

Model: ACSI index (American Customer Satisfaction Index)

Type of model: Customer satisfaction model (structure model)
 Author(s): Claes Fornell et al
 Domain: Brand loyalty

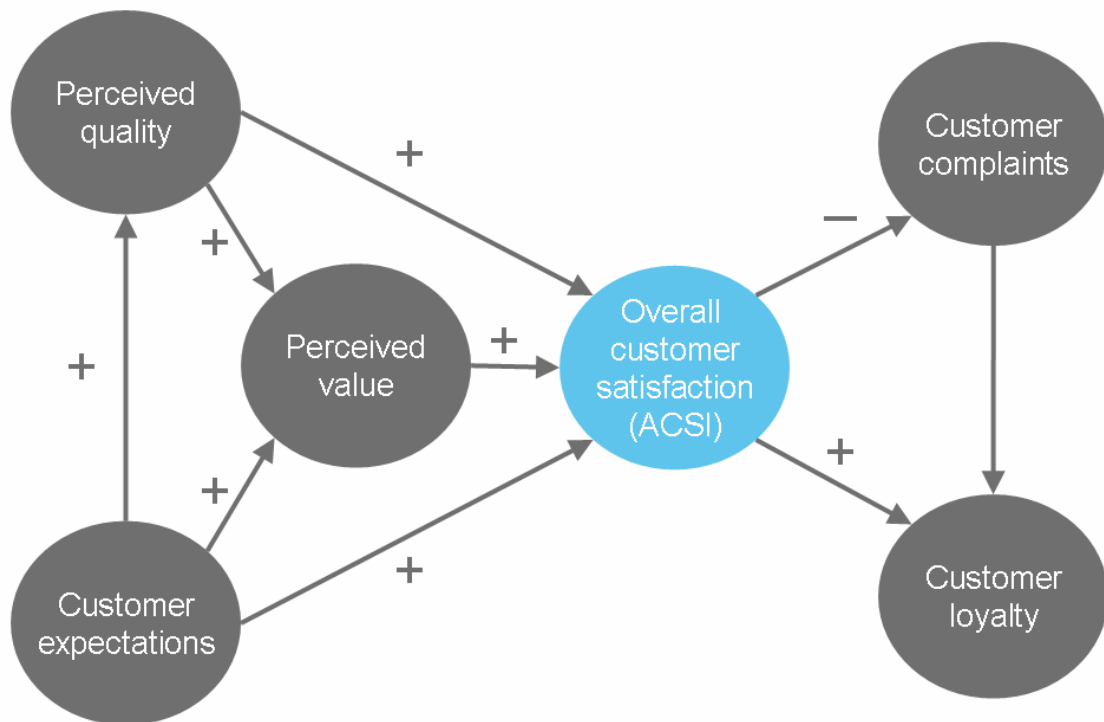


Figure 1: The ACSI model (according to Claes Fornell).

The ACSI model is a measuring system that was developed to evaluate the performance of companies, industries, economic sectors and national economies. The model was designed for use in benchmark studies, and is also very apt as a customer satisfaction model. It is based on perception data gathered from customers. The central focus is on overall customer satisfaction. This represents the quality of products and services as experienced by consumers. ACSI uses a multiple indicator approach: the overall customer satisfaction is measured by assessing answers to different questions, and the outcome is subsequently logged in an index.

Overall customer satisfaction has three antecedents (explanatory factors):

1. Perceived quality.

2. Customer expectations.

3. Perceived value.

Sub 1. Perceived quality: this is the evaluation of the consumption experience. This comprises: (a) the extent to which the company can meet customers' heterogeneous wishes, and (b) reliability. Reliability here refers to the extent to which the product offering is reliable, standardised and fault-free.

Sub 2. Customer expectations: these relate to (a) previous experiences and (b) an assessment of whether one expects the provider to deliver quality in the future.

Sub 3. Perceived value: the price/quality ratio. This solicits an evaluation of a product's quality in relation to the price paid for it.

Overall customer satisfaction has two interdependent variables ('consequences'): (1) the number of complaints by customers/consumers and (2) the loyalty of customers/consumers. Figure 1 depicts the supposed relations between all variables. Table 1 provides an overview of the variables from the ACSI model with corresponding operationalisations.

Table 1: Measuring variables in the ACSI model

	Variable	Operationalisation
1	Customer expectations	Overall expected quality (before purchase)
2	Customer expectations	Expectations of how well the product will be able to meet the customer's individual wishes (before purchase)
3	Customer expectations	Expectations relating to reliability, or the expectation of how often things can go wrong (before purchase)
4	Perceived quality	Overall evaluation of the quality (after purchase)
5	Perceived quality	Evaluation of how well the product meets personal wishes (after purchase)
6	Perceived quality	Evaluation of reliability, or the expectation of how often things can go wrong (after purchase)
7	Perceived value	Judgement of quality, considering the price
8	Perceived value	Judgement of price, considering the quality
9	ACSI	Overall satisfaction
10	ACSI	Expected disconfirmation (performance that does not live up to expectations or exceeds expectations)
11	ACSI	Performance vs. customer perception of the

		ideal for a product or service in the category in question
12	Customer complaints	Did the customer complain (formally or informally) about the product or service?
13	Customer loyalty	Chances of repeat custom
14	Customer loyalty	Sensitivity to price (increase) considering the intention to purchase the product/service again
15	Customer loyalty	Sensitivity to price (lowering) in decision to purchase the product/service again

Reference(s)

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*, vol.60, no.4, p.7-18. *

* : available in the EURIB library.