PROCESSING OF THE SATISFACTION RESPONSE IN CONSUMPTION: A SUGGESTED FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH PROPOSITIONS

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ABSTRACT

This paper extends current views of postpurchase response along two lines of analysis. In the first, the expectancy disconfirmation model is developed further with the inclusion of an attribution phase in the product judgment sequence. In this perspective, causal attributions are posited to play a mediating role between disconfirmation perceptions resulting from product outcomes and specific emotions thought to accompany attribution judgments. These emotions are hypothesized to combine with a primary affect generated by the goodness or badness of the product experience to provide the affective tone of consumer responses to consumption outcomes. Based on this integration, a summary judgment is thought to be formed which is currently represented by the common satisfied/dissatisfied response. In the second extension of current thought, the notion of a "satisfaction" expression is viewed in the context of multiple response orientations. In this perspective, different interpretations of a "satisfying" product experience are hypothesized to result from the level of arousal and the nature of reinforcement the consumer desires from the product. At the various stages of model development, propositions related to consumption contexts are suggested.

INTRODUCTION

The intended contribution of this paper is to present a more complete framework for analyzing consumer postpurchase response than has been proposed and to stimulate further work in the postpurchase area. To this end, a general model of product usage response is developed as are five variations based on differing consumption orientations. At each stage of development, research propositions are advanced to facilitate tests of the model. Hopefully, this will stimulate both original work and further conceptual reformulation of postpurchase phenomena.

To accomplish this objective, the present work attempts to bring together, with specific reference to consumption, three complementary research traditions addressing the psychology of responses to the outcomes encountered in everyday life. The first is the well known research stream in consumer satisfaction (Day 1983; Hunt 1983); the second is an emerging body of research on the attribution processing of positive and negative outcomes, resulting in "attribution-dependent" emotions (Weiner 1985; Weiner, Russell, and Lerman 1978, 1979); while the third is the literature on emotion typologies (e.g., Russell 1980; Plutchik 1980) and the positioning of a satisfaction response within emotion frameworks.

In merging these three perspectives into a conceptual framework, the paper proceeds in five major stages. First, gaps in the present postpurchase (i.e., satisfaction) literature are noted, thus suggesting the need for further developmental work. Second, the cognitive (i.e., disconfirmation) basis for attribution processing in consumption experiences is elaborated. Based on the

evidence for the role of disconfirmation in this process (e.g., Pyszczynski and Greenberg 1981), specific conditions under which disconfirmation and, hence, attribution, will take place are outlined. In the third phase, findings from the attribution literature (e.g., Weiner 1985; Weiner, Russell, and Lerman 1978, 1979) are reviewed for insights regarding the specific outcomes resulting from attribution processing of successful and unsuccessful outcomes (purchases in the present case). Fourth, the emotional basis or translation of emotion into postpurchase response is presented. This phase is accompanied by a review of the satisfaction response in emotional typologies.

Lastly, a response-specific framework is described, based on the observation that the nature of postpurchase response is moderated by the product outcomes intended and received by the consumer. This implies that disconfirmation, attribution processing, specific emotions, a summary satisfaction response and, hence, the meaning of a survey satisfaction score may convey different implications depending on the consumer's intended product experience. As before, specific propositions regarding the variables operating in each usage response mode are presented to illustrate potential research directions.

BACKGROUND

Significant strides have been made in the post-choice literature since a seminal research work by Cardozo (1965) and the first of the consumer satisfaction conferences in 1976 (Hunt 1977a). A number of helpful perspectives have emerged including the expectancy disconfirmation framework (Bearden and Teel 1983; Churchill and Surprenant 1982; Oliver 1980), equity theory (Huppertz, Arenson, and Evans 1978), two-factor theory (Swan and Combs 1976; Maddox 1981), comparison level theory (LaTour and Peat 1979), and social comparison theory (Sirgy 1984). Moreover, the dissatisfaction field has spawned a parallel body of thinking including that of attribution (Folkes 1984), exit-voice theory (Fornell and Westbrook 1984), and complaint behavior (Andreasen 1985; Day 1980; Day and Landon 1977; Landon 1977; Richins 1987). As a result of these complementary perspectives, there now appears to be some emerging consensus that "satisfaction" formation involves comparative processes where the nature of the comparison ranges from the Howard and Sheth (1969) notion of rewards versus sacrifices to a consideration of equitable exchange. Additionally, this process is generally thought to result in an evaluative, affective, or emotional response as opposed to a cognition (see Hunt 1977b for review).

Prior to this emerging convergence of thought, work in the postpurchase area had traditionally been viewed from the perspective of specific product attribute influences. In this view, an overall satisfaction or other summary score is regressed on attribute ratings or attribute factor scores (e.g., Leigh 1987). Those attributes with the highest regression coefficients are thought to be the

primary "drivers" of product satisfaction. As a result, studies of the product attributes which are correlated with high and low levels of satisfaction no doubt exist as proprietary in a large number of corporate data bases. While this "attribute basis" of satisfaction/dissatisfaction is intriguing, it says little, however, about the specific thought processes triggered by the product features. In particular, it fails to identify the mechanism by which performance is converted into a psychological reaction by the consumer.

One such mechanism is the expectancy disconfirmation model elaborated by Oliver (1977, 1980) who drew on earlier work in the social psychology literature (Weaver and Brickman 1974). In this model, consumers are posited to hold pre-consumption normative standards or to form expectancies, observe product (attribute) performance, compare performance with their norms and/or expectations, form disconfirmation perceptions, combine these perceptions with expectation levels, and form satisfaction judgments. Despite the complexity of this process, various levels of support have emerged for this paradigm (Bearden and Teel 1983; Cadotte et al. 1987; Churchill and Surprenant 1982; LaBarbera and Mazursky 1983; Oliver 1980; Oliver and DeSarbo 1988; Oliver and Linda 1981; Swan and Trawick 1981; Tse and Wilton 1988). Generally, the reported relationships between disconfirmation and satisfaction are significant and robust across product, situation, and methodological (i.e., survey vs. experimental) contexts. However, work in social psychology (to be discussed) suggests that this complex process omits an important psychological stage which, when incorporated into the expectancy disconfirmation model, could improve our understanding of these relationships. In particular, the expectancy disconfirmation process fails to identify the locus of causality for consumption cognitions.

These types of judgments are frequently referred to as causal ascriptions or attributions of causality (cf. Kelley 1972, 1973; Weiner 1980, 1986). Evidence (see, for example, Pyszczynski and Greenberg 1981; Weiner 1985) now suggests that disconfirmation does not lead directly to satisfaction as suggested by the current versions of the expectancy disconfirmation model but, instead, results in a search for the cause of the disconfirmation. Thus, it will be argued that expectancy disconfirmation in consumption is an instigator of attribution processing which gives rise to specific attributions.[1] The traditional expectancy disconfirmation model only recognizes a direct link from disconfirmation to satisfaction which connotes a disconfirmation-driven satisfaction response. This does not address the possibility that different types of "satisfaction" may result from different attributions of similarly perceived disconfirmation levels.

Additional mediating processes which may intervene between performance-based dicsonfirmation and satisfaction are elaborated by Weiner et al. (1978, 1979) who show that specific attributions can be linked to specific emotions. This suggests the possibility that emotions further mediate the satisfaction response and that satisfaction has emotional antecedents as suggested in Westbrook (1987). Thus, assuming that emotions underlie a satisfaction response, the same satisfaction "score" could have different implications for different consumers and

different purchase contexts by virtue of the emotions generated by the product experience. Presently, researchers can only assume that satisfaction scores capture direction and, perhaps, the intensity of the consumer's summary response. If, however, two emotions which have the potential to influence the satisfaction response have the same direction and intensity, the satisfaction scores which result may not distinguish between two consumers holding the two different emotions. For example, the nature of specific emotions such as anger and shame may not be distinguished in current satisfaction measures since either anger or shame may produce the same "score" but may entail different consumer responses. Anger, for example, may be directed at the marketer/manufacturer whereas shame, most typically, is inner-directed.

Thus, three major linkages are potentially omitted if one pursues either the direct attribute performance → satisfaction or expectancy disconfirmation → satisfaction perspectives which have been prominent in the literature. The first of these linkages is the relationship between attribute performance and the related cognition of disconfirmation on attribution processing; the second is the relationship between attribution processing and specific emotions; while the third is the interpretation or translation of emotions into summary postpurchase judgments.[2]

OUTLINE OF THE FRAMEWORK

The discussion which follows focuses on the role of the (expectancy) disconfirmation phenomenon in attribution processing. This discussion begins with an elaboration of the degree to which consumers will perceive and react to an expectation-performance discrepancy. The existence of such a disconfirmation response is thought to be critical for further stages in the consumption experience and for the consumption response modes offered here. The expectancy disconfirmation model recognizes two responses to expectation-performance comparisons. If performance is seen as consistent with one's expectations, confirmation or zero disconfirmation is thought to result. In the absence of a perceived disconfirmation, expectations are believed to have a major influence on the general tone of the resulting product evaluation. Thus, confirmation simply reinforces the consumer's prior attitude toward the product (Oliver 1980, 1981). Alternatively, a perceived discrepancy between performance and expectation is thought to result in disconfirmation, termed "positive" if performance exceeds expectations and "negative" if expectations exceed performance.

Categories of Disconfirmation

Further perspectives on this phenomenon are provided by Woodruff et al. (1983) who posit a range of "experience-based norms." The norms described by the authors are historical and represent the range of likely performance outcomes a person has experienced over time or has learned through the experience of others. In a manner consistent with Hovland, Harvey, and Sherif's (1957) latitudes of acceptance and rejection, the authors propose a range of "normal" performance contained within the range of "experienced" performance levels.

Performance deviations within this normal range are not considered to be disconfirming, as would be those outside this region.

If one adds to the Woodruff et al. (1983) discussion consideration of possible but highly improbable performance outside the consumer's experience, there may exist three major categories of (dis)confirming events. These are: (1) performance in a confirmation region where performance deviations are considered acceptable, (2) a range of disconfirming performance that is plausible but infrequent so that low performance (a negative discrepancy) might be described as disappointing and high performance (a positive discrepancy) gratifying, and (3) widely discrepant performance levels which are highly unlikely based on experience --- levels that are in some sense totally unexpected or "surprising." These latter performance levels will be referred to as evoking "surprise disconfirmation." In this way, the present perspective extends Woodruff et al. in that we acknowledge the possibility of performance outside the experience-based range which could include surprisingly unanticipated levels of bad or good performance.

Thus, it is suggested that disconfirmation can vary as a matter of degree on an "unexpectedness" dimension so that increasing levels of unexpectedness are required to evoke, first, disconfirmation, and later, a surprise disconfirmation perception. Based on this analysis, it is suggested that the arousal potential of a performance-expectation discrepancy is a function of the consumer's acceptance range (cf. Woodruff et al. 1983) and the unexpectedness of the product outcome as follows:

> Proposition 1: Given three levels of performance, namely a confirming level of normal performance variation, a range of possible but less likely performance around the confirming level, and a range of unexpected performance: (a) little, if any, disconfirmation-based processing will occur for confirming performance levels, (b) ordinary disconfirmation perceptions and moderate levels of processing will occur in the experienced range, and (c) surprise disconfirmation will occur in the unexpected range resulting in much greater focus on the surprising event and larger amounts of further processing.

Role of Disconfirmation in Attribution Processing

A growing number of works from the social psychology literature are in agreement that there is a link between disconfirmation of expectations and attribution. This finding has taken a number of forms. In its most general mode, unexpected events are thought to produce attribution processing and, in the absence of relevant causal information, further search for explanatory data (Hastie 1984; Kelley 1972; Lau and Russell 1980; Pyszczynski and Greenberg 1981; Wong and Weiner 1981). Moreover, this form of processing is perhaps more likely if the unexpected event was negative, such as would occur in failure at a task (Diener and Dweck 1978; Mizerski 1982; Wong and Weiner 1981). Unexpected success, in contrast, is somewhat less likely to result in

causal search (Hastie 1984; Pyszczynski, Greenberg, and LaPrelle 1985), although non-search attributions (e.g., to self) remain active.

Although many of the research conclusions to be used here were performed in the field of social psychology, it has recently been shown that attributions are generated in product settings and that these attributions result in further forms of processing (Folkes 1984; Folkes and Kotsos 1986; Folkes, Koletsky, and Graham 1987). In particular, the Folkes et al. study found that a negative product disconfirmation resulted in specific dimensions of attribution (to be discussed) which, in turn, resulted in reports of anger toward the firm. This finding is consistent with the observation that, unless search is suppressed, negative disconfirmation may be a more potent generator of attribution processing than is positive disconfirmation. Thus:

> Proposition 2: The degree to which disconfirmation is capable of evoking immediate attribution processing and further causal search for attribution is a function of the intensity of perceived disconfirmation and its polarity as follows: (a) Successes involving positive disconfirmation are posited to result in more available causal attributions, particularly to self, and less causal search. (b) Failures involving negative disconfirmation are posited to be more evocative of search for causality and, as a result, will result in greater amounts of attribution processing.

The Consequences of Causal Attributions

Because much of the current literature on the consequences of attribution processing derives from the work of Weiner (1980), this section relies heavily on the Weiner paradigm (1985, 1986) as opposed to that of Kelley (1972) which has characterized prior research in consumer behavior (e.g., Mizerski, Golden, and Kernan 1979). Bettman (1986) has noted that Weiner's perspective shows promise for insights into the consumption process and, lately, the work of Folkes and her colleagues, cited above, introduces Weiner's scheme into the context of postpurchase activities, primarily complaining behavior.

The Weiner model categorizes attributions into three dimensions (although other, less universal dimensions are also proposed; see Weiner 1985 and Anderson 1983). The three dimensions are locus of control (internal vs. external or self vs. other causation), stability (enduring vs. transitory causality), and controllability (inside or outside the perceiver's volitional control). Specific combinations of these causal attributions are known to result in regular patterns of causal thinking. For example, internal, stable, and controllable causes are typically ascribed to effort while external, unstable, and uncontrollable ascriptions are frequently attributed to luck. This eight cell framework is shown in Table 1.

Using this framework, Weiner, Russell, and Lerman (1978, 1979) and Weiner and Graham (1984) have made progress in linking the Weiner attribution dimensions to various emotions, referred to as "affects" in the

Table 1
Causes of Success and Failure by Locus
of Causality, Stability, and Controllability

	Internal		External	
	Stable	Unstable	Stable	Unstable
Not controllable	Ability, personality	Mood	Task difficulty	Luck
Controllable	Stable effort	Unstable effort	Other's stable effort	Other's unstable effort

Source: Adapted from Weiner (1980)

psychological literature. Weiner et al. (1978), in particular, have suggested the correspondence of 85 "success" affects and 150 "failure" affects to a number of attributions. Of interest to the present discussion is the fact that the success affects included "satisfied" while the failure affects included both "dissatisfied" and "unsatisfied." Results of this work showed that the satisfied response was among the top ten affects experienced in most of the attribution settings, the exceptions being mood and luck. Failure was more difficult to interpret. Using the same methodology, "dissatisfied" and "unsatisfied" were each cited as a consequence of roughly half of the failure attributions. Unstable effort and task difficulty were the two attributions least likely to be reported as resulting from either version of "non" satisfaction, though these attributions did produce the emotional responses of regret (sorry) and displeasure respectively. Thus, the success and failure findings by Weiner and his associates were among the first to suggest that satisfaction/dissatisfaction, along with other related "affects," was associated with attribution processing.

It is important to note that these studies show only that satisfaction and, to a lesser degree, dissatisfaction appear with other affects as stated consequences of specific attributions. Weiner and his colleagues were not addressing a temporal ordering of the affects or of the possibility that satisfaction (or another affect) may be a summary evaluation. Rather, their data show that satisfaction and other specific affects appear to result from situations containing attributions of a specific nature. More recent data in the consumer domain (Westbrook 1987) do suggest that satisfaction is a summary consequent of affective response, though Westbrook collapsed specific positive and negative affects into generalized positive and negative affect dimensions.

The notion of generalized affect was also addressed by Weiner and his colleagues though they do not view it as a collection of distinct affects. Rather, Weiner (1985) and Weiner and Graham (1984) suggest that there exist general affective responses in addition to the specific

attributions in causal ascriptions. For example, success appears to generate a general affective "constellation" of positive affect such as happiness while failure produces frustration. This suggests that events are first judged (or concurrently judged) as positive, negative, or neutral vis-a-vis one's desires. In the context of Weiner's work in achievement motivation, these events would first be judged as a success or failure. In the context of product satisfaction, a product outcome might be judged as "good for me" - "bad for me," "fulfilling my needs - not fulfilling my needs," etc. Further elaboration appears below.

An Attribution Model of Outcome-Dependent Emotions in Satisfaction

Based on the studies noted above and other works, Weiner (1985) has proposed a general attribution model of the cognition-emotion process whereby outcomes elicit evaluations with two components. In this scheme, he proposes an initial reaction of primary appraisal wherein the general affective tone to an event (e.g., success or failure) is established, a stage referred to as "outcome-dependent, attribution-independent." The first part of this stage is referred to as a primary evaluation (e.g., good for me, bad for me). It is proposed that this primary evaluation results in a primary affect, which is the general state of happiness-sadness in response to the goodness or badness of the event.

This first stage sequence is followed by secondary appraisal involving attributions, as noted. These attributions, then, result in distinct emotions which are attribution-dependent and not outcome-dependent. Weiner (1985) notes that his framework is intended to be perfectly general and not limited to specific contexts. This attribution perspective within the consumption processing framework is shown in Figure 1.[3]

Figure 1
Two Appraisal Consumption Processing Model
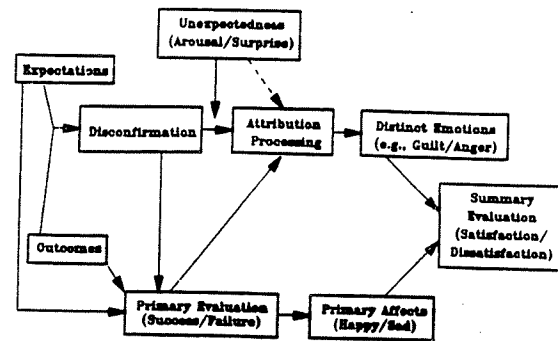
Though not proposed by Weiner, Figure 1 also shows a link from the primary evaluation to attribution processing. This is meant to imply that the nature of the evaluation (i.e., success-failure) moderates the types of attributions (see Proposition 2) as well as specific emotions (to be

discussed) that will occur as shown in Weiner et al. (1978, 1979). Thus:

> Proposition 3: Two potential emotional sequences are posited to emerge from the processing of purchase outcomes. The first results from the emotional response to the attribution processing of success and failure while the second is a general positive or negative affect evoked by the success or failure outcome itself. Both are thought to influence the consumer's summary evaluation of the product.

Insights into these outcome-dependent and attribution-dependent emotions within the consumption experience are beginning to appear. Works by Holbrook (1986; Havlena and Holbrook 1986) and Westbrook (1987) have shown that distinct primary affect dimensions are prominent in advertisement and product evaluations. Using emotion typologies developed by Plutchik (1980) and Izard (1977), respectively, both authors confirmed the existence of positive and negative affect as well as a surprise dimension. In addition, distinct attribution-dependent emotions including anger, gratitude, and guilt have been identified by Folkes (1984; Folkes et al. 1987). But note that none of these affective responses appear, on the surface, to correspond to satisfaction as commonly interpreted -- a feeling that the product has fulfilled its function or rendered acceptable service (i.e., the attribute basis). As will be suggested in the next section, however, the extant literature on the emotional positioning of satisfaction is not consistent with this attribute interpretation.

Emotional Bases for the Satisfaction Response

The emotional basis for the satisfaction response is not well documented in the literature. This may be so because one normally thinks of lay synonyms for the word "satisfaction" as being equivalent. For example, "happy" and "pleased" are frequently used to tap "satisfaction" feelings, as in the Delighted-Terrible scale of Andrews and Withey (1976) where all three terms are used for descriptor anchors in the same one-item scale. But, in fact, satisfaction had been appearing in a number of emotional typologies proposed within the last few years, perhaps best typified by the works of Russell (1978, 1979, 1980), Plutchik (1980), and Watson and Tellegen (1985).

These specific models of affect, which include emotions, are generally described as "circumplex" because the various emotions expressed by individuals can be described in two dimensions (intensity is usually the third) on the periphery of a circle. Based on analysis of four different emotional typologies and later on four different scaling methods, Russell (1978, 1979) proposed that two orthogonal primary dimensions underlie all affects, namely pleasantness/unpleasantness and arousal/boredom. In a study where subjects rated emotional descriptors including "happy," "satisfied," and other major affects including contentment, happy and pleased were nearly congruent while satisfaction fell between happy/pleased and contented. See Figure 2, Panel A.

It would seem reasonable to extrapolate these findings to the consumer domain as many (but not all) of the terms in these circumplex models (Figure 2) are descriptive of consumer experiences. Doing so allows a number of insights to emerge from this analysis, particularly with respect to the arousal dimension. For example, it would appear that (positive) product experiences can be either agreeable (causing contentment), pleasurable, or exciting, thus differing only on the degree of arousal. In a similar light, negative product experiences might be perceived as insufficient (causing discontent), unpleasant, or annoying. Thus, "satisfaction" may be an incomplete dependent variable in that it may mask the underlying degree of arousal inherent in the satisfaction response.
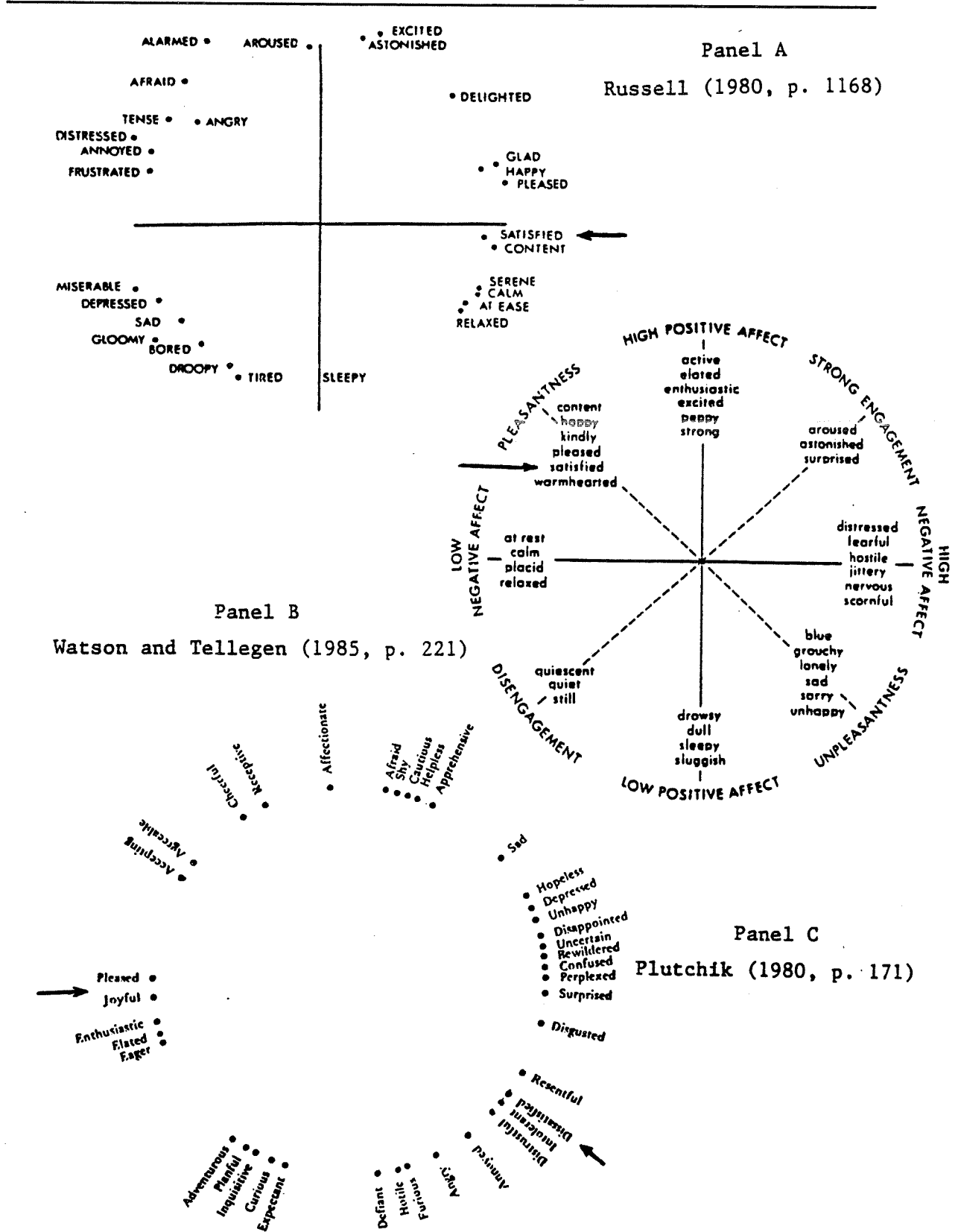
The possibility of simultaneous positive and negative affect was entertained by Watson and Tellegen (1985) who performed a second-order factor analysis on data from nine separate studies of affect. Their reanalysis resulted in a circumplex model (see Figure 2, Panel B) where the orthogonal dimensions are (unidimensional) positive affect and (unidimensional) negative affect. Arousal is represented as an oblique, positively correlated dimension with the two orthogonal affect axes. The authors refer to this oblique dimension as engagement/disengagement. Interestingly, the studies reviewed by Watson and Tellegen which include the word "satisfied" place satisfaction in the pleasantness sector representing the absence of negative affect. Dissatisfaction did not occur with sufficient frequency in the reviewed studies to permit categorization.

The Watson and Tellegen (1985) paradigm is useful from a number of perspectives. First, it allows for the simultaneous operation of satisfaction and dissatisfaction under high arousal, akin to Freud's approach/avoidance conflict. It also allows for affect with minimal (or no) arousal. This has implications for the meaning and measurement of satisfaction, particularly with regard to moderate levels of aroused satisfaction (e.g., pleased) versus either high arousal states (e.g., astonishment) or low arousal states (e.g., contentment).

In yet a third circumplex model, Plutchik (1980) juxtaposed eight basic emotions (joy, acceptance, fear, surprise, sadness, disgust, anger, and anticipation) in a ring so that the combination of adjacent, once-removed, and twice-removed emotions produce still other emotions (e.g., joy + acceptance = love; joy + fear = guilt; joy + surprise = delight). Intensity or arousal is relegated to a "depth" dimension, producing emotions above and below the basic eight (e.g., high fear = terror; low fear = apprehension). Of interest is the fact that satisfaction and dissatisfaction are represented on his circumplex, shown in Figure 2, Panel C, although only dissatisfaction appears in the original figure. If the location of "pleased" is designated as 0° on a circle, satisfaction appears at 359°, happiness at 356°, and contentment at 10°. Dissatisfaction is located at 215°, or 144 degrees from satisfaction.

In attempting to synthesize the three perspectives reviewed here, it is not the purpose of this paper to argue for one representation over another. Rather, the insights gained from these findings suggest a number of issues for the emotional content of the satisfaction response. First, it appears that pleasure and contentment both represent alternative emotional "meanings" of satisfaction. Second,

Figure 2
Circumplex Models of Affect Containing Satisfaction

ALARMED •   AROUSED •   • EXCITED
                        • ASTONISHED

AFRAID •   • DELIGHTED

TENSE •   • ANGRY
DISTRESSED •
ANNOYED •   • GLAD
FRUSTRATED •   • HAPPY
                                • PLEASED

                                • SATISFIED
                                • CONTENT

MISERABLE •   • SERENE
DEPRESSED •   • CALM
SAD •   • AT EASE
GLOOMY •   RELAXED
BORED •
DROOPY •   • TIRED   SLEEPY

Panel A

Russell (1980, p. 1168)

HIGH POSITIVE AFFECT
active
elated
enthusiastic
excited
peppy
strong

content
happy
kindly
pleased
satisfied
warmhearted

aroused
astonished
surprised

at rest
calm
placid
relaxed

distressed
fearful
hostile
jittery
nervous
scornful

blue
grouchy
lonely
sad
sorry
unhappy

quiescent
quiet
/ still

drowsy
dull
sleepy
sluggish

LOW POSITIVE AFFECT

PLEASANTNESS

STRONG ENGAGEMENT

LOW NEGATIVE AFFECT

HIGH NEGATIVE AFFECT

DISENGAGEMENT

UNPLEASANTNESS

Panel B

Watson and Tellegen (1985, p. 221)

Receptive
Cheerful
Affectionate
Afraid
Shy
Cautious
Helpless
Apprehensive

Acceptable
Accepting

Sad

Hopeless
Depressed
Unhappy
Disappointed
Uncertain
Bewildered
Confused
Perplexed
Surprised

Disgusted

Pleased
Joyful

Enthusiastic
Elated
Eager

Panel C

Plutchik (1980, p. 171)

Resentful
Displeased
Intolerant
Distrustful

Annoyed

Angry

Defiant
Hostile
Furious

Adventurous
Planful
Inquisitive
Curious
Expectant

arousal appears to draw out two other elements that are found in satisfaction-related works. The first of these is the possibility of emotional extremes including delight, excitement, and distress. The second is that high arousal is associated with surprise, the major element in "surprise disconfirmation." Moreover, high arousal affective states have easily identifiable and widely acknowledged descriptive states such as ecstasy, anger, and rage. As arousal declines, so does the affect level, decaying first into generally pleasant and unpleasant states, and then into complacency. This correlated arousal dimension will be used in the response mode framework to be suggested along with a proposed distinction between contentment and pleasure.

A CONSUMPTION MODE FRAMEWORK

The perspective that guides this section is based on the "variety of human experience" which suggests that individuals may mean different things when they claim to be "satisfied" and that there may be a number of adaptive states for a satisfaction response. The possibility that the term "satisfied" is imprecise in both content and meaning is evident from the litany of contexts in which the word is used as in the circumplex models reviewed above. This results from the fact that consumer responses to product experiences are unique along a number of dimensions. First, different consumers are known to react to the same situation differently due either to temperament or mood (Gardner 1985; Westbrook 1980). Secondly, the same consumer's reaction to a product may change over time as the product experience changes from the newness of the product to the routine of using it on a daily basis. Finally, products themselves have different meanings to consumers ranging from the nature of involvement (Traylor and Joseph 1984; Zaichkowsky 1986) to the meaning of the product in a person's life (Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton 1981).

Thus, it is argued that consumers have different orientations toward products and it is the orientation that determines the satisfaction response which will be evoked. For example, an automobile may be owned for the simple function of transportation, in which case contentment is likely to be expressed, or for the driving pleasure it gives. Likewise, a toy may present novelty experiences when new, but generate only simple enjoyment (pleasure) or perhaps even boredom as one becomes accustomed to it. And, a product that once provided pleasure may have become unreliable over time so that relief, not contentment, is expressed when it doesn't break down in use. These examples will be further developed in the following sections.

A Response Mode Approach to Consumption

The perspective taken in this section is motivated by the following paraphrase from Fehr and Russell (1984, p. 464), who were addressing the definition of emotion:

> Everyone knows what (satisfaction) is, until asked to give a definition. Then, it seems, no one knows.

Satisfaction would seem to mirror emotion in the Fehr and Russell (1984) sense. It is difficult to define (Hunt 1977b) and it appears to take on different meanings in different contexts and subject populations as the three circumplex models illustrated. Rather, it is suggested that a number of different product experiences are "summed up" under the rubric of "satisfaction." These experiences represent response orientations to satisfaction. Those to be proposed here derive from the circumplex models of Russell (1980), Watson and Tellegen (1985), and Plutchik (1980) and the findings of Weiner et al. (1978, 1979) where satisfaction was associated with success and failure emotions.

These writings suggest at least five consumption modes giving rise to "satisfaction," and it is expected that others remain to be identified as researchers explore the consumption situations which evoke a satisfaction response. These five are contentment, pleasure, relief, novelty, and surprise. Each satisfaction response mode can be distinguished from the others by the arousal level and the nature of the cognitions, attributions and emotions operating at the various processing phases in Figure 1. With the exception of product (attribute) performance, the nature and operation of each of the constructs in Figure 1 may be very different across response states. In particular, the distinct emotions resulting from attribution processing, if present, are posited to be more frequently observed in certain satisfaction modes and, therefore, may be diagnostic of the role of the product to the consumer.

Each of the proposed consumption response states is discussed below in two phases. The first major section describes the individual consumption states and covers the operation of the major variables in the substages of the consumption processing framework. The second addresses the attribution processing, emotion, and summary response stages of this model.

Proposed Categories of Consumption Response Orientation

Contentment. As the prior review indicated, a common meaning of satisfaction appears to be contentment, or what will be described here as satisfaction-as-contentment. This type of satisfaction exists for the continued operation of ongoing (consumption) processes, either in the case of a long-lasting consumer durable or in terms of continuous repeat buying. It is proposed that contentment satisfaction is characterized by low levels of arousal and may entail disinterest. In this state, a reasonable hypothesis is that expectations have become passive and are not actively processed (see Kahneman and Tversky 1982), typically because they have become permanently coded into the consumer's schema (e.g., the "expectation" that an operating refrigerator will maintain low inside temperatures). In the same manner, performance processing may have become passive in that consumers are posited to have adapted to a "static" or usual level of performance (cf. Helson 1964) to which they have been acclimated over time. Because performance remains well within acceptable levels in these situations, disconfirmation perceptions should not appear.[4] As a result, the primary evaluation is acceptance or tolerance which, as the latter term implies, can have

Table 2
First Phase Characteristics of the Proposed Response Modes

Satisfaction mode	Expectation processing	Performance processing	Disconfirmation processing	Primary affect	Attribution processing
Contentment	None/ Passive	Passive	None	Acceptance/ Tolerance	None
Pleasure/ Displeasure	Active	Active	Active	Happiness/ Sadness	Moderately active
Relief/ Regret	Active/ Apprehensive	Active with decay	Active	Relief/ Regret	Active
Novelty	None/ Undefined	Active/ Passive	None/ Unexpectedness	Interest/ Excitement/ Agitation	None/ Ambiguous
Surprise	Very active	Very active, decays	Very active	Delight/ Outrage	Very active

negative overtones. Finally, because disconfirmation is thought to be absent (i.e., confirmation prevails), there probably exists little arousal and no attribution processing.[5]

It is also possible that the potential disinterest expressed in this mode could indicate a general unemotional response to the product category. This would represent an extreme of low (or no) arousal postpurchase response where satisfaction may mean the absence of dissatisfaction. Until further work on non-emotion consumption emerges, this state will be subsumed within the contentment category. Thus, it is proposed that:

> Proposition 4: Given the ongoing consumption of a low arousal product, disconfirmation (or subsequent attribution processing) should not be present. In this event, the primary affect state, based on performance or expectations in situations where performance is not processed (e.g., insurance in the absence of claims), will be the central emotion expressed in this response mode.

Note that this proposition does not necessarily imply low involvement, although low involvement responses would certainly fit this processing state. High involvement products could also fit this mode as long as the consumer has acclimated to the usual form of product functioning. This satisfaction state as well as those which follow are summarized in Table 2 and shown in Figure 3, Panel A.

Reinforcement: pleasure and relief. The next two consumption response modes represent what one might refer to as "reinforcement satisfactions." This phrase is intended to reflect the difference between positive reinforcement (inducing or increasing a pleasurable state) and negative reinforcement (reducing or eliminating an unpleasant state -- see Nord and Peter 1980). The first of these proposed "satisfactions" is satisfaction-as-pleasure. This is thought to occur when a product "makes one happy" in the manner of positive reinforcement as would,

for example, a fine meal (cf. Holbrook 1986). It may involve moderate to high arousal, moderate to high interest, and easily identifiable emotional states. The converse or negative state of displeasure is also contained here and may entail similar or slightly more extreme levels of arousal or interest. For either of these affective states, expectations are probably processed as are outcomes and disconfirmation. Specific attributions, discussed in the next section, may exist and the primary affects are thought to be happiness/sadness. Thus:

> Proposition 5: Given a product which has the intended outcome of adding to a benefit set, disconfirmation processing will generate attribution processing. The specific emotions which result are posited to operate with but not obscure the effect of the primary affect. These specific emotions and the primary affect are thought to combine to produce the consumer's summary state toward the product.

In the special case of confirmation of a pleasure state, disconfirmation should be absent as before. Thus, the attribution and emotion sequence may not occur and the primary affect is posited to dominate the summary state. This case differs, however, from the contentment state because expectations are active and the arousal level underlying the primary evaluation is much higher. As a result, the primary affect experienced by the consumer in a confirming pleasure state should be more descriptive and more easily retrieved than that for a confirming contentment state.

A third, related, consumption response is satisfaction-as-relief, occurring when a product or event eliminates an aversive state in the manner of negative reinforcement (see Nord and Peter 1980, Holbrook 1986). A gas station on a lonely road, most medications, a successful legal defense, and the "satisfaction" one gets, if any, from complaining are examples of this satisfaction response mode.[6] A distinction is made between this and
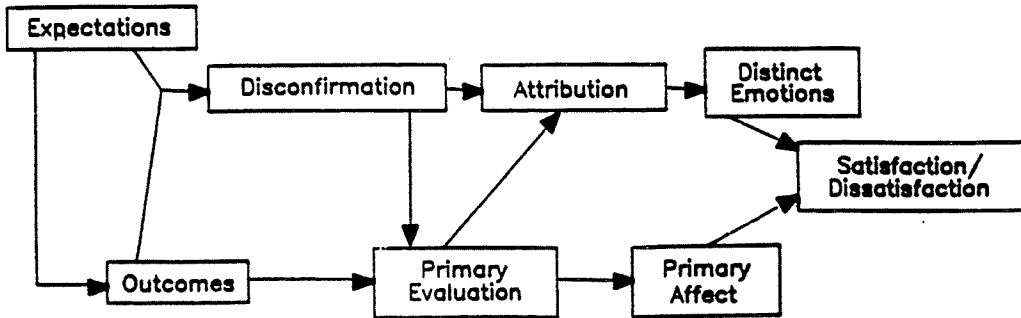
Figure 3
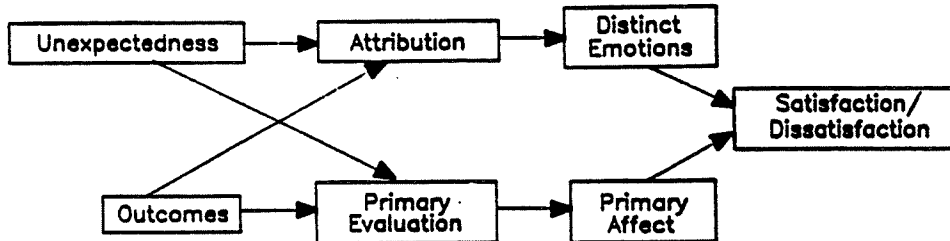**Model Variants for the Satisfaction Prototypes**
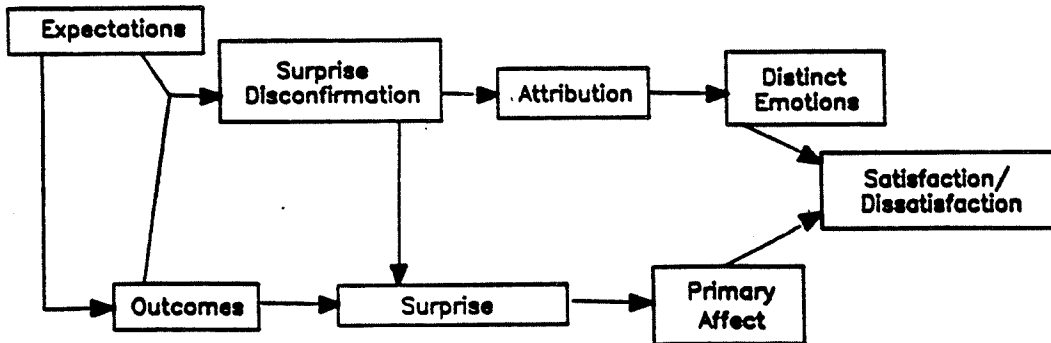
Panel A: Satisfaction—as—Contentment
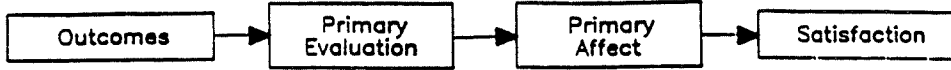
Panel B: Satisfaction—as—Pleasure or Relief

Panel C: Satisfaction—as—Novelty

Panel D: Satisfaction—as—Surprise

the pleasure state above because individuals are thought to have a hedonic bias in that most people seek out pleasure and avoid pain. Thus, pleasure is pursued, savored, and pursued further, whereas the removal of an aversive state is pursued but not necessarily savored because the act of savoring recalls the negative life event. It is this distinction that suggests that the relief of negative reinforcement is less enduring than the pleasure of positive reinforcement as discussed below.

Because of the constant presence of the aversive state, it is expected that higher arousal and heightened interest with more rapid decay mark this consumption mode. Expectations most probably are actively processed, although they may take the form of an apprehension. It is further proposed that performance is processed and decays rapidly as if the aversive state were best forgotten, and disconfirmation and attributions are evident. The primary affect relates to relief, restoration, or catharsis. An unsuccessful (negative) relief effort, reflecting the case of "dissatisfaction," probably also involves active decay as if the consumer were "no worse off than before," and the primary affect in this case is probably regret. As with satisfaction-as-pleasure, expectation, performance, disconfirmation, and attribution are thought to be processed here as well. Thus:

> Proposition 6: Given the outcome of a product intended to relieve an aversive state, consumers will display significant levels of disconfirmation and the primary affect state. The attributions resulting from disconfirmation will generate emotions having shorter durations than those resulting from pleasure experiences. This will cause the summary state, reflecting both the specific emotions and the primary affect, to be of shorter duration. In the special case of confirmation, the primary affect will dominate the summary state as before.

Both satisfaction-as-pleasure and satisfaction-as-relief can be represented in the same model format, shown in Figure 3, Panel B.

Unexpectedness: novelty and surprise. The last two response modes both entail unexpectedness, but in different forms. The first, satisfaction-as-novelty, is marked by a new experience where product performance expectations may be undefined or loosely defined. Rather, consumers expect the unexpected either because they have thrust themselves into the consumption situation (e.g., horror shows) or because the situation has been presented to them (e.g., a gift).

It is proposed in this case that interest will be high although emotional labeling will be difficult. Because product performance expectations may be only vaguely defined, there may be little cause for disconfirmation and attributions will most probably arise, not from product disconfirmation, but from performance and the very nature of the novelty's unexpectedness. This implies that consumers can have "expectations of unexpectedness" and that product outcomes can be disconfirming on an expectedness dimension (Oliver and Winer 1987).[7] The performance outcome is expected to be processed through

the primary evaluation as a primary affect (see Figure 3, Panel C). If the novelty occurs under low arousal conditions, the primary affect most probably is interest/disinterest; under high arousal the expected affect is excitement in the event that consumption is a "success" and agitation/irritation if consumption is a "failure."[8] Thus:

> Proposition 7: Given a consumption situation where the intended benefit is novelty, it is proposed that consumers will not exhibit strong product performance disconfirmation although they will respond to a disconfirmation of the unexpectedness of the outcome. The summary state is posited to be a combination of the primary affect generated by product performance and the emotions generated by the unexpectedness inherent in the consumption event.

Finally, there exists satisfaction-as-surprise where an unexpected event occurs or an expected event does not. Satisfaction-as-surprise differs from satisfaction-as-novelty in that the consumer does not expect the unexpected. As in the Woodruff et al. (1983) experience-based norms model, there exists a range of product performance that is thought to be possible. Within that range are both desired levels (e.g., a stock market gain) and undesired levels (a market loss). Surprise, as defined here, results when the product performs outside of this range either on the positive side or on the negative.

It is proposed that arousal is very high in this state and that emotional labeling occurs in two phases similar to those of the two-appraisal model (see Weiner 1986; Charlesworth 1969). The first results from the initial level of surprise disconfirmation and subsequent attribution; the second from the consumer's surprise in the event (e.g., "amazed/shocked") and subsequent affect (e.g., "delighted/outraged"). Here, the primary affect is thought to reflect the initial reaction to surprise, and disconfirmation and further attribution processing are expected to be extreme (see Figure 3, Panel D). Thus:

> Proposition 8: Given performance outside the range of "normal" performance levels, consumers responding in surprise mode are hypothesized to display all elements of the processing model with the exception of the primary evaluation which is subsumed under the surprise response itself. Extreme levels of disconfirmation are hypothesized to result in attribution processing which, in turn, elicits strong distinct emotions. These are expected to play a much greater role relative to that of the primary affect in governing satisfaction responses.

Response Mode Attributions and Likely Emotions

In the proposed attribution processing phase of consumption, specific attributions along the dimensions proposed by Weiner (1980) and some corresponding distinct emotions are posited. However, in the framework proposed here, these are thought to be moderated by two dimensions. The first is the basic nature of the outcome,

defined as the primary evaluation as before (i.e., success/"good for me" or failure/"bad for me" purchase outcomes), while the second is the satisfaction response mode. Thus, under a successful purchase situation of the "pleasure" variety, for example, the list of possible attributions and attribution-dependent emotions is restricted to those operating in success encounters and to those likely in the satisfaction-as-pleasure scenario. The first distinction has been elaborated by Weiner et al. (1978, 1979); the second is proposed here. To illustrate the first example of emotions moderated by success and failure, the Weiner et al. (1979) list of six common attributions is repeated in Table 3. In this list, the authors identify those emotions which tend to be elicited for each attribution under success and failure. This results in a list of 36 emotions as shown in the Table.

Table 3
Attribution-Dependent Emotions Identified
by Weiner et al. (1979)

Attribution	Success	Failure
Ability	Confident Competent Pleased	Incompetent Inadequate Panicked
Unstable effort (e.g., shopping effort)	Uproarious Delighted Good	Sorry Ashamed Scared
Stable Effort	Calm Relaxed Secure	Humble Guilty Troubled
Task ease/ difficulty	Hopeful Composed Safe	Stunned Sad Displeased
Luck	Surprised Astonished Thankful	Astonished Overwhelmed Surprised
Others	Appreciative Grateful Modest	Bitter Furious Revengeful

Source: Adapted from Weiner et al. (1979)

Some translation is required so that the emotions identified by Weiner et al. (1979) can be mapped into the consumption model. An ability attribution, for example, would refer to shopping ability/savvy or product knowledge/expertise. Unstable effort refers to the presence (or absence in the case of failure) of unusual or context-specific search or acquisition behaviors intended to aid or increase the probability of a successful purchase, as in reading product reviews, comparison shopping, etc. Stable effort includes normal, everyday shopping behaviors that have become routinized such as weekly shopping

trips, reading the food section of the paper, etc. Task ease/difficulty refers to the presence or absence of obstacles in attempting a successful purchase such as unavailability, product limitations, haggling over price, etc. Luck refers to the chance element in purchasing including the incidence of random defects. Finally, "others" refers to individuals in the manufacturing, sales, and promotional areas as well as word-of-mouth and personal influence generally.

Because analysis of attribution-dependent emotions for success and failure in consumer behavior is limited to the work of Folkes (1984), who investigated anger in the context of failure, and Westbrook (1987) and Holbrook (1986; Havlena and Holbrook 1986) in more general contexts, an attempt is made in Table 4 to suggest some likely distinct emotions for the five satisfaction states. These are derived from the Weiner et al. (1979), Folkes, Westbrook, and Holbrook papers and further reasoning developed below.

Table 4
Suggested Operation of Attribution-Dependent Emotions
In the Proposed Response Modes

Response Mode	Attribution	Success Emotion	Failure Emotion
Content- ment	None Effort (stable)	Contented Secure	Tolerant Acquiescent
Pleasure	Ability Effort (both) Task Others	Confident Pleased Competent Grateful	Inadequate Ashamed Frustrated Irritated
Relief	Ability Effort (both) Task Others	Secure Relieved Relaxed Indebted	Incompetent Guilty Helpless Resentful
Novelty	Effort (both) Luck Others	Amused Surprised Grateful	Sorry Surprised Disappointed
Surprise	Ability Effort (both) Task Luck Others	Proud Amazed Assured Astonished Appreciative	Alarmed Embarassed Flustered Shocked Vindictive

Under satisfaction-as-contentment, it was suggested that no attribution processing would take place because of low levels of arousal. Product evaluation in this scenario of continued usage/purchase might be viewed, if an attribution did occur, as due to those emotions generated by stable effort ascriptions. Note from Table 3 that these are low intensity emotions (e.g., calm, humble) consistent with the primary affects of contentment and tolerance suggested earlier. Thus:

Proposition 9: Under contentment consumption modes, no attribution processing is likely to be displayed. The primary affect state will govern satisfaction responses with the possible exception that stable effort attributions such as security and acquiescence may exist.

Note that Proposition 9 expands upon the sequence suggested in Proposition 4. In this second set of propositions, we discuss the specific types of attributions and emotions evident in the response modes. The contentment state just discussed, however, is relatively non-emotional by definition, so little additional processing may be evident. The remaining consumption states are hypothesized to involve greater levels of emotional activity.

Because there is no evidence that the reinforcement satisfactions, pleasure and relief, evoke different attribution logic, their predictions are contained in the same proposition. It is recognized, however, that the specific emotions elicited will be different by virtue of the fact that the elimination of aversive states provides a different sense of gratification than does an increase in pleasure, and this is reflected in Table 4. In both examples, non-routine purchase situations not contained in the satisfaction-as-contentment category are assumed. Additionally, it is intended that the performance outcomes be within the range of possible (but not necessarily desired) outcomes so that the arousal levels are those which consumers experience in everyday consumption. As a result, it is proposed that the evoked attributions encountered in these same situations will tend to be commonly observed including competence, gratitude, and disappointment. Here and for the remaining satisfaction response states, effort is intended to include both stable and unstable attributions and luck is omitted in the present case because it was felt to be better illustrated under novelty and surprise. As can be seen from Table 4, the distinct emotions from pleasure and relief span the mid-range of intensity. Thus:

Proposition 10: Pleasure and relief mode attributions will include those normally encountered within the consumer's range of possible performance when engaging in non-habitual, but ordinary, shopping activities. Thus, ability, effort (stable and unstable), and task attributions will be common. Because arousal is not at the extreme, the primary affect will play a prominent, perhaps dominant, role along with those emotions common to ability, effort, and task attributions in the satisfaction response.

Satisfaction-as-novelty presents a unique situation. In the case of self-imposed novelty (e.g., amusement parks), effort attributions are assumed along with luck (e.g., lotteries). In situations where novelty is presented to the consumer, self-attributions will probably not occur. In this case, it is posited that the variety of attributions would be concentrated in the external locus categories including luck and the actions of others. The emotions listed in Table 4 are generally the less intense of the success and failure

emotions, reflecting potentially lower levels of commitment to the product. Thus:

Proposition 11: Consumers in novelty mode will display a tendency to exhibit a greater number of external attributions due to components of unfamiliarity and unexpectedness in the product's and/or others' performance. When the novelty is self-imposed, effort attributions will be introduced. In both of these cases, the satisfaction response will be a joint function of primary affects and those emotions specific to effort, others, and luck attributions.

Satisfaction states with a large surprise disconfirmation component are thought to have the potential for a large number of attributions, possibly including both positive and negative ascriptions (cf. Watson and Tellegen 1985). It is posited that the emotions generated by these attributions may be fairly intense. In distinguishing between the first and second stages of surprise (Charlesworth 1969), it is believed that the distinct emotions are essentially second stage characteristics. The initial reaction to the large disconfirmation event is probably the surprise emotion itself, the effect of which becomes merged with whatever other distinct emotions are called up. Thus:

Proposition 12: Surprising disconfirmed expectancies resulting from purchase outcomes outside the expected possible range are proposed to generate a full range of more intense attribution-dependent emotions including those resulting from surprise. These emotions will play a prominent or dominant role in the summary postpurchase response, perhaps obscuring the effect of the primary affect.

SUMMARY AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Based on research in consumer satisfaction/ dissatisfaction, the attribution processing model of Weiner (1980, 1985), and the response mode analysis suggested here, a framework for analyzing buyer reactions to product outcomes is presented. The model begins with the expectancy-disconfirmation paradigm and argues that disconfirmation is the key to further processing. If disconfirmation is acknowledged and is sufficiently arousing, the attribution phase of the model is invoked. If not, generally positive or negative affects deriving from performance or expectations will determine the consumer's overall response to the product experience. If disconfirmation does evoke the attribution process, the consumer's product response is more complex, consisting of the primary affect plus specific types of distinct emotions retrieved from the consumer's analysis of the product outcome along the attribution dimensions of locus, stability, and controllability.

Two modifications over previous perspectives are noted. First, this framework demonstrates linkages mediating the expectancy-disconfirmation model with the satisfaction/dissatisfaction response. Prior works (e.g., Bearden and Teel 1983; LaBarbera and Mazursky 1983;

Oliver 1980) have assumed that all satisfaction responses are disconfirmation-dependent. However, Churchill and Surprenant (1982) found that no disconfirmation-satisfaction link was evident for a VCR tested in their study. More generally, it may now appear that the conditions prompting disconfirmation or the attribution consequences of strong disconfirmation may not have been present. As a result, the primary affects from product performance may have dominated the satisfaction ratings. (Cf. Oliver and DeSarbo 1988; Tse and Wilton 1988.)

A second modification concerns the ability to distinguish between different product response states and the likely differences one may observe in the attributions and distinct emotions which would be elicited. Westbrook (1987) and Holbrook (1986) have suggested that multiple emotions exist within consumption settings, and extensions of their research should be pursued. Work is also needed on the identification of specific product or individual characteristics which facilitate the occurrence of certain emotions.

A number of other research areas are suggested which have not been previously considered. These were posed as propositions at appropriate points in the paper. The first concerned the incidence of disconfirmation processing in product decisions. It was suggested that the arousal potential of performance-expectation discrepancies is a function of the consumer's latitude of acceptance and the surprisingness of the product outcome. This framework, suggested by Woodruff et al. (1983), has yet to be tested and offers much promise.

The relationship between disconfirmation and attribution processing is another area of needed research. Although evidence exists outside consumer behavior for this link (e.g., Pyszczynski and Greenberg 1981; Wong and Weiner 1981), further work is required in the context of consumer decisions. Also at issue is the differential potential for attribution processing under success and failure as well as the specific type of attribution evoked.

Finally, the entire process of evaluating consumption was modeled as a function of the consumer's response mode. Specific variables thought to operate in each of the response modes were suggested, providing an opportunity to test for different consumption modes over products, consumers, and situations.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

In preparing this framework as an effort to understand some under-researched mechanisms in the consumption experience, attribution, emotion, and primary affect have been developed within the mostly cognitive expectancy-disconfirmation paradigm. This represents an emerging role of the importance of non-cognitive concepts in consumer decisions (Hirschman and Holbrook 1982; Holbrook and Hirschman 1982; Westbrook 1987), allowing for the possibility that emotion is a central concept in the satisfaction formation process -- a suggestion originally proposed by Hunt (1977b). However, distinction is made between primary affects (e.g., happiness, sadness), that are largely autonomic in nature, and distinct emotions (e.g., anger, guilt) that require attributions. The notion of surprise, first as a response mode in and of itself and secondly as evoking luck and other attributions, is also

introduced as a potentially important variable in the satisfaction response. Hopefully, further consideration of these components in the consumption process will stimulate additional thinking and research on the emotional content in consumption.

NOTES

[1] It may also be true that one's expectations are the result of prior attribution processing as in the following: "I attribute this defective product to poor quality control and not my misuse of the product. Because I believe that the manufacturer's poor quality control is a stable condition, my future expectations of product quality are lowered." Kelley and Michela (1980) explicitly acknowledge this possiblity.

[2] It should be noted that it is not the purpose of this paper to provide a more precise definition of satisfaction than has been offered to date. Various definitions now exist including those of Hunt (1977b, p. 460) "the evaluation of an emotion," Westbrook (1980, p. 49) "favorability of the individual's subjective evaluation," Oliver (1981, p. 27) "summary psychological state resulting when the emotion surrounding disconfirmed expectancies is coupled with the consumer's prior feelings about the consumption experience," and Bearden and Teel (1983, p. 21) "a positive outcome from the outlay of scarce resources." Despite apparent similarities in these definitions, it is suggested here that satisfaction is not well-defined across consumers. In fact, Hunt later questioned the parsimonious definition he offered: "One has to wonder whether 'satisfaction' is the best word for what (the conference attendees) are talking about (p. 461)." Thus, it may be useful to continue the exploration of these meanings through the perspective taken here.

[3] This figure and the accompanying dicussion assume a "snapshot" approach to a one-time consumption experience. This could include, however, both first-time purchasers or repeat purchasers (as it does in what will be called the contentment response mode). Moreover, it is also possible that portions of this model are not manifest until repeat purchasing occurs. For example, in the event that a product is first experienced emotionally as with music (see Zajonc 1984), attribution judgments may even precede attribute evaluations as in: "Why do I like this music? Oh, because of the beat. The beat is fast-paced. I like it."

[4] It is also true that consumers may remain content because the focal product has not performed outside the range of their passive expectations. Should more extreme performance occur, the response mode would shift to the pleasure/ displeasure or surprise categories.

[5] This one satisfaction state alone may explain why reports of satisfaction levels in surveys are inordinately high, approaching 90% (Day and Ash 1979; Day and Bodur 1978; Leigh and Day 1979). If a survey samples an ongoing usage situation as in the refrigerator example used here, most subjects will be responding from a satisfaction-as-contentment perspective and the remaining satisfaction states become "mixed in" at varying levels of satisfaction/ dissatisfaction. Although the data would clearly include consumers responding from the perspective of other response states, these individuals may be small in number compared to those whose refrigerators have been operating

properly in contentment mode. Thus, one should not expect to find high levels of reported dissatisfaction.
[6]It might be argued that while negative disconfirmation is possible (e.g., a cold medication that did not reduce nasal congestion), positive disconfirmation is not because the expectation of normalcy is the best one can achieve. Hence, confirmation is the maximum state achievable. However, both overall and attribute performance can be observed to be better than expected as in the following examples: a repair that renders the product "better than new," a medication that relieves symptoms faster than expected (e.g., overnight relief), a legal award higher than expected, and a complaint response from a firm which gives the consumer back more than what was invested in the product (e.g., coupons for three free packages of ...).
[7]For example, if I expect to be pleasantly surprised by a gift, and I am not, this is a negative disconfirmation of my unexpectedness. Alternatively, if I expect a routine holiday tie with only the color unexpected and I get, instead, a sweater, my unexpectedness would have been positively disconfirmed.
[8]It should be noted that the unexpectedness of the product's performance under low arousal may move the consumption situation to one of high arousal.

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