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Review of emotions research in marketing, 2002–2013

Sanjaya S. Gaur*, Halimin Herjanto¹, Marian Makkar

AUT School of Business, AUT Faculty of Business and Law, Auckland University of Technology (AUT), Welleley Campus, WY Building Level 4, 120 Mayoral Drive, Private Bag 92006, Auckland 1142, New Zealand



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ABSTRACT

Study of emotions has been an important area of research for past several decades. Since emotions play an important role in purchase decisions, this area has particular importance for marketing scholars. In this study, we review the emotions research conducted within the marketing field between 2002 and 2013. Within the broad domain of emotions, this study focuses on social/personality issues, cognitive factors, the development of emotions and their interactions with other consumption factors. We found a total of 340 emotion-related articles, published in 19 marketing journals. There was a gradual increase in number of articles published every year with the trend peaking in 2009, 2010, and 2011. The review of extant literature offers interesting insights into emotion-related research, and helps in identifying clear directions for future studies.

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1. Introduction

Study of emotions has been a thriving area of research within the psychology domain for long. Psychology scholars have found that emotions have a vital role in determining peoples' behaviors and actions (Carlson et al., 2007). In more recent years, this topic has been taken up by many applied disciplines, including marketing (Solomon, 2008). In the marketing discipline, scholars argue that the constitutional character of emotions is very relevant and evident in human consumption. However, the extant literature on emotions is limited in explicating different dimensions of emotions as they relate to consumer decision making (Erevelles, 1998). We review the extant literature to take a stock of what we know.

In an effort to develop a nuanced understanding of the importance of emotions for consumer behavior, scholars in the marketing discipline have developed theoretical models by borrowing theories on emotions from disciplines such as psychology and sociology (Huang, 2001). Researchers have also focused on specific areas of emotions in marketing such as its measurement (Bellman, 2007), causes and consequences (Penz and Hogg, 2011), functions (Eyal and Fishbach, 2007), coping mechanisms (Bee and Madrigal, 2007) and communication (Landwehr et al., 2011). Despite these efforts, study of emotions in the marketing discipline is only in the preliminary stages (Holbrook and O'Shaughnessy, 1984; Bagozzi et al., 1998; Huang, 2001). Given the significance of emotions for

marketing research, it is important to determine its current status, trends, patterns, and development.

Erevelles (1998) first provided a review of emotions in the marketing discipline. However, this study had a limited scope as it focused solely on the concept of affect. It is also a bit outdated as there have been several theoretical and methodological advances in recent years. We extend Erevelles' (1998) study by examining the current research trends in emotions research in the marketing literature and presenting its latest findings. Based on this review, we provide directions for future research so that studies on emotions can help expand our understanding of its role in marketing. This study investigates and discusses the trends in emotions research in connection with journal information, author and article, the nature of the research, data collection methods and statistical analysis. The rest of the paper is organized as follows. First, definitions of emotions and emotion-related research in marketing are presented. Second, the methodology adopted for this research, measurement descriptions, and an explanation and justification for article extractions are presented. Last, results, discussion, conclusion, limitations, and future research scope conclude this paper.

2. Background

Human beings are considered as unique and complex creatures. According to Turner (2007), one reason for their complexity and uniqueness is the fact that they are "highly emotional animals" (p. 1). That is, human beings are able to experience and express different emotions, and more interestingly, they can interpret complex emotional states in others. Based on their emotions,

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +64 9 9219999x5465; fax: +64 9 9219629.

E-mail addresses: sgaur@aut.ac.nz (S.S. Gaur),hherjanto@mckendree.edu (H. Herjanto), mmakkar@aut.ac.nz (M. Makkar).¹ Present address: McKendree University, Lebanon, IL 62254, USA.

people form or reject social connections, and develop, maintain, or avoid their commitments to social structures and cultures. For this reason, emotions play an important role in every dimension of human activity within society.

Several studies (Holbrook and O'Shaughnessy, 1984; Bagozzi et al., 1998; Huang, 2001) confirmed that emotions play a critical role in determining consumers' behaviors. According to Holbrook and O'Shaughnessy (1984), investigating emotions assists advertising agencies and salespeople in recognizing the different aspects of clients' emotions and consequences of these in the decision making. Bagozzi et al. (1998) refreshed the exploration of the role of emotions in marketing and found that previous studies on emotions provided inconclusive findings. According to them, these inconclusive findings were due to a lack of consistency in emotions terminology. For example, terms such as "affect", "feelings", "mood", and "emotions" are frequently used interchangeably. According to Bagozzi et al. (1998), emotions can be identified throughout businesses, especially in marketing. To them, emotions influence individuals' information processing, mediate responses to persuasive appeals, measure the effects of marketing stimuli, instigate goal setting, affect goal-directed behaviors and serve as ends and measures of consumer welfare. Therefore, appreciating the role of emotions clearly helps marketers gain insight into customers. Bagozzi et al. (1998) also believe that marketers still know too little about the role of emotions in marketing behavior. They argue that there are numerous questions yet to be answered such as the function of emotions in influencing salespersons' and managers' behaviors, when emotions are functional or dysfunctional or customer satisfaction as a unique phenomenon or a subcategory of positive emotions.

More recently, Huang (2001) re-investigated the theory of emotions in marketing. In her view, marketing scholars have not fully identified the specific characteristics of emotions. Because of this reason, the author appeals to future researchers to investigate the characteristics of emotions that specifically relate to marketing

and to integrate these characteristics to existing emotions theories. The preceding discussion clearly shows that despite the importance of emotions, the study of its role in marketing is still in its infantile stages. More importantly, the call for further examination of this phenomenon is very broad and varied.

In order to help identify and narrow down the research gap, this study utilizes content analysis to offer the latest updates on emotions studies in marketing literature by revealing the current trends in the field. We focus on journal information, author information, article research information, research type and research methods, and cover five key sub disciplines of marketing: marketing; advertising; consumer behavior; consumer psychology and retailing. In brief, there are two main research questions that this study attempts to answer:

Research Question 1: How often are emotion-related articles published in major marketing journals?

Research Question 2: What is the status of authorial, topical and methodological emotion-related research in marketing literature?

3. Method

The initial search for literature was based on the keyword "emotion" in Google Scholar, covering the period 2002–2013. According to Norozi (2005), Google Scholar helps investigators broaden research scopes by offering immediate and large coverage to a variety of academic journals with fewer biases in journal selection. The articles were screened for the keywords in the title, abstract and the keyword list. First step in article extraction generated more than 750 published research articles. Full texts of published research articles were then examined to exclude those that were not associated with emotions. The final review produced 340 relevant published research articles from

Table 1
Publication trends (journal and year).

| Journal | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | Total | % |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------------|--------------|
| Marketing | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Journal of Marketing | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 9 | 12.33 |
| Journal of Marketing Research | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 23 | 31.51 |
| Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 10 | 13.70 |
| International Journal of Research in Marketing | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 7 | 9.59 |
| Journal of Marketing Management | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 10.96 |
| European Journal of Marketing | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 10 | 13.70 |
| Australasian Marketing Journal | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 8.22 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 73 | 21.47 |
| Advertising | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Journal of Advertising | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 11 | 35.48 |
| Journal of Advertising Research | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 14 | 45.16 |
| International Journal of Advertising | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 6 | 19.35 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 31 | 9.12 |
| Consumer behavior | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Journal of Consumer Research | 3 | 2 | 2 | 7 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 8 | 4 | 2 | 51 | 31.29 |
| Advances in Consumer Research | 0 | 2 | 3 | 18 | 5 | 10 | 7 | 17 | 25 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 87 | 53.37 |
| Journal of Consumer Marketing | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 1.84 |
| Journal of International Consumer Marketing | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 6 | 3.68 |
| Journal of Consumer Behavior | 3 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 16 | 9.82 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 163 | 47.94 |
| Consumer psychology | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Psychology & Marketing | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 26 | 50.98 |
| Journal of Consumer Psychology | 1 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 25 | 49.02 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 51 | 15.00 |
| Retailing | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Journal of Retailing | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 8 | 36.36 |
| Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 5 | 14 | 63.64 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 22 | 6.47 |

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