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Behavioral Consequences of Affect: Combining Evaluative and Regulatory Mechanisms

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The proposed model integrates two streams of research on affect by specifying how evaluative and regulatory mechanisms interact to guide behavior. Two experiments demonstrate that when no mood-changes are expected, the affective evaluation mechanism guides behavior, leading to a monotonic increase in behavioral intentions as affect conditions shift from negative to positive. When participants expect the behavioral activity to change their current affective states, a combination of affect regulation and affective evaluation produces a “U” shape pattern when a mood-lifting cue is present (experiment 1) and an inverted “U” shape pattern when a mood-threatening cue is present (experiment 2).

The impact of affect on consumer behavior is well documented (see Bagozzi, Gopinath, and Nyer 1999; Cohen and Areni 1991 for reviews). However, no unique pattern of behavior can be expected from a given valenced affective state. Positive feelings increase purchase intentions (Brown, Homer, and Inman 1998), but also decrease risk-taking if the odds are too high (Isen and Geva 1987). Bad moods mitigate consumers' willingness to go to a movie when they have a hedonic goal in mind (Pham 1998), but also increase impulsive consumption (Tice, Bratslavsky, and Baumeister 2001). As Bagozzi and colleagues (1999) summarized this literature, "Sometimes emotions spur one onto action; at other times emotions inhibit or constrain action. But only recently have researchers devoted much attention to studying how this occurs" (p. 199). The goal of this article is to incorporate somewhat divergent research streams under the same theoretical umbrella in an attempt to better understand and predict the inhibiting and stimulating consequences of both positive and negative affective states on behavior. A model is proposed in which two mechanisms (affective evaluation and affect regulation) operate in tandem during an affective experience. Current feelings and perceived mood-lifting (experiment 1) or mood-threatening cues (experiment 2) associated with the behavioral activity are manipulated in order to test more specific predictions as to when affective evaluation and affect regulation mechanisms are most likely to direct behavior.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Multiple theoretical accounts have been proposed to explain the causal influence of affect on behavior and behavioral intentions. At an aggregate level, it is possible to divide them into two groups: static affect evaluation theories and dynamic affect regulation theories. The static

affect evaluation theories assume that individuals' feelings at a single point in time influence processing, judgment, and eventually behavior. Such influence can occur in either a direct (e.g., affect as information, Schwarz and Clore 1983) or indirect fashion (e.g., mood congruency, Bower 1981; Isen et al. 1978; see Forgas 1995, for a combined approach). Although the proposed process varies, these accounts predict that people's current affective states will bias evaluative judgment and actions in a congruent manner. In general, positive affect is expected to lead to a more favorable evaluation of the environment, which stimulates proactive behavior (e.g., increased consumption), whereas negative affect is expected to lead to a less favorable evaluation of the environment, which inhibits action (e.g., decreased consumption).

A second group of theories has adopted a more dynamic approach. The dynamic affect regulation theories assume that individuals' projected discrepancy between feelings at two points in time (i.e., what they feel now and what they could feel in the future as a result of the behavioral activity), plays the major affective role in guiding behavior (see Gross 1998 for a review). Proceeding from a basic hedonistic assumption, those theories predict that people in negative affective states will engage in proactive behavior in anticipation of the mood-lifting consequences such behavior is expected to bring about (e.g., mood management theory, Zillmann 1988), whereas people in a positive mood will refrain from action in anticipation of the mood-threatening consequences of such behavior (e.g., mood-maintenance hypothesis, Clark and Isen 1982). As a result of a dynamic analysis, these theories predict not only that people are likely to move towards the goal of a more positive affective state when they feel bad but also that they would try to protect a current affective state when they feel good (e.g., Isen and Simmonds 1978). In other words, affect regulation theories can explain the two effects usually unaccounted for in static affect evaluation theories: when negative affect stimulates action and when positive

affect inhibits action. A similar dynamic analysis has also been used to explain the impact of positive affect on behavioral stimulation. The mood maintenance hypothesis speculates that happy people may perform a mood-lifting behavior (e.g., helping others) in an attempt to keep the good mood (but see Manucia, Baumann, and Cialdini 1984).

INTEGRATING AFFECTIVE EVALUATION AND AFFECT REGULATION

The previous overview suggests that to address the four combinations of the affect (positive/negative)-behavior(stimulation/inhibition) relationship it is critical to integrate both static and dynamic approaches. In an attempt to understand the impact of positive affect on risk-taking, Isen and colleagues (e.g., Isen and Geva 1987; Nygren et al. 1996) provided initial evidence of the interaction between these two mechanisms. However, there is no theoretical reason to believe that the same principles would not apply to negative affective states, and to virtually any type of behavioral activity (see also Gendolla 2000). Thus, we build on previous research to advance and test a model in which static and dynamic treatments of affect operate within two constantly active processes: affective evaluation (AE) and affect regulation (AR). Affective evaluation arises from people's congruent use of affective information (whether through associational processes or inferential reasoning) during an evaluative judgment. AE also captures changes in processing style (positive affect: broader/top down processing, negative affect: narrower/bottom-up processing). Affect regulation, on the other hand, relies on a hedonic goal pursuit assumption, in which positive affect represents a goal (or reflects achievement of a goal). Thus, individuals spontaneously attempt (1) to achieve this desired affective state when feeling bad and (2) to protect it once the state has been attained. The interdependence between

the two mechanisms implies that one process may add to or offset the effect of the other depending on internal and external cues. We discuss these moderators in turn.

Affect Accessibility. The salience of the current affective experience is predicted to influence both mechanisms in a similar way. Affective evaluation tends to produce stronger evaluative and behavioral effects compared to a control (neutral affect) condition when either negative and/or positive affective states are experienced (e.g., Forgas and Fiedler 1996). The same pattern holds true for the affect regulation mechanism, in which polarized (vs. neutral) affective states have been shown to have stronger influence on people's willingness to regulate their moods (e.g., Cohen and Andrade 2004). However, while the strength of the affective signal makes it more accessible and indicates a potentially stronger impact of affect on behavior, its direction (i.e., action vs. inaction) is contingent on the interaction between the accessible affective signal and specific situational factors associated with both AE and AR.

Affect Diagnosticity. Both mechanisms are influenced by the perceived informational value of current feelings vis-à-vis the judgment/behavior at stake. AE becomes less influential when diagnosticity is reduced. This happens, for instance, when people realize they are mistakenly using their feelings (e.g., Schwarz and Clore 1983) or when they simply do not trust their feelings (e.g., Avnet and Pham 2004). On the other hand, it becomes more influential when the diagnosticity of affect is increased. For example, this is the case when judgment/behavior is linked to hedonic goals and outcomes (e.g., Adaval 2001; Pham 1998; Yeung and Wyer 2004). Diagnosticity should have the same type of contingent impact for dynamic assessments linked to the affect regulation mechanism, although direct evidence for this is still scant. Finally, since

diagnosticity is exceedingly context-dependent, and context usually changes in a dynamic (vs. static) representation, the model also allows for the reduction of diagnosticity associated with AE, but the retention or even an increase in diagnosticity associated with AR, for instance.

Competing Information and Competing Goals. The diagnosticity of evaluatively-relevant affective information must be seen in relation to the diagnosticity of competing information about the stimulus/environment. Although researchers have focused more often on changing the diagnosticity of affective information (e.g., Pham 1998; Schwarz and Clore 1983), changes in the amount and quality of competing information should produce mirror image effects. More (less) diagnostic information about the stimulus should weaken (strengthen) the impact of the affective evaluation mechanism. For instance, affective evaluation tends to have a stronger impact when people judge ambiguous (vs. unambiguous) stimuli (e.g., Gorn, Pham, and Sin 2001) or when cognitive resources are depleted (e.g., Siemer and Reisenzein 1998). Though diagnosticity of competing information is also germane to affect regulation, the impact of AR on behavior should, importantly, also vary as a function of other potential competing/complementary goals. As the strength or number of competing goals increase, the impact of AR tends to decrease (e.g., foregoing shopping in favor of saving). Moreover, competing goals may influence not only the strength of the affect regulation mechanism, but also its direction (i.e., happy people trying to feel worse prior to a task requiring careful, analytical thinking; see Cohen and Andrade 2004).

Current and Anticipated Affect. At the core of the distinction between these two mechanisms is their static vs. dynamic character. Since the affective evaluation mechanism is essentially driven by people's current affective states, either directly (as information) or

indirectly (via mood congruent information), immediate feelings are responsible for the impact of AE on judgment and behavior. This is the case even when people project themselves into some imagined or alternative state of affairs and use an affective heuristic (thereby attempting to bring "future" affect into the present) to judge how much they like it, since they are still relying on a static congruent appraisal (e.g., Pham 1998). However, for affect regulation to operate, individuals must separately assess their current feelings and forecast the affective consequences likely to be produced by the subsequent behavioral activity. Therefore, intuitive theories about the affective consequences of behavior are critical to this dynamic analysis. For instance, when people are led to believe that the upcoming behavior will not change their mood because their mood is "frozen" (e.g., Manucia et al. 1984; Tice et al. 2001), the impact of AR is mitigated.

RESEARCH PARADIGM AND PREDICTIONS

The proposed model attempts to capture, within an integrative theoretical umbrella, all four combinations of the affect(positive-negative)-behavior(stimulation-inhibition) relationship, thereby taking both static and dynamic aspects of affect into account. Two experiments are conducted in which all four effects are derived from the interactive properties of AE and AR on behavioral intentions. Since current versus anticipated affective states represent the most critical aspect that separates the static affective evaluation mechanism from the dynamic affect regulation mechanism, expected mood changing properties of the behavioral activity were selected for use across the two studies. In order to ensure that affective evaluation can play a meaningful role, participants were given little other diagnostic information about the product/behavioral activity. The affect regulation mechanism was strengthened (weakened) by

changing the salience of the mood changing aspects of the behavior (experiment 1: mood-lifting; experiment 2: mood-threatening). Since past research has shown that affect regulation can produce strong effects on behavior (e.g., Tice et al. 2001; Zillmann 1988) even when there is no direct attempt to mitigate potential affect congruent effects (i.e., to shut down AE's effect), it is assumed that AR can overcome the AE effects built into the studies when the opportunity for mood-lifting among sad participants and or affective protection among happy participants presents itself.

For experiment 1 (mood-lifting), the specific predictions are the following: when the mood-lifting cue associated with anticipated behavioral activity is absent, a monotonic increase in behavioral intention is expected as participants' feelings are made to vary from negative to positive. This pattern results from the impact of AE on behavior (i.e., better evaluations associated with people feeling better). However, when the mood-lifting cue is present, a "U" shape pattern is expected, due to an increase in behavioral intentions for those in the negative and positive affect conditions (compared to the neutral affect condition). This pattern results from a combination of AR in the negative affect condition (i.e., the mood-lifting behavior becomes an attractive opportunity to upwardly regulate people's negative feelings) and AE in the positive affect condition.

For experiment 2 (mood-threatening), the same rationale should apply: when the mood-threatening cue associated with anticipated behavioral activity is absent, a monotonic increase in behavioral intention is expected as participants' feelings are made to vary from negative to positive. However, when the mood-threatening cue is present, an inverted "U" shape pattern is expected, due to a decrease in behavioral intentions for those in the negative and positive affect conditions (compared to the neutral affect condition). This pattern results from a combination of

AR in the positive affect condition (i.e., the behavior becomes a threat to people's good mood) and AE in the negative affect condition (i.e., more negative assessments as people experience negative feelings). Since both mechanisms are contingent on the strength of the affective signal, participants in a more neutral affective state are not expected to be as strongly sensitive to the mood-lifting or mood-threatening cues in the environment as those who are experiencing more polarized affective states.

EXPERIMENT 1

Research on eating behavior reveals strong individual differences regarding the perceived mood-lifting properties of chocolate (Benton, Greenfield, and Morgan 1998). Thus, the presence versus absence of a relevant mood-lifting cue associated with the behavioral activity, eating chocolate, can be "manipulated" by controlling for participants' self-rated use of chocolate as a mood-lifting alternative. Since there is consistent evidence that women acknowledge consuming chocolate in an attempt to improve their affective states more often than men (Benton et al. 1998) and behave accordingly (Grunberg and Straub 1992), gender is used in this experiment as a proxy for the presence (women) versus absence (men) of a mood-lifting cue. In a hypothetical scenario, participants are asked to rate their behavioral intentions toward chocolate consumption. A monotonic increase across affect conditions (from negative to positive affect) is expected among participants who do not perceive chocolate as mood-lifting (more likely men), due mainly to the impact of AE. Among participants who eat chocolate to feel better (more likely women), a "U" shape pattern is expected, due to a combination of AR within the negative affect condition and AE within the positive affect condition.

Method

Respondents and Design. One hundred forty-five undergraduate students from a southeastern university participated in the experiment in exchange for course credit. The study adopted a two (mood-lifting cue: present(women) vs. absent(men)) by three (affective state: negative vs. neutral vs. positive) between subjects design. Respondents were randomly assigned to one of the three affect conditions.

Procedure. After they entered the lab, a two-study cover story was introduced in a computer-based experiment. The cover story for "study 1" highlighted the impact of memory of material transmitted over the web. Respondents were instructed to watch a video on the computer screen (drama vs. documentary vs. comedy) and describe a real life experience similar to that watched in the film (affect manipulation). Then, they were asked to rate the video on 10 dimensions. The order of the items was randomized and three of them represented the manipulation check (I felt sad-I felt happy, It is depressing-It is upbeat, Created a negative mood-Created a positive mood). In the "second study" respondents were informed that a foreign company was about to introduce a new chocolate in the U.S. Respondents were then instructed to imagine themselves in a real sampling promotion scenario ("Virtual Sampling Promotion"). A picture of chocolate bars was presented, and they were asked to indicate along a 9-point scale (9 = I would definitely try it) the extent to which they would be willing to try the product. In order to attach some sort of cost to the behavioral activity, since these were free products, respondents were told to imagine that they would have to answer a 6-minute survey if they decided to taste it.

Respondents were then presented with some items that assessed the manipulations, the impact of the underlying processes, and potential hypothesis guessing. They were properly debriefed at the end of the experiment.

Results

Manipulation Checks. After checking for reliability ($\alpha = .91$), the three affect-related items were collapsed to form the affect index. The affect manipulation produced a significant main effect on participants' affective states ($F(2, 142) = 124.69$, $p < .001$). Pairwise comparisons showed that compared to the neutral affect condition ($M = 5.2$), respondents in the negative affect condition experienced more negative feelings ($M = 3.3$, $p < .001$), whereas respondents in the positive affect condition evaluated their affective state more positively ($M = 7.8$, $p < .001$). Also, a strong gender effect emerged with respect to the self-rated consumption of chocolate as a mood-lifting strategy. In response to the item "I eat chocolate to feel better", female participants were much more likely to agree than male respondents ($M_{women} = 5.7$ vs. $M_{men} = 2.7$; $F(1, 143) = 59.34$, $p < .001$).

Intention. In general, women were more tempted by the chocolate tasting opportunity than men ($F(2, 139) = 8.93$, $p < .001$). This main effect was qualified by an interaction between gender and affective state on participants' willingness to try the product ($F(2, 139) = 5.09$, $p < .01$, see figure 1). Within each gender condition, a one-way ANOVA tested the linear vs. quadratic shape of behavioral intentions across the three levels of affect. When the mood-lifting cue was absent (i.e., for men), participants' willingness to try the chocolate increased

monotonically as affect conditions moved from negative to positive ($F(1, 80) = 15.29$, $p < .001$), consistent with the affective evaluation rationale. Pairwise comparisons (global error term) showed that the effects were mostly driven by significant differences between negative ($M = 4.8$) and positive affect ($M = 7.2$, $p < .001$) conditions. The neutral affect condition ($M = 5.9$) marginally differed from the positive affect ($p < .10$), but not from the negative affect condition ($p = .14$). When the mood-lifting cue was present (i.e., for women), willingness to try the chocolate increased in both negative affect and positive affect conditions, leading to a "U" shape pattern ($F(1, 59) = 9.97$, $p < .005$). This pattern is consistent with the hypothesized impact of affect regulation in the negative affect condition when a mood-lifting alternative presents itself. Pairwise comparisons (global error term) showed that both the positive ($M = 7.7$) and negative affect conditions ($M = 7.4$) tended to increase the willingness to taste the chocolate compared to the neutral affect condition ($M = 6.0$; $p < .05$ and $p < .10$, respectively).

Insert figure 1 around here

Affect Regulation. The different patterns of results for those in positive and negative affect conditions are hypothesized to be due to the interactive properties of affect regulation for those experiencing bad feelings. Gender serves as a proxy for mood-lifting cue availability. Thus, a regression analysis was run with affect and the variable "I eat chocolate to feel better" (IECFB) on intentions toward chocolate tasting. Two dummy variables represented the negative and positive affect conditions (i.e., neutral affect was left out—comparison variable). Five variables entered the model: "IECFB", "neg_affect", "pos_affect", "IECFB*neg_affect", "IECFB*pos_affect". The regression produced significant results ($R^2 = .216$; $F(1,139) = 7.68$ $p <$

.001). Most importantly, the IECFB*neg_affect coefficient was significantly different from zero (β = .36, $p < .05$), whereas the IECFB*pos_affect coefficient was not significant (β = -.07, $p > .10$), confirming that people's self-rated use of chocolate to lift their moods played a role for those in a negative mood, but had no influence among happy participants.

Affective Evaluation. Since, across all conditions, those choosing to taste the chocolate were told they had to answer a six-minute survey, affective evaluation would predict that respondents experiencing negative affect should consider this cost element more carefully than those experiencing positive affect— if the affective evaluation mechanism is guiding their response. One item assessed people's concern about the length of the survey. The results showed that affect produced a main effect on respondents' concerns about costs (i.e., survey length) associated with the behavior ($F(2, 142) = 3.28$, $p < .05$). Sad respondents ($M = 6.4$) were more concerned that the survey "might take too long" than those in the neutral ($M = 5.2$) and positive ($M = 4.9$) affect conditions ($F(1, 98) = 4.12$, $p < .05$; $F(1, 88) = 6.23$, $p < .05$, respectively). The difference between neutral and positive affect conditions was non significant ($F < 1$). Also, no interaction between gender and affect emerged ($F < 1$).

Discussion

Experiment 1 provides initial evidence for the proposed model. It showed a monotonic increase driven by the affective evaluation mechanism when the opportunity for mood-lifting was absent (i.e., men facing a chocolate tasting scenario), and a "U" shape pattern driven by a combination of affect regulation on the negative side and affective evaluation on the positive side

of the affective spectrum, when the opportunity for mood-lifting was present (i.e., women facing a chocolate tasting scenario). The proposed model claims that affect regulation can also reduce people's willingness to act as they try to protect their current positive feelings. This should be true when a mood-threatening cue is made salient. Experiment 2 tackles this issue.

EXPERIMENT 2

The procedure was similar to that in experiment 1. However, instead of varying the availability of a mood-lifting cue, this second experiment manipulated a mood-threatening cue associated with the upcoming behavioral activity. Since long surveys can be perceived as boring, the length of the survey (three minutes vs. 12 minutes) was used as the mood-threatening manipulation. An unfamiliar product (Vita Coco) from an unfamiliar product category (Coconut Water) was selected in order to avoid a potential mood-lifting expectation and to minimize the availability of other diagnostic information. When the mood-threatening cue associated with the behavioral activity is absent (i.e., three minute survey), a monotonic increase in behavioral intentions is expected across affect conditions (from negative to positive affect), as a result of the affective evaluation mechanism. In the mood-threatening condition an inverted "U" shape is expected across affect conditions, as a result of a combination of AR in the positive affect conditions--participants attempting to protect their current positive feelings--and AE in the negative affect conditions--affect congruent evaluations leading participants to provide a more negative assessment of the behavioral activity.

Method

Respondents, Design, and Procedure. One hundred seventy-six undergraduate students from a western university participated in the experiment. They were paid $15 for their participation. The study adopted a three (affective state: negative, neutral, and positive) by two (mood-threatening cue: present vs. absent) between subjects design. Respondents were randomly assigned to one of the six conditions. The affect manipulation and cover stories were identical to the ones used in experiment 1. However, two major changes were made in the "Virtual Sampling Promotion" scenario. First, participants were asked to indicate their willingness to taste and receive an 11 oz free sample of a new drink (Vita Coco – Coconut Water). Second, the length of the survey in this experiment varied across conditions. If participants decided to try the drink, they would have to answer either a three minute (mood-threatening cue: absent) or a 12 minute (mood-threatening cue: present) questionnaire.[1]

Results

Manipulation Checks. The affect index ($\alpha = .93$) confirmed that the affect manipulation produced a significant main effect on respondents' affective state ($F(2, 173) = 169.71$, $p < .001$). Pairwise comparisons showed that compared to the neutral affect condition ($M = 5.2$), respondents in the negative affect condition experienced more negative feelings ($M = 3.5$), whereas respondents in the positive affect condition evaluated their affective state more positively ($M = 7.7$; $p < .001$ for both pairwise comparisons). Also, participants correctly recalled (at the end of the experiment) how long it would take them to answer the survey (three

[1] A pre-test with a single factor between subjects design showed that a 12 minute (vs. 3 minute) survey is perceived as more boring ($M_{12} = 5.8$ vs. $M_3 = 3.7$; $F(1, 33) = 6.42$, $p < .05$), more tiring ($M_{12} = 5.6$ vs. $M_3 = 3.2$; $F(1, 33) = 10.42$, $p < .01$), and longer ($M_{12} = 6.5$ vs. $M_3 = 4.0$; $F(1, 33) = 10.42$, $p < .01$).

minutes vs. 12 minutes) in case they decided to try the product. Finally, as expected, gender did not interact with the other two factors (F (2, 164) = 2.09, $p > .10$).

Intention. The mood-threatening cue produced a main effect on participants' willingness to try the product ($F(1, 170) = 15.22$, $p < .001$). When the mood-threatening cue was present behavioral intentions toward trying the product were lower ($M = 3.5$) than when the mood-threatening cue was absent ($M = 4.9$). Importantly, this main effect was qualified by an interaction between mood-threatening cue availability and current affective state on behavioral intention ($F(2, 170) = 4.12$, $p < .05$, see figure 2). Within each mood-threatening cue condition (present vs. absent), a one-way ANOVA tested the predicted linear vs. quadratic shape of behavioral intentions across the three levels of affective states. When the mood threatening cue was absent (i.e., three minute survey), participants' willingness to try the product increased monotonically as their affective state improved from negative to positive (F (1, 91) = 5.90, $p < .05$). Pairwise comparisons (global error term) showed that the effects were mostly driven by significant differences between negative ($M = 4.2$) and positive affect ($M = 5.7$, $p < .05$) conditions. The neutral affect condition ($M = 4.7$) did not differ from either the positive or the negative affect condition ($p > .10$, for both pairwise comparisons). When a mood-threatening cue was present, willingness to try the product decreased in both negative affect and positive affect conditions, compared to the neutral affect condition, confirming the quadratic-- inverted "U" shape--pattern ($F(1, 79) = 7.02$, $p = .01$). Pairwise comparisons showed that both the positive ($M = 3.0$) and negative affect conditions ($M = 3.1$) tended to decrease participants' willingness to taste the product compared to the neutral affect condition ($M = 4.5$; $p = .05$ and $p < .10$, respectively).

Insert figure 2 around here

Perceived Mood-Threats and Affective States. At the end of the experiment, a nine point scale assessed participant's perceived impact of the mood-threatening cue (i.e., "The questionnaire dramatically reduced my willingness to try the product"). Not surprisingly, participants exposed to the absent mood-threatening condition perceived the survey as less consequential ($M = 6.5$) than those in the mood-threatening condition ($M = 7.5$; $F(1, 170) = 7.42$, $p < .01$). This main effect was qualified by an interaction at the margin between the experienced affective state and the mood-threatening cue ($F(2, 170) = 2.38$, $p < .10$). Pairwise comparisons showed that the interaction resulted mainly from a strong simple main effect of the mood-threatening cue within the positive affect condition ($M_{\text{mood-threat: absent}} = 5.9$ vs. $M_{\text{mood-threat: present}}$ 8.0; $F(1 ,170) = 11.02$, $p = .001$). Consistent with the affect regulation rationale, the length of the survey became more of a threat when participants were experiencing positive feelings, since they had more to lose. No other pairwise comparisons reached significance ($F < 1$).

Discussion

Experiment 2 provides two additional pieces of evidence supporting the proposed model. First, similar to experiment 1, a monotonic increase in behavioral intentions due to AE emerged when a mood-changing cue was absent. Participants were more willing to try the product when experiencing positive versus negative affect, as predicted by the affective evaluation mechanism. However, when a mood-threatening cue associated with the behavior was present, participants'

behavioral intentions formed an inverted "U" shape pattern across affect conditions. In this case, not only negative affect, but also positive affect, decreased behavioral intentions. The latter is a result of the affect regulation mechanism, as participants attempted to protect their current positive affective state. The fact that happy participants, more than those in the other two affect conditions, acknowledged having their behavioral intentions changed as a result of the presence (vs. absence) of the mood-threatening cue supports this explanation.

GENERAL DISCUSSION AND LIMITATIONS

This research builds on previous attempts to capture the evaluative and regulatory properties of affective states. For example, Nygren and colleagues (1996) adopt an integrative approach, but concentrate their efforts on risk-taking within the positive side of the affective spectrum. Gendolla (2000) incorporates both poles of the affective continuum conceptually but provides no direct empirical evidence. Interestingly, the author's conceptualization runs counter to the present model: "it is hardly maintainable that the hedonic motive is stronger during negative than during positive affect" (p. 385). That view is not supported by other research (e.g. Tice et al. 2001), and is inconsistent with results from experiment 1.

Bringing two streams of literature together in one framework is always challenging, since each has examined unique contexts and dealt with moderators that are highly nuanced. Consequently, many questions remain to be addressed about factors that can influence AE and AR. For instance, (1) How does diagnosticity operate within the AR mechanism? (2) Can affective salience change diagnosticity and differentially influence the impact of AE and AR? (3) Can specific emotions systematically bias people's perception of a mood changing cue and

influence the impact of AR on behavior? (4) How does processing style influence behavior? The proposed model allows for potential information processing changes, but it does not make direct predictions at the behavioral level. Although variation in processing style can not account for the results presented in the previous experiments, future accounts could be made to formally integrate these effects into the current framework.

Finally, it would be particularly useful to investigate the circumstances under which AE and AR jointly promote or inhibit behavior. On the one hand, this research suggests, for instance, that the increase in behavioral intentions (experiment 1) of a mood-lifting product among happy people (compared to the neutral affect condition) was most likely driven by people's positive assessment of the environment (i.e., affective evaluation), rather than a systematic attempt to act in order to keep a current positive affective state (i.e., affect regulation). On the other hand, there may be circumstances in which both mechanisms may concurrently encourage (discourage) behavior when people experience positive (negative) feelings. Although the proposed model allows for such concomitant effects, direct evidence is yet to be provided.

The goal of this article was to incorporate two key affect research streams under the same theoretical umbrella in an attempt to better understand and predict likely outcomes resulting from differences in the valence of affective states. It is hoped that this effort will encourage further investigation on the joint impact of evaluative and regulatory properties of affect, providing a spur to research on critical moderators of the affect-behavior relationship.

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FIGURE 1: BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS TOWARD CHOCOLATE

(EXPERIMENT 1)

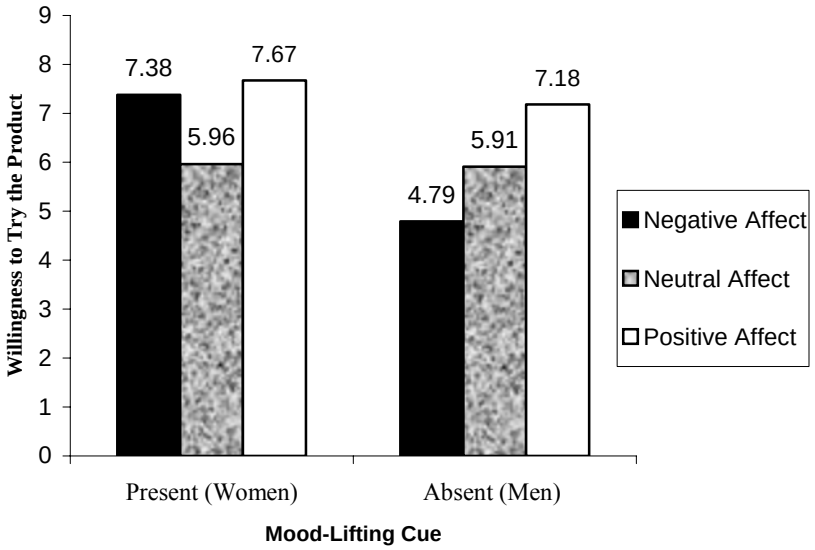

FIGURE 2: BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS TOWARD COCONUT WATER

(EXPERIMENT 2)