

AN EMPIRICAL TEST OF CONTINGENCY THEORY

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ABSTRACT

In a test of Fournier and Mick's (1999) contingency theory of consumer satisfaction, this work identifies two predictors of a relatively more emotional (as contrasted with rational) satisfaction experience. Two stages of work were undertaken. First, an exploratory investigation suggested that consumers do find a rational-emotional continuum meaningful for describing the nature of their satisfaction with a self-identified product. This early stage also suggested two context-specific predictors of differences in the rational-emotional nature of satisfaction. A subsequent large-scale survey focusing on packaged goods provided empirical support for a relatively more emotional experience with relatively more hedonic (as contrasted with utilitarian) product categories and with brands that permit a greater degree of self-expression.

INTRODUCTION

While satisfaction is one of the most fundamental notions in marketing, currently there is little agreement regarding its underlying nature. The traditional paradigm considers satisfaction a cognitive evaluation, the consumer as "rational man," comparing pre-consumption expectations with post-consumption performance, i.e., *cognition = satisfaction* (Oliver 1980). This model suggests that consumers are satisfied when their expectations about the product are met or exceeded. This paradigm has found considerable empirical support (see Anderson and Fornell 1994 and Iacobucci, Grayson, and Ostrom 1994 for reviews).

In recent years there has been increased interest in the role of affect in satisfaction. Some authors have investigated consumer emotions such as surprise, joy, and agitation as independent variables affecting cognitive satisfaction judgments, i.e., *affect -> satisfaction* (e.g., Evrard and Aurier 1994; Jayanti 1998; Jun et al. 2001; VanHamme and Snelders 2001). Another group of researchers has treated such emotions as dependent variables affected by the consumer's more objective cognitive assessment of

satisfaction, i.e., *satisfaction -> affect* (e.g., Carley, Forrester and Maute 1994; Oliver and Westbrook 1993). Of late, there has been emphasis on one seemingly important consumer emotion, delight, investigated primarily as a criterion variable (e.g., Kumar, Olshavsky and King 2001; Oliver and Rust 1997; Swan and Trawick 1999; Williams and Anderson 1999). The key practical implication from this work is that *both* cognition and affect may play a role in satisfaction.

A few researchers have also considered that (at least in specific instances), emotional response *is* satisfaction, i.e., *affect = satisfaction*. Hausknecht's (1988) early experiment suggests that satisfied consumers experience the emotions: interest, joy, and surprise. Oliver (1989) subsequently proposed five emotional satisfaction modes: contentment, pleasure, relief, novelty, and surprise. The practical implication suggested by this modal definition of affective satisfaction is that enhancing a particular emotional response(s), by definition, increases consumer satisfaction.

Recently, in a thought provoking study involving case studies of consumers' experiences with technology products, Fournier and Mick (1999) offered a cogent resolution to these different conceptualizations of the nature of satisfaction. After extensive analyses of rich, qualitative data, these authors concluded with the simple, but profound, suggestion that the satisfaction experience is best thought of as a *blend* of cognition and emotion, dependent upon the consumption context. Fournier and Mick called for a *contingency paradigm* to guide future thinking and research on satisfaction. The key implication of this contingency theory is that marketers must first understand the consumption context and then attempt to enhance *satisfaction as it actually is experienced in that context*.

The research presented here is an empirical test of the fundamental tenets of Fournier and Mick's (1999) contingency theory. Generally, this work assessed the meaningfulness to consumers and the potential usefulness to marketers of conceptualizing the nature of the satisfaction experience (i.e. its

character, its essence) as a rational-emotional continuum. Specifically, this work sought answers to the following questions:

- 1) do consumers find a rational-emotional continuum meaningful to describe the nature of a particular satisfaction experience (i.e., purely emotional, purely rational, some combination of the two);
- 2) can the consumption context contribute to a better understanding of the relative roles that cognition and emotion play in satisfaction with particular brands.

EXPLORATORY STUDY

This investigation began with extensive work with 92 student respondents to assess the meaningfulness to consumers of describing the nature of their satisfaction with a self-identified product along a continuum ranging from "purely rational" to "purely emotional." An additional objective was to identify what, if any, particulars of the consumption context were likely to result in relatively more emotional satisfaction.

The data were gathered from the author's two undergraduate classes, Marketing Research and Consumer Behavior at the University of Georgia during the Summer of 2002. The data were collected at the beginning of the semester, before any class readings or discussion of satisfaction. While these respondents had been exposed to the notion of satisfaction in a Principles of Marketing class, they were completely naive regarding the author's thinking or study objectives.

The general approach to asking the questions was unstructured/undisguised with respondents answering the questions in their own words. The questions were asked sequentially using an overhead projector to prevent bias from later questions on the responses to questions asked earlier. Respondents first were asked to identify a product with which they were "very satisfied" and answer questions in reference to this particular product. Subsequently, respondents answered questions about the types of brands and product categories they thought generally would be associated with both highly emotional and

highly rational satisfaction experiences (extensive detail on this early-stage work is available from the author upon request).

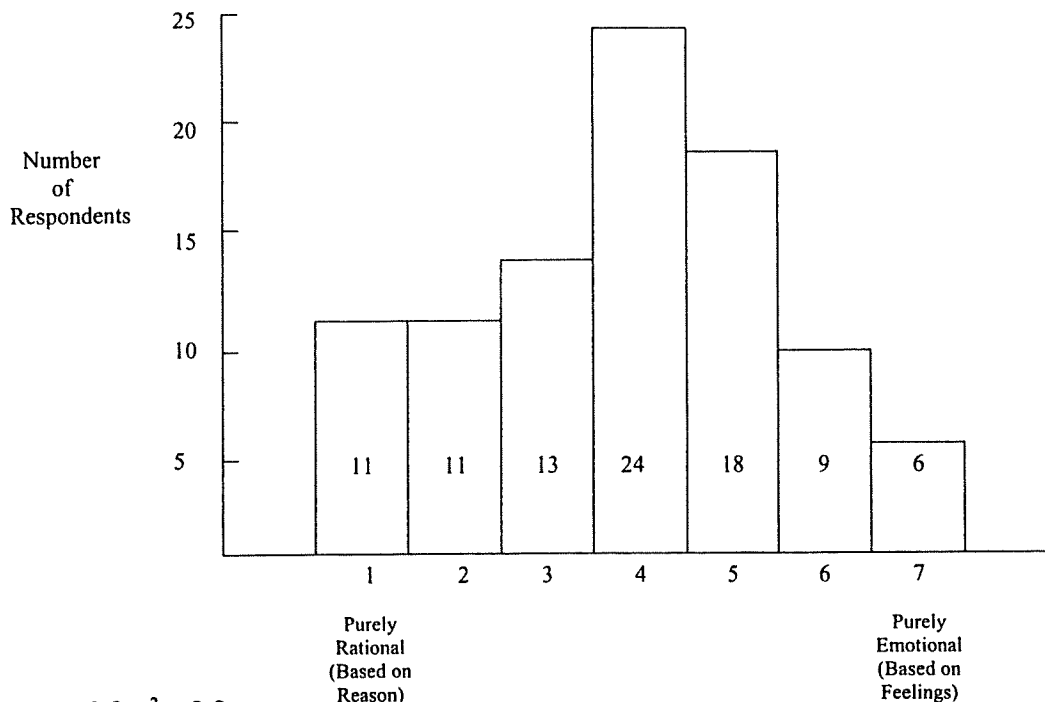
This early work suggested that consumers *do* find it meaningful to describe the nature of their satisfaction with a self-identified product (no constraints on choice) as highly rational, highly emotional, or some combination of the two. In open-ended answers:

- 51% of respondents described their satisfaction in purely rational terms (e.g., "it does everything I thought it should be capable of doing with no exceptions");
- 17% described their satisfaction in purely emotional terms (e.g., "I couldn't be happier");
- 15% described their satisfaction with a mixture of rational and emotional terms (e.g., "my vehicle fits my needs for a car as well as fits my personality");
- 16% used words that precluded a rational-emotional determination (e.g., "this club is awesome").

The results from a quantitative measure (scale of 1 to 7 with higher numbers indicating relatively more emotional satisfaction) provided additional support for the meaningfulness of a rational-emotional continuum for describing respondents' satisfaction with a particular product. A histogram of the responses to this simple quantitative measure suggested a normal distribution ($\bar{x}=3.8$, $s^2=2.8$; see the Figure).

When asked to generalize about those products for which satisfaction is primarily emotional in nature, the most common answer (24% of respondents) was a reference to the "hedonic" nature of the product, specifically and/or by example (e.g., "products that make you feel good without serving some basic function, movies, beer, etc."). When asked to generalize about those products for which satisfaction is primarily rational in nature, the (parallel) most common answer (27% of respondents) was the notion of "functional" products, specifically and/or by example (e.g.,

Figure
Histogram for Quantitative Measure*



“those that make a task easier”).

A second variable thought by some respondents to be associated with a more emotional satisfaction experience (mentioned by approximately 10%) was the amount of “self-expression” permitted by the brand (e.g., “products that represent me”). There also was the parallel suggestion by several that satisfaction tends to be more rational in nature when there is little brand differentiation (e.g., “a product where all kinds or brands of that product are the same”), perhaps limiting the potential for an emotional response to any particular brand.

The insights garnered from the exploratory study suggested the need for quantitative data to test the hypotheses generated. As such, a second study, a large-scale survey of real-world consumers, was undertaken.

LARGE-SAMPLE SURVEY

The main study of this investigation was a cross-sectional survey of non-student adults, age 21 and

up. Volunteers from the author's Fall 2002 and Spring 2003 Marketing Research classes acted as paid field researchers in gathering completed questionnaires from friends and family members. Approximately 1/3 (of over 300) volunteered, suggesting that no student felt compelled to act in this capacity.

Extensive preliminary work with students suggested that \$1 per questionnaire was a sufficient incentive for those interested in contributing to a “real and important” marketing research project. Furthermore, students indicated that \$1 was “too little” encouragement for students' completing the questionnaires themselves as a means to make extra money.

Extensive written instructions, complete with a lengthy oral discussion, stressed the importance of data purity. Students were instructed that it was *critical* that the questionnaires were completed independently by each consumer respondent, without discussion with other respondents or with the student volunteer. These volunteers then signed

a statement indicating that they understood the instructions as they went out to the field. These data-gatherers also signed a separate statement that they had complied with the instructions and had not completed any questionnaires (or items) themselves when they turned in their work.

This approach to data collection produced complete questionnaires from a sample of 334 real-world, adult consumers. The achieved sample was predominately white-non-Hispanic with a good mix of men and women of varied ages and household income levels (see Table 1 for details on the demographic makeup of the sample).

Table 1
Demographic Makeup of Achieved Sample
Quantitative Study

	Frequency	Percent
Age		
Under 25	81	24.3
25-39	85	25.4
40-54	117	35.0
55 and Over	<u>51</u>	<u>15.3</u>
Total	334	100.0
Marital Status		
Single	113	33.8
Married	187	56.0
Divorced	19	5.7
Widowed	9	2.7
Other	<u>6</u>	<u>1.8</u>
Total	334	100.0
Sex		
Male	154	46.1
Female	<u>180</u>	<u>53.9</u>
Total	334	100.0
Race		
White-Non Hispanic	294	88.0
Black	16	4.8
Asian	11	3.3
Hispanic	9	2.7
Other	<u>4</u>	<u>1.2</u>
Total	334	100.0
Annual Household Income		
Less than \$50,000	135	40.4
\$50,000 - \$150,000	144	43.1
Over \$150,000	<u>55</u>	<u>16.5</u>
Total	334	100.0

Hypotheses

The criterion construct in the investigation was the relative role of emotion in the satisfaction experience (labeled EMOTIONAL SATISFACTION), conceptualized as a continuum ranging from "purely rational" to "purely emotional." The midpoint of this continuum was conceptualized as "equally rational and emotional."

The predictor constructs investigated were the hedonic nature of the product category (labeled HEDONIC PRODUCT) and the self-expression permitted by the brand (labeled SELF-EXPRESSIVE BRAND). For use in this study, HEDONIC PRODUCT was defined as the relative pleasure provided by the product category, conceptualized as a continuum ranging from "utilitarian" to "hedonic." The midpoint was conceptualized as "equally utilitarian and hedonic." SELF-EXPRESSIVE BRAND was defined as the degree to which the brand is perceived as an extension of the consumer's self.

In an early paper, Hirschman and Holbrook (1982) discussed the notion of hedonic motives in consumer behavior. They presented a convincing argument for the importance of this (more subjective) consumer objective, particularly for "products whose selection and use are based upon satisfying emotional wants, rather than fulfilling utilitarian functions" (p 94). Subsequent empirical work has provided support for the hedonic motive in the consumption experience. For example, Kivetz and Simonson (2002) found that a substantial proportion of consumers chose a hedonic luxury prize over a cash equivalent in forced-choice experiments, suggesting the inherent need of some consumers to "indulge." Similarly, Dhar and Wertenbroch's (2000) experimental work reported that owners of more hedonic automobiles placed a greater monetary value (relative to market prices) on their cars than did owners of more utilitarian cars.

The results of the exploratory study suggested that the hedonic/utilitarian distinction also plays a role in determining the nature of consumer satisfaction in a particular consumption context. As discussed above, in an open-ended question, roughly 1/4 of the respondents identified a hedonic product category as the key predictor of a primarily

emotional satisfaction experience. Also, in a separate open-ended question, approximately 1/4 of the respondents identified a utilitarian product category as the principal factor contributing to a primarily rational satisfaction experience.

The general suggestion from the literature and the exploratory phase of this investigation can be summarized in the expectation that consumers will have a relatively more emotional satisfaction experience in the consumption of relatively more hedonic product categories. As such, the following formal hypothesis is offered:

H (1): HEDONIC PRODUCT has a positive effect on EMOTIONAL SATISFACTION.

Belk (1988) extensively discussed the notion that possessions can be perceived as an extension of the self. He suggested that possessions might be seen as contributing to one's social self and/or reflecting one's private self. Bhat and Reddy's (1998) empirical work extended this thinking to the symbolic power of brands as a shorthand for conveying the consumer's self-perceived prestige and/or expressing the consumer's personality.

The findings from the exploratory work suggested that the self-expression permitted by the brand also affects the nature of consumer satisfaction. About 10% of the respondents indicated that a primarily emotional satisfaction experience stems from the perception that a *particular* brand is an extension of the consumer's self (i.e., it enhances the social self and/or reflects the private self). Parallel observations by several respondents suggested that the satisfaction experience is primarily rational for product categories where there is little brand differentiation.

As such, the general expectation suggested by the literature and the exploratory study is that consumers will experience relatively more emotional satisfaction in the consumption of brands that permit greater self-expression. The formal statement of the hypothesis to be tested is, thus:

H (2): SELF-EXPRESSIVE BRAND has a positive effect on EMOTIONAL SATISFACTION.

Study Context

The decision was made to test the hypotheses in the context of the consumption of a specific brand of consumer packaged goods for several reasons. First, as the exploratory study suggested that consumer satisfaction tends to be brand specific (98% made reference to and/or identified a particular brand in their report on "product" satisfaction), it was appropriate to focus on product categories that tend to be "heavily branded," (i.e., the brand name plays a big role in the choice among alternatives). Second, the restriction to this one type of consumption experience should minimize the (gross) error variance stemming from respondents' reporting on very disparate product categories (e.g., durables/nondurables, services/goods), while retaining sufficient natural variance in the constructs to permit formal hypothesis testing. Finally, these types of products were expected to provide the most rigorous test of the hypothesized relationships linking the particulars of the consumption context to the relative role of emotion in the satisfaction experience. To clarify, finding significant effects in these (relatively) low-involvement situations seemed considerably *less likely* than in (relatively) high-involvement consumption experiences (e.g., consumer durables such as automobiles, service providers such as physicians).

Respondents are also reporting on a brand with which they are satisfied. That is, this study purports that EMOTIONAL SATISFACTION is a random variable *within* a population of satisfied consumers, one that can assess the relative roles of cognition and emotion in the satisfaction experience.

Survey Instrument and Construct Measures

An iterative process was undertaken to develop multi-item operations for the three constructs of interest: EMOTIONAL SATISFACTION, HEDONIC PRODUCT, and SELF-EXPRESSIVE BRAND. Initial measures were developed and pretested using the author's three undergraduate Marketing Research classes from Fall 2002 as respondents. During this measurement development process, extensive attention also was given to developing an unambiguous set of instructions for

completing the sections of the self-administered questionnaire. Early pretesting was qualitative; the final (fourth) pretest involved quantitative analyses (e.g., factor analyses, reliability analyses) on a sample of 125 students.

Semantic differential scales were employed for EMOTIONAL SATISFACTION and HEDONIC PRODUCT. Separate Likert-type measures were developed for the two dimensions of SELF-EXPRESSIVE BRAND suggested by the exploratory findings and the literature: 1) the degree to which the brand permits an extension of the social self and 2) the degree to which the brand reflects the inner self. This measurement approach for SELF-EXPRESSIVE BRAND was undertaken to permit an assessment of any differential effects of the two dimensions if factor analyses suggested two latent variables (versus one) underlying the responses.

Questionnaire instructions indicated the research was a study about satisfaction with consumer packaged goods. To ensure that all respondents were reporting from the same frame of reference, the definition of "consumer packaged goods" and specific examples of such were provided as follows:

These kinds of products:

- *come in packages (for example, cereals, health and beauty aids, soft drinks, ice cream, cigarettes, laundry detergents);
- *typically are bought at supermarkets, drugstores, and discount stores;
- *are purchased for the individual's or the household's use

Immediately after the introduction, Section I of the survey instrument asked respondents to:

Please focus your attention on a specific brand of consumer packaged goods with which you are satisfied:

What is this brand? Please write it in below.

Participants then answered the EMOTIONAL SATISFACTION items in Section II of the questionnaire, with the following instructions

provided for checking each of the (semantic differential) items:

For each of the items in this section, please check the position that best reflects the general nature of your satisfaction with the brand you identified in Section I. A check in the middle suggests a combination of the two extremes.

In Section III of the questionnaire, respondents answered the Likert-type items for the measure of SELF-EXPRESSIVE BRAND. The instructions were:

Now, please circle the number that best reflects your level of agreement within each of the following statements as they apply to the specific brand you identified in Section I.

In Section IV of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to identify the "product category" for the specific brand identified in Section I. The instructions were:

For this section, please change your focus a bit. What is the product category (for example, shampoo, pain reliever, cereal, cigarettes, beer) for the brand you identified in Section I. Please write it in below.

Immediately after, respondents completed the (semantic differential) HEDONIC PRODUCT items with the following instructions:

Now, for each of the items below, please check the position that best reflects the general nature of the product category identified just above. A check in the middle suggests a combination of the two extremes.

Section V asked respondents to answer questions to socio-demographic items, with the promise that "responses to this survey are strictly anonymous and will be used only in aggregate statistical analysis." Fixed-alternative questions were employed for age, marital status, sex, race/ethnic background, and annual household

income (measured in \$000's).

Measurement purification was continued with the data from the achieved sample in the quantitative study (334 adult, non-student consumers). In the study's context of consumer packaged goods, the social-self and inner-self items all loaded on a single factor in a maximum likelihood factor analysis, consistent with the SELF-EXPRESSIVE BRAND label in H (2).

The measurement analyses presented in Table 2 provide extensive support for the quality of the operations for testing the hypothesized relationships. First, all measures are multiple-item scales that reflect one factor and, in each case, the single factor explained a large proportion of the variance in the items (i.e., .70 to .71). Second, all scales have excellent internal consistency (i.e., *coefficient alpha* ranges from .86 to .94). In addition, a maximum likelihood factor analysis suggested good discriminant validity between the two semantic differential operations (after an oblique rotation, all items had loadings in excess of .66 on their expected factors, and no item cross-loaded). Finally, a gender comparison of the means and variances on the EMOTIONAL SATISFACTION scale suggests that the construct and its operation are meaningful to both men and women. The test for differences in the variances of EMOTIONAL SATISFACTION across men and women was nonsignificant ($p < .55$). Men did, however, did have a slightly higher mean on the measure (10.60 for men, 9.58 for women, $p < .02$)

Analysis

Descriptive statistics (as discussed in Table 2) provided empirical support for the meaningfulness of EMOTIONAL SATISFACTION as a random variable within a population of satisfied consumers. The maximum possible range of scores (16) was achieved, with all possible scores reported by at least one respondent each. The EMOTIONAL SATISFACTION distribution was skewed a bit to the right in these data, with a sample mode of 8, a median of 10, and a mean of 10.14.

Several analyses were undertaken to ensure that the assumptions of multiple regression, the intended model for testing the hypotheses, were met. First, after a multiple regression run with EMOTIONAL

Table 2
Construct Operations
Consumer Packaged Goods Context

EMOTIONAL SATISFACTION - four items, five points each, semantic differential scale

My satisfaction with the brand identified is:
Purely Rational/Purely Emotional
A Mental Evaluation/A Response of the Heart
Based on Feelings/Based on Thinking (-)
Determined by Reason/Determined by Sentiment

From Data Analysis:

Min 4, max 20, $\bar{x}=10.05$, $s=4.11$, maximum likelihood factor analysis produced one factor with all loadings in excess of .71 and explaining 71% of the variance in the items, *coefficient alpha*=.86.

HEDONIC PRODUCT - six items, five points each, semantic differential scale

This particular product category:
Is Functional/Is Pleasurable
Affords Enjoyment/Performs a Task (-)
Is Useful/Is Fun
Is a Sensory Experience/Does a Job (-)
Is a Necessity/Is an indulgence
Is a 'Must' in Life/Is One of Life's 'Rewards'

From Data Analysis:

Min 6, maximum 30, $\bar{x}=17.78$, $s=7.41$, maximum likelihood factor analysis produced one factor with all loadings in excess of .72 and explaining 71% of the variance in the items, *coefficient alpha*=.92.

SELF-EXPRESSIVE BRAND - eight items, five points each, Likert-type scale

This brand contributes to my image.
This brand adds to a social 'role' I play.
This brand has a positive impact on what others think of me.
This brand improves the way society views me.
This brand symbolizes the kind of person I really am inside.
This brand reflects my personality
This brand is an extension of my inner self.
This brand mirrors the real me.

From Data Analysis:

Min 8, max 40, $\bar{x}=19.47$, $s=7.23$, maximum likelihood factor analysis produced one factor with all loadings in excess of .72 and explaining 70% of the variance in the items, *coefficient alpha*=.94.

SATISFACTION as the dependent variable and HEDONIC PRODUCT and SELF-EXPRESSIVE BRAND as the independent variables, the histogram of the standardized residuals suggested that the assumption of a normally-distributed error had been met. Also, a plot of the standardized predicted values against the standardized residuals exhibited no discernable pattern, suggesting that the assumption of homoscedasticity had been met. In addition, all individual standardized residuals fell within three standard deviations and all but 12 fell within two standard deviations, suggesting that no outliers were grossly affecting the results. Furthermore, a test of the correlation between the two predictors was nonsignificant ($p < .13$), suggesting no multicollinearity problems. Finally, support for the additivity of the effects was provided by a regression run with the two hypothesized predictors, HEDONIC PRODUCT and SELF-EXPRESSIVE BRAND, along with a third predictor, their multiplicative interaction; in this run, the regression coefficient for the interaction term was nonsignificant ($p < .78$).

Initially, SEX was added to the hypothesized model as a control. As its regression coefficient was nonsignificant ($p < .18$) in this run, SEX was dropped from the model for the test of the hypotheses. (A subsequent gender comparison of the means for HEDONIC PRODUCT was significant ($p < .00$), indicating that, on average, men were reporting on more hedonic product categories.)

The regression run with EMOTIONAL SATISFACTION as the dependent variable and HEDONIC PRODUCT and SELF-EXPRESSIVE BRAND the two predictors was examined to test the hypotheses. First, the F-test for the overall model was statistically significant ($p < .00$). As such, it was appropriate to examine the test of significance for the regression coefficients associated with each independent variable.

Both of the hypotheses were supported by the data. The regression coefficient for HEDONIC PRODUCT was $.25$ ($p < .00$), providing empirical support for H (1). In addition, the regression coefficient for SELF-EXPRESSIVE BRAND was $.07$ ($p < .00$), providing empirical support for H (2).

The beta coefficients (standardized regression coefficients) indicated that HEDONIC PRODUCT's

effect was larger than that of SELF-EXPRESSIVE BRAND ($.44$ and $.14$, respectively). The total variance in EMOTIONAL SATISFACTION explained by the regression model (R^2) was $.20$.

Limitations

One of the key strengths of this study is also its most obvious limitation. The focus on consumer packaged goods inherently restricts the variance observed on all construct measures. As discussed above, these types of products were expected to provide the most rigorous test of the meaningfulness of the rational-emotional conceptualization and the hypothesized relationships. Nonetheless, it would be inappropriate to generalize about the distributions of the constructs and the effect sizes found here to other very different types of consumption experiences.

The total variance in EMOTIONAL SATISFACTION explained by HEDONIC PRODUCT and SELF-EXPRESSIVE BRAND model was relatively modest ($R^2 = .20$). The objective of this work was to test the hypotheses, and it was not anticipated that a two-variable model would explain a very large portion in the criterion, particularly as these were real-world (versus laboratory) data.

The EMOTIONAL SATISFACTION construct permits only a comparison of the *relative* roles that cognition and emotion play in the satisfaction experience. It does not permit an assessment of the *absolute* role of either. Work that seeks a better understanding the *levels* of cognition and/or emotion in the satisfaction experience would need other conceptualizations and measures. For example, if the research interest is identifying product categories and brands in which the satisfaction experience has high levels of *both* cognition and emotion, a two-dimensional conceptualization (with a rational component and an emotional component) would be more appropriate. This "relative comparison only" limitation also applies to the HEDONIC PRODUCT construct employed in this study.

Discussion

Generally, this work supports the tenets of the

contingency paradigm for investigating consumer satisfaction (Fournier and Mick 1999). That this investigation was conducted with a dramatically different method (large-scale, self-administered survey data and hypothesis testing here contrasted with their more subjective analyses of qualitative data from interviews) adds further credence to this new theory of consumer satisfaction.

First, the findings from this research provide empirical support for the meaningfulness to satisfied consumers of describing the nature of the satisfaction experience as a *blend* of cognition and emotion. In addition, this work suggests that a continuum conceptualization and operation ("purely rational" to "purely emotional") permits a simple, but useful, way to think about and measure the relative roles of cognition and emotion in the satisfaction experience. Finally, this construct and its measure permit an increased understanding and prediction of *differences* in satisfaction experience, as determined by the consumption context. On average, satisfied consumers reported a relatively more emotional satisfaction experience with more hedonic (contrasted with utilitarian) product categories and with specific brands that permit them a greater degree of self-expression (enhance the social self and/or reflect the inner self.). That these differences were found *even* in the typically routinely-purchased and relatively low-involvement category of consumer packaged goods that was the focus of this study seems particularly encouraging.

From a practitioner standpoint, this work offers some support for the conjecture that achieving (simple) satisfaction may be, in essence, a moot point, i.e., only marketers that have done this still survive. Rather, in today's marketplace it may be that a greater chance for achieving a competitive advantage lies in understanding the *differences* in satisfied consumers, such as the relative roles of cognition and emotion in the experience investigated here.

A review of campaigns in recent print advertising suggests that some consumer packaged goods practitioners are already incorporating such thinking into their manipulations of the marketing mix. For example, some marketers of primarily hedonic products are now suggesting that their particular brands offer "more" in terms of emotional

satisfaction (Doral cigarettes, "Imagine Getting More;" Camel cigarettes, "Pleasure to Burn;" Pepperidge Farm cookies, "Never Have an Ordinary Day. If you're gonna have a cookie, have a cookie;" Klondike ice cream products, "Less fat, fewer calories, no guilt").

Too, marketers of even some very utilitarian packaged goods seem to be emphasizing the emotional nature of the satisfaction experience associated with their brands (e.g., Simple Green cleaners, "Remember the Special Moments, not the Mess You Left Behind;" Glad garbage bags, "Don't Get Mad, Get Glad;" Pampers Easy-Up diaper's "Sesame Street" designs; Gillette's Venus razor, "What is it about PINK that makes you feel so good?"). Such anecdotal evidence provides support for the speculation that virtually all brands in more utilitarian packaged goods will "get the job done" and, thus, satisfy at a "rational" level. How then can a particular brand carve out a distinctive positioning for itself? The answer may lie in increasing "feelings" in the satisfaction experience.

Enhancing the emotional character of satisfaction may also be the key to a competitive edge for brands of packaged goods that offer some combination of utility and pleasure. Again, print advertising provides anecdotal evidence to support this thinking (e.g., Life Cinnamon "is full of surprises;" Lunchables "Balanced Fuel That's Cool;" Wheat Thins "Tastes Good. Feels Good;" Crisp'ums "Like kissing your husband after he's been dipped in cinnamon and sugar").

Suggestions for Future Research

Additional research is needed to identify other context-specific predictors of a relatively more emotional satisfaction experience. Such work should enrich the conceptual model tested here and also increase the total variance explained in EMOTIONAL SATISFACTION.

Hopefully, this work will encourage and facilitate subsequent tests of contingency theory. For example, work is needed that investigates the meaningfulness of the rational-emotional conceptualization in other types of consumption experiences (e.g., durables, services). As indicated earlier, it seems that this conceptualization would be

even more relevant in product categories generally thought to be of higher involvement than packaged goods, particularly those that are heavily branded. A review of recent advertising campaigns by automobile marketers provides additional support for this thinking (e.g., Toyota's "Get the Feeling;" Chrysler's "Drive & Love;" Saturn's "We Love You, Too"). Such work might include an investigation of the suggestion offered here that the provision of a relatively more emotional satisfaction experience may offer the key means to achieving a competitive advantage today, particularly in some product categories.

Another important suggestion for future research is an investigation of the *outcomes* of a relatively more emotional satisfaction experience. For example, subsequent work might investigate the effects on brand loyalty and/or positive word-of-mouth. The usefulness for this conceptualization and its operation in understanding and predicting such desirable consumer behaviors has yet to be established.

The extensive work on measurement validation in the work presented here also has produced a good set of new multi-item measures that others may find useful in this, or other, research streams. The measures of HEDONIC PRODUCT and SELF-EXPRESSIVE BRAND seem to be useful additions to the literature in several arenas popular with researchers today.

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