

The beauty of Discipline

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Abstract: Personal discipline is adopted by people to improve their self control, life satisfaction levels. With personal discipline, activities to fulfill daily requirements become like rituals and rituals are known to have various benefits like strengthen bonds, enhance meaning, boost morale and productivity. In this paper we talk about how people who adopt personal discipline have utility functions which do not follow the law of diminishing marginal returns.

Keywords: marginal, productivity, discipline

Introduction:

Discipline, and healthy habits add substantially to your life. They can even turn your life around. An activity repeated with discipline, like a ritual, is equated to meditation (Hobson, Schroeder, 2017)

Basic utility models taught in econ grad schools are often based on the law of diminishing marginal utility. This paper adds to it.

How it affects us? It remains to be seen how many people are disciplined at any point of time, as they will be out of the scope of the law of diminishing marginal utility.

Literature review:

The relationship between personal discipline and the law of diminishing marginal utility has garnered attention in various academic circles, particularly within psychology and economics. While direct studies on this specific intersection are limited, existing literature offers insights into how self-regulation influences consumption patterns and utility perception.

E.T. Berkman and J.L. Livingston, in their 2016 work "Self-Regulation and Ego Control," discuss how valuation mechanisms serve as facets of self-control. They highlight that the subjective value of repeated experiences tends to decrease—a concept paralleling the law of diminishing marginal utility. For instance, the initial consumption of a pleasurable item, like candy, provides significant satisfaction, but subsequent consumption yields progressively less pleasure. This diminishing return can be attributed to psychological phenomena such as habituation and hedonic adaptation, where individuals become accustomed to stimuli over time, leading to reduced emotional responses. [ScienceDirect](#)

Furthermore, the law of diminishing marginal utility suggests that as individuals consume more units of a good, the additional satisfaction gained from each extra unit decreases. This principle underscores the importance of personal discipline in consumption behaviours. By exercising self-control, individuals can moderate their consumption to maintain higher levels of satisfaction and avoid the pitfalls of overindulgence, which often leads to decreased utility and potential negative consequences. [Investopedia](#)

In summary, while direct research linking personal discipline with the law of diminishing marginal utility is sparse, existing literature indicates that self-regulation plays a crucial role in managing consumption and sustaining satisfaction levels. Understanding and applying these concepts can aid individuals in making informed decisions that enhance overall well-being.

Observations:

If you have a certain section of people who are disciplined, who will take a fixed amount of a good regularly, regardless of income change and price change (within a limit), the law of diminishing marginal utility does not apply to them. Certain section of people do follow discipline, and more and more people are inspired by success stories and adopt personal discipline. They are self serving and therefore cannot be removed from the mould of “rational” people. As the law applies only when the person consumes the proverbial second or third apple the same day, and these people only consume one and then repeat the same choice the next day. There is no doubt that with discipline, a person’s satisfaction levels in life improve (the famous marshmallow experiment indicates along with numerous studies (Sarikabak, 2019). He does not fit in the law of diminishing marginal utility.

Also a discipline applies when a person avails a doctor’s services, as a person will take medicines with the discipline prescribed by the doctor and also visit the doctor only as per requirement.

Discipline looks similar to habit formation, but is not dependent on the brand’s advertising- it doesn’t even interfere with the process of habit formation.

Further research:

I am working on furthering this topic and you are welcome to add or send any comments and your name will be duly mentioned in future papers.

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