DEVELOPING AND APPLYING CONSUMER SATISFACTION KNOWLEDGE: IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

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ABSTRACT

Satisfaction research should be responsive to the needs of various stakeholders, including both academic researchers and industry practitioners. This paper suggests a new set of CS/D research priorities for the next decade, keeping in mind the needs of both of these stakeholders. It is argued that more attention should be give to the application needs of industry practitioners in setting these priorities.

INTRODUCTION

Satisfaction knowledge has mushroomed at an impressive rate over the past decade. Not only are satisfaction papers being published more frequently in established journals, but there is now an entire journal devoted to this research. In addition, industry has expanded dramatically the resources devoted to measurement of customer satisfaction. This effort is an integral part of companies' growing commitment to compete on creating and delivering value to customers. As a result, industry practitioners have a growing need for knowledge about customer satisfaction that can be applied to managerial decision making.

Periodically, it is helpful to evaluate what has been learned about satisfaction (Woodruff, Cadotte, and Jenkins 1983a). However, this evaluation must consider the perspective of different stakeholder groups. One group's needs with regard to satisfaction knowledge might not be the same as another's. Further, the long run viability of satisfaction research will be directly related to the continued interest in and demand for new knowledge by the various stakeholders. This paper evaluates satisfaction research during the past decade from the perspective of two stakeholder groups: academic researchers and industry practitioners. Future research directions are suggested based on the premise that these directions should reflect the concerns of each stakeholder group.

A BRIEF ASSESSMENT OF SATISFACTION RESEARCH IN THE 1980s

For the most part, research on satisfaction during the 1980s has concentrated to a great extent on making conceptual and theoretical advancements. Progress has been made toward better understanding key constructs comprising satisfaction processes. For example, the standards construct has been studied, and evidence is building that predictive expectations is not the only standard affecting satisfaction outcomes (Cadotte, Woodruff and Jenkins 1987; Gardial et al 1993 and 1994; Spreng and Olshavsky 1992; Woodruff et al 1991). The meaning of the satisfaction construct itself has been thoughtfully examined (e.g., Oliver 1989, Singh 1991, Westbrook and Oliver 1991, Woodruff et al 1993), though there remain differences of opinion as to how the construct should be defined. Correspondingly, many alternative measures of these and other constructs have been proposed (Hausknecht 1990).

CS/D theory has been extensively explored, resulting in at least two kinds of developments. First, the dominant disconfirmation paradigm has been expanded to include new constructs that affect satisfaction outcomes. For instance, it has been proposed that consumers make attributions about causes of performance, and these attributions influence the nature of the satisfaction response (e.g., Oliver 1989). Others have shown that involvement may affect the nature of the process leading to satisfaction (e.g., Bolfing and Woodruff 1988, Churchill and Surprenant 1982). Westbrook and Oliver (1991) have modeled the role of affect in consumer disconfirmation processes.

Another direction has been to suggest other theoretical foundations (than disconfirmation) for satisfaction processes. The most widely studied of these has been equity theory as applied to post-buyer/seller interactions. For instance, Oliver and Swan (1989) show that equity is a complementary, parallel process to disconfirmation. More recently, Gardial et al (1994) found that satisfaction most likely is a subset of a larger phenomenon -- postpurchase evaluation. They argue that integration is needed among several evaluation theories, including multiattribute attitude, means-end hierarchy and disconfirmation theories, in order to adequately describe this larger phenomenon.

In short, the decade of the 1980s has been very productive in advancing knowledge of the consumer satisfaction phenomenon. There literally has been an explosion of this kind of knowledge. The question is, where do we go from here: is there a lot more to know about satisfaction or are the topics for new research becoming scarce?

Occasionally, someone questions whether satisfaction deserves all the attention it is getting. For instance, while satisfaction may be an important phenomenon conceptually, there remains concern about the ability to measure it. Coming over 15 years apart, both Olander (1977) and Peterson and Wilson (1992) offered warnings that questioned how meaningful satisfaction ratings are:

> "Ratings of satisfaction, then, seem to be highly dependent upon comparisons with the previous experiences and with peer groups. There is seldom, if ever, a yardstick which is common to different groups or which stays put over time. Is it then possible for a policymaker -- or anybody else -- to make much sense out of satisfaction ratings as measures of society's achievements?" (Olander 1977, p. 415)

> "Satisfying customers is a fundamentally sound principle. Unfortunately, measurements of customer satisfaction are not especially informative or diagnostic, principally because of their striking distributional characteristics. Indeed, examination of the satisfaction literature inevitably culminates in a pervasive yet inescapable conclusion -- it is not clear what customer satisfaction ratings are measuring." (Peterson and Wilson 1992, p. 69)

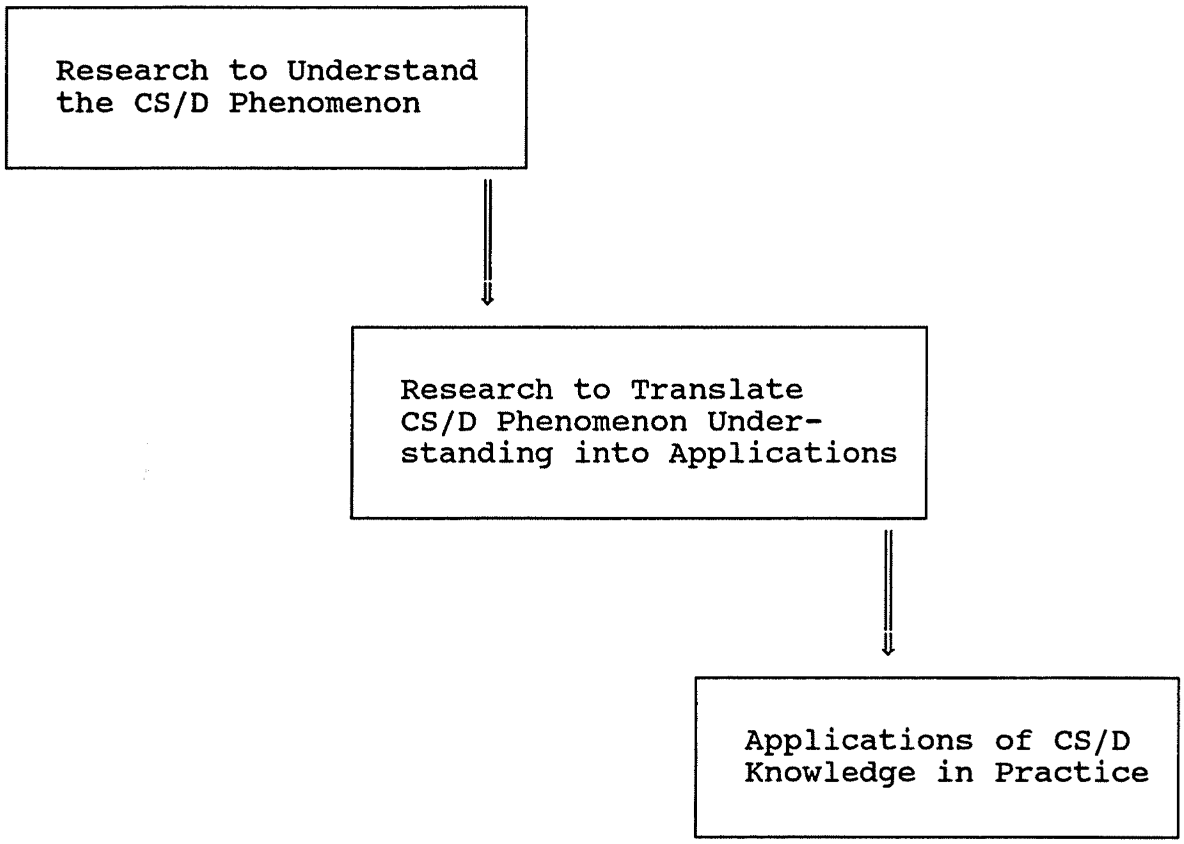
These comments illustrate a long-standing concern for the application potential of satisfaction data in practice. Those who take the perspective of decision makers in organizations when evaluating satisfaction knowledge implicitly raise an interesting dilemma: impressive knowledge has accumulated about the phenomenon of satisfaction, and yet, there is reason to question just how useful this knowledge is for industry practitioners.

One could argue that improved understanding of the satisfaction phenomenon also should improve application. However, the implications of phenomenon knowledge for specific applications often are not clear. For instance, we know, from satisfaction phenomenon research, that consumers use a variety of comparison standards, other than predictive expectations, in reaching satisfaction judgments (e.g., Gardial et al 1993; Woodruff, Cadotte, and Jenkins 1983b; Woodruff et al 1991). But, what exactly should practitioners do with that knowledge, say, when designing a satisfaction measurement process? Should one standard be selected as an anchor for disconfirmation questions within satisfaction questionnaires? Or, should no standard be specified in the hope that survey respondents will select their own standard to use?

Answers to such application questions cannot be provided without a second kind of research. This research might be called translation research because it is intended to help managers understand how to translate knowledge about a phenomenon into practice. The Figure shows a research sequence that incorporates both phenomenon research and translation research into a process leading to application of satisfaction knowledge by industry.

Judging from the literature accumulated in journals and proceedings, one can argue that the search for knowledge about the phenomenon has dominated satisfaction research. As argued above, conceptual and theoretical issues appear to have received the most attention, with minimal concern for application usefulness. Only a relatively few studies fit the mold of translation research with improvement of industries' application of satisfaction as a primary concern (e.g., Drew and Bolton 1990 and 1991, McGill 1991, Cadotte and Turgeon 1988). No doubt, there are many studies in the files of organizations that deal with consumer satisfaction application issues, but most of these have not been published. Thus, they are not part of the general body of knowledge available for everyone.

Figure
Knowledge Required for Satisfaction Applications



PRIORITIES FOR FUTURE SATISFACTION RESEARCH

Looking ahead to the future, satisfaction research should consider both the interests of academic researchers and industry practitioners. Their commitment to this research will determine how popular the topic will continue to be. First of all, there is more to know about the satisfaction phenomenon. The next section proposes several research directions for this kind of research. At the same time, more balance is needed in favor of translation research aimed at helping industry practitioners. With this in mind, a subsequent section presents directions for satisfaction translation research.

Advancing Knowledge of the Satisfaction Phenomenon

Research directions for advancing knowledge of the satisfaction phenomenon place high priority on construct and theoretical development. Evaluation of previous research for gaps suggest that four issues are especially important to address: (1) expanding from satisfaction to postpurchase evaluation theory, (2) the role of standards in satisfaction judgments, (3) capturing emotion in satisfaction measurements, and (4) understanding the dynamics of satisfaction over time.

Postpurchase Evaluation Theory. Many studies of consumer satisfaction implicitly assume that satisfaction is a sufficiently important and independent phenomenon to warrant being considered as a single topical area for research. As a result, there is a very large body of literature that is concerned with understanding consumer satisfaction, its determinants, and outcomes (Perkins 1992). Clearly, isolating satisfaction as a separate topic for study has lead to an impressive growth in knowledge, as was argued earlier. However, it may be time to question whether this isolation ought to continue.

Some evidence is emerging that suggests that satisfaction may be integral part of a larger phenomenon. Gardial et al (1994) suggest that satisfaction is a special case of more general postpurchase evaluations. They argue that several theories, including multiattribute attitude, means-end hierarchy, and disconfirmation, must be integrated into a broader foundation for understanding this larger phenomenon. This view is consistent with recent studies that examine how satisfaction is linked to other postpurchase evaluation concepts, such as equity, service quality, performance evaluation, and value (e.g., Bolton and Drew 1991, Cronin and Taylor 1992, Dabholkar 1993, Oliver and Swan 1989, and Zeithaml 1988). These developments suggest the following research questions:

1. To what extent do satisfaction judgments overlap with and differ from postpurchase evaluations?

2. What are the determinants of postpurchase evaluations and what role does satisfaction play in these evaluations?

An intriguing direction for research is to expand the disconfirmation paradigm to incorporate other constructs and processes. There appear to be at least two avenues that might prove fruitful, and they can be pursued in parallel with building postpurchase evaluation theory. One involves interesting work that is emerging concerning mediating processes. For instance, Oliver (1989) advocates more study of attribution processes to better understand how satisfaction outcomes might differ. Westbrook and Oliver (1991) want to model how emotion might influence satisfaction. In addition, there are indications that a contingency framework may be needed to understand how satisfaction processes might differ under different circumstances. One basis for contingency might be involvement (e.g., Churchill and Surprenant 1982, Bolfing and Woodruff 1988). There are likely to be other contingency bases as well. The following research questions are indicated by all of these developments:

3. What other processes, besides disconfirmation, are likely to influence satisfaction outcomes?

4. What are the contingencies that explain how satisfaction outcomes might arise from different determinants?

The Standards Issue. One important contribution of the disconfirmation paradigm to understanding postpurchase evaluation is its conceptualization of a comparison process. That is, satisfaction results from a comparison between perceived product (or service) performance and predictive expectations. A growing number of studies question whether predictive expectations is the only comparison standard that consumers use (e.g., Cadotte, Woodruff and Jenkins 1987; Gardial et al 1993; Spreng and Olshavsky (1992); Woodruff, Cadotte and Jenkins 1983b). There are likely to be many others, and little is known about what they are or how satisfaction might differ depending on what standard is used. This standards issue has been reviewed elsewhere (Woodruff et al 1991), but it does suggest several research questions:

5. What are the alternative standards that may be used in comparison processes, and how should they be classified to better understand their differences?

6. To what extent will satisfaction responses differ when different standards are considered, and how do these differences affect the possible behavior outcomes of satisfaction judgments?

Capturing Emotion in CS/D Measures. Intuitively, some managers in business recognize that it is important to know whether customers feel emotion when evaluating a seller. On more than one occasion, a manager has commented to this author, "we want to do more than satisfy customers; we want to delight them." Implicit in this comment is the belief that emotion (i.e., delight) is motivating (e.g., influences word-of-mouth behavior, repeat purchases, etc.) and that satisfaction-anchored measures do not capture such emotion very well. Similarly, over the years the academic literature has provided alternative views as to the exact meaning of the construct of satisfaction, ranging from a quasi-cognitive to affective definitions (e.g., Hunt 1977, Gardial et al 1993, Westbrook and Oliver 1991).

While there probably is no easy way to resolve the definitional controversy, there is a growing concern for the role of emotion in postpurchase evaluations (e.g. Oliver 1989; Muller, Tse and Venkatasubramaniam 1991; and Westbrook 1983 and 1987). This topic is important. The degree of emotion present in postpurchase evaluations may help to explain relationships between these satisfaction evaluations and future consumer behavior (Dabholkar 1993; Muller, Tse, and Venkatasubramaniam 1991). This potential suggests a research question:

> 7. Is the presence of emotion in post purchase evaluations more motivating with respect to future behaviors of consumers than lack of emotion?

Modeling emotion in satisfaction processes is one avenue worth pursuing, and this work is already underway. One particularly fruitful approach is to depict emotion as a separate process that complements the disconfirmation process (Oliver 1989, Westbrook and Oliver 1991). Another is to conceptualize emotion as a part of the content of the satisfaction construct itself (e.g., Cadotte, Woodruff, and Jenkins 1987; Oliver 1989; Woodruff, Cadotte, and Jenkins 1983).

Accepting that emotion plays a role in satisfaction processes, there are numerous opportunities to examine specific influences of emotion. One possibility is to see whether certain performance benefits and/or product attributes are more likely to create emotion in postpurchase evaluations than others. For example, benefits (in a means-end hierarchy) and/or attributes of which the consumer was not aware prior to use, the so-called surprise benefits and attributes, may be more likese emotional responses than others. ain kinds of benefits and/or attributes to lead to positive emotion, while othead to negative emotion (e.g., Cadotte ann 1988). If so, then emotion measures ovide a way to assess the relative sig of individual benefits and attributes urchase evaluations. This suggests thng research questions:

> 8. Is in postpurchase evaluations more hsociated with performance on certain benefits and/or attributes over others? , how should these benefits and/or as be classified?

> 9. Is enin postpurchase evaluations of benefits ibutes more likely to occur in some kinuse situations over others (see also Dabh1993)?

The poten better understand the role of emotion is gret it depends on being able to measure the on content of postpurchase evaluations. Ite of some helpful work on developing ancting emotion scales in the satisfaction litee (e.g., Westbrook 1980 and 1983; Cadotte/oodruff and Jenkins 1987), however, cognit measures of satisfaction still seem to predome (Hausknecht 1988). In the future, more atten should be given to methods for measuring emon in postpurchase evaluations. It is important to be able to measure both the degree of emotional content and the types of emotions felt. Thi uggests an additional research question:

> 10. What is/are the best way(s) to measure the degree and types of emotions associated with postpurchase evaluations of products or services?

The Dynamics of Consumer Satisfaction over Time. In a qualitative study of consumer postpurchase evaluation, the dynamic nature of these evaluations stood out (Woodruff et al 1993). For one thing, prior to purchase of a new product to replace one currently being used, there often was a period of "devaluing" the current product. That is, consumers derogated their owned product, nd this appeared to serve as a kind of trigger for repurchase.

In addition, there were indications of other kinds of triggers that lead to evaluation episodes. For example, an evaluation trigger might be a particularly dissatisfying use occasion incident. Interestingly, some of these triggers related to incidents that are beyond the ability of a seller to influence, such as a change in a consumer's employment location, responsibilities, or pay. All of these findings indicate that evaluations are likely to shift over time due to use occasion experiences or other circumstances.

In general, more attention should to be given to better understand the nature and determinants of change in postpurchase evaluations. There are many opportunities. A few suggested directions are:

11. Do consumers purposely devalue products after purchase and use? If so, are there patterns as to when this occurs and/or the causes of devaluing behavior?

12. What are the kinds of triggers that are most likely to lead to changes in postpurchase evaluations? Is it possible to meaningfully classify these triggers?

13. What are the implications of the dynamic nature of postpurchase evaluations for interpretation of satisfaction data, particularly data coming from a cross-sectional study?

Advancing Satisfaction Translation Knowledge

Clearly, better understanding of the satisfaction phenomenon in particular, and postpurchase evaluations in general, ought to lead to payoffs in improving applications of satisfaction measurement in practice. For example, answers to research questions 7 and 8, above, probably would be of equal interest to practitioners and academics. However, industry practitioners have additional knowledge needs. They must be able to justify the cost of satisfaction measurement by linking satisfaction data to improved decision making. With this in mind, would the needs of practitioners lead to the same future research directions as posed above? One could argue that the answer is "probably not."

The author's experience in working with businesses on issues related to satisfaction measurement suggests several different needs that can be met by research. These are (1) demonstrating the linkage of satisfaction to consumer behaviors critical to business success, (2) devising improved, but cost effective satisfaction measurement processes, and (3) guidance on how best to use satisfaction data for improved decision making.

Linking Satisfaction to Consumer Behaviors. There are a broad range of consumer behaviors that relate to the quality of performance of an organization. Some directly affect typical company performance measures such as sales, market share, and profits, and include consumer intentions to repurchase, next repurchase, and repeat buying and loyalty. Others have a more indirect effect, the most important of which are word-of-mouth, compliments (to the seller), and complaints. There may be other important consumer behaviors as well.

The academic literature models satisfaction as a motivating force with regard to such behaviors. The current emphasis by business on creating satisfaction as a performance goal suggests that many managers accept this theoretical position. From time to time, however, some practitioners question whether satisfaction is sufficiently predictive of important consumer behaviors. For instance, Reichheld (1993) argues that "Customer satisfaction is not a surrogate for customer retention. .... Current satisfaction measurement systems are simply not designed to provide insight into how many customers stay loyal to the company and for how long (p. 71)." The point is well taken. There is evidence that satisfaction is related to a few behaviors like purchase intentions and complaining behavior. However, there are not uniform levels of understanding of how satisfaction relates to a wider variety of consumer behaviors that a business may believe to be important to its success.

Reichheld (1993) implicitly suggests that either the phenomenon of satisfaction is not the strong motivating force posited by theory, or the existing measures of satisfaction are inadequate to reveal a relationship. Regardless of the reason, in order to justify the rather large amounts of resources required to measure consumer satisfaction across products and markets, managers need to know how predictive satisfaction is of consumer behaviors of interest. This suggests the following research questions:

> 14. What are the important consumer behaviors related to business success, and how predictive is satisfaction of each one?
>
> 15. Would improved measures of satisfaction more clearly reveal underlying linkages of satisfaction and important consumer behaviors?

Developing more cost effective consumer satisfaction measurement processes. The costs of consumer satisfaction measurement can be staggering. The amount can quickly get into the hundreds of thousands of dollars for companies with multiple products and serving multiple market segments. For this reason alone, one can understand why some companies may opt to rely on indirect indicators of satisfaction (e.g., sales) rather than employ formal measurement processes. A further complication occurs because for a given product or service there many be a large number of individual attributes or benefits for which a satisfaction experience can occur. In some cases, there also may be more than one customer within a buying unit (a customer company, a family) that can have one or more of these experiences. Dealing with all this complexity in a cost effective way is a major problem.

There are many factors that affect both the cost and usefulness of satisfaction data, too many to consider here. However, a few issues will illustrate how translation research might deal with this translation need. The first one concerns the timing of satisfaction studies. As discussed above, postpurchase evaluations change over time, and it is important to track these changes for diagnosis and other applications. The question is more complicated than just determining how frequently to interview consumers. The notion of triggers discussed earlier suggests that there might be particular times after purchase when a study ought to be conducted. Such times would depend on whether there are patterns for a given product as to when certain triggers might occur. For instance, first use of a product might be sufficiently novel to serve as a trigger for a satisfaction evaluation episode, and so a satisfaction study shortly after purchase might be needed. Other triggers might have to do with seasonal use, local market conditions (e.g., road construction making it difficult to get to a service facility, new competitor entry, etc.), or predictable customer situation changes (e.g., new child in family, expansion of a plant by business customer, etc.). The following research question addresses this issue:

> 16. Do satisfaction surveys that are timed to coincide with predictable evaluation trigger events provide more useful satisfaction tracking data than those that are not?

Another issue concerns the number and types of questions to ask on a satisfaction questionnaire. Given that space on a questionnaire is limited, it is critical to ask only the most actionable questions. (Actionable refers to being able to make important decisions based on the results of the data analysis.) Current practice appears to be to identify 10 to 30 quite broad attributes of a product or service that customer say are important to them, and then construct a survey questionnaire to find out how satisfied customers are with the seller's delivery of these attributes. The same attributes are typically repeated in subsequent waves of surveys to track satisfaction. An issue to consider is whether a set of 10 to 30 attribute-based satisfaction questions are the most actionable questions to ask.

Theory may be helpful in addressing this issue. Several authors advocate bringing notions of consumer means-end hierarchy and desires into satisfaction measures (e.g., Clemons and Woodruff 1992, Gardial et al 1993, Spreng and Olshavsky 1992). One way to do this would be to formulate satisfaction questions to find out whether consumers are experiencing, in specific use situations, the higher-order benefits that they desire from using the seller's product or service. Since there are typically fewer benefits that consumers seek than attributes, this approach may reduce the number of questions that have to be asked on a given questionnaire. Further, the benefits-based satisfaction data may be more insightful to managers than attribute data in indicating whether consumers' needs are being met. Based on this reasoning, the following research question is offered:

17. Is data derived from a higher-order benefits-based satisfaction survey more actionable than data from an attribute-based satisfaction survey?

Applying Consumer Satisfaction Measurement to Decisions. Actionability of satisfaction measurement processes involves a number of other concerns. Having quality data is a must, of course. In addition, when making decisions managers must understand the ways in which satisfaction can be influenced by the company's marketing offer components. Consider advertising, for instance. So much of today's advertising seems to be aimed at getting consumers to buy from the seller in the short run; too little thought has been given to how advertising might be used to influence consumers perceptions of value received and satisfaction after purchase has occurred. Suppose advertising is assigned the expanded purpose of influencing how satisfied existing consumers feel about a company's product or service. Then satisfaction data may play a much larger role in making advertising decisions. Research can contribute to encouraging this postpurchase orientation by studying how the various marketing offer components affect satisfaction feelings:

18. What are the mechanisms by which each of the marketing offer components influence consumers' satisfaction feelings?

The other way in which satisfaction data can become more actionable is by expecting managers to base their decisions on what is valued by customers. Satisfaction measurement is a key source of data for diagnosing company strengths and weaknesses in delivering value to customers. However, an organization's culture and reward systems must be designed to encourage managers to regularly monitor consumer satisfaction prior to making important marketing decisions. In part, this means instilling an analytical orientation among managers, particularly with regard to using satisfaction data for decision making. It also requires rewarding managers for the process by which decisions are made as well as on outcomes.

While this may be stretching the role of satisfaction researchers, an opportunity for future research may be to learn about the kinds of organizational culture values and reward mechanisms that most facilitate regular application of satisfaction measurement processes. For instance, one might study performance differences among firms that do use formal satisfaction measurement processes compared to those that do not. This suggests the following research question:

19. Do firms that rely on consumer satisfaction measurement processes for decision making perform better than firms that do not?

Another direction is to study the organizational culture and reward systems of those firms that do use satisfaction measurement processes, and contrast these with those of firms that do not. Some way must be found to determine actual use of satisfaction data for decisions, not just whether data are collected. The following question might guide this research:

20. What, if any, differences are there in the organizational culture and reward systems between those firms that do versus those that do not use satisfaction measurement processes for decision making?

CONCLUSIONS

For those interested in advancing knowledge of the satisfaction phenomenon, many opportunities for research remain. Indications point to the emergence of postpurchase evaluation as a more general phenomenon than satisfaction (Gardial et al 1994). The primary concern will be to improve theoretical frameworks to describe and explain these judgments, and current satisfaction theory will provide a springboard for this effort. In particular, the notion that postpurchase evaluation is based on a comparison process involving standards, consistent with disconfirmation and equity theories, can be the core for building expanded theory. Other theories, such as those used to explain prepurchase or choice evaluations, may also provide some useful notions to consider. As mentioned earlier, multiattribute attitude and means-end hierarchy theories hold much promise in this regard.

Within emerging theoretical frameworks, there will still be a need to better understand the role of particular constructs and processes. Alternative comparison standards, attribution, and emotion are some of the more intriguing ones to study. In addition, contingency theory needs to be developed because it is quite likely that more than one theoretical framework will be needed to adequately explain postpurchase evaluations occurring under different circumstances. Already, there are indications that involvement is one such contingency (Churchill and Surprenant 1982, Bolfing and Woodruff 1988). There are, no doubt, other contingency circumstances to explore.

Research along these lines will be done mostly by those interested in advancing knowledge of the phenomenon. However, it will be important for practitioners to keep up with the developments. The warnings provided by Olander (1977) and Peterson and Wilson (1992) about the meaning of satisfaction data should be heeded. After all, those who apply satisfaction, or postpurchase evaluation data are ultimately responsible for understanding exactly what the data mean. Hopefully, advances in understanding the phenomenon will lead to more meaningful measures, which will improve the usefulness of satisfaction data to all.

Finally, the decade of the 1990s will see more alliances and partnerships between business schools and industry. Practitioners need help in developing improved ways to implement more customer-oriented approaches to decision making. In turn, business schools will call upon industry to financially and otherwise support more of its research. Thus, mutually beneficial research will be an important basis for these partnerships. (To make this happen, practitioners will have to be sensitive to the needs of academics to advance satisfaction phenomenon knowledge. At the same time, academics will have to be more sensitive to the satisfaction translation knowledge needs of practitioners). For these reasons, research intended to advance the actionability of satisfaction data will take on more importance for everyone involved in studying satisfaction and postpurchase evaluation phenomenon. There are very attractive opportunities for future research along these lines.

Translation research to advance actionability will have to address different kinds of questions beyond the theory-driven ones on which academics have been concentrating for some time. Increasing and already high cost of satisfaction measurement will push practitioners to justify this cost by demonstrating the corresponding value of the data to organizational decisions. Research can help in this effort by studying the link between satisfaction and important consumer behaviors, by developing more meaningful and cost effective measures, and by providing better guidelines on how to use satisfaction data in specific kinds of organizational decisions.

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