

Investigation of the Effect of Consumption Emotions on Satisfaction and Word of Mouth Communications

¹Kambiz Heidarzadeh Hanzaee and ²Mahmoud Khanzadeh

¹Department of Business Management, Science and Research Branch,
Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

²Department of Business Management, Qazvin Branch, Islamic Azad University, Iran

Abstract: This research investigates the effect of consumption emotions on satisfaction and word of mouth communications. Research conceptual model has its roots in Russell's pleasure-arousal model from the field of environmental psychology. The primary objective of this research is to examine the impact of consumption emotions on satisfaction and word of mouth communications. The sample population in this study consisted of tourists that visiting Iranian churches on the UNESCO World Heritage List, including *Saint Thaddeus Monastery*, the *Saint Stepanos Church* and the *Chapel of Dzordzor*. Structural equations modeling using LISREL was performed to empirically test the relationships between the constructs in this study. The results indicate that pleasure has a significant relationship with satisfaction. Also results indicate that pleasure, arousal and satisfaction has a significant relationship with WOM. Finally, it is suggested that managers can create very effective methods for developing positive behavioral intentions in customers by better understanding of emotional factors.

Key words: Consumption emotions • Customer satisfaction • Pleasure • Arousal • Word of mouth • Church

INTRODUCTION

Recently, the study of consumption related emotions has received increasing attention from consumer behavior researchers [1]. Nowadays, an extraordinary amount of research is carried out into emotion within the boundaries of the marketing discipline [2]. Emotions have received greater attention in advertising, consumer decision making, retailing, satisfaction and behavioral intentions research [3]. There is ample evidence that emotional reactions associated with the consumption experience are fundamental for the determination of satisfaction [4]. There are also indications that consumption emotions have an impact on behavioral intentions, including word of mouth (WOM) communications and loyalty [5]. This study investigates the effect of consumption emotions on satisfaction and word of mouth communications. This study has its roots in Russell's pleasure-arousal (PA) model from the field of environmental psychology [6].

This paper first discusses the conceptual framework, pleasure-arousal model and hypothesized relationships. It then describes the methodology before presenting the results of the empirical study and the study's findings.

Conceptual Framework and Research Hypotheses

Consumption Emotions: the Pleasure-Arousal Model:

Consumption emotions refer to the set of emotional responses elicited specifically during product usage or consumption experiences, as described either by the distinctive categories of emotional experience and expression (e.g., joy, anger and fear) or by the structural dimensions underlying emotional categories, such as pleasantness/unpleasantness, relaxation/action, or calmness/excitement [7].

There are three generally accepted approaches to studying emotions in the marketing field: categories approach, dimensions approach and cognitive appraisals approach.

The categories approach does not attempt to determine the causes of emotions, but rather groups emotions based on their similarities [8]. Izard [9] proposes the coexistence of 10 fundamental discrete emotions: interest, joy, anger, contempt, disgust, shame, guilt, sadness, fear and surprise. The dimensions approach uses valence and arousal to differentiate emotions [8]. This approach takes into consideration that emotional states exist in bipolar categories. This model of affect is known by the acronym PAD, which stands

for the three constitutive dimensions of emotions: pleasure-displeasure, arousal-nonarousal and dominance-submissiveness [3].

The third approach, cognitive appraisals, offers a more in-depth way to explain the subtle nuances of emotions. Importantly, as an emerging theory its aim is to predict what emotions should be elicited in a given context as well as how evoked emotions affect behavior [8].

In recent marketing studies, emotions are represented by only two dimensions, that is, pleasure and arousal (PA model). Pleasure refers to the extent to which individuals feel good, happy, pleased, or joyful in a situation [10]. Pleasure is positively linked to satisfaction [11]. Arousal is the degree to which individuals feel stimulated, excited, or active [10]. Researches results indicate that positive arousal influences visitor pleasure positively. Pleasure is strongly linked to consumer satisfaction and loyalty in experiencing tourism attractions [12]. The impact of emotions on satisfaction is well documented in the satisfaction literature. Consistent with the literature on satisfaction, which supports a significant positive effect of consumption emotions on satisfaction, the effect of pleasure and arousal on satisfaction is expected [3]. Also, the impact of emotions on WOM has been investigated. Ladhari and Westbrook found that consumption emotions influence the WOM [3, 13].

Satisfaction: Consumer satisfaction is a concept that has been widely debated in the literature [12]. The degree of overall pleasure or contentment felt by the customer, resulting from the ability of the service provider to fulfill the customer's desire, expectations and need in relation to the service. Customer satisfaction is a complex construct and has been defined in various ways [14]. In the tourism context, satisfaction is primarily referred to as a function of pre-travel expectations and post travel experiences. When experiences compared to expectations result in feelings of gratification, the tourist is satisfied. However, when they result in feelings of displeasure, the tourist is dissatisfied [15]. Past studies have suggested that perceptions of service quality and value affect satisfaction and satisfaction furthermore affects loyalty and post behaviors [16]. There is growing evidence that consumption emotions are significantly associated with satisfaction and behavioral intentions [17]. Research findings indicate that satisfaction has a direct relationship with positive WOM [18].

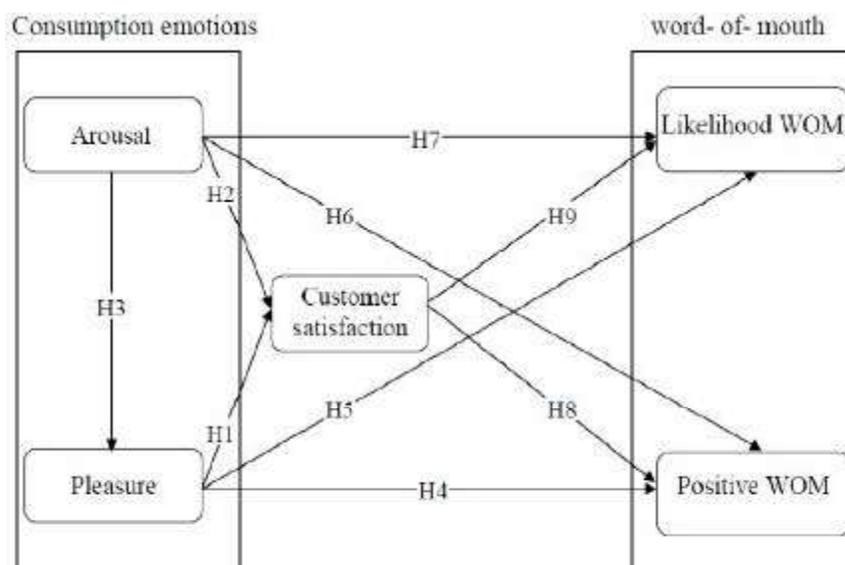
Word of Mouth: WOM consists of oral, person to person communication between a receiver and a communicator whom the receiver perceives as non commercial, regarding a brand, product or service [19]. In fact, word of mouth behavior is generally conceived of as the informal transfer of purchase related and consumption related information between consumers. Typically, word of mouth is assumed to be of two general types: negative word of mouth and positive word of mouth [20]. Positive WOM occurs when good news testimonials and endorsements desired by the company are uttered. Negative WOM is the mirror image [19]. The empirical research that has investigated the relationship between customer satisfaction and word of mouth has not produced consistent findings. Some researchers have found a direct positive relationship with satisfied customers engaging in more word of mouth activity. Others have found a negative relationship with dissatisfied customers engaging in more word of mouth activity. Other studies have not found any significant direct relationship between the two constructs [21].

Conceptual Model and Hypotheses

Research Methodology

Measurement Items: To test the hypotheses, multi item scales validated in previous studies were identified and modified to fit the study setting. Emotions were measured by 11 items representing the pleasure and arousal dimensions. Pleasure was measured using a five-item five-point semantic differential scale [22]. Since satisfaction was the study's dependant variable, the item "satisfied- dissatisfied" was eliminated from the original six-item pleasure scale. These bipolar adjectives were pleased/annoyed, contented/melancholic, hopeful/despairing, relaxed/bored and happy/unhappy. Arousal was measured with a six-item five-point semantic differential scale [22]. The items were excited/calm, stimulated/relaxed, frenzied/sluggish, jittery/dull, wide awake/sleepy and aroused/unaroused. Satisfaction was measured using five items, three of which were adapted from Oliver [23]. The likelihood of generating WOM was measured on one five-point item [3]. Positive word of mouth activity was measured using the three-item five-point Likert scale [24].

Sample Population: In this research, the tourism context was selected to empirically test the conceptual model and the hypothesized relationships.



Note: Hypothesis 10 is not presented in this figure

Fig. 1: Conceptual model and hypothesized relationships

- H1. Pleasure will have a direct positive relationship with satisfaction.
- H2. Arousal will have a direct positive relationship with satisfaction.
- H3. Arousal will have a direct positive relationship with pleasure.
- H4. Pleasure will have a direct positive relationship with positive WOM.
- H5. Pleasure will have a direct positive relationship with likelihood of generation WOM.
- H6. Arousal will have a direct positive relationship with positive WOM.
- H7. Arousal will have a direct positive relationship with likelihood of generation WOM.
- H8. Satisfaction will have a direct positive relationship with positive WOM.
- H9. Satisfaction will have a direct positive relationship with likelihood of generation WOM.
- H10. Satisfaction will mediate relationship of pleasure and arousal with the likelihood of WOM and positive WOM.

The sample population in this study consisted of tourists that visiting Iranian churches on the UNESCO World Heritage List. This church consists of:

- Saint Thaddeus Monastery
- Saint Stepanos Church
- Chapel of Dzordzor

Data Collection Procedure: The research population in this study consisted of tourists that visiting Iranian churches on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Stratified random sampling was used; however, the method of selecting respondents was systematic random sampling. According to the information received, the number of visitors and tourists to the three historical churches and the visual areas of around it are specific - the total number of visitors and tourists to Saint Stepanos Church and Saint Stepanos Church is 177,000, persons. In addition, the number of visitors and tourists to Chapel of Dzordzor was very few and for this reason this church was omitted

from this research. The population size was 177,000 and the sample size was determined according to Krejcie and Morgan's table to be at least 384 [25]. Data was collected from 560 visitors and tourists at Saint Stepanos Church and Saint Thaddeus Church. A total of 396 usable questionnaires were retained. Fourteen respondents were foreign tourists and 382 persons were Iranian visitors. Of all the questionnaires, 298 were taken at Saint Stepanos Church and 98 were from Saint Thaddeus Church.

Validity and Reliability: A pretest was conducted to check the validity and reliability of scale items in the survey instrument by surveying 48 tourists in Saint Stepanos Church. Two types of validity tests were used to test the goodness of the measure: content validity and face validity. A reliability test was used to assess the consistency of the result measurements. The coefficient alpha is the most popular measure of reliability for a multi-item scale. This was used to assess the internal homogeneity existing among the items scale in this study.

Values were all above 0.70. Each construct yielded the following reliabilities: Cronbach alpha coefficient for positive WOM was 0.81, customer satisfaction 0.80, pleasure 0.83 and arousal 0.78. Thus, these values were above the .70 level suggested by Nunnally [26] and therefore indicated internal consistency.

Analysis and Results: The demographic characteristics of the sample were shown in Table 1. Structural equations modeling using LISREL 8.54 for Windows were performed to test the relationships between the constructs in this study. First, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed to identify whether the measurement variables reliably reflected the hypothesized latent variables. Second, a structural equation modeling (SEM) with latent variables was tested to determine the adequacy of the constructs of the model and test the hypotheses.

Measurement Model: Prior to conducting Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), a measurement model was assessed using LISREL 8.54. The overall evaluation of the model fit was based on multiple indicators (Ladhari, 2007). These indicators included the χ^2 ; the normed fit index (NFI), the nonnormed fit index (NNFI), the comparative fit index (CFI), the root mean squared error of approximation (RMSEA), Expected Cross-Validation Index (ECVI), Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), Root Mean Square Residual (RMR) and Incremental Fit Index (IFI). As shown in Table 2, the RMR was 0.11, the SRMR was 0.059, the GFI was 0.91, the NFI was 0.92, the NNFI was 0.93, the ECVI was 0.68, the CN was 386, the IFI was 0.94, the CFI was 0.94 and the RMSEA was 0.075. The fit statistics showed that the measurement model fit the data reasonably well. However, the chi-square for this model was significant. This statistic is sensitive to large sample size.

A construct measurement summary is presented in Table 3.

Structural Model: A structural equation modeling (SEM) with latent variables was tested to determine the adequacy of the constructs of the model and test the hypotheses. As shown in Table 4, the structural model estimates are used to verify the hypothesized relationships. All hypothesized relationships are statistically significant (t -value. >1.96). In addition, the structural model showed acceptable fit.

The results of Structural parameter estimates were shown in Table 5.

Table 1: Demographic details

Demographic variables	n	%
Gender		
Male	239	60.4
Female	157	39.6
Total	396	100.0
Age (years)		
Below 20	31	7.8
20-30	176	44.4
30-40	100	25.3
40-50	47	11.9
Above 50	42	10.6
Total	396	100.0
Marriage state		
Single	156	39.4
Marriage	240	60.6
Total	396	100.0

Table 2: Indicators of fit for measurement model

Indicators	Values
RMR	0.11
SRMR	0.059
GFI	0.91
NFI	0.92
NNFI	0.93
ECVI	0.68
CN	386
IFI	0.94
CFI	0.94
RMSEA	0.075

Table 3: Construct Measurement Summary

Constructs		Standardized loading	Standardized deviation	t- value	p-value
	ARO1	0.83	0.007	108.76	0.01
	ARO2	0.76	0.008	94.21	0.01
Arousal	ARO3	0.81	0.0058	137.74	0.01
	ARO4	0.56	0.010	53.61	0.01
	ARO5	0.84	0.0059	140.79	0.01
	ARO6	0.75	0.005	135.02	0.01
	PL1	0.80	0.0045	174.33	0.01
	PL2	0.83	0.0044	185.23	0.01
Pleasure	PL3	0.67	0.0089	75.20	0.01
	PL4	0.76	0.0071	106.24	0.01
	PL5	0.83	0.0061	135.34	0.01
	SAT1	0.75	0.0058	127.42	0.01
	SAT2	0.80	0.0066	120.25	0.01
Satisfaction	SAT3	0.74	0.0069	106.91	0.01
	SAT4	0.83	0.0083	99.28	0.01
	SAT5	0.71	0.011	59.22	0.01
	PWOM1	0.87	0.0074	117.0	0.01
	PWOM	PWOM2	0.86	0.0086	99.79
PWOM3		0.86	0.0074	115.61	0.01
LWOM		LWOM	0.99	0.025	39.21

Table 4: structural Model Estimates or Correlation Matrixes

	Arousal	Pleasure	Satisfaction	PWOM	LWOM
Arousal	1.00				
Pleasure	0.98	1.00			
	t = 33.13	t = 25.06			
Satisfaction	0.90	0.80	1.00		
	t = 28.01	t = 25.06	t = 23.09		
PWOM	0.83	0.83	0.74	1.00	
	t = 25.05	t = 25.03	t = 23.09	t = 22.36	
L WOM	0.90	0.87	0.82	0.71	1.00
	t = 27.90	t = 26.36	t = 24.10	t = 22.36	t = 22.36

Table 5: Structural parameter estimates

Hypothesized Path	Path confident	T-value	Results
H1: pleasure → Satisfaction	0.77	46.06	supported
H2: Arousal → Satisfaction	0.05	1.42	not supported
H3: Arousal → Pleasure	0.79	62.50	supported
H4: pleasure → P WOM	0.15	4.23	supported
H5: pleasure → LWOM	0.21	7.82	Supported
H6: Arousal → P WOM	0.78	61.51	Supported
H7: Arousal → LWOM	0.77	61.49	Supported
H8: Satisfaction → P WOM	0.66	21.60	Supported
H9: Satisfaction → LWOM	0.41	11.03	supported

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study tests the impact of emotions on post purchase behavior. The model specifies the impact of pleasure and arousal on satisfaction, positive WOM and the likelihood of generating WOM. The model has its roots in Russell’s framework for basic emotions. Consistent with Russell’s model, emotions have two independent dimensions, i.e. pleasure and arousal [27]. As hypothesized, pleasure has a significant direct positive relationship with satisfaction. This result supports the findings of Ladhari and Bigné and Gnoth [3, 12]. However, the relationship of arousal with satisfaction was non-significant. This result supports the findings of Bigné and Gnoth [12]. Similar to the findings of Ladhari and Bigné and Gnoth [3, 12], arousal is strongly linked to pleasure in experiencing tourism attractions. Pleasure has a significant positive relationship with positive WOM and likelihood of generating WOM. These results are consistent with the findings of Ladhari [3]. Arousal has a significant positive relationship with positive WOM and likelihood of generating WOM. Satisfaction has a significant relationship with likelihood of WOM and positive WOM communications. Satisfied tourists participate more in WOM activities than dissatisfied tourists do. This result is consistent with the findings of Ladhari and Oliver [3, 28]. Thus, managers and

marketers should focus on keeping tourists satisfied. Also, results show that satisfaction mediates the relationship of pleasure and arousal with the likelihood of WOM and positive WOM. Our results show that feelings of pleasure are directly linked to satisfaction and WOM. Hence, service managers need to make sure that the experience is as pleasurable as possible. This can be achieved by various means. For example, the services can be manipulated according to the preferences of the customers. Alternatively, the service delivery system can be designed to minimize perceived waiting time. These findings emphasize the importance of measuring consumer emotions throughout the service process.

The research findings must be considered within the limitations of the research methodology. This study focuses only on the tourist industry. Additional research is needed to examine these relationships within and across additional sectors. Another limitation stems from the use of self report measures of affective and cognitive bases. These explicit measures are more likely to be tied to deliberative affect and cognition, because they encourage an active search in memory for specific emotional experiences and cognitive beliefs associated with the focal leisure experience.

This research suggests further avenues of exploration. First, additional research using other types of hedonic services would increase the generalizability of our findings. Second, in building towards a clearer understanding of consumption emotions evoked through experiencing tourism services, this research would also like to suggest new variables to be taken into account for future enquiries. Third, future research efforts should replicate this study with different experiential and utilitarian services or products.

REFERENCES

1. Mattila, A. and J. Wirtz, 2000. The role of preconception affect in post purchase evaluation of Services. *Psychology and Marketing*, 17(7): 587-605.
2. Bigné, J.E. and L. Andreu, 2004. Emotions in segmentations: An empirical study. *Annals of Tourism Res.*, 31(3): 682-696.
3. Ladhari, L., 2007. The effect of consumption emotion on satisfaction and word of mouth communication. *Psychology and Marketing*, 24(12): 1085-1108.
4. Oliver, R.L., 1993. Cognitive, affective and attribute bases of the satisfaction response. *J. Consumer Res.*, 20: 418-430.

5. Derbaix, C. and J. Vanhamme, 2003. Inducing word of mouth by eliciting surprise a pilot investigation. *J. Economic Psychol.*, 24: 99-116.
6. Russell, J.A., 1980. A circumplex model of affect. *J. Personality and Social Psychol.*, 39(6): 1161-1178.
7. Westbrook, R.A. and R.L. Oliver, 1991. The dimensionality of consumption emotion patterns and consumer satisfaction. *J. Consumer Res.*, 18(1): 84-91.
8. Watson, L. and M.T. Spence, 2007. Causes and consequences of emotions on consumer behavior, a review and integrative cognitive appraisal theory. *European J. Marketing*, 41(5/6): 487-511.
9. Izard, C.E., 1977. *Human emotions*. New York: Plenum.
10. Ryu, K. and S. Jang, 2008. Influence of restaurants' physical environments on emotion and behavioral intention. *The Service Industries J.*, 28(8): 1151-1165.
11. Bigné, J.E., A.S. Mattila and L. Andreu, 2008. The impact of experiential consumption cognitions and emotions on behavioral intentions. *J. Services Marketing*, 22(4): 303-315.
12. Bigné, J.E., L. Andreu and J. Gnoth, 2005. The theme park experience: an analysis of pleasure, arousal and satisfaction. *Tourism Management*, 26: 833-844.
13. Westbrook, R.A., 1987. Product/consumption-based affective responses and postpurchase processes. *J. Marketing Res.*, 24: 258-270.
14. Hanzae, K.H. and M. Mirvaisi, 2011. Customer orientation of service employees (COSE): Customer satisfaction, commitment and retention in Iranian Islamic banking. *World Applied Science J.*, 13(6): 1414-1424.
15. Chen, C.F. and F.S. Chen, 2010. Experience quality, perceived value, satisfaction and behavioral intentions for heritage tourists. *Tourism Management*, 31: 29-35.
16. Chen, C.F., 2008. Investigating structural relationships between service quality, perceived value, satisfaction and behavioral intentions for air passengers: Evidence from Taiwan. *Transportation Research Part A*, 42(4): 709-71.
17. Han, H. and K.J. Back, 2007. Investigating the effects of consumption emotions on customer satisfaction and repeat visit intentions in the lodging Industry. *J. Hospitality Marketing and Management*, 15(3): 5-30.
18. Bitner, M.J., 1990. Evaluating service encounters: The effects of physical surroundings and employee responses. *J. Marketing*, 54(2): 69-82.
19. Buttle, F.A., 1998. Word of mouth: Understanding and managing referral marketing. *J. Strategic Marketing*, 6: 241-254.
20. Söderlund, M. and S. Rosengren, 2007. Receiving word of mouth from the service customer: An emotion-based effectiveness assessment. *J. Retailing and Consumer Services*, 14: 123-136.
21. Saha, G.C. and Theingi, 2009. Service quality, satisfaction and behavioral intentions: A study of low-cost airline carriers in Thailand. *Managing Service Quality*, 19(3): 350-372.
22. Mehrabian, A. and J. Russell, 1974. *An approach to environmental psychology*, Cambridge, MA. MIT Press.
23. Oliver, R.L., 1980. A cognitive model of the antecedents and consequences of satisfaction decisions. *J. Marketing Res.*, 17: 460-469.
24. White, C. and Y.T. Yu, 2005. Satisfaction emotions and consumer behavioral intentions. *J. Services Marketing*, 19(6): 411-420.
25. Krejcie, R.V. and D.W. Morgan, 1970. Determining sample size for research activities. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 30: 607-610.
26. Nunnally, J.C., 1978. *Psychometric theory*, McGraw-Hill, New York, NY.
27. Russell, J.A. and G.A. Pratt, 1980. A description of the affective quality attributed to environments. *J. Personality and Social Psychol.*, 38: 311-322.
28. Oliver, R.L. and J.E. Swan, 1989. Consumer perceptions of interpersonal equity and satisfaction in transaction: field survey approach. *J. Marketing*, 53: 21-35.