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Brand Hate and Brand Forgiveness - A Dynamic Analysis

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BRAND HATE AND BRAND FORGIVENESS

A DYNAMIC ANALYSIS

HONOR THESIS OF

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Abstract

Purpose – Despite the vast research regarding customer brand relationships, and the positive feelings towards brand, there is little research on negative feelings towards brand. Despite the importance of brand hate and brand forgiveness, no research assesses how brand hate evolve over time and how this relates to brand forgiveness. The purpose of this thesis is to address this gap.

Design/Methodology/Approach – We used a multi-method approach. First, we conducted a series of 30 in-depths interviews to explore these concepts and develop our research model. Second, we conducted a survey by using MTurk to obtain U.S. representative sample of 506 respondents.

Findings – Findings show that brand forgiveness can be attained depending on which determinant caused the brand hate. Some determinants lead to higher or lower forgiveness.

Originality/Value – This thesis explores and outlines theoretically and empirically the determinants and outcomes of brand hate as well as brand forgiveness. It also provides a useful taxonomy of brand hate.

1. Introduction

According to Fournier (1998), brands give consumers meaning to their lives. Marketers and companies are often interested in the purchasing behavior of consumers, since consumers purchase products for the positive feeling that it releases (Lee *et al.*, 2009). Consumers seek to identify themselves and express themselves through brands (Fournier, 1998). There is a continuous increase in the interest of researching positive Consumer Brand Relationships, however, in the marketing literature, brand hate, and negative feelings towards brands, have been highly neglected (Batra *et al.,* 2012). Nevertheless, it is important to examine *why* and *how* consumers develop brand hate overtime. More importantly, examining how consumers stop loving a brand, begin hating it, and if there is any possibility for brand forgiveness. But how can we study and examine consumers falling *out* of love with brands? We will further structure this argument in this thesis.

Within the field of Consumer Brand Relationships, this topic is highly growing and becoming more desirable to research. Anti-branding on websites, its antecedents and its consequences are becoming more popularly researched. However, a topic that has often fallen in the back burner, and that we would like to propose a study on, is more precisely on falling out of love with brands..

In the field of branding substantial research exists on positive emotions towards brands. Currently, 98% of articles are solely focused on the positive feelings, and how consumers 'fall in love' with their brands (Batra, *et al*. 2012; Fetscherin 2014; Fetscherin *et al*., 2014). A small number of these articles touch upon the subject of negative feelings towards brands. It has been stated that strong brand love can quickly turn into brand hate, demonstrating the possibility of strong brand aversion (Johnson *et al*., 2011). However, no research explains as to *why* this happens, or what factors lead to this outcome. Interest in this area is growing, and the pressing need for research in the negative

attitudes towards brands increases. An avenue for future research, is to examine the process of brand hate. The current project will focus on negative brand relationships and *why do people stop 'being in love' or why do they 'fall out of love' (brand divorce) with brands? What are its determinants and its outcomes? Is an outcome forgiveness?*

This thesis poses both theoretical and practical contribution. From a theoretical point of view, it is surprising how little research has been done on negative feelings towards brands since numerous psychological studies (Blum, 1997) compare and show that negative information is more salient and retrievable to humans than positive information. In a practical point of view, many can benefit from the outcomes of this thesis. Examining the negative relationships of consumers and brands will improve the understanding of its process and its impact on consumer behavior (Park *et al*., 2013). Understanding negative feelings against brands will help companies develop strategies to satisfy these consumers' needs (Kaynak *et al*., 2013). Defining the possible factors that lead to brand divorce will provide beneficiary results for both companies (to maintain sustainable competitive power) and for consumers (for their needs to be met and negative feelings to decrease).

This thesis will also provide significant contribution to the field of Consumer Brand Relationships (CBR), since it focuses on an under-researched yet important aspect of negative emotions in relation to brand relationships. Its most important contribution will be the theory and practice of why people 'fall out of love' with brands.

The argument this thesis is attempting to prove is the importance of this thesis - the benefits it will bring to both consumers and producers, theoretically and practically. We took the AA model as the foundation for our research model by integrating the determinants, outcomes, emotional behaviors, as well as the dynamics of brand hate over time. Therefore, we will begin this thesis by

defining the AA model, and presenting critiques and extensions of the model, as well as responses to these critiques from the authors, and how our model integrates these critiques. Then, we will cover the literature of this field, by summarizing what is significant to this thesis, what it lacks and how this thesis will improve these gaps, and what is inapplicable to this thesis. We will then state the methodology that will be used, as well as an outline of the thesis and its limitations.

The objective of this thesis is to shed light and explore the reasons of negative emotions towards brands. But most importantly, to define the factors that lead people to develop these negative emotions, its determinants and outcomes. For example, do these negative feelings lead to anti-branding websites and negative word of mouth, or simply the consumer to stop buying the brands' products? And in the future, is there the potential for brand forgiveness? Has the brand completely lost the consumer, or is there room to gain them back?

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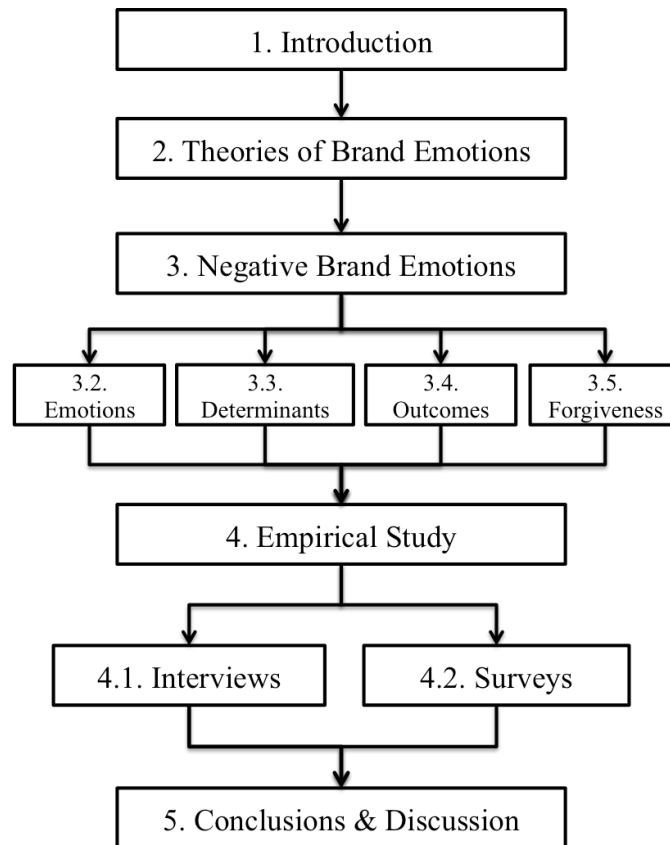
Figure 1. Thesis Structure

Figure 1 shows the roadmap of this thesis. We begin by looking at theories on emotion towards brands, more specifically on Park's *et al.* (2013) Attachment-Aversion mode, which will be used as framework to create our research model. We then explore the literature that covers brand emotions. We define brand love and brand hate, and then explore several negative brand emotions, its determinants, outcomes, and its potential for forgiveness. We later measure these through our empirical study, which is performed both through interviews and a survey. Our interviews and survey adopt Langner's *et al.* (2016) methodology, which measure brand love over time; our thesis aims to achieve the same, by examining brand hate over time, by using a dynamic research model, which obtains a past, present and future. Lastly, we will share our results, limitations and conclusion.

2. Theories on Emotions Towards Brands

2.1. Park's Attachment-Aversion Model

First, we will explore the research done on the Attachment-Aversion (AA) model of customer-brand relationships (Park *et al*., 2013), as this model will be used in this thesis in relation to brand divorce. The AA model extends Fournier's (1998) work of the dynamics of customer-brand interactions. This model empirically tests brand-self distance, differences between the AA relationship, other alternative relationship measures, three key determinants that underlie the behavioral intentions and actual brand behaviors, and lastly, customer age in correlation with customer-brand relationships (Park *et al*., 2013). Their model derived from a pressing need for a theoretical and empirical test of a conceptual model of customer-brand relationships (CBR).

The theoretical basis of the AA model looks at CBR as an expansion of the self, (Park *et al*., 2013), in other words, the close relationship of the self and the brand is one's own identity, where the self is enhanced to accomplish its goals. Arnould and Thompson (2005) believe that the self uses the brand to construct their sense of identity. Park *et al.* (2010) argues, the closer the relationship, the greater the overlap between identities, and the more positive emotions towards the brand. The AA model proposes the opposite, the further away that the brand and the self are from each other, the more negative feelings towards the brand will exist. For the purposes of this thesis, the theoretical basis of the AA model presents reasons for brand-hate in relation to seeing brands as a form of identity, which we will extend/adapt in this thesis. For example, if the brand impoverishes the person's identity, it becomes a target for brand aversion.
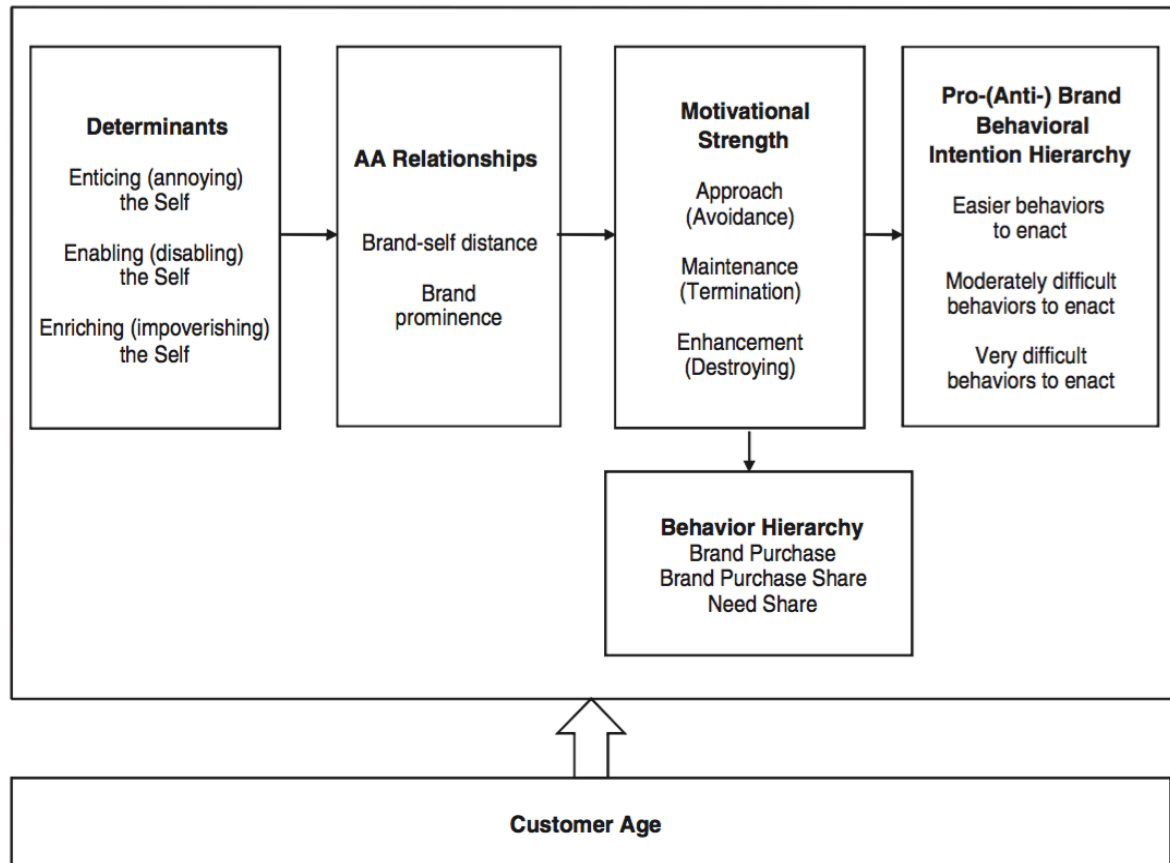
Figure 2. The AA Relationship Model

Figure 2 illustrates the AA relationship model, which underlies the process from determinants to behavioral intentions. The AA relationship model represents the customer's relationships such as *brand-self distance* and *brand prominence.* The conceptualization of the AA relationship proves that brand attachment can transition to brand aversion overtime, however, their model does not explore how or why this happens, which we will examine in this thesis. For our model, we will also use "determinants", "intentions" as outcomes, and the "AA relationships" will be the core emotions, brand hate and brand forgiveness. The model also provides the measures for the AA model, which is the model we use as foundation to create our own. The meter of measurement is from brand-love to brand-self distance and brand prominence, with brand indifference being in the middle between both ends (Park *et al.*, 2013).

A limitation of the AA model that correlates strongly with this thesis is that the brand love-hate relationship does not involve the self in the relationship (Batra *et al*., 2012), whereas the AA model includes the self.

2.2. Critique's on Park's AA Model

The critiques and commentaries on Park's AA model support the importance of this thesis, and the importance for the further need of study in the research gap of negative brand relationships. Park's AA model focuses on the positive relationships, and should be extended to consider negative brand relationships as well.

2.2.1. Fournier and Alvarez's Critique

Park defends and adapts their research in response to authors' commentaries and critiques. Fournier and Alvarez's (2013) commentary on the AA model proves and shows the importance of this thesis, regarding missing analysis on negative brand relationships. Their commentary explains how positive and negative brand relationships cannot be analyzed as the flip side of each other (Fournier and Alvarez, 2013), more specifically negative relationships are more complex and rich than positive ones. This becomes an issue in Park's AA model regarding the distant brand-self relationships, because it is not applicable to negative brand relationships at all. Therefore, the AA model is more appropriate to examine and understand positive CBR. Park *et al*. (2013) agree with Fournier and Alvarez's suggestions, and that an opportunity and need for further research and theorization on negative CBR exists, more specifically its formation process and its impact on consumers.

2.2.2. Schmitt's Critique and Extension

Schmitt provides a research that extends and critiques the AA model, by focusing more on the consumer psychology of brands (Schmitt, 2013). Schmitt critiques Park's anthropomorphization approach, where it is assumed that people's relationships with brands are treated like relationships with humans, and suggests that close attention should be paid to the difference between the two. He critiques this because in his previously published article solely on consumer psychology of brands (2011) he explores these brand relationships that consumers construct with human-like properties. He points out, however, that due to the AA model's complexity, taking this approach is more difficult. Therefore, it should be paid closer attention to as it might not be fully applicable to the AA model. An important and useful addition to the AA model that Schmitt (2013) provides, is the brand experience as a key determinant of AA relationships. He offers this determinant as a prerequisite for developing any CBR; in other words, one must experience the brand to form a relationship, and more specifically, if the brand entices or annoys the self, (Schmitt, 2013).

Against this background, in this thesis we take the AA model as a basis, but also integrate the main limitations pointed out by Fournier and Alvarez's (2013) commentary, by integrating more negative brand emotions, and by examining the formation process of brand hate by using a dynamic model. We alo consider Schmitt's (2013) comments that the model should consider brand experience, which we do by looking at the feeling of hate in three distinct times, past, present, and future.

3. Negative Emotion Literature

3.1. Introduction

Figure 3 is a matrix that shows feelings towards brands and the strength of their feelings/relationships. Quadrant one shows a weak relationship between the brand and the consumer, yet a positive feeling. Concepts such as, brand satisfaction, brand trust, and brand loyalty, can fall under this quadrant, but are not necessary outcomes. Consumers can be satisfied with a product or service, but that does not guarantee that they will be loyal to the brand. Quadrant two shows a stronger brand relationship. Here consumers have strong and positive feelings towards brands. Concepts such as brand love and brand passion fall under this quadrant. Quadrant three shows weak, but negative feelings towards brands. Few studies have explored this area, such as Lee's *et al.* (2009) research on anti-consumption and brand avoidance. The fourth and last Quadrant shows strong and negative feelings towards brands. Like the previous Quadrant, very little research has been done in this area. Some examples are, Sussan's *et al* (2012) research on brand divorce, and Kucuk's (2009) research on anti-branding.

		Strengths of Brand Relationship	
		Weak	*Strong*
Feeling Towards Brand	*Positive*	(1) Brand Satisfaction	(2) Brand Love Brand Passion
	Negative	(3) Brand Avoidance	(4) Brand Hate Brand Divorce

Figure 3. Brand Feeling Matrix

The fourth quadrant is the most relevant to this thesis. In this thesis, we will discuss this emotion, brand hate, its determinants, and its outcomes.

3.2. Emotions

Figure 4 shows the spectrum of love and hate. The spectrum moves from hate to love. In this thesis, we will only focus on the negative emotions, and more specifically we will focus on the strongest and most fundamental emotion, hate. It is important to note that both hate and love are the extremes of the spectrum, as seen in Figure 4, and therefore we must first define love, and then define hate.

| Hate | Loath | Dislike | Disregard | Neutral | Interest | Like | Desire | Love |
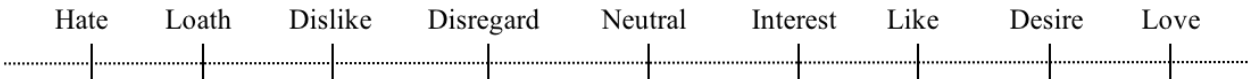
Figure 4. Spectrum of Love and Hate

Regarding love, many theorists describe love to be a multifaceted construct that appears in many forms, which can have multiple meanings and multiple outcomes (Sternberg, 1986). In the field of philosophy, Johnson (2001) offered a description of love, containing four components, which many agree with. First, love must have an object, which then, secondly, love values this object, thirdly, love is drawn to the object, and finally, love feels something for the loved object. Therefore, Johnson (2001) concludes that love values the object, and wants to promote the well-being of the object. Turning to hate, hate is an understudied human emotion, despite its importance (Blum, 1997). It is often discussed as the opposite of love, as it is an intense state similarly to love. Most scholars in this field agree that hate is an emotion, but have contradictory opinions of its nature. Some characterize hate as stable and persistent (Kernberg, 1992; Litwinski, 1945). While others, characterize it as unstable and a long-term sentiment (Ben-Ze'ev, 2000). Scholars have yet to agree if love is stable, temporary, or the opposite. Regardless of the differences in recognizing its nature, hate has implications, and can cause the desire to hurt and destroy (Rempel, 2005). Allport (1950)

and other scholars suggest that hate can serve as a framework that orients one's life. For this thesis, we infer that love and hate are conceptual parallels. Since love is to value the object, then hate is to devalue the object, and therefore, hate has the goal to destroy and diminish the object's well-being.

3.2.1. Brand Dislike

Romani *et al.* (2009) explore negative emotions towards brands, and more specifically, brand dislike, anger, and sadness. In their findings, respondents were more inclined to describing one negative emotional state rather than describing a combination. They gathered all the results and most feelings centered around dislike and anger. Some expressed feelings such as aversion, distaste and disgust (Romani *et al*, 2009). Another study, done by Dalli *et al.* (2007) also explores brand dislike. In this research, they explore factors and levels of dislike, such as levels with the product of the brand, like pricing or quality, the user of the brand, such as stereotypes that the brand carries and users do not want to be associated with, or the corporate brand, where consumers see brands acting unethically, immorally, or illegally.

3.2.2. Brand Hate

Despite Fehr and Russell's (1984) description of hate as the second most important emotion after love, little research and studies focus on the theoretical explanation of brand hate and negative brand emotions and relationships. Some scholars see hate as a simple emotion, but the majority consider hate as a complex and compounded emotion. Plutchik (1991) describes hate as disgust and anger. McDougall (2001) describes hate as anger, fear, and disgust. Kemper (1987) describes hate as fear and anger. Finally, Sternberg (2003) describes hate in three components, as repulsion and disgust, anger and fear, and devaluation through contempt.

Brand hate is more intense, stronger, and fundamental than brand dislike. This is also applicable to brand liking versus brand love (Rossiter, 2012), brand like is stronger and more fundamental than brand love. Fetscherin (2017) defines brand hate as, "a strong emotional responder of anger, contempt or disgust for a brand." This definition derived from Sternberg's Triangular Theory of Hate (2003), which will be furthered discussed later in this section.

In the field of marketing and consumer research, the first conceptualization of brand hate is seen in Grégoire *et al.* (2009). Grégoire *et al.* (2009) describe hate as a form of desire for revenge, or desire for avoidance. That is, either consumers have a desire to punish the brand for what has been caused to them, or they want to withdraw themselves from the brand. These two desires are separate reactions/outcomes to brand hate.

3.2.2.1.   *Sternberg's Triangular Theory of Hate*

Sternberg's (1986) triangular theory of interpersonal love was adapted to encompass the theory of hate. In Sternberg's triangular theory of love, the theory conceptualizes a triangular metaphor, where there are three main components to love. These components are, intimacy, passion, and commitment, as shown in Figure 5.
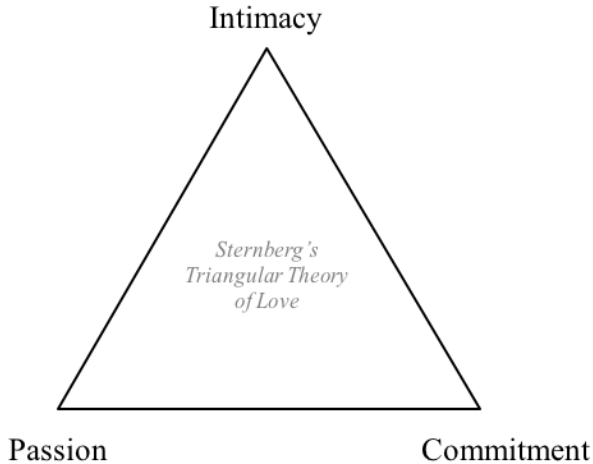
Figure 5. Sternberg's Triangular Theory of Love

Like love, Sternberg (2003) believes hate is not a single emotion, and it also has multiple components. Just like his triangular theory of love, Sternberg's triangular theory of hate (2003) identifies three primary components that comprise hate.

Negation of Intimacy:
Disgust

Sternberg's Triangular Theory of Hate

Passion:
Anger/Fear

Commitment:
Devaluation/Diminution
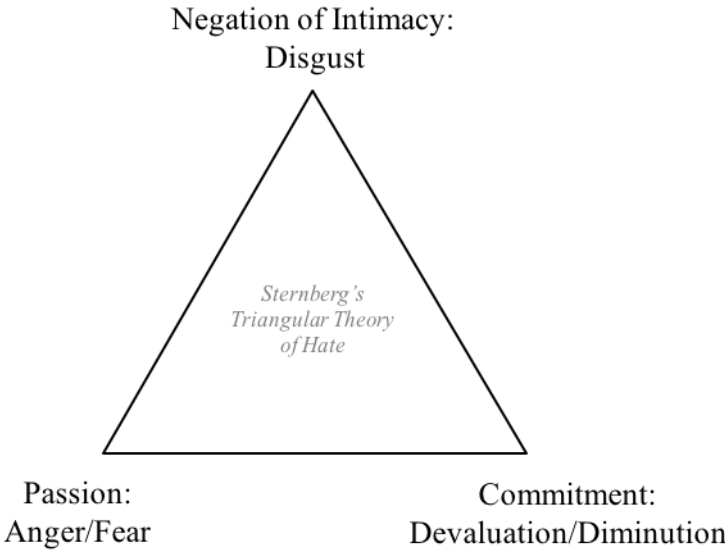
Figure 6. Sternberg's Triangular Theory of Hate

Figure 6 shows the three primary components. These components are, the negation of intimacy, the negation of commitment, and the negation of passion. These components that conceptualize hate, show how brand hate is also a multicomponent construct, which can individually or collectively influence consumer behaviors. Looking at Sternberg's theory of love (1998) and theory of hate (2003), we can argue that hate is the parallel to love since these two strong emotions have the same opposite three components.

3.2.2.2. *Anti-Branding Websites*

The school of thought on anti-branding in the branding field is explored by Kucuk (2007, 2008) and Kaynak *et al.* (2013). These researchers focus mainly on anti-branding websites, and online negative word-of-mouth. Due to the Internet and social media, consumers have the capacity to

express their negative feelings towards brands. The quantity of these websites are growing substantially, creating a need for research on this field; these anti-brand websites affect consumer consumption, and construct negative brand identity (Wolrich, 2005).

Kucuk explores antecedents of anti-branding, "consumer empowerment" and "consumer dissatisfaction" (Kucuk, 2009). However, the antecedents explored cannot answer the question of this thesis, as it is in relation to anti-branding rather than brand divorce. Also, Kucuk's research focuses on the outcomes of anti-branding, rather than its antecedents (Kucuk, 2009). Nevertheless, this research is applicable to the field of branding, which is the field of this thesis. As discussed by Kucuk, consumer empowerment derives from the access of the Internet, as it gives voice to consumers and is an outlet for activism. Consumer dissatisfaction is analyzed as a trigger to anti-branding. Empirical evidence supports this claim (Feick, 1987).

Kucuk furthers his research on negative effects of anti-brand sites by expanding on the Double Jeopardy (DJ) phenomenon. Kucuk acknowledges a new concept and new phenomenon, the Negative Double Jeopardy (NDJ) (Kucuk, 2007). Kucuk notes that anti-brand sites are highly focused on strong, and more popular brands. We hope that in this thesis the findings will be generalizable to all brands, strong or weak, since it focuses on brand divorce, and not necessarily on anti-branding (more specifically anti-branding sites). The purpose of Kucuk's research is to minimize the negative impacts that these anti-branding sites have on market relationships (Kucuk, 2007). Through his article, he explores the types of anti-branding people, and offers possible strategies on how to handle NDJ. Most relevantly connected to this thesis are "complainers," who are the type of consumers who overtime became dissatisfied with the brand. Kucuk does not, however, consider in his research, as to why these consumers become dissatisfied.

Kaynak *et al.* (2013) also explore the anti-branding within the Internet, focusing on its antecedents. Their objectives are to minimize the negative effects that anti-branding websites cause by examining antecedents of anti-branding on the Internet. The antecedent proved to be true, and most applicable to this thesis is the "environmental consciousness," which is the strongest antecedent that causes consumers to switch from brand-love to brand-hate, depending on the brand's ideological incompatibility (Lee *et al.*, 2009). This research is highly applicable to this thesis, however, not all antecedents will be used since they refer most relevantly to anti-branding on the Internet.

3.2.3. Brand Divorce

Sussan *et al.* (2012) examines brand divorce - a highly under-researched topic. The approach of their research is the relation between self-transformation and the correlation with brand divorce. The findings from this research could be useful and applicable towards our findings of antecedents for brand divorce. Sussan *et al.* (2012) use the same approach as Park in the AA model, (this approach is highly used in marketing literature) where consumers perceive brands as a form of identity or as a form of an extension of the self. Sussan *et al.* (2012) hypothesize that if the self is spiritually connected to the brand, the consumer will suffer a brand divorce once the self goes through spiritual transformation. Therefore, one of the antecedents of brand divorce can come from the outcome of a spiritual transformation (Sussan, *et al.* 2012). In this thesis, we view brand-divorce differently than Sussan's *et al.* (2012) research. Sussan's *et al.* (2012) findings look at brand divorce as beneficial, because their perspective is focused towards the consumer experiencing a spiritual transformation. Whereas this thesis looks towards the benefit of the company, but also towards the benefit of the consumer through the lenses of meeting their needs,

therefore brand divorce is perceived negatively. But nevertheless, brand divorce can be positive in the aspects of learning from past experiences.

3.3. Determinants of Brand Hate

Studies by Dalli *et al.* (2007), Grégoire *et al.* (2006, 2008), Hogg *et al.* (2009), Romani *et al.* (2009), Sandikci *et al.* (2009), Lee *et al.* (2009), Kucuk (2009), and Johnson *et al.* (2011), propose several determinants of negative brand emotions. These determinants can be grouped as product-related (negative past experience), consumer-related (self-image vs. brand image), or contextual-related (ideological incompatibility). In this section, we will further into these brand hate antecedents.

3.3.1. Negative Past Experience

Psychology research shows that emotions are linked to experience and behavior, (Shaver *et al*., 1987). By relating this to branding, it is assumed that brand hate can be caused due to a negative past experience. Negative past experience is categorized as a product-related determinant; as in the product or service itself determined the brand hate. A bad experience can emerge from consumer expectations; a consumer's nature is to compare their initial expectation to their actual performance (Oliver, 1980). If their expectation is not met, or is below their expectation, then the consumers have a negative experience, leading to dissatisfaction (Olive, 1980), and then leading to brand hate. Some examples of product-related determinants, discussed in previous studies, are caused by the price and/or quality of the product, its performance, the customer service experience, service failure, the marketing environment of the brand, or a prior negative past experience.

H1a: Negative past experience leads to brand hate.

As this relates to brand forgiveness, we hypothesize that if the determinant of brand hate comes from negative past experience, the consumer is more likely to forgive in the future given that s/he has purchased the brand in the past. Negative past experience implies that the consumer has purchased or used the service of this brand, or was in contact with the brand in the past. We assume that given that the consumer has purchased the brand s/he had a positive relationship with the brand in the past and therefore, the consumer is more likely to forgive in the future.

H1b: Brand hate caused by negative past experience leads to higher brand forgiveness.

3.3.2. Self-Image vs. Brand-Image Incongruity

The studies mentioned above, show that most consumer-related determinants are caused by self-image vs. brand image with the brand. Self-image vs. brand image can be described as the consumer not wanting to be associated with the image that brand represents. In positive brand relationships, consumers' self-image matches with the brand's image (Kressmann *et al.*, 2006), and consumers have the tendency to buy those brands that they have image congruencies with (Khan and Lee 2014). Since we explore negative brand relationships, we expect that consumers will have the opposite reaction, and will have the desire to *not* buy brands with image incongruities. Therefore, self-image vs. brand image, or image incongruity, between the consumer and the brand, can lead to negative emotions towards the brand, causing the individual to deliberately not use or buy the brand to enforce their personal identity.

Some examples of consumer-related determinants, discussed in previous studies, are caused by negative stereotypes, consumer's individual environment, symbolic cultural object, self and image congruency, self-image vs. brand image, or self-relevance.

H2a: Image incongruity leads to brand hate.

As it relates to brand forgiveness, we hypothesize that feelings of brand hate determined by self-image vs. brand image incongruity are more likely to continue in the future, and therefore, the consumer is less likely to brand forgive. Since the image of the consumer does not align with the image of the brand, the consumer is less likely to be willing to forgive, given that his or her image no longer correlates with the brand. S/he is less likely to forgive, because it is less likely that the image of the brand will change to fit the image of the consumer, or vise-versa. Also, self-image vs. brand image does not imply that the consumer has previously bought or used the brand, and therefore adding another factor that shows that the consumer is less likely to forgive.

H2b: Brand hate caused by image incongruity leads to lower brand forgiveness.

3.3.3. Ideological Incompatibility

Contextual-related factors are in nature, moral or ideological incompatibilities with the consumer and the brand. This occurs when the consumer has a set of beliefs that are incompatible to what the brand represents in terms of moral misconducts or deceptive communication. Ideological incompatibility surges from an inconsistency of values between the brand and the consumer. Lee *et al.* (2009), suggest that this determinant is beyond the individual's needs, as it is contextual, as it is associated with a societal or moral focus. For example, issues with the environment, or disrespect towards human rights, or unethical and/or unfair business practices. Essentially, ideological incompatibility emerges from legal, moral, or social concerns towards the brand by the consumer (Lee *et al.*, 2009). Some examples of context-related determinants, discussed in previous studies, can be caused by exploitation, persuasive communication, the quality of the brand relationship, the social environment, organizational misidentification, ideological incompatibility, market-level dissatisfaction, ideological dissatisfaction, and moral rejection.

H3a: Ideological incompatibility leads to brand hate.

As it relates to brand forgiveness, we hypothesize that brand hate determined by ideological incompatibility is more difficult to be forgiven, and therefore, a consumer that hates the brand due to ideological incompatibility is less likely to forgive the brand in the future. This thought derives from the difficulty of a brand resurfacing from an ideological incompatibility, such as morality or ethical issues. Since consumers are less likely to become ideologically compatible, it is less likely that they will forgive. Also, brand hate generated from brand ideological incompatibility does not imply that a consumer has previously bought or used the brand, and therefore is less likely to forgive, as mentioned in the previous hypothesis.

H3b: Brand hate caused by ideological incompatibility leads to lower brand forgiveness.

3.4. Outcomes of Brand Hate

Research shows that negative emotions lead to unique behavioral responses, (Roseman, 1984). In this section we will explore the most likely behavioral outcomes of brand hate. The works of Grégoire *et al.* (2006, 2008, 2010), Johnson *et al.* (2011), Romani *et al.* (2012), Joireman *et al.* (2013), and Harmeling *et al.* (2015), outline various responses to unsatisfactory experience. These responses may be passive, or active. Passive responses to brand hate, are expressed by avoidance of the brand, by either switching to their competitor, or by completely stopping use or consumption of product or service of the brand. Active responses, due to brand hate, are expressed either indirectly, or directly. Indirect actions are by complaining to third parties, such as anti-branding websites. Direct actions are manifested towards the brand, such as their employees, or by damaging the brand's property, such as stealing. This distinction is furthered examined by Grégoire *et al.* (2010), as 'direct revenge' or 'indirect revenge'. The following sections explore five expected

outcome behaviors, these outcomes are illustrated in Figure 7, in order from left to right, from least harmful to brands to most harmful to brands: brand avoidance, private complaining, public complaining, brand revenge, and brand retaliation.
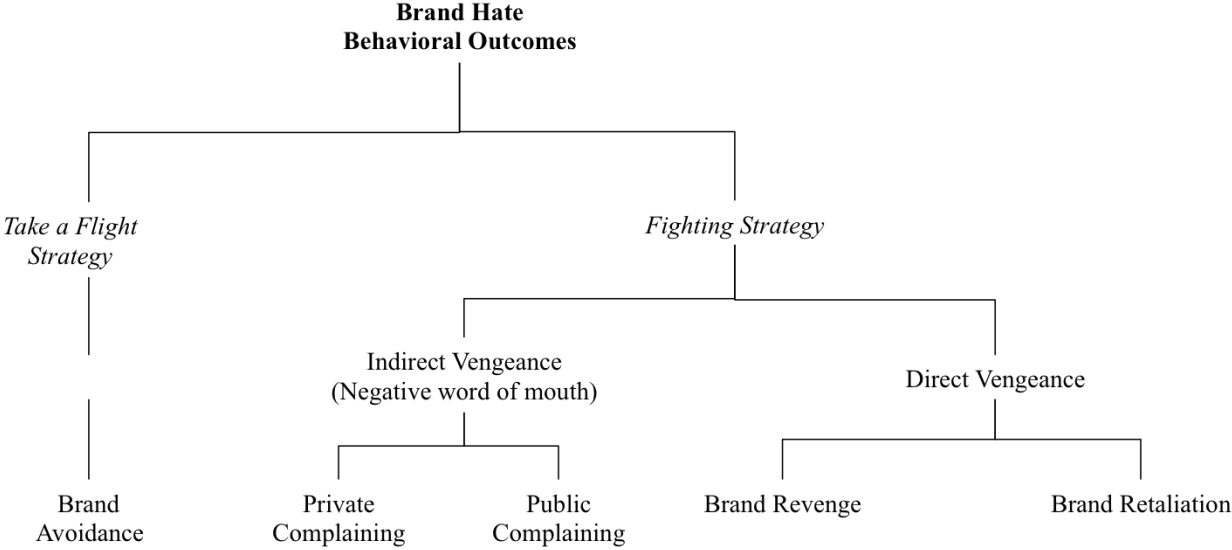
Figure 7. Brand Hate Behavioral Outcomes

3.4.1. Brand Avoidance

Research done by Sternberg (1986) on consumer brand relationship, shows that a customer responds to love relations by the closeness of the relationship (119). Grégoire *et al.* (2009) and Park *et al.* (2013), acknowledge that the opposite of closeness is avoidance, which is how individuals act due to negative feelings towards brands. Therefore, brand hate can lead to brand avoidance; where individuals feel negative towards a brand, and therefore deliberately choose to reject that brand. Brand avoidance does not imply that consumers purchased a product or service from the brand in the past; the feeling of avoidance surges from negatively feeling towards a brand, and not necessarily from having purchased the brand. Lee *et al.* (2009) argue that, "the term brand avoidance [is] interchangeably with brand switching" (170), this is important to note, as in this thesis we do not recognize them as the same. Brand switching implies that a consumer must have

purchased the brand in the past, and in this thesis, we examine the paths of relationships from beginning to end of consumer-brand relationships, but do not discriminate solely to brand users. Therefore, brand switching is considered a form of brand avoidance, but it is not interchangeable.

H4a: Brand hate leads to brand avoidance.

In relation to brand forgiveness, we hypothesize that those consumers who are more likely to forgive are less likely to generate a brand hate outcome. Due to this, consumers that are more likely to forgive, are directly less likely to avoid the brand due to forgiveness. This also applies inversely, those consumers who are less likely to forgive, are more likely to act in brand hate outcomes, and are more likely to brand avoid.

H4b: High forgiveness leads to lower brand avoidance.

3.4.2. Private Complaining

Private complaining can also be referred to as negative word-of-mouth. Baumeister *et al.* (2001) states that individuals are more likely to share their negative feelings with others than they are willing to share their positive feelings and/or experiences. Private complaining is achieved by telling friends and family about the negatively perceived brand, while speaking poorly of it.

H5a: Brand hate leads to private complaining.

As it relates to brand forgiveness, we hypothesize that consumers who are more likely to forgive are also less likely to privately complain, since it is a brand hate outcome. And therefore, those consumers who are more likely to forgive are less likely to act in private complaining. This also applies inversely, such as, consumers who are less likely to forgive are more likely to act in brand hate outcomes, and therefore are more likely to privately complain.

H5b: High forgiveness leads to lower private complaining.

3.4.3. Public Complaining

Public complaining is also a form of negative word-of-mouth. However, Grégorie *et al.* (2010) identify public complaining as a distinct behavioral outcome, separate from private complaining, which we agree in this thesis. Public complaining can be achieved through use of online posts, anti-branding websites, social media, or blogs. Some studies do not differentiate between private and public complaining, but in this thesis, we consider them as separate outcomes of brand hate. These are distinguished as separate, as we hypothesize that public complaining causes more harm to brands than private complaining; and when measuring the risk to brands, these two terms need to be separate.

H6a: Brand hate leads to public complaining.

As it relates to brand forgiveness, we hypothesize that, alike the previous brand hate outcomes, those consumers who are more willing to forgive are less willing to publicly complain, as public complaining is a form of brand hate outcome. Inversely, consumers less likely to forgive are more likely to act in public complaining.

H6b: High forgiveness leads to lower public complaining.

3.4.4. Brand Retaliation and Brand Revenge

Brand retaliation and brand revenge are the strongest and most extreme outcomes of brand hate. These types of outcomes are when individuals actively and directly want to take actions towards the brand. Grégoire *et al.* (2010) recognizes brand retaliation as an outcome variable of brand hate. Sternberg (2003) believes that brand hate leads to the thirst for revenge and/or retaliation. Brand

retaliation is defined by Grégoire *et al.* (2009) as a customers' need to punish or cause harm to brands for the damages they have caused them, as a form of revenge.

H7a: Brand hate leads to brand retaliation.
H8a: Brand hate leads to brand revenge.

As it relates to brand forgiveness, we hypothesize that consumers who are more willing to forgive are less willing to brand retaliate, as brand retaliation is a brand hate outcome, and as previously stated, those who are more willing to forgive may be less likely willing to act in brand hate. Inversely, consumers less willing to forgive are more willing to act in brand retaliation. As it relates to brand forgiveness, we hypothesize that consumers more willing to forgive are less willing to act in brand revenge, as brand revenge is also a brand hate outcome, and as stated above, consumers more willing to forgive are less likely to act in brand hate outcomes. Inversely, consumers less willing to forgive are more willing to act in brand revenge.

H7b: High forgiveness leads to lower brand retaliation.
H8b: High forgiveness leads to lower brand revenge.

3.4.5. Brand Forgiveness

Forgiveness is a highly-researched area in the field of psychology, however it has gained little attention in the field of business or marketing. Casidy and Shin (2015) state that forgiveness can be achieved by a brand's actions attempting to recover from failure. Groonros (1988) also believes consumer satisfaction can be recovered after service failures with suitable recovery strategies. Service failure, or brand hate, can highly harm a brand-consumer relationship, therefore it is crucial to examine the possibility of forgiveness in brand-consumer relationships. Failure affects the consumers' satisfaction and can also affect their level of trust and loyalty (Xie and Peng, 2009).

Brand failure can lead to brand avoidance (Grégoire, 2009), reduced willingness to defend the brand (Park *et al*., 2009), and public outrage (Grégorie, 2009). The reactions of consumers due to service failures are strong, and therefore it is important that a company attempts to recover them effectively (Smith *et al*., 1999). However, a lack of consistency occurs on how individuals undertake brand failures; individuals often react in different ways. Despite the research done, the question of *how to attain brand forgiveness* still stands unanswered. Like love, and hate, forgiveness is complex, and therefore difficult to determine; forgiveness is a complex notion, and it is difficult to determine how and why an individual chooses to forgive. Another question is, whether forgiveness and future behavior are dependent to one another. However, most believe that forgiveness and future behavior are not related, as someone can forgive, but continue to use a competing brand, or in the opposite case, not forgive, but continue using the brand.

Oliver (1999) states that satisfaction is not enough to relate to loyal behavior. However, some evidence shows that close relationships can help individuals overcome brand failure. Donovan *et al.* (2012), state that forgiveness between humans is dependent on the interpersonal relationship. Interpersonal relationships, in the field of psychology, have shown that close relationships have a positive effect on the likelihood of attaining forgiveness (Fincham, 2000; McCullough *et al*., 1998). Figure 8 shows the inclusion of other in the self-scale, where an individual includes the other until it is part of one's self (Aron *et al*., 1992).
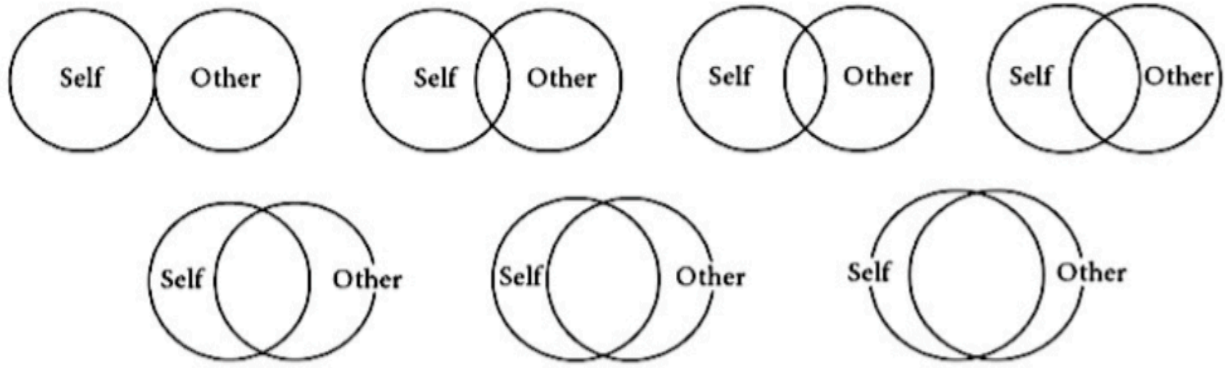
Figure 8. The Inclusion of Other into the Self-Scale

Brand relationship closeness can be thought as part of the self (Reimann and Aron, 2009). Individuals may include a brand in their self-concept, and therefore, a brand-consumer relationship can be compared to regular human relationships between individuals (Donovan *et al*. 2012). Figure 8 was adapted, and is applicable to brand-consumer relationships, as shown in Figure 9, designed by Reimann *et al.* (2012).
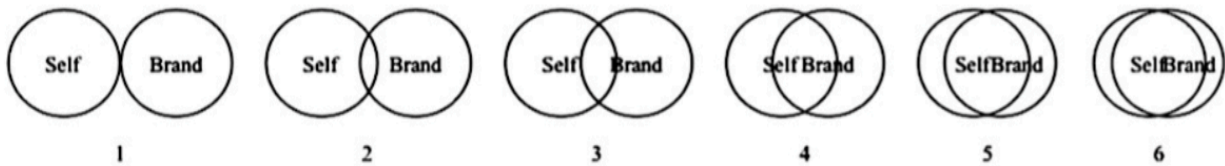
Figure 9. The Inclusion of Brand into the Self-Scale

Following this thought, individuals with closer brand relationships prior to brand failure are more likely to forgive the brand in the future, than those individuals that had distant brand relationships. And it can also be concluded that a firm should attempt to reach forgiveness, as forgiveness can lead to positive future behavioral intentions.

H9: High forgiveness leads to higher willingness to purchase the brand in the future.

3.5. Dynamics of Brand Emotions

In the field of marketing literature, a lot of attention has been paid towards brand love (Batra *et al*., 2012, Rossiter, 2012), but little attention has been paid to negative emotions towards brands (Fournier and Alvarez, 2013). As mentioned before, this is surprising since hate has been identified as a strong and important human emotion, which can lead to the willingness to hurt (Rempel, 2005). Scholars have begun to explore the negative emotions towards brand (Romani *et al*., 2012), such as brand detachment (Perrin-Martinenq, 2004), brand aversion (Park *et al*., 2013), and brand hate (Zarantonello *et al*., 2016; Fetscherin *et al*., 2014, Grégorie *et al*., 2009, Johnson *et al*., 2001). These studies have examined brand hate as a static perspective, only looking at it at a specific moment in time, but not examining its evolving nature, as recently done to brand love (Langner *et al*., 2016). Grégorie *et al.* (2009), composed a research that does examine emotions over time; they examined the desire for revenge and desire for avoidance, but just these two specific desires and their evolution over time. Their research proves the importance in examining emotions over time, rather than a static perspective, as it provides a better understanding of the consumer's negative feelings towards brands. This thesis aims to achieve the same, but by examining brand hate over time. This will be done by adopting Langner's *et al.* (2016) methodology that measured the evolving nature of brand love, but will be used in a manner to evaluate brand hate. Figure 10 shows Langner's *et al.* (2016) findings of the brand love trajectories. Their trajectories were measured from love, like, neutral, dislike, hate, and by first contact and today. In this thesis, we will use the same measures on the y axis, but on the x axis we will use three periods in time, rather than two, measuring the beginning (past), middle (present), and end (future). The "future" will measure for the willingness to forgive; in other words, what is the highest value that a consumer is willing to allocate for that brand in the future.

Trajectory Type 1: Slow development

Intensity of feelings for the brand

Love — Liking — Neutral — Disliking — Hatred

First contact — Today — Time

— Participant 13 ······· Participant 24 – – – Participant 34
–·– Participant 15 –··– Participant 27 –···– Participant 11

Trajectory Type 2: Liking becomes love

Intensity of feelings for the brand

Love — Liking — Neutral — Disliking — Hatred

First contact — Today — Time

— Participant 16 ······· Participant 5 – – – Participant 31

Trajectory Type 3: Love all the way

Intensity of feelings for the brand

Love — Liking — Neutral — Disliking — Hatred

First contact — Today — Time

— Participant 10 ······· Participant 30 – – – Participant 18
–·– Participant 33

Trajectory Type 4: Bumpy road

Intensity of feelings for the brand

Love — Liking — Neutral — Disliking — Hatred

First contact — Today — Time

— Participant 3 ······· Participant 7 – – – Participant 20

Trajectory Type 5: Turnabout

Intensity of feelings for the brand

Love — Liking — Neutral — Disliking — Hatred

First contact — Today — Time

— Participant 4 ······· Participant 14 – – – Participant 35

Figure 10. Brand Love Trajectories

In relation to the "future," in other words, brand forgiveness, we can hypothesize that the feeling of the past influences the feeling of today, and ultimately influences the feeling of the future. Therefore, we hypothesize, the lower their level of hate for the brand in the past, the more likely they are to forgive the brand in the future. Inversely, the higher the level of hate for the brand in the past, the less likely they are to forgive in the future. Ideally, we would measure and compare the feeling in the past to the feeling in the future, but we can also analyze the feeling of today (hate) and predict the feeling of forgiveness in the future. Therefore, we state the following hypothesis:

H10: The lower level of past hate leads to higher brand forgiveness.

3.6. Research Model

Our research model takes Park's *et al.* AA model as a framework, and with adaptation, we designed a dynamic model that includes brand hate determinants (past), brand hate emotion (present), and brand hate outcomes (future). Figure 11 illustrates our research model in relation to brand hate, illustrating the hypothesis previously presented.
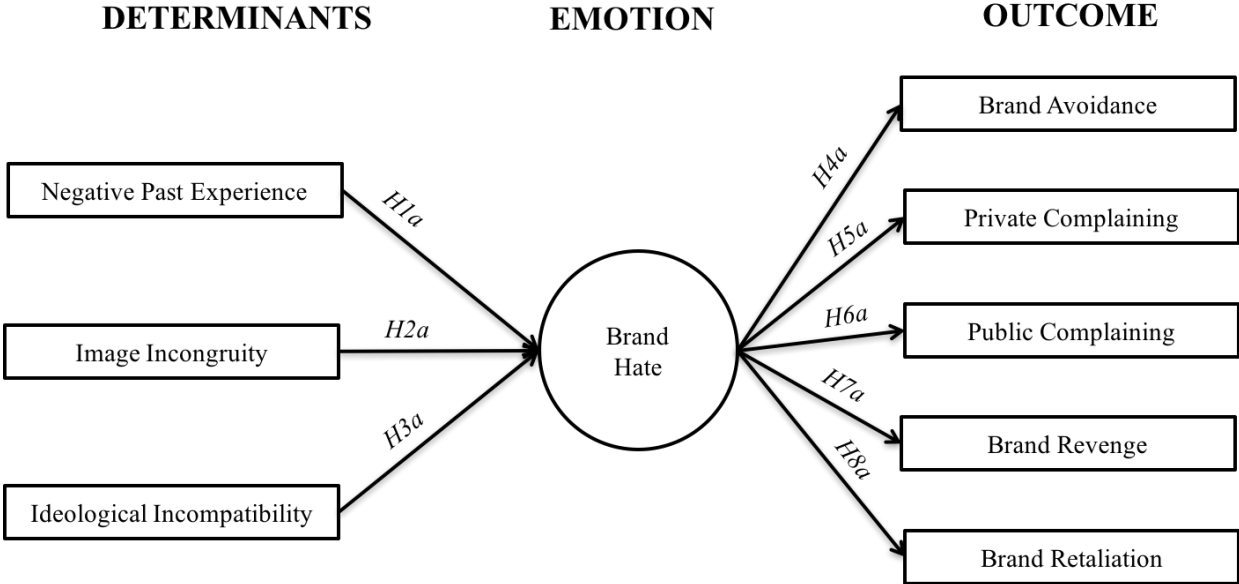
Figure 11. Research Model Brand Hate

Our second model follows in the line with brand hate, but takes the core emotion as the willingness to brand forgive (brand forgiveness) in relation to the previous model. Figure 12 provides an illustration of the research model for brand forgiveness and the hypothesis previously presented.
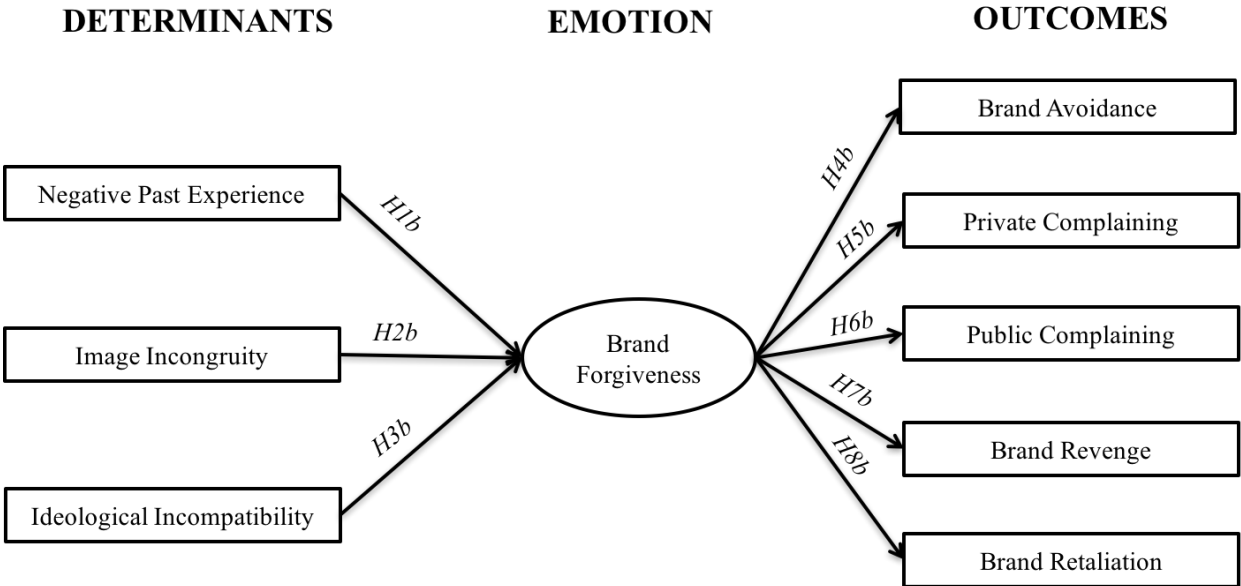
Figure 12. Research Model Brand Forgiveness

In addition, we assess the relationship between brand hate and brand forgiveness as hypothesis H9 and H10 show, and the link between past feeling and present/future feeling.

4. Empirical Study

4.1. Interviews

After carrying out a large-scale review of brand divorce and brand forgiveness literature, an interview questionnaire was developed. This questionnaire's focus was primarily to identify any internal flaws in the questions, to better develop a survey instrument. Generally, the interviews allowed for a review of the responses and requests of adaptation; identifying which questions generated any difficulty or confusion in answering, and which generated helpful results, or did not generate substantial results. The interviews also served as a tool to acquire more qualitative responses, containing mostly open-ended questions. Therefore, when the interviews were conducted, questions were not limited to those predesigned, to ensure for active discussion, and allow for a tailored need of each participant with the centralized focus on triggers and outcomes of brand hate, and possible brand forgiveness. The questions asked during the interview are attached in Appendix A.

4.1.1. Procedure

A sample of twenty volunteer participants (8 male, 13 female), were involved in the study. The participants, except for a few, are Undergraduate students at Rollins College, aging from eighteen to twenty-four. The student gender profile at Rollins College is 58% female and 42% male, (Rollins Facts & Figures, 2016), allowing for our sample of volunteers to be a representative sample of the Rollins community. The participants were interviewed, individually, in an average of thirty to forty minutes. They were first asked to name up to five brands they hated, or felt extreme negative emotions towards, and then to focus on the brand they hated the most. Then, they were asked several open-ended questions about the brand, asking to describe their hate relationship

with it, what was their experience with the brand, what led them to hate it, what behavior they adopted to express their hate, if there is a possible development of forgiveness in the future, and what the brand would have to do to achieve forgiveness, if at all. Follow-up and probe questions were asked when necessary.

The last part of the interview was an adaptation of Zarantonello's (2016), "Stories of Brand hate" research. Participants were asked to sketch, on a piece of paper, the pattern of their feelings toward the brand. On the vertical axis, the feeling towards the brand was measured, from love, like, neutral, dislike, and hate. On the horizontal axis, time was measured from past, present, to future. This illustration is shown in Figure 13.
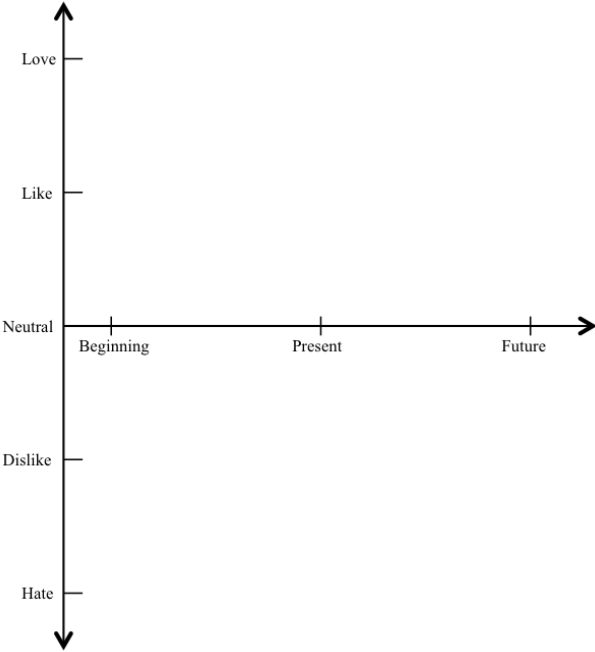

Figure 13. Interview Graph Measuring Brand Relationship Over Time

In the interview, we included another measurer of feeling, instead of just the sketch like Zarantonello's *et al*. (2016) research. We also asked participants to rank their feeling from -100 to 100 in the three separate times, past, present, and future. This second measurer of feeling was used

to see if both methods showed equal or clashing results. The interview questions were constructed

on Qualtrics, with the purpose of keeping the responses grouped, and to facilitate the adaptation

towards the mass survey. The interviews were conducted within a week, where each participant

met with the researcher one-on-one.

4.1.2. Summary

The interview aimed to gain qualitative data; nevertheless, Table 1 provides a summary of the

quantitative data that was collected from the interviews. Each interviewee was asked to measure

their past feeling of the brand, their present feeling of the brand, and a potential future feeling of

the brand from a scale of -100 to 100. They were also asked the likelihood of their willingness to

forgive, measured in a five-point Likert scale from "definitely not" to "definitely yes". They were

also asked if they still bought the brand after brand hate in a yes or no answer, and the likelihood

of them buying it again in the future, measured in a five-point Likert scale, from "extremely likely"

to "extremely unlikely".

Respondent Number	Respondent Name	Hated Brand	Past Feeling	Present Feeling	Still buy brand: Y/N	Future Feeling	Forgiveness (Y/N)	Buy again: Y/N
1	Manuel	Verizon	51	-75	Yes	0	Neutral	Extremely likely
2	Catherina	Net TV	0	-100	No	-100	Probably Not	Extremely unlikely
3	Craig	HP	54	-100	No	-78	Definitely Not	Extremely unlikely
4	Tonya	Victoria Secret	100	-100	Yes	50	Probably Yes	Extremely likely
5	Samantha	Biator	100	-100	No	0	Probably Yes	Neutral
6	Brooke	American Airlines	0	-100	No	0	Definitely Not	Extremely unlikely
7	Jonas	Got Milk!	0	-100	Yes	0	Definitely Not	Extremely likely
8	Mark	Wanda Group	-100	-100	No	-100	Probably Not	Extremely unlikely

9	Katherine	Michael Kors	54	-50	No	50	Probably Yes	Somewhat likely
12	Mackenzie	Walmart	0	-100	No	0	Definitely Not	Extremely unlikely
13	Neema	Sea World	100	-25	Yes	52	Definitely Yes	Somewhat likely
14	Julia	Trump Org.	53	-100	No	-53	Probably Not	Extremely unlikely
15	Raquel	American Airlines	54	-52	Yes	52	Probably Yes	Extremely likely
16	Chirssy	Hobby Lobby	52	-100	No	52	Probably Yes	Somewhat likely
17	Marcelo	TIM	-64	-64	No	-25	Definitely Not	Extremely unlikely
18	Mai-Hahn	Lululemon	52	-75	Yes	52	Definitely Yes	Somewhat likely
19	Alexandra	Orange Theory	0	-100	No	0	Probably Not	Extremely unlikely
20	Lili	Avon	100	-100	No	-100	Definitely Not	Extremely unlikely
21	Alexandre	Bahamas Air	-52	-76	Yes	-19	Probably Not	Somewhat unlikely

Table 1. Interview Quantitative Summary

Most interviewees began their relationship in either, "love" "like" or "neutral" phase, and few were in the "dislike" or "hate" phase. The mean value of all the interviewees' past feeling towards the brand was 27.94, considered as brand like. Not surprisingly, all present feeling values are negative, since all interviewees are in the process of "brand hate" emotion; the maximum value allocated was -25, and the mean was -84.14, considered stronger than brand dislike. The mean value of interviewee's future feeling value that they are willing to allocate was -3.59, and the maximum value was 54. We conclude that companies *can* achieve forgiveness, but the maximum value they can attain is equivalent to "brand like," and it is unlikely that "brand love" would be attained again.

Thirteen of the interviewees stated they no longer purchase the brand, but nine interviewees still do. We classify the nine interviewees that still purchase from their brand into three categories. Firstly, the difficulty in brand switching, forcing consumers to continue using their service due to

a contract, benefits/rewards system, or familiarity with product, for example respondent 1, Manuel, said, "*it is hard for me to change* my *carrier provider*," respondent 4, Tonya Maharajh, said, "I am just familiar with their products and its easy," and respondent 6, Brooke, said, "unfortunately my family has airline points that connect to our credit card rewards." Secondly, despite poor service quality the company provides, it still offers the best pricing or best time options, causing consumers to be *forced* to choose using this brand, for example interviewees said, respondent 15, Raquel, said, "a lot of times I have no other choice. They have the most flight options and pricing," and respondent 21, Alexandre, said, "I would only use them as a last resource, if I really have to buy a flight at that specific time and date, and no other company offers it." Lastly, interviewees that hated a brand due to their marketing approach, their values and ideals, but still liked its good quality product and therefore continue to purchase the brand, for example respondent 18, Mai-Hahn, said, "they satisfy my consumer needs for athletic wear," and respondent 13, Neema, said, "I went [to Sea World] again because of a family trip, and would go again if I were to receive free tickets" and respondent 7, Jonas, said, "I hate their campaigning, but I just love dairy and like milk so much."

No immediate correlation is seen between those who still buy today and what future feeling they would allocate to the brand. However, except for one, all interviewees that still buy the brand today said they are likely to continue to buy the brand in the future. Three interviewees that said they no longer buy the brand today said that they are likely to buy the brand in the future, *if* forgiveness is achieved. All other interviewees that no longer buy the brand today, said they would not buy the brand in the future. This shows that today's feelings are linked with the future feelings, and have a strong influence on the potential of forgiveness.

Twelve participants (57%) stated they would "definitely not" or "probably not" forgive the brand, while eight participants (38%) stated they would "probably" or "definitely" forgive the brand, and only one participant stated neutral. In this thesis, according to the interviews, we show that consumers are more likely to not forgive the brand than to forgive it. Eleven participants (52%) stated that they are "extremely unlikely" or "somewhat unlikely" to purchase the brand again in the future. While nine participants (45%) stated they are "somewhat likely" or "extremely likely" to purchase the brand again in the future. A correlation between forgiveness and buying the brand again in the future is seen. All participants (except for one) that stated that they will not forgive the brand, also stated that they will not buy the brand in the future. The outlier's hated brand is the *Got Milk!* Campaign, and he considers eating/buying dairy products as using and participating in the campaign, rather than protesting it by avoiding any dairy product. If they stated they would forgive the brand, they also stated they would buy the brand in the future. This shows the importance of brand forgiveness. Respondents explained how the brand could attain their forgiveness, for example, respondent 1, Manuel had negative customer service experiences, and said, "I would forgive them if they actually ma[de] a better customer service, and tr[ied] to enhance their customer experience in their brand." Respondent 4, Tonya, had negative service experience, and she stated, "I think they should provide an exact shipping date … and let us know that the item is backordered before we purchase it." Attaining forgiveness due to negative past experience seems to be easier than due to other determinants. For example, respondent 9, Katherine, hates Michael Kors due to ideological incompatibility, and she stated she would forgive them, "if Michael Kors reinvents itself, and makes it less about the logo, and more about the design and quality," and for a brand to reinvent itself is much more difficult than improving their customer service or shipping logistics. This shows how each determinant has different weights towards brand forgiveness.

4.1.3. Graph Patterns

From the data presented in Table 1, we used the values of past, present, and future, to produce graphs. These graphs were categorized into three patterns, those who began the relationship in a positive value, those who began the relationship in a neutral value, and those who began the relationship in a negative value. Two participants were excluded from the table and graphs, as they were outliers.

Figure 14 shows the relationships that began with a positive past feeling. It can be observed that few stabilized in brand hate, and most bounced back to a lesser negative feeling, or bounced back to a positive feeling. In terms of brand forgiveness, these results show an outlet for forgiveness.
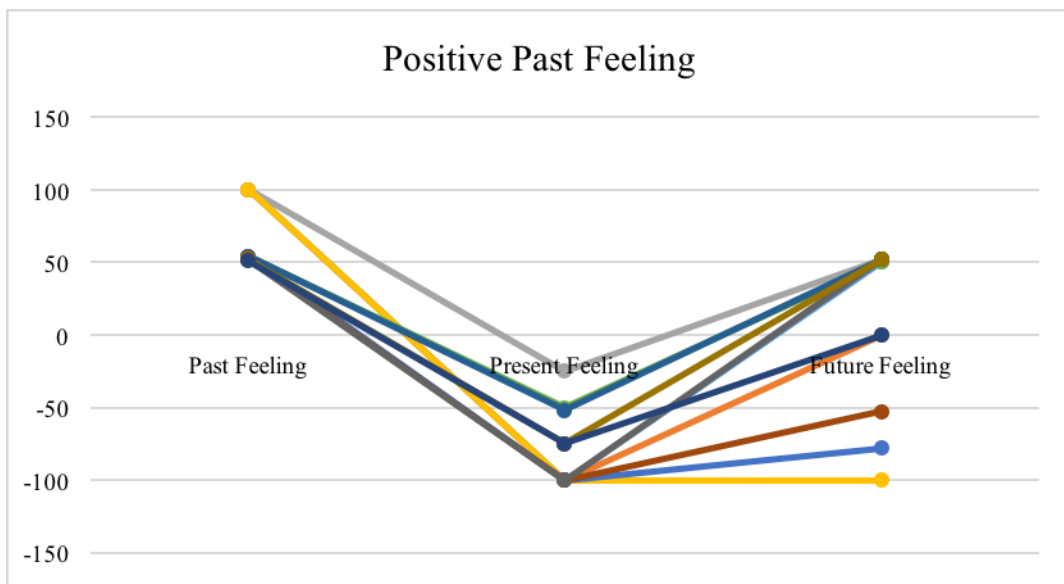
Figure 14. Positive Past Feeling Graphs

Figure 15 shows relationships that began in neutral past feeling. The same pattern is noticed as above, one respondent stabilizes in brand hate, and one respondent bounces back to neutral. These results also show the possibility of brand forgiveness.
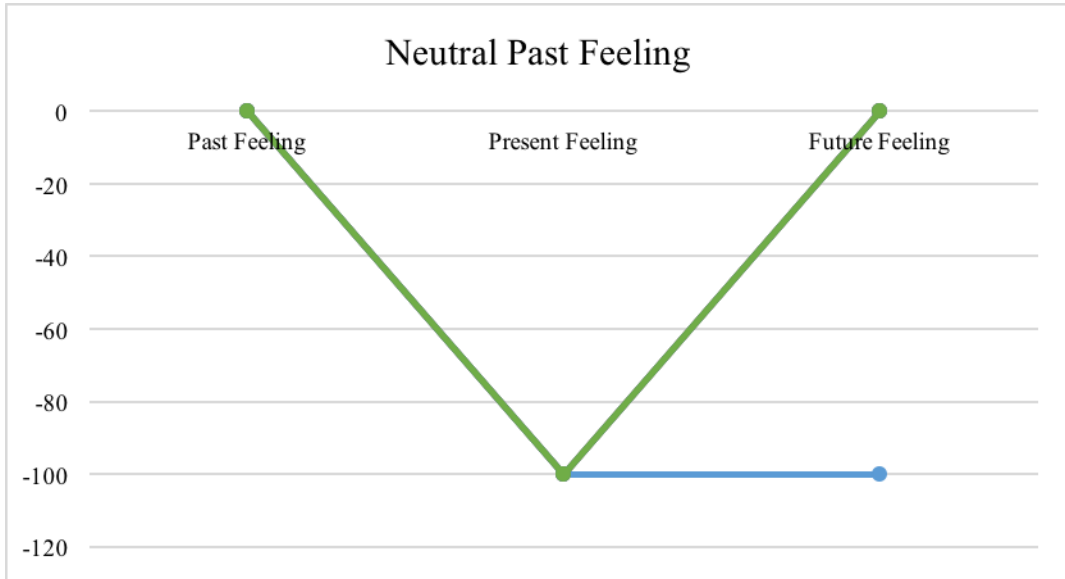
Figure 15. Neutral Past Feeling Graph

Figure 16 shows relationships that began with negative past feeling, and like the two graphs above, two patterns are observed. Either the relationship stabilizes in brand hate, or it bounces back to a lesser negative feeling, or a positive feeling. Again, showing potential for brand forgiveness in the future.
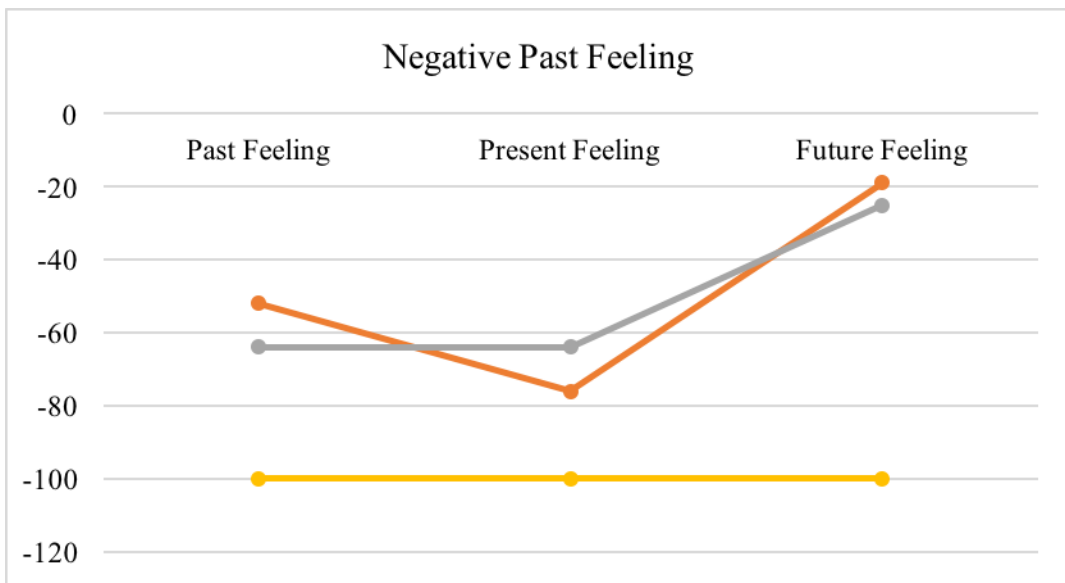
Figure 16. Negative Past Feeling Graph

From the sketches made at the end of the survey, which showed the pattern of their feelings towards

the brand from past, to present, to future possible allocated value, the two patterns observed above

were also confirmed. All the graphs are attached in Appendix B. The first pattern is where the

relationship *stabilizes* at the negative feeling phase, and the feeling never goes back up. An

example of this is seen in Figure 17, where the relationships goes from love to hate, and in the

future, it stabilizes at hate.
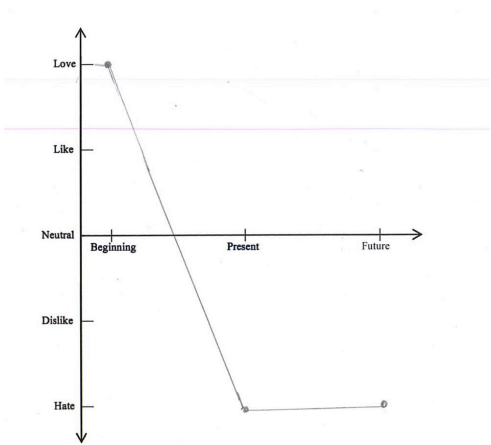
Figure 17. Interview Graph Pattern 1: Stabilizes

The second pattern is that the emotion *bounces back*. Different degrees of bouncing back exist;

this can be seen in Figure 18, in order from left to right, where the emotion either goes to a lesser

negative feeling, goes to neutral, or goes back to like. In all three scenarios, we see the possibility

of brand forgiveness, indicating that brands can attain their consumers back.
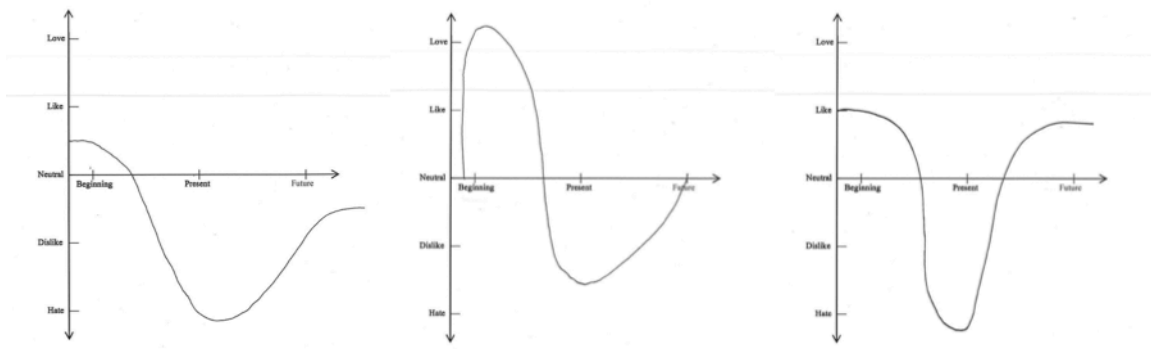
Figure 18. Interview Graphs Pattern 2: Bounces Back

These results show that both the drawn graphs and the data collected from the interview show consistent patterns.

4.2. Surveys

After conducting the interviews, the survey was constructed with adapted questions from the interview, and from findings of the literature review. Compared to the interview questions, we limited the amount of open-ended questions, and increased the amount of multiple-choice questions. The selection of items for the survey was a critical primary importance to the success of the study. These items served as tools for acquiring quantitative responses. Many adaptations were made until the final draft was agreed upon to be most effective, in terms of maintaining the participants' focus, and items that led for precise results towards brand divorce and brand forgiveness. The questions asked in the survey are attached in Appendix C.

4.2.1. Procedure

The survey questions were designed and exported from Qualtrics to Amazon's mechanical turk, Mturk. Mturk is an Internet market place for obtaining reliable survey responses in a large scale and rapidly. Buhrmester *et al.* (2011), praise Mturk for its demographically diverse group of respondents, compared to other Internet samples. Respondents in Mturk are screened for their US

residency and for their ability of speaking English. The survey was distributed via MTurk to 500 paid participants. Participants received $1.25 for their contribution; with an average of twelve minutes and twenty seconds time spent.

4.2.2. Items

The survey began like the interviews, asking participants to list up to five of their most hated brands, and to list their top choice. Then, the survey was divided into three main sections, questions about the past, present, and future. The past representing their brand-love period, the present representing their brand-hate period, its determinants and outcomes, and the future representing their brand forgiveness potential. In the past and present periods, participants were asked if they had bought the brand in the past, and if they still buy the brand today, with a yes or no question. In the future period, they were asked how likely they are to buy a product from the brand again, measured in a five-point Likert scale, one representing "extremely likely," and five representing "extremely unlikely". To quantitatively measure the change in "feeling", each period contained a scale from -100 to 100, where respondents were asked to indicate how they "felt, feel, and may feel in the future," about the brand. With this scale, we could create a graph showing the path of each participants' experience, from beginning to end.

In the "present" section, thirteen items were chosen to measure determinants of brand hate, which are identified as three possible establishers: negative past experience, image incongruity, and ideological incompatibility. These items were chosen from Lee's *et al.* (2009) research, "Anti-consumption and brand avoidance." The respondents were asked to rate to what extent they agreed or disagreed with each statement, grading each item on a five-point Likert scale, one representing "strongly agree," and five representing "strongly disagree". Eighteen items were chosen to measure outcomes of brand hate, divided into five possible trajectories: brand avoidance, private

complaining, public complaining, brand retaliation, and brand revenge. These items were a combination of items from Romani's *et al.* (2012) research, "Emotions that drive consumers away from brands" and from Thomson's *et al.* (2012) research, "Why brands should fear fearful consumers." The respondents were asked to rate to what extent they agreed or disagreed with each statement, grading each item on a five-point Likert scale, one representing "strongly agree," and five representing "strongly disagree."

In the "future" section, respondents were asked how likely they are to forgive the brand, measured in a five-point Likert scale, one representing "extremely likely," and five representing "extremely unlikely." After an open-ended question, explaining what the brand would have to do to achieve forgiveness, the respondents were asked five items that served as a forgiveness scale. These five items were chosen from Xie's *et al.* (2009) research, "How to repair customer trust after negative publicity," to measure brand forgiveness. The respondents were asked to rate to what extent they agreed or disagreed with each statement, grading each item on a five-point Likert scale, one representing "strongly agree," and five representing "strongly disagree". Appendix E shows all the survey items.

The survey ended with seven ethnographic questions, in the purpose of attaining some preliminary analysis, for example, measuring differences in willingness to forgive between genders. To ensure maximum response, all questions were designed to be "force" questions, so that every participant had to complete the survey.

4.2.3. Participants

Our sample consists of 506 respondents with 31 items on a 5 point Likert Scale. It is well above the minimum rule of 300 (Norusis, 2005) and has a sample-to-item ration of 16.32, which is higher

than the acceptable ratio of 10:1 (Nunnally, 1978), and concludes we have an adequate sample size. We calculated the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) as well as Barlett's Test of Sphericity to measure sampling adequacy, (Hutcheson and Sofroniou, 1999). The KMO is 0.854 (>0.5) and Barlett's Test of Sphericity is signicant at 0.000 (p>0.05); therefore, both values are over the threshold and the data is suitable for factor analysis. We also tested each item for normality, to assess which extraction method to use. According to our results, we get significant results for both, Kolmogorow-Smirnow and Shapiro-Wilk's 'test of normality' (Appendix K). We have a normal distribution, and we conclude we need to use principle factor analysis. To examine the quality of the sample regarding its demographic properties, a comparison to the US Census data was carried out, (Appendix D). The comparison revealed that the sample is relatively close to the US representative sample. 50.2% of the respondents identified as male, and 49.8% identified as female. Most respondents, 39.3%, were between 25-34 years old. 84% of the respondents identified as white, and 7% identified as black or African American. 41.6% stated they were single, and 49.2% stated they were married. Regarding the highest educational level completed, 37.5% of the respondents acquired a Bachelor's degree, 20.3% acquired an Associate degree, and 27.7% had a high school diploma. Respondents were relatively evenly distributed across the US, 34.8% live in the South, 11.5% live in the West, 24.2% live in the Midwest, and 29.5% live in the Northeast.

4.2.4. Validity and Reliability Tests

We used principle factor analysis (with promax rotation as we have correlations between factors, see Appendix F). As hypothesized, all nine constructs had eigenvalues >1, explaining 73.29 percent cumulative variance. Of the initial 31 items, no item had significant cross-loadings (>0.50). The details of the principle factor analysis with promax is shown on Table 2. All scales proved to be reliable with Cronbach's a values > 0.70 [negative past experience (0.75), image incongruence

(0.84), ideological incompatibility (0.91), brand avoidance (0.77), private complaining (0.86),

public complaining (0.82), brand retaliation (0.94), brand revenge (0.92), brand forgiveness (0.83)],

as seen in Table 4, (refer to Appendix G for more details on Cronbach's *a* values).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
RET_I stole from	0.96								
RET_I broke the law in order to get back	0.92								
RET_I used brands resources	0.90								
RET_I broke or damaged things	0.89								
RET_I threatened employees with payback	0.69								
I_acts unethically		0.95							
I_violates moral standards		0.91							
I_ acts irresponsible		0.88							
I_doesn't match my values and beliefs		0.75							
SI_Brand not reflect me			0.85						
SI_not represent what I'am			0.84						
SI_not fit my personality			0.83						
SI_not symbolize me			0.69						
SI_Not seen with			0.68						
FORGIVE_I would think favorably				0.86					
FORGIVE_Given brands response, I would forgive it.				0.84					
FORGIVE_I would disapprove				0.79					
FORGIVE_I feel sympathetic toward brand				0.71					
FORGIVE_I would condemn it				0.64					
REV_I imagined how to hurt					0.93				
REV_I obsessed to get back					0.83				
REV_ fascinated about the ways to harm					0.80				
REV_I made my missions to damage					0.68				
NPE_Poor Performance						0.87			
NPE_Bad performance of product						0.85			
NPE_Dissatisfied by product						0.66			
NPE_Products are inconvenient						0.61			
PrC_I recommend not to buy							0.90		
PrC_I say negative things to others							0.88		
PrC_I discourage friends to buy							0.86		
PuC_I'm involved in clubs against brand								0.90	

		0.85
PuC_I complained to law enforcement		0.85
PuC_I complained to external agencies		0.81
A_buy less frequently		0.85
A_I stop buying		0.83
A_switched to a competing brand		0.80

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. | Rotation Method: Promax with Kaiser Normalization. | a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.

Table 2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis

To assess multicollinearity, we ran a series of regressions models on the various constructs to calculate the variance infraction factor (VIF), (Kleinbaum *et al.,* 1988). The VIF values ranged between 1.00 and 1.99, and for the tolerance test between 1.00 and 0.50. While no formal, theory-based cut-off values exist, many regard a VIF > 10 and a tolerance test < 0.10 as cut off values for multicollinearity. Our values are well below the cutoff values, which is considered unproblematic. Details of the VIF values can be seen in Table 3, for the variables of determinants and the outcomes.

Construct	Tolerance Test	VIF
Determinants		
Negative Past Experience	0.92	1.09
Image Incongruity	1.00	1.00
Ideological Incompatibility	0.97	1.03
Outcomes		
Avoidance	0.50	1.99
Private Complaining	0.51	1.97
Public Complaining	0.52	1.92
Brand Retaliation	0.73	1.37
Brand Revenge	0.76	1.32
Brand Forgiveness (after recoding)*	0.50	1.99

Table 3. Test for Multicollinearity

Convergent validity was examined by calculating the average variance extracted (AVE), and the construct reliability (CR). Both, the AVE needs to be > 0.50, (Fornell and Larcker, 1981) and the

CR > 0.60, (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988). All our AVE and CR values are above the recommended threshold. To test for discriminant validity, all AVE values need to be higher than the squared inter-construct correlation (SIC) estimates. We used the Kendall's tau-b correlations, a measure of correlation between ordinal scales, (see Appendix H). Details for Cronbach's *a,* AVE, CR and SIC values are provided in Table 4.

Construct	Cronbach Alpha	AVE	CR	Highest SIC
Determinants				
Negative Past Experience	0.75	0.57	0.75	0.19**
Image Incongruity	0.84	0.61	0.80	0.27**
Ideological Incompatability	0.91	0.76	0.93	0.34**
Outcomes				
Avoidance	0.77	0.68	0.87	0.19**
Private Complaining	0.86	0.78	0.84	0.34**
Public Complaining	0.82	0.73	0.91	0.39**
Brand Retaliation	0.94	0.77	0.94	0.50**
Brand Revenge	0.92	0.66	0.85	0.50**
Brand Forgiveness (after recoding)*	0.83	0.60	0.78	0.16**

Table 4. Cronbach Alpha, AVE, CR, SIC Tests

4.2.5. Hypothesis Testing – Brand Hate Model

We conducted a structural equation model by using SPSS 24 AMOS to assess the relationships among the underlying constructs. The results suggest an acceptable model fit with x=1368.12; df= 42; p=0.00; x/df = 3.26; IFI = 0.92; NFI= 0.87, TLI = 0.90 and CFI= 0.91; RMSEA= 0.07.
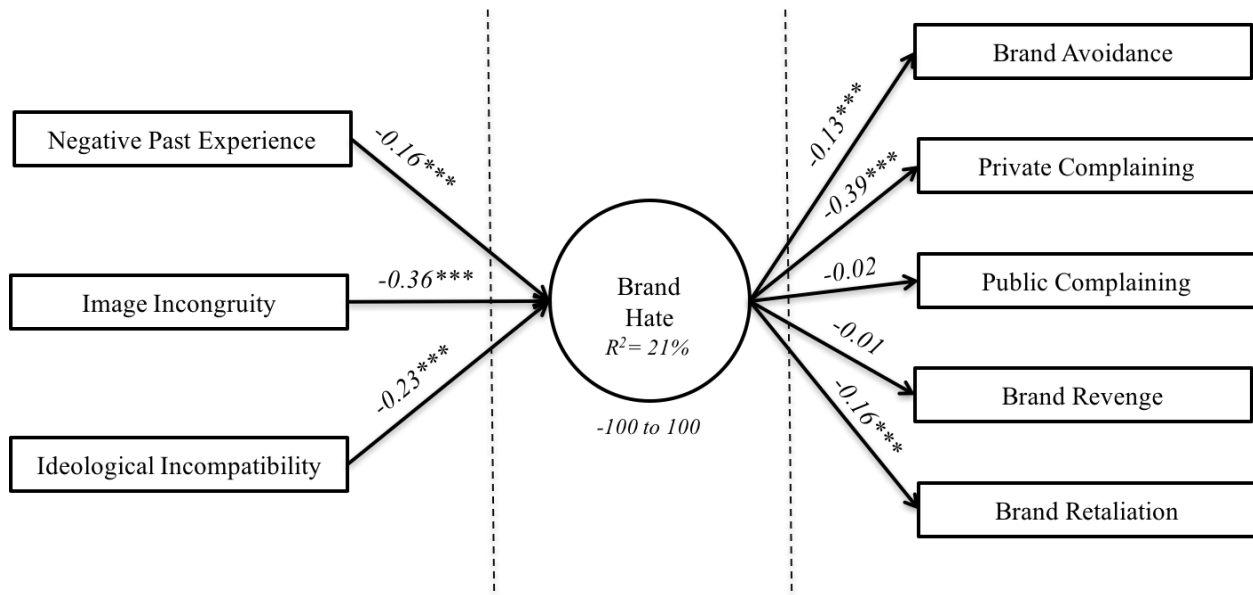
Figure 19. Brand Hate Model Results

Figure 19 shows the significance level for each variable. We considered significance level of 0.01 as 1% receiving ***, and significance level of 0.05 as 5% receiving **, and any significance level below were considered not significant. In this model, both public complaining and brand revenge resulted as not significant, but all other variables lied on 1% level, being considered significant. Hypothesis H1a is supported, as it shows that negative past experience allocates a negative feeling of - 0.16 towards brand hate. Hypothesis H2a is also supported, as image incongruity allocates - 0.36 towards brand hate. Hypothesis H3a also is supported, as it allocates - 0.23 towards brand hate. Hypothesis H4a is supported, as brand hate leads to brand avoidance, and creates a - 0.13 value, which when multiplied by a determinant (all negative values), indicates the amount of brand avoidance. Therefore, the stronger the brand hate, the more the consumer will brand avoid. Inversely, the more brand love, the less the consumer will brand avoid. This is also true for H5a and H8a. This is not true for H6a and H7a as they are not supported. Table 5 summarizes the hypothesis and their standard regression weights, which are also visualized Figure 19.

Hypothesis	Standard Regression Weights	Supported
H1a: Negative Past Experience → Hate	- 0.16***	✓
H2a: Image Incongruity → Hate	- 0.36***	✓
H3a: Ideological Incompatibility → Hate	- 0.23***	✓
H4a: Hate → Brand Avoidance	- 0.13***	✓
H5a: Hate → Private Complaining	- 0.39***	✓
H6a: Hate → Public Complaining	- 0.02	
H7a: Hate → Brand Revenge	- 0.01	
H8a: Hate → Brand Retaliation	- 0.16***	✓

Table 5. Hypothesis Testing Summary Table

4.2.6. Hypothesis Testis – Brand Forgiveness Model

We conducted a structural equation model by using SPSS AMOS to assess the relationships among the underlying constructs. The results suggest an acceptable model fit with x=1372.78; df= 420; p=0.00; x/df = 3.27; IFI = 0.905; NFI= 0.868, TLI = 0.894 and CFI= 0.904; RMSEA= 0.67.
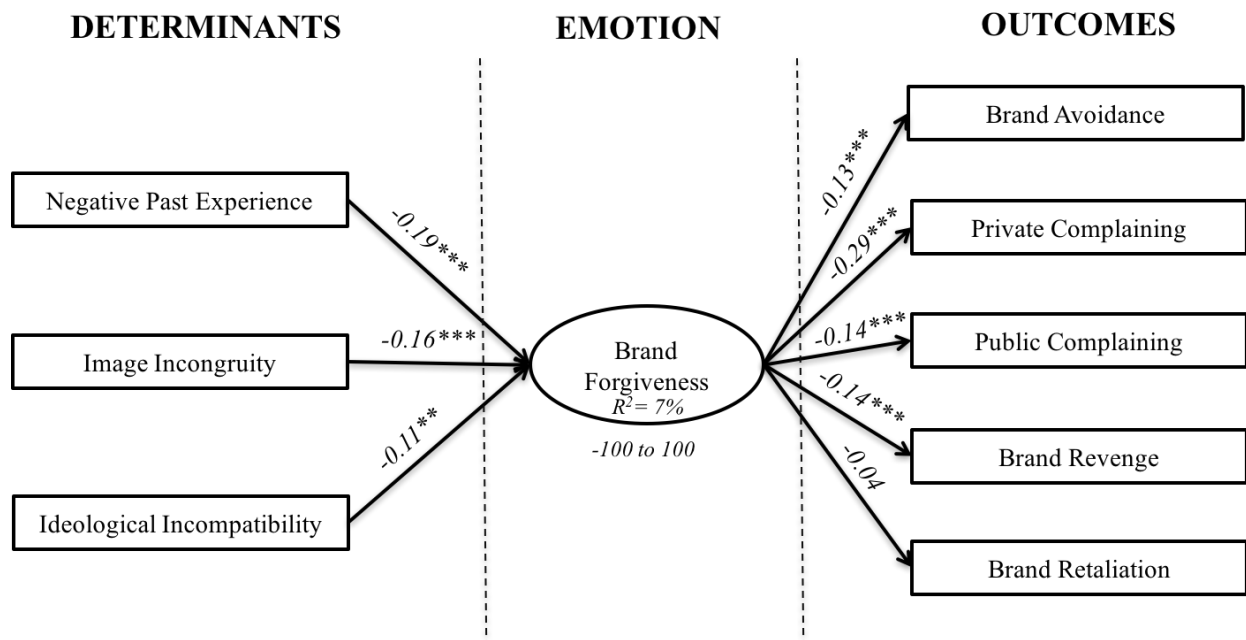

Figure 20. Brand Forgiveness Model Results

Figure 20 shows the significance value for each variable. We considered significance level of 0.01 as 1% receiving ***, and significance level of 0.05 as 5% receiving **, and any significance level below were considered not significant. In this model, only brand retaliation resulted as not significant, but all other variables lied on 1% level and one on 5% level, being considered significant. Hypothesis H1b is supported, as it shows that negative past experience allocates a negative feeling of - 0.19 towards brand forgiveness. Hypothesis H2b is also supported, as image incongruity allocates - 0.16 towards brand forgiveness. Hypothesis H3b also is supported, as it allocates - 0.11 towards brand forgiveness. Hypothesis H4b is supported, as brand forgiveness leads to brand avoidance, and creates a - 0.13 value, which when multiplied by a determinant (all negative values), indicates the amount of brand avoidance. Therefore, the stronger the willingness to forgive, the less the consumer will brand avoid. Inversely, the less willingness to forgive, the more the consumer will brand avoid. This is also true for H5b through H7b. This is not true for H8b as it is not supported.

Table 6 summarizes the hypothesis and their standard regression weights, which are also visualized in Figure 20.

Hypothesis	Standard Regression Weights	Supported
H1b: Negative Past Experience → Forgiveness	- 0.19***	✓
H2b: Image incongruity→ Forgiveness	- 0.16***	✓
H3b: Ideological Incompatibility→ Forgiveness	- 0.11**	✓
H4b: Forgiveness → Brand Avoidance	- 0.13***	✓
H5b: Forgiveness → Public Complaining	- 0.29***	✓
H6b: Forgiveness → Private Complaining	- 0.14***	✓
H7b: Forgiveness → Brand Revenge	- 0.14***	✓
H8b: Forgiveness → Brand Retaliation	- 0.04	

Table 6. Summary Table

4.2.7. Additional Brand Forgiveness Results

To further test the hypothesis, we looked only at the outcomes, to see the difference within willingness to forgive. We split the sample into low forgiveness and high forgiveness. Low forgiveness considered scores of 1-2 (N=243), and high forgiveness considered scores of 4-5 (N=201). Scores of 3 were excluded, as they are considered neutral (see Appendix I).

To test the hypotheses an ANOVA analysis was performed in SPSS (see Appendix J). Table 7 displays the results for hypotheses H4b through H8b and H9 and H10, and shows which hypothesis are supported.

Hypothesis	Mean Low Forgiveness	Mean High Forgiveness	P-value	Supported
H4b: Forgiveness → Avoidance	4.37	4.17	.039	✓
H5b: Forgiveness → Private Complaining	4.51	4.12	.000	✓
H6b: Forgiveness → Public Complaining	1.89	1.68	.041	✓
H7b: Forgiveness → Brand Revenge	1.58	1.38	.030	✓
H8b: Forgiveness → Brand Retaliation	1.14	1.22	.134	
H9: Forgiveness → Likely to Buy in Future	1.26	1.79	.000	✓
H10: Forgiveness → Feeling Now	-82.08	-66.26	.000	✓

Table 7. Summary Table of Split Forgiveness

These results are another way of testing the hypothesis, and they are consistent with our model. Figure 21 is a visualization of our results presented above, showing the significance values of each variable from Hypothesis H4b-H7b and H9-10, excluding H8b, since it was not supported. This visualization shows the mean of each variable, and if it indicates low forgiveness or high forgiveness. H4b-H7b show, the higher the value allocated to a brand hate outcome, the lower the value will be allocated towards brand forgiveness. In other words, the more brand avoidance, the lower the forgiveness. This is the same for all outcomes, the more public complaining, the lower

the forgiveness. Or inversely, the less brand avoidance, the higher the forgiveness. H9 and H10 show high forgiveness results. H9 shows, the more willing the consumer is to forgive, the more likely they are to buy the brand again in the future. H10 shows, the stronger the feeling of hate in the past, the lower forgiveness will be, or, the weaker the feeling of hate in the past, the higher the forgiveness will be.
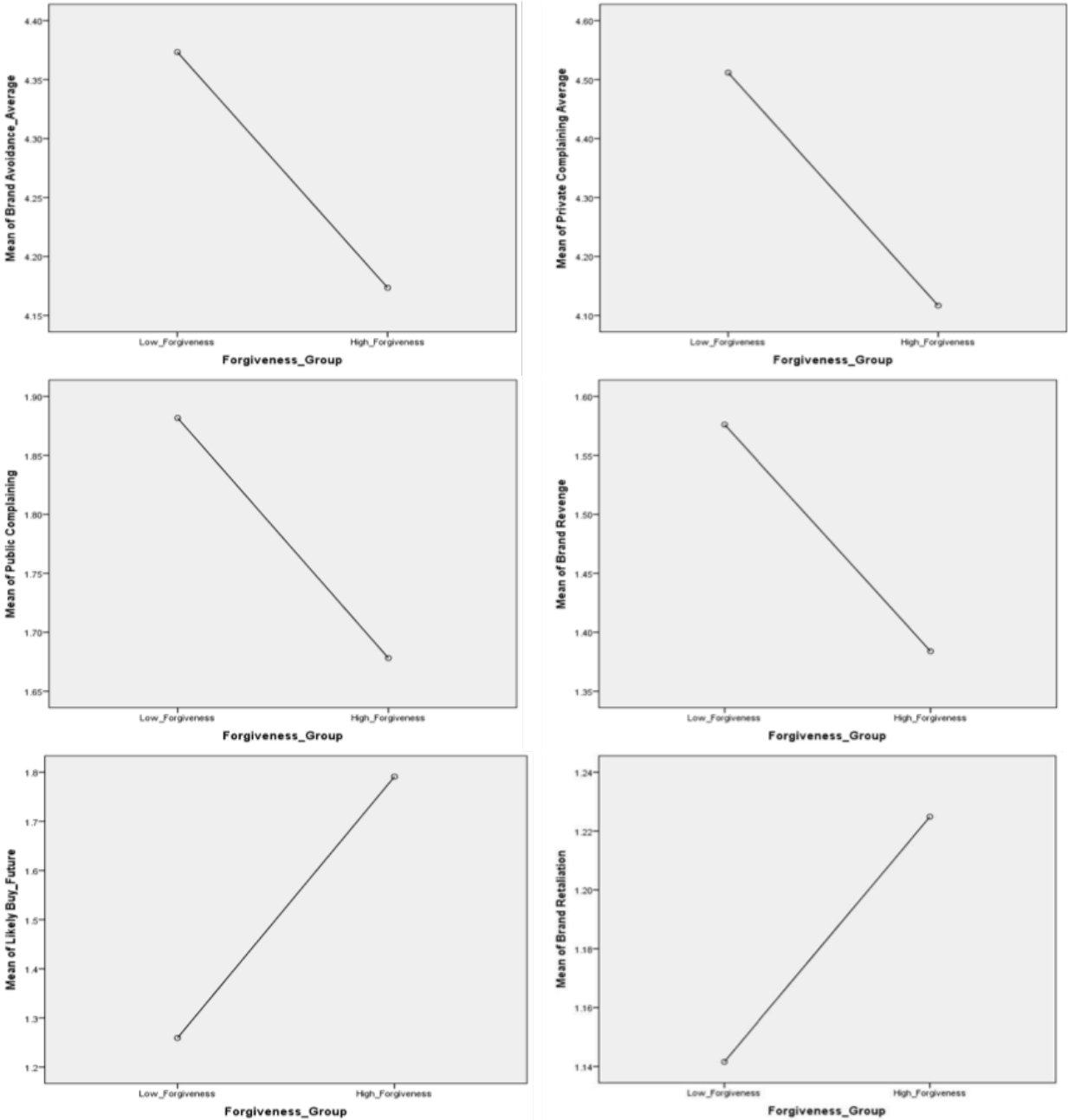

Figure 21. Visualization of Significance for Split Brand Forgiveness Results

5. Conclusion and Discussion

5.1. Limitations

Although the results of this thesis were substantive, it still poses limitations. Firstly, our sample pool is only located within the United States. There might be other determinants that we could have taken into consideration, as well as other outcomes, such as "willingness to hurt a brand." Both illustrations of the research models indicate that each determinant can lead to any, or all, outcomes. Our thesis fails to separate each determinant individually to analyze which determinant most likely leads to which outcomes. Our low R^2 value for the forgiveness model indicates that there is much more to forgiveness than we have considered in this thesis; as previously mentioned, both love and hate are complex emotions, and the willingness to forgive is complex as well. Our thesis also fails to look at all the qualitative data acquired from the mass survey, which could have shown further results.

5.2. Suggestions for Future Research

The limitations listed above are potential avenues for future research. Also, the understudied field of negative brand emotions, and brand forgiveness has vast outlets for further research. This thesis also fails to mention strategies of brand forgiveness, or how to attain brand forgiveness, there is a limited amount of research in this field, and this question still stands unanswered, and therefore potential for further research exists in this field. Some of our hypothesis might have resulted as unsupported due to the limitation of separating the pool or respondents by age or gender. For example, H6a (public complaining) may have been supported if only respondents aging between

18-24 were analyzed, given the unfamiliarity of anti-branding websites within the age group of 55+. Analyzing our respondents more narrowly may lead to further results.

5.3. Conclusion

This thesis explored and outlined the theoretical and empirical determinants and outcomes of brand hate and brand forgiveness. This thesis provides a useful taxonomy of brand hate, and provides significant contribution to the field of CBR, since it is an under-researched aspect of negative emotions relating to brand relationships. This thesis shows the strength of each outcome towards brand hate, and the strength of each towards brand forgiveness.

This thesis proves that an angry costumer is not a lost customer. Brand forgiveness is possible, and although consumers may experience high brand hate, there is potential for companies to regain back those consumers. As seen in the graphs obtained from the interviews, both hand-sketched and electronic (as they both showed consistent results), most of the interviewees showed a pattern of *bouncing back* to either a lesser negative feeling, neutral, or positive feeling. All of these outcomes from *bouncing back* show the potential for brand forgiveness, indicating that companies *can* attain brand forgiveness.

More specifically, by splitting the sample into low forgiveness and high forgiveness, companies can see which consumers are more *worth* to invest on to regain their brand trust. This thesis shows brand forgiveness can be attained depending on which determinant caused the brand hate. Some determinants lead to higher forgiveness and some lead to lower forgiveness. We also see that consumers who had lower levels of hate for the brand in the past, are more likely to forgive in the future. Inversely, consumers with higher levels of hate for the brand in the past, are less likely to forgive in the future. Companies therefore should focus on consumers that are more willing to forgive in the future, and that had less strong negative feelings in the past. Since negative past

experience showed the least negative feeling towards brand hate (within its determinants), companies should also focus on consumers who obtained brand hate from negative past experience, as these consumers are more likely to forgive in the future. Also, those consumers who have previously bought the brand in the past are more likely to forgive the brand in the future. Companies should focus on consumers that previously bought the brand, as they are more likely to buy again in the future.

Appendix

Appendix A: Interview Guide

Brand Divorce

Q1 Please list up to 5 brand names you feel negative about:
    Brand 1
    Brand 2
    Brand 3
    Brand 4
    Brand 5

Q2 Which one do you dislike/hate the most?
- Brand 1
- Brand 2
- Brand 3
- Brand 4
- Brand 5

Q9 When was the first time you ....
    heard about
    saw/familiar
    contact/bought

Q5 How did you feel about the brand in the past?
_____

Q10 Explain in detail, why you felt this way

Q7 Today do you still use/buy the brand?
- Yes
- No

Q11 Why or why not?

Q13 How do you feel about the brand today?
_____

Q12 Explain in detail, how did your feeling change/or not change, from the beginning?

Q14 What behavior have you adopted to express your feelings? Eg. Avoidance, Complaints, or Retaliation?

Q15 How likely are you to forgive the brand? From a scale of not likely at all to very likely.
- ⭕ Definitely Not
- ⭕ Probably Not
- ⭕ Neutral
- ⭕ Probably
- ⭕ Definitely
- ⭕ I Don't Know

Q16 Why or Why not?

Q17 How likely are you to buy this brand again? from scale of not likely to all very likely.
- ⭕ Extremely unlikely
- ⭕ Somewhat unlikely
- ⭕ Neither likely nor unlikely
- ⭕ Somewhat likely
- ⭕ Extremely likely
- ⭕ Don't know

Q18 Why or Why not?

Q19 How do you expect to feel about this brand in the future? Provide the maximum value you are willing to allocate.

_____
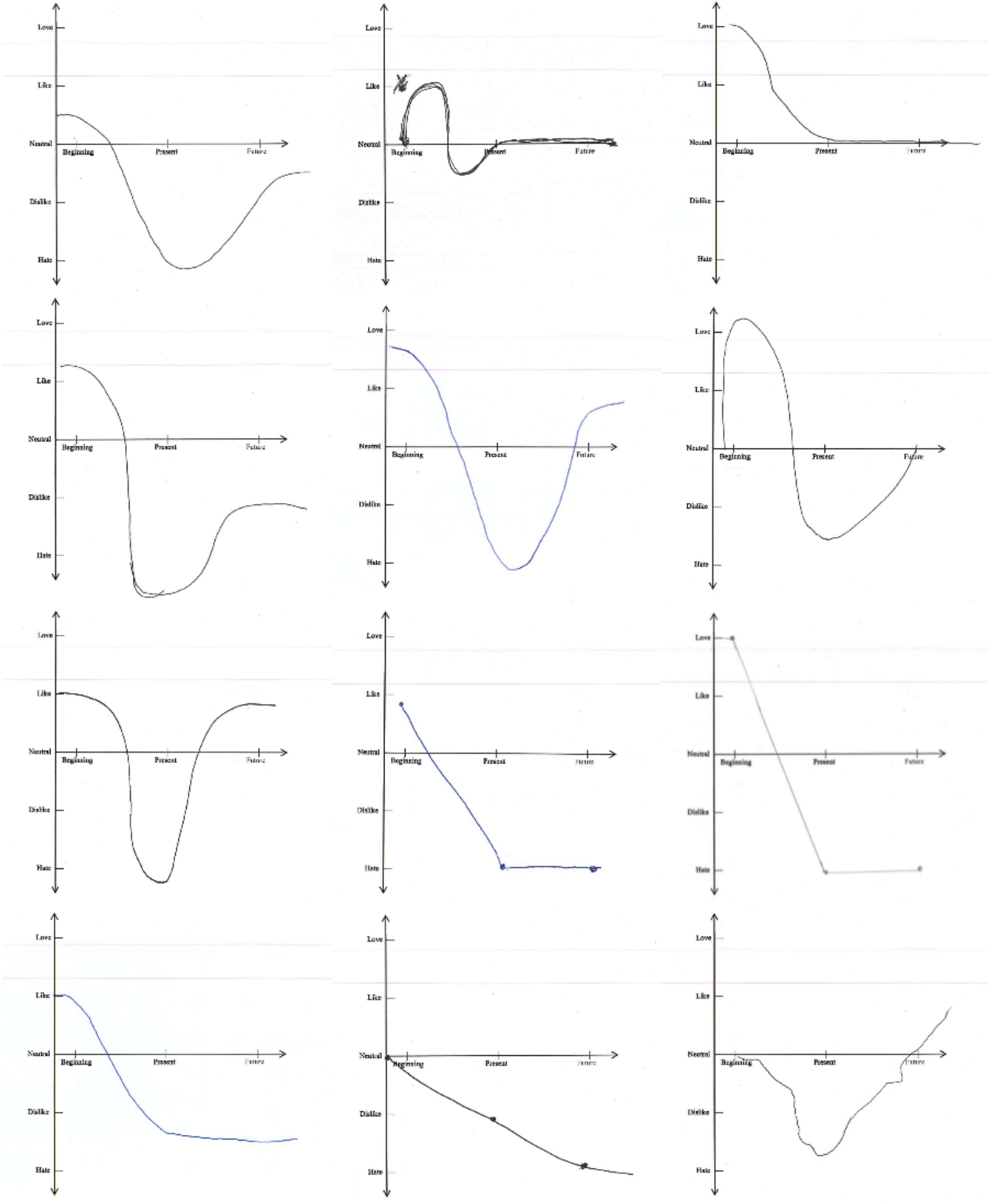
Q20 Gender
- ⭕ Male
- ⭕ Female

Q21 Age
- ⭕ Under 18
- ⭕ 18 - 24
- ⭕ 25 - 34
- ⭕ 35 - 44
- ⭕ 45 - 54
- ⭕ 55 - 64
- ⭕ 65 - 74
- ⭕ 75 - 84
- ⭕ 85 or older

Q22 Ethnicity
- ○ White
- ○ Black or African American
- ○ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ○ Asian
- ○ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- ○ Other

Appendix B: Interview Graphs

Appendix C: Large Scale Survey on MTurk

Brand Divorce and Brand Forgiveness

You are invited to participate in a brief anonymous survey on your experience with a brand. A brand can be any type of product (e.g. soft drink, shoe) or service (e.g., restaurant, hotel) you can think of. When answering the survey, please keep the same brand in your mind. Please provide answers that best reflect your opinion. You can terminate the survey anytime. Your participation is greatly appreciated

Do you want to proceed with the survey?
❍ YES
❍ NO

Q1 List up to 5 brand names you have negative feelings
    Brand 1
    Brand 2
    Brand 3
    Brand 4
    Brand 5

Q2 Which one do you dislike/hate the most? Please type again brand name

Q3 Did you buy/use Brand X in the PAST?
❍ Yes
❍ No

Q4 How did you feel about Brand X in the PAST?
_____

Q5 Describe how your relationship WAS with Brand X in the PAST (write at least 30 words).

Q6 Do you still buy/use Brand X TODAY?
❍ Yes
❍ No

Q7 Why or why not? (write at least 30 words).

Q8 How do you feel about Brand X TODAY?
_____

Q9 Explain in detail, how and why your feelings changed/or did not change (write at least 30 words).

Q10 To what extend do you agree or disagree with the following statements as related to Brand X's products or services?

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
The performance of products of Brand X is poor	○	○	○	○	○	○
Brand X products are inconvenient	○	○	○	○	○	○
My hate for Brand X is linked to the bad performance of this product	○	○	○	○	○	○
I'm dissatisfied by Brand X	○	○	○	○	○	○

Q11 To what extend do you agree or disagree with the following statements as related to Brand X's products or services?

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
The products of Brand X do not reflect who I am	○	○	○	○	○	○
The products of Brand X do not fit my personality	○	○	○	○	○	○
I don't want to be seen with Brand X	○	○	○	○	○	○
Brand X does not represent what I am	○	○	○	○	○	○
Brand X symbolizes the kind of person I would never want to be	○	○	○	○	○	○

Q12 To what extend do you agree or disagree with the following statements as related to Brand X's products or services?

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
In my opinion, Brand X acts irresponsible	○	○	○	○	○	○
In my opinion, Brand X acts unethically	○	○	○	○	○	○
Brand X violates moral standards	○	○	○	○	○	○
Brand X doesn't match my values and beliefs	○	○	○	○	○	○

Q13 To what extend do you agree or disagree with the following statements as related to Brand X's products or services?

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
I buy Brand X less frequently than before	○	○	○	○	○	○
I stop buying Brand X and will not buy it anymore	○	○	○	○	○	○
I switched to a competing brand	○	○	○	○	○	○

Q14 To what extend do you agree or disagree with the following statements as related to Brand X's products or services?

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
I discourage friends and relatives to buy Brand X	○	○	○	○	○	○
I say negative things about Brand X to others	○	○	○	○	○	○
I recommend not to buy Brand X to someone who seeks my advice	○	○	○	○	○	○

Q15 To what extend do you agree or disagree with the following statements as related to Brand X's products or services?

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
I became involved in organizations or clubs united against Brand X	○	○	○	○	○	○
I complained to law enforcement about Brand X	○	○	○	○	○	○
I complained to external agencies (eg. consumer unions) about Brand X	○	○	○	○	○	○

Q16 To what extend do you agree or disagree with the following statements as related to Brand X's products or services?

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
I stole from Brand X	○	○	○	○	○	○
I broke the law in order to get back at Brand X	○	○	○	○	○	○
I intentionally broke or damaged things from Brand X	○	○	○	○	○	○
I intentionally used Brand X's resources wastefully to hurt them	○	○	○	○	○	○
I threatened employees of Brand X with payback or retribution	○	○	○	○	○	○

Q17 To what extend do you agree or disagree with the following statements as related to Brand X's products or services?

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
I imagined how to hurt Brand X	○	○	○	○	○	○
I obsessed over what I could do to get back at Brand X	○	○	○	○	○	○
I made it one of my family's missions to damage Brand X	○	○	○	○	○	○
I became fascinated about the various ways I can do to harm Brand X	○	○	○	○	○	○

Q18 How likely are you to buy Brand X again? From a scale of extremely likely to extremely unlikely.
○ Extremely unlikely
○ Somewhat unlikely
○ Neither likely nor unlikely
○ Somewhat likely
○ Extremely likely

Q19 Why or why not? (write at least 30 words)

Q20 How likely are you to forgive Brand X? From a scale of extremely likely to extremely unlikely.
○ Extremely unlikely
○ Somewhat unlikely
○ Neither likely nor unlikely
○ Somewhat likely
○ Extremely likely

Q21 What would Brand X have to do for you to forgive them? (write at least 30 words)

Q22 If Brand X were to change and do the things you mentioned in the previous question, what is the maximum value you are willing to allocate as it relates to your FUTURE feelings for this brand? _____

Q23 To what extend do you agree or disagree with the following statements as related to Brand X's products or services?

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
I would think favorably of Brand X	○	○	○	○	○	○
Given Brand X's response, I would condemn it.	○	○	○	○	○	○
Given Brand X's response, I would forgive it.	○	○	○	○	○	○
I would disapprove of Brand X.	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel sympathetic toward Brand X.	○	○	○	○	○	○

Q24 What is your gender?
- ○ Male
- ○ Female

Q25 What is your age?
- ○ 18
- ○ 19
- ○ 20

....
- ○ 96
- ○ 97
- ○ 98
- ○ 99

Q26 What is your marital status?
- ○ Never married
- ○ Married
- ○ Separated
- ○ Divorced
- ○ Widowed/other

Q27 What is the highest level of education you have completed?
- ○ Less than high school
- ○ High school
- ○ Associate Degree (2 years college)
- ○ Bachelor's Degree (4 years college)
- ○ Master's Degree
- ○ Doctoral Degree
- ○ Professional Degree (MD, JD)

Q28 What is your race/ethnicity?
- ○ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ○ Asian
- ○ Black or African American
- ○ Hispanic or Latino
- ○ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- ○ White

Q29 What U.S. region do you come from?
- ○ Northeast
- ○ Midwest
- ○ South
- ○ West

Q30 6. What is your combined annual household income in $? (not mandatory to respond)
- ○ under $20,000
- ○ 20,000-29,999
- ○ 30,000-39,999
- ○ 40,000-49,999
- ○ 50,000-59,999
- ○ 60,000-69,999
- ○ 70,000-79,999
- ○ 80,000-89,999
- ○ 90,000-99,999
- ○ 100,000-109,999
- ○ 110,000-119,999
- ○ 120,000-129,999
- ○ 130,000-139,999
- ○ 140,000-149,999
- ○ 150,000+

Appendix D: Descriptive Statistics of Samples

	Survey 1 (n=514)	U.S. 2010 CENSUS
Gender	In %	In %
Male	50.2	49
Female	49.8	51
Age*	In %	In %
18-24	5.4	17
25-34	39.3	17
35-44	29.4	17
45-54	15.6	18
55-64	9 .1	15
> 65	1.2	16
Marital Status	In %	In %
Single	41.6	34
Married	49.2	52
Divorced or Widow	9.2	14
Highest Educational Level	In %	In %
High School or less	27.7 ⎤	67
Associate Degree	20.3 ⎦	
Bachelor Degree	37.5	21
Master's Degree	12.3	10
Doctorate Degree (PhD/MD/JD)	2.1	2
Ethnicity	In %	In %
White	84	75
Black or African American	7	14
Hispanic or Latino	3.7	n/a
Asian	4.1	6
Native American and other	1.2	5
Geographical U.S. region	In %	In %
Northeast	29.5	18
Midwest	24.2	22
South	34.8	37
West	11.5	23

* Census data reported excluding ages 0-18 years old to make it comparable to respondents samples of study 1 and 2.

Appendix E: Survey Items

Time	Construct	# items	Item description	Source
PAST / Determinant	Negative Past Experience	4	The performance of products of X is poor X's products are inconvenient My hate for X is linked to the bad performance of this product I'm dissatisfied by X	Lee, M. S., Motion, J., & Conroy, D. (2009)
	Self-image vs. Brand Image	5	The products of X do not reflect who I am The products of X do not fit my personality I don't want to be seen with X X does not represent what I am X symbolizes the kind of person I would never want to be	Lee, M. S., Motion, J., & Conroy, D. (2009)
	Ideological Incompatibility	4	In my opinion, X acts irresponsible In my opinion, X acts unethically X violates moral standards X doesn't match my values and beliefs	Lee, M. S., Motion, J., & Conroy, D. (2009)
PRESENT / Outcome	Brand Avoidance	3	I buy X less frequently than before I stop buyingX and will not buy it anymore I switched to a competing brand	Romani, S., Grappi, S., & Dalli, D. (2012)
	Private Complaining	3	I discourage friends and relatives to buy X I say negative things about X to others I recommend not to buy X to someone who seeks my advice	Romani, S., Grappi, S., & Dalli, D. (2012)
	Public Complaining	3	I became involved in organizations or clubs united against X I complained to law enforcement about X I complained to external agencies (eg. consumer unions) about X	Romani, S., Grappi, S., & Dalli, D. (2012)
	Brand Retaliation	5	I stole from X I broke the law in order to get back at X I intentionally broke or damaged things from X I intentionally used X's resources wastefully to hurt them (4) I threatened employees of X with payback or retribution	Thomson, M., Whelan, J., & Johnson, A. R. (2012)
	Brand Revenge	4	I imagined how to hurt X I obsessed over what I could do to get back at X I made it one of my life's missions to damage X I became fascinated about the various ways I can do to harm X	Thomson, M., Whelan, J., & Johnson, A. R. (2012)
FUTURE - Forgiveness	Forgiveness Scale	5	I would think favorably of X Given X's response, I would condemn it Given X's response, I would forgive it I would disapprove of X I feel sympathetic toward X	Xie, Y., & Peng, S. Marketing, 26(7), 572-589.
	Forgiveness Scale	1	How likely are you to buy X again? From a scale of extremely likely to extremely unlikely.	

Anchor: Five Point Likert Scale from a scale of extremely likely to extremely unlikely.

Appendix F: Component Correlation Matrix

Component Correlation Matrix

Component	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	1.00	- 0.04	- 0.15	0.03	0.54	0.05	- 0.05	0.47	- 0.05
2	- 0.04	1.00	0.27	- 0.14	0.12	- 0.02	0.36	0.15	0.04
3	- 0.15	0.27	1.00	- 0.22	- 0.00	0.16	0.24	0.01	0.12
4	0.03	- 0.14	- 0.22	1.00	- 0.17	- 0.20	- 0.26	- 0.15	- 0.09
5	0.54	0.12	- 0.00	- 0.17	1.00	0.17	0.14	0.46	- 0.08
6	0.05	- 0.02	0.16	- 0.20	0.17	1.00	0.21	0.18	0.16
7	- 0.05	0.36	0.24	- 0.26	0.14	0.21	1.00	0.16	0.14
8	0.47	0.15	0.01	- 0.15	0.46	0.18	0.16	1.00	0.08
9	- 0.05	0.04	0.11	- 0.09	- 0.08	0.16	0.14	0.08	1.00

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Promax with Kaiser Normalization.

Appendix G: Construct

Construct	Cronbach Alpha	Min	Max
Determinants			
Negative Past Experience	0.75	0.22	0.71
Image incongruity	0.84	0.38	0.75
Ideological Incompatibility	0.91	0.62	0.85
Outcomes			
Avoidance	0.77	0.48	0.58
Private Complaining	0.86	0.65	0.72
Public Complaining	0.82	0.60	0.65
Brand Retaliation	0.94	0.66	0.84
Brand Revenge	0.92	0.65	0.86
Brand Forgiveness (after recoding)*	0.83	0.22	0.74

Appendix H: Correlations

<table>
<tr><td colspan="10" align="center">Correlations</td></tr>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Negative Brand Experience</th>
<th>Image Incongruity</th>
<th>Ideological Incompatibility</th>
<th>Brand Avoidance</th>
<th>Private Comp.</th>
<th>Public Comp.</th>
<th>Brand Retaliation</th>
<th>Brand Revenge</th>
<th>Forgiv…</th>
</tr>
<tr><td>Negative Brand Experience</td><td>1.00</td><td>0.13**</td><td>0.01</td><td>0.15**</td><td>0.19**</td><td>0.15**</td><td>0.08*</td><td>0.12**</td><td>- 0.0…</td></tr>
<tr><td>Image Incongruity</td><td>0.13**</td><td>1.00</td><td>0.27**</td><td>0.08*</td><td>0.23**</td><td>0.03</td><td>- 0.12**</td><td>0.01</td><td>- 0.1…</td></tr>
<tr><td>Ideological Incompatibility</td><td>0.01</td><td>0.27**</td><td>1.00</td><td>0.05</td><td>0.34**</td><td>0.14**</td><td>- 0.06</td><td>0.10**</td><td>- 0.0…</td></tr>
<tr><td>Brand Avoidance</td><td>0.15**</td><td>0.08*</td><td>0.05</td><td>1.00</td><td>0.19**</td><td>0.06</td><td>- 0.07</td><td>- 0.05</td><td>- 0.0…</td></tr>
<tr><td>Private Complaining</td><td>0.19**</td><td>0.23**</td><td>0.34**</td><td>0.19**</td><td>1.00</td><td>0.17**</td><td>0.04</td><td>0.13**</td><td>- 0.1…</td></tr>
<tr><td>Public Complaining</td><td>0.15**</td><td>0.03</td><td>0.14**</td><td>0.06</td><td>0.17**</td><td>1.00</td><td>0.33**</td><td>0.39**</td><td>0.0…</td></tr>
<tr><td>Brand Retaliation</td><td>0.08*</td><td>- 0.12**</td><td>- 0.06</td><td>- 0.07</td><td>0.04</td><td>0.33**</td><td>1.00</td><td>0.50**</td><td>0.08…</td></tr>
<tr><td>Brand Revenge</td><td>0.12**</td><td>0.01</td><td>0.10**</td><td>- 0.05</td><td>0.13**</td><td>0.39**</td><td>0.50**</td><td>1.00</td><td>- 0.0…</td></tr>
<tr><td>Forgiveness</td><td>- 0.08*</td><td>- 0.13**</td><td>- 0.07*</td><td>- 0.03</td><td>- 0.16**</td><td>0.03</td><td>0.08*</td><td>- 0.00</td><td>1.0…</td></tr>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Appendix I: Forgiveness to Outcomes Descriptive

Descriptives

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Min	Max
Brand Avoidance *H4b*	Low Forgiveness	243	4.37	0.99	0.06	4.2485	4.50	1.00	5.00
	High Forgiveness	201	4.17	1.04	0.07	4.0282	4.32	1.00	5.00
Private Complaining *H5b*	Low Forgiveness	243	4.51	0.79	0.05	4.4120	4.61	1.33	5.00
	High Forgiveness	201	4.12	0.95	0.07	3.9840	4.25	1.00	5.00
Public Complaining *H6b*	Low Forgiveness	243	1.88	1.11	0.07	1.7415	2.02	1.00	5.00
	High Forgiveness	201	1.68	0.95	0.07	1.5462	1.81	1.00	5.00
Brand Retaliation *H8b*	Low Forgiveness	243	1.14	0.46	0.03	1.0831	1.20	1.00	4.60
	High Forgiveness	201	1.22	0.70	0.05	1.1277	1.32	1.00	5.00
Brand Revenge *H7b*	Low Forgiveness	243	1.58	1.00	0.06	1.4498	1.70	1.00	5.00
	High Forgiveness	201	1.38	0.82	0.06	1.2697	1.50	1.00	5.00
Likely Buy Future *H9*	Low Forgiveness	243	1.26	0.79	0.05	1.16	1.36	1.00	5.00
	High Forgiveness	201	1.79	1.14	0.08	1.63	1.95	1.00	5.00
Feeling in the PAST *H10*	Low Forgiveness	243	-26.01	57.44	3.69	-33.27	-18.75	-100	100
	High Forgiveness	201	- 4.61	56.74	4.00	-12.50	3.28	-100	100

Appendix J: Forgiveness to Outcomes ANOVA

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Brand Avoidance *H4b*	Between Groups	4.39	1	4.39	4.27	0.04
	Within Groups	454.59	442	1.03		
	Total	458.98	443			
Private Complaining *H5b*	Between Groups	17.16	1	17.16	22.78	0.00
	Within Groups	332.91	442	0.75		
	Total	350.07	443			
Public Complaining *H6b*	Between Groups	4.56	1	4.56	4.21	0.04
	Within Groups	478.20	442	1.08		
	Total	482.76	443			
Brand Retaliation *H8b*	Between Groups	0.76	1	0.76	2.26	0.13
	Within Groups	149.47	442	0.34		
	Total	150.23	443			
Brand Revenge *H7b*	Between Groups	4.06	1	4.06	4.77	0.03
	Within Groups	376.72	442	0.85		
	Total	380.78	443			
Likely Buy Future *H9*	Between Groups	31.11	1	31.11	33.22	0.00
	Within Groups	413.89	442	0.94		
	Total	445.00	443			
Feeling in the PAST *H10*	Between Groups	50361.23	1	50361.23	15.43	0.00
	Within Groups	1442503.72	442	3263.58		
	Total	1492864.94	443			

Appendix K: Test of Normality

Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
NPE_Poor Performance	0.28	506	0.00	0.79	506	0.00
NPE_Products are inconvenient	0.17	506	0.00	0.89	506	0.00
NPE_Bad performance of product	0.28	506	0.00	0.80	506	0.00
NPE_Dissatisfied by product	0.46	506	0.00	0.47	506	0.00
SI_Brand not reflect me	0.40	506	0.00	0.65	506	0.00
SI_not fit my personality	0.37	506	0.00	0.70	506	0.00
SI_Not seen with	0.38	506	0.00	0.68	506	0.00
SI_not represent what I'am	0.44	506	0.00	0.58	506	0.00
SI_not symbolize me	0.38	506	0.00	0.68	506	0.00
I_ acts irresponsible	0.36	506	0.00	0.69	506	0.00
I_acts unethically	0.35	506	0.00	0.72	506	0.00
I_violates moral standards	0.32	506	0.00	0.76	506	0.00
I_doesn't match my values and beliefs	0.41	506	0.00	0.63	506	0.00
A_buy less frequently	0.43	506	0.00	0.58	506	0.00
A_I stop buying	0.42	506	0.00	0.62	506	0.00
A_switched to a competing brand	0.36	506	0.00	0.70	506	0.00
PrC_I discourage friends to buy	0.30	506	0.00	0.74	506	0.00
PrC_I say negative things to others	0.34	506	0.00	0.70	506	0.00
PrC_I recommend not to buy	0.36	506	0.00	0.66	506	0.00
PuC_I'm involved in clubs against brand	0.34	506	0.00	0.70	506	0.00
PuC_I complained to law enforcement	0.42	506	0.00	0.57	506	0.00
PuC_I complained to external agencies	0.34	506	0.00	0.70	506	0.00
RET_I stole from	0.52	506	0.00	0.29	506	0.00
RET_I broke the law in order to get back	0.52	506	0.00	0.29	506	0.00
RET_I broke or damaged things	0.52	506	0.00	0.30	506	0.00
RET_I used brands resources	0.52	506	0.00	0.30	506	0.00
RET_I threatened employees with payback	0.51	506	0.00	0.32	506	0.00
REV_I imagined how to hurt	0.42	506	0.00	0.60	506	0.00
REV_I obsessed to get back	0.45	506	0.00	0.52	506	0.00

REV_I made my missions to damage	0.48	506	0.00	0.44	506	0.00
REV_ fascinated about the ways to harm	0.47	506	0.00	0.47	506	0.00
FORGIVE_I would think favorably	0.18	506	0.00	0.89	506	0.00
FORGIVE_I would condemn it brand	0.20	506	0.00	0.89	506	0.00
FORGIVE_I would forgive it.	0.21	506	0.00	0.90	506	0.00
FORGIVE_I would disapprove	0.18	506	0.00	0.90	506	0.00
FORGIVE_I feel sympathetic toward brand	0.20	506	0.00	0.87	506	0.00

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