

**Hungry for Sour Grape:
Brand Rejection on Brand Desirability and Preference**

DANIEL SUN

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of
The University of Manitoba
in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

Faculty of Management

Department of Marketing

University of Manitoba

Winnipeg

Copyright © 2012 by Daniel Sun

Abstract

Many niche and luxury brands build their strategies based on the notion that “people want what they can’t have.” Companies build their brand exclusiveness on brand rejection. While rejection may heighten one’s desire, it may also decrease one’s preference and enjoyment. In this study, we focus on the effect of brand rejection by exclusive brands on consumers: do consumers want a brand more but like it less when rejected by a brand and can this counter-driving be expanded to include peer brands?

In two studies, we show that the counter-driving of want and preference is present when brand rejection comes from a legitimate source and expands to include peer brands but not non-peer brands. Our research makes novel theoretical contributions and provides important managerial implications. We offer suggestions for future research that may bring great interest and knowledge expansion in the field of consumer behaviour and branding.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to acknowledge and thank his supervisor, Dr. Fang Wan, and the members of his advisory committee, Dr. Subramanian Sivaramakrishnan, Dr. Nathan Greidanus, and Dr. Jason Leboe-Mcgowan for their time and support.

The author would also like to acknowledge and thank the financial support received from Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), the Faculty of Graduate Studies at University of Manitoba, the Department of Marketing in Asper School of Business, and Dr. Fang Wan.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iii
Introduction	1
Literature Review.....	6
Social Rejection.....	6
Social Exclusion and Social Rejection.....	6
Social Rejection and Neglect.....	7
Responses to Social Rejection.....	7
Social Rejection and Peer Groups.....	11
Brand Rejection.....	12
Brand-Person Relationships.....	13
Rejection and Neglect.....	14
Exclusion and Compensation	15
Wanting and Liking	15
Framework Development	18
Ambivalence of Want and Like	18
Brand Exclusiveness and Brand Rejection	21
Research Methodology.....	25
Pretest: Perception of Business Schools in Canada	26
Procedures	27
Study 1: Rejection and Peer Group on Wanting and Liking.....	28
Procedures	29
Results.....	31
Discussion.....	35
Study 2: Exclusiveness on Rejection and Peer Evaluation	36
Procedures	37
General Discussion.....	47
Research Contributions.....	47
Brand Rejection and the Counter-Driving of Want and Preference.....	47
Brand Rejection and Brand Peer Groups	48
Managerial Implications	49
Limitations.....	50

Future Research	51
Conclusion.....	57
References	59
Appendix 1: Consent Form	66
Appendix 2: Hypothetical Scenario.....	67
Appendix 3: Rejection vs. Control.....	68
Appendix 4: Willingness to Pay (Want).....	69
Appendix 5: Peer Evaluations	70
Appendix 6: Exclusive vs. Non-exclusive.....	71
Appendix 7: Rejection vs. Control.....	72
Appendix 8: School Evaluation (PERVAL).....	73
Appendix 9: Manipulation Check.....	74

List of Tables

Table 1: Summary of Literature on Social Rejection and Antisocial and Pro-social Behaviours.....	9
Table 2: Manipulation Variable Estimated Means.....	39
Table 3: Manipulation Variable Pairwise Comparisons.....	39
Table 4: Estimated Means of Brand Emotional Values.....	44

List of Figures

Figure 1: Conceptual Model	18
Figure 2: Rejection on Desire and Preference	20
Figure 3: Rejection and Exclusiveness on Desire and Preference	24
Figure 4a: Counter Movements of Standardized Price and Perception on Rejecting School – Rotman	33
Figure 4b: Counter Movements of Standardized Price and Perception on Peer School – Ivey	34
Figure 4c: Counter Movements of Standardized Price and Perception on Non-Peer School – Telfer and Edwards	34
Figure 5a: Rejection and the Counter Movements of Standardized Price and Perception on Ivey	41
Figure 5b: Rejection Rate and the Counter Movements of Standardized Price and Perception on Ivey	42
Figure 6: Future Research Directions on Brand Rejection and Exclusion	54

Introduction

Remember the last time you waited in line for a concert ticket only to be turned away when you reached the window because the tickets were all sold out or when you took your loved someone to an exclusive restaurant but was refused service because you did not wear the appropriate attire? Most of us would feel disappointed, rejected, and even angry; but how many of us would say that we would still want or desire that product or service and would even be willing to pay more?

There is a new wave of research on the topic of wanting and liking. Wanting, which can be a combination of emotional impulse and controlled cognitive decision to fulfill an urge or to obtain some objective (E'Argebeau et al, 2008; Belk, Ger, Askegaard, 2003), is very much closely associated with liking, which can be conscious, separate, and mental representations of objects so to evaluate and express a preference for the objects (Dai, Brendl, & Ariely, 2010; Irwin, 1961). However, while the two constructs may be closely related in some cases (Havermans et al., 2009; Finlayson, King, & Blundell, 2008), in other cases they appear to be distinct and independent (Fishman & Foltin, 1992; Berridge, 1999). Furthermore, recent studies have shown that, in cases such as being jilted (i.e. being stopped from one's desired outcome), there can be a divergence between wanting and liking (Dai, Brendl, & Ariely, 2010; Litt, Khan, & Shiv, 2010), leading us to believe that it is possible to want something more while liking it less.

Rejection, being refused or rebuffed, can be thought of as a form of jilting. In social psychology literature, rejection is broadly defined as a person who has been "put into a condition of being

alone or is denied social contact” (Blackhard, Nelson, Knowles & Baumeister, 2009). For most people, rejection can lead to both physical and emotional distress, such as physiological pain, headaches, anxiety, depression, and aggression (Williams, 2007; Williams, 2001; Zhong & Leonardelli, 2008; MacDonald & Leary, 2005; Eisenberger, Lieberman & Williams, 2003). However, how people deal with these physiological and psychological distresses is still under investigation. In some cases, people display antisocial behaviour such as social withdrawal as a result of social rejection (Twenge et al, 2007; Leary, Twenge & Quinlivan, 2006), but in other cases, people instead display pro-social behaviour such as social reconnection (Mead et al., 2011; Williams, Cheung, & Choi, 2000; Maner, Dewart, Baumeister, & Schaller, 2007).

Furthermore, when an individual is rejected, the blame for the rejection may be expanded beyond simply the source of the rejection (i.e. one that committed the rejection) to include peers among the same identified or perceived group, and the rejected individual will react the same way towards the perceived group peers as he or she would towards the original rejecting source (Gaertner, Iuzzini, and O’Mara, 2008). Not only can there be more antisocial and pro-social consequences as a result of social rejection, subsequent behaviours may also be transferred to perceived peer members.

While rejection may be a norm between interpersonal relationships, it is not exclusive to human social behaviours. In brand-person relationships, individuals may also experience rejection. Some Brands, especially niche and luxury brands, build their brand strategies based on their exclusiveness. Exclusiveness can increase desirability, which in turn means higher

brand status, higher brand loyalty, and higher price premiums. Apple routinely limits its product quantities during product launches to stimulate a consumer hype based on product shortage. Abercrombie & Fitch cultivates a brand image of physical youth and sexiness that tailors to specific consumers and turns away buyers and even staff that do not meet its stringent target consumer image. Harley-Davidson has built a brand community based on its culture, tradition, and heritage: for buyers to become a part of the brand is to be accepted by the brand community. While most brands try to differentiate themselves from competitors by appealing to the widest possible markets, these niche and luxury brands differentiate themselves by doing exactly the opposite: rejecting the mass market.

This exclusivity-based brand strategy may stimulate brand commitment and loyalty among current brand community members (McAlexander, Schouten & Koenig, 2002; Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001) but its consequences on non-brand community members and new brand consumers are not yet studied. In social exclusion literature, there is indication that rejection can lead individuals to both pro-social behaviours (such as actively seeking to re-engage or reconnect with other people) and to anti-social behaviours (such as becoming angry at the source of rejection). However, do the same hold true in brand-person relationships?

In this research, we aim to combine the research on the disparity between want and preference and the research on rejection in the context of consumer behaviour. If interpersonal relationship norms between people are driving brand-person relationships (Aggarwal & Zhang, 2006) we can expect to see similar distress and re-engagement towards a brand as a result of

brand rejection. Furthermore, if brand rejection is a form of jilting where consumers are stopped from obtaining their purchasing goals of a particular brand, brand rejection may cause consumers to want the brand more but like it less.

There are several theoretical contributions of this research. First, this research topic is novel – rejection by a brand in the brand-person relationship has rarely been studied. Second, we expand the research on rejection beyond social rejection to include brand rejection in the context of brand-person relationship. While social psychology theory will guide us in our research, there are similarities and differences between social rejection and brand rejection. These similarities and differences will further the knowledge in both fields. Finally, we seek to identify potential boundary conditions that are specific to the brand-person relationship between brand rejection and the disparity between want and preference. We believe that both the perceived exclusiveness of a brand and the perceived peer membership of a brand act as moderators on the relationship between rejection and want/preference.

Furthermore, there are significant managerial implications for this research. Brand exclusivity is a major brand strategy for many companies, whether their brands are positioned within luxury or niche segment. Managers practice brand rejection as a short-term marketing gimmick to boost sales and increase bottom-line. While many managers believe that perceived brand exclusion can lead to increased brand status and thus desirability, the result in terms of actual brand preference, brand choice, and subsequent brand purchase might just be the opposite: as a result of brand rejection, consumers may desire the brand more but purchase it less. Thus,

brand equity in terms of perceived exclusiveness and luxury may come at the expense of brand choice in the long-term. Furthermore, if consumers do in deed perceive brands within a brand category to be peers that share the same attributes and identities, rejection by one brand in the segment can have a significant effect on other members of the brand group – even if one brand does not reject consumers, that brand can still experience backlashes as a result of brand rejection by its peers. Hence, managers should seek alternative brand strategies to differentiate its own exclusive brand from other similar competitors so to maintain brand control and minimize brand risk.

Literature Review

Social Rejection

In social psychology, exclusion and rejection are major topics of interest that permeate and affect interpersonal relationships. However, there are over-lapses in literature on the subject of ostracism, social exclusion, and social rejection. Ostracism refers to “targeted refusals of social interaction, such as by repeatedly and intentionally not replying to someone who attempts to converse,” whereas social exclusion is broader, encompassing all phenomena in which “a person is put into a condition of being alone or is denied social contact” (Blackhard et al., 2009). While ostracism is often treated as a form of social exclusion, Williams (2001, 2007) has argued that it has multiple effects and implications that can go beyond the scope of simply social exclusion such that being ostracised impedes the desire for control and reduces the outlook of the meaning of life.

Social Exclusion and Social Rejection

Social exclusion can generally mean a lack of belonging, acceptance, and recognition. The term social exclusion tends to encompass all social phenomena in which “a person is put into a condition of being alone or is denied social contact” (Blackhard et al., 2009). Social rejection, however, is narrower and can be viewed as part of social exclusion. In its literal meaning, rejection refers specifically “to a refusal of social connection” (Blackhard et al., 2009). One possible distinction between social exclusion and social rejection is an individual’s initial desire for bond and connection. In the case of social exclusion, one does not necessarily have to initiate a social connection in order to be excluded. In the case of social rejection, the individual

initiates and seeks social connection but is declined. For example, if a group of friends decide to go to an event without inviting a member of that group, this uninvited individual is then socially excluded; however, if this particular member has sought to be included but is then declined by others, he or she would then be socially rejected.

Social Rejection and Neglect

Furthermore, there are also distinctions within social rejection. In some social rejection situations, individuals receive implicit indication of their lack of social connection and are passively ignored (Twenge, Catanese & Baumeister, 2003) while in other situations, individuals are actively refused and rejected (Leary, 2005). Although the distinction may be minute, the difference is significant. Research has shown that being ignored produces a sense of social failure, leading to more promotion-focussed responses such as re-engagement in social contact, whereas being rejected produces a sense of social loss, leading to more prevention-focussed responses such as withdrawal from social contact (Molden et al, 2009). Therefore there may be different mediating mechanisms between the modes of rejection (i.e. passive vs. active) and the subsequent social responses by the rejected individual.

Responses to Social Rejection

Literature generally agrees that social rejection has negative emotional and psychological impacts on an individual. According to Baumeister and Leary (1995), the “need to belong” is one of the strongest motivators for much of human behaviour and being thwarted from this need can lead to serious psychological and social distress for the individual. Williams (2007,

2001) believes that rejection can elicit strong negative responses because being rejected jeopardizes a set of fundamental human needs which is served by group membership: belongingness, self-enhancement, control, and meaningful existence (or recognition by others). When these fundamental human needs are compromised, as in the case of social rejection, the result can lead to negative psychological effects such as depression, social anxiety, feelings of loneliness and isolation, and decreased self-esteem (Williams, Cheung, & Choi, 2000; Gardner, Gabriel, & Diekmann, 2000; Gardner, Pickett & Brewer, 2000; Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Baumeister & Tice, 1990). Recent research also suggests that the same neural mechanisms underlying physical painful experience might be associated with the pains felt when one is socially excluded, and thus individuals may experience real physiological “pains” when socially excluded (Zhong & Leonardelli, 2008; MacDonald & Leary, 2005; Eisenberger, Lieberman & Williams, 2003).

Although it is quite clear that social rejection can lead to negative psychological impacts and painful physical experiences for an individual, subsequent responses by rejected individuals can be rather puzzling. On one hand, researchers have found that rejection can lead to decreased pro-social behaviour (Twenge et al, 2007) and increased aggression (Leary, Twenge & Quinlivan, 2006). Leary, Twenge, and Quinlivan (2006) conducted an in-depth review of the literature on social rejection focussing on four main areas of research: rejections in adult life, rejections in childhood, rejection manipulations in laboratory experiments, and individual differences. They found that there are many possible explanations as to why rejection may lead to anger and aggression, such as “rejection as a source of pain, rejection as a source of frustration, rejection

as a threat to self-esteem, mood improvement following aggression, aggression as social influence, aggression as a means of re-establishing control, retribution, dis-inhibition, and loss of self-control” (Leary, Twenge, and Quinlivan, 2006).

On the other hand, researchers have also found that social rejection may also induce individuals to compensate (Williams & Sommer, 1997), to reconnect through interpersonal relationships (Maner et al., 2007), and to conform to the opinions of others (Williams, Cheung, & Choi, 2000). In a recent study, Gómez and colleagues (2011) found that individuals rejected from their “identity-fused member group” were even more loyal to their group than before. Not only did rejection by an individual’s group intensify the tendency for the individual to endorse extreme pro-group actions, it also induced the individual to refuse to leave the group and even to help an in-group member such as by donating money. Therefore, there are conflicting results on individuals’ behaviours as a result of social rejection. Table 1 is a summary of literature on anti-social and pro-social behaviour as a result of social rejection.

Table 1: Summary of Literature on Social Rejection and Antisocial and Pro-social Behaviours

Antisocial Research	
Twenge, Baumeister, DeWall, Ciarocco, & Bartels (2007)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social exclusion causes substantial reduction in pro-social behaviour: less willing to donate, less willing to volunteer, less helpful after mishap, less willing to cooperate. - Empathy is shown to be a mediator of the effect. Rejection is believed to temporarily interfere with emotional responses, thereby impairing the capacity for empathic understanding of others; as a result, undermining the individual’s inclination to help or cooperate with others
Twenge, Baumeister, Tice, & Stucke (2001)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social exclusion (being told would end up alone later in life) and social rejection (rebuffed by others) cause participants to behave more aggressively and evaluate more negatively against someone

Voncken, Alden, Bogels, & Roelofs (2008)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social rejection is associated with negative emotions and poor social performance. - Structural equation modelling supported the social rejection-social anxiety relationship: poor social performance is associated with perceived dissimilarity ratings which are mediated by evoked negative emotions.
Dodge et al. (2003)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Authors investigated the relationship between social rejection and growth in antisocial behavior and developed a recursive model for antisocial development. - Studies in children between the ages of 6-8 years and 10-12 years found that early peer rejection predicted growth in aggression. - Early aggression moderated the effect of rejection: rejection exacerbated antisocial development only among children initially disposed toward aggression.

Pro-social Research

Gomez et al. (2011)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identity fusion increased the amount of compensatory activity - Social rejection by in-group amplified the tendency to endorse extreme pro-group actions, refuse to leave the group, and provide monetary rewards to members of an in-group
Maner, DeWall, Baumeister, & Schaller (2007)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Threat of social exclusion resulted in greater expression and desire of interest in making new social connections: to make new friends, to work with others, to form more positive impressions and to assign greater rewards to new interaction partners. - Fear of negative evaluation moderated responses to exclusion.
Hess & Picket (2010)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rejected participants exhibited better memory for other-related social behaviours but poorer memory for self-related social behaviours. - Responses to social rejection can be a result of both self-protective strategies and pro-social strategies aimed at regaining and maintaining social relationships
Williams & Sommer (1997)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Males and females interpret and respond to social rejection differently: females socially compensated when rejected while males socially loafed (redirecting their interests towards their environment) regardless whether they were rejected or not.

Social Rejection and Peer Groups

What is also interesting is that these antisocial and pro-social behaviours, as a result of social rejection, may not be only limited to the individual that committed the act of rejection; these behaviours may be extended to include members of peers that are perceived to be within the same group. Through an experiment of virtual ball-tossing game, Chernyak and Zayas (2010) found that being excluded by one person had similar effect to being excluded by two or multiple people. Furthermore, even when an individual was present as a form of support to include the rejected person, that inclusive person is thought to also have partaken in the act of exclusion. In two sets of experiments designed to examine the relationship between social rejection and perceived “groupness”, Gaetner and colleagues (2008) found that participants who experienced both rejection and perceived groupness (or group membership) behaved more aggressively and showed less affectionate associations towards members of the group than did participants who did not experience either. According to Gaertner (2008), when group membership is salient, “rather than associating the rejection solely with the rejecter, the rejectee associates rejection *with the group* and retaliates against the group” including members who have never individually rejected or wronged the rejectee. Therefore, in some cases, one single source of rejection can lead to aggression against an entire social group.

However, this expansion of the attribution of rejection is not just limited to the antisocial behaviours. Gomez and colleagues (2011) also found that pro-social behaviours can also be extended beyond a single individual to include perceived members of that individual’s peers. In four separate experiments, Gomez showed that not only are rejected individuals more willing

to fight and die for their in-groups (such as national identity), they are also more likely to endorse extreme pro-group actions, refuse to leave the group, and help members of an in-group by donating money. This is rather a stark contrast to Gaertner's research which showed that rejected individuals are more likely to display anti-social behaviours such as aggression towards the perceived group members of the individual who committed the rejection. One key difference, perhaps, involves the perception and the group identity of the rejected individual. In Gaertner's research, the group identity of the rejected individual is relevant to inclusion of the source of rejection peers, whereas in Gomez's research, the group identity of the rejected individual is at the centre of the in-group and out-group rejection discussion. Therefore, how one views his or her association with the source of rejection can have a major impact on his or her subsequent antisocial and pro-social behaviours toward both the source of rejection and its peers.

Brand Rejection

Interpersonal relationship is not the only possible type of relationship for people. Individuals can develop relationships with animals (Beck & Katcher, 2003; Serpell, 1996) and with inanimate objects (Wallendorf & Arnould, 1988; Fishbein, 1963). Brands, however, go beyond being merely an inanimate object or concept. Many researchers have proposed that brands are like individuals in that they can exhibit different types of personalities (Aaker, 1997), develop souls (Urde, 2003), and build a consumer following based on their brand culture and brand communities (Schroder & Salzer-Morling, 2006).

Brand-Person Relationships

Since brands can exhibit so many human characteristics, it is understandable that people would also develop close ties with specific brands on a personal level. In her influential case study, Susan Fournier (1998) reported that people's relationships with brands are similar to their relationships with friends. In other words, the way people interact with, hold expectations for, and exhibit loyalty towards specific brands can be said to be analogous to those with other people. Research in this area has also shown that despite low satisfaction with a particular relationship, people seek to maintain commitment to a brand much the same way they do so in a romantic relationship, provided that time and effort have been heavily invested in the relationship (Sung & Choi, 2010). Other researchers have also shown that people also relate to brands based on the affective dimensions such as love and intimacy (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006; Pawle & Cooper, 2006; Stern, 1997). These similarities between people relationships and brand-person relationships may have derived from the possibility that people rely on human relationship norms, such as exchange, attachment, and communal relationship, to guide them as consumers when interacting with brands (Aggarwal & Zhang, 2006; Aggarwal, 2004).

Just as people can encounter interpersonal problems in their relationships, people can also experience brand-person relationship heartaches. Aaker, Fournier, and Brasel (2004) conducted a longitudinal study and found that people's relationships with sincere brands are like those of long-term friendships with other people and deepen over time, whereas relationships with exciting brands are like those of short-lived flings. In the presence of brand transgression, people's relationship with sincere brands suffered more whereas their relationship with

exciting brands actually elicited signs of reinvigoration. Similarly, Gregoire, Tripp, and Legoux (2009) also found that the deeper people invest their emotional commitment to a brand the more likely they are to hold a grudge if the brand fails or disappoints them. Based on Williams' perspective on the psychological impact of social exclusion, Stillman, Wan, and Chattopadhyay (2011) argued and showed that brand rejection can result in poor psychological well-being in consumers who are high in materialism but positive psychological reaction in consumers low in materialism. Therefore, negative actions by the brand, specifically brand transgression in the form of brand rejection, can result in negative consumer behaviours similar to those caused by social exclusion and rejection. However, a key question arises out of this similarity: would brand rejection also result in consumer aggression and frustration towards the original rejecting brand and subsequent compensatory and reengagement behaviour towards other brands or brand communities? Since brand-person relationships have been shown to be analogous to people relationships, research in social rejection could shed light on the gaps that exist in the brand rejection literature.

Rejection and Neglect

The social exclusion difference between rejection and neglect is also found in the market place. Lee and Shrum (2012) found that compared with people who were rejected, people who were ignored expressed greater tendency towards conspicuous consumption behaviour. On the contrary, compared with those who were ignored, those who were rejected expressed greater willingness to help others. It is possible that being ignored threatens one's efficacy needs, which results in "attention-getting behaviour such as conspicuous consumption" by the

individual, whereas being rejected threatens one's relational needs, which results in the individual seeking ways "to gain self-esteem and belonging" (Lee & Shrum, 2012). Therefore, there is indication that social rejection can lead to psychological effects that influence an individual's purchasing behaviour in the market place.

Exclusion and Compensation

The compensatory behaviour as a result of rejection is also observed in the marketing research. Mead and her colleagues (2011) found that individuals who were socially excluded strategically and actively changed their spending habits to the preferences of a potential source of social affiliation. The negative psychological impact of social exclusion can cause people to seek social reconnection with potential new friends in hope of improving their social well-being even if at a cost of sacrificing their personal financial well-being.

Wanting and Liking

Many people use wanting and liking synonymously and believe that if one wants something, one must like that thing. However, research in this area has shown that wanting (desire) and liking (preference) can be two distinct and independent constructs. Wanting, as explained by Belk, Ger, and Askegaard (2003), is an expression of personal and psychological preference to obtain or fulfill an urge. It can encompass both emotional and rational dimensions of one's cognitive activities. Wanting can be as simple as the want to fulfill the basic biological or psychological human need such food and willingness-to-belong, or as complex as the desire to fulfil a fantasy or dream forgoing the possibility of actual attainment of such fancies. Liking,

however, is more of a preference expressed through the order of ranking of alternatives (Belk, Ger, & Askegaard, 2003; Irwin, 1961). While there may be both emotional and cognitive attachments to the target of liking, the focus here is the evaluation and the choice of the alternatives. Furthermore, it is possible to have a preference order to one's desires or wants; that is to say, one may like or prefer one want over another.

The disassociation and the counter-driving of want and like are well-documented in literature. It is present in physiological studies where people's intense desire for addictive substances (such as opioids) can co-exist with no subsequent enjoyment in consumption. In general, research in pharmacological and neuroscience has identified that liking-mediation is done "by the opioid systems and the primary sensory regions" whereas wanting-encoding by "midbrain dopamine activities in such efferent regions as nucleus accumbens" (Litt, Khan, & Shiv, 2010). This physiological and neurological independence of wanting and liking gives rise to the notion that there may be conditions under which desire and enjoyment are not simply independently affected but are actually propelled in opposite directions.

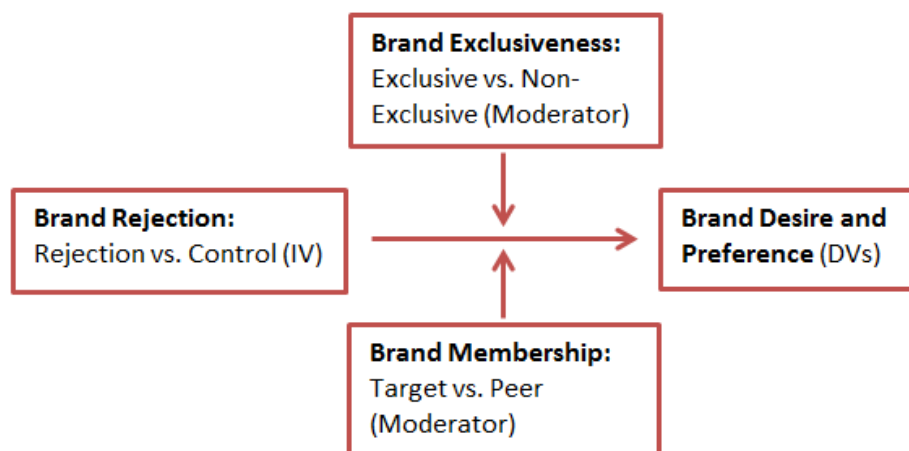
However, this separation of wanting and liking also resides outside of the studies of physiological research. Thaler (1980) showed an endowment effect on ownership where being given an object to own for a short period may lead to increased desire for that object but not to its enjoyment. The separation of desire and enjoyment can also be the result of by envy where seeing the ownership of an object by someone else may increase the desire for that object but not necessarily its enjoyment (Loewenstein, 1999). Even when people are cognitively aware of

this divergence in their desire and preference, their conscious behaviour is unchanged in the face of this apparent incongruence (Dai, Brendl, & Ariely, 2010).

Framework Development

Building on existing social and brand rejection research, we believe that brand rejection can lead to an ambivalence of brand desire and brand preference (see Figure 1: Conception Model). Furthermore, this relationship is moderated by two variables: the perceived peer membership of the rejecting brand and the perceived exclusiveness of the rejecting brand.

Figure 1: Conceptual Model



Ambivalence of Want and Like

Research in social psychology has shown that social rejection can produce conflicting psychological behaviours: antisocial and pro-social behaviours. This antisocial and pro-social behaviour as a result of rejection can be said to be an example of ambivalence emotions. Ambivalence emotions are essential conflicting emotions of both positive and negative emotions (Aaker, Drolet, & Griffin, 2008). Positive feelings, such as determination and pleasure, are elicited by possibilities and opportunities whereas negative feelings, such as frustration and regret, are elicited by obstacles (Aaker, Drolet, & Griffin, 2008). If social rejection can lead to ambivalence in subsequent behaviour, and if brand-person relationship is analogous to

interpersonal relationship, then it is possible that brand rejection can also lead to ambivalence of emotions.

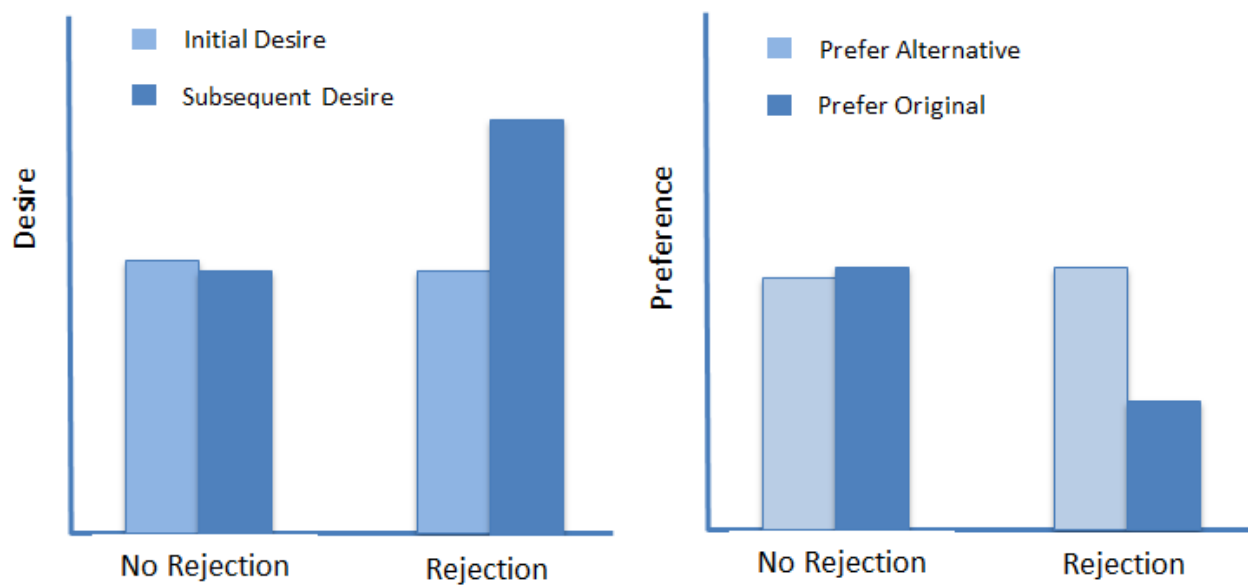
Since brand rejection has an effect on people, the natural assumption is that people and brands have a stronger intimate relationship that goes beyond merely the economic relationship of the market place. People develop intimate and long-term relationships with brands similar to those of interpersonal relationships. If social rejection can lead to ambivalent emotional responses (antisocial and pro-social) in interpersonal relationships, can brand rejection lead to ambivalent emotions in brand-person relationships?

Research has also shown that being “jilted” (i.e. stopped from attaining some desired object, target, or outcome) can simultaneously *increase* motivation to pursue that target and yet *decrease* its actual appeal, or in other words, “desiring more what [we] like less” (Litt, Khan, & Shiv, 2010). On one hand, being rejected can result in increased desire (Fitzsinons, 2000), persistence (Sommer & Baumeister, 2002), and efforts (Kruglanski et al., 2002) in obtaining the denied outcome since the experience may be enhanced by constraints, denials, and failure. On the other hand, the very experience of rejection can lead to negative impacts on an individual’s emotional and psychological well-being which in turn leads to negative evaluation of the source of rejection (Wan & Bhatnagar, 2012; Gaetner, Iuzzini & O’Mara, 2008), inducing individuals to switch away from decisions associated with these negative outcomes (Ratner & Herbst, 2005).

Brand rejection, like social rejection, may also be separated into passive brand neglect and active brand rejection. In some cases, such as limited supply of products or limited location of storefronts, the exclusion is a result of physical limitation imposed by the brand. While consumers theoretically have equal access to the brand, not everyone will obtain it. This is a case of passive brand neglect. In other cases, however, employees of the brand purposely turn down potential consumers because they do not fit the perceived brand image or brand community culture. This exclusion is a result of direct and confrontation rejection, a case of active brand rejection. In our research, we define brand rejection as the rejection that occurs when a consumer is actively turned down for a product or service. Since brand rejection shares many characteristics with those of social rejection, the parallel counter-driving between desire and preference may also be extended to the case of active brand rejection.

H1: When a consumer is rejected by a brand, his or her desire for that brand increases but evaluation or preference for that brand decreases (see Figure 2)

Figure 2: Rejection on Desire and Preference



Brand Exclusiveness and Brand Rejection

Most research shows that brands have two distinctive aspects in terms of consumer consumption and enjoyment: utilitarian (functional) and hedonic (symbolic) (Spangenberg, Voss, & Crowley, 1997; Babin, Darden, & Griffin, 1994). These two values reflect two distinctive paradigms in marketing and consumer behaviour theory. On one hand, utilitarian value corresponds to the cognitive construct of reason and is more important when the product category is high in terms of tangible product attributes. On the other hand, hedonic value corresponds to the archetypal construct of emotion and is more important when the product category is high in terms of emotional elements of pleasure and experience (Chaudhuri & Holdbrook, 2001). While both elements of utilitarian and hedonic values exist ubiquitously in all brands, researchers generally agree that there is a higher level of hedonic value than utilitarian in luxury brands (Atwal & Williams, 2009; Phau & Prendergast, 2000). This higher level of hedonic value makes consumers connect with luxury brands on a deeper affective level to form stronger and longer-lasting relationships through symbolic and experiential relationships much like the relationships found in individuals' inter-personal relationships.

One of the most important components to a luxury brand is its exclusiveness. Unlike mass-market brands, which target and are accessible to almost all consumers in the market, luxury brands craft their identity through their communication strategies, brand culture, and heritage. A Luxury brand accomplishes its exclusiveness through limited editions of products and controlled ranges and locations of product lines (Fiona & Moore, 2009). In doing so, luxury

brands achieve their higher status by turning consumers away or selectively and passively excluding them.

In branding literature, there are many ways by which researchers have categorized brands, such as luxury versus non-luxury, high-end versus low-end, and niche versus mass-market. There are many different dimensions and characteristics that consumers can use to evaluate the perceived luxury or ranking of a brand, which has been well illustrated in Dubois and Laurent's 2003 research as the following: quality, price, rarity, use of five senses, privileged relation with past, and uselessness/futility (Ward & Chiari, 2008). According to Dubois and Laurents, "exclusivity is the minimal level of content that a luxury product must have." Therefore, one salient characteristic among most brand categorization is the feature of exclusiveness, whether the brand appeals to a narrow market segment or the entire market place. If constraints and denials in obtaining outcomes can lead to enhanced desire (Fitzsimons, 2000; McFarlin, Baumesiter, & Blascovich, 1984), brand exclusivity, if perceived as a signal of attainment constrain, may also lead to increased desire. For brands that lack the perception of exclusiveness, the desire may not be as high and as a result of brand rejection both desire and preference may go down. Therefore, the counter-driving phenomenon for brand rejection may only occur for exclusive brands but not for non-exclusive brands.

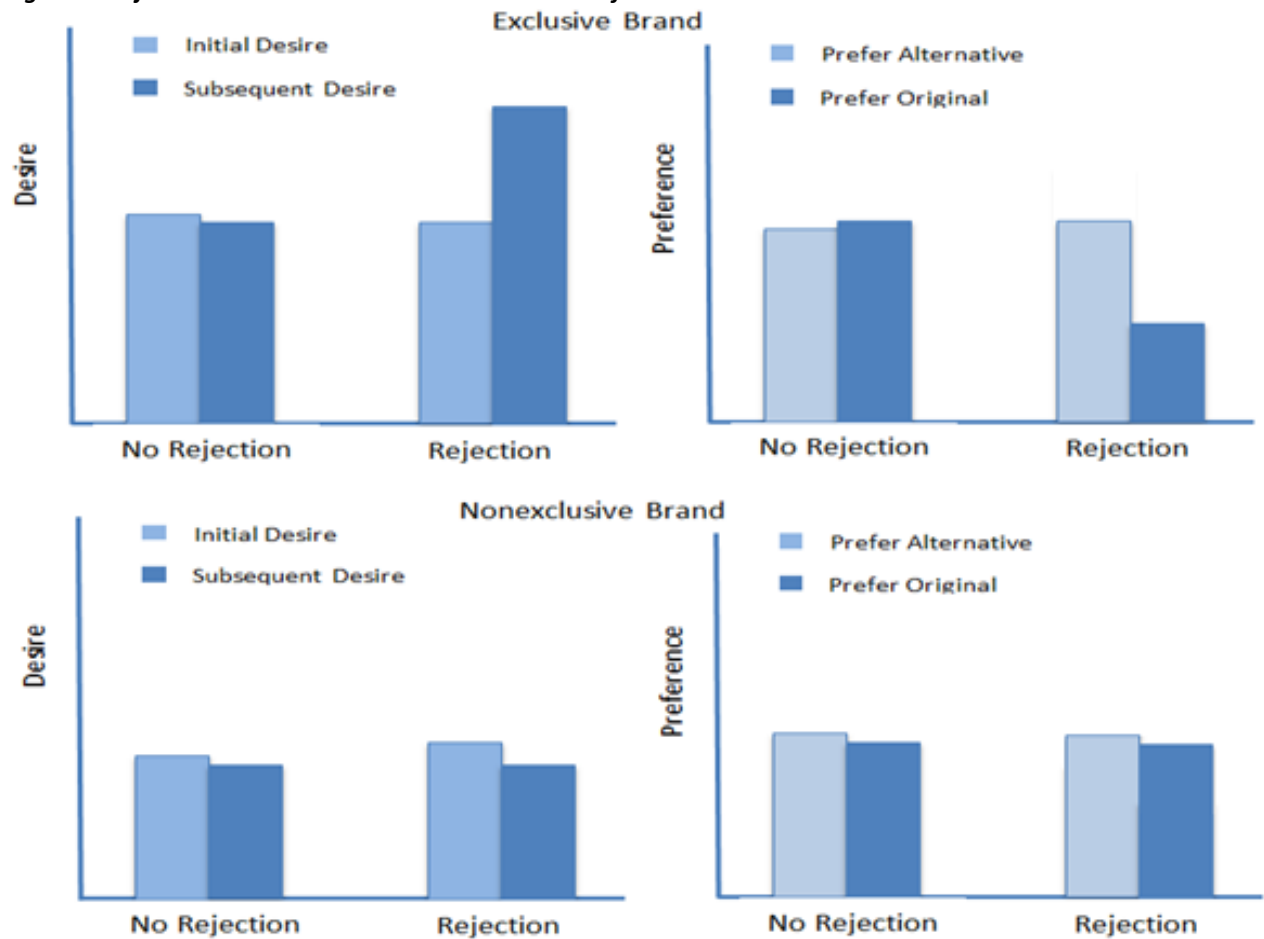
H2: If the source of brand rejection is from an exclusive brand, a consumer's subsequent desire for this exclusive brand will increase while preference for the brand will decrease. This counter-driving between desire and preference will not be present if the brand is non-exclusive.

In social rejection, research has shown that when an individual experiences social rejection, he or she displays signs of aggression towards the origin of the rejecting group. This aggression even extends to members of the group that have taken no part in the act of rejection (Gaetner, Iuzzini, & O'Mara, 2008). Perceived "groupness" can greatly influence cognition and behaviour by facilitating stereotyping, promoting integration or abstraction of group representation, and enhancing judgements of group responsibility (Gaetner, Iuzzini, & O'Mara, 2008). In social identity theory, perception of group members is stereotyped based on the group's prototype: members are perceived as interchangeable rather than unique individuals. Furthermore, because perception is based on the group and not at the individual level when "groupness" is highly salient, one individual member's behaviour and information is readily transferred and integrated into the group identity and subsequently identified with all group members (Crawford et al., 2002). Therefore, rejection from a member of a group might be passed as a rejection from other members of the group as well.

If exclusiveness can be a salient brand characteristic, consumers may perceive brands in terms of brand groups based on the perceived exclusivity of the brands. In the context of brand rejection, if a consumer is rejected by one brand, his or her subsequent behaviour might be transferred or extended to other brands that, in the eyes of the consumer, belong to the same brand category. Therefore, if a consumer is rejected by an exclusive brand, his or her subsequent desire and evaluation of other exclusive brands may also be jeopardized since the source of rejection comes from an exclusive brand.

H3: *The consumer's subsequent desire for other peer brands that are similar in perceived exclusiveness to the source exclusive brands will also increase while preferences will decrease. Non-peer brands that are dissimilar to the source of brand rejection will not be affected by the rejecting brands in terms of desire and preference.*

Figure 3: Rejection and Exclusiveness on Desire and Preference



Research Methodology

Our research question is twofold. First we seek to find out whether consumers display ambivalence between wanting and liking of a brand as a result of rejection. Second we seek to establish two boundary conditions for this ambivalence: the perceived exclusiveness of the rejecting brand and the perceived peer members that are associated with the rejecting brand.

To answer our research question, we will design two experimental studies based on the experimental designs from the researches of Wan and Bhatnagar (2012) and Litt, Khan, and Shiv (2010). Both of these studies focus on the ambivalence of wanting and liking. Wan and Bhatnagar (2012) used questionnaire experiments and found that differences in the source of rejection, rejection by a brand versus rejection by a fellow consumer, affect the brand evaluation differently: brand rejection lowers brand evaluations and intensifies felt alienation in the absence of co-consumer rejection whereas consumer rejection positively affects brand evaluations but has no impact on felt alienation. In our studies, we will also use survey questionnaires to deliver our manipulation of variables in our experimental design.

We use willingness-to-pay as a proxy for the measurement of want (desire). Litt, Khan, and Shiv (2010) used participants' willingness-to-pay (by way of "virtual-tokens) as a measure for the desire for a target not yet in participants' possession. Willingness-to-pay (WTP) is the maximum amount a person would be willing to pay in order to receive a good. Since want is defined as the desire to obtain or to fulfill (Belk, Ger, and Askegaard, 2003), we believe WTP is a

good proxy to measure desire given that it measures the maximum amount a person is willing to sacrifice (in terms of money) to obtain that desire.

We use the evaluation of brand perceptions as a proxy for the measurement of like (preference). Preference is the order or the choice of alternatives. In Litt's (2010) research, he and his colleagues used the actual action of choosing among alternatives to measure participants' preference. However, in our study, we want to measure not only the preference for the single rejecting brand (whether its preference increases or decreases), but also its peer brands. Literature has shown that evaluation of perception is closely linked to the evaluation of alternatives. Thang and Tan (2003) showed that consumer perceptions can heavily influence preferences and choices. Adamowicz and his colleagues (1998) also argued that it is the evaluation of choices which allows for the estimation of preferences over attributes. It is then reasonable to assume that evaluation of perception is a major determinant in the ranking and choosing of alternatives. Therefore we use the evaluation of perception as a proxy to test brand preference.

Pretest: Perception of Business Schools in Canada

The current set of studies will use business schools across Canada as the source of brand rejection. Using business schools is appropriate for this study for several reasons. First, different business schools carry with them different brand images and brand identities. For example, even for a layman the name "Harvard Business School" carries weight and status. Therefore it is easy to identify the level of product category in the market of business schools. Second,

business schools routinely reject applicants based on a variety of factors such as past academic performances, work experiences, and future prospects. These factors make the manipulation of brand rejection succinct and easy. Lastly, since the participant pool for this study will be drawn from a university campus, it makes the brand salient and relevant.

Procedures

Thirty-four first year marketing students participated in the pretest. Participants were led into a classroom and provided with a pencil-paper version of the questionnaire. Twelve business schools across Canada were used in the pretest: Rotman School of Management at University of Toronto, Schulic School of Business at York University, Queen's School of Business at Queen's University, Richard Ivey School of Business at University of Western Ontario, Telfer School of Management at University of Ottawa, Odette School of Business at University of Windsor, Edwards School of Business at University of Saskatchewan, Haskayne School of Business at University of Calgary, and Alberta School of Business at University of Alberta. Participants were asked to provide their WTP for and perceptions of each school.

The purpose of the pretest is to see whether there are significant separations in the perception of business schools in Canada. We used a 7-point Likert scale to measure schools' "exclusiveness" and "prestige" in order to gauge the overall perception of the business schools. Cronbach's Alpha for exclusiveness and prestige was 0.948 and Pearson correlation of $r = 0.9$, $p < 0.001$, indicating a very high internal reliability and high correlation.

Among the nine schools we sampled, four were chosen to represent upper, middle, and lower brand tiers respectively: Rotman School of Management at University of Toronto (upper tier, $M = 5.52$), Richard Ivey School of Business at University of Western Ontario (upper tier, $M=5.24$), Telfer School of Management at University of Ottawa (middle tier, $M=4.84$), and Edwards School of Business at University of Saskatchewan (lower tier, $M=4$). In terms of perception based on exclusiveness and prestige, pairwise comparison showed that there was no significant difference between Rotman and Ivey ($\alpha = 0.215$), but significant difference between Rotman and Telfer ($\alpha = 0.015$) and Rotman and Edwards ($\alpha = 0.002$). There is also a difference between Ivey and Telfer ($\alpha = 0.079$) and between Telfer and Edwards ($\alpha = 0.020$), which indicates that there is a definite separation of three distinct brand tiers. This result confirms our ranking of the schools since there is significant difference between the upper schools (Rotman and Ivey) and the non-upper schools (Telfer and Edwards). We chose two schools to test the upper tier level because one school (Rotman) will be used as the focus of the source of brand rejection and the peer school (Ivey) will be used to see how participants respond to rejection.

Study 1: Rejection and Peer Group on Wanting and Liking

A 2 x 2 mixed factorial model tested: (a) between-subjects: whether a participant is rejected or not rejected (still waiting for response) from a business school, and (b) within-subjects: the evaluation of the focus rejection school on the evaluation of peer schools (top tier: Rotman and Ivey) and non-peer schools (middle tier: Telfer and lower tier: Edwards). We used Rotman as the source of brand rejection and Ivey as the peer brand of the source of rejection. We averaged the scores for Telfer and Edwards to create an indexed score for a non-peer brand of

the source of rejection. We tested Telfer and Edwards individually as middle and lower tiered schools and together as an index for the non-peer brand. The independent variables were rejection and peer of rejection; the dependent variables were the pricing of the schools (want) and the perception of the schools (liking).

Procedures

Seventy-eight (37 females and 41 males) first year marketing students at the University of Manitoba participated in the study for partial course credit. Participants were led into a computer lab and randomly assigned to sit in front of each computer station. They were presented with a general summary and purpose of the study and asked to sign a consent form (see Appendix 1) whether they choose to participate. Participants read the scenarios and questions prompted on the monitor in front of them and used mouse and keyboard to navigate the survey questions and to provide in responses.

At the beginning of the study, participants were asked to imagine a scenario where they were applying to business schools across Canada and Rotman School of Management was one of them. They were shown a chart outlining the general tuition fees charged by business schools across Canada without specific school names. The purpose was to provide a range reference for subsequent pricing evaluation (see Appendix 2). Participants were then randomly selected to one of two conditions: control – application was still pending, and rejection – application was rejected (see Appendix 3).

We used “pending” as the control treatment as oppose to “accepted” because “pending”, or no answer, is the natural null condition in our experimental design. While rejection is a negative outcome, acceptance is the positive outcome. However, we are not comparing the effect of rejection to that of acceptance. Instead, we are focussing on the effect of rejection has on want and preference. Using acceptance would unduly influence the participants and contaminate the result whereas “pending” would make a better control condition.

Willingness to Pay (Want) and School Evaluation (Preference)

After the participants read the hypothetical scenario, they were asked to write down how much tuition fee they were willing to pay for each of the 9 business schools across Canada (see Appendix 4). Participants’ willingness to pay (pricing of the schools) was used to measure their desire or want for the business schools.

Participants were asked to evaluate Rotman and three other business schools on a 7-point Likert Scale (see Appendix 5). The five dimensions for evaluation are based on weights and measurements used by MacLeans’ when ranking universities (Dwyer, 2010). These dimensions provide a general evaluation of universities from the eyes of the public. Manipulation check and demographic questions were also conducted.

Manipulation-check

Using Gaertner, Iuzzini, and O’Mara’s measures, we used a four-items Likert Scale to measure the manipulation of the feeling of rejection: felt rejected, felt abandoned, felt unwanted, and

felt unwelcomed. Cronbach's Alpha for the four items was 0.935, indicating a very high internal consistency. We averaged the rejection items and ran a one-way ANOVA. A rejection main effect, $F(1,24)=6.61, p=0.02$, confirmed that our manipulation was successful: participants reported stronger feelings of rejection when they were rejected ($M=4.58$) than when they were still waiting ($M=3.15$).

Results

We used Richard Ivey as the peer group and averaged Telfer and Edwards as the non-peer group for the rejecting brand of Rotman. We entered the pricing and overall evaluation of the schools into a 2(Rejection) x 2(Peer) Repeated Measure ANOVA.

As expected, there was a main effect in the price difference between the peer groups: $F(2,72)=56.31, p<0.001$. The mean price for Rotman was $M=42.34$, for peer school (Ivey) $M=38.04$, and non-peer school (average of Telfer and Edwards) $M=26.69$. Similar to our pilot study, the participants were more willing to pay for the two top schools Rotman and Ivey and less willing for Telfer and Edwards. While there were increases in the prices for all schools as a result of rejection, the increases were not significant ($p>0.1$).

We observed a significant decrease ($F(1,73)=3.43, p=0.068$) in the perception of Rotman (Control $M=5.73$, Rejection $M=5.2$). Such a result provides some evidence in support of our H1: as a result of rejection, brand perception decreases while brand desire increases. Although the increase in brand desire is not significant, the counter-driving of opposite directions between desire and preference exists. While the perception for the peer school Ivey also decreased

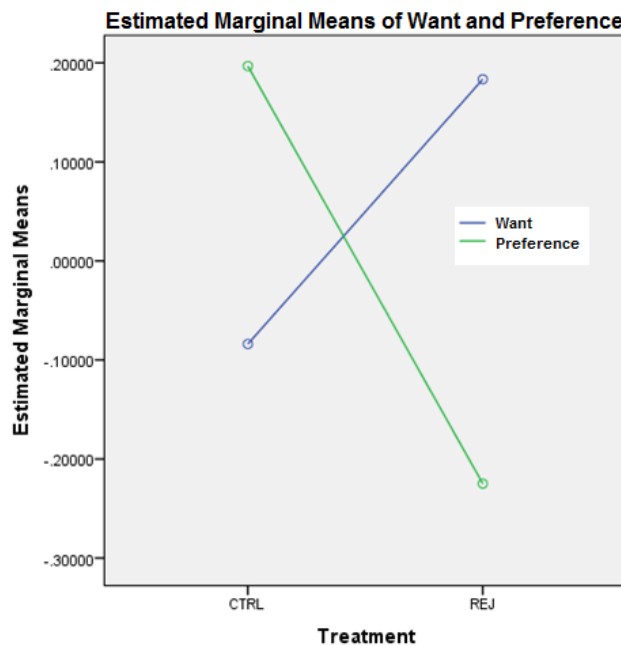
(Control $M=5.25$, Rejection $M=4.80$), the change was not significant ($F(1,73)=2.53$, $p=0.116$).

There was a slight increase in the non-peer schools (Control $M=4.18$, Rejection $M=4.30$) but the increase was not significant ($F(1,73)=0.36$, $p=0.55$). The results support the second half of our H1: preference of the rejecting brand decreases as a result of rejection. There is also a significant main effect in the perception difference between the peer groups $F(2,71)=40.86$, $p < 0.001$. This result is similar to the findings in our pretest, indicating that there are significant differences between the focus peer school (Richard Ivey) $M=5.03$ and the non-focus peer schools (Telfer and Edwards) $M=4.24$ in terms of perception.

There is also an interaction effect of rejection on perception differences between rejecting school (Rotman) and non-peer schools (Telfer and Edwards): $F(1,72)=5.16$, $p=0.026$). However, this interaction was not observed between rejecting school and peer school (Ivey): $F(1,73)=0.08$, $p=0.77$. These differences in the significance between peer and non-peer schools lead us to believe that rejection affects the perception of peer and non-peer schools differently. We used a difference-score measure of perception (Rotman's score - peer score and Rotman score - non-peer score) and compared the two peers directly (Levy, 2006; Edwards (2001); Lee & Lita, 1970). We ran an repeated ANOVA on the two difference-scores and confirmed our belief that there is a significant interaction effect between rejection and the different peer groups: $F(1,72)=4.52$, $p=0.037$). This confirms our H3 that, as a result of rejection, non-peer brands are affected differently compared to peer brands: while the preference for the peer brand decreased similar to the rejecting brand, the non-peer brand is unaffected.

To directly compare the price and the perception of each school groups, we standardized the two measures and ran a repeated ANOVA on each of the rejecting school, peer school, and non-peer school. We found that there is a significant interaction among rejection, price and perception of the rejecting school (Rotman): $F(1,73)=5.90$, $p=0.018$ (see Figure 4a).

Figure 4a: Counter Movements of Standardized Price and Perception on Rejecting School - Rotman



This result further supports our H1 that rejection results in the counter-driving movement of want and preference: want increases while preference decreases. This counter-driving is also observed in the peer school (Ivey): $F(1,73)=6.69$, $p=0.010$ (see Figure 4b). However, there is no such interaction found for the non-peer schools (Telfer and Edwards): $F(1,73)=0.002$, $p=0.695$ (see Figure 4c).

Figure 4b: Counter Movements of Standardized Price and Perception on Peer School – Ivey

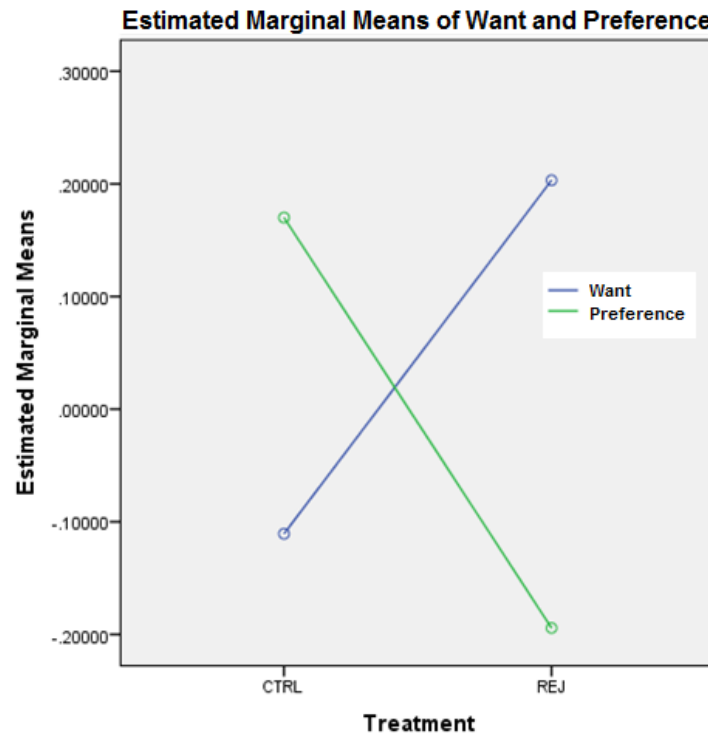
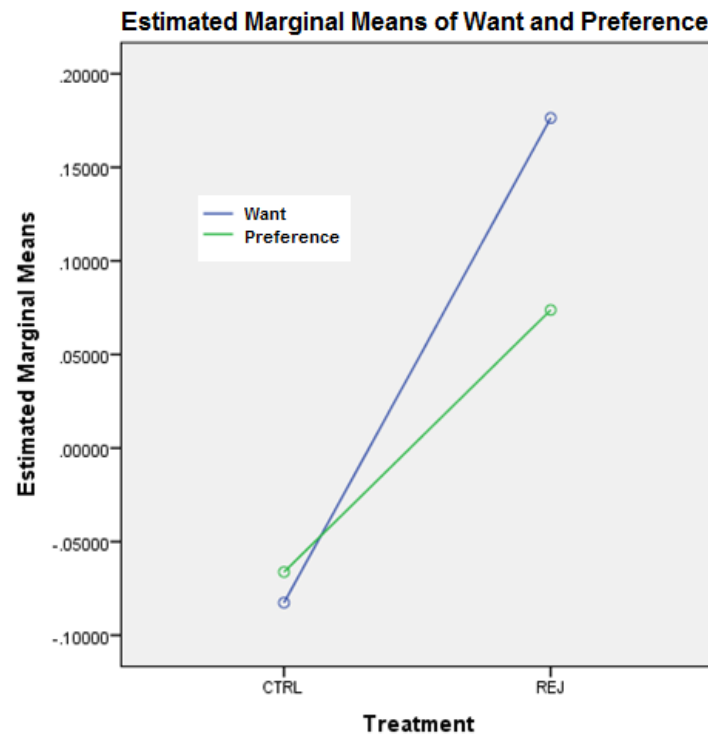


Figure 4c: Counter Movements of Standardized Price and Perception on Non-Peer School – Telfer and Edwards



Discussion

In Study 1 we tested the hypothesis that rejection by a brand can lead to increased desire and decreased perception of that brand. We manipulated rejection as a between subjects variable and measured peer and peer brands as a within subjects variables. Although the result for increased want is not significant itself, the interaction between want and preference is significant as a result of rejection. This result fully supports our H1 where we predicted that brand rejection will lead to a counter-driving movement between want and preference. Our result is coherent with the results from Litt (2010) and showed that a rejection by a brand, a non-human source of rejection, can also result in an ambivalence of desire and preference.

Furthermore, the results from Study 1 also support our H3 and show that peer membership is a boundary condition for the counter-driving of want and preference. While there is an interaction between price and perception for the rejecting brand and the peer of that rejecting brand, there is no such interaction for non-peer schools. Similar to findings in social psychology literature, peer groups serve as a boundary condition for the response and treatment of individual brands subsequent to rejection. Rejection carries over to peers that are perceived to be similar, resulting in the counter-driving of want and like, but does not carry over to peers that are dissimilar, resulting in the lack of counter-driving.

While Study 1 used exclusive school (Rotman) as the source of rejection, it did not manipulate the perception of exclusiveness. Instead, it relied on the existing perception of the participants (based on pretest) to establish the exclusiveness and the peer groups of the brands. To further

investigate whether exclusiveness truly affects the relationship between brand rejection and the counter-driving of want and preference, we designed a second study to manipulate the perception of exclusiveness and to test our theoretical framework.

Study 2: Exclusiveness on Rejection and Peer Evaluation

In Study 1, we examined the desire and perception of brands and the peer brands were categorized based on the perceived exclusiveness and prestige of the brands. However, exclusiveness of brands was determined a-priori to Study 1 based on the results of our pretests of the Canadian business schools. We analysed the results in Study 1, knowing that participants viewed the rejecting school (Rotman) as an exclusive and prestigious school. Building on the findings from Study 1, we conducted Study 2 and focussed on the single item “exclusiveness” in order to examine whether the perceived exclusiveness of a brand affects participants’ desire and preference.

Exclusivity plays a major role in the perception of luxury brand. Research has shown that there is a close relationship between luxury brands and conspicuous consumption (O’Cass & McEwen, 2004; O’Cass & Frost, 2002; Phau & Prendergast, 2000). Furthermore, conspicuous consumption may serve two competing needs in consumers, the need for uniqueness and the need for conformity (Brewer, 1991), depending on the relationship to particular brand associations (Shukla, 2008). Therefore, to further understand the role exclusivity plays on consumers’ peer evaluations, we also included emotional and social approval dimensions. We incorporated the emotional and social approval evaluation measures used in Sweeney & Soutar

(2001) to see whether personal emotional fulfillment and social approval play a role in the desire and preference of exclusive brands.

Procedures

A 2 x 2 x 2 mixed factorial model tested: (a) between subjects: perceived exclusiveness of the rejecting brand (high rejection or low rejection), (b) between subjects: manipulation of rejection (rejected or still waiting), and (c) within subjects: peer or non-peer to the source of rejection. The independent variables were exclusiveness, rejection, and peer of rejection; the dependent variables were again the pricing of the schools (want) and the perception of the schools (preference).

One hundred and thirty first year marketing students (66 female and 64 male) at the University of Manitoba participated in the study for partial course credit. Similar to Study 1, participants were randomly assigned to a lab station and took the survey questions using a computer in the computer lab. They were asked to imagine that they were applying to Canadian business schools. A fictitious business school (University of International School of Business UISB) is used as the source of brand rejection. Participants were told that the school is at the same level as Richard Ivey at University of Western Ontario and the two schools are thought of as the “Harvard and Yale” of Canadian business schools. Participants were then randomly assigned to the “low exclusive” treatment where they were told that UISB has a rejection rate of 50% or to the “high exclusive” treatment where UISB has a rejection rate of 95% (see Appendix 6). A fictitious school is used instead of a known one so that participants will not rely on prior

knowledge or preference with respect to school reputation and exclusiveness. Participants then read a correspondence letter from UISB indicating that the school has either rejected their applications (rejection treatment) or the school has not yet made a decision (control treatment) (see Appendix 7).

Willingness to Pay and School Evaluation

Similar to Study 1, after the participants read the hypothetical scenario, they were asked to write down how much tuition fee they were willing to pay for each business schools across Canada. This time, however, the list only consisted of four schools: UISB (source of rejection), Richard Ivey School of Business (high exclusivity), Telfer School of Management (medium exclusivity), and Edwards School of Business (low exclusivity). Participant's willingness to pay (pricing of the schools) was used to measure their desire for or wanting of the business schools.

Participants were asked to evaluate UISB and the three peer schools based on the emotional and social dimensions of Sweeney & Soutar (2001) PERVAL (perceived value) scale (see Appendix 8). These two dimensions are used to test whether there is a significance relationship between brand's exclusiveness and the fulfilment of self emotional and social approval.

Participants were then asked to rate the possible factors that might have played a role in their decision-making such as school reputation, tuition fees, and school location. Finally participants completed manipulation check (Appendix 9) and demographic questions.

Manipulation-check

We included four items as part of our manipulation check. Apart from measuring the perception of rejection and the exclusiveness of UIBS, we also wanted to measure whether participants attributed their rejection to themselves or the environment. We ran a MANOVA on the items in manipulation checks. The main effect of rejection tested significant for “UIBS is exclusive” and “I’m not good enough for the school” with $p < 0.05$; the main effect of rejection tested marginally significant for “I feel rejected” and “The competition is too great” with $p < 0.1$ (see Table 2 and 3).

Table 2: Manipulation Variable Estimated Means

Dependent Variable	Rej or Ctrl	Mean
I feel rejected	Control	3.842
	Rejection	4.350
UIBS is exclusive	Control	5.070
	Rejection	5.583
I’m not good enough for school	Control	3.537
	Rejection	4.250
The competition is too great	Control	4.572
	Rejection	5.050

Table 3: Manipulation Variable Pairwise Comparisons

Dependent Variable	(I) Rej or Ctrl	(J) Rej or Ctrl	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
I feel rejected	Control	Rejection	-.508	.298	.091
UIBS is exclusive	Control	Rejection	.508	.255	.047
I’m not good enough for school	Control	Rejection	-.513	.318	.027
The competition is too great	Control	Rejection	.513	.289	.100

The main effect of perceived exclusiveness of UISB tested significant only for “The competition is too great” with mean difference of pairwise comparisons between high rejection rate and low rejection rate = 0.663, $p = 0.023$. Therefore the manipulation of the independent variable “exclusiveness” was not significant ($F(1,125) = 0.67$, $p = 0.42$). We believe that comparing UISB to Ivey, Harvard, and Yale in the hypothetical scenario raised the perceived exclusiveness of the

school. UISB resulted as the highest level of exclusiveness when compared to the other four schools: UISB's exclusiveness $M=5.55$, Ivey's exclusiveness $M=5.05$, Telfer's exclusiveness $M=4.43$, and Edwards' exclusiveness $M=3.49$. Because of its pre-perceived exclusiveness, the mere mentioning that UISB has a rejection rate of 50% or 95% may not be enough to manipulate its exclusiveness. However, it is interesting to note that the rate of rejection has a significant main effect on the external attribution of rejection (that the competition is too great). Participants might have perceived the difference in rejection rate as a reason for their rejection, not the exclusiveness of the school.

There is also a significant main effect in the change of perceived exclusiveness of UISB as a result of time lag. Along with the PERVAL Scale, participants were asked about their perceived exclusiveness of UISB immediately after they read the scenario; they were again asked about UISB's exclusiveness towards the end of the survey as part of the manipulation check. We found that there is a significant main effect on the within subject perception of exclusiveness $F(1,127)=5.56$ and $p=0.02$. The initial perceived exclusiveness $M=5.56$ is significantly higher than the subsequent perceived exclusiveness $M=5.33$. However, no interaction effect is observed with rejection and exclusiveness.

Results

We again used Richard Ivey as the peer group and Telfer and Edwards as the non-peer group for the rejecting brand of UISB. After standardizing price and the evaluation, we entered the pricing and overall evaluation of the schools into a $2(\text{Exclusiveness}) \times 2(\text{Rejection}) \times 2(\text{Peer})$

Repeated Measure ANOVA. Results for UISB appeared to be not significant. There were no main or interaction effects on the price and evaluation as a result of rejection or rejection rate (all $p > 0.1$) and so H2 is not supported. The same is true for non-peer brands of UISB: no main or interaction effects were found on price and evaluation as a result of rejection or rejection rate (all $p > 1$). However, there is a significant interaction between rejection and the counter-driving of want and preference ($F(1,127)=3.632, p=0.059$) and between rejection rate and the counter-driving of want and preference ($F(1,127)=7.392, p=0.007$) for Ivey. Under the rejection treatment, desire for Ivey decreased while preference increased (see Figure 5a). Such a result is the opposite of what we found in Study 1, where under the rejection treatment, desire for Ivey (the peer brand) increased while preference decreased (see Figure 4b). Furthermore, under the exclusive treatment (rejection rate = 95%), desire for Ivey also decreased while preference increased (see Figure 5b). However, there is no three way interaction between rejection, rejection rate, and counter-driving of want and preference ($F(1,125)=1.374, p=0.243$).

Figure 5a: Rejection and the Counter Movements of Standardized Price and Perception on Ivey

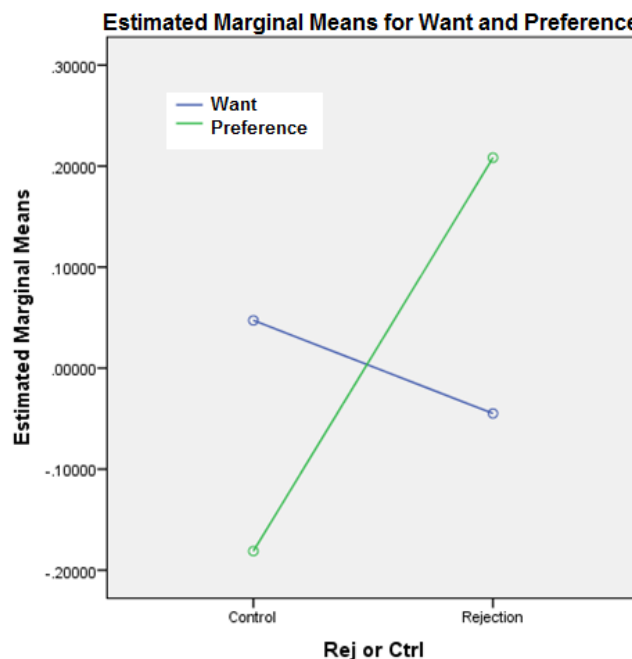
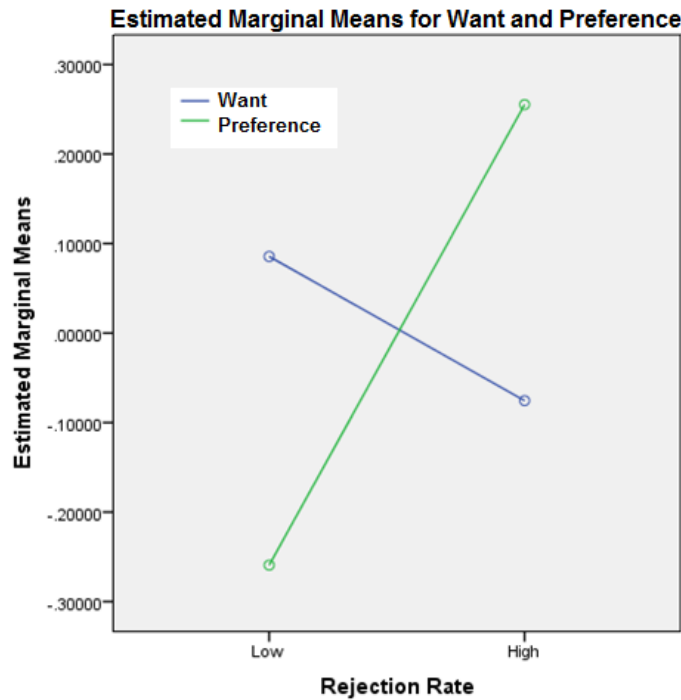


Figure 5b: Rejection Rate and the Counter Movements of Standardized Price and Perception on Ivey



We believe that two factors might have contributed to this null result observed on the UISB.

One is the use of a fictitious school name. If the participants did not believe the school UISB to be real, being rejected from the school may not significantly matter to them and would not produce the same level of reaction to rejection as found in Study 1. The second factor might be the failed manipulation of rejection rate. If participants already perceive UISB as an exclusive school, simply manipulating the rejection rate may not lead to a change in perception in the exclusiveness of the school but rather to the perception that the competition is too great.

If participants did not view UISB as an exclusive school, Ivey would not be perceived as UISB's peer group. However, if UISB was perceived as a non-exclusive school Ivey would be perceived as a non-peer group. This difference may be one of the explanations as to why there were null

results for UISB and the other non-exclusive schools (Telfer and Edwards) but there were significant results for the exclusive school Ivey. UISB being perceived as a non-exclusive school may also be the explanation as to why Ivey's counter-driving of want and preference in Study 2 (want decreases and preference increases) moved in opposite directions to those of Study 1 (want increases and preference decreases). If UISB is in a different brand group from Ivey, being rejected by UISB could lead to increased desire for UISB but decreased desire for Ivey and decreased preference for UISB but increased preference for the Ivey. However, since we treated UISB as if it were an exclusive brand, the results did not paint such a clear picture. Follow-up studies should be conducted to examine these relationships and conditions in more detail.

We used four items to measure emotional values (i.e.: would enjoy, want to apply to, feel good, give pleasure) and four items to measure the social values (i.e.: feel acceptable, improve perception, good impression, social approval) of the brands (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001).

Cronbach's Alpha tested 0.94 for the four emotional value items and 0.94 for the social value items, indicating that there is a high level of internal consistency within each of the two measures. All inter-item correlations were $r > 0.7$, indicating that there is a strong positive relationship among the items within each group.

We find a mixed result when analysing the emotional and social perceived values of the schools using MANOVA. There appears to be a main effect of exclusiveness on the social values of UISB $F(1,126)=3.311, p=0.071$ and Ivey $F(1,126)= 3.748, p=0.055$. There is a significant increase in the

social values for UISB (high exclusiveness $M=5.47$, low exclusiveness $M=5.19$) and Ivey (high exclusiveness $M=5.35$, low exclusiveness $M=4.93$) when the source of rejection is perceived to have a higher exclusiveness compared to a lower exclusiveness. This main effect is not observed in the other lower schools. When participants believe that there is a high level of exclusiveness to a brand, a major part of their consumption of the brand could be for the purpose of providing them with social status and recognition as part of conspicuous consumption of a luxury brand.

There also appears to be an interaction effect between exclusiveness and rejection on the emotional values of Telfer ($F(1,126)= 4.486, p=0.036$) and Edwards ($F(1,126)=5.792, p=0.018$). When there is no rejection, emotional values for Telfer and Edwards increase as perceived exclusiveness of the rejecting brand increases from low to high. However, when there is rejection, emotional values for Telfer and Edwards decrease as perceived exclusiveness increases from low to high (see Table 4). No other main effects, however, are observed for these two schools.

Table 4: Estimated Means of Brand Emotional Values

	Control		Rejection	
	Low Exclusiveness	High Exclusiveness	Low Exclusiveness	High Exclusiveness
Telfer	4.43	4.77 ↑	4.93	4.46 ↓
Edwards	3.63	4.21 ↑	4.19	3.69 ↓

Since these two schools are not exclusive or top tier schools, they may not carry much imbedded social values compared to Ivey. As such, their values may reside within their functional and emotional aspects of consumption. However, since exclusiveness may not have been successfully manipulated these values may not be reliable.

Discussion

Study 2 sought to build on Study 1 to further investigate the effect of exclusiveness on the counter-driving of want and preference of a brand. While no main effects or interaction effects were observed in the rejecting brand UISB and non-peer brands Telfer and Edwards, a significant interaction effect is found for Ivey between rejection and the counter-driving and rejection rate and the counter-driving of want and preference. In Study 2, the differences in results between UISB and Ivey and the opposite effect rejection and exclusiveness had on want and preference (where want decreased and preference increased as a result of rejection by some other brand) compared to those of Study 1 (where want increased and preference decreased as a result of rejection by some other brand) lead us to believe that participants may have treated UISB and Ivey in different brand categories. UISB may have been perceived as a non-exclusive brand whereas Ivey remained as an exclusive brand. If this is indeed the case, rejection by a non-exclusive brand such as UISB then does not lead to the counter-driving of want and preference in non-exclusive rejecting brand as well as non-exclusive peer brands (in which case Telfer and Edwards would be considered UISB's peer brands). Instead, rejection by non-exclusive brands may actually lead to increased preference but decreased want for exclusive brands such as Ivey (in which case would be considered UISB's non-peer brands). To support such a claim, further research needs to clearly investigate the relationships between non-exclusive brand rejections and subsequent desire and evaluations of peer and non-peer brands.

In Study 2, we also found some significance in the emotional and social values in the consumption of exclusive and non-exclusive brands. The perception of exclusiveness could be part of conspicuous consumption. When there is a higher perceived exclusiveness of an exclusive brand, the social value of that brand is increased. For non-exclusive brands, the core consumption value may lie only with an individual's emotional values. However, the perceived exclusiveness and the act of rejection by an exclusive brand may also have an effect on the emotional value of the non-exclusive brand. Studies have shown that perception and image of external stimuli can be sources of self-threat (Wan et al, 2012). Therefore, self-threat and self-defence mechanisms may explain the interaction observed between exclusiveness and rejection on the emotional value of non-exclusive brands. These measures should be adopted into future studies.

General Discussion

The topic of desire and preference has been central in both consumer behaviour and marketing management research. However, research has generally focussed on a one-way analysis of consumers' desire and preference, never the dual-directional relationship of the two. Drawing on research on social relationships and rejection, we seek to bridge the gap in the marketing literature on the relationship among brand rejection, brand peer group, brand desire and brand preference. We set out to expand the theories on brand-person relationship by incorporating theories on rejection in social psychology into consumer behaviour where the source of rejection is inanimate.

Research Contributions

Brand Rejection and the Counter-Driving of Want and Preference

Our research shows that brand rejection affects consumers' desire and preference of the rejecting brand and its peers differently. Similar to Litt's (2010) study where a participant's desire for an object increased but preference for that same object decreased when the participant was jilted (or stopped) from obtaining that object, we found that rejection by a brand increases the consumer's desire for that brand but decreases the consumer's preference for that brand (Study 1). Being rejected by a brand evokes the same ambivalence in desire and preference as being jilted or stopped from attaining one's desired object or outcome.

This counter-driving of want and preference as a result of brand rejection is novel in the brand-person relationship research. In social psychology, people can experience ambivalence between

anti-social and pro-social behaviours as a result of social rejection. In terms of consumer behaviour, social rejection can also lead to increased spending as a way to re-engage and reconnect (Mead et al., 2011). Based on our research, however, non-human form of rejection, rejection by a brand, can also elicit strong ambivalent feelings. Not only are want and preference two distinct constructs, but they can also move in opposite directions under the condition of rejection and in the context of brand rejection. People may not always prefer what they want or want what they prefer.

Brand Rejection and Brand Peer Groups

Consumers also desire and evaluate brands based on their exclusiveness. When rejection comes from an exclusive brand, the subsequent counter-driving of want and preference is extended to include fellow exclusive peer brands. However, such is not the case with non-exclusive brands which are non-peer brands to the rejecting exclusive brand. Thus, peer group or peer identity may act as a boundary condition in the relationship between brand rejection and the counter-driving of want and preference.

The inclusion of peer brands as a result of brand rejection is consistent with the results found in social psychology. Gaertner and his colleagues (2008) showed that perceived social group membership expands to include individuals who are not part of the rejection process. In this respect, brand rejection has similar effect on peers as social rejection and brand-person relationship is very much analogous to interpersonal relationship.

Managerial Implications

This research helps to shed light on two distinctive constructs of desire and preference in the context of consumer behaviour and brand management. Perceived peer group based on exclusiveness and prestige is found to be a boundary condition on rejection and desire and preference. While consumers may believe that their desire and preference are synonymous, they do not act accordingly. They may desire and be willing to spend more on a luxury brand that is thought to be exclusive and prestigious but may not actually attain or meet their expected enjoyment need. Such a situation is especially true when consumers experience a direct rejection from the brand. They may compensate the rejection by willing to pay more for the brand or even a peer brand at the expense of their reduced preference. Reversely, they may also be more willing to pay more for lower status brand or non-exclusive brand but their enjoyment may not actually decrease.

Furthermore, consumers' perception of exclusiveness of a brand could be a result of marketing hype which induces a heightened sense of desire leading to subsequent buyer's remorse. Too often managers resort to building a luxury brand by limiting its accessibility and manipulating its exclusiveness. Exclusivity, in the form of rejection, can be a powerful tool to manipulate brand desire. However, this limitation and sometimes active rejection of consumers can have an adverse effect on the perception and enjoyment of the brand. Furthermore, this adverse effect can be salient across brand peers. In other words, the rejection of a peer exclusive brand can also lead to reduced preference and enjoyment of one's own brand. Peer exclusive brands should endeavour to differentiate themselves from competitors to minimize their perceived

similarities in terms of exclusiveness and prestige so as to reduce the risk of hazardous consumer brand generalization.

Limitations

There are a few limitations in this study. First, the external validity of this research may be limited. We used business schools in Canada to represent exclusive and non-exclusive brands. While our measures are strong enough to capture the differences in perceptions and categorization of the schools, perceptions of school brands can be a mediocre proxy for product brands. While school brands share many aspects of product brands, such as price, quality, and exclusivity, they are also very different from other brands such as the commitment required to consume the brand (i.e.: the duration of enrolment) and the direct and long-term social interactions among peer consumers (i.e.: fellow students). Furthermore the location of the school can have an impact on the perception of the school. People carry with them inherent perceptions about various cities across Canada, and their perception of the city can lead to a pre-perception against the school located there. Nevertheless we used business schools in our study as the focus brand because the participants are all university students and the application scenario is thought to have a high degree of relevance to their brand experience.

Second, preference in our research is measured by the evaluation of perception of schools rather than actual choices. While researchers have provided justification for the acceptability of using perception and evaluation to measure preference, such measures are nonetheless only proxies for the actual action of “choice.” Choice involves the action of selecting one alternative

among all other alternatives. By merely measuring the perception and the evaluation of alternatives, our research may not have gone far enough to gauge the complete preference process by the participants.

Lastly, the use of fictitious school in Study 2 did not provide successful manipulation of exclusiveness. This unsuccessful manipulation could be a result of inadequate measurement, where we did not properly record participant's perceptions of the differences in the exclusiveness of the brands, or a result of inadequate experimental design, where we did not explicitly and successfully manipulate the variable in order for participants to perceive the distinctive perceptions of exclusiveness. This unsuccessful manipulation could call into question the validity of the findings in Study 2. The exclusivity of a school can have multiple meanings. It can be perceived as the highly stringent and selective process of the application stage, as the research and teaching bodies at the institution, or as the image of the general student population that attends the school. Furthermore, we suspect that the use of a fictitious school may have led to a certain degree of ambiguity for participants regarding the brand's desire and perception, resulting in null results in terms of the measurements for desire and preference.

Future Research

While this study has yielded valuable research results and made novel theoretical contributions, it is still on going. Our next step is to follow up on the mixed results found in Study 2 to further investigate the relationship between exclusiveness and brand rejection. In Study 1 we used an

exclusive brand as the source of rejection and found that peer also shared similar counter-driving of want and preference with increased want and decreased preference. In Study 2 we tried to replicate this same result but found that, by using a fictitious brand, not only was the counter-driving of want and preference not present for the rejecting brand but the counter-driving of the proposed peer brand was reversed: want decreased but preference increased. There are two main possibilities for this difference. It is possible that participants did not perceive the rejecting brand (UISB) in Study 2 as an exclusive brand and so Ivey would not have been perceived to be UISB's peer brand. If that was the case, a follow-up study should be conducted where the source of rejection should come from a non-exclusive brand. Peer and non-peer brands should be retested but this time Ivey be the non-peer brand. This follow-up study focussing on a non-exclusive brand as the source of rejection would complement Study 1 and Study 2 where the brand rejection has been initiated by exclusive brands.

Furthermore, we will better measure the constructs of want and preference in our future studies. In our current research, want was measured by the willingness-to-pay and preference by the evaluation of schools, both of which were very much cognitive evaluative processes. However, researchers have argued that both wanting and liking can have conscious and unconscious dimensions with unconscious liking and wanting forming the basis of conscious liking versus conscious wanting (Berridge, 1999; Winkielman & Berridge, 2003). In addition to using surveys, in which the questionnaires can result in the conscious evaluation of want and preference, we will use behavioural experiments to test the latent desire and preference. For example, participants can be asked to perform a certain task (such as physical activity or mental

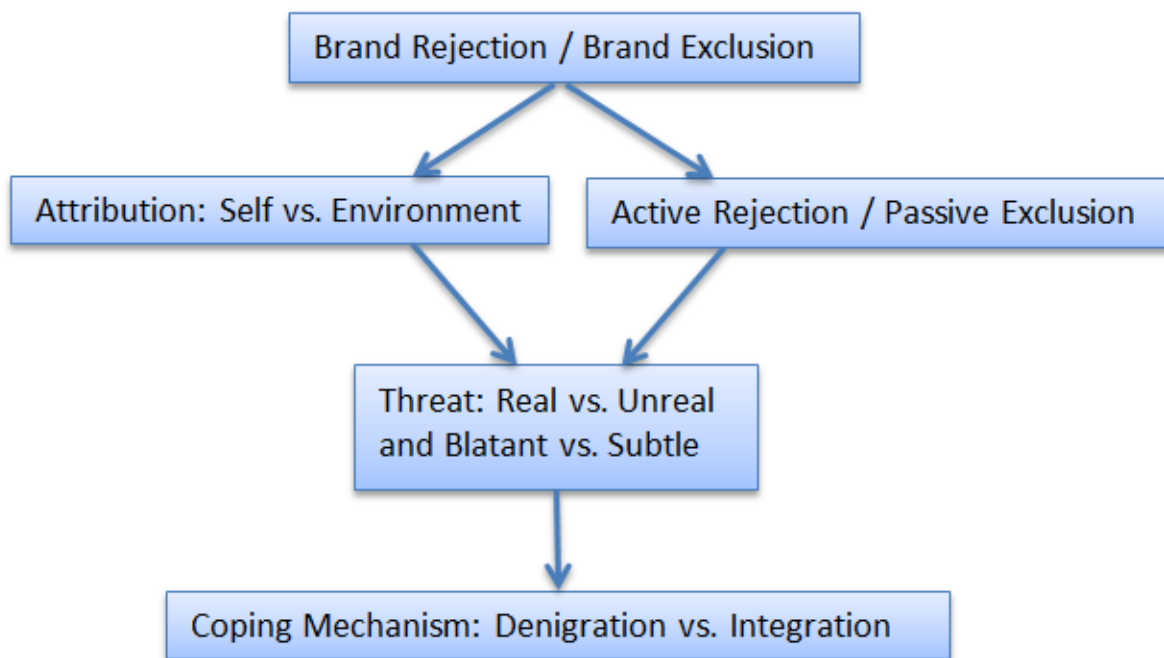
exercise) in order to obtain their desired brand. The effort they put into the activity can be used as a measure of their inner desire for that brand. Preference can be measured through the actual choosing among alternatives, which was used by Litt and his colleagues (2010) in their measure of the construct. However, the evaluation was only for one target in Litt's case (2010). To measure multiple brand preferences, we will use a ranking system where participants are asked to choose one brand among the alternatives; after the first brand is chosen, participants are again asked to choose among the remaining alternatives until all alternatives are exhausted.

We also noticed that the use of fictitious school in Study 2 may have uncovered something more latent beyond simple brand rejection and the counter-driving of want and preference. What is interesting about the two studies is that, while Study 1 was successful when we used a real school, Study 2 was not when we used a fictitious school. Why would using a fictitious school fail where a real school succeeded? We believe that brand rejection may act as a type of threat to an individual and, depending on how the threat is presented, the individual may respond with different types of coping mechanisms (see Figure 6).

From social psychology, we know that rejection and exclusion are different. Rejection involves the active seeking of connection by an individual and subsequent refusal for connection whereas exclusion can occur without an individual's active participation or even conscious awareness (Twenge, Catanese & Baumeister, 2003, Molden et al, 2009). In this sense, brand exclusion can occur even without any direct contact or correspondence between the brand and the consumer. Unlike brand rejection where consumers are actively and directly turned down

by a brand, brand exclusion can occur when the perceived identity of a brand (i.e. the status or the culture of a brand) is so far removed or different from consumers' own identities that consumers feel unable to partake in that brand's identity group.

Figure 6: Future Research Directions on Brand Rejection and Exclusion



Lee and Shrum (2012) have suggested that being neglected and being rejected can lead to the activation of different threats: neglect may lead to threats to efficacy needs and rejection to relational needs. Thus, if brand exclusion acts in similar ways to social neglect, then brand exclusion and brand rejection may very well elicit different threat cues with brand exclusion becoming a threat to self-efficacy need and brand rejection a threat to the brand-person relational need. Therefore, the role active and passive rejections/exclusions play on the relationship between brand rejection/exclusion and threat is an interesting topic for future research.

Another possible future research area is the attribution of rejection. Regardless whether it is brand rejection or brand exclusion, the reason for the rejection may also influence the way consumers perceive rejection as a threat. According to Kelley and Michela (1980), information, beliefs, and motivation are the three antecedents of perceived causes (attributions) which will lead to subsequent changes in behaviour, affect, and expectancy. The way rejection is framed through information and personal beliefs can shape the perceived cause of rejection which could lead to subsequent changes in attitudes and behaviour of consumers in their relationship to the rejecting brand. We would expect to see a difference in a consumer's attitude towards a brand if the blame of rejection falls on the brand (such as the brand does not approve of the consumer's profile) as compared with the blame falling on circumstances outside of the control of the brand (such as the brand ran out of supplies). In the former case, the rejection can be attributed to the brand directly rejecting the consumer as an individual on a personal level. In the latter case, the rejection can be attributed to causes outside of the brand's control. If the rejection is attributed squarely to the brand, it certainly means that there must be some characteristics of the consumer that have led to this rejection. If the consumer believes that it is his or her inadequacy that results in the rejection, this rejection from the brand can certainly be considered a source of self-threat to the consumer. Hence, the attribution of rejection may be a factor in influencing consumers' perception of rejection as threat.

Both types of rejection and the attribution of rejection can be factors in influencing how consumers perceive the rejection as a threat. The area of self-threat itself may be an interesting

topic for future research. Threat can be real or unreal. Not all threats are perceived to be threats. An individual may be threatened, but if that individual perceives the threat as inconsequential to his or her well-being, then that threat is no threat at all and will not lead to subsequent coping by the threatened individual. On the other hand, if the individual feels threatened even if the source of the perceived threat does not directly act to threaten the individual (i.e. an individual may be threatened by the perceived exclusiveness of a brand without having the brand directly rejecting the individual). From Study 2, we speculate that participants failed to feel threatened when they were rejected by UISB because they did not perceive UISB as a real source of threat. Since the source of threat is not real, the threat itself must not be real, which means no coping mechanism is needed in the absence of threat. In comparison, the rejection in Study 1 came from a real source, Rotman. Because participants believed that this rejection came from a real legitimate source, the threat may be perceived to be real and thus may lead to real coping mechanisms. Thus, if the actual threat is perceived to be real (regardless whether the source of threat is real or unreal), the threat may lead to subsequent coping by consumers; however if the threat is perceived to be unreal (even if the source of threat may be real), consumers will not react to the threat and there will evoke no subsequent coping.

The delivery of threat can also be blatant (conscious) or subtle (unconscious). Different delivery can lead to different coping mechanisms by consumers. Wan and her colleagues (2012) found that blatant exposure to threat can lead consumers to defensive coping through the denigration of the target of the threat and positive evaluation of self-image; subtle exposure,

on the other hand, can lead to a more integrated coping with consumers lowering their self-views and endorsing the brand attitudes. Similarly, brand rejection may act as blatant threat while brand exclusion as subtle threat. When brands directly reject a consumer, the confrontation is blatantly visible and the threat clear. In this case, to maintain self-esteem and efficacy, consumers may actively denigrate the source of rejection in order to maintain their own self-worth. However, if the threat is from brand exclusion, such a threat is subtle and indirect and the consumer may not even be fully aware of it. In this case, there may be a greater tendency for consumers to integrate the threat into his or her schema, resulting probably in higher brand endorsement.

Conclusion

This research on brand rejection has gained valuable insights into the field of brand-person relationship. It has been shown that social psychology theories on rejection and exclusion can be expanded into the research on brand rejection. Brand rejection, similar to personal rejection, can be expanded to include peers that are perceived to share some identifiable characteristics, such as brand exclusiveness in our case. Furthermore, in social rejection, there is subsequent ambivalence of antisocial and pro-social behaviours by the rejected individual; similarly, in brand rejection, there is subsequent ambivalence of desire and preference. In these aspects, brand-person relationship can be regarded as analogous to interpersonal relationship.

This study is only the first step in our research on brand rejection and brand-person relationship. In the immediate future, we will follow up with studies that will consolidate our results and

complete our analysis on the moderating role of exclusiveness on brand rejection. Our goal is to expand the framework of brand rejection to investigate in more details the mediating relationships between various constructs (such as exclusion, threat, and coping) that can better explain the dynamics of brand rejection and consumer behaviour.

References

- Aaker, J. L. (1997). Dimensions of brand personality. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 34(3), 347-356.
- Aaker, J., Drolet, A., & Griffin, D. (2008). Recalling Mixed Emotions. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 35, 268-278.
- Aaker, J., Fournier, S. & Brasel, S. A. (2004). When Good Brands Do Bad. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 31(1), 1-16.
- Adamowicz, W., Boxall, P., Williams, M. & Louviere, J (1998). Stated preference approaches for measuring passive use values: Choice experiments and contingent valuation. *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, 80(1), 64-75
- Aggarwal, P. (2004). The Effects of Brand Relationship Norms on Consumer Attitudes and Behavior. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 31 (1), 87-101.
- Aggarwal, P. & Zhang M. (2006). The Moderating Effect of Relationship Norm Salience on Consumers' Loss Aversion. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 33 (3), 413-419.
- Atwal, G. & Williams, A. (2009) Luxury brand marketing – The experience is everything! *Journal of Brand Management*, 16(February), 338–346.
- Baumeister, R. F. & Leary, M. R. (1995). The need to belong: Desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation. *Psychological Bulletin*, 117, 497-529
- Baumeister, R. F., & Tice, D. M. (1990). Anxiety and social exclusion. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 9, 165-195.
- Babin, B. J., Darden, R. D., & Griffin, M. (1994). Work and/or Fun: Measuring Hedonic and Utilitarian Shopping Value. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 20 (March), 644-656.
- Beck, A. M. & Katcher, A. H. (September 2003). Future Directions in Human-Animal Bond Research. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 47(1), 79-93.
- Belk, R. W., Ger, G., & Askegaard, S. (2003). The Fire of Desire: A Multisited Inquiry into Consumer Passion. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 30, 326-351.
- Berridge, K. C. (1999). Pleasure, pain, desire, and dread: Hidden core processes of emotion. In D. Kahneman, P. Slovic, & N. Schwarz (Eds.), *Well-being: The foundations of hedonic psychology* (525-557). New York: Russel Sage Foundation.

- Brewer, M. (1991), "The social self: on being the same and different at the same time", *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 17(5), 475-82.
- Carroll, B. & Ahuvia, A. (2006). Some antecedents and outcomes of brand love. *Marketing Letters*, 17 (2), 79–89.
- Chaudhuri, A. & Holbrook, M. B. (2001). The Chain of Effects from Brand Trust and Brand Affect to Brand Performance: The Role of Brand Loyalty. *Journal of Marketing*, 65(April), 81-93.
- Cheryak, N. & Zayas, V. (2010). Being excluded by one means being excluded by all: Perceiving exclusion from inclusive others during one-person social exclusion. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 46, 582-585.
- Crawford, M. T., Sherman, S. J., & Hamilton, D. L. (2002). Perceived entitativity, stereotype formation, and the interchangeability of group members. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 83, 1076–1094.
- D'Argrebeau, A., Xue, G., Lu, Z. L., Van der Linden, M., & Bechara, A. (2008) Neural correlates of envisioning emotional events in the near and far future. *Neuroimage*, 20, 398-407.
- Dai, X., Brendl, C. M., & Ariely, D. (2010). Wanting, Liking, and Preference Construction. *Emotions*, 10(3), 324-334.
- Dodge, K. A., Lansford, J. E., Burks, V. S., Bates, J. E., Pettit, G. S. & et al. (2003). Peer Rejection and Social Information-Processing Factors in the Development of Aggressive Behavior Problems in Children. *Child Development*, 74(2), 374–393.
- Dwyer, M. (2010, November 11). Measuring Excellence. *MacLeans: On Campus*. Retrieved from <http://oncampus.macleans.ca/education/2010/11/11/measuring-excellence/>.
- Edwards, J. R. (2001). Ten Difference Score Myths. *Organizational Research Methods*, 4(3), 265-287
- Eisenberger, N. I., Lieberman, M. D., & Williams, K. D. (2003). Does Rejection Hurt? An fMRI study of social exclusion. *Science*, 302, 290–292.
- Finlayson, G., King, N., & Blundell, J. (2008). The role of implicit wanting in relation to explicit liking and wanting for food: Implications for appetite control. *Appetite*, 50, 120-127.
- Fiona, A. M. & Moore, C. M. (2009). The anatomy of the Luxury Fashion Brand. *Journal of Brand Management*, 16(5/6), 347-363.
- Fishbein, M. (1963) An Investigation of the Relationships between Beliefs about an Object and the Attitude toward that Object. *Human Relations*, 16(3), 233-239.

- Fishman, M. W., & Foltin, R. W. (1992). Self-administration of cocaine by humans: A laboratory perspective. In G. R. Bock and J. Whelan (Eds.), *Cocaine: Scientific and Social dimensions* (Vol. 166, 165-80). Chester, UK: Wiley.
- Fitzsimons, G. J. (2000). Consumer Response to Stockouts. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 27(2), 249-266.
- Fournier, S. (1998). Consumers and Their Brands: Developing Relationship Theory in Consumer Research. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 24(4), 343-353.
- Gaetner, L., Iuzzini, J., & O'Mara, E. M. (2008). When Rejection by one Fosters Aggression against Many: Multiple-victim Aggression as a Consequence of Social Rejection and Perceived Groupness. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 44, 958-970.
- Gardner, W. L., Gabriel, S., & Diekmann, A. (2000). The psychophysiology of interpersonal processes. In J. T. Cacioppo, L. G. Tassinary, & G. G. Bertons (Eds.), *The Handbook of Psychophysiology* (2nd ed.; 643-664). Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.
- Gardner, W. L., Pickett, C. L., & Brewer, M. B. (2000). Social exclusion and selective memory: How the need to belong influences memory for social events. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 26, 486-496.
- Gerend, M. A. & Sias, T. (2009) Message framing and color priming: How subtle threat cues affect persuasion. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 25, 999-1002.
- Geuens, M. & De Pelsmacker, P. (2002). Developing a short affect intensity scale. *Psychological Reports*, 91(2), 657-670.
- Gomez, A., Morales, J. F., Hart, S., Vázquez, A., & Swann, W. B. Jr. (December 2011). Rejected and Excluded Forevermore, but Even More Devoted Irrevocable Ostracism Intensifies Loyalty to the Group Among Identity-Fused Persons. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 37(12), 1574-1586.
- Gregoire, Y, Tripp T. M., & Legoux, R. R. (2009). When customer love turns into lasting hate: The effects of relationship strength and time on customer revenge and avoidance. *Journal of Marketing*, 73(6), 18-32.
- Havermans, R. C., Janssen, T., Giesen, J. C., Roefs, A., & Janse, A. (2009) Food liking, food wanting, and sensory-specific satiety. *Appetite*, 52, 222-225.

- Higgins, E. T., Rholes, W. S., & Jones, C. R. (1977). Category accessibility and impression information. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 13, 141-154.
- Irwin, F. W. (1961). On desire, aversion, and the affective zero. *Psychological Review*, 68(5), 293-300.
- Kelley, H. H. & Michela, J. L. (1980). Attribution Theory and Research. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 31, 457-501.
- Kruglanski, A. W., Shah, J. Y., Fishback, A., Friedman, R., Chun, W. Y., & Sleeth-Keppler, D. (2002). A Theory of Goal Systems. *Advancens in Experimental Social Psychology*, 34, 331-378.
- Leary, M. R. (2005). Varieties of interpersonal rejection. In K. D. Williams, J. P. Forgas, & B. von Hippel (Eds.). *The Social Outcast: Ostracism, Social Exclusion, Rejection, and Bullying* (35-51). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Leary, M. R., Twenge, J. M., & Wuinlivan, E. (2006). Interpersonal Rejection as a Determinant of Anger and Aggression. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 10, 111-132.
- Lee, J. & Shrum, L. J. (2012). Conspicuous Consumption versus Charitable Behavior in Response to Social Exclusion: A Differential Needs Explanation. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 39(October).
- Lee, J. C. & Lita, F. (July 1970). How we should measure "change": Or should we? *Psychological Bulletin*, 74(1), 68-80.
- Levy, P. (2006). The reliability of a difference between two scores: A re-examination of assumptions. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 22(3), 357-359.
- Litt, A., Khan, U., & Shiv, B. (2010). Lusting while Loathing: Parallel counter-driving of wanting and liking. *Psychological Science*, January 21(1), 118-125.
- Lowenstein, G. (1999). Because it is there: The challenge of mountaineering for utility theory. *Kyklos*, 52, 315-344.
- Low, G. S. & Lamb Jr., C. W. (2000). The measurement and dimensionality of brand associations. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 9(6), 350-368.
- MacDonald, G. & Leary, M.(2005). Why does social exclusion hurt? The Relation Between Social and Physical Pain. *Psychological Bulletin*, 13, 202–223.
- Martin, L. L. (1986). Set/Reset: Use and Disuse of Concepts in Impression Formation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 51(3), 493-504.

- McAlexander, J. H., Schouten, J. W., & Koenig, H. F. (2002). Building Brand Community. *Journal of Marketing*, 66 (January), 38-54.
- McFarlin, D. B., Baumesiter, R. F., & Blascovich, J. (1984). On knowing when to quit: Task failure, self-esteem, advice, and non-productive persistence. *Journal of Personality*, 52(2), 138-155.
- Mead, N. L., Baumeister, R. F., Stillman, T. F., Rawn, C. D., & Vohs, K. (2011). Social Exclusion Causes People to Spend and Consumer Strategically in the Service of Affiliation. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 37(February), 902-919.
- Muniz, A. M., O'Guinn, T. C. (2001). Brand Community. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 27 (March), 412-432.
- O'Cass, A. & Frost, H. (2002). Status brands: Examining the effects of non-product-related brand associations on status and conspicuous consumption. *The Journal of Product and Brand Management*. 11(2/3), 67-88.
- O'Cass, A. & McEwen, H (2004). Exploring consumer status and conspicuous consumption. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*. 4(1), 25-39.
- Pawle, J. & Cooper, P. (2006). Measuring emotion—love marks, the future beyond brands. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 46(1), 38–50.
- Phau, I. & Prendergast, G. (2000) Consuming luxury brands: The relevance of the 'Rarity Principle'. *The Journal of Brand Management*, 8(2), 122-138.
- Ratner, R. K., & Herbst, K. C. (2005). When Good Decisions have Bad Outcomes: The Impact of Affect on Switching Behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 96(1), 23-37.
- Schroeder, J. E. & Salzer-Morling, M. (2006). *Brand Culture*, Routledge, New York, NY.
- Serpell, J. A. (1996). *In the Company of Animals – A Study of Human-Animal Relationships*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Sommer, K. L. & Baumeister, R. F. (2002). Self-Evaluation, Persistence, and Performance Following Implicit Rejection: The Role of Trait Self-Esteem. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 28(7), 926-938.
- Shukla, P. (2008). Conspicuous consumption among middle age consumers: psychological and brand antecedents. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*. 17(1), 25-36.

- Spangenberg, E. R., Voss, K. E. & Crowley, A. E. (1997). "Measuring the Hedonic and Utilitarian Dimensions of Attitudes: A Generally Applicable Scale" in *Advances in Consumer Research*, 24, Merrie B. & Deborah J. M., eds. Provo, UT: Association for Consumer Research, 235-241.
- Stern, B. B. (1997). Advertising intimacy: Relationship marketing and the service consumer. *Journal of Advertising*, 26(4), 7-19.
- Stillman, T., Wan, F., & Chattopadhyay, A. (2011), "Niche Branding as A Double-edged Sword: Materialism Moderates the Psychological Impact of Brand Rejection," *Society for Consumer Psychology Conference*, Atlanta, Georgia, Feb 24-26.
- Sung, Y. & Sejung, M. C. (2010), I won't leave you although you disappoint me: The interplay between satisfaction, investment, and alternatives in determining consumer-brand relationship commitment. *Psychology & Marketing*, 27(11), 1050-1074.
- Sweeney, J. C. & Soutar, G. N. (2001). Consumer Perceived Value: The development of a multiple item scale. *Journal of Retailing*, 77, 203-220.
- Thaler, R. H. (1980). Toward a positive theory of consumer choice. *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization*, 1, 39-60.
- Twenge, J. M., Baumeister, R. F., DeWall, C. N., Ciarocco, N. J., & Bartels, J. M. (2007). Social Exclusion Decreases Prosocial Behavior. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 92(1), 56-66.
- Twenge, J. M., Baumeister, R. F., Tice, D. M., & Stucke, T. S. (2001). If You Can't Join Them, Beat Them: Effects of Social Exclusion on Aggressive Behavior. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 81(6), 1058-1069.
- Twenge, J. M., Catanese, K. R., & Baumeister, R. F. (2003). Social exclusion and the deconstructed state: Time perception, meaninglessness, lethargy, lack of emotion, and self-awareness. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 85, 409-423.
- Urde, M. (2003). Core Value-based Corporate Brand Building. *European Journal of Marketing*, 37(7/8), 1017-1040.
- Voncken, M. J., Alden, L. E., Bogels, S. M., & Roelofs, J. (2008). Social rejection in social anxiety disorder: The role of performance deficits, evoked negative emotions and dissimilarity. *British Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 47, 439-450
- Wallendorf, M. & Arnould, E. J. (March 1988). "My Favorite Things": A Cross-Cultural Inquiry into Object Attachment, Possessiveness, and Social Linkage. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 14(4), 531-547.

- Wan, F. & Bhatnagar, N. (2012). Proceedings from SCP 2012. *"Yes I Take Rejection Personally": The Impact of Brand and Consumer Rejection on Brand Evaluations*. Las Vegas, NV.
- Wan, F., Ansons, T., Chattopadhyay, A., Leboe, J. P., & Smeesters, D. (2012). *Defensive Reactions to Slim Female Images in Advertising: The Moderating Role of Mode of Exposure*. Manuscript prepared for Elsevier Editorial System for Organizational Behavior and Human Decision.
- Ward, D. & Chiari, C. (2008). Keeping Luxury Inaccessible. *Munich Personal RePEc Archive*. October.
- Watson, D. & Clark, L. A. (1994). *The PANAS-X Manual for the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule - Expanded Form*. University of Iowa.
- Williams, K. D. (2007). Ostracism. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 58, 425-452.
- Williams, K. D. (2001). *Ostracism: The power of silence*. The Guilford Press, New York, NY.
- Williams, K. D., Cheung, C. K. T., & Choi, W. (2000). Cyberostracism: Effects of being ignored over the Internet. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 79, 748-762.
- Williams, K. D. & Sommer, K. L. (1997). Social Ostracism by Coworkers: Does Rejection Lead to Loafing or Compensation? *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 23(7), 693-706.
- Winkielman, P. & Berridge, K. (2003) Irrational wanting and sub-rational liking: How rudimentary motivational and affective processes shape preferences and choices. *Political Psychology*, 24, 657-680.
- Zhong, C. B. & Leonardelli, G. J. (2008). Cold and Lonely. Does Social Exclusion Literally Feel Cold? *Psychological Science*, 19 (November), 838-842.

Appendix 1: Consent Form

Consent Form

By choosing to participate in this study, you are agreeing to the following statement:

I consent to participating in the study “MBA and Business School Evaluation”, and I have read the Letter of Information, and had any questions answered to my satisfaction. I confirm that I am over 18 years of age and that I understand the provisions around confidentiality to protect my identity. I understand that all data will be stored in a secured location at the University of Manitoba, only the researcher named will have access to the data and that the data will be disposed after the publication of the research results. I also understand that my participation is voluntary and I have been told to contact Daniel Sun by e-mail at hfazel@hotmail.com, or contact the University of Manitoba’s Human Ethics Secretariat at 474-7122 or by e-mail at Margaret_bowman@umanitoba.ca, if I have questions/concerns about this study.

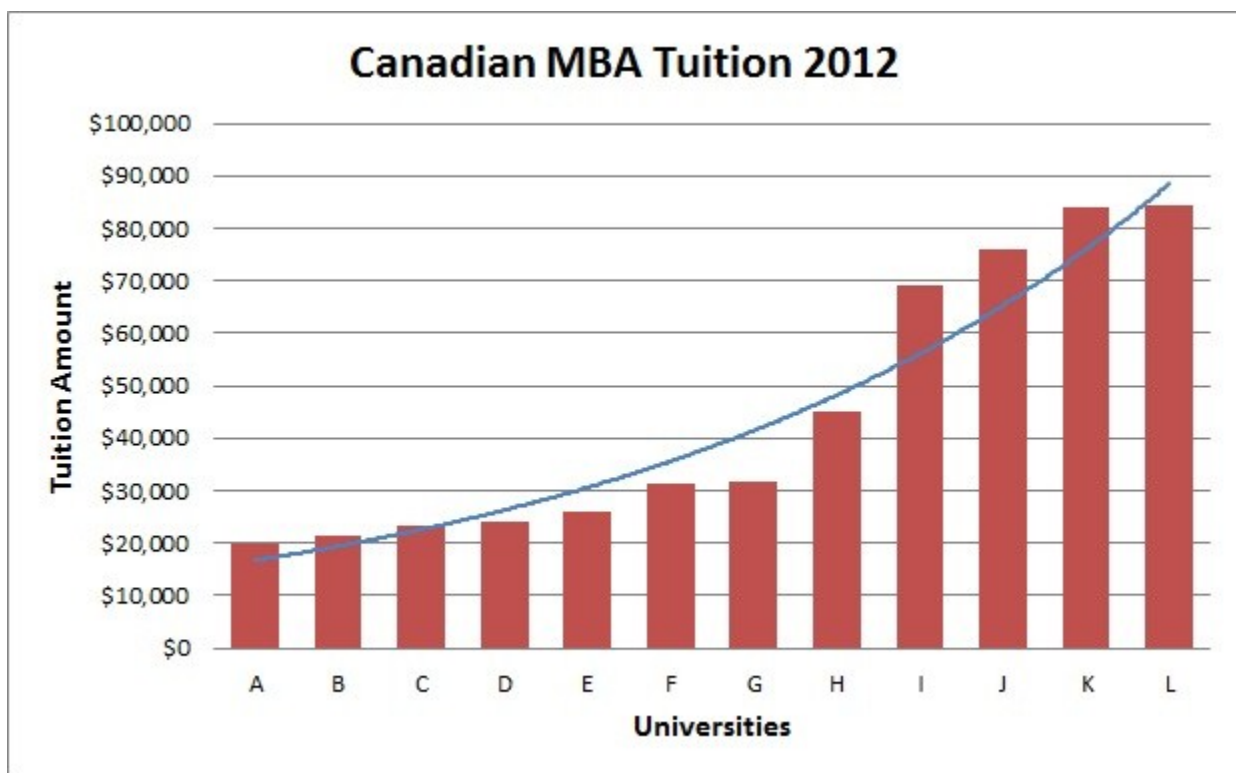
By signing bellow, you agree that you are 18 years or older, have read and understood this consent form, and give your consent for the information you have provided to be used within the scope of this research.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 2: Hypothetical Scenario

You are a successful business graduate working in your respective field. You have been working at your job for the past three years and are thinking about returning to school to pursue a MBA degree next year so that you can go further in your career. You have spent the past month researching on various business schools and full time MBA programs across Canada with regards to their tuition fees and national rankings. Below is a chart created by you to give yourself a better sense of the tuition scale of the business schools in Canada.



Appendix 3: Rejection vs. Control

Control Condition:

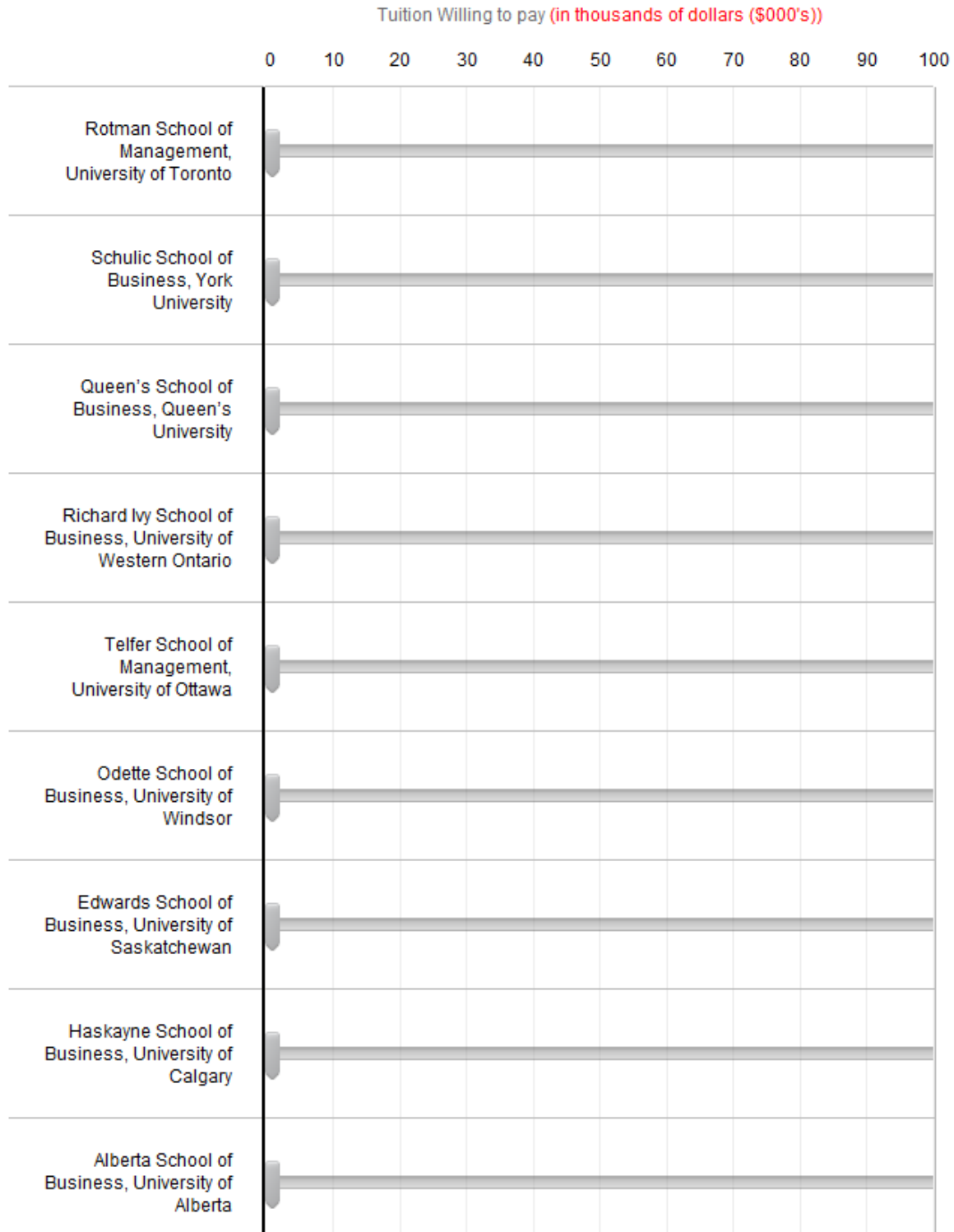
After careful consideration, you applied to a few schools and Rotman School of Management at University of Toronto is one of them. Rotman has been consistently ranked as one of the top business schools in Canada. Rotman School of Management has been consistently ranked as the top business school in Canada. It is early March and you are waiting for the result letter from Rotman for your application into its MBA program.

Rejection Condition:

After careful consideration, you applied to a few schools and Rotman School of Management at University of Toronto is one of them. Rotman has been consistently ranked as one of the top business schools in Canada. Rotman School of Management has been consistently ranked as the top business school in Canada. It is early March and you have just received a letter from Rotman indicating that it had rejected your application to its MBA program. You are pondering your next step.

Appendix 4: Willingness to Pay (Want)

Please drag the slider bar beside each business school to indicate how much tuition fee you are *willing* to pay (in thousands of dollars) for a full-time MBA program.



Appendix 5: Peer Evaluations

Please imagine that you are applying to each of the following business schools. For each school, please circle your answer based on your current knowledge and perceptions.

Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto

Student Academic Excellence

Poor 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Great

Faculty Academic Excellence

Poor 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Great

Financial Resources Support

Poor 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Great

Student Services Support

Poor 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Great

Overall Reputation

Poor 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Great

Richard Ivey School of Business, University of Western Ontario

Student Academic Excellence

Poor 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Great

Faculty Academic Excellence

Poor 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Great

Financial Resources Support

Poor 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Great

Student Services Support

Poor 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Great

Overall Reputation

Poor 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Great

Appendix 6: Exclusive vs. Non-exclusive

Exclusive Condition:

After careful consideration, you applied to a few schools including University of Western Ontario, University of Ottawa, University of Saskatchewan, and University of International School of Business (UISB).

According to Times, Business Week, and Maclean's UISB is a world renowned business school. It has consistently ranked among the top 20 business schools in North America and the top 50 in the world, equal to that of Richard Ivey School of Business at University of Western Ontario and even Harvard Business School. UISB is a very exclusive business school with a rejection rate of 90%.

Non-exclusive Condition:

After careful consideration, you applied to a few schools including University of Western Ontario, University of Ottawa, University of Saskatchewan, and University of International School of Business (UISB).

According to Times, Business Week, and Maclean's UISB is a world renowned business school. It has consistently ranked among the top 20 business schools in North America and the top 50 in the world, equal to that of Richard Ivey School of Business at University of Western Ontario and even Harvard Business School. UISB is a very exclusive business school with a rejection rate of 50%.

Appendix 7: Rejection vs. Control

Rejection Condition:

Dear Applicant:

The Admissions Committee for UISB has received your application and supporting credentials. As you know, UISB is a very exclusive business school and this year the competition has been very fierce.

We appreciate your interest in our school but have to inform you that we have reached a decision and your MBA application is **rejected** at this time.

Sincerely,

Kelley Myers
Director of Graduate Enrollment
University of International School of Business

Control Condition:

Dear Applicant:

The Admissions Committee for UISB has received your application and supporting credentials. As you know, UISB is a very exclusive business school and this year the competition has been very fierce.

We appreciate your interest in our school but have to inform you that we have not yet reached a decision and your MBA application is still **pending** at this time.

Sincerely,

Kelley Myers
Director of Graduate Enrollment
University of International School of Business

