

Goal-Directed Behaviors in Marketing: The Role of Emotion, Volition, and Motivation

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INTRODUCTION

Much of marketing behavior is purposive. Yet little theory and even less research can be found in the literature concerning purposive marketing activities.

This special issue focuses upon the role of emotions in goal-directed consumption. Emotions perform different functions and operate at different levels under various stages of consumer decision making. The five articles presented in this issue reflect this. In the first article, Mano explores the *moderating effects* of emotions. Pleasantness and arousal interact with involvement to govern the course of information processing in a persuasion context.

In the next two articles, emotions function as *intervening variables*. Miller and Marks study the ability of emotions to mediate the effect of personality on product satisfaction. They operationalize emotions as positive and negative affects, where each component of affect consists of an aggregation of multiple discrete emotional responses. Sherman, Mathur, and Smith investigate the power of emotions to mediate the effects of environmental retail stimuli on shopping behaviors. Emotion here was conceived as a two-dimensional pleasure/arousal phenomenon.

Emotions function as well as important *dependent variables* in the fourth article, by Mooradian and Olver. Here emotions were measured through a number of positive affect and arousal/activity items. Gould

then explores the functioning of moods as *self-regulating mechanisms* in consumption in the final article. The intriguing idea that people manage their moods through consumption activities is developed. This is done through a holistic process of self-interpretation, where moods are psychologically constructed as goal-directed activities.

SUMMARY OF ARTICLES

The role of affect in persuasion has been studied primarily as the impact of a unidimensional phenomenon, namely, pleasantness–unpleasantness, on information processing. Further, there is some discrepancy in the literature with respect to the effects found for positive mood on message elaboration, with some studies showing a decrease and others revealing an increase in elaboration. Mano addresses these issues head-on in an experimental investigation of the effects of pleasantness and arousal on persuasion outcomes (i.e., attitude) and information processing (i.e., message elaboration). Specifically, Mano manipulated involvement and message quality and treated pleasantness and arousal as measured variables (by asking people before the manipulations to indicate how pleasant and aroused they felt in response to a series of emotion-describing adjectives). Among other results, he found that pleasantness accentuated the interaction effect between involvement and argument quality on attitudes (i.e., a three-way interaction was found between pleasantness \times involvement \times argument quality). Moreover, high arousal led to more favorable attitudes under high but not low involvement. In addition, under low involvement, pleasantness and message elaboration were slightly negatively correlated, but under high involvement they were positively correlated. Mano's study clarifies the impact of affect on persuasion and information processing and suggests that task involvement is a key moderator.

The influence of different imagery-evoking strategies on responses to appeals in radio advertisements was investigated by Miller and Marks. The authors manipulated sound effects, vividness of verbal information, and instructions to imagine aspects of college football games to potential patrons. It was found that sound effects (i.e., presence/absence of clatter of fans entering a stadium, roaring of a crowd in reaction to a touchdown, and half-time marching band) were the most effective tactics in generating imagery and influencing positive feeling and attitudes toward the ad. Instructions to imagine were the least effective tactics, with vivid verbal messages only slightly less effective than sound effects. The propositional–representations theory was used to interpret the results, where it was argued that sound effects should more directly activate memory structures that contain perceptual information than the other tactics. That is, exposure to the

sound effects vividly stimulated sights, sounds, and other sensations connected to attending football games.

Sherman, Mathur, and Smith examine the determinants of various shopping behaviors for consumers in fashion stores. Following a stimulus–organism–response paradigm, the authors put specific emphasis on the mediating role of emotions, which they operationalized as separate factors of pleasure and arousal. Four exogenous stimuli were investigated as aspects of the retail environment: social, overall store image, store design, and store ambiance. The dependent-variable measures of behavior included number of items purchased, amount of money spent in store, amount of time spent in store, and reactions to store environment. The findings generally confirmed predictions.

We know a great deal about how the confirmation or disconfirmation of expectations influences product satisfaction. But do personality and emotional responses also influence satisfaction? Mooradian and Olver answer this question by investigating the impact of extroversion and neuroticism on positive and negative consumption-based emotions, respectively, and how these emotions affect satisfaction. They also examine the effects of satisfaction on consumer complaints, product recommendations, and repeat purchase intentions. The findings in their survey show that satisfaction mediates the effects of positive and negative consumption-based emotions on complaints, recommendations, and intentions, even after controlling for confirmation of product expectations. Further, consistent with research in psychology, extroversion and neuroticism had strong effects on positive and negative emotions, respectively. A structural-equation methodology was used to test hypotheses.

Gould investigates mood and its relationship to self-regulation in the consumption of feeling-good products, particularly those alleviating bad moods. Using open-ended written protocols and an interpretive approach to analyze these data, he develops an emergent consumption and mood framework (CMF). The CMF maintains that consumers use products and services as tools for regulating their moods and achieving desired goals. Professor Gould stresses that self-reflection and consumption-specific experiences are needed to understand the role of mood. In this way the intrinsic character of moods are revealed, in contrast to the use of standard paper-and-pencil scales, which lack deep connections to the consumption experience. It is involvement with product use that requires focus, Gould points out, rather than purchase per se. He also suggests that individual differences, such as gender, ethnicity, or personality, are expressed through mood management and consumption and frequently act as moderators. Finally, Gould notes that researchers need to consider consumption as a process and in an ongoing developmental sense rather than as an isolated response to situational stimuli. Throughout the article, the reader will get a sense of how a phenomenological approach can be used to gain insights into consumption.

CONCLUSION

The articles in this issue show that consumer decision making is very much characterized by emotional processes and their role in purposive action. Emotions serve to motivate action, qualify information processing, and in general regulate the pursuit of consumption goals. As we learn more about the affective side of consumer behavior, we are likely to find that our theories, which are by and large cognitive in content, will require refinement. We are in need of more integrative theorizing to better explain and understand consumption. The articles in this issue provide a basis for such theorizing, but much remains to be done.

I would like to express my appreciation to Professor Rajan Nataraajan for asking me to coordinate this special issue. Actually, Rajan and I worked closely together throughout the process. I am indebted to him for his support and insights and am pleased and honored to be considered his friend.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The input of the following reviewers, some of whom read two manuscripts each, is gratefully acknowledged:

Aaron Ahuvia	University of Michigan Business School
Gerald Albaum	University of Oregon
Chris Allen	University of Cincinnati
Raj Arora	University of Missouri, Kansas City
Rajeev Batra	University of Michigan Business School
Hans Baumgartner	Pennsylvania State University
William Bearden	University of South Carolina
Sharon Beatty	University of Alabama
Russ Belk	University of Utah
Joseph Bellizzi	Arizona State University W. Campus
Albert J. Della Bitta	University of Rhode Island
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