An Exploration of the Effects of Outcome Desirability and Agency Appraisals on Emotions and Consumer Decision-Making Processes

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Lisa Watson, M.M.S., B. Com. (Hons)
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Dissertation Supervisor:
Dr. Mark T. Spence

Signed Certification

This thesis represents my own work and contains no material which has been previously submitted for a degree or diploma at Bond University or any other institution, except where due acknowledgement is made.

Lisa Watson, M.M.S., B. Com. (Hons) March 31, 2006

Date

Summary

Researchers have traditionally focused on the dimensions of valence and arousal when studying how affect, mood and emotions influence consumer decision-making processes. As a result, it was concluded that negative emotions were associated with more systematic processing and positive emotions were related to more heuristic processing (Tiedens and Linton, 2001). However, recent studies of the effects of emotions on consumer decision-making have shown that emotions with the same valence and arousal level can lead to different response behaviours (Lerner and Keltner, 2000; Ragunathan and Pham, 1999; Tiedens and Linton, 2001; Yi and Baumgartner, 2004). Cognitive appraisals have been offered as an avenue for explaining these differences (Bagozzi, Gopinath and Nyer, 1999; Ruth, Brunel and Otnes, 2002; Tiedens and Linton, 2001); however, a comprehensive theory of their effects on decision-making has yet to emerge. This three study research program tests whether the cognitive appraisals of outcome desirability and agency combine to offer a more comprehensive explanation of emotion's effect on consumer decision-making processes than has been offered to date. Outcome desirability and agency are proposed to influence decision-making processes both directly and through the mediating influence of emotions. Results show that emotions mediate relationships between outcome desirability and agency appraisals and consumer decision-making processes. There is some evidence to suggest that agency driven emotions differentially influence consumer decision-making processes and outcomes. Further study is needed to confirm how these complex interactions work together to drive decision-making behaviours.

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