

Do you do more than run in your Nikes? If so, you might not like them

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Consumers might like variety when it comes to products to buy, but will using a product in a variety of circumstances and in a variety of ways lead consumers to like it more? Probably not, says a new study in the *Journal of Marketing Research*. According to the study, the more a consumer uses a product for different purposes or in different situations, the more likely he or she will report being unsatisfied with their purchase.

"Consumers often use the same product in the same way in multiple situations, and these situations may differ in variety," write authors Jordan Etkin (Duke University) and Aner Sela (University of Florida). "Across many different products and usage scenarios, we found the same result: when people perceived more variety among a product's usage situations, they liked the product less."

The authors conducted several studies to establish this result. A typical study looked at how the variety in usage influenced product evaluation, customer satisfaction, and the likelihood of the customer recommending the product to others. Did [consumers](#), for instance, use their sneakers only for walking, be it walking the dog, walking to work, or walking to the grocery store? Or did they wear them in a variety of circumstances—walking the dog, flying on airplanes, doing home improvement projects?

The authors found the same pattern each time: when people perceived more variety in a product's usage, they liked the product less. Lower

variety situations (walking the dog, walking to work, and walking to the [grocery store](#)) impressed upon the customer how often they were using their sneakers, leading them to feel they were getting a lot of value from the product. Higher variety situations ([walking](#) the dog, flying on airplanes, and doing home improvement projects) gave people a sense that they were using the sneakers less often, and therefore getting less value.

"This research has several implications for marketing practice. For example, asking consumers to think of their 'various experiences' with a product may accidentally lead consumers to remember a wide variety of different usage situations, feel they had used the product less often, and consequently give it a lower rating. And contrary to what might be expected, advertising that portrays usage as more repetitive may lead current customers to feel that they are getting more use from the product, which should increase loyalty and repeat purchases," the authors conclude.

More information: Jordan Etkin and Aner Sela. "How Experience Variety Shapes Post-Purchase Product Evaluation." Forthcoming in the *Journal of Marketing Research*.

Provided by American Marketing Association

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