change in the direction?

Electronic commerce

What we know and its implications. Given that the dramatic growth in e-retailing and related digital businesses (electronic commerce) emerged in parallel with the third-generation of customer satisfaction studies, and the ability of the firms operating through this channel to sell across national boundaries to conceivably billions of



consumers, the emergence of international B2C satisfaction research in this context is unsurprising. For example, one meta-analytic study concluded that the relationships between key website attributes and e-service quality are conditional on national culture, the regulatory environment, and industry, and that in turn, e-service quality drives customer satisfaction (Blut, Chowdhry, Mittal, & Brock, 2018). Other research finds that website design elements (navigation design, visual design, and information design) are key drivers of both customer trust and customer satisfaction, which in turn drive customer loyalty, but that these relationships differ across countries with varying cultural characteristics (Cyr, 2008). A study of Chinese search engine users finds that customer-based brand preference (defined in part via customer satisfaction) differs significantly between local and foreign brands (Yang, Sonmez, Li, Qinghai, & Duan, 2015). Some researchers have also attempted to validate models of e-retail quality and satisfaction across national markets, identifying models with cross-cultural model equivalence (Caruana & Ewing, 2006), and models most predictive of online behavioral outcomes like reuse/repurchase intentions (Ha, Muthaly, & Akamavi, 2010).

What we don't know. Overall, based on the limited number of studies in this cluster, it can be cautiously concluded that the effects of website-related factors that drive customer satisfaction in e-commerce differ across cultures and countries. Yet despite such observed differences, many leading e-commerce firms continue to offer websites, mobile applications, and other customer-facing technologies that are consistent across countries, likely in order to achieve the benefits of synergy and scale. Additional research is required to examine the customer satisfaction implications of this strategy to customers' preferences and homogenization of services across cultures and national markets by e-commerce firms. Further, while studies in this cluster have examined and found variance in the effects of the antecedents (e.g., e-quality, website design attributes) of customer satisfaction, they do not yet provide an understanding of potential cross-cultural and cross-national variance in the effects of customer satisfaction on outcomes such as customer engagement in the e-commerce context. Additionally, based on a sample of customers from the U.S., recent research has found that both the antecedents and the outcomes of customer satisfaction differ across online and offline purchases (Hult,

Sharma, Morgeson, & Zhang, 2019). However, the third-generation international customer satisfaction research has yet to examine whether such differences between online and offline purchases exist across cultures and nations. Insights from such research would be highly useful for practitioners, and particularly for international firms seeking to design optimal multi-channel strategies.

Developed versus emerging markets

What we know and its implications. Several third-generation international B2C satisfaction studies have focused on levels of market development (rather than culture) and the developed vs. emerging markets dichotomy as a potential driver of variability in the customer satisfaction formation process and its outcomes. For example, significant variation in the relationships between satisfaction and its antecedents and outcomes have been identified when comparing satisfaction modeling results across customer samples from emerging and developed markets (Morgeson et al., 2015). Another article conducted in-depth interviews with a cross-national sample of B2C managers working within MNCs and discovered the varied effects of firm-related factors (interaction orientation and the omnichannel model) on service experience and subsequently on satisfaction among customers, where the former are moderated by factors including the level of market development (developed vs. emerging) (Kumar et al., 2019).

In the context of retailing, the relationships between 24 separate retail marketing mix instruments and their outcomes (including customer satisfaction) were found to be moderated by country-level characteristics, including GDP and level of market development (Blut, Teller, & Floh, 2018). Two interrelated studies of global hotels found significant differences in the success of customer-oriented (as a function of customer satisfaction) vs. competitor-oriented strategies across emerging and developed markets, with firms entering developed markets advised to adopt a satisfaction-centered, customer-oriented approach (Zhou, Brown, Dev, & Agarwal, 2007; Dev, Zhou, Brown, & Agarwal, 2009). Interestingly, but perhaps complicating matters further, other research has found that while customer satisfaction mediates the positive relationship between service quality and customer loyalty for customers in several African countries, this relationship varies even across the distinct frontier markets examined in the study (Diallo, Diop-Sall, Djelassi, & Godefroit-Winkel, 2018). As

with national culture, the level of development of a national market appears to have a significant impact on variability in customers' satisfaction, as well as the relationships between satisfaction and its antecedents and outcomes. Notwithstanding the lack of insights in this cluster of research regarding the mechanisms underlying such variability, practitioners need to be cautious, as many currently do, about utilizing their home country strategies to drive customer satisfaction and its downstream outcomes in host countries with varying levels of economic development.

What we don't know. While generating many useful insights, the developed vs. emerging market cluster of international B2C satisfaction research has thus far also failed to compare MNEs originating from developed vs. emerging economies and the implications of this difference in origins to customer satisfaction and its antecedents and outcomes in both home and host countries. Beyond the reviewed third-generation research, a growing number of articles have examined the multinationality–firm performance relationship for MNEs from both developed and emerging markets (e.g., Qian, Li, Li, & Li, 2008; Kirca et al., 2011; Kalasin, Dussauge, & Rivera-Santos, 2014; Pisani, Garcia-Bernardo, & Heemskerk, 2020). However, these articles likewise provide limited guidance on variability in customer-level outcomes and the underlying mechanisms between MNEs from developed and emerging markets, something that might be expected given the significant differences in their competitive advantages and disadvantages, and their motivation and approach to internationalization (Buckley, Clegg, Cross, Liu, Voss, & Zheng, 2007; Hernandez & Guillén, 2018).

Country-of-origin (foreign vs. domestic)

What we know and its implications. How satisfied are consumers with goods imported from foreign markets relative to local/domestic alternatives (foreign vs. domestic goods)? Relatedly, does the country-of-origin of goods and services, and/or the country-of-origin of the consumers of these goods/services themselves, impact customers' satisfaction? Several international B2C customer satisfaction studies have attempted to answer these questions. For example, consumers in Turkey were found to exhibit higher levels of satisfaction with imported durable goods products (washing machines) when compared with domestic versions of the same. Quality perceptions were found to be critical drivers of satisfaction for customers of both the domestic

and the imported alternatives, but one key advantage for the local suppliers was the superior product serviceability provided by domestic manufacturers (Yamin & Altunisik, 2003). Similarly, in a study of consumers' responses (as customer satisfaction, repurchase intention, and willingness to switch) in central European countries to regrettable purchases of goods, customers' perceptions are influenced by the global/local availability of chosen and forgone choices. Specifically, consumers experience more regret when they forgo global rather than local brands and are more satisfied with their purchase if it involves choosing a global brand in categories of global brand superiority (Davvetas & Diamantopoulos, 2018).

Focusing on foreign versus domestic services, foreign accent detection and location (country-of-origin) of call centers by customers have no impact on satisfaction, trust, or word of mouth, while customer orientation does (Walsh, Gouthier, Gremier, & Brach, 2012). Relatedly, in a study of service provision in a cross-border setting, satisfaction does not directly impact customer loyalty but does so through trust and value, similar to the relationships observed in single-market studies, and indicating that customers develop relational and not transactional connections with cross-border providers (Nijssen & Herk, 2009). In the hospitality and tourism literature, a study of hotel guest satisfaction found that the customers' country-of-origin moderates the relationship between hotel attributes and customer satisfaction, with domestic and international customers differing with respect to the impact of these attributes on their satisfaction (Li et al., 2020). The characteristics of the hotel and visitors (e.g., demographics) are found to be the strongest drivers of customer satisfaction, with the purpose of the trip, characteristics of the destination city, and visitor's country-of-origin also playing a significant role (Radojevic et al., 2017). Contrarily, other research found no significant difference in satisfaction between local and foreign visitors to a mega-business event in Hong Kong (Bauer et al., 2008). Additional, more focused literature in this area (e.g., Del Chiappa et al., 2017; Li & Liu, 2020; Yoon & Lee, 2017) likewise shines light on the relationship between foreign vs. domestic and country-of-origin effects in satisfaction with hospitality services. Overall, this stream of the literature highlights the need for managerial attention (within both importing and exporting firms) to the potential consequences of country-of-origin effects on customer satisfaction.



What we don't know. Yet while offering many useful initial insights, the foreign vs. domestic and the country-of-origin cluster of research leaves some questions unanswered that warrant further investigation. For example, the research examined here focuses largely on making comparisons of domestic versus foreign firms (or products and services) and customers' country-of-origin, but does not specifically examine the effects of firm country-of-origin – typically defined as the location where a product is manufactured – on customer satisfaction or as a moderator between satisfaction and its antecedents and outcomes. Similarly, beyond the international B2C satisfaction studies reviewed here, while the voluminous origin-related academic research has examined customer-level outcomes such as brand attitude and purchase intention, it has yet to examine its effects on the customer satisfaction formation process or its outcomes (Samiee & Chabowski, 2021). Second, this cluster of research has yet to examine a related but distinct variation of origin, i.e., brand origin, which refers to the location of the headquarters of the firm or the brand (Samiee & Chabowski, 2021). For example, in the automobile industry, many brands are strongly linked with the location of their headquarters (e.g., Toyota, associated with Japan; Hyundai, associated with South Korea; GM, associated with the U.S.) regardless of the fact that these manufacturers source components globally and assemble their products in multiple countries. As such, country-of-origin and brand origin can play a distinct role in the context of customer satisfaction. Lastly, concerning born-global firms, defined as “business organizations that, from or near their founding, seek superior international business performance from the application of knowledge-based resources to the sale of outputs in multiple countries” (Knight & Cavusgil, 2004, p. 124), that are becoming more common in the current hyper-connected era (Zander, McDougall-Covin, & Rose, 2015), the cluster of origin-related research offers little insight into how the location-agnostic “international” origin of these firms (versus those with specific country-of-origin or brand origin) affects customer evaluations.

International Business-to-Business Satisfaction Studies (Figure 1, Panel 2)

Much like firms serving consumer markets, globalization has opened a variety of new markets to business-to-business (B2B) firms (e.g., Rosenbloom & Larsen, 2003). And like companies serving

consumer markets, entry into foreign national markets is accompanied by innumerable challenges for B2B firms, including how to best satisfy the customers and clients within these markets. While not as prevalent as international B2C customer satisfaction studies (as noted in Table 2), over the last 20 years a substantial body of literature has focused on satisfaction in the context of international B2B relationships.

As a theoretical backdrop to the B2B discussion, research in IB typically classifies the global mode of entry preferences of firms into non-equity-based strategies, such as exporting and licensing, and equity-based strategies, such as international joint ventures (IJVs) and wholly owned subsidiaries (e.g., Tihanyi, Griffith, & Russel, 2005). Based on our analysis, a majority of the third-generation, international customer satisfaction B2B studies undertake either cross-cultural or cross-national examination for only the equity-based modes (i.e., importer–exporter relationship). As a result, we thematically sub-categorize international B2B customer satisfaction research based on the dominant research question and/or primary findings into a smaller number of sub-categories relative to the international B2C literature: importer–exporter relationships, differentiated by either a cross-cultural or a cross-national approach. These categories also include research that examines specific dimensions of national culture or related differences among channel partners within and across nations.

Importer–exporter relationships (cross-cultural)

What we know and its implications. A multitude of studies have examined the role of national culture dimensions, the cultural values of specific countries, and/or general cultural differences as either moderating the relationships comprising customer satisfaction or as driving, directly or indirectly, customer satisfaction. For example, in a study of Taiwan-based importers of goods, communication facets (e.g., frequency of communication and bidirectional communication) between exporters and importers were found to have a positive effect on their joint action (cooperation and coordination), with the effect fully mediated through relationship factors (trust and satisfaction). Further, the effects of communication facets on relationship factors were observed to be negatively moderated by the psychic distance between the partners (Johnston et al., 2012). Examining trust in the relationships between Chinese importers and Western exporters, the results show that opportunistic behavior on the

part of the exporters results in conflict and lowers importers' trust. In turn, reduced trust reduces importers' commitment and enhanced conflict impedes communication, both of which reduce importers' satisfaction and long-term orientation, while the two Chinese cultural values of *renqing* and *mianzi* were found to moderate the relationship between satisfaction and long-term orientation (Barnes et al., 2010).

In global B2B relationships, the level of uncertainty avoidance was found to moderate the effect of perceived service quality on customer satisfaction, with customers from high uncertainty avoidance cultures less satisfied in the event of a service defect or failure (Reimann et al., 2008). In the context of B2B services, such as traditional face-to-face service relationships, national culture does not moderate the positive effect of perceived service quality on customer satisfaction. However, for service calls, the national culture characteristics of individualism and uncertainty avoidance are found to moderate this relationship positively and negatively, respectively. Similarly, for the electronic service contact mode, the four primary Hofstede dimensions of national culture moderate this relationship such that the relationship is stronger for high power distance, individualistic, and masculine cultures, and weaker for high uncertainty avoidance cultures (Van Birgelen et al., 2002).

Relatedly, in a comparison of U.S. and Japan-based buying and selling firms, national culture values were observed to moderate the effect of reciprocity (equivalence and immediacy) on satisfaction (Hoppner et al., 2015). Moreover, and continuing the comparison between U.S. and Japanese firms, dynamic differences are observed in the relationships between home-country-driven cultural values of firms and their business and customer satisfaction outcomes. The relationships between certain organizational cultural values (stability, people-orientation, detail orientation) and firm outcomes (business performance and customer satisfaction) are stronger for Japanese firms than U.S. firms, while other organizational cultural values (aggressiveness, innovation, and outcome orientation) are stronger for U.S. firms than Japanese firms. Additionally, firms whose organizational culture matches their home country culture experience a higher level of customer satisfaction in their home country but lower levels when they operate in other countries (Webster & White, 2010).

On a more general level, cultural differences or similarities and the cross-cultural skills of stakeholders in the importer-exporter relationship have significant implications for customer satisfaction and its antecedents and outcomes. For example, examining 585 offshore information technology projects in the U.S. executed by India-based vendors, cultural differences at both the project-team level and at the organizational level between the vendor and the offshore client were observed to be significant drivers of the client's satisfaction (Rai et al., 2009). In another study of U.S.-based exporters of goods to 47 countries, cultural divergence was observed to determine satisfaction in the importer-exporter relationship through its effect on sense making and sense giving (Shankarmahesh et al., 2004). For industrial goods, the importer's cultural familiarity was found to moderate the effect of satisfaction and benevolence towards the exporting partner, with the effect found to be significant only when cultural familiarity is high (Lee et al., 2007). Somewhat contrarily, no differences were observed between exporters from similar and dissimilar cultures in sequential relationships among structure (dependence), conduct (cooperation), and outcomes (satisfaction, trust, commitment) among South Korea-based importers (Ha et al., 2004).

A number of studies have focused on examining the role of national culture dimensions in the international B2B channel partner relationships, a variation of importer-exporter relationships. Findings from such studies indicate that country-specific cultural values impact channel partner relationships, and especially the satisfaction of downstream partners. For example, in research on supplier-retailer dyads, the supplier's dependence on the retailer and its social capital was observed to determine its use of interpersonal communication with the retailer. This relationship is moderated by the supplier's *guanxi* (a cultural orientation concerning informal social relationships in China). Further, the supplier's use of interpersonal communication was found to determine the supplier's satisfaction with this relationship moderated by retailer's use of interfirm influence (Su et al., 2009). Additionally, *xinyong* (a system of social trust in China) is found to have a positive and direct effect on the partnership relationship, while also mediating the complex effects of supplier competence, conflict handling, commitment, and *guanxi* on the partnership relationship. However, satisfaction is



found to not affect either *xinyong* or the partnership relationship but is affected by conflict handling, commitment, and *guanxi* (Leung et al., 2005).

Similarly, the Arab cultural relational values of *somah* (cognitive component of social networks) and *hamola* (conative component of social networks) both have positive effects on business performance. Satisfaction fully mediates the relationship between *somah* and performance while it partially mediates the relationship between *homah* and performance (Berger et al., 2015). Such studies have also examined more general cultural values such as individualism versus collectivism or long-versus short-term orientation (e.g., Hofstede, 1984) and general cultural similarities or differences among upstream and downstream channel partners. The use of coercive power by department stores was found to have no impact on tenant's economic or social satisfaction in China, indicating differences between China's collectivistic culture and Western countries' individualistic culture in terms of the perceived legitimacy of coercive power (Ramaseshan et al., 2006). Supplier's long-term orientation has also been found to be an antecedent to customer's trust, economic dependence, and satisfaction with the suppliers in Japan, rather than an outcome of these constructs, as is the case with such relationships in Western countries (Chung et al., 2006).

Collectively, these international B2B satisfaction studies show that culture-related factors not only affect the level of customer satisfaction (Rai et al., 2009; Shankarmahesh et al., 2004; Su et al., 2009), but also moderate the relationships of customer satisfaction with its antecedents (Van Birgelen et al., 2002; Johnston et al., 2012) and outcomes (Barnes et al., 2010; Lee et al., 2007). Such effects of culture-related factors are observed for importer-exporter relationships in both goods (Hoppner et al., 2015) and services-based (Webster & White, 2010) contexts.

What we don't know. Building on the findings from these articles, we identify three areas that scholars can address to expand our understanding of the role of culture in the context satisfaction of importer-exporter relationships. First, within this literature, no study yet has examined the cross-cultural (or cross-national) invariance of the measures of customer satisfaction for B2B relationships, including the importer-exporter relationships. This is despite the fact that measures of customer satisfaction for B2B relationships are typically different from those for B2C relationships.

For the latter, as noted earlier, some studies have examined invariance of measures across cultures and nations, albeit with mixed findings (see column 5 of Table A3 for examples). Addressing this gap is important not only for the benefit of practitioners who benchmark the satisfaction of their business customers across cultures or nations, but also to clarify the extent to which the differences in levels of customer satisfaction across cultures found in research (Rai et al., 2009; Shankarmahesh et al., 2004) are real or artifacts of a lack of measurement invariance. Second, assuming invariance of B2B customer satisfaction measures, these articles provide only limited understanding of why cultural difference or divergence (Rai et al., 2009; Shankarmahesh et al., 2004) has a negative effect on customer satisfaction, and even less understanding of the contexts in which such negative effects are potentially weaker (or stronger). Scholars can draw on the extensive research on cultural distance conducted over the past three decades (Cuypers, Ertug, Heugens, Kogut, & Zou, 2018) and on recent conceptual and empirical developments concerning cultural distance (Maseland, Dow, & Steel, 2018) to provide a more robust understanding of these relationships.

Finally, the extant international B2B satisfaction literature has examined the moderating role of culture in the relationship between customer satisfaction and a narrow set of customer mindset-based outcomes (e.g., long-term orientation, benevolence towards the foreign exporter). Yet they have so far overlooked the examination of any objective product-market (e.g., market share, new product success), accounting-based (e.g., revenue growth, cash flows), or financial market-based (e.g., stock returns, risk) firm performance outcomes. This gap appears to exist because these third-generation articles have focused predominantly on reexamining concepts and constructs predominant in the first-generation research, albeit in an international context, but are yet to draw inspiration from or follow the lead of the second-generation research stream (see Table 1). We draw on this gap to suggest a broader set of opportunities for future research later in the manuscript under the section "What We Should Know - Topics for Future Research."

Importer-exporter relationships (cross-national)

What we know and its implications. International B2B customer satisfaction studies that examine the importer-exporter relationship from the perspective of the national market (rather than national

culture) have likewise focused on both antecedents and outcomes of satisfaction. With respect to antecedents, cross-national findings indicate that channel structure is a significant driver of buyer's economic satisfaction but not their social satisfaction, with economic satisfaction observed to be higher for customers served by direct channels than for those served by indirect channels (Rambocas et al., 2015). Additionally, firms' export segmentation commitment, export segmentation strategy, and number of segmentation bases are key antecedents of export segmentation effectiveness, which in turn drives satisfaction, strategic export performance, and export financial performance (Diamantopoulos et al., 2014). Similar research on buyer-supplier relationships in Germany and the U.S. finds that perceived quality and perceived flexibility are critical drivers of customer satisfaction in such cross-national relationships. However, while the levels of perceived quality and perceived flexibility are significantly lower in transnational compared to domestic relationships, transnationality does not moderate the relationship between these drivers and customer satisfaction (Homburg et al., 2002). Moreover, a firm's country-of-origin and international experience moderate the effects of various employee and firm-related factors on customer's perceived performance, which subsequently has a positive effect on customer satisfaction mediated through perceived value (La, Patterson, & Styles, 2009).

Relatedly, research on importer-exporter relationships has found that higher levels of decision-making uncertainty have a more negative impact on satisfaction in export channels than in domestic channels. Similarly, higher levels of environmental uncertainty have a more negative impact on satisfaction in export channels than in import channels (Raven et al., 1994). Additionally, a study of China-based buyers from global service firms found that professional knowledge asymmetry and local knowledge asymmetry between the global firms and local clients lead to knowledge incongruence, which in turn has a negative effect on client satisfaction. The degree of adaptation of the local client and the global firm moderate the relationships between goal incongruence and relationship satisfaction (Dou, Li, Zhou, & Su, 2010).

More broadly, differences are also observed in the factors considered by buyers from different countries to evaluate satisfaction. For example, research on buyers of B2B services shows that Japanese buyers consider a broader range of factors when

evaluating their satisfaction with the service when compared to their U.S. counterparts. Furthermore, the size of the effects of satisfaction differs between the two countries (Khan et al., 2009). Similarly, Lewin, Biemans, and Ulaga, (2010) find that the effects of the drivers and outcomes of satisfaction of business customers differ between the U.S. and European countries. Somewhat contrarily, Voldnes et al., (2012) find that trust, communication, power, and commitment are drivers of satisfaction of business customers from both Russia and Norway, while certain personal differences are observed in how customers from these countries approach these drivers (e.g., for Russian customers, trust is personally related but the Norwegian sellers see trust with a stronger company focus). Similar to the state of the B2C studies, therefore, mixed findings concerning the drivers of satisfaction and their effects across countries characterize B2B studies as well, leaving a gap to be addressed by future research.

Interestingly, and in contrast to first-generation satisfaction studies, only a limited number of international B2B studies examine the outcomes of customer satisfaction. As an example, U.S.-based importers' satisfaction was found to have no effect on their benevolence towards the exporters while their commitment to the relationship had a positive effect (Lee et al., 2004). On the other hand, satisfaction, along with trust, commitment, and cooperation in the importer-exporter relationship, was observed to lead to decreased infidelity and these relationships are moderated by the relationship status (declining versus growing) and relationship age (Leonidou et al., 2017). Further, in research on business buyers and sellers across multiple countries, customer orientation indirectly affected customer satisfaction through customer value. In turn, customer satisfaction was found to have a consistently positive impact on customer loyalty across countries (Blocker et al., 2011).

In the aggregate, the above-outlined studies identify a variety of attitudinal (Homburg et al., 2002; Voldnes et al., 2012) and strategic (Diamantopoulos et al., 2014; Dou et al., 2010) factors that drive customer satisfaction in importer-exporter relationships, along with a limited number of its behavioral outcomes (e.g., Blocker et al., 2011; Lee et al., 2004).

What we don't know. Reflecting on these findings, at least three gaps emerge from this research that motivate future research attention. First, in these inherently cross-national relationships, no study



examines the role of country-related factors such as economic structure, institutional environment, socio-economic conditions, and political economy in the customer satisfaction eco-system. Drawing on the vast literature in international business investigating such characteristics (e.g., Bahadir, Bharadwaj, & Srivastava, 2015; Gan & Qiu, 2019), scholars can examine their effects on the level of customer satisfaction and their influence on its relationships with its antecedents and outcomes. Second, despite the critical role of the salesforce in B2B relationships (e.g., Borgh & Schepers, 2018; Shi, Sridhar, Grewal, & Lilien, 2017), including in the context of customer satisfaction (Agnihotri, Gabler, Itani, Jaramillo, & Krush, 2017; Agnihotri, Yang, & Briggs, 2019; Mittal, Han, Lee, & Sridhar, 2021), these articles provide no insights on the role of the salesforce in driving customer satisfaction and/or influencing its links with other factors in the international B2B context. Several factors concerning the salesforce, such as location (home versus host country), cultural familiarity (or dissimilarity), individual attributes (e.g., motivation, ability), and automation play a plausible role in the customer satisfaction eco-system in international B2B context. Third, as noted earlier for the cluster of cross-cultural importer–exporter studies, these articles focus on a narrow set of behavioral outcomes of customer satisfaction (benevolence towards exporter, infidelity, loyalty) but overlook the examination of firm-level objective performance outcomes, an issue we address in greater detail in the “Future Research” section below.

WHAT WE SHOULD KNOW: TOPICS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This review article provides several contributions to the burgeoning internationally oriented third generation of international customer satisfaction research. As a theoretical foundation, we identify three interconnected but distinct generations of satisfaction research – culminating with the current IB-focused, third-generation studies – a schema useful for understanding and differentiating the plethora of customer satisfaction studies over the last half a century. Second, we provide the first systematic review of these third-generation cross-national and multinational customer satisfaction studies, summarizing and categorizing – and adding much-needed structure to – this research and positioning it relative to the first two generations. Within this process, we have also identified

omissions and specific research gaps in the various clusters of research within this literature suggestive of research questions scholars can pursue towards making contributions in the future.

This overview of our findings from the third-generation satisfaction literature paves the way for our third and final contribution – presenting recommendations for, in our estimation, the most important research questions requiring attention in the future, based on the findings of our comprehensive and systematic review. Revealed are a number of limitations, unanswered questions, and research avenues not pursued (which are also reflected in Figure 1). Our discussion centers around three topics – expanding the national markets studied, standardizing models and methods, and cross-national moderators of the strategic antecedents of satisfaction and the satisfaction–financial performance relationship. In particular, we focus on this final category, outlining several critical research questions in this domain requiring examination.

Expanding Markets Studied

Our review of third-generation customer satisfaction studies reveals a number of common themes and applications of the satisfaction concept in both the international B2C and B2B contexts. What is also revealed, however, is that the geographic scope of these studies – in terms of the national markets and national cultures examined – remains relatively narrow. Based on analysis of the studies outlined in Table 4 and Table A3 (Web Appendix), we find that a majority of studies focus on an analysis of two or more relatively wealthy, more developed national markets. A few of these studies expand the scope and compare one or more developed and one or more emerging markets. Only a small handful compare two or more emerging markets, with fewer yet examining frontier or least developed economies. For example, and as noted in Table 3, only a very small proportion of this research examines national markets in either South America or Africa.

The predominant focus on the more developed and prominent emerging national economies examining the satisfaction concept is not particularly surprising. Given that a substantial proportion of researchers in this space emanate from these developed markets, combined with the greater ease of conducting research in markets more familiar to the researcher, these studies are perhaps naturally biased towards this outcome. A bias towards larger,

more high-profile markets in terms of what gets published in academic journals may also exist. Moreover, while MNCs are expanding operations into a wide variety of markets of all sizes and levels of development, many businesses naturally focus on larger (developed or emerging) markets, giving research of these markets a higher priority (Luo, Zhang, & Bu, 2019).

The above explanations notwithstanding, there is ample focus in recent IB research on examining the success of both B2B and B2C MNEs (from both developed and emerging economies) as they attempt to expand into markets at different levels of development (e.g., Luo et al., 2019). Related IB research has also focused on the tendency of MNEs from emerging markets to experience disadvantages relative to competitors from developed markets, and thus to focus on seeking new business in less- and least-developed economies (Cuervo-Cazurra & Genc, 2008), and this too highlights the importance of expanding research to new national markets. As MNEs seek to take advantage of the “fortune at the bottom/base of the pyramid” and expand into frontier and less developed markets, an enhanced understanding of the needs of customers and clients in a more diverse array of markets will be required.

Standardizing Models and Methods

Another revelation from our analysis of the third-generation, internationally focused customer satisfaction literature is that while these studies provide many useful insights, for both academics and practitioners, contradictory findings appear somewhat regularly. As noted above in the B2C discussion, these mixed findings indicate that third-generation studies are yet to reach a consensus regarding the measurement and nomological invariance of customer satisfaction across countries and cultures (e.g., Spreng & Chiou, 2002; Ueltschy et al., 2004, 2007; Veloutsou et al., 2005). Similarly, mixed findings concerning the drivers of satisfaction and their effects across countries emerge in B2B studies as well (e.g., Lewin et al., 2010; Voldnes et al., 2012). Consequently, a systematic classification of these third-generation findings proves difficult.

The appearance of sometimes conflicting results is due at least in part to the wide variety of applications of the customer satisfaction concept, with satisfaction often functioning as the focal variable of interest – whether an antecedent of future customer and client behaviors or as an

outcome of some other set of predictor variables – but at times employed as only one of several variables in a more complex system of relationships. As such, the modeling and methods literature on international customer satisfaction and its findings are somewhat difficult to synthesize. Given these limitations, efforts to test a comprehensive, standardized model of satisfaction cross-nationally across a wide set of national markets and using a common set of national culture and sub-culture variables (e.g., Hofstede cultural dimensions or the World Values Survey dimensions) would be helpful. A rigorous meta-analysis of effects sizes, and the impact of national culture on these satisfaction effects, would be useful as well, but itself would likely be complicated by the lack of modeling and methods standardization.

International Business, Satisfaction, and Its Strategic Antecedents and Outcomes

Finally, and most importantly, second-generation customer satisfaction research pivoted from the consumer psychology and marketing research perspective of first-generation studies to a marketing strategy perspective, as noted above. This (natural) evolution aimed at validating customer satisfaction measurement through the identification of firm strategies towards driving satisfaction and establishing satisfaction as a predictor of positive, pro-firm consumer behaviors revealed through the linkage between satisfaction and firms’ financial performance. While some of the earliest second-generation research examined these relationships in a context outside the U.S. economy (e.g., Anderson et al., 1994), a vast majority of the studies since have focused on this market. Even fewer studies have looked at variability in these relationships cross-nationally (e.g., Fornell, Morgeson, & Hult, 2016). Thus, and much like the first-generation customer satisfaction literature, the third-generation literature is largely left to “presume” that satisfaction results in pro-firm consumer behaviors that function the same or similarly vis-à-vis firm financial performance across diverse markets. It also emerges that this literature examines a relatively narrow set of traditional strategic drivers of customer satisfaction, such as customer-perceived quality and value, ignoring many others that have been the focus of second-generation customer satisfaction research. Yet, as our review has starkly illustrated, national culture variation, level of market development, and a variety of other characteristics influence the customer satisfaction



eco-system across national markets – including the link between customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, positive and negative customer word-of-mouth, and so forth, all critical steps (for example) in the satisfaction–profit chain. Realistically, these differences likely alter (positively or negatively) the ability of firms to drive customer satisfaction and/or to convert satisfaction into product-market (operational) and financial performance.

Following from this, there are innumerable research questions, applicable in many instances to both B2C and B2B relationships, regarding the firm strategy-related drivers of satisfaction and the satisfaction–profit chain that have yet to be asked or answered in the cross-national, international business context, and all could have substantial implications regarding a firm's ability to drive customer satisfaction and the financial value of satisfaction across diverse national markets. Answering these questions would thus provide invaluable information for international business.

1. Satisfaction and its Strategic Antecedents

The second-generation customer satisfaction research has explored a variety of firm strategies for building and improving customer satisfaction (Otto et al., 2020). Here, and through our identification of gaps in the third-generation international satisfaction literature, we propose some research questions in this context vis-à-vis these strategies, including some classical marketing (advertising, R&D), financial (financial leverage), human resource (work–life balance, wage inequality), and business (downsizing, corporate political activity, mergers and acquisitions) strategies.

Research Question #1: Marketing Strategy: How do culture and/or country-related factors moderate the relationship between firms' marketing strategies (e.g., advertising, R&D) and customer satisfaction? Research finds that through its persuasive (by creating brand equity), informational (by creating exchange efficiencies), and signaling (by implying financial viability to customers) roles, advertising positively influences levels of customer satisfaction (Otto et al., 2020). Similarly, research suggests that R&D investments create higher customer satisfaction through the regular introduction of new products that meet customer needs, customers' beliefs that products from innovative firms are better, and through identifying and serving customers with unmet needs (Rubera & Kirca, 2017). Separately, research in international business finds that the effects of different international

advertising strategies such as standardization (or global) versus localization (Heinberg, Ozkaya, & Taube, 2017; Laroche, Kirpalani, Pons, & Zhou, 2001) have implications for its persuasive appeal and its effects on factors such as brand equity. Research has also documented differential sources of innovation for firms with varying degrees of internationalization (Cano-Kollmann, Cantwell, Hannigan, Mudambi, & Song, 2016) and the differential impact of innovation (R&D)-related factors, such as the R&D internationalization on a variety of firm performance outcomes (Belderbos, Lokshin, & Sadowski, 2015; Leung & Sharma, 2021). Drawing on these studies, the effects of advertising and innovation strategies of firms on customer satisfaction, which have largely been overlooked in the third-generation customer satisfaction research, can be inferred to plausibly vary across culture and country-related factors.

Research Question #2: Financial Strategy: How do culture and/or country-related factors moderate the relationship between firms' financial strategies (e.g., financial leverage) and customer satisfaction? Research has found that a firm's financial strategy such as increased financial leverage, which reflects the proportion of debt and equity in a firm's capital structure, has a negative effect on customer satisfaction. This is because the increased pressure to generate cash flows associated with higher financial leverage leads firms to undertake myopic decision-making, like reducing advertising and R&D expenditures, paying lower wages to their employees leading to inferior customer service, or providing inferior quality products and services (Malshe & Agarwal, 2015). However, research also shows that the importance of some of these factors in determining customer satisfaction varies across cultures and/or countries (e.g., Winsted, 1999; Laroche et al., 2001; Ueltschy & Krampf, 2001), indicating that the strength, if not the direction, of the effect of financial leverage on customer satisfaction may also vary.

Research Question #3: Human Resource Strategy: How do culture and/or country-related factors moderate the relationship between firms' human resource strategies (e.g., work–life balance, wage inequality) and customer satisfaction? Findings from two of the third-generation articles indicate that firms' international human resource strategies such as work–life support practices (Cogin et al., 2018) and customized HRM policies (Cogin & Williamson, 2014) have positive effects on foreign subsidiaries' customer satisfaction performance,

suggesting that the effects of other factors related to firms' HR strategies on satisfaction may also vary across cultures and/or countries. For example, a recent study finds that wage inequality between a firm's top managers and employees is detrimental to customer satisfaction through customer-directed opportunism and an undermined customer-oriented culture (Bamberger et al., 2021a, b). Relatedly, another study finds that employee satisfaction has significant implications for customer satisfaction even in situations of low employee–customer contact (Wolter, Bock, Mackey, Xu, & Smith, 2019). Driven by the findings from some of the reviewed third-generation studies (e.g., mixed findings concerning the effect of cultural distance on customer satisfaction in the context of service failure), it is expected that these relationships (i.e., the effects of wage inequality and employee satisfaction on customer satisfaction) could differ across cultures and countries, and future research should examine this variability and explain the underlying mechanisms.

Research Question #4: General Business Strategy: How do culture and/or country-related factors moderate the relationship between firms' general business strategies (e.g., downsizing, corporate political activity, mergers and acquisitions) and customer satisfaction? Prior research has documented various intentional and unintentional consequences of business strategies such as downsizing, political investments, and mergers and acquisitions (M&As) for customer satisfaction. Findings from the extant third-generation customer satisfaction research also indicate that such effects might vary by culture and country. For example, business downsizing, defined as "major workforce reductions to cut costs and to improve productivity and consequently financial performance" (Habel & Klarmann, 2015, p. 770), has a negative effect on customer satisfaction (Homburg, Klarmann, & Staitz, 2012; Habel & Klarmann, 2015), which is argued to occur through factors such as increased customer uncertainty. One study, examining B2B relationships, has documented differences in the levels of satisfaction of customers with downsized suppliers across cultures (Lewin et al., 2010). However, it is not yet clear whether such variability in the effects of downsizing on customer satisfaction exists in B2C relationships. In the international context, many firms downsize by exiting from certain countries, and the implications of such strategic decisions on the satisfaction of host country customers merits further research.

Moreover, M&As are a common route that firms adopt to go international or to grow their international presence. Evidence based on an analysis of U.S.-based firms suggests that M&As hurt customer satisfaction because post-M&A firms' attention shifts away from customers to financial issues (Umashankar et al., 2021). However, this relationship could manifest differently in international M&As given that some firms undertake acquisitions in host countries for acquired (or merged) firms' strong local presence, market knowledge, and customer relationships. Finally, yet another business strategy that has been recently examined for its potentially negative impact on customer satisfaction is corporate political activity (e.g., political lobbying and donations), defined as "expending resources in an attempt to sway government officials to make decisions beneficial to the lobbying firm" (Ridge, Ingram, & Hill, 2017, p. 1138). Examining U.S.-based firms, lobbying investments have been observed to have a negative effect on customer satisfaction, possibly through firms' reduced customer focus (Vadakkappatt et al., 2021). Similar research has found that CEO's political ideology affects a firm's innovation propensity (Kashmiri & Mahajan, 2017) and as discussed earlier, separate research has found that a firm's innovation impacts customer satisfaction and that such impact potentially varies across cultures and countries. Concerning lobbying, its effect on customer satisfaction likely varies across countries as a function of different institutional, regulatory, and political environments.

2. Satisfaction and its Objective Firm Performance Outcomes

In addition to the focus on strategic drivers of firm customer satisfaction in second-generation satisfaction literature, and the lessons to be gleaned towards as-yet unanswered research questions in the third-generation context, similar questions regarding the strategic outcomes of satisfaction vis-à-vis firm financial performance also emerge. As noted above, efforts to establish the importance of the satisfaction concept by establishing empirical linkages of firm satisfaction to firm financial performance defined the second-generation customer satisfaction literature, but have yet to garner sufficient attention in third-generation studies.

Research Question #1: Market Share: How do culture and/or country-related factors moderate the relationship between customer satisfaction and firm market share? While the satisfaction-



market share relationship has been shown to be more complex than once believed even in studies of single, developed markets (Anderson et al., 1994; Rego, Morgan, & Fornell, 2013), it is likely to be even more so cross-nationally. A number of studies suggest that the satisfaction-customer loyalty effect varies across markets at different levels of development (e.g., Aksoy et al., 2013; Morgeson et al., 2015), and is also moderated by assorted national cultural characteristics and dimensions (e.g., Liu & McClure, 2001; Aksoy et al., 2013; Olsen, Tudoran, Brunsno, & Verbeke, 2013; Diallo et al., 2018). Given this, satisfaction improvement strategies aimed at creating more loyal customers towards growing and (especially) maintaining market share and the related financial advantages may be differently influential across international markets.

Research Question #2: Revenue Growth: How do culture and/or country-related factors moderate the relationship between customer satisfaction and firm revenue growth? As noted above, the linkage between satisfaction and revenue growth is intertwined with the impact of satisfaction on customer loyalty, a linkage that has been shown to vary both across markets at different levels of development and due to national culture. Moreover, revenue growth is often linked to the propensity of satisfied customers to recommend products/services to others (and conversely, for dissatisfied customers to engage in negative word-of-mouth (WOM)), aiding in firm customer acquisition and revenue growth (Villanueva, Yoo, & Hanssens, 2008). While evidence of cross-national variance in the satisfaction-WOM relationship is limited, some research suggests that both WOM propensity (i.e., higher vs. lower) and the effect of WOM on “WOM recipients” do exhibit general cross-cultural variation (Anderson, 1998; Schumann, Wangenheim, Stringfellow, Yang, Blazevic, Praxmarer, & Jiménez, 2010). For these reasons, the satisfaction-revenue growth relationship likely varies across international markets as well, though the answer to this question requires examination.

Research Question #3: Cost of Selling: How do culture and/or country-related factors moderate the relationship between customer satisfaction and the cost of selling? While it has long been theorized that customer satisfaction reduces firms’ cost of selling (Luo & Homburg, 2007), recent research provides empirical evidence for such an effect, argued to emerge through factors such as reduced bad debt, increased salesforce efficiency, and increased customer tolerance to inconvenience

(Lim, Tuli, & Grewal, 2020). Given the variability in the cost structures that MNEs experience across countries, it is not unreasonable to expect these relationships to also vary, both in strength and direction, across markets. For example, in countries with a higher prevalence of monopolistic or oligopolistic market structures across industries, firms may not derive an equally strong cost of selling reduction benefit from customer satisfaction improvements. We note that while firms may not derive a similar benefit in monopolistic markets, evidence does exist suggesting that they do benefit in terms of reduced operating costs even in such markets (Bhattacharya, Morgan, & Rego, 2021). As such, a comprehensive examination of the implications of customer satisfaction for different types of costs across countries and cultures and the underlying mechanisms driving these effects would provide a significant contribution to the reviewed literature.

Research Question #4: Customer Service Costs: How do culture and/or country-related factors moderate the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer service costs? An often-discussed advantage of (superior) customer satisfaction is its ability to lower costs for firms concerning customer service and service recovery (e.g., Bhattacharya et al., 2021; Morgeson et al., 2020), with satisfied customers less likely to complain and less demanding of costly customer service interventions. However, the relationship between satisfaction and complaint behavior have been shown to vary across markets due to national culture factors (e.g., individualistic vs. collectivist, masculine vs. feminine), with, for example, some consumers requiring greater post-complaint firm effort (i.e., customer service intervention) to reaffirm satisfaction and loyalty (Liu & McClure, 2001; Yani-de-Soriano et al., 2019). As such, improvements (or declines) in satisfaction will likely have differential effects on both complaint behavior and requisite firm customer service responses to this behavior across markets, leading to larger relative gains in profitability via greater declines in customer service costs.

Research Question #5: Stock Market Performance: How do culture and/or country-related factors moderate the relationship between customer satisfaction and company stock market performance? Some research has addressed this topic and observed relatively consistent returns on firm customer satisfaction across markets, but for only a small cross section of national markets at similar

levels of maturity and with similar national culture characteristics (e.g., Fornell et al., 2016). However, research has demonstrated a significant impact of national cultural variation on market returns performance (e.g., individualism and uncertainty avoidance) (Fernandez-Perez, Gilbert, Indriawan, & Nguyen, 2021), as well as some effect of market maturity on stock mispricing (Jacobs, 2016). Yet the third-generation satisfaction literature sheds no light on whether the effect of customer satisfaction on stock market-based risk (e.g., systematic and idiosyncratic), which single country studies have shown to be negative (e.g., Luo, Homburg, & Wieseke, 2010; Tuli & Bharadwaj, 2009), manifests differently across markets, or perhaps due to the degree of firms' internationalization. Internationalization is one form of diversification that firms undertake to diversify their risk (Kwok & Reeb, 2000) and an examination of its complementary (or supplementary) relationship with customer satisfaction in reducing stock market-based risk provides a promising avenue for future research. Broadly, there exists the possibility of significantly different cross-market satisfaction-stock performance relationships, though the question remains open.

CONCLUSIONS AND LIMITATIONS

The customer satisfaction literature has provided valuable insights into the importance of this concept to businesses across the international marketplace. In all corners of the world, customer satisfaction has become an important performance metric for both local and global firms. In this review of the international customer satisfaction literature, we have systematically assessed a comprehensive and cross-disciplinary set of these studies. Through the review, we have identified gaps that exist in the international business, third-generation satisfaction literature, largely focusing on failures to examine the connections between customer satisfaction, its strategic antecedents, and outcomes as firms' financial performance cross-nationally. Finally, we provide several suggested research questions and ideas in these areas that should drive theorizing and research application moving forward. Answers to these questions can generate important IB-related customer satisfaction knowledge that has the potential to provide enormous value to both researchers and managers.

The several important contributions of this study delineated above notwithstanding, a few limitations should nevertheless be noted. First, given our

focus on the third-generation literature and due to limitations in space, we do not discuss the first- and second-generation literatures in expansive detail, offering instead a stage-setting review of these two streams (as well as a side-by-side comparison of the three streams of literature; see Table 1). However, for interested readers, we include a carefully chosen list of studies from the first- and second-generation literatures, along with some additional discussion, in Tables A1 and A2 of the Web Appendix. Second, while we thematically classify the literature on customer satisfaction into three generations of research, and review and integrate the most recent, third-generation literature focused on the examination of customer satisfaction from an international perspective, we recognize that other, equally reasonable classification schemes exist and that may offer slightly different perspectives and conclusions. Finally, while we are confident that our comprehensive and systematic search (see the "Methodology" section for complete details) for third-generation customer satisfaction articles in 66 top business journals covers a substantial cross section of the leading research in this area, we note that there are other sub-fields and journals that may not have been revealed through our search process and covered in this review.

NOTES

¹To give one example, Ipsos, a world-leading global market research firm, produces a series of syndicated "Global Satisfaction" studies for large multinational clients in a variety of industries designed to facilitate benchmarking across multiple national markets.

²The 50 Financial Times' "FT Research Rank" journals can be found at: <https://www.ft.com/content/3405a512-5cbb-11e1-8f1f-00144feabdc0>

³We used the generic term "satisfaction" because it allowed us to capture its many variations (e.g., consumer satisfaction, buyer satisfaction, client satisfaction, importer satisfaction, etc.). We specify the terms "life satisfaction", "job satisfaction", and "assignment satisfaction" under the exclusion criteria of our Boolean search to reduce the number of search outcomes, because these keywords do not refer to customer satisfaction or its acceptable variants. Further, the complete list of 35 keywords that we used to capture the international dimension



comprises the terms “international”, “global”, “country”, “cross-border”, “cross-national”, “cross-cultural”, “multinational”, “culture”, “emerging”, “developed”, “developing”, “MNC”, “MNE”, “EMNE”, “western”, “eastern”, “overseas”, “domestic”, “foreign”, “host”, “home”, “world”, “regional”, “trade”, “bloc”, “ASEAN”, “APEC”, “BRICS”, “EU”, “NAFTA”, “CIS”, “COMESA”, “SARC”, “MERCOSUR”, and “IOR-ARC”.

⁴Nevertheless, we did not encounter any review article on third-generation, international business customer satisfaction studies.

⁵Each article included in our review was assigned to one or more of the relevant marketing research topics by one of the co-authors, and another co-author subsequently and independently assessed the assignments. The discrepancies were resolved through discussions. See Table A4 (Column 3) for details of the topics assigned to each article included in this review. The percentages are based on total number of reviewed studies, unless specifically mentioned otherwise in the notes of Tables 2, 3 and 4.

REFERENCES

- Agnihotri, R., Gabler, C. B., Itani, O. S., Jaramillo, F., & Krush, M. T. 2017. Salesperson ambidexterity and customer satisfaction: Examining the role of customer demandingness, adaptive selling, and role conflict. *Journal of Personal Selling and Sales Management*, 37(1): 27–41.
- Agnihotri, R., Yang, Z., & Briggs, E. 2019. Salesperson time perspectives and customer willingness to pay more: Roles of intraorganizational employee navigation, customer satisfaction, and firm innovation climate. *Journal of Personal Selling and Sales Management*, 39(2): 138–158.
- Aguilera, R. V., Marano, V., & Haxhi, I. 2019. International corporate governance: A review and opportunities for future research. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 50: 457–498.
- Aksoy, L., Buoye, A., Aksoy, P., Larivière, B., & Keiningham, T. L. 2013. A cross-national investigation of the satisfaction and loyalty linkage for mobile telecommunications services across eight countries. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 27(1): 74–82.
- Aksoy, L., Cooil, B., Groening, C., Keiningham, T. L., & Yalçın, A. 2008. The long-term stock market valuation of customer satisfaction. *Journal of Marketing*, 72(4): 105–122.
- Alden, D. L., He, Y., & Chen, Q. 2010. Service recommendations and customer evaluations in the international marketplace: Cultural and situational contingencies. *Journal of Business Research*, 63(1): 38–44.
- Anderson, E. W. 1998. Customer satisfaction and word of mouth. *Journal of Service Research*, 1(1): 5–17.
- Anderson, E. W., Fornell, C., & Lehmann, D. R. 1994. Customer satisfaction, market share, and profitability: Findings from Sweden. *Journal of Marketing*, 58(3): 53–66.
- Anderson, E. W., Fornell, C., & Rust, R. T. 1997. Customer satisfaction, productivity, and profitability: Differences between goods and services. *Marketing Science*, 16(2): 129–145.
- Anderson, E. W., & Mittal, V. 2000. Strengthening the satisfaction-profit chain. *Journal of Service Research*, 3(2): 107–120.
- Anderson, E. W., & Sullivan, M. W. 1993. The antecedents and consequences of customer satisfaction for firms. *Marketing Science*, 12(2): 125–143.
- Ang, T., Liou, R. S., & Wei, S. 2018. Perceived cultural distance in intercultural service encounters: does customer participation matter? *Journal of Services Marketing*, 32: 547–558.
- Bahadir, S. C., Bharadwaj, S. G., & Srivastava, R. K. 2015. Marketing mix and brand sales in global markets: Examining the contingent role of country-market characteristics. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 46(5): 596–619.
- Baker, T. L., Meyer, T., & Johnson, J. D. 2008. Individual differences in perceptions of service failure and recovery: The role of race and discriminatory bias. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 36(4): 552–564.
- Bamberger, B., Homburg, C., & Wielgos, D. M. 2021. EXPRESS: Wage inequality: Its impact on customer satisfaction and firm performance. *Journal of Marketing*, 85: 24–43.
- Bamberger, B., Homburg, C., & Wielgos, M. D. 2021a. Wage inequality: Its impact on customer satisfaction and firm performance. *Journal of Marketing*, 85(6): 24–43.
- Banalieva, E. R., & Dhanaraj, C. 2019. Internalization theory for the digital economy. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 50(8): 1372–1387.
- Barnes, B. R., Leonidou, L. C., Siu, N. Y., & Leonidou, C. N. 2010. Opportunism as the inhibiting trigger for developing long-term-oriented Western exporter–Hong Kong importer relationships. *Journal of International Marketing*, 18(2): 35–63.
- Bauer, T., Law, R., Tse, T., & Weber, K. 2008. Motivation and satisfaction of mega-business event attendees: The case of ITU Telecom World 2006 in Hong Kong. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*.
- Berger, R., Silbiger, A., Herstein, R., & Barnes, B. R. 2015. Analyzing business-tobusiness relationships in an Arab context. *Journal of World Business*, 50(3): 454–464.
- Belderbos, R., Lokshin, B., & Sadowski, B. 2015. The returns to foreign R&D. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 46(4): 491–504.
- Bell, G. D. 1967. The automobile buyer after the purchase. *Journal of Marketing*, 31(3): 12–16.
- Bhattacharya, A., Morgan, N. A., & Rego, L. L. 2021. Customer satisfaction and firm profits in monopolies: A study of utilities. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 58(1): 202–222.
- Blocker, C. P., Flint, D. J., Myers, M. B., & Slater, S. F. 2011. Proactive customer orientation and its role for creating customer value in global markets. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 39(2): 216–233.
- Blut, M., Frennea, C. M., Mittal, V., & Mothersbaugh, D. L. 2015. How procedural, financial and relational switching costs affect customer satisfaction, repurchase intentions, and repurchase behavior: A meta-analysis. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 32(2): 226–229.
- Blut, M., Teller, C., & Floh, A. 2018. Testing retail marketing-mix effects on patronage: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Retailing*, 94(2): 113–135.
- Bolton, R. N. 1998. A dynamic model of the duration of the customer's relationship with a continuous service provider: The role of satisfaction. *Marketing Science*, 17(1): 45–65.
- Bonifield, C., & Cole, C. A. 2008. Better him than me: Social comparison theory and service recovery. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 36(4): 565–577.
- Brady, M. K., Knight, G. A., Cronin, J. J., Jr., Tomas, G., Hult, M., & Keillor, B. D. 2005. Removing the contextual lens: A multinational, multi-setting comparison of service evaluation models. *Journal of Retailing*, 81(3): 215–230.

- Brady, M. K., & Robertson, C. J. 2001. Searching for a consensus on the antecedent role of service quality and satisfaction: an exploratory cross-national study. *Journal of Business Research*, 51(1): 53–60.
- Brayfield, A. H., & Rothe, H. F. 1951. An index of job satisfaction. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 35(5): 307.
- Buckley, P. J., Clegg, L. J., Cross, A. R., Liu, X., Voss, H., & Zheng, P. 2007. The determinants of Chinese outward foreign direct investment. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 38(4): 499–518.
- Buckley, P. J., Doh, J. P., & Benischke, M. H. 2017. Towards a renaissance in international business research? Big questions, grand challenges, and the future of IB scholarship. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 48(9): 1045–1064.
- Cano-Kollmann, M., Cantwell, J., Hannigan, T. J., Mudambi, R., & Song, J. 2016. Knowledge connectivity: An agenda for innovation research in international business. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 47(3): 255–262.
- Caprar, D. V., Devinney, T. M., Kirkman, B. L., & Caligiuri, P. 2015. Conceptualizing and measuring culture in international business and management: From challenges to potential solutions. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 46: 1011–1027.
- Cardozo, R. N. 1965. An experimental study of customer effort, expectation, and satisfaction. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 2(3): 244–249.
- Caruana, A., & Ewing, M. T. 2006. The psychometric properties of eTail quality: An international investigation across product categories. *International Marketing Review*, 23(4): 353–370.
- Chan, H., & Wan, L. C. 2008. Consumer responses to service failures: a resource preference model of cultural influences. *Journal of International Marketing*, 16(1): 72–97.
- Chan, H., Wan, L. C., & Sin, L. Y. 2009. The contrasting effects of culture on consumer tolerance: Interpersonal face and impersonal fate. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 36(2): 292–304.
- Chan, K. W., Yim, C. K., & Lam, S. S. 2010. Is customer participation in value creation a double-edged sword? Evidence from professional financial services across cultures. *Journal of Marketing*, 74(3): 48–64.
- Cheng, J., Qian, W., & Reeb, D. M. 2020. The ownership complaint gap: Mutual versus stock intermediaries. *Journal of Financial and Quantitative Analysis*, 55(5): 1685–1715.
- Chung, J. E., Sternquist, B., & Chen, Z. 2006. Retailer–buyer supplier relationships: The Japanese difference. *Journal of Retailing*, 82(4): 349–355.
- Churchill, G. A., Jr., & Surprenant, C. 1982. An investigation into the determinants of customer satisfaction. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 19(4): 491–504.
- Clarivate Analytics. 2020. <http://help.incites.clarivate.com/incitesLive|CR|JCRGroup/howtoCite|CR.html>
- Cogin, J. A., Sanders, K., & Williamson, I. O. (2018). Work-life support practices and customer satisfaction: The role of TMT composition and country culture. *Human Resource Management*, 57(1), 279–291.
- Cogin, J. A., & Williamson, I. O. 2014. Standardize or customize: The interactive effects of HRM and environment uncertainty on MNC subsidiary performance. *Human Resource Management*, 53(5): 701–721.
- Collins, D. 2013. *Management fads and buzzwords: Critical-practical perspectives*. Milton Park: Routledge.
- Costello, J. P., & Reczek, R. W. 2020. Providers versus platforms: Marketing communications in the sharing economy. *Journal of Marketing*, 84(6): 22–38.
- Crolic, C., Thomaz, F., Hadi, R., & Stephen, A. 2021. EXPRESS: Blame the bot: Anthropomorphism and anger in customer–chatbot interactions. *Journal of Marketing*, 86: 132–148.
- Cronin, J. J., Jr., Brady, M. K., & Hult, G. T. M. 2000. Assessing the effects of quality, value, and customer satisfaction on consumer behavioral intentions in service environments. *Journal of Retailing*, 76(2): 193–218.
- Cuervo-Cazurra, A., & Genc, M. 2008. Transforming disadvantages into advantages: Developing-country MNEs in the least developed countries. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 39(6): 957–979.
- Cullen, J. B., Johnson, J. L., & Sakano, T. 1995. Japanese and local partners commitment to IJVs: Psychological consequences of outcomes and investments in the IJV relationships. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 26(1): 91–115.
- Cuypers, I. R., Ertug, G., Heugens, P. P., Kogut, B., & Zou, T. 2018. The making of a construct: Lessons from 30 years of the Kogut and Singh cultural distance index. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 49(9): 1138–1153.
- Cyr, D. 2008. Modeling web site design across cultures: relationships to trust, satisfaction, and e-loyalty. *Journal of Management Information Systems*, 24(4): 47–72.
- Davvetas, V., & Diamantopoulos, A. 2018. Should have I bought the other one? Experiencing regret in global versus local brand purchase decisions. *Journal of International Marketing*, 26(2): 1–21.
- de Bellis, E., Hildebrand, C., Ito, K., Herrmann, A., & Schmitt, B. 2019. Personalizing the customization experience: A matching theory of mass customization interfaces and cultural information processing. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 56(6): 1050–1065.
- De Luca, L. M., Herhausen, D., Troilo, G., & Rossi, A. 2021. How and when do big data investments pay off? The role of marketing affordances and service innovation. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 49(4): 790–810.
- De Ruyter, K., Wetzels, M., Lemmink, J., & Mattson, J. 1997. The dynamics of the service delivery process: A value-based approach. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 14(3): 231–243.
- Del Chiappa, G., Seijas Giménez, M. N., & Zapata-Aguirre, S. 2017. Travelers satisfaction with food and beverage services in airports. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 26(8): 829–845.
- Deng, W. J., Yeh, M. L., & Sung, M. L. 2013. A customer satisfaction index model for international tourist hotels: Integrating consumption emotions into the American Customer Satisfaction Index. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 35: 133–140.
- Dev, C., Zhou, K. Z., Brown, J., & Agarwal, S. 2009. Customer orientation or competitor orientation: Which marketing strategy has a higher payoff for hotel brands? *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, 50(1): 19–28.
- Diallo, M. F., Diop-Sall, F., Djelassi, S., & Godefroit-Winkel, D. 2018. How shopping mall service quality affects customer loyalty across developing countries: The moderation of the cultural context. *Journal of International Marketing*, 26(4): 69–84.
- Diamantopoulos, A., Ring, A., Schlegelmilch, B. B., & Doberer, E. 2014. Drivers of export segmentation effectiveness and their impact on export performance. *Journal of International Marketing*, 22(1): 39–61.
- Dotzel, T., Shankar, V., & Berry, L. L. 2013. Service innovativeness and firm value. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 50(2): 259–276.
- Dou, W., Li, H., Zhou, N., & Su, C. 2010. Exploring relationship satisfaction between global professional service firms and local clients in emerging markets. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 41(7): 1198–1217.
- Dowling, K., Guhl, D., Klapper, D., Spann, M., Stich, L., & Yegoryan, N. 2020. Behavioral biases in marketing. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 48(3): 449–477.
- Duque, L. C., & Lado, N. 2010. Cross-cultural comparisons of consumer satisfaction ratings: a perspective from Albert Hirschman's theory. *International Marketing Review*, 27(6): 676–693.
- Duran, P., Kammerlander, N., Van Essen, M., & Zellweger, T. 2016. Doing more with less: Innovation input and output in



- family firms. *Academy of Management Journal*, 59(4): 1224–1264.
- Eckhardt, G. M., Houston, M. B., Jiang, B., Lambertson, C., Rindfleisch, A., & Zervas, G. 2019. Marketing in the sharing economy. *Journal of Marketing*, 83(5): 5–27.
- Fang, E. E., & Zou, S. 2009. Antecedents and consequences of marketing dynamic capabilities in international joint ventures. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 40(5): 742–761.
- Fernandez-Perez, A., Gilbert, A., Indriawan, I., & Nguyen, N. H. 2021. COVID-19 pandemic and stock market response: A culture effect. *Journal of Behavioral and Experimental Finance*, 29: 100454.
- Fong, L. H. N., He, H., Chao, M. M., Leandro, G., & King, D. 2019. Cultural essentialism and tailored hotel service for Chinese: The moderating role of satisfaction. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 31(9): 3610–3626.
- Fornell, C. 1992. A national customer satisfaction barometer: The Swedish experience. *Journal of Marketing*, 56(1): 6–21.
- Fornell, C. 1995. The quality of economic output: Empirical generalizations about its distribution and relationship to market share. *Marketing Science*, 14(3): G203–G211.
- Fornell, C., Johnson, M. D., Anderson, E. W., Cha, J., & Bryant, B. E. 1996. The American customer satisfaction index: Nature, purpose, and findings. *Journal of Marketing*, 60(4): 7–18.
- Fornell, C., Morgeson III, F. V., & Hult, G. T. M. 2016. Stock returns on customer satisfaction do beat the market: Gauging the effect of a marketing intangible. *Journal of Marketing*, 80(5): 92–107.
- Fournier, S., & Alvarez, C. 2013. Relating badly to brands. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 23(2): 253–264.
- Franke, N., Keinz, P., & Steger, C. J. 2009. Testing the value of customization: When do customers really prefer products tailored to their preferences? *Journal of Marketing*, 73(5): 103–121.
- Gan, Y., & Qiu, B. 2019. Escape from the USA: Government debt-to-GDP ratio, country tax competitiveness, and US-OECD cross-border M&As. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 50(7): 1156–1183.
- Gilbert, G. R., Veloutsou, C., Goode, M. M., & Moutinho, L. 2004. Measuring customer satisfaction in the fast food industry: A cross-national approach. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 18: 371–383.
- GLOBE 2020. A unique large-scale study of cultural practices, leadership ideals, and generalized and interpersonal trust in 150 countries in collaboration with nearly 500 researchers. <https://globeproject.com/>. Accessed 4 February 2021.
- Grégoire, Y., & Fisher, R. J. 2008. Customer betrayal and retaliation: when your best customers become your worst enemies. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 36(2): 247–261.
- Grégoire, Y., Laufer, D., & Tripp, T. M. 2010. A comprehensive model of customer direct and indirect revenge: Understanding the effects of perceived greed and customer power. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 38(6): 738–758.
- Ha, J., Karande, K., & Singhapakdi, A. 2004. Importers' relationships with exporters: does culture matter? *International Marketing Review*.
- Ha, H. Y., Janda, S., & Park, S. K. 2009. Role of satisfaction in an integrative model of brand loyalty: Evidence from China and South Korea. *International Marketing Review*, 26(2): 198–220.
- Ha, H. Y., Muthaly, S. K., & Akamavi, R. K. 2010. Alternative explanations of online repurchasing behavioral intentions: A comparison study of Korean and UK young customers. *European Journal of Marketing*, 44: 874–904.
- Habel, J., & Klarmann, M. 2015. Customer reactions to downsizing: when and how is satisfaction affected? *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 43(6): 768–789.
- Heckman, J. J. 1979. Sample selection bias as a specification error. *Econometrica: Journal of the Econometric Society*, 153–161.
- Heinberg, M., Ozkaya, H. E., & Taube, M. 2017. The influence of global and local iconic brand positioning on advertising persuasion in an emerging market setting. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 48(8): 1009–1022.
- Hernandez, E., & Guillén, M. F. 2018. What's theoretically novel about emerging-market multinationals? *Journal of International Business Studies*, 49(1): 24–33.
- Hofstede, G. 1984. *Culture's consequences: International differences in work-related values* (Vol. 5). Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Homburg, C., Klarmann, M., & Staritz, S. (2012). Customer uncertainty following downsizing: The effects of extent of downsizing and open communication. *Journal of Marketing*, 76(3), 112–129.
- Homburg, C., Krohmer, H., Cannon, J. P., & Kiedaisch, I. 2002. Customer satisfaction in transnational buyer–supplier relationships. *Journal of International Marketing*, 10(4): 1–29.
- Hoppner, J. J., Griffith, D. A., & White, R. C. 2015. Reciprocity in relationship marketing: A cross-cultural examination of the effects of equivalence and immediacy on relationship quality and satisfaction with performance. *Journal of International Marketing*, 23(4): 64–83.
- Hughes, C., Swaminathan, V., & Brooks, G. 2019. Driving brand engagement through online social influencers: An empirical investigation of sponsored blogging campaigns. *Journal of Marketing*, 83(5): 78–96.
- Hult, G. T. M., Gonzalez-Perez, M. A., & Lagerström, K. 2020. The theoretical evolution and use of the Uppsala Model of internationalization in the international business ecosystem. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 51: 38–49.
- Hult, G. T. M., Ketchen, D. J., Griffith, D. A., Finnegan, C. A., Gonzalez-Padron, T., Harmancioglu, N., Huang, Y., Talay, M. B., & Cavusgil, S. T. 2008. Data equivalence in cross-cultural international business research: Assessment and guidelines. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 39(6): 1027–1044.
- Hult, G. T. M., Sharma, P. N., Morgeson III, F. V., & Zhang, Y. 2019. Antecedents and consequences of customer satisfaction: Do they differ across online and offline purchases? *Journal of Retailing*, 95(1): 10–23.
- Hult, T., Closs, D., & Frayer, D. 2014. How global should your supply chains be. *Global Edge Business Review*, 8(2): 1–12.
- Hunter, J. E., & Schmidt, F. L. 1990. Dichotomization of continuous variables: The implications for meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 75(3): 334.
- Hunter, J. E., & Schmidt, F. L. 2004. *Methods of meta-analysis: Correcting error and bias in research findings*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Iltner, C. D., & Larcker, D. F. 1998. Are nonfinancial measures leading indicators of financial performance? An analysis of customer satisfaction. *Journal of Accounting Research*, 36: 1–35.
- Jacobs, H. 2016. Market maturity and mispricing. *Journal of Financial Economics*, 122(2): 270–287.
- Jean, R. J. B., Sinkovics, R. R., & Cavusgil, S. T. 2010. Enhancing international customer–supplier relationships through IT resources: A study of Taiwanese electronics suppliers. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 41(7): 1218–1239.
- Jean, R. J., Wang, Z., Zhao, X., & Sinkovics, R. R. 2016. Drivers and customer satisfaction outcomes of CSR in supply chains in different institutional contexts. *International Marketing Review*, 33(4): 514–529.
- Jin, B., Park, J. Y., & Kim, J. 2008. Cross-cultural examination of the relationships among firm reputation, e-satisfaction, e-trust, and e-loyalty. *International Marketing Review*, 25: 324–337.
- Johnson, G. D., & Grier, S. A. 2013. Understanding the influence of cross-cultural consumer-to-consumer interaction on consumer service satisfaction. *Journal of Business Research*, 66(3): 306–313.
- Johnston, W. J., Khalil, S., Jain, M., & Cheng, J. M. S. 2012. Determinants of joint action in international channels of distribution: The moderating role of psychic distance. *Journal of International Marketing*, 20(3): 34–49.



- Kalasin, K., Dussauge, P., & Rivera-Santos, M. 2014. The expansion of emerging economy firms into advanced markets: The influence of intentional path-breaking change. *Global Strategy Journal*, 4(2): 75–103.
- Kashmiri, S., & Mahajan, V. 2017. Values that shape marketing decisions: Influence of chief executive officers' political ideologies on innovation propensity, shareholder value, and risk. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 54(2): 260–278.
- Kashyap, V., & Murtha, B. R. 2017. The joint effects of ex ante contractual completeness and ex post governance on compliance in franchised marketing channels. *Journal of Marketing*, 81(3): 130–153.
- Katsikeas, C. S., Morgan, N. A., Leonidou, L. C., & Hult, G. T. M. 2016. Assessing performance outcomes in marketing. *Journal of Marketing*, 80(2): 1–20.
- Keh, H. T., & Sun, J. 2008. The complexities of perceived risk in cross-cultural services marketing. *Journal of International Marketing*, 16(1): 120–146.
- Khamitov, M., Grégoire, Y., & Suri, A. 2020. A systematic review of brand transgression, service failure recovery and product-harm crisis: integration and guiding insights. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 48(3): 519–542.
- Khan, M. S., Naumann, E., Bateman, R., & Haverila, M. 2009. Cross-cultural comparison of customer satisfaction research: USA vs Japan. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*.
- Kirca, A. H., Hult, G. T. M., Roth, K., Cavusgil, S. T., Perry, M. Z., Akdeniz, M. B. M. B., Deligonul, S. Z., Mena, J. A., Pollitte, W. A., Hoppner, J. J., & Miller, J. C. 2011. Firm-specific assets, multinationality, and financial performance: A meta-analytic review and theoretical integration. *Academy of Management Journal*, 54(1): 47–72.
- Knight, G. A., & Cavusgil, S. T. 2004. Innovation, organizational capabilities, and the born-global firm. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 35(2): 124–141.
- Kumar, V., Nim, N., & Agarwal, A. 2021. Platform-based mobile payments adoption in emerging and developed countries: Role of country-level heterogeneity and network effects. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 52(8): 1529–1558.
- Kumar, V., Rajan, B., Gupta, S., & Dalla Pozza, I. 2019. Customer engagement in service. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 47(1): 138–160.
- Kwok, C. C., & Reeb, D. M. 2000. Internationalization and firm risk: An upstream-downstream hypothesis. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 31(4): 611–629.
- La, V., Patterson, P., & Styles, C. 2009. Client-perceived performance and value in professional B2B services: An international perspective. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 40(2): 274–300.
- Lai, I. K. 2015. The roles of value, satisfaction, and commitment in the effect of service quality on customer loyalty in Hong Kong-style tea restaurants. *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, 56(1): 118–138.
- Lamberton, C., & Stephen, A. T. 2016. A thematic exploration of digital, social media, and mobile marketing: Research evolution from 2000 to 2015 and an agenda for future inquiry. *Journal of Marketing*, 80(6): 146–172.
- Laroche, M., Kirpalani, V. H., Pons, F., & Zhou, L. 2001. A model of advertising standardization in multinational corporations. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 32(2): 249–266.
- Lee, C., & Beamish, P. W. 1995. The characteristics and performance of Korean joint ventures in LDCs. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 26(3): 637–654.
- Lee, D. J., Lee, M., & Suh, J. (2007). Benevolence in the importer-exporter relationship: Moderating role of value similarity and cultural familiarity. *International Marketing Review*.
- Lee, D. J., Sirgy, M. J., Brown, J. R., & Bird, M. M. 2004. Importers' benevolence toward their foreign export suppliers. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 32(1): 32–48.
- Leonidou, L. C., Aykol, B., Fotiadis, T. A., & Christodoulides, P. 2017. Antecedents and consequences of infidelity in cross-border business relationships. *Journal of International Marketing*, 25(1): 46–71.
- Leung, T. K. P., Lai, K. H., Chan, R. Y., & Wong, Y. H. 2005. The roles of xinyong and guanxi in Chinese relationship marketing. *European Journal of Marketing*, 39(5/6): 528–559.
- Leung, T. Y., & Sharma, P. (2021). Differences in the impact of R&D intensity and R&D internationalization on firm performance—Mediating role of innovation performance. *Journal of Business Research*, 131, 81–91.
- Lewin, J. E., Biemans, W., & Ulaga, W. 2010. Firm downsizing and satisfaction among United States and European customers. *Journal of Business Research*, 63(7): 697–706.
- Li, H., Liu, Y., Tan, C. W., & Hu, F. 2020. Comprehending customer satisfaction with hotels: Data analysis of consumer-generated reviews. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*.
- Li, Y. Q., & Liu, C. H. 2020. Impact of cultural contact on satisfaction and attachment: Mediating roles of creative experiences and cultural memories. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 29(2): 221–245.
- Lim, E. A. C., Lee, Y. H., & Foo, M. D. 2017. Frontline employees' nonverbal cues in service encounters: a double-edged sword. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 45(5): 657–676.
- Lim, L. G., Tuli, K. R., & Grewal, R. 2020. Customer satisfaction and its impact on the future costs of selling. *Journal of Marketing*, 84(4): 23–44.
- Lin, W. T., & Chen, C. Y. 2013. Shopping satisfaction at airport duty-free stores: A cross-cultural comparison. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 22(1): 47–66.
- Lin, X., & Germain, R. 1998. Sustaining satisfactory joint venture relationships: the role of conflict resolution strategy. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 29(1): 179–196.
- Littell, J. H., Corcoran, J., & Pillai, V. 2008. *Systematic reviews and meta-analysis*. Oxford University Press.
- Liu, R. R., & McClure, P. 2001. Recognizing cross-cultural differences in consumer complaint behavior and intentions: an empirical examination. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 18(1): 54–75.
- Liu, M. W., Zhang, L., & Keh, H. T. 2019. Consumer responses to high service attentiveness: A cross-cultural examination. *Journal of International Marketing*, 27(1): 56–73.
- Luo, X., & Bhattacharya, C. B. 2006. Corporate social responsibility, customer satisfaction, and market value. *Journal of Marketing*, 70(4): 1–18.
- Luo, X., & Homburg, C. 2007. Neglected outcomes of customer satisfaction. *Journal of Marketing*, 71(2): 133–149.
- Luo, X., Homburg, C., & Wieseke, J. 2010. Customer satisfaction, analyst stock recommendations, and firm value. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 47(6): 1041–1058.
- Luo, Y., Zhang, H., & Bu, J. 2019. Developed country MNEs investing in developing economies: Progress and prospect. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 50(4): 633–667.
- Mafael, A., Raithel, S., & Hock, S. J. 2021. Managing customer satisfaction after a product recall: The joint role of remedy, brand equity, and severity. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 50: 174–194.
- Malshe, A., & Agarwal, M. K. 2015. From finance to marketing: The impact of financial leverage on customer satisfaction. *Journal of Marketing*, 79(5): 21–38.
- Malshe, A., Colicev, A., & Mittal, V. 2020. How main street drives wall street: Customer (Dis)satisfaction, short sellers, and abnormal returns. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 57(6): 1055–1075.
- Marinova, D., Ye, J., & Singh, J. 2008. Do frontline mechanisms matter? Impact of quality and productivity orientations on unit revenue, efficiency, and customer satisfaction. *Journal of Marketing*, 72(2): 28–45.
- Maseland, R., Dow, D., & Steel, P. 2018. The Kogut and Singh national cultural distance index: Time to start using it as a springboard rather than a crutch. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 49(9): 1154–1166.



- Mattila, A. S., & Patterson, P. G. 2004. Service recovery and fairness perceptions in collectivist and individualist contexts. *Journal of Service Research*, 6(4): 336–346.
- McNeal, J. U., & Lamb, C. W. 1979. Consumer satisfaction as a measure of marketing effectiveness. *Akron Business and Economic Review*, 10(2): 41–45.
- Mintz, O., Currim, I. S., Steenkamp, J. B. E., & de Jong, M. 2019. Managerial metric use in marketing decisions across 16 countries: A cultural perspective. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 52: 1474–1500.
- Mittal, V., Han, K., Lee, J. Y., & Sridhar, S. 2021. Improving business-to-business customer satisfaction programs: Assessment of asymmetry, heterogeneity, and financial impact. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 58(4): 615–643.
- Moorman, C., & Rust, R. T. 1999. The role of marketing. *Journal of Marketing*, 63(4_suppl1): 180–197.
- Morgan, N. A., Whitley, K. A., Feng, H., & Chari, S. 2019. Research in marketing strategy. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 47(1): 4–29.
- Morgeson III, F. V., Hult, G. T. M., Mithas, S., Keiningham, T., & Fornell, C. 2020. Turning complaining customers into loyal customers: Moderators of the complaint handling–customer loyalty relationship. *Journal of Marketing*, 84(5): 79–99.
- Morgeson, F. V., Mithas, S., Keiningham, T. L., & Aksoy, L. 2011. An investigation of the cross-national determinants of customer satisfaction. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 39(2): 198–215.
- Morgeson III, F. V., Sharma, P. N., & Hult, G. T. M. 2015. Cross-national differences in consumer satisfaction: Mobile services in emerging and developed markets. *Journal of International Marketing*, 23(2): 1–24.
- Mukherjee, D., Makarius, E. E., & Stevens, C. E. 2021. A reputation transfer perspective on the internationalization of emerging market firms. *Journal of Business Research*, 123: 568–579.
- Neugarten, B. L., Havighurst, R. J., & Tobin, S. S. 1961. The measurement of life satisfaction. *Journal of Gerontology*.
- Nijssen, E. J., & van Herk, H. 2009. Conjoining international marketing and relationship marketing: exploring consumers' cross-border service relationships. *Journal of International Marketing*, 17(1): 91–115.
- Oliver, R. L. 2010. Customer satisfaction. In: *Wiley international encyclopedia of marketing*.
- Oliver, R. L. 1977. Effect of expectation and disconfirmation on postexposure product evaluations: An alternative interpretation. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 62(4): 480.
- Oliver, R. L. 1980. A cognitive model of the antecedents and consequences of satisfaction decisions. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 17(4): 460–469.
- Oliver, R. L. 1993. Cognitive, affective, and attribute bases of the satisfaction response. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 20(3): 418–430.
- Olsen, S. O., Tudoran, A. A., Brunsø, K., & Verbeke, W. 2013. Extending the prevalent consumer loyalty modelling: The role of habit strength. *European Journal of Marketing*, 47(1/2): 303–323.
- Olshavsky, R. W., & Miller, J. A. 1972. Consumer expectations, product performance, and perceived product quality. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 9(1): 19–21.
- Otto, A. S., Szymanski, D. M., & Varadarajan, R. 2020. Customer satisfaction and firm performance: insights from over a quarter century of empirical research. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 48(3): 543–564.
- Paharia, N. 2020. Who receives credit or blame? The effects of made-to-order production on responses to unethical and ethical company production practices. *Journal of Marketing*, 84(1): 88–104.
- Palmatier, R. W., Houston, M. B., & Hulland, J. 2018. Review articles: Purpose, process, and structure. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 45(1): 1–5.
- Patterson, P. G., Cowley, E., & Prasongsukarn, K. 2006. Service failure recovery: The moderating impact of individual-level cultural value orientation on perceptions of justice. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 23(3): 263–277.
- Patterson, P. G., & Smith, T. 2003. A cross-cultural study of switching barriers and propensity to stay with service providers. *Journal of Retailing*, 79(2): 107–120.
- Pisani, N., Garcia-Bernardo, J., & Heemskerck, E. 2020. Does it pay to be a multinational? A large-sample, cross-national replication assessing the multinationality–performance relationship. *Strategic Management Journal*, 41(1): 152–172.
- Poon, W. C., & Low, K. L. T. 2005. Are travellers satisfied with Malaysian hotels? *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 17(3): 217–227.
- Prayag, G., Hassibi, S., & Nunkoo, R. 2019. A systematic review of consumer satisfaction studies in hospitality journals: Conceptual development, research approaches and future prospects. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 28(1): 51–80.
- Qian, G., Li, L., Li, J., & Qian, Z. 2008. Regional diversification and firm performance. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 39(2): 197–214.
- Radojevic, T., Stanisic, N., & Stanic, N. 2017. Inside the rating scores: a multilevel analysis of the factors influencing customer satisfaction in the hotel industry. *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, 58(2): 134–164.
- Rai, A., Maruping, L. M., & Venkatesh, V. 2009. Offshore information systems project success: The role of social embeddedness and cultural characteristics. *MIS Quarterly*, 617–641.
- Ramaseshan, B., Yip, L. S., & Pae, J. H. 2006. Power, satisfaction, and relationship commitment in Chinese store–tenant relationship and their impact on performance. *Journal of Retailing*, 82(1): 63–70.
- Rambocas, M., Meneses, R., Monteiro, C., & Brito, P. Q. 2015. Direct or indirect channel structures. Evaluating the impact of channel governance structure on export performance. *International Business Review*, 24(1): 124–132.
- Raub, S., & Liao, H. 2012. Doing the right thing without being told: Joint effects of initiative climate and general self-efficacy on employee proactive customer service performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 97(3): 651.
- Raven, P. V., McCullough, J. M., & Tansuhaj, P. S. 1994. Environmental influences and decision-making uncertainty in export channels: Effects on satisfaction and performance. *Journal of International Marketing*, 2(3): 37–59.
- Rego, L. L., Morgan, N. A., & Fornell, C. 2013. Reexamining the market share–customer satisfaction relationship. *Journal of Marketing*, 77(5): 1–20.
- Reimann, M., Lünemann, U. F., & Chase, R. B. 2008. Uncertainty avoidance as a moderator of the relationship between perceived service quality and customer satisfaction. *Journal of Service Research*, 11(1): 63–73.
- Ridge, J. W., Ingram, A., & Hill, A. D. 2017. Beyond lobbying expenditures: How lobbying breadth and political connectedness affect firm outcomes. *Academy of Management Journal*, 60(3): 1138–1163.
- Robitaille, N., Mazar, N., Tsai, C. I., Haviv, A. M., & Hardy, E. 2021. Increasing organ donor registrations with behavioral interventions: A field experiment. *Journal of Marketing*, 85(3): 168–183.
- Rosenbloom, B., & Larsen, T. 2003. Communication in international business-to-business marketing channels: Does culture matter? *Industrial Marketing Management*, 32(4): 309–315.
- Rubera, G., & Kirca, A. H. 2017. You gotta serve somebody: the effects of firm innovation on customer satisfaction and firm value. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 45(5): 741–761.
- Ruiz, B., García, J. A., & Revilla, A. J. 2016. Antecedents and consequences of bank reputation: a comparison of the United Kingdom and Spain. *International Marketing Review*.
- Rust, R. T., & Zhorik, A. J. 1993. Customer satisfaction, customer retention, and market share. *Journal of Retailing*, 69(2): 193–215.

- Samiee, S., & Chabowski, B. R. 2021. Knowledge structure in product-and brand origin-related research. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 49: 947–968.
- Schoefer, K. 2010. Cultural moderation in the formation of recovery satisfaction judgments: a cognitive-affective perspective. *Journal of Service Research*, 13(1): 52–66.
- Schumann, J. H., Wangenheim, F. V., Stringfellow, A., Yang, Z., Blazevic, V., Praxmarer, S., Shainesh, G., Komor, M., Shannon, R. M., & Jiménez, F. R. 2010. Cross-cultural differences in the effect of received word-of-mouth referral in relational service exchange. *Journal of International Marketing*, 18(3): 62–80.
- Shang, J., Yildirim, T. P., Tadikamalla, P., Mittal, V., & Brown, L. H. 2009. Distribution network redesign for marketing competitiveness. *Journal of Marketing*, 73(2): 146–163.
- Shankarmahesh, M. N., Ford, J. B., & LaTour, M. S. 2004. Determinants of satisfaction in sales negotiations with foreign buyers: Perceptions of US export executives. *International Marketing Review*.
- Sharma, P., Tam, J. L., & Kim, N. 2012. Intercultural service encounters (ICSE): An extended framework and empirical validation. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 26(7): 521–534.
- Sharma, P., & Wu, Z. 2015. Consumer ethnocentrism vs. intercultural competence as moderators in intercultural service encounters. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 29: 93–102.
- Sharma, P., Wu, Z., & Su, Y. 2016. Role of personal cultural orientations in intercultural service encounters. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 30(2): 223–237.
- Shedd, K. (2019). Why home depot failed in China. *CNBC.com*. June 14, 2019. Retrieved Feb. 22, 2021 from <https://www.cnbc.com/2019/06/14/why-home-depot-failed-in-china.html>.
- Shi, H., Sridhar, S., Grewal, R., & Lilien, G. 2017. Sales representative departures and customer reassignment strategies in business-to-business markets. *Journal of Marketing*, 81(2): 25–44.
- Silverblatt, Howard. "S&P Global Sales," 2019. Retrieved Feb. 22, 2021 from <https://www.spglobal.com/spdji/en/indexology/djia-and-sp-500/sp-500-global-sales/>
- Smith, A. K., Bolton, R. N., & Wagner, J. 1999. A model of customer satisfaction with service encounters involving failure and recovery. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 36(3): 356–372.
- Smith, A., & Reynolds, N. 2009. Affect and cognition as predictors of behavioral intentions towards services. *International Marketing Review*, 26(6): 580–600.
- Song, R., Jang, S., & Cai, G. G. 2016. Does advertising indicate product quality? Evidence from prelaunch and postlaunch advertising in the movie industry. *Marketing Letters*, 27(4): 791–804.
- Song, R., Moon, S., Chen, H. A., & Houston, M. B. 2018. When marketing strategy meets culture: The role of culture in product evaluations. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 46(3): 384–402.
- Spector, A. J. 1956. Expectations, fulfillment, and morale. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 52(1): 51.
- Spreng, R. A., & Chiou, J. S. 2002. A cross-cultural assessment of the satisfaction formation process. *European Journal of Marketing*, 36(7/8): 829–839.
- Spreng, R. A., MacKenzie, S. B., & Olshavsky, R. W. 1996. A reexamination of the determinants of consumer satisfaction. *Journal of Marketing*, 60(3): 15–32.
- Su, C., Yang, Z., Zhuang, G., Zhou, N., & Dou, W. 2009. Interpersonal influence as an alternative channel communication behavior in emerging markets: The case of China. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 40(4): 668–689.
- Tam, J., Sharma, P., & Kim, N. 2014. Examining the role of attribution and intercultural competence in intercultural service encounters. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 28: 159–170.
- Tan, Y. C., Chandukala, S. R., & Reddy, S. K. 2021. Augmented reality in retail and its impact on sales. *Journal of Marketing*, 86: 48–66.
- Tihanyi, L., Griffith, D. A., & Russell, C. J. 2005. The effect of cultural distance on entry mode choice, international diversification, and MNE performance: A meta-analysis. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 36(3): 270–283.
- Tranfield, D., Denyer, D., & Smart, P. 2003. Towards a methodology for developing evidence-informed management knowledge by means of systematic review. *British Journal of Management*, 14(3): 207–222.
- Treviño, L. J., Mixon, F. G., Jr., Funk, C. A., & Inkpen, A. C. 2010. A perspective on the state of the field: International business publications in the elite journals as a measure of institutional and faculty productivity. *International Business Review*, 19(4): 378–387.
- Trianasari, N., Butcher, K., & Sparks, B. 2018. Understanding guest tolerance and the role of cultural familiarity in hotel service failures. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing and Management*, 27(1): 21–40.
- Truong, C., Nguyen, T. H., & Huynh, T. 2021. Customer satisfaction and the cost of capital. *Review of Accounting Studies*, 26(1): 293–342.
- Tsai, S. P. 2011. Strategic relationship management and service brand marketing. *European Journal of Marketing*, 45(7/8): 1194–1213.
- Tse, D. K., & Wilton, P. C. 1988. Models of consumer satisfaction formation: An extension. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 25(2): 204–212.
- Tuli, K. R., & Bharadwaj, S. G. 2009. Customer satisfaction and stock returns risk. *Journal of Marketing*, 73(6): 184–197.
- Ueltschy, L. C., & Krampf, R. F. 2001. Cultural sensitivity to satisfaction and service quality measures. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 9(3): 14–31.
- Ueltschy, L. C., Laroche, M., Eggert, A., & Bindl, U. 2007. Service quality and satisfaction: an international comparison of professional services perceptions. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 21(6): 410–423.
- Ueltschy, L. C., Laroche, M., Tamilia, R. D., & Yannopoulos, P. 2004. Cross-cultural invariance of measures of satisfaction and service quality. *Journal of Business Research*, 57(8): 901–912.
- Umashankar, N., Bahadir, S. C., & Bharadwaj, S. 2021. EXPRESS: Despite efficiencies, M&As reduce firm value by hurting customer satisfaction. *Journal of Marketing*, 86: 66–86.
- Vadakkappatt, G. G., Arora, S., Martin, K. D., & Paharia, N. 2021. EXPRESS: Shedding light on the dark side of firm lobbying: A customer perspective. *Journal of Marketing*, 86: 79–97.
- Van Birgelen, M., de Ruyter, K., de Jong, A., & Wetzels, M. (2002). Customer evaluations of after-sales service contact modes: An empirical analysis of national culture's consequences. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 19(1), 43–64.
- Van der Borgh, M., & Schepers, J. 2018. Are conservative approaches to new product selling a blessing in disguise? *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 46(5): 857–878.
- Veloutsou, C., Gilbert, G. R., Moutinho, L. A., & Goode, M. M. 2005. Measuring transaction-specific satisfaction in services: Are the measures transferable across cultures? *European Journal of Marketing*, 39(5/6): 606–628.
- Villanueva, J., Yoo, S., & Hanssens, D. M. 2008. The impact of marketing-induced versus word-of-mouth customer acquisition on customer equity growth. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 45(1): 48–59.
- Voldnes, G., Grønhaug, K., & Nilssen, F. 2012. Satisfaction in buyer-seller relationships—Influence of cultural differences. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 41(7): 1081–1093.
- Voss, C. A., Roth, A. V., Rosenzweig, E. D., Blackmon, K., & Chase, R. B. 2004. A tale of two countries' conservatism, service quality, and feedback on customer satisfaction. *Journal of Service Research*, 6(3): 212–230.
- Walsh, G., & Bartikowski, B. 2013. Exploring corporate ability and social responsibility associations as antecedents of customer satisfaction cross-culturally. *Journal of Business Research*, 66(8): 989–995.
- Walsh, G., Gouthier, M., Gremler, D. D., & Brach, S. 2012. What the eye does not see, the mind cannot reject: can call center



- location explain differences in customer evaluations? *International Business Review*, 21(5): 957–967.
- Wang, J. J., & Lalwani, A. K. 2019. The distinct influence of power distance perception and power distance values on customer satisfaction in response to loyalty programs. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 36(4): 580–596.
- Weber, K., Hsu, C. H., & Sparks, B. A. 2014. Consumer responses to service failure: The influence of acculturation. *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, 55(3): 300–313.
- Webster, C., & White, A. 2010. Exploring the national and organizational culture mix in service firms. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 38(6): 691–703.
- Whitler, K. A., Lee, B., Krause, R., & Morgan, N. A. 2020. Upper echelons research in marketing. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 49: 198–219.
- Winsted, K. F. 1999. Evaluating service encounters: A cross-cultural and cross-industry exploration. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 7(2): 106–123.
- Wolter, J. S., Bock, D., Mackey, J., Xu, P., & Smith, J. S. 2019. Employee satisfaction trajectories and their effect on customer satisfaction and repatronage intentions. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 47(5): 815–836.
- Wulf, K. D., Odekerken-Schröder, G., & Iacobucci, D. 2001. Investments in consumer relationships: A cross-country and cross-industry exploration. *Journal of Marketing*, 65(4): 33–50.
- Yamin, M., & Altunisik, R. 2003. A comparison of satisfaction outcomes associated with adapted and non-adapted products: Domestic versus imported washing machines in Turkey. *International Marketing Review*, 20(6): 604–620.
- Yang, D., Sonmez, M. M., Li, Q., & Duan, Y. 2015. The power of triple contexts on customer-based brand performance—A comparative study of Baidu and Google from Chinese netizens' perspective. *International Business Review*, 24(1): 11–22.
- Yani-de-Soriano, M., Hanel, P. H., Vazquez-Carrasco, R., Cambra-Fierro, J., Wilson, A., & Centeno, E. 2019. Investigating the role of customers' perceptions of employee effort and justice in service recovery: A cross-cultural perspective. *European Journal of Marketing*, 53(4): 708–732.
- Yi, Y. 1990. A critical review of consumer satisfaction. *Review of Marketing*, 4(1): 68–123.
- Ying, S., Chan, J. H., & Qi, X. 2020. Why are Chinese and North American guests satisfied or dissatisfied with hotels? An application of big data analysis. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*.
- Yoon, S. J., & Lee, H. J. 2017. Does customer experience management pay off? Evidence from local versus global hotel brands in South Korea. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 26(6): 585–605.
- Zander, I., McDougall-Covin, P., & Rose, E. L. 2015. Born globals and international business: Evolution of a field of research. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 46(1): 27–35.
- Zhang, T. 2021. Will the increase in publication volumes "dilute" prestigious journals' impact factors? A trend analysis of the FT50 journals. *Scientometrics*, 126(1): 863–869.
- Zhou, K. Z., Brown, J. R., Dev, C. S., & Agarwal, S. 2007. The effects of customer and competitor orientations on performance in global markets: a contingency analysis. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 38(2): 303–319.

Publisher's Note Springer Nature remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

Accepted by V. Kumar, Consulting Editor, 28 May 2022. This article has been with the authors for four revisions.

Springer Nature or its licensor holds exclusive rights to this article under a publishing agreement with the author(s) or other rightsholder(s); author self-archiving of the accepted manuscript version of this article is solely governed by the terms of such publishing agreement and applicable law.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

G. T. M. Hult PhD, is Professor of Marketing at the Broad College of Business at Michigan State University. A native of Sweden, Dr. Hult is a member of the Expert Networks of the World Economic Forum and UNCTAD's World Investment Forum, and part of the research team at the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI). Dr. Hult's research focuses on international business, customer satisfaction, supply chain management, and strategy.

F. V. Morgeson III PhD, is Assistant Professor of Marketing at the Broad College of Business at Michigan State University. Dr. Morgeson's research focuses on customer satisfaction and customer experience measurement and management. His work explores the impact of political identity on consumer attitudes, international marketing, the marketing–finance interface, and the impact of IT on customer service delivery (e-commerce and e-government).

Udit Sharma is a doctoral candidate in marketing at the Broad College of Business at Michigan State University. A native of India, he holds a master's degree in Marketing Research from Michigan State University. His area of research interest is marketing strategy with emphases on customer–firm relationships, political identity in marketing, the marketing–finance interface, and marketing in upper echelons.

Claes Fornell PhD, is the D.C. Cook Distinguished Professor in the Ross School of Business at University of Michigan (Emeritus). A native of Sweden, he founded the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) in 1994 and is hailed globally as "The Father of Customer Satisfaction." Fornell's work on managing customer satisfaction has led to two U.S. patents. Claes is one of the world's most cited business scholars and #1 in customer satisfaction.