

EMOTIONS AND CONSUMER SATISFACTION

FLORIN ISAC¹, SERGIU RUSU¹

¹ Aurel Vlaicu University of Arad, Romania,
e-mail: florinisac72@yahoo.com

Abstract: Customer satisfaction is considered as the "cornerstone" of marketing, it is often presented as the ultimate goal of marketing function. According to Giese and Cote [2000], consumer satisfaction is an emotional or cognitive response. Researching the role of emotions in shaping the concept of consumer satisfaction presents theoretical and practical interest.

Key words: customer satisfaction, emotional response

RESEARCH RESULTS

1. The affect as the antecedent of consumer satisfaction

Research during the past 30 years have placed increased emphasis on the role of emotions in marketing and in the explaining of consumer behavior.

According to Szymanski and Henard [21], the possibility that satisfaction is not only cognitive, but also to include an emotional component has been the focus of research concerning satisfaction. In 1980, Richard Westbrook identifies an important limit of the expectations disconfirmation paradigm (cognitive model) and that it was neglecting emotional reactions influence on customer satisfaction. For this reason, his 1980 study, applied on cars and sports footwear, incorporated, along with disconfirmation variables such as mood, dissatisfaction, optimism / pessimism, life satisfaction.

The researcher concludes from this study that the influence of measured affective variables change depending on the type of product analyzed. When in particular referring to the mood, the study of Spies, Hesse and Loesch [20] confirms an appreciable impact of this variable on satisfaction, and establishes that customers of a supermarket were recording higher scores of satisfaction compared to their experience of buying if they had a good mood. Instead, the study led by Babin, Griffin and Babin [1] indicates that mood effects on satisfaction are weaker or absent if the consumer is very heavily involved with the product or service [23].

According to Derbaix and Pham [4], a clear distinction between different types of emotions is rarely present in the literature devoted to consumer behavior. Pieters and Van Raaij [19] make a distinction between moods, emotions, personality characteristics on one hand, and evaluative affects respectively attitude, assessment and preference. They characterized the mood, emotion and affective characteristics of personality through four dimensions: antecedents, intensity, duration and specificity.

Because in the literature terms like "emotion", "affection", "mood" and "feeling" are used interchangeably, Oliver [17] provides definitions for all these concepts. Emotion is addressed as evocative stimuli, internal reactions, observable manifestations that include motivational states and behavioral characteristics such as facial expressions. The affect refers to the "sentimental" consciousness and is in opposition to the thought that lies in the cognitive domain. From a cognitive point of view the emotion is involved more than the affect. The feeling is including pleasure or displeasure, happiness or sorrow, pleasure or displeasure. Include feeling pleasure or displeasure, happiness or sorrow, pleasure or displeasure. The mood can be distinguished by its duration, being a temporary state of pleasure or displeasure.

Table 1.

The typology of affective reactions according to Derbaix and Pham

Characteristics	Emotion	Feeling	Mood	Preference	Attitude	Appreciation
Target or stimulus	Stimulus specific	Stimulus specific	Target and stimulus non specific	Target specific	Target specific	Target specific
Somatic intensity	Strong	Moderate	Weak to moderate	Moderate (function of the targets)	Weak	Weak
Duration	Brief or very brief	Moderate to long	Moderate	Moderate to long	Moderate to long	Brief
Frecquey of somatic experiences	Always	Sometimes to often	Sometimes to often	Sometimes	Seldom	Seldom
Frecquey of somatic expressions	Often	Function of display rules	Function of display rules	Sometimes	Seldom	Seldom
Facility to deceive (ease to control the expression)	Low	Rather low due to the duration and/or the intensity	Rather low due to the duration and/or the intensity	May be low if the target is important	High	High
Intention to disimulate (deception)	May be strong due to display rules	May be strong due to display rules	May be strong due to display rules	Poate fi puternic în raport cu inta	Poate fi puternic	Poate fi puternic
Probability of elementary subjective experience	High	Rather high	Rather low	High	Moderate	High
Amount of cognitive antecedents	Small to very small	Large	Moderate	Small to moderate	Large	Very large
Frequency of subsequent cognitive processes	Small to very often	Often	Often	Often	Often and important in case of cognitive dissonance	Often and related to the cognitive antecedents

Source: Derbaix, C., Pham, M.T., 1991, p.329

Post buying affect influences the satisfaction and other social perceptions [8]. Some studies [11; 24; 26] analyze the *affect dimensionality* and examine its role in judgments relating to satisfaction. They reveal that emotion has a two-dimensional character; the general affect has an impact on levels of satisfaction before and beyond the classical type expectations-disconfirmation effects.

Westbrook [25,24] and Westbrook and Oliver [26], expanded their research purposes related to satisfaction by incorporating affect. Westbrook [24] argues that consumers form two brief emotional states, one based on positive affects in consumption and the other on negative ones. He pointed out that joy and interest are forming the positive affect, and anger, contempt and disgust form negative affect, the two not being correlated. In addition, the two significant affective components were relational in the expected direction with satisfaction.

Oliver [15] suggests that there are five different prototypes of satisfaction, contentment, pleasure, release, novelty and surprise. They are associated with different primary emotions. Contentment is associated with the primary affect of tolerance and acceptance. Pleasure is a positive reinforcement evoking positive states, being associated with the primary affect of happiness. Release on the other hand, is a state of negative

consolidation involving the removal of negative states. The novelty was defined as an expectation of the unexpected and is associated with the primary affect of interest and emotion. The surprise comes when the product performs outside the expectations "range" can evoke both a positive primary affect (excitement), or a negative primary affect (anger), depending on the direction of expectations disconfirmation.

Westbrook and Oliver [26] have identified similar issues, except interest and joy that were approached as separate factors. They identified five dimensions of consumption emotions that are associated with satisfaction: contentment, a pleasant surprise, lack of emotions, unpleasant surprise, anger.

Emotions were studied in fields such as advertising, consumer decision-making process, retail, behavioral intentions. They were defined by Westbrook and Oliver [26] as "the set of emotional responses elicited specifically during product usages or consumption experiences..."

Among the affective variables, emotions can influence the satisfaction considerably. Westbrook's study results [24] demonstrated that positive and negative emotions related to the purchase or consumption experiences significantly increased explanatory power of cognitive model of satisfaction, and that these variables explain satisfaction judgments almost as much as this model.

The emotions effect was not mediated by expectations or denial. Oliver's [16] study results show that for one of the services that the research was concentrated on, positive and negative emotions were predictive variables of satisfaction better than disconfirmation. The study of Mano and Oliver [11] highlights the following relationships [23]:

- activation ("arousal") - positive affective reactions (emotions included) - satisfaction;

- activation (arousal) - negative affective (emotions included) - satisfaction.

Westbrook and Oliver [26] identified five consumer groups that had different ways of emotional responses to a particular consumer experience:

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- the "satisfied" group, characterized by interest and enjoyment;
- the group of "positive surprise", characterized by the experience of joy and surprise;
- the group of "non-emotional" individuals;
- the group of "negative surprise", characterized by surprise experience and negative emotions, particularly sadness;
- the group of "angry/upset", characterized by negative emotions experience, but also by the experience of surprise.

The consumers from "positive surprise" and "satisfied" groups reported the highest satisfaction scores, while consumers "negative surprise" and "upset" groups reported the lowest satisfaction scores. The study led by Westbrook and Oliver [26] reached similar results. Joelle Vanhamme's research [22] confirms not only the importance of positive and negative emotions influence on satisfaction, but equally of the surprise (the author discovered a direct and an indirect influence via positive and negative emotions, to surprise on satisfaction).

2. Emotions taxonomy, their measurement and relationship with satisfaction

Although researchers agree with the importance of emotions as a determinant of post-purchase behavior, there are no conclusive findings on the relationship between them [3].

According to Ladhari [10] in psychology literature there are two main approaches for the measurement of emotions.

The first approach considers that all emotions come from a small number of basic emotions. Izard [7] proposes a framework for analysis of ten basic emotions: interest, joy, anger, contempt, aversion, shame, guilt, sadness, fear and surprise. Plutchick (1980) offers a theory of emotions based on adaptive functions corresponding to eight primary emotions: contempt, fear, sadness, anger, surprise, hope, acceptance and joy. Other emotions result from combinations of these eight primary categories.

Table 2

Emotions taxonomies

Plutchik (8 types)	Mehrabian & Russell (3 types)	Izard (10 types)
Fear	Pleasure	Interest
Anger	Excitement	Joy
Joy	Domination	Anger
Sadness		Disgust
Acceptance		Contempt
Disgust		Suffering
Hope		Fear
Surprise		Shame
		Guilt
		Surprise

Source: Adapted from Evrard, Y., Aurier, P., 1994, p.120; Westbrook, R.A., 1987, p.259.

A second approach considers that emotions exist in bipolar categories [13]. This model of affect is known by the acronym PAD, resulting in three dimensions constitutive of emotions: pleasure-displeasure; activation-deactivation; dominance-submission. Bipolarity implies that the presence of these dimensions exclude the possibility of other ends. In the marketing studies that fall into this category, emotions are represented by only two dimensions, pleasure and activation (The PA) [28; 12; 3]. Pleasure represents the degree to which a person feels comfortable, happy, or satisfied a situation. Activation is the degree to which a person feels excited, alert, stimulated, active in a given situation.

Table 3

Types of emotions in the literature devoted to customer satisfaction

Authors	Measures	Analyses	Product / services	Results
Westbrook (1987)	6 of 10 DES II (Izard, 1977) subscale: anger, disgust, contempt, interest, joy, emotions, and surprise.	Confirmatory factor analysis; Reliability analysis	Automobile, cable television service	2 dimensions of affect: positive, emotions and negative
Dube-Rioux (1990)	5 positive and 5 negative adjectives selected from those most frequently mentioned in a pre-test.	Reliability analysis	Restaurant	2 dimensions of affect: positive emotions (warm feeling, enthusiastic, being valued, surprised, interested) and negative emotions (irritated, annoyed, displeased, bored and indifferent).
Westbrook & Oliver (1991)	10 DES-II subscales: anger, disgust, contempt, interest, joy, sadness, fear, shame, guilt, and surprise scale and Watson et al.'s or (1988) PANAS scale.	Discriminant analysis	Automobile	3 dimensions: pleasant surprise (positive affect and surprise), hostility (constellation of negative affect), and interest
Mano & Oliver (1993)	43 adjectives: combined version of items in the Mano's (1991) circumplex	Principal component analysis with varimax rotation; Reliability analysis	Variety of products	3 dimensions: aroused positive affect, negative affect, and low arousal or 2 dimensions: aroused positive affect and negative affect
Oliver & Westbrook (1993)	A shortened version of Izard's (1972), original DES (29 items)	Discriminant analysis	Automobile	5 distinct patterns of affect: hostility, guilt-shame, happy/sad (bipolar dimension), surprise, and fear
Oliver (1994)	16 items were selected from studies of Watson et al. (1988), Larsen and Diener (1992)	Factor analysis	Health care service	3 dimensions of consumption emotions: positive affect, negative affect, and arousal
Evrard & Aurier (1994)	Combined items issued from Plutchik's eight dimensions and from PAD model	Exploratory factor analysis; Reliability analysis; Confirmatory factor analysis	Motion picture	4 dimensions of affect: positive affect, negative affect, absence of arousal, and surprise
Dubé et. al. (1996)	15-item scale, including both positive and negative emotions, was developed by the authors	Factor analysis with orthogonal rotation; Reliability analysis.	Health care service	3 dimensions of affect: situation-attributed negative emotions; other attributed negative emotions; positive emotions
Liljander & Strandvik (1997)	7 emotions retained from literature	Principal component analysis with varimax rotation; Reliability analysis	Public service (labor force bureau)	2 dimensions of affect: positive emotions (happy, hopeful, and positively surprised) and negative emotions (angry, depressed, guilty, and humiliated).
Nyer (1997)	15 emotions were retained from the works of Shaver et al (1987) and Holbrook and Batra (1987) to represent anger, sadness, and joy	Factor analysis with oblique rotation; Reliability analysis	Simulated computer system	3 dimensions: anger, sadness and joy/satisfaction (joy and satisfaction were merged to form a joy/satisfaction scale). Satisfaction is considered as an emotional response to consumption experience
Dubé & Menon (1998)	27-item scale was developed by the authors based on the review of emotions associated with health service context	Factor analysis with varimax rotation; Reliability analysis	Health service	5 dimensions: situation-attributed negative emotions positive emotions, other attributed negative emotions, self-attributed negative emotions, arousal emotions

Authors	Measures	Analyses	Product / services	Results
Jun, Hyun, Gentry & Song (2001)	List of emotions selected from past studies were pre-tested; (14 emotions were retained)	Factor analysis with varimax rotation; Reliability analysis	Course	3 dimensions of consumption emotions: positive affect, agitation-related negative affect; dejection-related negative affect.
Wirtz & Bateson (1999)	Scale 1: 12 items derived from Mehrabian (1980). Scale 2: 20 items form Russell and Pratt (1980)	Reliability analysis	PC-based home banking service	2 dimensions of consumption emotions (pleasure and arousal) for each of the two scales
Phillips & Baumgartner (2002) study 1	23 items derived from Edell and Burke (1987) and Burke and Edell (1989)	Factor analysis; Reliability analysis	Orange juice	2 dimensions of consumption emotions: positive emotions and negative emotions
Phillips & Baumgartner (2002) study 2	23 items derived from Edell and Burke (1987) and Burke and Edell (1989)	Factor analysis; Reliability analysis	Orange juice	2 dimensions of consumption emotions: positive emotions and negative emotions
Bigné, Andreu & Gnoth (2005)	12 items derived from Russell (1980)	Reliability analysis; Confirmatory factor analysis	Theme park experience	2 dimensions of consumption emotions: pleasure and arousal
Babin et.al. (2005)	8 items derived from Mehrabian and Russell (1974)	Reliability analysis; Confirmatory factor analysis	Dining experience	2 dimensions of consumption emotions: positive emotions and negative emotions

Source: Ladhari, 2007, p.1090-1092

CONCLUSIONS

In the literature devoted to customer satisfaction analyzed above, it has been shown that emotions play an essential role [24; 26; 17; 18; 28; 3]. Emotional response is part of the construction of satisfaction, emotions existing even without considering a purchase [18].

There are conclusions showing that the emotions during consumption have an impact on behavioral intentions, including informal interpersonal verbal communication and loyalty [24; 27].

Emotions experienced during consumption will leave affective traces in memory, traces available to be accessed and integrated by consumers in their assessments related to satisfaction [26]. Several studies [2; 6; 11; 24; 26; 27] showed a significant relationship between emotions and different measures of satisfaction. In general, we consider the existence of a positive relationship between emotion and satisfaction, a positive relationship that is supported by the literature as well. [21; 12; 9].

However, the literature has not reached a definitive answer to the question: is the satisfaction an emotion? Emotions act together with cognitions in getting a satisfaction type answer. Moreover, individual consumers can emphasize either the cognitive component, or the emotional one regarding their purchases results [18].

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