

The anatomy of a rivalry: the role of resentment in the development of brand attitudes

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Abstract

Purpose – This study aims to demonstrate that feelings of resentment, fueled by perceptions of injustice, underlie the formation of rivalries. Further, this study analyzes how consumers evaluate the two brands that participate in a rivalry relationship.

Design/methodology/approach – The research uses four experiments. Study 1 uses two conditions to test whether injustice predicts inter-personal rivalries through resentment. Study 2 uses a one-factor design with three levels (resentment vs contempt vs control) to examine the underlying mechanism of resentment on the formation of a rivalry. Study 3 analyzes the effect of brand rivalries on consumers' brand attitudes. Study 4 uses a 2 (Temporal-focus: past vs future) × 2 (competitive relationship: resentment vs control) between-subjects experimental design, to test the moderating effects of temporal-focus on consumer brand rivalry perceptions. This experiment replicates the effects of brand rivalries on consumer brand attitudes.

Findings – Rivalries have an essential emotional component – resentment – that is fueled by injustice and leads consumers to form more favorable attitudes toward the brand that consumers perceive is treated unfairly (target brand) and more unfavorable attitudes toward the brand that is perceived to treat the other brand unfairly (the rival brand). A future-focused mindset attenuates consumer perceptions of brand rivalries, whereas a past-focused mindset enhances these effects.

Originality/value – Prior research has failed to identify the emotional components of rivalries and their effects on consumer choices. To the best of the authors' knowledge, this is the first study that reveals how attitudes change when consumers are exposed to a brand rivalry.

Keywords Emotions, Consumer behavior, Brand attitudes, Brand relationships, Brand identification, Consumer psychology, Injustice, Brand rivalries, Resentment, Rivalries

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Brand rivalries are increasingly common in the marketplace. There are recent rivalries, such as Netflix vs Amazon, Apple vs personal computer (PC) and Instagram vs TikTok, as well as rivalries that have lasted for decades, including Coke vs Pepsi, Disney vs Universal theme parks and Nike vs Reebok (Fortune Editors, 2013; Havard *et al.*, 2021). Yet, despite the prevalence of brand rivalries, little is known about how they are formed and their impact on consumer brand attitudes. This research explores consumer-brand interactions and examines whether the dynamics between rivals influence how consumers ultimately evaluate brands. Specifically, it examines rivalries' theories and seeks to understand the nature of brand rivalries and their effect on consumer attitudes toward the brands within a rivalry relationship.

Rivalries are often suggested to be synonymous with competition, and are defined as a “subjective competitive relationship that an actor has with another actor, that entails

increased psychological involvement and perceived stakes of competition for the focal actor, independent of the objective characteristics of the situation” (Kilduff *et al.*, 2010 p. 945). Recent research indicates that rivalries move beyond just competition and involve a relational component that changes the nature of the relationship by increasing the emotional significance that actors place in the outcomes of the competition (Converse and Reinhard, 2016; Havard, 2020).

Past research explores different dimensions of a rivalry with little convergence. One study identifies conflict, peer and bias as contributors to rivalries (Tyler and Cobbs, 2015), while other research finds three correlates of rivalries – similarity between rivals, shared history and a high level of competitiveness (Kilduff *et al.*, 2010; Kilduff, 2019). Despite these important initial studies, the present research moves beyond these associations to explore an underlying casual emotional driver for how rivalries are formed and whether they lead to changes in consumer attitudes.

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This paper suggests that rivalries are deeply embedded in the emotional processing of information. In particular, the elicitation of resentment built upon perceptions of injustice. Competing emotions are examined and found not to explain the causal driver of rivalries in the way that resentment does. Furthermore, this research explores whether these feelings of resentment influence how rival brands are ultimately evaluated and whether attitudes are more favorable toward the targeted brand (the brand that is treated unfairly), less favorable toward the rival brand (the brand that treats the other brand unfairly) or both. These effects are further explained by how consumers incorporate brands into their self-identity (Escalas and Bettman, 2017) to achieve their identity goals (Huffman *et al.*, 2000). As consumers routinely identify with brands that reinforce their self-identity (Fournier, 1998; Escalas and Bettman, 2017), they tend to favor those brands that reflect their values and senses of justice (Tappin and McKay, 2017). Consequently, consumers who perceive injustice between two brands will likely construe the rivalry as an attack on themselves, and thus, side with the targeted brand against the rival brand.

Understanding how brand rivalries are created and their effect on consumer brand attitudes may inform firm-level competitive strategy. Therefore, the primary goal of this article is to make managerial and theoretical contributions to multiple bodies of literature. First, it explores the emotional factors that drive rivalries beyond the associations found in current research. Second, it contributes to the consumer behavior and branding literature by exploring the potential effects of brand rivalries on consumer choices.

Brand rivalries

Rivalries involve competitive relationships that only exist when two entities have a history with each other, in which one entity pursues success at the expense of the other (Kilduff *et al.*, 2010; Pike *et al.*, 2018). Prior competitive experiences between two entities create a relationship that magnifies the stakes of the competition (Converse and Reinhard, 2016), resulting in actors placing greater importance on the outcomes of competition when facing a rival (Kilduff, 2014).

Rivalries are prominent in interpersonal relationships, sports and politics. However, they can also arise among consumer brands. For example, marketing research finds that rivalries increase consumers' desire to win and their willingness to pay (Häubl and Popkowski Leszczyc, 2019) and that rivalry associations can be transferred from parent brands to extension categories, affecting extension evaluations (Pontes and Pontes, 2021). Sports marketing researchers examine the role of sincerity in how *schadenfreude* – pleasure, joy or satisfaction that comes from the misfortune, failures, troubles or humiliation of others – affects the effectiveness of rivalry game sponsorships (Smith *et al.*, 2009; Tyler *et al.*, 2021), and find that emotionally engaged fans increase their purchase intention of brands that sponsor rivalry games. These findings provide exciting insights into the role of emotions in rivalry relationships. Furthermore, inter-firm brand rivalries are closely related to inter-consumer brand rivalries, exhibiting several positive consequences, such as increased brand distinctiveness and improved brand identification (Berendt *et al.*, 2018). Consequently, a firm's communications

eliciting a rivalry may provoke responses at a consumer level improving consumers' identification with the involved brands. This article adopts a consumer perspective and examines their perception of inter-firm brand rivalries.

Emerging research proposes three main factors associated with a rivalry: similarity shared history and competitiveness (Kilduff *et al.*, 2010; Kilduff, 2019). Similarity between entities – geographic location, actors' characteristics or competitors' identities – is a characteristic of a developed rivalry. Aside from fostering attraction and cooperation, similarity has been found to increase social comparison, self-relevance and competitive intensity (Garcia *et al.*, 2006). Likewise, the number of interactions between entities is also a characteristic of rivalries (Kilduff, 2014). Repeated competition can foster feelings of competitiveness that remain beyond the completion of interactions (Johnson *et al.*, 2006), transforming the target into the standard, with whom comparisons become more automatic (Mussweiler, 2020). Finally, competitiveness – the quality and intensity of previous competitive interactions – fosters greater rumination, counterfactual thinking and emotional reactions (Medvec *et al.*, 1995; Doan *et al.*, 2021), common characteristics of actors within a rivalry (Kilduff, 2014). While only correlations between variables have been identified, past research suggests that these factors play an antecedent role onto rivalries. The current article analyzes these factors as a potential antecedent and compares each factor's causal role in developing a rivalry against the influence of resentment.

Beyond these three associations, research has yet to examine an emotional driver of rivalries rooted in the morality of the individual. Recent research suggests that rivalries stimulate a shift toward emotions – excitement, eagerness and spontaneity – while shifting away from deliberative thinking (Converse and Reinhard, 2016). Furthermore, regular competition makes relationships between entities more intimate and emotional (Chen, 2017). Consequently, as competitive relationships grow closer, positive and negative emotions underlying the relationship should increase (Berscheid, 1999; Emery *et al.*, 2021).

Research has found that the valence of emotions moderates the effect of brand failure in consumer retaliation (Zhang *et al.*, 2020). Similarly, both strong positive (Batra *et al.*, 2012) and negative (Rodrigues *et al.*, 2020) emotions exist between consumers and brands, revealing the crucial role emotions play in the development of consumer-brand relationships. Thus, while rivalries are characterized as similar, competitive and sharing a history of competitive interactions, this research, in line with recent research that highlights the importance of the emotional perceptual component of a brand to build brand equity (Alvarado-Karste and Guzmán, 2020) posits that an underlying emotional component drives the development of rivalries, such that, when these relationships grow, emotions are likely to intensify to the point where they ultimately define the nature of the relationship. This article introduces resentment as the essential underlying emotion that creates a rivalry, based on the perceived injustice that rivalries invoke.

Resentment

Resentment is a mixture of negative emotions, including disappointment, anger and fear and is typically not expressed openly (TenHouten, 2006). Resentment is stronger within long

term relationships (Murphy, 1982) and is often regarded as a feeling of inability to change past perceptions of injustice, inequality and corruption, in which one individual or entity becomes successful at the expense of other, fueling enduring anger toward the specific individual or entity (Ure, 2015). Anger and social comparison fuel this emotion, such that feelings of unfairness and injustice are central to resentment (Feather and Sherman, 2002; Zhang *et al.*, 2019). Similar to resentment, contempt appears only within relationships; however, whereas contempt is directed at a lower-status person or entity, resentment is often directed toward a person or entity of a higher status (Solomon, 1993).

Envy and jealousy are also similar to resentment, as they are all grounded in social comparison (Feather and Nairn, 2005). However, envy is low in arousal, can be both positive or negative in valence and involves a desire for quality, achievement or possession that someone else possesses (van de Ven and Zeelenberg, 2018). Resentment, in contrast, originates from perceptions of injustice in which one entity becomes successful at the expense of other (Parrott, 1991; Feather and Sherman, 2002), leading to higher arousal and negatively valenced feelings. For instance, envy is likely felt by a non-leading brand that has not achieved the success of a leading brand, whereas resentment is likely felt as a result of a perceived offense, such as disparaging, belittling or overly critical advertising claims. One notable example includes the Macintosh vs PC campaign developed by Apple Inc., wherein actors personify the computers they portray and resemble the founders of both companies. The Macintosh actor is younger, easy-going and better looking, designed to represent Macintosh products as being easier to use and much more user friendly, at the expense of the PC actor, who is portrayed as nerdy, uptight and boring.

As brands capitalize on perceptions of injustice, resentment likely fosters rumination toward the rival brand. Resentment may grow and intensify over time, particularly when marketing efforts further highlight this perceived injustice. Additionally, feeling unfairly treated often triggers a desire to correct the perceived injustice, resulting in feelings of revenge and retaliation (Zhang *et al.*, 2019), which lead to greater willingness to win and more pleasure in winning when competing against the entity that has treated the target unfairly (Feather and Sherman, 2002).

Jealousy, while similar to resentment, is unique in that it is a combination of fear and insecurity invoking a feeling of suspicious guarding toward another person (Rydell *et al.*, 2004). Both jealousy and resentment are negative in valence and moderate in arousal, but they have quite distinct psychological drivers. Jealousy involves distrustful safeguarding of a person or entity and arises when a person is afraid of losing something (van de Ven and Zeelenberg, 2018). In contrast, resentment involves feelings of focused displeasure stemming from knowing that someone or something has been wronged. The underlying negative rumination, characteristic of resentful thinking, is critical to the development of rivalries. Feelings of injustice further intensify resentment, creating emotional intensity among competing entities. This research predicts that rivalries, as competitive relationships built upon previous interactions, are fueled by resentment that is based on the desire to correct a perceived injustice. Formally stated:

- H1. Injustice has a direct influence on the perception of a rivalry, such that, as perceptions of injustice between two entities increase, perceptions of a rivalry between the two entities also increase.
- H2. Resentment will mediate the influence that perceptions of injustice have on rivalries.

Downstream effects of brand rivalries

Sports fans identify with a sports community to fulfill their need of belongingness and celebrate their rival team's direct and indirect defeats (Havard, 2014). Thus, highly identified fans display greater interest (Angell *et al.*, 2016) but less favorable attitudes toward rivals' sponsors (Bee and Dalakas, 2015). Fans are also more likely to increase consumption related to their favorite team when playing a rival (Havard *et al.*, 2016). As sports team fans form brand communities no different from those formed around other consumer brands (Lupinek, 2019), it is expected that brand rivalries will have similar downstream effects on consumers' brand attitudes.

Consequences of rivalries are typically negative, harmful and detrimental, such as price wars or unethical behavior (Berendt *et al.*, 2018). However, rivalries can also enhance group distinctiveness (Berendt *et al.*, 2018), boost motivation (Malhotra, 2010; Kilduff, 2019), stimulate a desire to win (Malhotra, 2010) and increase performance (Pike *et al.*, 2018). For instance, athletes have been found to increase testosterone levels, run faster and play more intensely when facing fierce rivals (Neave and Wolfson, 2003). More recently, Osuna Ramírez *et al.* (2019) find that brand polarization, which is usually present in a rivalry relationship, can have positive consequences in consumers, such as increased passion toward the involved brands.

This article aims to uncover the unique role that resentment plays as the underlying driver in the formation of rivalries and to better understand how rivalries impact evaluations of rival brands. In essence, does a rivalry help or hurt the brands involved? Might attitudes toward the targeted brand increase or decrease as a result of the dynamics of a rivalry? How might consumers evaluate the rival brand, which fosters resentment? This research suggests that rivalries, based on feelings of resentment, will have significant downstream effects on brand attitudes. Namely, attitudes toward the targeted brand are anticipated to significantly increase, whereas attitudes toward the rival brand are expected to significantly decrease.

Consumer brand attitudes

Consumers form relationships with brands similar to how they form relationships with others in social contexts (Fournier, 1998). As such, brands become an integral part of consumers' identities (Tajfel *et al.*, 1971; Escalas and Bettman, 2017) and can reveal significant effects on brand attitudes (Escalas, 2004). Brands are liked not only for what they do but also for the meanings they provide (Levy and Rook, 1999; Ungarala, 2021). Consumers routinely choose brands that reflect their self-identity and avoid brands that are incongruent with their values or beliefs (Aaker, 1997; Batra, 2019). Therefore, identification with a brand and internalization with its values

improves the brand image and increases consumers' perceived brand equity (Alvarado-Karste and Guzmán, 2020).

A brand that is congruent with consumers' desired self-identity is more appealing to them and helps them build and define their self-identities (McCracken, 1989). Consequently, consumers increase their sense of belongingness with a brand and its community while at the same time facilitate oppositional loyalty and boost negative and opposing views about rival brands (Liao *et al.*, 2020). In addition, strong identification with a brand is correlated with *schadenfreude* against the brand's rival (Phillips-Melancon and Dalakas, 2014). Thus, a competitor's unfair action is likely to stimulate greater consumers' identification and internalization with the target brand (Alvarado-Karste and Guzmán, 2020), leading to highly favorable attitudes and quite possibly highly negative attitudes toward the rival brand.

In the aforementioned rivalry between Mac and PC, PC was seen as the dominant brand in the computer industry, leading many Macintosh users, who viewed Macintosh as a superior product, to develop such intense favorable attitudes toward Mac that they tattooed the Apple logo on their bodies (Aggarwal, 2004). Simultaneously, many developed such passionate unfavorable attitudes toward PC that they created webpages featuring an altered picture of Bill Gates with devil-like horns and the title "Save Us from the Gates of Hell" (Muniz and O'guinn, 2001). Similarly, Target customers regularly use memes to mock Walmart customers on social media, mainly through the *Target Family* Facebook page. Walmart provides similar products at a more competitive price than Target, which may lead some Target shoppers to create unfavorable attitudes toward Walmart and stronger attitudes toward Target.

Brands use direct and indirect comparative advertising to glorify their attributes and benefits while often criticizing those of their rivals (Pechmann and Ratneshwar, 1991). More recently, brands use social media to create narratives and advertise products as better than rivals' (Kim and Ko, 2012; Tran *et al.*, 2020). Direct comparative advertising improves brand evaluation of both the leading brand and other brands (Snyder, 1992); however, while these strategies may improve persuasion and brand differentiation (Byun and Jang, 2018), they could also lead consumers to perceive the claims as unfair, resulting in negative implications for the rival brand. This paper predicts that consumers will choose the brand most congruent with their moral self-identity, regardless of prior attitudes toward the brands. As consumers maintain positive self-evaluations by avoiding brands and messages associated with negatively viewed group identities (White *et al.*, 2012; Teeny *et al.*, 2021), it is likely that an unfair narrative toward a brand will elicit consumers' moral self-identity by not only resenting the rival brand but also identifying more with the targeted brand. Formally stated:

H3. Brand rivalries will have significant downstream effects on brand attitudes, such that, when consumers perceive a rivalry between two brands, (a) their attitudes toward the target brand (i.e. the brand that is unfairly treated) will increase; and (b) their attitudes toward the rival brand (i.e. the brand mistreating another brand) will decrease.

Boundary role of temporal focus

Temporal focus is the allocation of attention to the past, present and future. It refers to how individuals focus on things in their surroundings that generate strong positive or negative affective reactions (Shipp and Aeon, 2019). Given that resentment involves rumination about unfair memories, the temporal focus is likely to have a significant moderating effect on rivalries. Specifically, focusing on the past might increase rumination about unfair events of consumers' own history. However, when consumers are oriented toward the future, they might not identify with the history between two brands. Therefore, this paper posits that feelings of resentment will strongly influence brand rivalries when participants are past-rather than future-focused. Individuals focused on the past will likely ruminate about the unfair events that have occurred and dwell on mistakes and regrets (Zimbardo and Boyd, 2015; Baird *et al.*, 2021). Conversely, those focused on the future will be more interested in planning and achieving goals while overlooking adverse past events (Shipp and Aeon, 2019). As a result, feelings of resentment will weakly influence participant perceptions of brand rivalries when participants are future-focused. Formally stated:

H4. Consumers' temporal focus will moderate the positive effect that resentment has on the perceptions of rivalries, such that, when consumers focus on the past, the influence of resentment on consumer perceptions of brand rivalries will intensify, but, when consumers are focused on the future, the effect of resentment on consumer perceptions of brand rivalries will be fully attenuated.

Overview of studies

Four studies are conducted to test the underlying mechanism of resentment, fueled by perceived injustice, onto the formation of rivalries, beyond the effects of similarity, shared history and competitiveness. Further, this research tests the downstream effects of brand rivalries on brand attitudes. First, the article examines the roles of injustice and resentment in the formation of rivalries between individuals and then takes the perspective of consumers and analyzes whether the same drivers trigger their perceptions of brand rivalries. Study 1 tests whether resentment predicts rivalries beyond the previously identified dimensions. Furthermore, perceptions of injustice are tested as a driver of resentment, thereby strengthening rivalries. Then, Study 2 examines the underlying mechanism of resentment (vs contempt) on the formation of a rivalry. Next, Study 3 takes consumers' perspective and explores whether brand rivalries heighten attitudes toward a targeted brand and decrease attitudes toward a rival brand. Finally, Study 4 examines temporal focus as a boundary condition of consumers' perceptions of brand rivalries, such that a past focus strengthens and a future focus attenuates the effect of resentment in consumer perceptions of rivalries, respectively.

Study 1

Study 1 tests whether resentment is uniquely appropriate as the underlying driver of rivalries beyond similarity, competitiveness

and shared history. As resentment can only exist within a relationship (Feather and Sherman, 2002; Zimbardo and Boyd, 2015) and relationships are founded on past experiences, it is predicted that shared history should remain a significant predictor of rivalries along with resentment. An additional goal of Study 1 is to test whether a perception of injustice might evoke feelings of resentment.

Method

In total, 132 students (55% female; $M_{age} = 22.39$; $SD = 4.19$) from a large US university were recruited to participate in an online experiment for partial course credit. Participants were randomly assigned to one of two (control; rivalry) conditions. Following Kilduff's (2014) procedure, participants were asked to recall a personal rival and describe their relationship (Appendix 1). A similar manipulation was used for the control condition, except participants were asked to recall a competitor they did not consider a personal rival. Kilduff's items were also used to measure similarity, shared history and competitiveness. Finally, participants indicated the level of injustice (three items – Appendix 6; $\alpha = 0.61$) and resentment (four items – Appendix 6; $\alpha = 0.95$) experienced in their competitive relationship.

Results

Manipulation checks. A *t*-test confirms that participants in the rivalry condition report stronger rivalry than participants in the control condition (five items – Appendix 6; $\alpha = 0.88$; $M_{rival} = 5.03$ vs $M_{control} = 3.06$; $t = 8.14$; $p < 0.01$). A Likert scale that went from 1 = *totally disagree* to 7 = *totally agree* was used.

Hypothesized effects. Data were analyzed using mediation analysis, following procedures described by Hayes (2017), PROCESS Statistical Package for the Social Sciences macro *Model 4*. Injustice was used as the independent variable, resentment as the mediator and rivalry as the dependent variable. Finally, similarity shared history and competitiveness were included as control variables. As predicted, the results illustrate a full mediation of resentment in the relationship between injustice and rivalry (Direct effect = 0.20; CI = -0.01, 0.40. Indirect effect = 0.22; CI = 0.13, 0.34). There is a positive and significant relationship between injustice and resentment ($b = 0.52$; $t = 4.84$; $p < 0.01$), as well as between resentment and rivalry ($b = 0.40$; $t = 5.45$; $p < 0.01$). As predicted, of the three control variables, only shared history is significant ($b = 0.26$; $t = 3.69$; $p < 0.01$) (Figure 1).

Discussion

Study 1 provides initial support for the conceptual model and empirically demonstrates how the emotion of resentment is

significantly correlated with interpersonal rivalry beyond the factors of shared history, similarity and competitiveness that have been proposed in recent literature. Because of the competitive nature of rivalries, shared history remained significant. Furthermore, the findings indicate that the relationship between resentment and rivalry is significant beyond similarity, shared history and competitiveness. Additionally, as predicted, perceived injustice underlies the development of resentment for consumers, which, in turn, initiates a rivalry.

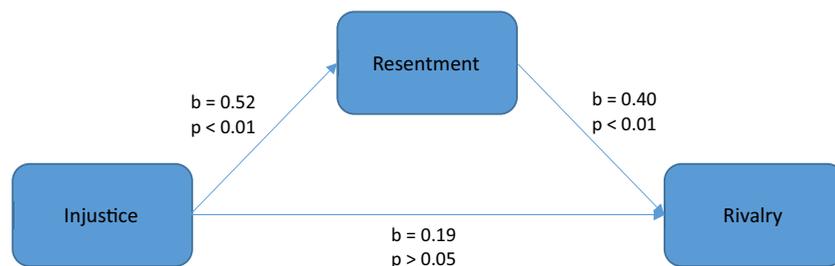
Study 2

Study 1 followed Kilduff's (2014) procedure, experimentally manipulated rivalry scenarios and measured resentment, shared history, similarity and competitiveness. The objective of Study 2 is twofold. First, to test a causal relationship between resentment and rivalry. Second, to examine the alternative explanation of a very similar emotion – contempt – as being responsible for the creation of rivalries. Resentment and contempt are remarkably similar secondary emotions that are formed from primary emotions such as anger and fear (Ure, 2015). Much like resentment, contempt is often fueled by a perception of being taken advantage of, being unrecognized or due to the unfair success of others at the expense of the self (TenHouten, 2006). However, contempt involves a feeling of disgust, wherein an entity is beneath consideration and deserving of scorn. Resentment, in contrast, is a reaction of one person or entity of lower status (Solomon, 1993) to the unfair or unjust treatment from the other entity (Meltzer and Musolf, 2002). Consequently, because of the similarity between these constructs, contempt is tested as an alternative explanation to resentment in the development of rivalries. Both feelings of resentment and contempt are experimentally manipulated by asking participants to recall their past experiences via a writing task (Strack *et al.*, 1985), and then measuring the levels of rivalry created across conditions.

Method

In total, 145 students from a large US university participated in a one-factor between-subjects experiment with three levels (emotion: contempt, resentment, control) for partial extra credit (59.3% female, $M_{age} = 22.28$, $SD = 2.69$). Following a writing procedure used in previous studies (Strack *et al.*, 1985; Coleman *et al.*, 2017), participants were asked to write about three to five situations when they felt resentful (contemptuous) toward someone and to write the initials of the person who made them feel this way. Then, participants were told to choose

Figure 1 Study 1 results. Effect of injustice on perceptions of rivalries through resentment



one situation that made them feel the most resentful (contemptuous) and write a detailed description of it. In the control condition, participants were asked to write about three to five activities they did with someone, then asked to write a description of their activities so that someone reading this description might reconstruct them. Participants were later asked questions about the development of a rivalry (four items – Appendix 6; $\alpha = 0.94$). Further, participants were asked questions about similarity, competitiveness and shared history, using Kilduff's (2014) items (Appendix 6).

Results

Manipulation checks. There is a significant difference between the three conditions in the level of resentment that participants reported (four items – Appendix 6; $\alpha = 0.96$; $F(2,142) = 88.23$, $p < 0.01$). In post hoc comparisons with least significant differences (LSD), participants who wrote about a resentful experience feel more resentful ($M = 5.25$; $SD = 1.29$) than participants who wrote about a contemptuous experience ($M = 4.39$; $SD = 2.14$; $p < 0.05$) or the neutral writing task ($M = 1.45$; $SD = 0.73$; $p < 0.01$). Similarly, there is a significant difference in the level of contempt that participants reported (four items – Appendix 6; $\alpha = 0.95$; $F(2,142) = 721.43$; $p < 0.01$). Post hoc comparisons using LSD, reveal a significant difference between participants in the contemptuous condition ($M = 5.09$; $SD = 1.61$) and participants in the resentful condition ($M = 4.32$; $SD = 1.57$; $p < 0.05$) or in the neutral control condition ($M = 2.97$; $SD = 2.25$; $p < 0.01$).

Hypothesized effects. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) using similarity, competitiveness and shared history as control variables reveal a significant effect of the manipulation onto rivalries ($F(2,139) = 14.14$, $p < 0.01$). Similarity ($F(1,139) = 13.01$, $p < 0.01$) and shared history ($F(1,139) = 35.64$, $p < 0.01$) are significant, while competitiveness is not ($F(1,139) = 3.02$, $p > 0.05$). As predicted, planned contrasts reveal that participants indicate a greater rivalry in the resentment condition ($M = 3.26$, $SD = 1.84$) compared to both participants in the contempt ($M = 2.16$, $SD = 1.25$, $p < 0.01$) and the control ($M = 1.84$, $SD = 1.06$, $p < 0.01$) conditions. There is no significant difference between the contempt and the control condition ($p > 0.1$).

Discussion

Consistent with the findings of Study 1, Study 2 demonstrates that resentment significantly impacts the development of a rivalry. Of the three factors previously identified as associated with rivalries, similarity and shared history are significant, whereas competitiveness is not. Furthermore, despite the similarities between contempt and resentment (TenHouten, 2006), contempt indicates no significant effect on rivalries compared to the control condition. Results from this study further illuminate the underlying process mechanism of resentment on the formation of a rivalry.

Study 3

Studies 1 and 2 were designed to understand the role of resentment in the creation of rivalries. Study 3 examines the effect of brand rivalries on consumer perceptions suggesting

that consumers would side with the target brand within the rivalry to enhance their moral self-identity. Thus, perceptions of brand rivalries are manipulated to examine how attitudes toward the target and the rival brand vary. With the goal of enhancing realism, this experiment uses existing energy drink brands. The study also uses a pre- and post-test experiment to avoid threats to internal validity. Finally, brand familiarity and loyalty are also considered to avoid confounding variables.

Method

Manipulation of rivalries. Using two known brands (Red Bull and Monster), two conditions were created, namely, rivalry (a competitive relationship based on injustice) and control (plain competition). To manipulate rivalry, a narrative was provided about a competitive relationship between the brands that included a situation of injustice. The control condition included a similar story but without the element of injustice. In both vignettes, a fictitious story was told about how Monster became a significant competitor in the energy drink market despite Red Bull's efforts to bring them down. Using a narrative that included injustice, Monster Energy was framed as the target brand and Red Bull, with more market share and power, as the rival brand. Red Bull's consumption keeps increasing since its debut in 1997 and continues to be the leader in the energy drink market followed by Monster (Malinauskas *et al.*, 2007). However, no comparative advertising or salient public conflict between the two brands were found. Thus, these brands served as ideal candidates for manipulation.

In total, 209 participants (58.9% female, $M_{age} = 22.77$, $SD = 4.78$) from a large US university were recruited to participate in an online experiment for partial course credit. Participants first indicated their attitudes toward Red Bull and Monster (seven-point semantic differential scale with three items, e.g. "bad-good" and "unfavorable-favorable;" $\alpha = 0.93$, the order of the brands was counterbalanced). Then, they were randomly selected to either the rivalry or the control condition, in which they were shown two different vignettes (Appendix 2). After answering to manipulation checks (Perceived Rivalry: three items – Appendix 6; $\alpha = 0.80$) and filling in some demographic questions, participants answered questions about resentment (four items – Appendix 6; $\alpha = 0.89$) and stated their attitude toward both brands one more time. The difference between the pretest and the posttest attitudes was measured. Familiarity (one item on a seven-point Likert scale: how familiar are you with Red Bull/Monster?) and loyalty toward each brand (one item on a seven-point Likert scale: how Loyal are you to Red Bull/Monster?) were also measured as controls to prevent confounding variables.

Results

Manipulation check. A *t*-test confirms that the manipulations were successful. Participants in the rivalry condition perceive a stronger rivalry among the two brands than participants in the control condition ($M_{rival} = 6.39$; $M_{control} = 5.42$; $t = 8.10$; $p < 0.01$).

Hypothesized effects. First, a multivariate analysis of variance was conducted with changes in attitudes toward Red Bull and Monster as the dependent variables. To measure the changes in attitudes, the differences between the pretest and the posttest for each brand were computed. Familiarity and loyalty were also measured and used as control variables. As predicted, the results indicate that the manipulation was significant (Wilks' Lambda:

$F = 9.88, p < 0.01$). A one way ANOVA was also conducted for each brand, confirming that, after controlling for familiarity and loyalty, compared to the control condition participants in the rivalry condition have a greater increase in their attitudes toward the target brand ($M_{\text{control}} = 0.12, SD = 0.91$; vs $M_{\text{rivalry}} = 0.47, SD = 1.10$; $F(1,203) = 7.14$; $p < 0.01$). Conversely, participants in the rivalry condition have a greater decrease in their attitudes toward the rival brand ($M = -0.38, SD = 1.45$) compared to participants in the control condition ($M = 0.07, SD = 0.83$; $F(1,203) = 7.37$; $p < 0.01$). Eliminating the control variables does not affect the significance of the relationships. Furthermore, a t -test reveals that participants in the rivalry condition have higher levels of resentment than participants in the control condition ($M_{\text{rival}} = 3.57$ vs $M_{\text{control}} = 2.13$; $t = 8.12$; $p < 0.01$) (Figure 2).

Discussion

Using two existing energy drinks brands, Study 3 finds that when consumers perceive a rivalry between two brands, attitudes toward the targeted brand will increase relative to a control condition of competition alone. The results also indicate that, compared to the competition, when a rivalry exists, participants will express lower attitudes toward the rival brand. Furthermore, consistent with the predicted model, participants in the rivalry condition have higher levels of resentment than participants in the control condition. These results provide a first look at how the dynamics of a brand rivalry may affect consumers' perceptions.

Study 4

Study 4 tests the proposed moderating effects of temporal focus on the relationship between resentment and rivalry. This study also seeks to replicate the positive effects that rivalries have on consumers' attitudes toward the target brand and the negative effects that rivalries have on consumers' attitudes toward the rival brand. However, while Study 3 used existing brands, in this study, fictitious brands are used to reduce potential confounds associated with prior attitudes.

Method

In total, 203 participants from the US were recruited using the crowdsourcing marketplace MTurk in exchange for a small monetary payment (61.4% female; $M_{\text{age}} = 31.88, SD = 1.11$). A 2 (temporal focus: past vs future) \times 2 (competitive relationship: resentment vs control) between-subjects experimental design was used. Two participants who did not follow directions were

eliminated from the sample. Participants were randomly assigned to a past- or future-focus condition and either a resentment or control condition. Next, they were asked to imagine that they were customers of a fictional brand (XPace) and read a vignette about the relationship between this brand and a competitor. Subsequently, they answered four questions assessing their resentment toward a fictional rival (Lunel – Appendix 6; $\alpha = 0.97$). Further, participants answered manipulation checks for temporal focus with items adapted from Shipp *et al.* (2009). Participants answered four questions on a Likert scale for past-focus (Appendix 6; $\alpha = 0.91$) and four for future-focus (Appendix 6; $\alpha = 0.91$). Given that current research indicates that consumers can shift their attention to different time periods based on the context (Shipp and Aeon, 2019), in this study, past-focus and future-focus were subtracted from each other to build one construct: temporal focus.

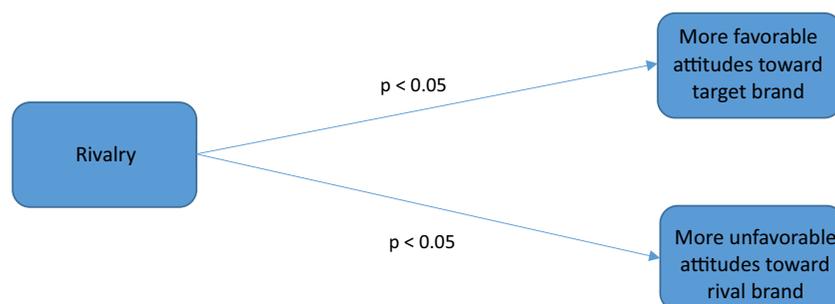
Manipulation of temporal focus. Temporal focus was manipulated using a fake news article about the advantages of making decisions while thinking about the past (future) compared to the future (past). After reading the article (Appendix 3), participants were invited to a writing task: “please, remember (imagine) an event in the past (future) and give us an example of how thinking about the past (future) helps you make better decisions.”

Manipulation of resentment. To manipulate resentment, two vignettes about a competitive relationship between two fictitious brands were used (Appendix 4). Both vignettes showed a similar story about a leader brand (Xpace) losing market share against a competitor (Lunel). Both scenarios were framed such that participants would imagine that they used and liked Xpace, and, in both scenarios, Lunel was growing at Xpace's expense. However, for the resentment scenario, an unfair situation was included to trigger resentment. The vignettes were followed with a writing task, in which participants imagined an opportunity to post a comment about the relationship between Xpace and Lunel. Next, participants answered five questions indicating their perceived rivalry between Xpace and Lunel (Appendix 6; $\alpha = 0.92$). Participants were then asked about their attitudes toward both the targeted and rival brands. Next, they stated their perceptions of similarity, shared history and competitiveness between the two brands, which were used as controls. Finally, participants answered demographic questions.

Results

Manipulation checks. Manipulations of temporal focus and resentment were examined to detect if they created their

Figure 2 Study 3 results. Effect of brand rivalries on attitudes toward the rival brands



intended effect. A *t*-test confirms that participants in the future-focus manipulation have a significantly higher temporal focus (more focused toward the future; $M = 0.35$) than participants in the past-focus manipulation (more focused toward the past; $M = -0.26$, $p < 0.05$). Furthermore, a *t*-test confirms that participants in the resentment condition express significantly higher resentment toward the rival brand ($M = 5.67$) than in the control condition ($M = 4.38$, $p < 0.01$).

Hypothesized effects. To examine the differences in the relationships between resentment and temporal focus in the creation of a brand rivalry, a 2×2 ANOVA was conducted, with brand rivalry as the dependent variable and temporal focus and resentment as fixed factors. Similarity, competitiveness and shared history were added as control variables. The results reveal a significant interaction between temporal focus and resentment toward the creation of a brand rivalry ($F(1,195) = 10.84$; $p < 0.01$). As expected, of all the control variables, only shared history is significant.

Planned contrasts revealed that participants' perceptions of a brand rivalry are significantly higher when exposed to resentment in a past-focus condition ($M = 5.75$, $SD = 0.169$) compared to the control condition ($M = 4.94$, $SD = 0.17$; 95% *CI* [0.32, 1.29], $p < 0.01$). However, for participants in the future-focused condition, no difference in the levels of perceptions of rivalry are reported ($M_{\text{Control}} = 5.59$, $SD = 0.18$; $M_{\text{Resentment}} = 5.27$, $SD = 0.17$, 95% *CI* [-0.18, 0.81], $p = 0.22$). Likewise, replicating the results of Study 3, brand rivalries increase attitudes toward the target brand ($F = 18.15$,

$p < 0.01$, $R^2 = 0.08$) while decreasing attitudes toward the rival brand ($F = 46.34$, $p < 0.01$, $R^2 = 0.09$). Participants' reported levels of brand rivalry by the condition are included in Figure 3.

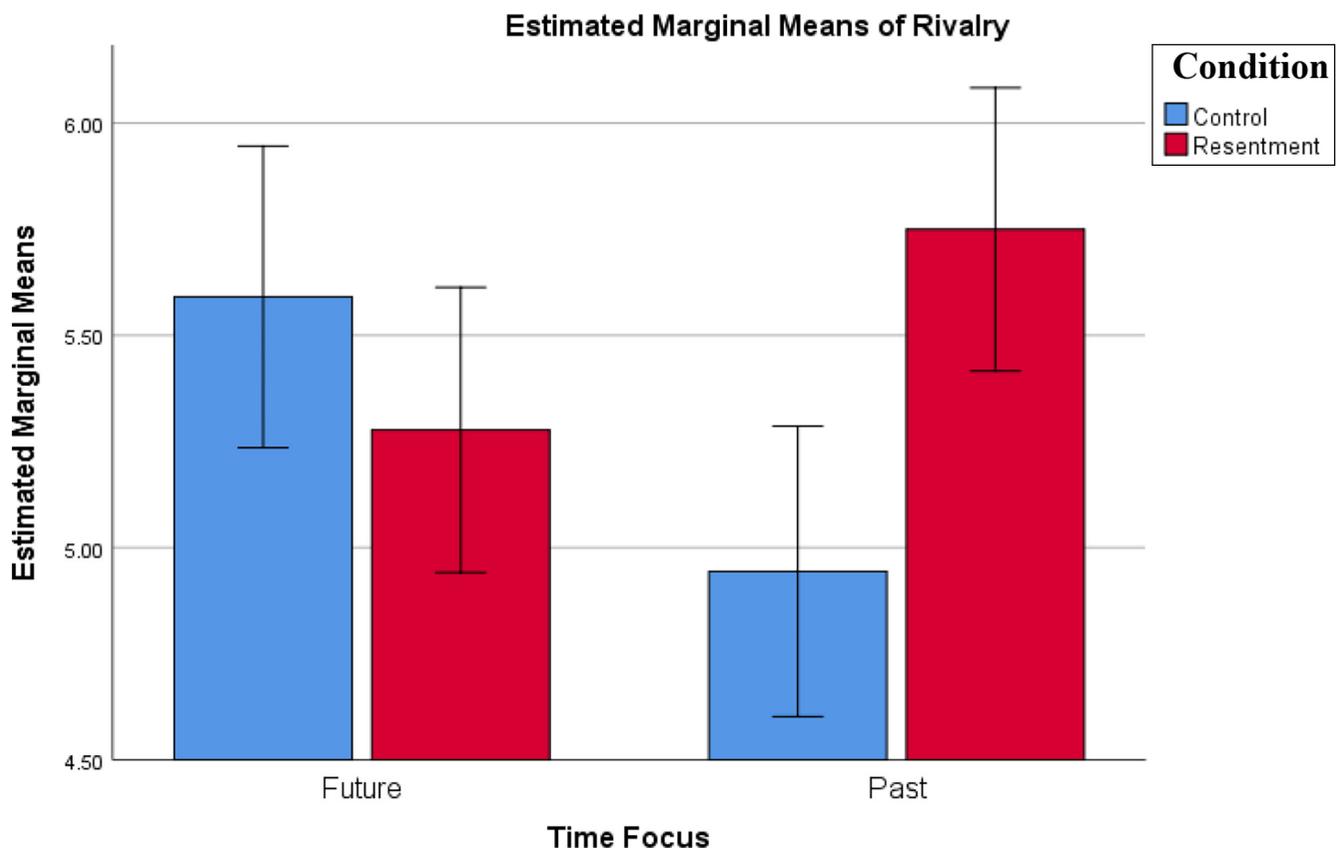
Follow-up study. Although from a theoretical standpoint it would be unlikely to have a reversed causality effect of rivalries on resentment, this possibility was empirically tested. In total, 100 participants were recruited via MTurk in exchange for a small monetary payment (49% female; $M_{\text{age}} = 32.65$, $SD = 10.19$). Participants were randomly assigned to a rivalry or a control condition. The same fictional brands – Xspace and Lunel – were used to create the two conditions (Appendix 5). Further, participants answered manipulation checks for rivalry (five items – Appendix 6; $\alpha = 0.96$) and resentment (four items – Appendix 6; $\alpha = 0.95$).

A *t*-test confirms that the manipulations were successful. Participants in the rivalry condition perceive a stronger rivalry among the two brands than participants in the control condition ($M_{\text{rival}} = 5.82$ vs $M_{\text{control}} = 4.31$; $t = 7.33$; $p < 0.01$). More importantly, the results of an additional *t*-test reveal no significant difference between the rivalry and the control groups in the creation of resentment ($M_{\text{rival}} = 4.21$ vs $M_{\text{control}} = 3.80$; $t = 1.38$; $p = 0.17$), statistically ruling out reverse causality between rivalry and resentment.

Discussion

Study 4 identifies how resentment impacts brand rivalries when temporal focus is varied. For participants focused on the past, the effects are similar to previous studies. However, when

Figure 3 Study 4 results. Moderating effect of time focus on brand rivalry perceptions



participants are focused on the future, the emotion of resentment no longer influences the perception of rivalries between brands. Together, these findings highlight a boundary condition of the rivalry effects. Furthermore, this study replicates previous findings of the downstream effects of brand rivalries in consumer research.

General discussion

The current research investigates the impact of resentment on brand rivalries and examines the effects that brand rivalries have on consumer brand attitudes. The results of four empirical studies provide converging evidence that resentment has a vital role in the development of brand rivalries and that brand rivalries have important downstream effects on consumer attitudes. These findings contribute to the branding and marketing literature by establishing the role of emotions in this unique relationship and by showing how consumers' attitudes toward brands can significantly change when these brands have rivals.

The results of Study 1 support the correlation between resentment and rivalries. Though it is unlikely that a rivalry could affect resentment, Study 2 serves to test this possibility and provides additional support by verifying that the influence of contempt is not an alternative explanation to resentment, ruling out contempt as an emotional trigger of rivalries. This investigation also reveals that brand rivalries have downstream effects on consumers' attitudes (Study 3), demonstrating that rivalries can have positive effects on brands that are framed as the targeted brand and negative effects on brands that are perceived as the rival brands.

Study 4 reveals that when consumers are focused on the past, resentment makes them perceive stronger brand rivalries. However, when consumers are focused on the future, the effect of resentment on rivalries is fully attenuated. This boundary condition is consistent with work on the psychology of resentment, which states that resentment is fueled by rumination about negative experiences (Dalrymple, 1995; Zhang *et al.*, 2019). Also, it provides a better explanation of the anatomy of a rivalry by displaying the importance that past experiences have in the construction of both resentment and rivalries. Furthermore, Study 4 replicates the findings of Study 3 regarding the effects of brand rivalries on attitudes toward the brands. Finally, this study rules out a reversed causality between resentment and rivalries.

The findings of this research demonstrate that the presence of a rival can shape consumer brand attitudes and reveals that consumers will identify with brands that they perceive are treated unfairly and increase their attitudes toward these brands. Conversely, consumers disassociate themselves from brands that are unfair to others, decreasing their brand attitudes. This behavior is coherent with research on brand identity, moral identity and in-group behavior (Tajfel *et al.*, 1971; Escalas and Bettman, 2017), which suggests that people's social identities are the basis of their conduct and actions. Therefore, while research suggests that sports play a more central role than other consumer brands in people's identity (Havard, 2020), an unfair event between two entities could trigger consumers' moral identity, activating resentment due to such injustice and leading consumers to construe the brand rivalry as their own.

The current research studies rivalries both from an interpersonal and a brand-relationship perspective. While this overlap may seem as a limitation, most of the underlying theory

on firm rivalries is drawn from interpersonal psychological research and has found minor differences between interpersonal and interfirm rivalry relationships (To *et al.*, 2018). Brands are typically managed by key leaders in organizations, who are often strongly invested in the brand they manage. While the antecedents and outcomes of an interpersonal rivalry and an interfirm rivalry remain the same, interfirm rivalries move beyond individual emotions and can become part of the organization's brand story, its myths, its legends, its rituals and its identity (Kilduff, 2019). Thus, the main difference between interpersonal and interfirm rivalries is its institutionalization.

Theoretical contributions

Past research has documented the correlational relationships between rivalries and shared history of interactions, competitiveness and similarity (Kilduff *et al.*, 2010; Kilduff, 2019). The current research moves beyond these factors and looks at an essential emotion underlying brand rivalries – resentment – and demonstrates how the perception of injustice between two brands fuels resentment, leading to an increased perception of a rivalry between brands. Despite rivalries being considered as relationships grounded in competition (Converse and Reinhard, 2016; Berendt *et al.*, 2018; Pike *et al.*, 2018; Tyler *et al.*, 2021), to the best of the authors' knowledge, little, if any, research has explored the emotions underlying these relationships and the causal nature of how rivalries are formed.

The findings in this research thus, represent the first examination of how consumer perceptions of brand rivalries are formed. While a competitive relationship exists, a strong emotional component – resentment – provides the critical underlying factor that builds and strengthens consumer perceptions of brand rivalries, beyond the elements of similarity, competitiveness and shared history found in current literature. These findings are consistent with prior work on resentment as an emotion that encompasses ruminating anger and social comparison (Solomon, 1993; Hooghe and Dassonneville, 2018; Demertzis, 2020) but make a new contribution by showing that resentment is the critical underlying component responsible for the creation of rivalries. While documenting this effect, it is also demonstrated that the impact of resentment on consumer perceptions of rivalries is stronger when consumers are focused on the past and is fully attenuated when consumers have a future temporal focus.

This research also reveals that an unfair narrative between two brands leads consumers to resent the rival brand, construing the rivalry between brands as their own, increasing attitudes toward the target brand while at the same time decreasing attitudes toward the rival brand. This effect suggests that an unfair action of a brand against another can foster some level of resentment even in customers, making them choose sides with the targeted brand. Finally, the studies demonstrate that this effect is robust across both existing and fictional brands.

Managerial implications

Marketing managers usually try to avoid competition and are advised to find markets in which they could become sole players (Kim and Mauborgne, 2014). This research reveals that intense competition, in the form of a rivalry, could not only be beneficial for consumers but also for brands. Brand managers can shape their brands through the association of brand

identities, but they can also use dis-association with a rival brand, which can increase attitudes toward the brand and the strength of those attitudes. Ultimately, consumers place a higher value on brands that have a higher social influence and help them build their social personas, leading to higher brand equity (Baalbaki and Guzmán, 2016).

There are several tools that brand managers can use to display brand rivalries. For instance, comparative advertising (Pechmann and Ratneshwar, 1991) could be framed in a way that includes a history of competition between two brands that would elicit consumers to perceive the brand rivalry. Also, the use of social media and advertorials could boost brand rivalries. Consumers naturally interpret their exposure to brands in a narrative-like form (Escalas, 2004; Escalas and Bettman, 2017). Thus, managers can foster rivalries through the creation of narratives that are fueled by resentment toward another brand.

The implications of this work are even more relevant for companies that own several brands competing in similar markets. For example, brands such as “always” and “Tampax,” which are owned by Procter & Gamble, could foster a rivalry with each other that could be beneficial to increase brand attitudes in their loyal customers. Nonetheless, brand managers should use caution in the way they frame their rivalries so that their brands appear as the target and not the rival brand.

Future research

The current conceptualization of the formation of rivalries and their effects on consumer attitudes provides several avenues for future exploration. The most fruitful of these include exploring the role of rivalries in the development of other emotions, such as jealousy and envy. Although from a theoretical standpoint, it is unlikely that these two emotions could fuel rivalries, the opposite is plausible. Rivalries could make the social comparison more salient activating emotional nodes in consumers, developing jealousy and envy as a consequence.

While this work finds that the effect of perceived injustice in resentment and the formation of rivalries hold even when attitudes toward the rival brand are high, this effect could change in the long-term. Other mechanisms such as motivated reasoning (Jain and Maheswaran, 2000) or willful ignorance (Reczek et al., 2018) are likely to be activated in the long-term when attitudes toward the rival brand are highly favorable. As a result, in the long-term, it could be possible to see a shift in the attitudes toward the rival brand and the target brand. Future research should examine this possibility. Likewise, this research hypothesizes that consumers side with the targeted brand and against the rival brand to prompt their moral self-identity. Though theoretical support was provided for this prediction, future research could empirically test this effect through mediation analysis.

Future work should investigate other dimensions of rivalries and other effects on consumer behavior. For example, work on comparative advertising has focused on its effects on brand positioning, attention, memory and purchase intentions (Pechmann and Stewart, 1990; Pechmann and Ratneshwar, 1991), but its impact on the creation of rivalries is yet to be studied. Research might examine the particularities of comparative advertising and when it could foster rivalries that

could trigger different outcomes for both the target and the rival brand.

While prior research suggests that similarity, shared history and competitiveness are antecedents to rivalries (Kilduff et al., 2010; Kilduff, 2014; Kilduff, 2019), these studies find correlations without examining causation. Therefore, it is possible that some of these factors are not antecedents but rather outcomes of a rivalry. Research is consistent with this premise. For instance, Zajonc et al. (1987) notice that people in a long-term relationship grow physically similar in their facial expressions. Other research finds increasing similarity of several traits as relationships grow over time (Hasford et al., 2018). Because of its relationship state, long-term rivals could also imitate each other and grow more similar over time. As brands grow more similar, they could also attract similar target markets, which could lead to higher competitiveness among rivals. Future research could examine these possibilities.

While this research focuses on brand attitude changes, future research could explore different outcomes. For example, the presence of a rival could activate consumers' self-identity, which could make consumers construe the rivalry more concretely, at a lower level and, in turn, shift their focus from a promotion goal to a prevention goal (Higgins et al., 1997; Gino et al., 2020). In sum, this study provides evidence of the influence of perceived injustice on rivalries through the emotion of resentment and the effects that rivalries have on consumer attitudes toward brands. These results also spur further questions, leading to exciting new avenues for research of theoretical and managerial importance.

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Appendix 1

Personal rivalry vignette in Study 1

Please think of someone that you have competed against who you consider(ed) to be a personal rival. By a personal rival, we mean someone against whom competitions are of greater

importance or significance to you, due to the relationship or past history that you have with this person. Please briefly describe this personal rival and the things you have competed on.

Appendix 2

Vignette for rivalry condition in Study 3

Red Bull has dominated the energy drink market for several years, and it is still one of its major players. However, in 2002, a new and aggressive brand entered the market with a similar marketing strategy: Monster Energy. Red Bull and Monster were friendly competitors, up until 2012, the year in which Red Bull used all its power to bully major US retailers, leaving Monster without its distribution channels overnight.

On the verge of bankruptcy and after losing hundreds of millions of dollars in just a few weeks, Monster was contacted by Red Bull’s chief executive officer (CEO) who attempted to acquire the company. Even though the proposal was substantial, Monster’s CEO considered Red Bull’s offer “nothing but an insult.” Therefore, instead of fighting a war that he knew was going to lose, Monster’s CEO arranged a meeting with a large distribution company and offered the exclusive distribution rights of Monster plus 49% of the company, all for a fraction of what Red Bull had proposed before. Monster asked for only one condition: to do everything in their power to bring Red Bull down. The distribution company accepted.

With the new company as its sole distributor, Monster was able to focus on the development of new, innovative products. These new products flooded the market, allowing Monster to double its market share in just two years. Some experts believe that Monster could become the number one energy drink in the USA within the next few years.

Vignette for control condition in Study 3

Red Bull has dominated the energy drink market for several years, and it is still one of its major players. However, in 2002, a new and aggressive brand entered the market with a similar marketing strategy: Monster Energy. From that point on, Red Bull and Monster have been friendly competitors and together they have dominated the extreme-sports endorsements.

At one point in time, Red Bull and Monster thought about merging their companies so they can focus each brand on different markets. Even though the arrangement was tempting, both companies considered that the market was growing fast and there was space for two big competitors. Therefore, instead of focusing in the extreme sports market, Monster’s CEO arranged a meeting with a new distribution company in which he offered the exclusive distribution rights of monster plus 49% of the company for an undisclosed amount of money. Monster asked for only one condition: to increase energy drink consumption by entering new markets. The new distribution company accepted the offer and started distributing Monster right away.

With the new company as its sole distributor, Monster was able to focus on the development of new, innovative products. These new products flooded different markets, allowing Monster to double its revenue in just two years. Some experts

believe that the energy drink market will continue to grow in the following years, benefiting both Red Bull and Monster.

Appendix 3

Article for past condition in Study 4

The importance of thinking about the past! Science Daily – June 30th, 2018 www.sciencedaily.com/2018-06-30-vksapmw. How often do you think about the past before making decisions? Recent research from Cornell University suggests this may be effective. Dr Marsha White and her colleagues in the psychology department have recently published a number of studies highlighting the benefits of thinking about the past before making choices.

“It really does help,” suggests Dr White. “Thinking about the past and incorporating these thoughts into decision-making provides a valuable source of information. We find that, in a variety of decisions, those who think about the past tend to make objectively better decisions.”

Dr White’s research consistently demonstrates how thinking about the past can improve decision-making. Whether making routine decisions, choosing among complex products or making decisions in social relationships, Dr White provides compelling evidence that people should be thinking about the past and what has happened in the past more frequently during decision-making.

“You would be surprised,” she suggests. “While only some people do think carefully about the past when making decisions, those that do, experience significant benefits. Over time, I think you will see more people integrate thoughts about the past into decision-making.”

Dr White’s research has been published in leading psychology journals including Science and Cognition.

Article for future condition in Study 4

The importance of thinking about the future!

Science Daily – June 30th, 2018.

www.sciencedaily.com/2018-06-30-vksapmw.

How often do you think about the future before making decisions? Recent research from Cornell University suggests this may be effective. Dr Marsha White and her colleagues in the psychology department have recently published a number of studies highlighting the benefits of thinking about the future before making choices.

“It really does help,” suggests Dr White. “Thinking about the future and incorporating these thoughts into decision-making provides a valuable source of information. We find that, in a variety of decisions, those who think about the future tend to make objectively better decisions.”

Dr White’s research consistently demonstrates how thinking about the future can improve decision-making. Whether making routine decisions, choosing among complex products or making decisions in social relationships, Dr White provides compelling evidence that people should be thinking about the future and what is likely to happen in the future more frequently during decision-making.

“You would be surprised,” she suggests. “While only some people do think carefully about the future when making decisions, those that do experience significant benefits. Over time, I

think you will see more people integrate thoughts about the future into decision-making.” Dr White’s research has been published in leading psychology journals including Science and Cognition.

Appendix 4

Vignette for resentment condition in Study 4

We would like you to imagine a brand of workout shoe that you have worn for several years. Imagine that you love this brand of shoe because it is lightweight and very comfortable because of its patented technology. This brand is called XPace, and it is one of the two leading providers of high-quality shoes.

The competitor of XPace, a brand known as Lunel, has launched an aggressive marketing campaign against XPace. They have used tactics such as publicly humiliating XPace by calling them weak and inferior in various publications comparing the brands. They have repeatedly tried to create prejudice against XPace by making fun of consumers who wear XPace merely because they wear this brand.

After 12 months of this aggressive marketing, XPace has slipped in sales and is no longer considered by market analysts to be a leading brand, even though XPace developed and patented the technology that makes the entire product category of workout shoes lightweight and very comfortable. Many consumers are forced to choose sides. XPace customers are beginning to feel that the brand is no longer recognized as the high, if not the highest quality, workout shoes on the market.

To make matters worse, you have just come across a blog where the Lunel CEO has made unnecessary and unsupported claims about unsatisfactory working conditions in XPace factories. While these claims are false, Lunel has been investigated numerous times for engaging in unethical business practices. Lunel is attempting to take advantage of consumers’ lack of knowledge about the workout shoe industry and further degrade XPace market share.

In the space below, please take the opportunity to post a comment on this blog. Write whatever you wish, whether you support or do not support these claims and your thoughts about these brands.

Vignette for control condition in Study 4

We would like you to imagine a brand of workout shoes that you have worn for several years. You love this brand of shoe because it is lightweight and very comfortable because of its patented technology. This brand is called XPace, and it is one of two leading providers of high-quality shoes.

One of XPace’s competitors, a brand is known as Lunel, has launched an expensive marketing campaign to beat XPace. They have used tactics such as guerrilla marketing where they have done street level comparison’s where they have consumers try their brand compared to XPace and has called them less comfortable and heavier weight than Lunel. They have repeatedly tried to create more confidence in their brand by appealing to consumers who currently wear XPace.

After 12 months of this creative marketing campaign, XPace has slipped in market share, even though XPace developed

and patented the technology that makes the entire product category of workout shoes lightweight and very comfortable. Many consumers are forced to choose sides. XPace customers are beginning to feel concerned that they will not remain the highest quality workout shoes on the market.

To make matters worse, you have just come across a blog where the Lunel CEO has made claims that XPace will no longer be the dominant workout shoe within the next couple of years. While these claims may not come true, Lunel has been growing continuously and also provide a high-quality workout shoe. Lunel is attempting to take the lead in sales in the workout shoe industry and further decrease XPace market share.

In the space below, please take the opportunity to post a comment on this blog. Write whatever you wish, whether you support or do not support these claims and your thoughts about these brands.

Appendix 5

Vignette for the rivalry condition in a follow-up experiment in Study 4

We would like you to imagine a brand of workout shoes that you have worn for several years. Imagine that you love this brand of shoe because it is lightweight and very comfortable because of its patented technology. This brand is called XPace, and it is one of the two leading providers of high-quality shoes.

The competitor of XPace, a brand known as Lunel, has launched an expensive marketing campaign. They are using comparative advertising, in which they claim better features on Lunel's shoes than XPace. After 12 months of this creative marketing campaign, XPace has slipped considerably in market share.

XPace and Lunel have a long history of competing with one another. Both brands have been in the market almost the same time, since about 20 years ago and, in the years since, XPace and Lunel have repeatedly competed for customers, market share and to have the best reputation. XPace and Lunel have been very evenly matched over the years, with neither brand ever taking a decisive lead. As a result of this, there is a great rivalry between the two brands.

Please take a few minutes and in the space below write about the rivalry relationship between XPace and Lunel.

Vignette for the control condition in a follow-up experiment in Study 4

We would like you to imagine a brand of workout shoes that you have worn for several years. Imagine that you love this brand of shoe because it is lightweight and very comfortable because of its patented technology. This brand is called XPace, and it is one of the two leading providers of high-quality shoes.

The competitor of XPace, a brand known as Lunel, has launched an expensive marketing campaign. They are using comparative advertising, in which they claim better features on Lunel's shoes than those in XPace. After 12 months of this creative marketing campaign, XPace has slipped in market share.

XPace and Lunel do not have much of a history together. XPace has been operating their business for about 20 years, but Lunel is a fairly new brand. Therefore, XPace and Lunel have not experienced direct competition with one another.

Please take a few minutes and in the space below write what you think about the relationship between XPace and Lunel.

Appendix 6

Table A1

Constructs	Items
<i>Study 1</i>	
Rivalry	I feel rivalry toward this person I have a history with this person that makes competitions against him or her more significant than competitions against other people I consider this person to be a personal rival Competitions against this person are more important to me because of the relationship that exists between us This person and me are rivals
Injustice	The competition between this person and me has not always been fair I feel this person wants to be successful at my expense This person was successful at my expense
Resentment	I feel resentful toward this person I resent this person Past interaction with this person made me feel resentful I feel a sense of resentment toward this person
<i>Study 2</i>	
Rivalry	I feel rivalry toward this person This person and I are rivals I consider this person to be a personal rival Competitions against this person are more important to me because of the relationship that exists between us
Resentment	I feel resentful toward this person I resent this person Past interaction with this person made me feel resentful I feel a sense of resentment toward this person
Contempt	I feel contempt toward this person I am contempt with this person Past interaction with this person made me feel contempt I feel a sense of contempt toward this person
<i>Study 3</i>	
Brand rivalry	Red Bull and Monster can be viewed as rivals Red Bull and Monster are rivals Red Bull and Monster have a competitive relationship
Resentment	Consumers should resent Red Bull's actions The message that I read earlier makes me feel resentful toward Red Bull As a consumer, I feel resentful toward Red Bull Monster drinkers should resent how they have been treated
<i>Study 4</i>	
Resentment	Lunel's actions would make me resentful I would resent Lunel I would feel resentful toward Lunel I would feel a sense of resentment toward Lunel
Past focus	I replay memories of the past in my mind I reflect on what has happened in my life I think about things from my past I think back to my earlier days
Future focus	I think about what my future has in store I think about times to come I focus on my future I imagine what tomorrow will bring for me
Brand rivalry	xPace and Lunel are more than just competitors, they are rivals I feel xPace and Lunel are rivals The history between xPace and Lunel make their competition more significant than competitions against other brands I consider that xPace and Lunel are rivals xPace and Lunel are rivals

(continued)

Table A1

Constructs	Items
<i>All studies – Manipulations for Studies 3 and 4 in parenthesis</i>	
Similarity	This person and I (these two brands) have similar backgrounds I am (Red Bull/Lunel) similar in ability level to this person (Monster/xPace) I (Red Bull/Lunel) share(s) similar characteristics and attributes with this person (Monster/xPace) I (Red Bull/Lunel) occupy a similar position to this person (Monster/xPace)
Competitiveness	This person and I (These two brands) have been evenly-matched in our competitions against each other My competitions against this person (competitions among these brands) have been closely-decided (i.e. the margins of victory or defeat were small)
Shared history	I (Red Bull/Lunel) have (has) repeatedly competed against this person (Monster/xPace) I (Red Bull/Lunel) have (has) often been in competition with this person (Monster/xPace)

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