• Critiques/Evaluations
  o The process of calculation is not a reflection of the typical thinking pattern for relationships
    ▪ Only evaluate relationships by weighing up our inputs and outcomes and those of our partner’s at times when the relationship is in some sort of crisis
    ▪ Hatfield et al. (2007): concerns regarding fairness in the relationship and the process of calculating outcomes and inputs might be relevant at different stages with a relationship (initiation and deterioration) rather than being consistently relevant throughout
  o Problems with claiming causal links between perceived equity and relationship satisfaction
    ▪ Studies collected data of relationship satisfaction at the same time as they report their sense of relationship equity
    ▪ Correlations between satisfaction and perceived equity – causal links can be questioned
  o Calculations regarding relative rewards and investments alone, without consideration of other relationships, gives an incomplete picture of the processes involved:
    Buunk, Oldersma & De Dreu (2001): relationship satisfaction is not simply a calculation concerning one’s own relationship in isolation, but may be related to perceptions of others’ relationships
    ▪ Men’s satisfaction related to their perception that their relationship was superior and the assumption there are relatively few, happy relationships
    ▪ Women’s satisfaction related to the perception that most others were happy with their relationship
  o Cross-cultural research has challenged the idea that there is a universal concern with fairness
    Aumer-Ryan et al. (2007): Jamaican participants experienced more satisfaction when over-benefiting and US participants experienced more satisfaction when there was perceived equity; different cultural ways of expressing that the relationship is good within the interview – Jamaican participants emphasises how much their partner does for them when expressing how good their relationship was; US cultural ideal of being a fair relationship

Relationship satisfaction: attribution

• Emphasises importance of rational cognitive processing of information in understanding relationship satisfaction
• Output of the cognitive calculation shapes the level of satisfaction (causal prediction)
• Explanation for partner behaviour (particularly negative partner behaviour) reflects and shapes the relationship
  o High relationship satisfaction: negative behaviour explained in partner-enhancing ways – emphasis on external, temporary causes and partner’s lack of responsibility for their behaviour (e.g. under a lot of stress)