Emotions and Response Actions in Consumer Complaint Behaviour

Nathan A Vincent. Honours Student:
University of Newcastle.
School of Business and Law

Abstract
This research examines the relationship between the emotions that are triggered by a stressful marketplace experience and the type of response action that a dissatisfied consumer engages in as a result of this perceived stress and dissatisfaction. The research will focus on public and private external behavioural actions and the relationship they have with the emotions that result from a consumer's dissatisfaction. Emotions and responses to dissatisfaction form a small part of the broad subject of consumer complaint behaviour. They do not occur in isolated situations but rather form part of a process of complaint behaviour. The aim of this research is to explore the relationship between emotions and response actions in an attempt to define their position within the complaint behaviour process.
Importance of the Topic

Consumer complaints often represent the last chance that an organisation has to redress the dissatisfaction of a consumer and retain that consumer as a regular purchasers. This is why it is essential to the organisation’s survival to understand the process that these individuals engage in as a result of their perceived dissatisfaction. This research will provide organisations with a better understanding of the consumers who have experienced some form of dissatisfaction in relation to that organisation. Dissatisfied consumers' emotional responses may provide valuable information as to any possible weakness or deficiencies that are associated with the organisation’s products or services and allow for these problems to be rectified.

This research will contribute to the information on consumer complaint behaviour (CCB) by identifying a possible relationship between emotions occurring due to a dissatisfying consumption event and public and private external response actions to the perceived dissatisfaction. The role that emotions play is not agreed upon and current research is divided as to the position within the complaint behaviour process that emotions should occupy. By providing empirical support for a possible relationship between emotions and response actions, it will be clearer as to the role that emotions play, as well as their position in relation to the rest of the components of the complaint process. This research will also contribute to the eventual goal of creating a unified conceptual framework of the entire consumer complaint behaviour process and its influencing factors. The concept of a unifying conceptual framework has been heavily discussed and tentatively attempted, (Day 1977, 1980, Singh 1988, Crie 2003) but little agreement has been made as to the structure of the framework and the appropriate components.

Prior Research

Introduction

Ralph Day came to the conclusion that: “to say that there is no general agreement among satisfaction researchers on how to define satisfaction would indeed be an understatement.” (1980 pg 593) This conclusion, although dated, still remains valid. While the understanding of CCB has evolved a great deal, from an evaluation to a process, and a large number of factors have been identified which influence the process, agreement on exactly what constitutes the CCB process has not been forthcoming. There have been attempts to create a unified typology of CCB such as by Stephens and Gwinner in 1998 and Crie in 2003, however these works vary immensely. While researchers can’t agree on what would constitute a complete typology of CCB, there are some basic similarities that occur within the multitude of models that have been proposed.

1. CCB is a process that involves several distinct stages within the marketplace experience.
2. The consumer’s evaluation of the marketplace experience will determine their satisfaction, dissatisfaction or indifference.
3. There are many factors that occur during each stage of the CCB process which will have an influence on the consumer’s final evaluation.
4. If a consumer is dissatisfied, there are a number of actions they may engage in as a response to this dissatisfaction.

The expectations paradigm

CCB was initially limited to the expectations paradigm (Day and Landon 1977). That is, if the marketplace experience was equal to or greater than the consumers’ expectations, the consumer would be satisfied with their purchase or use. If the consumption process was less than expected, the consumer would be dissatisfied and complaint behaviour would then follow (Day 1977). The expectation paradigm has a narrow focus, emphasising a single purchase episode and the associated evaluation. It suggests that dissatisfaction automatically leads to complaint behaviour, fails to explain why the consumer was dissatisfied and does not attempt to define possible influencing factors on the evaluation process. The expectations paradigm may form the
basis of consumer complaint behaviour however it can not adequately contextualise the entire complaint process.

Consumer complaint behaviour as a process

The narrow focus of the expectations paradigm lead to the development of the Purchase/Consumption/Evaluation Process Model (Day 1977). This model retains consumers’ evaluations of the consumption process, however it divides the marketplace experience into pre-purchase, purchase, use and post-purchase stages as well as suggesting possible factors that influence consumers’ evaluations which occur at the end of this process. Within the model influential factors include pre-purchase expectations, consumer’s perceptions of product performance and the social context of the situation. This was the first step in creating a unifying framework that considered all aspects of the complaint process. It is a very basic description of CCB as a process rather than a single event. The model is limited as it does not consider the actions that consumers may take once they have become dissatisfied. It ends at the consumer’s evaluation of the marketplace experience.

This understanding of the CCB process was extended (Jacoby and Jaccard 1981) through the Consumer’s Post-Usage Evaluation Process Model, by adding to the process the results of consumers’ evaluations of their marketplace experience. Possible results of this evaluation included indifference as well as satisfaction or dissatisfaction. The model also added direct first-hand experience, personality predispositions and situational influences as well as prior expectations as factors that influence consumers’ evaluations of marketplace experiences. This model is limited because it does not offer possible actions that consumers may engage in once they have become dissatisfied.

Factors that influence the evaluation process

Many factors have an effect on a consumer’s evaluation of the consumption process and complaint behaviour, however no single study has provided a conclusive list of factors which will influence an individuals’ evaluation. In general, these factors can be divided into two categories: individual and situational factors (Crie 2003). Individual factors can include such things as previous experience, prior expectations, personality predispositions (Jacoby and Jaccard 1981), willingness to express concern (Day 1977), and general beliefs (Stephens and Gwinner 1998). Situational factors can include such things as importance of the consumption episode (Bolfing 1989), novelty of the situation, imminence and duration (Stephens and Gwinner 1998). Not all of these factors will apply to each situation and the ones that are relevant will depend on the environment that the dissatisfaction occurred in. The potential influences on the evaluation process may be infinite and will vary greatly depending on the individual involved, the source of the dissatisfaction and the product category involved. The CCB process is similar for all product categories. The main difference being the unique aspects of each particular category which influences the marketplace experience and explains the wide variations in dissatisfaction (Day & Ash 1978). The influencing factors at each stage of the consumption process will vary depending on the product category in question. Factors more applicable to services such as the consumption environment may have a greater weighting on the eventual evaluation compared to goods because of the nature of a service. The large number of possible factors that may have an impact on an individual’s evaluation and the variability of these factors have ensured that a comprehensive taxonomy of CCB has yet to be developed.

Classification of Responses to Dissatisfaction

Once a consumer has arrived at feelings of dissatisfaction based on their evaluation of the consumption process there is a number of actions s/he can engage in as a response to this dissatisfaction. The range of available options that a consumer may engage in has been proposed
in a number of different formats. The main streams of literature focus on three methods of classifying responses to dissatisfaction: 1) exit, voice or loyalty, 2) public or private and 3) behavioural or non-behavioural. Exit, voice or loyalty was originally proposed by Hirschman (1970) to explain the responses to declines in firms, organisations or states, however it has been adapted to apply to situations of consumer dissatisfaction. The public/private and behavioural/non-behavioural classifications are a more inclusive combination of classifications and so will be the focus of this section.

Day and Landon (1977) developed the Post-Dissatisfaction Alternatives Model which outlines the actions consumers may engage in as a response to dissatisfaction. The first level distinguishes between those who elicit a behavioural response (i.e. take some action) and those who elicit a non-behavioural response (i.e. take no action). A behavioural response occurs when a consumer engages in an observable form of action in relation to their perceived dissatisfaction. A non-behavioural response refers to the dissatisfied consumer who chooses to ignore their dissatisfaction and continues to behave as if the dissatisfying marketplace experience never occurred. The majority of consumers take no action because they feel redress is not possible or that obtaining the redress was not worth the resources required to acquire it (Day and Ash 1978). The fact that some consumers choose a non-behavioural response to dissatisfaction ensures that inclusion of this type of response is not only justified, but necessary (Singh 1988).

The second level of the model is derived from those consumers who engage in a behavioural response and distinguishes between public and private action. Public action involves making the consumer’s dissatisfaction known to an external party and includes actions such as seeking redress directly from the organisation, taking legal action or complaining to public or private agencies. Private action involves making the consumer’s dissatisfaction known to family, friends and acquaintances and includes actions such as product and store boycotting and negative word of mouth. Studies based on durable goods (Day & Bodur 1978) and services and intangibles (Day & Ash 1978) show that the occurrence of public and private action is approximately equal, with roughly half of the consumers who engaged in a behavioural response initiated public action and half initiated private action. Although this method of classifying response actions is quite comprehensive, it focuses entirely on external behaviour and does not consider possible internal behavioural actions.

Day (1980) built on this public/private action level of the model by proposing that the reason or purpose for complaining could be used as a further basis for segmenting dissatisfaction responses. He suggested that consumers could be further divided based on the specific objectives that they wished to achieve by engaging in complaint behaviour. These objectives can be grouped into three categories: redress seeking, where a specific remedy is sought after; complaining, where dissatisfaction is voiced for reasons other than seeking a specific remedy; and personal boycotting, where the product in question (or store, manufacturer or service) is no longer used by the consumer. This distinction still fails to address the existence of internal behavioural responses.

Internal Responses to Dissatisfaction

While these classifications of responses to dissatisfaction effectively cover all aspects of external actions, they fail to give recognition to internal actions that a consumer may possibly engage in. Stephens and Gwinner (1998) propose three types of coping strategies as a response to feelings of dissatisfaction: problem focussed, emotion focussed and avoidance focussed coping. Problem focussed and avoidance focussed coping encompass similar actions to behavioural and non-behavioural responses respectively. Emotion focussed coping, as a contrast, is directed inward. The consumer attempts to control their mental response to the problem in order to feel better (Lazarus and Launier 1978). Instead of measurable external behaviour, the consumer remains silent and engages in self-deception of some type (Lazarus and Folkman 1984). If emotion focussed coping is successful then the dissatisfying situation still exists, however the
consumer’s thoughts about the situation have changed (Lazarus and DeLongis 1983) Stephens and Gwinner (1998) propose three types of self-deceptions, or internal response actions. These are 1) self-blame, where the consumer blames his or her own actions for the situation, 2) denial, where the consumer refuses to admit that any situation exists and 3) self control, where the consumer controls his or her emotions and refrains from making taking any action.

A Complete Taxonomy of Response Actions

A difficulty with classifying responses to dissatisfaction is the multiple numbers of actions that a consumer may engage in as a response to a single dissatisfying marketplace experience. As Singh (1988) proposed, there are two extremes. At one end classification of responses is uni-dimensional where focus is on a single response. The other extreme is an n-dimensional classification where n is all possible responses to dissatisfaction. The real number of responses lies somewhere along this continuum and would be influenced by many factors. Research has shown that consumers can, on average, engage in up to 2.4 actions in response to a single episode of dissatisfaction. The number of responses a consumer engages in, the subjective strength of each of these responses and the order in which they are initiated are all factors which would need to be considered in a complete taxonomy of dissatisfied consumers.

A Combination of Classifications

A comprehensive classification of the responses to dissatisfaction must allow for the entire range of responses that are available to an individual and include them in the classification (Singh 1988, pg ) Any comprehensive classification of dissatisfaction responses would include both internal and external actions. A review of the literature has shown that there are comprehensive taxonomies of external behavioural responses (Hirschman 1970, Day & Landon 1977, Crie 2003) and a comprehensive classification of internal responses (Stephens & Gwinner 1998). However research has not been done that focuses on both internal and external behavioural responses to dissatisfaction. If this study is to be effective then it must take into account all possible responses to dissatisfaction. In order to achieve a comprehensive classification of responses to dissatisfaction, an amalgamation of the literature is proposed.

An amalgamation of the literature would involve a combination of those classifications that focus on external responses and those that focus on internal responses. Day and Landon’s (1977) Post Dissatisfaction Alternatives model is proposed as an appropriate starting point because it includes both of the accepted external classifications of response actions; behavioural/non-behavioural and public/private. If it included an internal classification as well the external classifications, it would be more comprehensive. That is why it is proposed to add an internal/external classification to the model by including Stephen and Gwinner’s (1998) emotion focussed coping strategies as internal response actions to dissatisfaction. A new internal/external level of classification within the model is represented by Figure 1.
Figure 1. Classification of responses to dissatisfaction based on Day & Landon’s (1977) Post Dissatisfaction Alternatives model.

The result of such an amalgamation is that it focuses on all classifications of responses to dissatisfaction. The research will therefore include response actions to dissatisfaction as a global construct and this will consist of the sub-constructs: non-behavioural, internal, public or private responses. These sub-constructs will be measured by their own items which will be taken from the existing literature. A conceptual view of the global dissatisfaction response construct and its associated sub-constructs is represented by Figure 2.

The role of emotions in the CCB process

The notion that consumer satisfaction is a short term emotional phenomenon has been recognised since the earliest research into CCB (Hunt 1977). Although the existence of emotions within the consumer complaint behaviour process has been recognised, the role that it plays is the cause for debate. There is little agreement in current research as to the roles that emotions play within the CCB. The major issue that agreement is divided over concerns the relationship between emotions and a consumer’s evaluation of the marketplace experience. There are those who argue that the antecedent factors to dissatisfaction, as mentioned above, will influence a consumer’s evaluation of the marketplace experience. The result of this evaluation will then influence the emotions that will occur. (Stephens and Gwinner 1998). An opposing position within the literature is that the emotions that occur during a marketplace experience will influence the consumer’s evaluation of that experience. (Zeelenberg and Pieters 2002, Ruth, Brunel and Otnes 2002) This position puts a large emphasis on the role of emotions and reduces the other factors which influence a consumer’s evaluation. For this reason as well as the proximity of emotions to behavioural responses, the former approach, where a stressful evaluation of a consumption episode will lead to negative emotions, has been adopted. Stephens and Gwinner (1998) developed the Cognitive-Emotive Process Model which describes the entire CCB process as consisting of antecedents of a dissatisfying market place experience which results in a cognitive appraisal of the process. This appraisal outcome will then result in an emotional elicitation which will lead to coping strategies. The seven negative emotions that form the basis of the research; anger, disgust, contempt, sadness, fear, guilt and shame come from Izard’s Differential Emotions Scale (1991). Negative emotions are the focus of the research because they are the ones most likely to emanate from a dissatisfying marketplace experience (Stephens and
Gwinner 1998). The emotions are grouped based on the party that is the cause for the dissatisfaction, in other words, to whom blame is attributed (Godwin, Patterson and Johnson 1995). When it is believed by a consumer that an event cannot be helped and the blame for it is situational (situational attribution), this will lead to emotions of sadness and fear. Attributing responsibility for the event to someone else (external attribution) leads to feelings of anger, disgust and contempt, while blaming oneself for an event (internal attribution) leads to feelings of shame and guilt. Figure 2 is a conceptualisation of the emotions that a consumer may experience during an episode of dissatisfaction.

**Figure 2**: Emotions that occur during an episode of dissatisfaction (Stephens & Gwinner 1998)

The Relationship Between Emotions and Response Actions

Two approaches to examining the relationship between emotions and response actions have been proposed. The valence-based approach considers all the negative and positive emotions that a consumer experiences in the one evaluation. The net valence is the weighted combination of these emotions and the behaviours that follow are assumed to be driven by this overall positivity or negativity (Zeelenberg and Pieters 2002). The problem with this approach is that it focuses on mere valence and ignores the specific elements that form this valance. The opposing approach which this research will conform with is the specific emotions approach. This approach considers each individual emotion as having an impact on possible response actions. Each individual emotion that a consumer experiences may lead to a possible response action (Zeelenberg and Pieters 2002). Stephens and Gwinner (1998) have proposed The Cognitive Emotive Process Model which is in line with the specific emotions approach. The model proposes that when a marketplace experience is deemed to be stressful it will lead to negative emotions. The consumer will then engage in a particular coping strategy in an attempt to deal with the negative emotions they have experienced. Problem focussed coping includes direct action and making plans to take action which is similar to a behavioural response action. Avoidance coping pertains to physically removing one’s self from the situation which is similar to non-behavioural response actions. Emotion focussed coping is an internal response and is not covered by Day’s (1977) classification. For an effective examination of the relationship between emotions and response actions, it is proposed to maintain the structure of the Cognitive-Emotive Process Model (Stephens and Gwinner 1998), however problem focussed coping strategies will be replaced with the behavioural responses of public and private action (Day 9177) and avoidance coping will be replaced with non-behavioural action (Day 1977). These replacements will be made because they relate to the same actions the consumer may engage in, however the classifications proposed by Day (1977) are much more comprehensive. Emotion focussed coping has been described as “focussed inward” (Stephens and Gwinner 1998 pg 181) and will be
changed to internal response actions to maintain similar terminology. As a result the following model, Figure 3, is proposed as a basis for this research.

**Figure 3:** Relationship between emotions and response actions based on Stephen & Gwinner's Cognitive/Emotive Process Model (1998)

![Diagram of emotional responses to dissatisfaction]

**Research Objectives**

A deductive approach will be used, whereby one dimension of the response actions will be examined in an attempt to determine which specific emotions are associated with it. The response actions that will be examined will be public and private, external behavioural responses. Previous research has shown that these two actions can be engaged in as a response to a single episode of dissatisfaction, while being mutually exclusive of non-behavioural and internal behavioural responses (Day 1977). The research aims are twofold: 1) to examine the extent to which individuals engage in public and private responses to dissatisfaction, and 2) to define the relationships between response actions and specific emotions. More explicitly, the proposed research will determine if there is an observable relationship between a specific set of emotions and public and private, external behavioural responses.

**Research Question**

To summarise the objectives of the research: What is the relationship between public and private external responses to dissatisfaction and the emotions that a consumer experiences during that episode of perceived dissatisfaction?

**Hypotheses**

It is hypothesised that consumers, who engage in public and private responses to dissatisfaction, will experience emotions of anger, disgust and contempt. This hypothesis is based on externality. The focus of public and private response actions is external. In these situations the consumer makes his or her dissatisfaction known to an external party. Emotions of anger, contempt and disgust have external blame attribution. That is, consumers who experience anger, disgust or contempt blame external parties for their dissatisfaction. It is a logical inference which suggests that those consumers who blame an external party for their dissatisfaction will make their dissatisfaction known to an external party. This leads to the hypothesised relationship between public and private response actions and emotions of anger, disgust and contempt.
It would be ideal to examine the relationship between public response actions and externally blamed emotions then compare this to the relationship between private response actions and externally blamed emotions. This is not possible because the sample of respondents used in this research will come from a complaint database which means that all respondents would have engaged in some type of public action. To overcome this difficulty, the relationship between consumers who engage in public response actions and externally blamed emotions will be compared to the relationship between consumers who engage in public and private response actions and externally blamed emotions. This has lead to the following hypotheses.

**H1:** Externally attributed emotions of anger, disgust and contempt will be more prevalent than situational attributed emotions of sadness and fear for consumers who engage exclusively in public external responses to perceived dissatisfaction.

**H2:** Externally attributed emotions of anger, disgust and contempt will be more prevalent than internally attributed emotions of shame and guilt for consumers who engage exclusively in public external responses to perceived dissatisfaction.

**H3:** Consumers who experience high levels of both externally attributed emotions and situational emotions will be more likely to engage in both public and private external responses to the perceived dissatisfaction.

**Methodology**

The aim of this research is theory testing rather than theory generation. The literature that forms the basis of this study and the hypotheses within it are already in existence and are quite detailed and extensive. The main aim of this study is to provide empirical support for the hypotheses put forward by this literature, namely the relationship between emotions and public and private response actions in consumer complaint behaviour.

A descriptive, quantitative survey will be used to investigate the relationship between emotions and responses to dissatisfaction (Malhotra et al 2002). It has already been proposed that there are relationships between emotions and response actions. The aim of this research is to determine the significance of the relationship. The survey method was chosen because it is simple to administer and provides information obtained from a large number of respondents suitable for statistical analysis. (Burns and Bush 2000)

**Data Gathering Techniques**

It would be ideal if this study could examine all the relationships between specific emotions and response actions, however the ability to obtain an appropriate sample limits this. The ideal sample would be one whose respondents, as a whole, had experienced the entire range of emotions and engaged in the total range of response actions, in relation to similar products or services. Obtaining such a sample would be extremely difficult. The time it would take to gather this sample, the number of screening questions and the sheer volume of potential respondents who would have to be approached ensure that this is definitely not feasible for this research, which has a limited time frame.

Research studies in the field of consumer complaint behaviour have used a variety of methods to collect a sample of respondents. These include purely random samples where it was unknown whether the respondents had experience with the subject matter (Andreasen 1985, Morel, Poiesz and Wilke 1997) as well as samples where it was known that the respondent had experience with the subject matter (Bolfing 1989). Volkov, Harker and Harker (2002) used a sample which had experience with the research topic and had actually engaged in complaint behaviour in the course of this experience. This sampling technique was adopted because it was the most appropriate for the current research. Because the researcher has experience in the retail
sector, it was decided that a national retail organisation would be approached to provide the sample from a database of customers who had made a recent telephone complaint. A national organisation was chosen because the sample would be representative of the whole country rather than a small geographic area. A national organisation would also be able to provide a large sample of respondents who had complained recently due to the number of stores that it has and the number of customers it serves daily. The recency of the complaint is essential because it will enable the consumer to recollect the dissatisfying experience more accurately. For these reasons Big W, the retail section of Woolworths Ltd, was chosen. It has over 170 stores throughout Australia as well as a head office in Sydney which receives complaints from all its stores throughout Australia.

The sample will be gathered by Big W head office over a four week period and will consist of individuals who have made a telephone complaint to Big W in regards to some aspect of their experience with the company. Those individuals who telephone the complaint line will be asked if they consent to participate in the survey. The respondents who agree will be mailed a simple, self-administered questionnaire which contains questions about the responses they engaged in and the emotions they experienced as a result of dissatisfaction, as well as what the cause of the dissatisfaction was.

Choosing a sample of respondents from a complaint hotline has an advantage over other techniques, in that it ensures that each respondent has experienced an episode of dissatisfaction and will be familiar with the topic of the questionnaire (Malhotra, Hall, Shaw & Oppenheim 2002). Further, the episode of dissatisfaction has arisen from the same source or occurred in the same setting which will allow a greater comparability of respondents. Gaining a sample from the hotline also ensures that the dissatisfying experience has occurred recently which will aid in the respondents recollection of the event.

The questionnaire will be divided into four sections. The purpose of the first section is to measure the emotions that the consumer experienced. These emotions will be measured by Izard’s (1991) differential emotions scale which has been utilised in previous emotion based CCB research and has shown to be appropriate (Stephens & Gwinner 1998). The seven negative emotions that will be examined will each be measured by three items. The second section will focus on the dissatisfaction responses that the individual engaged in. These will be measured by a combined scale consisting of Singh’s (1988) dissatisfaction response scale to measure the external responses and a number of items from the literature that were utilised by Stephens and Gwinner (1998) to measure internal responses. The third section will question the source of the dissatisfaction, whether it be a product, service or the organisation’s marketing, and the fourth section will be a simple demographic section to identify possible relationships among respondents.

There are 27 variables to be measured in the questionnaire. It has been suggested that a bare minimum of five cases per variable are required for an accurate analysis of the data (Coates & Steed 2001). This would give a minimum total of 135 respondents within the sample. The response rate to mail-out questionnaires depends on a number of factors, such as the length of the questionnaire, the subject of the research and the participant’s commitment to respond. In the field of CCB, mail-out response rates have been as low as 17% (Day 1977). In the case of the current research the respondents will have already agreed to participate in the survey. They also have strong opinions and commitment to the topic because they have actively expressed their dissatisfaction previously. The questionnaire will be short and will focus on an event that occurred recently which will aid in recollection time. These three factors support the chance of a higher than usual response rate to a mail-out questionnaire. It is predicted that the response rate will be approximately 50%. This means that a minimum of 270 questionnaires will need to be posted to achieve the minimum sample size of 135 responses.

Data Analysis Techniques
The responses to dissatisfaction have been combined together from a number of sources within the literature. Although the validity of these factors has already been shown while separate, they have not been examined together. From visual inspection it is assumed that the variables will load correctly to their original factors, however such an assumption could lead to mistakes within the research if it is shown to be inaccurate. That is why an exploratory factor analysis will be conducted on the combined variables, to evaluate the combined scale and make certain that when combined, they still load on their original factors (Hurley et al 1997). An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was chosen over a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) because the objective was to evaluate the validity of the scale rather than test a particular hypothesis associated with the scale (Hair, Anderson, Tatham & Black 1995). A clear identification of the variables which measure the dissatisfaction responses is necessary from the beginning of the research. Because a deductive approach will be used, measuring the dissatisfaction responses is the beginning of the research. If an error is made in this initial stage of the research, then it can have an effect on the entire remainder of the project. Having completed this, it will be possible to conduct the rest of the project on an informed basis.

Once a factor analysis has been completed, the possible relationships within the variables can be examined. Public and private response actions as well as the externally, situational and internally attributed emotions are sub-constructs within the global constructs of dissatisfaction responses and emotions. Once the existence of these sub-constructs has been identified, the data will be examined to see if there is a relationship between them. Identifying such relationships will provide support for or against the hypotheses. These relationships will be subjected to an analysis of the cause of the dissatisfaction, whether it is a product, service or the marketing to determine any possible relationships.

**Limitations**

The main limitation is the time frame. A longer time frame would allow collection of an ideal sample. The ideal sample would, as a whole, have experienced the complete range of emotions and response actions so that all the specific relationships between the two global constructs could be examined. This is not feasible because it would be difficult to gain a sufficient sample of respondents who have recently experienced an episode of dissatisfaction in relation to a similar source. The number of screening questions to gain this information means that an enormous number of potential respondents would have to be approached to achieve such a sample.

A main limitation of the research is the amalgamation of the literature to form the global dissatisfaction response construct. Although the theory behind the amalgamation is quite strong, it has not been tested or implemented before. It would have been more substantial if there was an existing classification of response actions that included internal and external response actions. If this were the case, then the initial factor analysis would not need to be conducted and the validity of the results would not be in question.

**Future Research**

Future research in the context of CCB could focus on examining the relationships within the proposed model that could not be examined in this research due to the sampling technique used. That is the relationship between the emotions that have internal and situational blame attribution and the response actions that are internal and non-behavioural. Once these relationships have been examined, future researchers on the subject would have a better understanding of emotions and the relationship they have within the CCB process. It may even be possible for their position within the process model to be identified. Despite the outcome of this research, it will highlight the fact that consumer complaint behaviour is not merely a behavioural phenomenon. There are affective and cognitive facets that cannot be ignored. To do so would be a
fallacy and would limit any attempt to adequately describe the complete consumer complaint
behaviour process.

Future research into the response actions to dissatisfaction would be encouraged to
consider internal response actions. There is support within the literature for the self-deceptions
that an individual engages in to change their thoughts on a dissatisfying situation. This is a
definite response action and should be included in any future research into the area.
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