I feel unease with this brand! Consumers' negative emotions to brands and behavioral responses

Simona Romani

University of Sassari

Via Torre Tonda, 34 – 07100 Sassari – Italy

Tel: +39 079 2017320

Fax: +39 079 2017312

sromani@uniss.it

Silvia Grappi

University of Modena and Reggio Emilia

Viale Berengario 51 - 41100 Modena - Italy

Tel: +39 059 2056860

Fax: +39 059 2056927

grappi.silvia@unimore.it

Daniele Dalli

University of Pisa

Via Ridolfi, 10 – 56124 Pisa – Italy

Tel: +39 050 2216347

Fax: +39 050 541403

dalli@ec.unipi.it

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Abstract

This paper addresses the conceptual and measurement issues related to the study of negative emotions to brand. It first briefly reviews the literature on negative emotions and branding, then it reports on the construction and psychometric assessment of a measure that covers the range of most frequently experienced negative emotions to brand, more specifically the BNE (brand negative emotion) scale. In particular, demonstrating the scale's predictive validity, we show that different negative emotions have very different behavioral consequences related to brands (such as, switching, negative WOM, complaining, etc.).

The paper fills the gap in negative emotion research related to brands, and provides empirical evidence about the influence of these negative emotions on consumers' behavioral outcomes relevant for marketing.

Keyword

Specific negative emotions, brand, scale

While it is possible for consumers to like or even love some brands, have an emotional attachment to or in any case generally positive feelings toward them, it is equally true that they can express negative feelings. However, despite this fact, most research available on consumer-brand relationships focuses almost exclusively on positive emotional reactions, giving little or no consideration to possible negative aspects. With a few exceptions, these studies fail to allow for the strong negative emotions that can often play a daily part in consumers' emotional relationships with brands and the material world, such as distaste, anger, hatred or fear. This asymmetry is understandable, particularly in the marketing field: companies and institutions are chiefly interested in the practical consequences of positive forms of affective processes and reactions. They want to know what consumers most like, want and are willing to buy. On the other hand this asymmetry is difficult to justify on a theoretical level given that, in order to better understand and explain brand-related behaviors, the inclusion of negative aspects is also of much importance as illustrated in some recent research (e.g. Dalli et al., 2006; Lee et al. forthcoming; Sandikci and Ekici, forthcoming) What kind of negative emotions do consumers experience in relation to brands? Do they experience anger and disappointment only, as reported by past research, or also dislike or even fear and sadness? In order to fill this theoretical and empirical gap, the primary aim of our study is to better understand the range of possible negative emotions toward brands and develop a psychometrically reliable scale of measurement, using the *"specific emotion approach"* as a theoretical framework. Subsequently, we demonstrate the scale's validity and predictive ability. More in detail, we show that different negative emotions have very different behavioral consequences related to brands (such as, switching, negative WOM, complaining, etc.).

The paper fills the gap in negative emotion research related to brands, and provides empirical evidence about the influence of these negative emotions on consumers' behavioral outcomes relevant for marketing.

BRANDS AND EMOTIONS

Brands are complex entities; they are associated with product or service's attributes and functions but – at the same time – brands' symbolism has a central role in contemporary consumption culture (Elliott, 1997). Again, researchers have put forward the idea of the brand as an active partner in a dyadic relationship (Fournier, 1998), or in other words, a real agent and more recently brands are considered as objects employed to facilitate social interactions, as central elements in social networks and consumption communities (Cova and Cova, 2002; Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001). Taking these perspectives into consideration, it is understandable that brands are capable of generating strong emotional reactions, whether these are positive or negative. A wide range of positive responses to brands have already been examined by researchers – e.g. brand love (Whang, Allen, Sahoury, and Zhang, 2004; Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006; Albert et al., forthcoming), brand attachment (Thomson, McInnis, and Park, 2005; Thomson *et al.,* 2006), brand passion (Fournier 1998), brand satisfaction (Oliver, 1997; Fournier and Mick, 1999; Giese and Cote, 2000) and brand delight (Oliver, Rust and Varki, 1997; Durgee, 1999; Swan and Trawick, 1999; Kumar, Olshavsky and King 2001).

Conversely, the research available on consumers' negative emotional responses to brands is limited, and what little there is focuses almost exclusively on brand dissatisfaction. However, as observed by Bagozzi et al. (1999, p. 201), the centrality of dissatisfaction in marketing and consumer behavior studies is perhaps due more to its being the primary emotion to receive attention than constituting a unique, fundamental construct in and of itself. These authors also suggest the exploration of other specific negative emotions, such as anger, disgust, anxiety and guilt, as equally valid, possible consumer reactions to purchase. However, till now, the researches done on this issues continue to be limited (e.g. Bougie et al., 2003; Zeelenberg and Pieters, 2004).

Moreover, it is also important to consider that consumers can experience various negative emotions to brands even in the absence of purchase, as simple reactions to marketing stimuli. The angry call of anti-brand activists opposed to a number of global brands could represent an interesting example of this (Kozinets and Handelman, 2004; Hollenbeck and Zinkhan, 2006).

Therefore, there is a clear need for additional research on this topic, and it is in this direction that we aim to develop our study.

As illustrated above, the focus of this paper is on negative emotions to brands. While it is possible to conceptualize negative emotions as *general* dimensions (*valence-based approach*), such as negative affect (Watson and Tellegen, 1985), there has also been a more recent rise in interest in specific emotions. This research intends to focus on these, adopting the so called "*specific emotion approach*". Indeed, appraisal theorists (e.g. Ortony et al., 1988; Roseman et al., 1996; Smith and Ellesworth, 1985) argue that specific emotions should not be combined within broad emotional factors, since each one is characterized by specific appraisal patterns that usefully differentiate emotional experiences and effects. In this way, it is possible to obtain more precise information about consumers' feelings (Bagozzi et al., 1999).

Given that specific emotions are prompted by different conditions and lead to particular behavioral consequences, it is therefore important to know whether, for example, a brand's technical failure or its overt commercialism elicit feelings of anger or sadness. The point is that both angry and sad people share the feeling that something went wrong, but those who are sad tend toward inactivity and withdrawal, whereas angry ones are inclined to react in order to battle and possibly remove the cause of their annoyance.

The effects of negative emotions to brands on consumers' behaviors (complain, word-of-mouth, repurchase, desire for retaliation, etc.) may well differ depending on the specific emotion in question and these differences are very important in better understanding consumer behavior related to brands. Preliminary evidence on these issues, in the field of services, is presented, among others, by Bougie et al., 2003, Zeelenberg and Pieters, 2004 and Bonifield and Cole, 2007.

Given this premise, we attempt:

a) to develop and validate a measurement scale that allows us to identify the specific negative emotions elicited by brands; in particular we define negative emotions to brands as consumer negative emotional reactions evoked by brands as complex entities (ranging from main sources of symbolic meanings to partners, till central elements in social networks and consumption communities)[1];

b) to illustrate how, depending on specific negative emotions, different outcomes arise that affect consumer – brand relationships.

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[1] This focus on brands should make irrelevant some emotion states typically associated to the shopping situation or the product usage (for example, discontent but also envy or worry).

ISSUES ON MEASUREMENT

The starting point for adequately representing consumer emotional reactions to most consumption experiences is represented by CES (Consumption Emotion Set) introduced by Richins (1997). In recognizing the limitation of the measures available for the analysis of consumption-related emotions (Mehrabian and Russell, 1974; Aaker et al., 1988; Batra and Holbrook, 1990; Edell and Burke, 1987; Izard, 1977; Havlena and Holbrook, 1986), this author introduced a new scale (CES), that focuses on a relatively broad range, although not exhaustive, of consumption emotional states. The scale that we plan to present in this paper (BNE – brand negative emotion scale) meets the need, highlighted also by Richins (1997), to create a specific set of descriptors that can be useful in assessing particular negative emotional reactions toward a brand, as specified above. Indeed, we may find that certain emotion states excluded from the CES prove to be important for our research goal, and equally, that a number of those included are likely to be irrelevant for the phenomenon studied.

In addition, considering the lack of validity tests for CES - especially predictive validity in terms of outcomes that are relevant from the marketing point of view- we focus with the new BNE scale on these issues demonstrating how different negative emotions can generate different consumer behaviors.

RESEARCH PROCESS

The scale is developed in studies 1 and 2, whereas study 3 validates the scale's internal consistency, defines its dimensional structure and assesses convergent and discriminant validity. Finally, study 4 examines the scale's predictive validity, showing that various negative emotions can lead to different behavioral consequences related to brands, such as brand switching (Bougie et al., 2003), negative word of mouth (Bougie et al., 2003), complaining (Zeelenberg and Pieters, 2004), desire for retaliation (Gregoire and Fisher, 2006) and brand detachment (Perrin-Martinenq, 2004).

Study 1

The purpose of Study 1 was to identify a preliminary set of descriptors of negative emotions consumers experience toward a brand. To attain this objective, we asked 106 students (48 females and 58 males; aged from 20 to 27 years old; enrolled in different undergraduate and graduate courses and schools) to identify a brand capable of generating negative emotional responses. Participants completed a survey composed of 106 negative emotion descriptors. The emotion descriptor set covers the range of negative emotions identified by respondents in an exploratory

study expressly conducted to identify the feelings/emotions evoked by consumers when asked to reflect on "*disliked*" brands as lived experiences, and by scholars. For an interesting review, see Laros and Steenkamp (2005), in addition Ortony et al. (1988), Ben Ze'ev, (2000), Izard (1977). These negative emotion descriptors have been collected in English, since the literature on this topic is essentially US based. These items were then translated in Italian by three researchers with long fluency in English and competence in the field, a British English teacher working at the University of Pisa, and an official translator. One hundred and twenty-five items were developed in English, which reduced to 106 in the translation process: certain English terms can be translated by the same word in Italian.

Respondents used a 7-point rating scale, ranging from 1 (not at all) to 7 (very much), to describe the extent to which the brand makes them feel each of the 106 emotion descriptors. In order to control for possible order effects, two versions of the questionnaire were prepared, one with emotion descriptors in alphabetical order and the other version in reverse order.

Seventy-three different brands were considered capable of generating negative emotional responses. Any item with a mean rating over below 2 was assumed to have significance. The negative emotion descriptors were subjected to maximum likelihood exploratory factor analysis with an oblique rotation (Promax). Eight different factors (Chi2:202.4, df:165; p:0.02) were identified containing 25 negative emotion descriptors that were used in the subsequent study.

Study 2

The purpose of Study 2 was to investigate the structure of negative emotions towards brands and refine it into a manageable and valid number of emotions, so as to construct a general scale useful in research across a wide range of brands.

We asked 227 Italian undergraduate students to identify a brand capable of generating negative emotional responses and then indicate which of the 25 emotion descriptors identified in the first study describe their feelings using the same 7-point rating scale, ranging from 1 (not at all) to 7 (very much). In order to control for possible order effects, also in this case two versions of the questionnaire were prepared: one with emotion descriptors in alphabetical order and the other in reverse order.

One hundred and forty-six different brands were considered capable of generating negative emotional responses.

The negative emotion descriptors were subjected to maximum likelihood exploratory factor analysis with promax rotation. Even in this case, we rejected items that had mean ratings below 2. The final

set of items reflected a six-factor solution (Chi2:84.2, df:60; p:0.02) containing 18 negative emotion descriptors (see Table 1).

Table 1. Study 2: Negative emotion dimensions revealed by exploratory factor analysis

Items	Components					
	Sadness	Anger	Dislike	Fear	Discontent	Embarrassment
Feel of contempt	0.153	0.478	**0.878**	0.181	0.039	0.043
Feel of repulsion	0.255	0.348	**0.869**	0.162	0.041	0.063
Feel of hate	0.224	0.433	**0.860**	0.222	0.080	0.041
Heartbroken	**0.871**	0.305	0.198	0.329	0.212	0.267
Sorrowful	**0.819**	0.296	0.134	0.195	0.056	0.236
Distressed	**0.750**	0.169	0.248	0.332	0.068	0.315
Dissatisfied	0.112	0.195	0.007	0.024	**0.874**	0.044
Unfulfilled	0.062	0.224	0.043	0.050	**0.828**	0.145
Discontented	0.161	0.213	0.079	0.155	**0.802**	-0.006
Indignant	0.319	**0.847**	0.424	0.211	0.244	0.002
Annoyed	0.185	**0.820**	0.398	0.095	0.278	0.111
Resentful	0.240	**0.698**	0.305	0.175	0.078	0.155
Threatened	0.267	0.184	0.190	**0.847**	0.056	0.072
Insecure	0.145	0.106	0.119	**0.730**	0.144	0.306
Worried	0.394	0.170	0.148	**0.705**	-0.017	0.111
Sheepish	0.257	0.093	0.029	0.246	0.117	**0.867**
Embarrassed	0.298	0.113	0.071	0.095	-0.012	**0.845**
Ridiculous	0.395	0.279	-0.007	0.381	0.131	**0.518**
Eigenvalues	*3.013*	*2.930*	*2.900*	*2.438*	*2.353*	*2.147*
Alpha	*0.784*	*0.702*	*0.839*	*0.692*	*0.788*	*0.679*

A first factor, labelled sadness, includes the items heartbroken, sorrowful and distressed. Items in this factor reflect unpleasant emotions experienced by consumers toward a brand, usually because of an undesirable outcome.

A second factor, labelled anger, includes the items indignant, annoyed and resentful. Items in this factor reflect emotions of anger, with varying levels of intensity, experienced by consumers toward a brand for a fairly specific cause, provocation, violation of principles, etc.

The third factor, labelled dislike, includes the items feeling of contempt, repulsion and hate. Items in this factor imply a clear rejection of the brand considering a consumers' position of control or superiority over it.

A fourth factor, labelled fear, includes the items threatened, insecure and worried. Items within this factor imply consumers' consideration of a brand as potentially dangerous and threatening to themselves.

A fifth factor, labelled discontent, includes the items dissatisfied, unfulfilled and discontented. In detail, these three items describe consumers' negative feelings when their expectations from a specific brand are disconfirmed.

Finally, a sixth factor, labelled embarrassment, includes the items sheepish, embarrassed and ridiculous. Items in this factor reflect negative feelings of social disadvantage experienced by consumers because of their own behavior with a brand.

Results highlight cross loadings above the recommended threshold of 0.25 and, for highly correlated factors, it is advisable to run confirmatory factor analysis. CFA confirmed that the 6 factors we found are valid ones: Chi2(120): 174.49; NNFI: 0.93; CFI: 0. 95; RMSEA: 0.04; SRMR: 0.05. The correlations between dimensions, obtained through CFA, are reported in Table 2.

Table 2. Study 2: Correlations between dimensions (t-values)

	Dislike	Sadness	Discontent	Fear	Anger	Embarrassment
Dislike	1.00					
Sadness	0.28 (3.38)	1.00				
Discomtent	0.05 (0.62)	0.19 (2.43)	1.00			
Fear	0.26 (3.35)	0.39 (5.14)	0.06 (0.71)	1.00		
Anger	0.61(10.45)	0.39 (5.29)	0.32 (4.10)	0.26 (3.17)	1.00	
Embarrassment	0.10 (1.15)	0.46 (6.26)	0.09 (1.09)	0.25 (2.96)	0.16 (1.81)	1.00

Although we had not anticipated that the scale would exhibit a six dimensional factor structure, the results suggest the possibility that the items represent six first order factors that are linked to one or more second order factors. We address this point in study 3.

Study 3

Study 3 was designed to confirm the stability of the BNE scale using a different sample of respondents (ordinary consumers) and to assess the relation among the factors as first order factors underlying the brand negative emotion construct.

In addition, we tried to confirm the validity of our measure performing the multitrait-multimethod (MTMM) analysis considering the alternative measures that have been used in prior research on emotions in marketing and consumer behaviour: CES (Richins, 1997), Izard's (1977) DES-II scale and Havlena and Holbrook's (1986) adaptation of Plutchik's scale.

Four hundred and twenty-one ordinary consumers (49,6% male and 50,4% female; 1,4% under 18 years old, 42% aged between 19-35 years old, 26,4% aged between 36-50 years old, 15,4% aged between 51-65 years old and 14,7% over 66 years old) were asked to think about a brand to which they feel "negative emotions" and to complete the 18 items BNE scale with this brand in mind. In addition, in order to pursue the second goal, the questionnaire included the measurement scales illustrated above.

To assess the relation of the scale items to the BNE construct, we used structural equation modelling (using Lisrel). The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for the measures were all

satisfactory (alpha>0.7). CFA confirmed that the 6 factors we found are valid ones: Chi2(120): 285.86; NNFI: 0.90; CFI: 0.92; RMSEA: 0.05; SRMR: 0.05. Correlations between dimensions (and t-values) are reported in Table 3.

Table 3. Study 3: Correlations between dimensions (t-values)

	Dislike	Sadness	Discontent	Anger	Fear	Embarrassment
Dislike	1.00					
Sadness	0.34 (5.83)	1.00				
Discontent	0.04 (0.60)	0.02 (0.28)	1.00			
Anger	0.75 (20.06)	0.36 (6.22)	0.03 (0.43)	1.00		
Fear	0.39 (6.75)	0.49 (8.77)	0.01 (0.15)	0.47 (8.40)	1.00	
Embarrassment	0.20 (3.32)	0.46 (8.10)	-0.01 (-0.15)	0.17 (2.73)	0.25 (3.95)	1.00

Then we conducted a set of confirmatory factor analyses. We decided to not allow for correlations among first-order factors in favour of a careful analysis of the meaning of such correlations. The fit statistics of each model were subsequently examined to assess which model best fits the data. In general, a not significant chi2 is considered adequate. In cases of a significant chi2 statistic, given for example to the sample size, a less than 5 value of the chi2 divided by the degrees of freedom is considered adequate. NNFI and CFI statistics over 0.90 are considered adequate, as well as RMSEA and SRMR under 0.07.

Model 1 assumes that all 18 items load directly onto a single latent BNE construct. This model is not acceptable (Chi2(135): 1415.20; NNFI: 0.41; CFI: 0.48; RMSEA: 0.15; SRMR: 0.12).

Model 2 assumes six equally weighted first-order latent factors (labelled Anger, Sadness, Dislike, Discontent, Embarrassment, Fear) reflecting a single second-order factor (BNE) with no correlations permitted among the first-order latent factors. The goodness-of-fit tests of this model are weak (Chi2(129): 347.69; NNFI: 0.88; CFI: 0.90; RMSEA: 0.06; SRMR: 0.07) and the average variance extracted for three constructs was very low and for "discontent" is zero (Sadness:0.24, Discontent:0.00, Embarrassment:0.09, Fear:0.33, Dislike:0.67, Anger:0.74). Therefore, this model is not acceptable and suggests to check for specific correlation paths.

Model 3 assumes 6 first-order latent factors (Anger, Sadness, Dislike, Discontent, Embarrassment, Fear). Four of these reflect two second-order factors (BNEs) with no correlations permitted among the first-order latent factors, since we consider the first-order factors as measures of other second-order factors. We let the factors of embarrassment and discontent to be first order factors, and we allow these first order factors to correlate with the other two second order factors (Figure 1). This model reflects the specific correlations paths registered between dimensions through the CFA analysis.
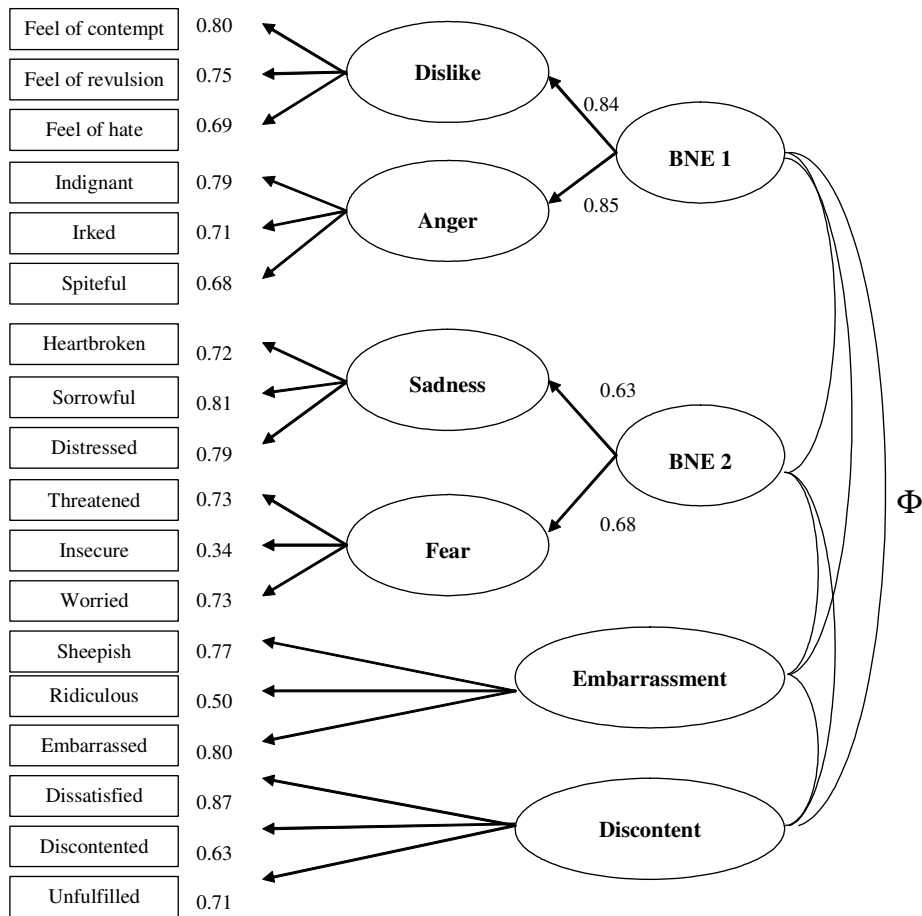
Figure 1. Confirmatory factor analysis.
Model assumes six first-order latent factors, four of these reflect two second-order factor (BNEs).

The goodness-of-fit tests of this model are quite good (Chi2(131): 299.65; NNFI: 0.90; CFI: 0.92; RMSEA: 0.05; SRMR: 0.06), but the analysis of correlations between factors shows that none of the three factors (embarrassment, anger+dislike, sadness+fear) are significantly linked to "discontent" (see standardized correlations in Table 4). Therefore, results suggest to test for a model without considering "discontent".

Table 4. Study 3 - Model 3: Correlations between dimensions (t-values)

	Discontent	Embarrassment	Anger + Dislike	Sadness + Fear
Discontent	1.00			
Embarrassment	0.01 (0.20)	1.00		
Anger + Dislike	0.04 (0.57)	0.22 (3.37)	1.00	
Sadness + Fear	0.03 (0.13)	0.59 (7.47)	0.78 (10.65)	1.00

Model 4 (Figure 2) excludes "discontent" and assumes 5 first-order latent factors (Anger, Sadness, Dislike, Embarrassment, Fear), 4 of these reflect 2 second-order factors (BNEs) with no correlations permitted among the first-order latent factors. The goodness-of-fit tests of this model are good (Chi2(86):213.01; NNFI: 0.91; CFI: 0.92; RMSEA: 0.05; SRMR: 0.06) and the analysis of correlations between the factors (embarrassment, anger+dislike, sadness+fear) are all positive and significant (see standardized correlations in Table 5). The average variance extracted for all the constructs was adequate (Dislike:0.71, Anger:0.72. Sadness:0.44, Fear:0.51). Therefore, this model is fully acceptable.

Feel of contempt	0.80
Feel of revulsion	0.75
Feel of hate	0.69
Indignant	0.79
Irked	0.71
Spiteful	0.68
Heartbroken	0.72
Sorrowful	0.80
Distressed	0.69
Threatened	0.71
Insecure	0.36
Worried	0.77
Sheepish	0.77
Ridiculous	0.50
Embarrassed	0.80

Dislike
Anger 0.84 0.85
BNE 1
Sadness 0.64
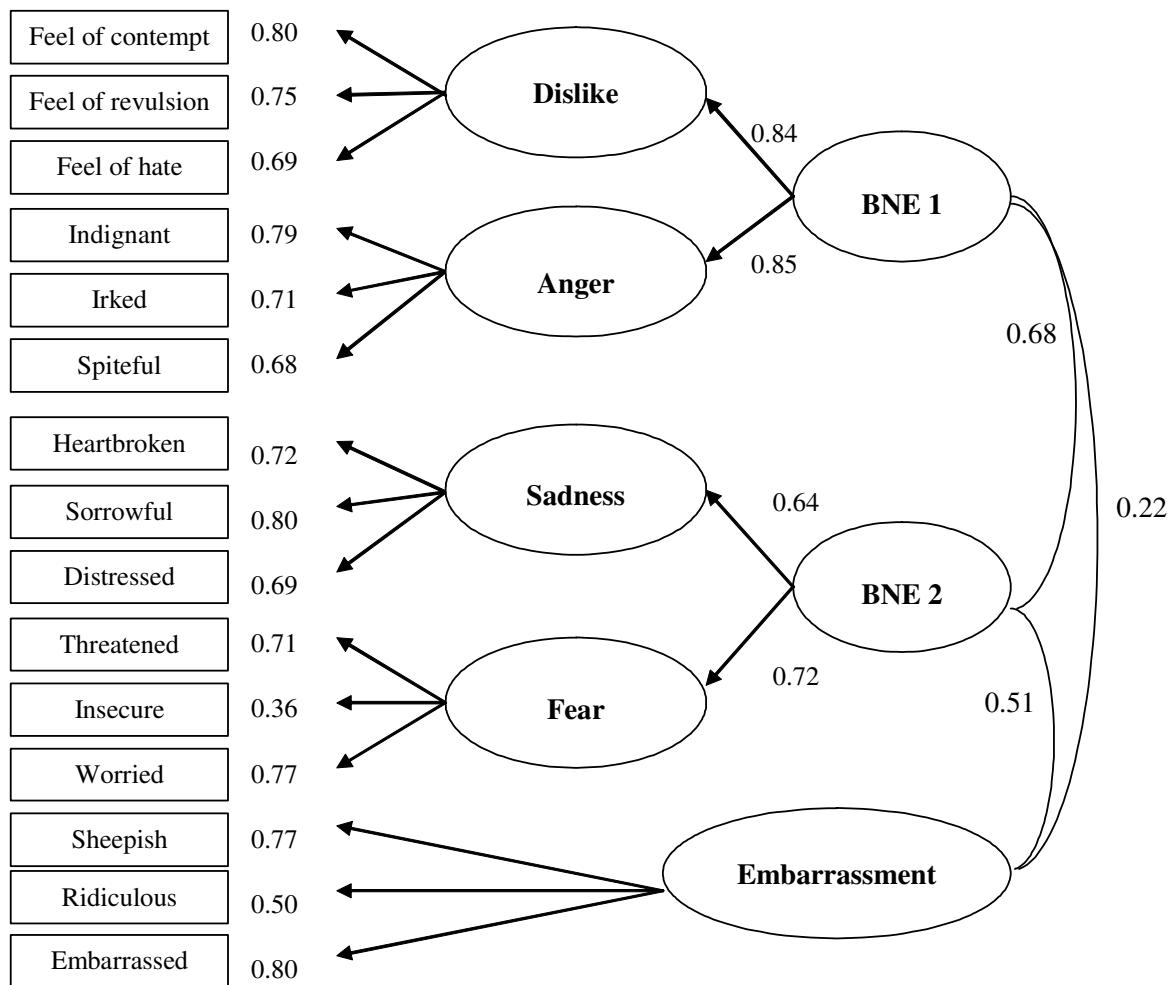Fear 0.72
BNE 2
0.68 0.22 0.51
Embarrassment

Figure 2. Confirmatory factor analysis.
Model assumes five first-order latent factors, four of these reflect two second-order factor (BNEs).

Table 5. Study 3 - Model 4: Correlations between dimensions (t-values)

	Embarrassment	Anger + Dislike	Sadness + Fear
Embarrassment	1.00		
Anger + Dislike	0.22 (3.49)	1.00	
Sadness + Fear	0.51 (7.54)	0.68 (10.88)	1.00

Likelihood ratio tests show that the three second-order factors in Model 4 are distinct dimensions that can't be summarized in a single second-order factor (Table 6)

Table 6. Study 3 - Likelihood ratio tests

Comparisons	Chi2 tests
Correlation between (anger+dislike) and (sadness+fear) equal 1 v.s Model 4 without constraints	Δchi2: **11.32**; Δdf:1; α<0.05
Correlation between (anger+dislike) and (embarrassment) equal 1 v.s Model 4 without constraints	Δchi2: **195.86**; Δdf:1; α<0.05
Correlation between (sadness+fear) and (embarrassment) equal 1 v.s Model 4 without constraints	Δchi2: **44.78**; Δdf :1; α<0.05

Model 4 holds that Anger and Dislike, Sadness and Fear are first-order factors that correspond with two higher order BNE constructs, while Embarrassment is a specific negative emotion. Higher-factors, as emerge from empirical analysis, assume further relevance when interpreted in the light of specific literature, especially considering the perceived causation of events (circumstances/other person/self) as appraisal factor in emotion theory (e.g. Roseman et al., 1996) and the concept of compound emotion (Plutchik, 1980; Izard, 1972).

Focusing on discontent and the fact that, somehow surprisingly, it doesn't correlate with any other factors several explanations can be provided. This result is in line with the fact that discontent is not a central emotional category in leading theories of emotions (Bagozzi et al., 1999). In addition, we think that discontent represents a group of emotions specifically related to decision making and in particular to product purchase decision processes. It can be felt when decisions somehow go awry; when the product does not match up to prior held expectations. All the other negative emotions are not directly linked to the decision making process, but they are generated by peculiar brand meanings.

Basically we think that an explanation could be in the distinction between emotions to brands (with symbolic, cultural and agentic meanings) and emotions related to purchase decision (as a process). And consumers tend not to mix these two different situations.

Finally, probably discontent as measured in our scale is an evaluative judgement rather than an emotional state; the items dissatisfied, discontented and unfulfilled activate in consumers' mind the cognitive deliberations (such as comparing performance to expectations) by which a summary evaluation is formed.

In order to confirm the construct validity of our measures, we performed the multitrait-multimethod (MTMM) analysis using the following alternative measurement scales: the BNE scale and the measures selected from the Havlena and Holbrook's (1986) adaptation of Plutchik's scale, the Izard's (1977) DESII scale and the CES scale (Richins, 1997).

In fact construct validity, defined as the extent to which an operationalization measures the concept it is supposed to measure (Cook and Campbell, 1979), is a central issue in research and calls for attention. In this study, given multiple measures obtained with multiple methods, construct validation can be done with the MTMM matrix (Bagozzi, Yi, Philips, 1991; Bagozzi and Yi, 1991, 1992, 1993; Bagozzi and Edwars, 1998). In this way, we are able to asses construct validity estimating and correcting for the influences of random error and method variance.

The CFA for the MTMM with 5 traits (the negative emotions) and 2 methods (the BNE scale and the measures selected from the Havlena and Holbrook's (1986) adaptation of Plutchik's scale, the Izard's (1977) DESII scale and the CES scale(Richins, 1997)[2]) is shown in figure 3 below.
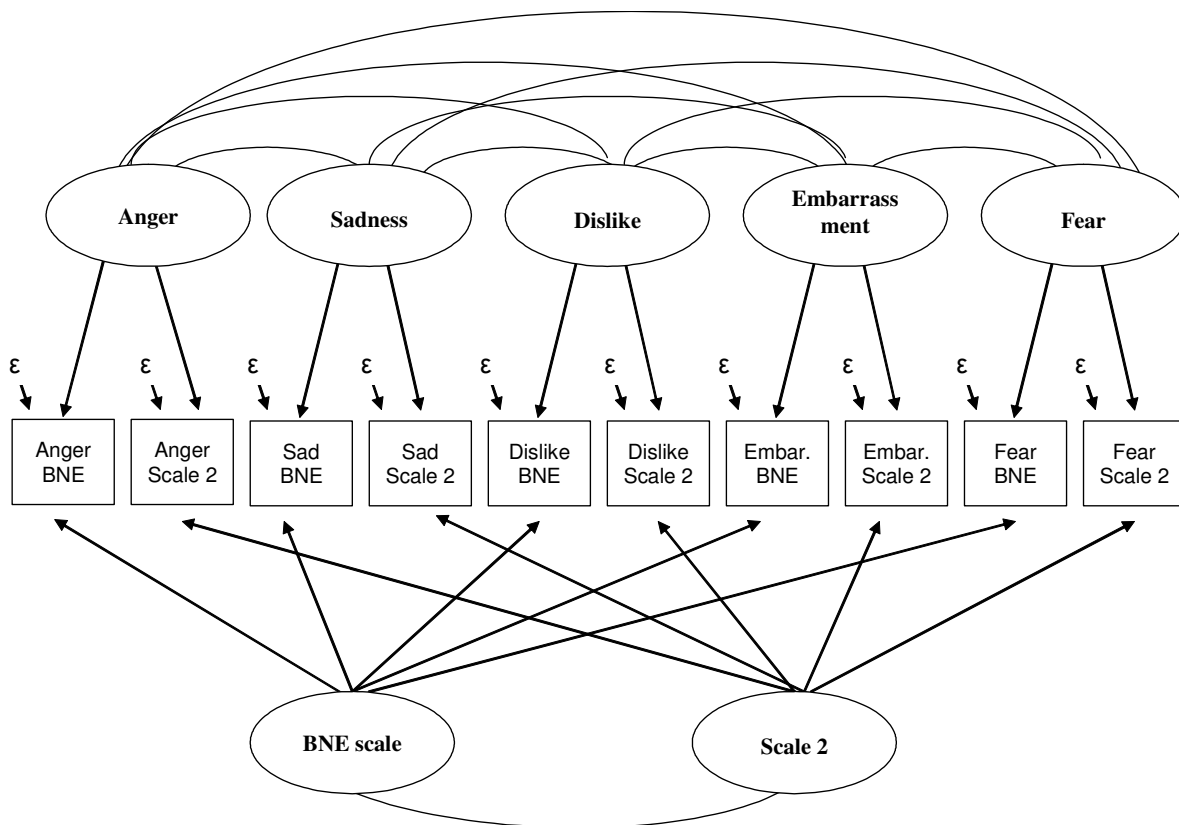

Figure 3. Confirmatory factor analysis for MTMM

[2] The measures composing the *method 2* are: for ANGER: irritated, angry, hostile, enraged; for DISLIKE: disgusted, disdainful; for SADNESS: sad, miserable, downhearted; for EMBARRASSMENT: ashamed, humiliated, shy; for FEAR: scared, afraid, fearful.

The five negative emotions – anger, dislike, sadness, fear, embarrassment – and the two methods – our BNE scale and the selected measures of the other scales – are drawn as ovals. Each negative emotion is connected with two boxes with arrows. The boxes represent the items used to measure our latent variables, a total of ten measurements result for the five negative emotions as provided by two different methods. In the figure:

- the arrow from the negative emotions to the measures stand for variance due to the underlying emotion;
- the arrow from the two methods to the measures reflect the variance due to corresponding method;
- the ten short arrows with ε_i represent variance in the measures due to random error;
- the curved lines connecting factors indicate correlations between factors.

In this way, we can interpret the CFA model of figure 3 as showing the sources of the variation in three different senses: variation due to trait (the negative emotions), method (the BNE or the other scales), and error. Table 7 summarizes the results. The CFA model with traits and methods fits satisfactorily the data: chi2(df): 19.82(14) p:0.14; RMSEA: 0.031; NNFI: 0.99; CFI: 1.00; SRMR: 0.019. The decomposition of variance due to trait, method and error is done by inspecting squared factor loadings in Δ_T and Δ_M and unique variances in θ, respectively.

Table 7. Study 3 – Variances of the MTMM analysis

	Variances		
	Trait	Method	Error
Anger BNE	.53	.26	.21
Anger Scale 2	.42	.49	.08
Sad BNE	.38	.10	.53
Sad Scale 2	.56	.16	.29
Dislike BNE	.64	.11	.25
Dislike Scale 2	.40	.26	.33
Embarrassment BNE	.44	.001	.56
Embarrassment Scale 2	.62	.07	.32
Fear BNE	.26	.31	.43
Fear Scale 2	.46	.08	.45

The model defined as the Trait Method Error model hypothesizes that both trait and method factors are needed to explain the variance in the measures. In order to confirm this hypothesis we compare this model with the "trait-only" model.

- The Trait-only model hypothesizes that variation in measures can be explained completely by traits plus random error. This model assumes that method variance is negligible and that measures reflect only trait and error variance.

- The Trait Method Error model hypothesizes that variation in measures can be explained completely by traits, method, and random error.

The trait-only model is nested in the trait and method model, consequently chi-square difference test can be used to test whether trait or trait and method variance are present. The fit statistics of the trait method error model (chi2(df): 19.82(14); RMSEA: 0.031; NNFI: 0.99; CFI: 1.00; SRMR: 0.019) are better than the fit statistics of the trait-only model (chi2(df): 78.42(25); RMSEA: 0.07; NNFI: 0.96; CFI: 0.98; SRMR: 0.03). The comparison of the two models shows that the introduction of method factors provides significant improvements over the trait-only model (Δ chi2= 58.6, Δ df= 11; p<0.01). Therefore, we used the Trait Method Error model to test the construct validity.

Convergent validity is defined as the agreement among measures of the same trait, for this reason trait variance is used to indicate the degree of convergent validity (Widman, 1985). All factor loadings for traits are statistically significant, indicating that convergent validity has been achieved.

Another important issue is the assessment of discriminant validity: discriminant validity among traits is achieved when the trait correlation differs significantly from 1.00[3] (Schmitt and Stults, 1986). Table 8 summarizes the findings for discriminant validity, as well as the correlation between methods. All traits in this study achieve discriminant validity because each correlation between pairs of traits is less than 1.00 at the 0.05 level. The methods are significantly correlated but they achieve discriminant validity. This is probably due to the fact that the two methods are very similar (interviews on consumers, the same 7 point likert scale, ecc…) and, in the light of this effect discriminant validity of traits is further confirmed.

Study 3 suggests a structure of the BNE scale based on two higher order constructs (Anger&Dislike and Sadness& Fear), embarrassment as a specific negative emotion and discontent surprisingly not related to these other dimensions.

Furthermore the present study supports the construct validity for the BNE measure comparing it also with the other scales available in marketing and consumer behaviour literature.

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[3] All traits are distinct since their correlations with other traits are significantly less than 1.00 in a statistical sense (correlation ± two standard errors).

Table 8. Study 3 – Correlations of the MTMM analysis

	Correlations						
	Anger	Dislike	Sad	Embarrassment	Fear	BNE	Scale 2
Anger	1.00						
Dislike	.74 (.07)	1.00					
Sad	.31 (.14)	.34 (.11)	1.00				
Embarrassment	.31 (.11)	.42 (.08)	.58 (.07)	1.00			
Fear	.08 (.17)	.14 (.13)	.61 (.08)	.69 (.08)	1.00		
BNE						1.00	
Scale 2						.83 (.08)	1.00

The two higher order constructs, although empirically relevant, are formed by specific negative emotions that given their specificities will continue to be treated in this research as separated. In fact anger and dislike, and also sadness and fear, despite some similarities in terms of appraisal (e.g. Roseman et al.,1996), present substantial differences in their experiential content (Roseman et al., 1994) that claim for separate treatments of these negative emotions.

Study 4

Study 4 has the objective to examine the scale's predictive validity, showing that various negative emotions can lead to different behavioral consequences related to brands, such as brand switching, negative word of mouth, complaining, desire for retaliation and brand detachment. We sought to collect data from a sample of ordinary consumers to address issues of generalizability and external validity.

To test these effects we conducted a study with 974 individuals (46.9% male, 53.1% female; aged from 18 to 89, with a mean age of 41)[4].

We developed five different "recalled emotion" conditions corresponding to each of the five negative emotions measured by the BNE scale. In each condition respondents were asked to identify a brand to which they experienced the specific negative emotion randomly assigned to them. For example, in the condition of dislike as recalled emotion, respondents were asked to take a few minutes to identify a brand toward which they experienced dislike, then they were asked to picture the situations related to the brand they had in mind and to remember it as vividly as possible before providing written, open ended responses to some questions about the brand. These open-ended responses fostered recollection of the experiences prior to complete the questionnaire. Then, respondents filled the items of the BNE scale with this brand in mind.

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[4] We collected data also for discontent but they will not be considered in the following analysis.

In addition, in order to show that different specific negative emotions have different consequences on consumers' negative behavioural responses toward the brand, the questionnaire included the following measures:

- *brand switching* – we employed a 3-item adapted subset of Bougie et al (2003) measure of brand switching ($\alpha = 0.81$). Respondents used a 7 point agreement scale for the items "I bought this brand less than before", "I switched to a competing brand" and "I stopped to buy this brand and I will not buy it anymore in the future".

- *negative word of mouth* – to measure negative word of mouth ($\alpha = 0.925$) we adapted the scale of Bougie et al. (2003). Respondents used a 7 point scale (1: not at all, 7:very much) to answer the following three questions: "I said negative things about this brand to other people", "I discouraged friends and relatives to buy this brand" and "I recommended not to buy this brand to someone who seek my advice".

- *complaining* – we used an adapted subset of Zeelenberg and Pieters (2004) measure of complaining ($\alpha = 0.75$). Respondents used a 7 point scale (1: not at all, 7:very much) to answer the following three questions: "I complained to external agencies (such as consumer unions) about the brand", "I complained to the company that produce the brand", "I filled written complaints to the company that produce the brand".

- *desire for retaliation* – to measure desire for retaliation($\alpha = 0.94$) we adopted the scale presented by Gregoire and Fisher (2006). Respondents used a 7 point agreement scale to answer the following six questions: "I wanted to do something bad to the brand", "I wanted to take actions to get the brand in trouble", "I wanted cause inconvenience to the brand", "I wanted to punish the brand in some way", "I wanted to make the brand get what it deserves" and "I wanted to get even with the brand".

- *brand detachment* – we used the Perrin-Martinenq (2004) measure of brand detachment ($\alpha = 0.943$). A 7 point agreement scale was used for the following items: "I no longer pay any attention to this brand", "I no longer think about this brand", "I'm no longer attracted by this brand", "I no longer pay any special attention to this brand", "I'm interested by what this brand offers" and "I no longer like this brand".

Table 9 reports mean values of the experienced emotions by the five recalled emotion conditions. The diagonal entry is the highest number in each row and column of the table.
This means that:
a) a given experienced emotion was highest in the relevant recalled emotion condition (for example, experienced dislike was highest in the dislike recalled emotion condition, compared to the other

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four different recalled emotion conditions). ANOVA analyses was conducted comparing each experienced emotion among the five different recalled emotion conditions[5] [Dislike: $F_{(4, 968)}$ = 273,191, *p.*<0.001; Anger: $F_{(4, 969)}$ = 197,735, *p.*<0.001; Sadness: $F_{(4, 969)}$ = 178.546, *p.*<0.001; Fear: $F_{(4, 968)}$ = 403.099, *p.*<0.001; Embarrassment: $F_{(4, 968)}$ = 523.351, *p.*<0.001].

b) for a given recalled emotion condition, the targeted emotion was the dominant emotion experienced and in the all cases the differences were significant and shown below. For example, in the case of dislike as recalled emotion condition we compared the mean of dislike (6.16) with the means of the other negative emotions experienced within the same condition using the t-test statistic (e.g. mean for dislike = 6.16 vs. mean for anger = 4.38; t= -16.55; p < 0.001).

Overall the findings show that the recall instructions were successful in stimulating the retrieval of brands able to elicit the target emotions to a significant degree.

Table 9. Study 4 – Means and t-test statistics of the five experienced emotions by recalled emotion conditions

Experienced emotions	Recalled emotion conditions									
	Dislike condition (N=226)		Anger condition (N=203)		Sadness condition (N=165)		Fear condition (N=203)		Embarrassment condition (N=177)	
	Mean	(t) Sig.	Mean	(t) Sig.	Mean	(t) Sig.	Mean	(t) Sig.	Mean	(t) Sig.
Dislike	**6.16** (0.89)	(0.00) *p.* 1.00	3.70 (1.74)	(-17.70) *p.*<0.001	2.29 (1.54)	(-24.86) *p.*<0.001	3.02 (1.53)	(-27.05) *p.*<0.001	2.20 (1.29)	(-37.54) *p.*<0.001
Anger	4.38 (1.62)	(-16.55) *p.*<0.001	**5.86** (1.16)	(0.00) *p.* 1.00	2.34 (1.65)	(-22.86) *p.*<0.001	3.00 (1.54)	(-27.04) *p.*<0.001	2.49 (1.34)	(-33.33) *p.*<0.001
Sadness	1.95 (1.30)	(-48.95) *p.*<0.001	2.05 (1.46)	(-37.37) *p.*<0.001	**5.28** (1.59)	(0.00) *p.* 1.00	2.44 (1.53)	(-32.32) *p.*<0.001	1.86 (1.22)	(-43.49) *p.*<0.001
Fear	1.88 (1.23)	(-52.27) *p.*<0.001	2.01 (1.40)	(-39.20) *p.*<0.001	1.99 (1.22)	(-34.59) *p.*<0.001	**5.92** (1.11)	(0.00) *p.* 1.00	2.10 (1.23)	(-40.30) *p.*<0.001
Embarrassment	1.78 (0.99)	(-66.58) *p.*<0.001	1.66 (0.95)	(-63.06) *p.*<0.001	1.77 (1.13)	(-39.80) *p.*<0.001	1.69 (1.15)	(-52.34) *p.*<0.001	**5.84** (1.21)	(0.00) *p.* 1.00

Table 10 reports mean values for the five measures used to assess predictive validity by the recalled emotion conditions. F values assess the statistical significance of differences for consumers' negative behavioural responses toward the brand across recalled emotion conditions.

It has been shown that the recall instructions have significant effects on emotions and behaviors. Once that is established, the next step is to verify that these significant effects are really due to the mediating role of negative emotions. For this purpose we use a step down analysis using MANOVA (Bagozzi and Yi, 1989; Bagozzi et al., 1991).

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[5] The negative emotions indexes were formed by averaging the pertinent items.

Table 10. Study 4 – Means of the measures used to assess predictive validity

	F, Sig.	Recalled emotion conditions (means, SD)				
		Dislike Condition	Anger Condition	Sadness Condition	Fear Condition	Emb.ment Condition
Complain	$F(4, 966) = 22.44$ $p.<0.001$	1.65 (1.29)	2.11 (1.61)	1.18 (0.78)	1.47 (1.05)	1.16 (0.55)
Negative WOM	$F(4, 966) = 79.63$ $p.<0.001$	5.50 (1.75)	5.18 (1.86)	2.57 (2.05)	4.45 (2.11)	3.12 (2.04)
Switching	$F(4, 644) = 44.06$ $p.<0.001$	5.87 (1.54)	5.24 (1.92)	2.91 (2.12)	5.16 (1.97)	3.56 (2.30)
Retaliation	$F(4, 964) = 44.38$ $p.<0.001$	4.22 (1.90)	3.95 (2.27)	2.25 (1.94)	3.31 (2.01)	2.19 (1.61)
Detachment	$F(4, 645) = 37.41$ $p.<0.001$	5.42 (1.59)	4.70 (1.88)	2.83 (1.93)	4.92 (1.84)	3.35 (2.19)

Two groups are created in each specific recalled emotion condition: group 1 corresponds to the specific condition and group 2 is composed by all the other conditions considered together. Table 11 summarizes the results of the analysis. Step 1 is a regular MANOVA in which the experienced emotion and the behaviours are the dependent variables. The significance of results denotes that recall instructions have a significant effect on these variables[6].

In step 2 the dependent variables are the five negative behavioural responses, and the specific experienced emotion is used as covariate.

In detail, in step 1, if the omnibus test indicates rejection of equal means, the final variables (negative behavioural responses) are tested with the variance due to the remaining dependent variable (specific experienced negative emotion) partialled out as covariate.

A nonsignificant omnibus test, in step 2, signals that the negative behavioural responses do not differ significantly across groups after controlling for the specific experienced negative emotion. Therefore, the difference in the behaviors, if any, is due wholly to the causal relations between these behaviors and the specific emotion considered.

In the case of dislike condition, as Table 11 indicates, the differences in four consumer's negative behavioural responses to brands – complaining, negative word of mouth, switching and detachment – are totally due to the causal relations between these behaviours and dislike. On the contrary, the difference in desire for retaliation is only partially due to the causal relation between this behaviour and dislike.

In the anger condition, only the difference in complaining is totally due to the direct effect of the specific negative emotion. The same result can be observed in the embarrassment condition. Differently from above, in the sadness condition no differences in behaviours is totally caused by this emotion.

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[6] It could be useful to remind that, in this analysis, the comparison is not made across conditions but between groups: group 1 corresponds to the specific condition and group 2 is composed by all the other conditions considered together.

Finally, in the fear condition, in the first stage of the step-down analysis the omnibus test indicates that rejection of equal means is not possible for complaining and desire for retaliation, therefore these two behavioural responses were not considered in step 2. Meanwhile, the differences in switching and detachment are totally due to the direct effect of the experienced fear.

The results of study 4 support the predictive validity of the scale, showing that the influence of the specific negative emotions on different behavioral consequences is theoretically consistent with emotion theories.

First of all, the inactive nature of sadness (Shaver et al., 1987; Izard and Ackerman, 2000) is confirmed by the present study. Experiencing sadness to brands induces consumers to withdraw from social contact and to talk little or not at all about the experience with the brand; no efforts are undertaken to improve circumstances or to re-establish a positive relationship with the brand.

Fear is commonly assumed to be an emotional response to a threat to oneself (Oatley and Jenkins, 1996). It activates consumers for action, especially motivating them to escape from the frightening brand and avoid further confrontation with it. Therefore, fear leads mainly to detachment and switching.

Anger elicits reactions quite opposite to fear. Both of them activate consumers but, unlike fear, anger motivates individual to actively solve the situation for his/her own sake (Stephens and Gwinner, 1998). Therefore, due to its active nature, anger results to be a straightforward antecedent of complaining behaviours. This result confirms previous research on this issue. As shown by Folkes et al. (1987), Oliver (1997) and Bougie et al. (2003) anger often exists in a complaint situation when responsibility for the failure can be attributed to the company, particularly concerning factors over which it has control.

Although we know that embarrassment and anger are different emotions, a commonality between behavioural responses associated with the two emerges in our results. An explanation for this particular phenomenon can be identified in the research presented by Grace (2007): studying embarrassment experiences in a consumption context, she found that in terms of the emotional dimension, the most common reported feeling manifesting the embarrassment was anger. The description of the emotion of embarrassment via a feeling of anger can explain the similarity in terms of behavioural responses related to these emotions.

Finally, the specific emotion of dislike implies an active subject (Storm and Storm, 1987). In the presence of dislike to brands consumers want to be far away from them, reject them and express their disapproval. These results confirm previous research where the actions associated with dislike emotions were identified (Roseman et al., 1994).

Table 11. Study 4 – Step down analysis

	Dependent Variable	F	Sig.
DISLIKE Condition			
Step 1	Complaining	11,082	,001
	Negative Wom	43,152	,000
	Switching	37,291	,000
	Retaliation	39,496	,000
	Detachment	38,848	,000
	Dislike	418,871	,000
Step 2	Complaining	0,150	,699
	Negative Wom	3,014	,083
Covariate:	Switching	,172	,678
experienced dislike	Retaliation	13,769	,000
	Detachment	,050	,823
ANGER Condition			
Step 1	Complaining	37,010	,000
	Negative Wom	33,850	,000
	Switching	15,384	,000
	Retaliation	15,328	,000
	Detachment	5,981	,015
	Anger	398,842	,000
Step 2	Complaining	2,352	,126
	Negative Wom	12,545	,000
Covariate:	Switching	6,977	,008
experienced anger	Retaliation	29,114	,000
	Detachment	16,950	,000
SADNESS Condition			
Step 1	Complaining	18,172	,000
	Negative Wom	97,126	,000
	Switching	72,124	,000
	Retaliation	33,731	,000
	Detachment	60,031	,000
	Sadness	317,376	,000
Step 2	Complaining	12,845	,000
	Negative Wom	111,192	,000
Covariate:	Switching	61,982	,000
experienced sadness	Retaliation	73,159	,000
	Detachment	56,369	,000
FEAR Condition			
Step 1	Complaining	1,274	*,259*
	Negative Wom	5,514	,019
	Switching	10,547	,001
	Retaliation	1,061	*,303*
	Detachment	15,418	,000
	Fear	1215,952	,000
Step 2**	Negative Wom	4,193	,041
Covariate:	Switching	,147	,701
experienced fear	Detachment	,453	,501
EMBARRASSMENT Condition			
Step 1	Complaining	23,384	,000
	Negative Wom	47,579	,000
	Switching	39,968	,000
	Retaliation	39,368	,000
	Detachment	36,311	,000
	Embarrassment	1657,727	,000
Step 2	Complaining	1,412	,235
	Negative Wom	22,983	,000
Covariate:	Switching	11,194	,001
experienced embarrassment	Retaliation	18,884	,000
	Detachment	17,488	,000

** complaining and desire for retaliation are were removed from the analyses in step 2

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The primary objective of this paper is to develop a new measure reflecting negative emotions consumers experience to brands. Based on the premise that consumers can experience negative feelings in consumption situations, we identified a set of items that describe brand negative emotions (BNE).

With three different studies, a 15-item scale is developed. The final set of emotion descriptors reflect five first-order factors labelled dislike, anger, sadness, fear and embarrassment. Dislike&Anger and Sadness&Fear map onto two different second order constructs, while embarrassment is a specific first order negative emotion.

Convergent and discriminant validity were determined in Study 3, using also MTMM analysis comparing our scale with other relevant measures available in marketing and consumer behaviour literature.

Study 4 finally offered evidence of predictive validity showing that negative emotions to brands lead to different behavioural consequences in a theoretically consistent way. Specific negative emotions have direct effects on behavioral responses, although we can't affirm that negative emotions are the only drivers of complaining, negative word of mouth, etc.

The need to create a specific set of emotional descriptors that can be useful in assessing negative emotions to brands is met. Comparing in fact the BNE scale with CES (the most used emotion set developed in the consumption setting by Richins, 1997) emerges for example that dislike emotions, excluded from the CES, prove to be very important in relation to brands especially for their effects on consumers' behavioural reactions to brands. On the contrary, envy emotions, for example, prove to be not relevant for our research goal.

This research can prove to be useful for practitioners in the field of marketing and communication. The scale we tested is in fact able to identify specific negative emotions to brands: it is a "brand specific" tool that can be employed together with (positive) attitude or attachment tools for proper brand tracking. Moreover, the scale has proved to be reliable even in terms of predictive validity: professionals can use it for looking at behaviours arising from brand evoked emotions. In case these behaviours are worth of consideration, the results of scale application can be interpreted (e.g. in terms of appraisal theory) in order to develop appropriate countermeasures.

Extensions to the studies presented in this paper, actually in progress, will examine the generalizability of our results – especially considering the relationships among first order factors discussed in Study 3 – to respondents from other cultural settings (France and the United Kingdom).

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