

Social Exclusion and Organic Food Consumption

**Framing Organic Consumption as Pro-
Social Behaviour**

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Enjoy reading!

Abstract

Organic production and consumption are among today's major remedies towards sustainability in terms of environmental protection and animal welfare. In order to motivate our society to consume in a more conscious manner, tools have to be developed for the promotion of for instance organic food products. One phenomenon that has proven to influence human behaviour is social exclusion, also in a consumer context. Studies show that social rejection promotes pro-social, affiliative reactions whereas being socially ignored evokes anti-social, aggressive behaviour. This is due to the fact that being rejected threatens people's need for belongingness and self-esteem (relational needs) while being ignored thwarts their feelings of a meaningful existence and control/power (efficacy needs). This phenomenon has been termed as the differential needs hypothesis. Since organic consumption can be framed as a pro-social act, the feeling of being rejected should increase people's preference for organic food products. In order to investigate this, an online experiment with 197 participants from all across Germany was conducted. After manipulating feelings of being rejected and being ignored among certain participants, their willingness to pay for, attitude towards and intention to buy organic food were measured. Additionally, the participants' satisfaction levels with regard to the four fundamental needs were measured after the manipulation as well. The results indicate that if people feel socially rejected and have a high need to belong, which was measured in the very beginning, their intention to buy organic food is higher than among rejected individuals low in their need to belong. The three remaining needs that underlie this mechanism are the perceived levels of self-esteem, a meaningful existence and control/power. No main effects of being rejected alone could be found on the preference for organic food and the effects of being ignored could not be investigated since the manipulation of this feeling was too weak. Also, the differential needs hypothesis could not be validated in this study since the feeling of rejection threatened the participants' relational as well as their efficacy needs almost equally. Nevertheless, these insights serve as useful tools for marketing efforts and related campaigns to increase the consumption of organic food in our society. As it would be highly unethical to manipulate potential customers to feel socially rejected, a way to implement the findings would be emphasising and communicating the pro-social nature of organic food production and consumption. Thus, customers who already feel rejected could be attracted.

List of Abbreviations

EC	European Commission
NTB	Need to Belong
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
UN	United Nations
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
WTP	Willingness to Pay

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1 Introduction

Today, researchers as well as the common public are increasingly recognising humanity's destructive effect on the natural environment of our planet through overfishing, deforestation, the emission of greenhouse gases and several further influences (Sale, 2011). As a consequence, sustainable developments are becoming more and more important to prevent our world from natural resource depletion. Accordingly, the UN World Summit on Sustainable Development (2002) declared that "changing unsustainable patterns of production and consumption and protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development" are among the major objectives and requirements for achieving this goal. For instance, one significant remedy towards sustainability is the production and consumption of organic food, as confirmed by researchers (Abeliotis, Koniari & Sardianou, 2010) as well as widely recognised international organisations such as OECD (2008) and UNEP (2011).

On the one hand, organic consumption is one of the recent major food trends and the demand for organic products is increasing quite rapidly (Falguera, Aliguer & Falguera, 2012; Kearney, 2010). This can be explained with consumers' growing concerns about the environmental implications of their consumption patterns and a general increase in environmental awareness (EC, 2014). On the other hand, no European country showed an organic market share higher than 7,8% in comparison with the total food market in 2011 (Schaack, Lernoud, Padel & Willer, 2013). Furthermore, the price difference between conventional and organic food is still too large for many consumers to permanently and entirely change their behaviour (Falguera et al., 2012). In addition to that, the economic recession since 2009 has intensified this effect. Whilst public concerns about sustainability and positive consumer attitudes towards organic food products are rising, there is still a gap with regard to people's actual behaviour (Kearney, 2010). Consequently, further research is still needed in order to explore means and efforts to promote the consumption of organic food products.

Previous research has shown that one factor influencing individuals' consumption behaviour is the phenomenon of social exclusion (Mead, Baumeister, Stillman, Rawn, & Vohs, 2011; Lee & Shrum, 2012). Depending on the type of social exclusion, people tend to adopt either anti- or pro-social responses. According to Mead et al. (2011), one pro-social response is spending money in the service of affiliation. With regard to organic food consumption, this could be considered as pro-social behaviour in order to affiliate with other individuals holding a positive attitude towards the environment. Additionally, benefitting the environment and promoting sustainability through organic food consumption can generally be considered as a pro-social response. One previous unpublished study has shown that social exclusion can evoke the preference for organic food in people with a high need to belong (Tasso, 2013). However, the study did not succeed in confirming a direct effect of social exclusion on the consumption of organic food and in elucidating the underlying mechanisms. Thus, the aim of this study is to

explore these mechanisms and to replicate or rather extend the previous findings. This leads to the following main research questions:

- 1. To what extent does social exclusion lead to a preference for organic food consumption?*
- 2. What are the underlying mechanisms of this phenomenon?*

2 Theoretical Background

2.1 The Concept of Social Exclusion

Among the first to talk about social exclusion were the French sociologists Serge Paugam and Robert Castel. In line with the French Republican notion, the first spoke of a process of “social disqualification” (1993) and the latter of “social disaffiliation” (1995). As a result of such processes, the individual experiences a rupture in his or her relationship with society and the state (Bhalla & Lapeyre, 1997). In contrast to this solidarity-motivated approach, the Anglo-Saxon tradition considers social integration to take place among individuals voluntarily choosing their relationships. Thus, the focus here lies on the alienation between individuals, not so much with society or the state in general (Silver, 1994). Nevertheless, both notions emphasise the complexity and diversity of the concept of social exclusion, which many researchers have given attention to. In various studies, this term has been used interchangeably with other terms such as ‘ostracism’, ‘rejection’ and ‘isolation’ and there is a great interference among these definitions (Robinson, O’Reilly & Wang, 2013). For the current study, the behavioural consequences of social exclusion are of main interest. Only recently, studies on the impact of this phenomenon on consumer behaviour, where relatively little work has been done so far, revealed important insights regarding the reactions towards it. With the help of these insights, this chapter attempts to give a comprehensive definition of the concept of social exclusion and seeks to lie down its consequences relevant for the consumption of organic food.

According to Baumeister and Leary (1995), among the most fundamental and universal needs is the human desire for social connection. If this need is not satisfied, severe consequences for an individual’s psychological and physiological well-being follow (Buckley, Winkel and Leary, 2004; De Wall & Baumeister, 2006; Maner, De Wall, Baumeister & Schaller 2007; Twenge, Baumeister, Tice & Stucke 2001; Williams, 2001). For instance, brain regions are stimulated that control the feeling of pain (Eisenberger, Lieberman and Williams, 2003) and people’s self-regulation and logical reasoning are derogated (Baumeister, Twenge & Nuss, 2002; Baumeister, De Wall, Ciarocco & Twenge, 2005). This certainly underpins the severity of consequences socially excluded individuals are facing and why they seek social reconnection.

From this approach focussing on the human desire for social relationships, one could conclude that social exclusion mainly and always threatens people’s need to belong (NTB) or belongingness. However, research suggests that socially excluded people also feel a threat of three further human needs, namely self-esteem, control/power and a meaningful existence (Williams 2001; Zadro, Williams & Richardson, 2004). According to Maslow (1954/1987), self-esteem is achieved through inner-directed (e.g. competences giving respect for the self) as well as other-directed (being respected, accepted and admired by others) cues. The latter suggest that from the degree of self-esteem, it can be derived whether an individual feels rather included or excluded by others. Consequently,

it also shows if this individual tends to perform behaviour mitigating social exclusion (Leary, Tambor, Terdal & Downs, 1995). The third need endangered by this phenomenon is the level of perceived power and control. When this desire is threatened, a possible reaction is that the individual tries to regain power and control over others through aggressive behaviour (Frieze & Boneva, 2001). Baumeister, Smart and Boden (1996) suggest that the aggression can also be passively expressed by striving for symbolic status or superiority as restoration of a feeling of control and power. A final need that is threatened by social exclusion is the human desire for a meaningful existence. In order to believe in a meaningful existence, people need and look for social interactions (Lee & Shrum, 2012). If an individual is socially excluded, this desire cannot be satisfied and the person concerned feels invisible, non-existent (Williams, 2001) and less human (Bastian & Haslam, 2010). Consequently, excluded people look for ways to gain attention, which similar to power and control can be achieved through aggressive and anti-social behaviour (Warburton & Williams, 2005).

With the help of these insights, the concept of social exclusion can best be framed by adapting the definition of Hitlan, Clifton and DeSoto (2006, p. 217) in the following way: "The exclusion, rejection, or ignoring of an individual (or group) by another individual (or group) that hinders one's ability to establish or maintain positive interpersonal relationships [and threatens the individual's *need to belong*, *self-esteem*, perceived feeling of *control/power* and *a meaningful existence*". The following section will shed light on which responses the threat to each of these four needs incites in a consumer context.

2.2 Responses to Social Exclusion in a Consumer Context

For this study, the focus lies on how social exclusion affects the consumption of organic food. In the section above, it has been clarified that social exclusion thwarts several human needs and the reactions to this threat are quite diverse.

First of all, several studies have shown that social exclusion stimulates people to take on pro-social and affiliative behaviour. In experiments by Maner et al. (2007), socially excluded individuals revealed an increased interest to make new interpersonal acquaintances via a student connection service and to engage in work with others. Furthermore, participants in other studies got involved in non-conscious behavioural mimicry (Lakin, Chartrand & Arkin, 2008), which is copying the behaviour of others, unintentionally and without being aware of it. According to several researchers, this leads to increased liking (Chartrand & Bargh, 1999), trust (Maddux, Mullen & Galinsky, 2008), closeness (Ashton-James, van Baaren, Chartrand & Decety, 2007) and helping behaviour (van Baaren, Holland, Kawakami & van Knippenberg, 2004) among individuals towards those who mimicked their behaviour. Thus, non-conscious behavioural mimicry is an affiliative response possibly creating interpersonal rapport (Chartrand, Maddux & Lakin, 2005). Additionally, socially excluded participants in the studies of Pickett, Gardner and Knowles (2004) showed a higher social attentiveness. This means that they

displayed a higher motivation to identify and decode social cues such as vocal tone and facial emotion. Moreover, an increased willingness to show empathy in terms of deciphering other people's state of mind could be found among socially excluded participants. Accordingly, these efforts can be interpreted as means to gain social inclusion and affiliation. With regard to consumer behaviour, Mead et al. (2011) have shown that a possible pro-social response to social exclusion is spending money in the service of affiliation with other individuals. In their experiments, socially excluded participants displayed a higher willingness to buy products of symbolic group membership rather than practical or self-gifting items. Furthermore, they adjusted their spending behaviour to whether their interaction partner was a frugal or lavish spender and showed the same preferences. Also, excluded participants showed a higher willingness to pay for a generally unappealing food item (chicken feet) because it was favoured by a peer beforehand. This higher willingness was only present when the participants were told that their peer would be informed about their decision.

However, the responses to social exclusion can also turn out to be the complete opposite in terms of aggressive, anti-social and self-focussed behaviour, as shown by several researchers. In the experiments of Twenge et al. (2001) for instance, socially excluded participants assigned a more negative job evaluation to people who insulted them beforehand than non-excluded participants having faced insults as well. In other studies, the excluded participants provided their interaction partners with unappealing snacks in relation to appealing alternatives (Chow, Tiedens & Govan, 2008) and partners who were thought to disapprove spicy food were allocated more hot sauce by socially excluded individuals (Warburton, Williams & Cairns, 2006). In a consumer context, an expression of such self-focused and aggressive behaviour in order to regain control over others is what Veblen (1899/1994) termed as conspicuous consumption: The acquisition of goods in order to display economic power and to show off.

Clearly, social exclusion can lead to pro-social as well as anti-social responses. How can this be explained?

Williams (2007) proposed that the different reactions to social exclusion depend on which fundamental human desires are threatened the most and divided them into two groups: relational (need to belong, self-esteem) and efficacy needs (control/power, meaningful existence). When relational needs are in danger, the individual tends to bolster these needs by behaving, thinking and feeling in a pro-social, affiliative fashion since pro-social behaviour enhances interpersonal attractiveness (Lee & Shrum, 2012). On the contrary, when efficacy needs are thwarted, the response to restore them often is performing provocative, attention-getting and controlling (anti-social) behaviour (Williams, 2007; Williams & Zadro, 2005). However, William's considerations presupposed that there is only one general type of social exclusion, namely ostracism, which includes explicit rejection as well as implicit ignoring. Through four experiments, Lee and Shrum (2012) could provide evidence that different types of social exclusion thwart different human needs, thus triggering different behavioural patterns. These researchers are building

upon considerations of Molden, Lucas, Gardner, Dean and Knowles (2009) that there are two slightly different sorts of social exclusion: Being passively ignored and being actively rejected. For instance, an individual's opinion could be neglected in a discussion by others, thus implicitly excluding (ignoring) the former. An example of an explicit rejection would be if possible interaction partners tell a person that its presence at a certain event and the like is not desired. As subtle as these differences might be concerning the excluded individual's perceived harm, according to Lee and Shrum (2012), they account for why the reactions to social exclusion can turn out to be completely contrary. This holds for people's behaviour in reality as well as in the experiments mentioned in the previous paragraph.

In the experiments of Lee and Shrum (2012), it could be demonstrated that the feeling of being rejected threatens an individual's relational needs whereas the feeling of being ignored threatens an individual's efficacy needs. This means that if a person is or at least feels explicitly rejected by another person or group, this individual's need to belong and self-esteem are threatened. In the same manner, if a human being feels implicitly ignored by others, this person's feelings of perceived control/power and a meaningful existence are endangered. Thus, by combining the findings of Williams (2007) and Molden et al. (2009), Lee and Shrum (2012) are providing the very first extensive proof of what they coined as the *differential needs hypothesis*: If the relational needs of an individual are threatened (rejection), pro-social responses are the outcome whereas threatening efficacy needs (ignoring) results in anti-social, self-focussed behaviour. In the first two experiments, Lee and Shrum investigated participants' preferences for brand logos and donation behaviour. In both experiments, ignored participants showed a higher preference for brand logos than participants in the rejected (and control) condition. Also, rejected participants manifested a higher probability of donating money for charity purposes than participants in the ignored (and control) condition. The most important difference between these two experiments was the type of manipulation: Experiment 1 included a writing task and experiment 2 an actual manipulation. In order to fortify their findings, Lee and Shrum (2012) conducted two further experiments in which they showed that bolstering relational needs reduces the effects of being rejected and bolstering efficacy needs those of being ignored. In experiment 3, ignored and rejected participants received either a power (efficacy need), self-esteem (relational need) or no boost after the manipulation. The results were that ignored participants having received a power boost showed a significantly lower preference for brand logos than ignored participants given different boosts. Concerning their preference for helping behaviour, rejected participants having experienced a self-esteem boost scored lower than rejected participants with a power or no boost. In the final experiment, ignored and rejected participants were either given a meaningful existence (efficacy need) or self-esteem boost. The fourth experiment also included a self-esteem instead of a need to belong boost since belongingness is by definition the opposite of social exclusion so it was expected that such a boost would reduce the effects of being rejected as well as being

ignored (Lee & Shrum, 2012). The results stated that ignored participants with a meaningful existence boost had a significantly lower preference for brand logos than those having received a self-esteem boost. In the same fashion, rejected participants having undergone a self-esteem boost manifested a lower likelihood to donate money than those with a meaningful existence boost.

Consequently, the four experiments reported by Lee and Shrum (2012) show that neither being ignored increased pro-social responses nor did being rejected cause participants to act in an anti-social, self-focussed manner. This delivered evidence that being rejected should mainly threaten an individual's relational needs (need to belong and self-esteem), which leads to a pro-social outcome. Simultaneously, being ignored is supposed to primarily thwart people's efficacy needs (control/power and a meaningful existence), which evokes an anti-social reaction. Lee and Shrum (2012) noted that being rejected has merely little impact on people's efficacy needs and being ignored on their relational needs. Here, considerations by Warburton and Williams (2005) have to be taken into account as well. These researchers state that several needs might be threatened by both types of social exclusion, not necessarily exclusively relational or efficacy needs. Which fundamental needs are thwarted is subject to how exactly the social exclusion took place as well as to individual differences in those affected. Consequently, it cannot be presumed that efficacy needs remain unaffected by rejection and relational needs by being ignored, which leads to the following first two research hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1 a: Being explicitly rejected threatens an individual's relational needs significantly stronger than its efficacy needs

Hypothesis 1 b: Being implicitly ignored threatens an individual's efficacy needs significantly stronger than its relational needs

Taking a look at what being rejected respectively ignored implies for an individual, this conclusion is also quite reasonable. If people are ignored, their power to receive attention from others decreases. Other than being rejected, where the individual is still capable or can at least try to contest the rejection and thus take over control, being ignored is unidirectional and renders the affected person powerless. The only remedy here is gaining attention, otherwise the individual feels invisible, non-existent and thus practically socially dead (Warburton & Williams, 2005; Williams, 2009). Consequently, it is understandable that being ignored alongside control/power threatens the feeling of a meaningful existence. In order to thwart a person's need to belong and self-esteem, the exclusion needs to be explicit. If the individual is actively rejected, this underlines its poor standing in a relationship or group and several researchers suggest that self-esteem functions as a monitor of a person's inclusionary status (Leary et al., 1995). This decrease in self-esteem and the desire for social relationships (need to belong) motivate the rejected individual to achieve reconnection rather than power and control.

In a consumer context, people feeling ignored tend to gain control/power and reassure their existence by showing off to others (Lee and Shrum, 2012). This leads to the phenomenon of conspicuous consumption, impressing others and increasing power over them through the consumption of goods displaying a high socio-economic status (Veblen, 1899/1994; Rucker & Galinsky, 2008 & 2009). On the contrary, rejected individuals seek social reconnection through pro-social behaviour by for instance showing an increased tendency for helping and donation behaviour (Lee & Shrum, 2012). While these researchers were able to show an effect of being ignored on consumer behaviour (conspicuous consumption), they did not research if being rejected automatically leads to affiliative spending. Indeed, consuming in the service of affiliation was a pro-social response to social exclusion in the experiments of Mead et al. (2011) but they did not make a distinction between being ignored and rejected. Thus, the present study also seeks to investigate whether being rejected automatically evokes affiliative spending in a consumer context.

As stated in the introduction, organic food consumption can be considered as cooperative, pro-social behaviour to affiliate with other individuals holding a positive attitude towards the environment and sustainability. Consequently, the concept of organic consumption and the motivations behind it will be illustrated in the following section.

2.3 Organic Food Consumption and Social Exclusion

Now that the concept of social exclusion and its impacts on consumer behaviour have been elucidated, the motivations to consume and the concept of organic food products have to be pointed out.

Dimitri and Dettmann (2012) state that factors such as access to organic food, education, marital status and income play an important role in consumers' decision to buy organic products. In another study, Dettmann (2008) also claimed that indeed, individuals with a higher income have a higher probability to consume organic food. However, she also found out that in proportion to their income, these individuals are not likely to spend more on organic products than it is the case among people with a lower budget.

Moreover, several researchers (Padel & Foster, 2005; Makatouni, 2002; Lockie, Lyons, Lawrence & Mummery, 2002) have found out that the major reasons for buying and consuming organic food products are linked to health-, animal welfare- and environment-related issues. Indeed, organic food production has the potential to improve consumer health, food quality and safety and increase biodiversity (Reed, 2001, cited in Seyfang, 2006). Furthermore, consuming organic food is regarded as an environmentally conscious consumer behaviour (Gatersleben, Stege & Vlek, 2002) and contributing more to sustainability than the production and consumption of conventional food products (Thøgersen, 2010). For instance, this partially stems from the fact that organic farming has the potential to reduce global warming (UNCTAD, 2007). Additionally, organic

products promote animal welfare and a reduction of waste and pesticide usage (Davies, Titterington & Cochrane, 1995).

Due to its beneficial effects for the environment, organic food consumption can thus be considered as a pro-social behaviour. As elaborated in the section on social exclusion, being explicitly rejected stimulates individuals to commit pro-social acts and therefore should increase their willingness to consume organic food. This leads to the following research hypotheses:

Hypothesis 2 a: Being explicitly rejected increases the willingness to pay for organic food

Hypothesis 2 b: Being explicitly rejected leads to a more positive attitude towards organic food

Hypothesis 2 c: Being explicitly rejected increases a person's intention to buy organic food

In a previous study on social exclusion and the consumption of organic food (Tasso, 2013), a positive interaction effect could only be found for participants with a high need to belong. More precisely, they showed a more positive attitude towards and a higher intention to buy organic food than participants with a low NTB, both groups being in the exclusion condition.

Coming back to people's need to belong, threatening this need is among the main motivations for showing cooperative, pro-social behaviour (Van Vugt, 2009). Individuals with an inherent strong NTB rather look for and want to maintain interpersonal relationships, at least until having acquainted a minimum degree of relatedness and social contact (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Furthermore, they care more about preserving a good public image (Williams, 2001). As elaborated in the previous section, the feeling of rejection thwarts an individual's perceived feeling of belongingness. Consequently, it will be investigated in this study whether rejected people with a high NTB experience a stronger threat to their belongingness than individuals low in NTB. If this is the case, the feeling of being rejected should be increased, as already suggested by Kern (2011), and a pro-social response should be stimulated even more. This leads to the following additional research hypotheses:

Hypothesis 3 a: The effect of being explicitly rejected on the willingness to pay for organic food is stronger for people with a high need to belong

Hypothesis 3 b: The effect of being explicitly rejected on the attitude towards organic food is stronger for people with a high need to belong

Hypothesis 3 c: The effect of being explicitly rejected on a person's intention to buy organic food is stronger for people with a high need to belong

Now it has been theorised that the feeling of rejection leads to an increased willingness to consume organic food products. Additionally, a person's high need to belong might increase this phenomenon for actively rejected individuals. The second type of social exclusion investigated in this study, being implicitly ignored, should have an adverse effect. As exemplified beforehand, the feeling of being ignored leads people to perform self-centred, anti-social behaviour. Despite the fact that organic food is perceived to be beneficial for the individual, thus its consumption being a possible expression of self-serving behaviour, it is not always the most rational choice in that sense. Namely, the advantages of conventional food for oneself are that it is cheaper, easier to access, has a wider variety, provides longer shelf-life and consequently is higher in convenience than organic food. Moreover, some people might prefer the taste and hedonic pleasure of conventional products, which are enhanced through contained additives. This and the environmental and ethical downsides of conventional food production, for instance with regard to animal welfare, make it possible to consider consuming its products as a self-centred, anti-social behaviour. With regard to organic food consumption, this leads to the following additional research hypotheses:

Hypothesis 4 a: Being implicitly ignored decreases the willingness to pay for organic food

Hypothesis 4 b: Being implicitly ignored leads to a less positive attitude towards organic food

Hypothesis 4 c: Being implicitly ignored decreases a person's intention to buy organic food

Since the feeling of being ignored thwarts people's efficacy needs (control/power, meaningful existence) but not relational needs (belongingness, self-esteem), whether an individual has a high need to belong or not should not have an influence on these effects. In this study, a distinction between the two types of social exclusion is made and different scenarios concerning organic food consumption are provided by presuming that socially excluded people will either increase (rejection) or decrease (ignoring) their preference for organic food. Thus, the goal is to clarify why no direct effect without the influence of NTB could be proven in the previous study.

3 Methodology

3.1 Design and Participants

For this study, a 3 (rejected versus ignored versus control) by 2 (high versus low NTB) experimental design was adopted. The participants were randomly divided into three conditions: being socially rejected, ignored and a control group. These two types of social exclusion were manipulated by asking the participants to recall an event where they were either rejected or ignored. This procedure was adapted from the studies of Lee and Shrum (2012), Maner et al. (2007) and Molden et al. (2009). The participants' need to belong was measured by adapting the scale by Leary, Kelly Cottrell and Schreindorfer (2013). Derived from their scores on the scale, the participants were allocated to either the group with a high (100 participants) or a low NTB (97 participants), which was based on a median split. The exact results of the median split and the mode of functioning of the scale follow in the measures section.

The experiment was conducted as an online survey including questionnaire items and data of 197 participants served for the final analysis. Taking a look at the distribution of gender, 125 participants were female and 72 male (control group: 26 males & 44 females; rejected condition: 27 males & 37 females; ignored condition: 19 males & 44 females). Thus, males and females were not distributed unproportionally across the groups. In total, 220 people participated in the experiment and 23 had to be discarded due to invalid data. The participants were exclusively living in Germany and the most represented age group was between 21 and 29 years of age (60%). The most frequent indication of the participants' highest education level to date was 'advanced technical college entrance qualification respectively university entrance diploma' (41%). Merely 16 participants had obtained a lower education level upon completion of the experiment. The study materials consisted of three main parts and took participants about 10-20 minutes on average to complete. The link to the survey was distributed via social media and at various universities across Germany. The complete survey can be found in the appendices of this study.

3.2 Procedure

At the beginning of the online experiment, participants were told that they would be participating in two separate, non-related surveys and that their data would be handled confidentially. The first survey was disguised as a test of their memory capacity and the second was supposed to measure their consumer behaviour towards organic food. This procedure was used to prevent participants from discovering the true purpose of the study and was adapted from the experiments of Lee and Shrum (2012).

First, the participants indicated how frequently they consume organic food and to what extent they consider organic consumption as beneficial for society and themselves. Thus, the organic consumption pattern among the sample could be measured before having

undergone the manipulation, which would have distorted these data already. They then rated statements indicating their need to belong. Next to the statements on NTB, random items related to consumer behaviour were included to distract the participants from the purpose of this scale.

In the first survey, participants were randomly assigned to either one of the two experimental groups or the control condition. In the ignored and the rejected condition (experimental groups), participants were asked to recall an event where they felt either ignored or rejected. In order to ensure that participants would complete the tasks correctly, examples were provided for these conditions. The former were supposed to recall an event where for instance their presence was not noticed or their opinion was not included into a conversation and so forth. The latter should describe a situation where their presence was actively not appreciated, their opinion rejected or where they were denied help. In the control condition, participants described a collective, positive undertaking of the past two weeks, which was a completely random task. To release them from any kind of inhibition, they were given the possibility to omit names, places and the like to ensure anonymity. Subsequently, the participants were asked to indicate to what extent several feelings were invoked in them during the event they just had described. These questions were adapted from the 'Need Threat Scale' by Jamieson, Harkins and Williams (2010) and served to urge the participants to reflect upon the previously specified event even more. Moreover, they served as a tool to validate the differential needs hypothesis since they indicate to what extent each of the four fundamental needs is satisfied respectively threatened (Belongingness, Self-esteem, Meaningful existence, Control/Power). Two questions from the adapted scale were investigated as a manipulation check. All questions' mode of functioning is explained in the measures section of this chapter and the original scale can be found in the appendices.

After filling out the questions, participants were told that the first part was now completed and they would proceed to the second survey on organic food consumption. The structure of this survey was adapted from a previous study on social exclusion and organic food consumption (Tasso, 2013). First, eight different products were presented whereby half of them were organic and the other half conventional. The products for evaluation were apples, bananas, cookies and chocolate bars (one organic and one conventional version). Two utilitarian (fruits) and two hedonic (sweets) products were chosen for this experiment. This categorisation was a result of the findings by Shiv and Fedorikhin (1999) and Saldahna (2009). By employing their categorisation, the results were not influenced by product type. How the participants' willingness to pay was measured in this part of the study and how this differs from the previous one will be explained in the measures section.

The following part of the survey on organic food consisted of questions indicating participants' attitude towards and intention to buy organic food. These questions are presented in the measures section as well. The final task of the second survey was

remembering the number of products that were evaluated previously and which product was favoured the most, which served as another camouflage tactic.

In the last part, the participants filled in demographic data, which was done in the end to make sure these indications would not influence participants' statements throughout the surveys.

Finally, participants were thanked and then debriefed on the true purpose of this study. They were encouraged not to reveal this goal to other prospective participants and beyond that were given the possibility to fill in their names and e-mail addresses if they wished to receive the final results of the study. A translation from German into English of the complete experimental online survey can be found in the appendices.

3.3 Measures

The participants' organic consumption frequency was measured on a six-point Likert scale from 1 – 'I exclusively consume organic food' to 6 'I never consume organic food'. Whether they consume organic food because it is beneficial for society and themselves was both measured on a seven-point Likert scale (from 1 – 'strongly disagree' to 7 – 'strongly agree').

Need to Belong

In order to measure the participants' need to belong, the NTB scale by Leary, Kelly, Cottrell and Schreindorfer (2013) was used. Originally, the scale consists of ten statements, which have to be rated on a five-point Likert scale. In this case, a seven-point Likert scale was used to make an even more subtle difference between high and low NTB (from 1 – 'strongly disagree' to 7 – 'strongly agree'). An example item is: "I need to feel that there are people I can turn to in times of need". The complete scale can be found in the appendices. A reliability analysis showed that the participants' need to belong could be measured successfully with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.79.

To divide all participants into the two groups of a high and low need to belong, a median split was conducted that yielded a median of 4.3. Accordingly, 97 participants with a NTB from 0 to 4.3 were considered having a low NTB (M = 3.49; SD = 0.50) while 100 participants with a NTB above 4.3 were assigned to the high NTB group (M = 4.96; SD = 0.89).

Manipulation Check

For the manipulation check, the 'Need Threat Scale' by Jamieson et al. (2010) was adapted. The scale consists of 20 questions (reverse scored [R] and non-reverse scored), each describing a feeling relating to one of four different needs (Belongingness, Self-esteem, Meaningful existence, Control). Since social exclusion, being ignored and/or being rejected, always thwarts some of these needs, answering questions about them

should help to activate the according feelings of threat in the experimental conditions. In this case, the feeling of being ignored was added to the scale, which threatens the need for either Meaningful existence or Control (Lee & Shrum, 2012). This was done since the feeling of being rejected was already included by Jamieson et al. (2010) to measure if the state of belongingness is threatened. Thus, participants were asked directly about both types of social exclusion. The feeling of being ignored served as a manipulation check in the ignored condition and the feeling of being rejected in the rejected condition. This procedure was adopted from the experiments of Lee and Shrum (2012). In total, the participants of this study were left with 21 questions and five to six indications per need. Thus, it could be measured to what extent the feeling of being rejected threatens people's relational needs and the feeling of being ignored their efficacy needs in order to validate the differential needs hypothesis. All needs could be measured successfully (Cronbach's alpha values under the tables):

Table 1.1: Statements measuring the feeling of belongingness

Belongingness
"I felt disconnected" [R]
"I felt rejected" [R]
"I felt like an outsider" [R]
"I felt I belonged to the group"
"I felt the others interacted with me a lot"

Cronbach's alpha: 0.90

Table 1.2: Statements measuring the feeling of self-esteem

Self-esteem
"I felt good about myself"
"I felt my self-esteem was high"
"I felt liked"
"I felt insecure" [R]
"I felt satisfied"

Cronbach's alpha: 0.92

Table 1.3: Statements measuring the feeling of a meaningful existence

Meaningful existence
"I felt invisible" [R]
"I felt meaningless" [R]
"I felt non-existent" [R]
"I felt important"
"I felt useful"

Cronbach's alpha: 0.87

Table 1.4: Statements measuring the feeling of control/power

Control/Power
"I felt powerful"
"I had a feeling of control"
"I felt I had the ability to significantly alter events"
"I felt I was unable to influence the actions of others" [R]
"I felt the others decided everything"

Cronbach's alpha: 0.79

As mentioned above, the statement "I felt ignored" [R] was added to the scale, which is supposed to measure to what extent the feelings of a meaningful existence and control/power are threatened. All statements were rated on a seven-point Likert scale from 1 – 'not at all' to 7 – 'very strongly'. The original scale includes a five-point Likert scale, which was changed to make the results comparable with the questionnaire on organic food consumption.

Willingness to Pay

Instead of asking the participants directly which maximum price they would be willing to pay for each of the shown products, the indirect method of a conjoint analysis was chosen. With this method, the participants could indicate on a scale how likely it is in per cent that they would buy a certain product. In order to measure the effect of social exclusion on participants' willingness to pay for either organic or conventional food, the average purchase probabilities for each product type were calculated. In the chapter on the study results, these variables are referred to as 'WTP_organic' and 'WTP_conventional'. In this case, the trade-off method of a conjoint analysis was used, where the participants are confronted with only two attributes of a product instead of a full profile. Thus, they only knew whether the product was organic or conventional and its price, measuring their willingness to pay for either organic or conventional food. This was done since organic are in general more expensive than conventional products and this experiment sought to investigate whether being rejected also leads to rather accepting higher prices for organic produce. In order to prevent that higher or lower prices would be preferred automatically, the images were not arranged in pairs. The prices were calculated by taking a look at the average prices in German supermarkets for the products that were to evaluate. Although the real purchase behaviour can only be predicted in a poor manner with both, direct and indirect surveying techniques, the conjoint analysis has a higher validity than direct approaches (Breidert, Hahsler & Reutterer, 2006). While the willingness to pay for conventional food could not be measured in a reliable manner (Cronbach's alpha: 0.62), the WTP for organic food could (Cronbach's alpha: 0.72).

Attitude and Intention to Buy

In order to measure the attitude towards and the intention to buy organic food, the procedure was adapted from a previous study on social exclusion and organic food consumption (Tasso, 2013). The following questions and statements were evaluated by the participants: Attitude: 1) How much do you like organic food right now?, 2) Organic food is tastier than conventional food and 3) Organic food has a better quality than conventional food. Another reliability analysis of these three questions yielded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.76.

Intention to buy: 4) Do you feel the urge to go and buy organic food right now? The answers were arranged in a seven-point Likert scale from 1 - 'not at all' to 7 - 'very strongly' (for questions 1 and 4) and from 1 - 'strongly disagree' to 7 - 'strongly agree' (for statements 2 and 3).

4 Results

4.1 Manipulation Checks and Controls

As a first step of the statistical analysis of the obtained data, it was necessary to find out whether the manipulation was successful in significantly evoking feelings of being rejected in the rejected condition and feelings of being ignored in the ignored condition. As a manipulation check, a MANOVA was conducted with condition (rejected versus ignored versus control) as the independent variable and feelings of being ignored and being rejected as the dependent variables. This procedure was adopted from the experiments of Lee and Shrum (2012). As it was expected in the present study, participants in the two experimental conditions reported much higher feelings of being ignored respectively rejected than participants in the control condition ($F_{\text{feel_rejected}}(2,194) = 214.51, p = 0.00, \eta_p^2 = 0.69$; $F_{\text{feel_ignored}}(2,194) = 167.69, p = 0.00, \eta_p^2 = 0.63$). Also, there was a significant difference in participants' feelings of being rejected between the rejected and the ignored condition. In the rejected condition, the feeling of being rejected was evoked significantly stronger than in the ignored condition ($p = 0.04$). Similarly, the feeling of being ignored was incited to a greater extent in the ignored than in the rejected condition. However, this difference in participants' feelings of being ignored between the ignored and rejected condition was not significant ($p = 0.12$). These values are summarised in Table 2:

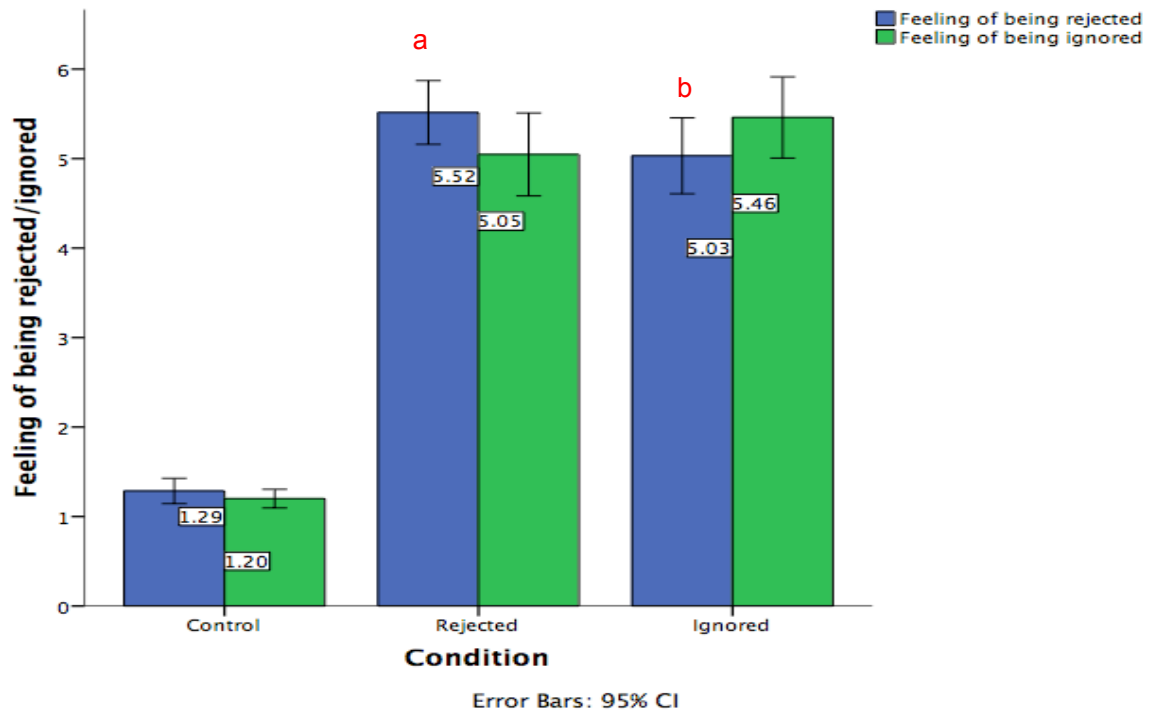
Table 2: Feelings of being rejected and ignored across all conditions (on a scale of 1-7)

Condition	'I felt rejected'	'I felt ignored'
Control	M = 1.29; SD = 0.59	M = 1.20; SD = 0.44
Rejected	M = 5.52; SD = 1.43	M = 5.05; SD = 1.86
Ignored	M = 5.03; SD = 1.68	M = 5.46; SD = 1.80

Significant difference between the two experimental conditions (without control condition)

NON-significant difference between the two experimental conditions

In the context of this study, where the subtle differences between being rejected and being ignored are investigated, merely the manipulation of the feeling of rejection was successful. The feeling of being ignored could not be manipulated successfully. The above mentioned results of the manipulation check are illustrated in Figure 1:



[a-b]: Significant difference between the two experimental conditions (without control condition)

Fig. 1: Feelings of being rejected and ignored across all conditions (on a scale of 1-7)

4.2 Correlations

Secondly, the correlations between several variables were explored. As can be deduced from table 3, the largest correlation was found between the feelings of being rejected and ignored. The fact that they are positively correlated shows that both emotions were evoked in a proportional fashion among all participants of the experiment. The feeling of being rejected was not significantly correlated with neither the probabilities of paying for conventional or organic food nor with the attitude towards and intention to buy the latter. Consequently, the feeling of being rejected did not lead to an increased preference for organic food.

Coming to participants' need to belong, a significant correlation with the willingness to pay for conventional food could be shown. Thus, in the experiment conducted for this study, participants with a high need to belong assigned a higher purchase probability to conventional food, suggesting a higher willingness to pay.

The willingness to pay for conventional food (in terms of probability) was positively correlated with the willingness to pay for organic food. This suggests that people who are more likely to pay the prices for conventional food possess the same willingness for organic food, thus having a higher spending tendency for nutrition in general. Although the willingness to pay for conventional food was positively correlated with the WTP for organic food, only the latter had a significant positive correlation with the intention to buy organic food. The willingness to pay for conventional food instead was negatively correlated with participants' intention to buy organic food. Additionally, the willingness to

pay for organic food was significantly and positively correlated with the attitude towards organic food. Furthermore, the attitude towards organic food showed a significant and positive correlation with the intention to buy it as well. Consequently, the more people like organic food (attitude), the higher their willingness to pay for and intention to buy these products.

Table 3: Correlations among key variables across all conditions

	Rejected	Ignored	NTB	Conventional_ Probability	Organic_ Probability	Attitude	Intention to buy
Rejected	1	.722**	.129	-.030	-.031	-.043	.083
Ignored	.722**	1	.084	.053	-.123	-.195**	-.033
NTB	.129	.084	1	.187**	.057	-.004	.074
WTP_conventional	-.030	.053	.187**	1	.275**	-.129	-.208**
WTP_organic	-.031	-.123	.057	.275**	1	.520**	.285**
Attitude	-.043	-.195**	-.004	-.129	.520**	1	.501**
Intention to buy	.083	-.033	.074	-.208**	.285**	.501**	1

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

4.3 Differential Needs Hypothesis

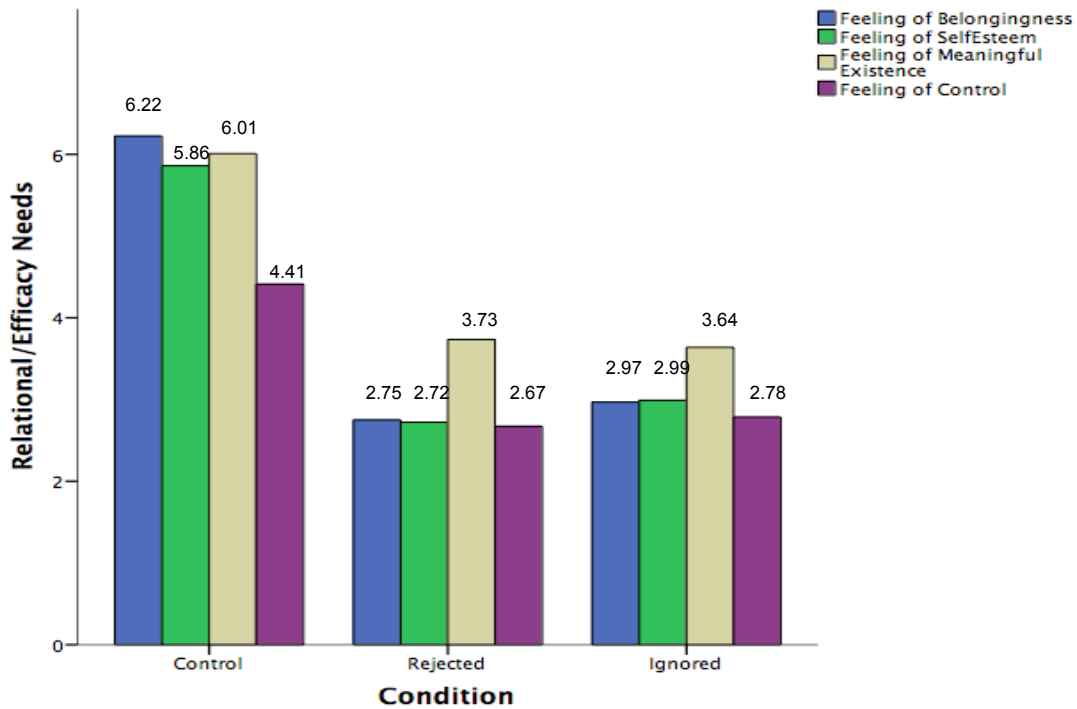
In order to test the differential needs hypothesis established by Lee and Shrum (2012), another MANOVA was conducted with condition (rejected versus ignored versus control) as independent variable and the feelings of belongingness, self-esteem, a meaningful existence and power/control as dependent variables.

As expected, these four needs were significantly less satisfied and thus threatened to a greater extent in the two experimental conditions in comparison with the control condition:

Table 4: Significance of the differences between the need satisfaction levels across all conditions

Need	F(2,194) =	p-value	η_p^2
Belongingness	247.63	0.00	0.72
Self-Esteem	204,88	0.00	0.68
Meaningful Existence	105,10	0.00	0.52
Control/Power	60.97	0.00	0.37

Taking a look at the rejected and the ignored condition, no significant differences could be found in the satisfaction of belongingness ($p = 0.23$), self-esteem ($p = 0.14$), a meaningful existence ($p = 0.62$) and control/power ($p = 0.539$). As can be deduced from Figure 2, three of the four needs were almost equally thwarted within the rejected condition and the feeling of a meaningful existence (efficacy need) was even more satisfied. Since participants' relational needs were not threatened significantly stronger than their efficacy needs by the feeling of rejection, hypothesis 1a was rejected:



Low values indicate a higher threat to each need

Fig. 2: Satisfaction of needs after the manipulation across all conditions (on a scale of 1-7)

Concerning the feeling of being ignored, no claims can be made with regard to the differential needs hypothesis since the manipulation was not effective. Consequently, hypothesis 1b was rejected as well and the differential needs hypothesis by Lee and Shrum (2012) could not be validated.

4.4 Participants' Organic Food Consumption Patterns and Motivations

Before investigating the study's remaining hypotheses, a look was taken at participants' pre-established organic food consumption frequency. It was normally distributed among the sample and the most frequent indication was 'I sometimes consume organic food' (48%). To check whether this consumption pattern was equally distributed across conditions, a one-way ANOVA with condition (rejected versus ignored versus control) as independent and the organic consumption frequency as dependent variable was

conducted. No significant differences emerged: ($F(2,194) = 0.06, p = 0.94$). Consequently, the participants' primary organic food consumption pattern could also not account for any differences among the conditions regarding their indications of willingness to pay for, attitude towards and intention to buy organic food. However, a factor that might have had an influence on the preference for organic food, at least in the rejected condition, is to what extent participants agreed that they consume organic food because it is beneficial for themselves and society. Only if participants regard organic consumption as beneficial for the society, it can be framed as a pro-social act, a behaviour that is evoked by the feeling of rejection. However, the participants' motivation to consume organic due to personal benefits was higher than for benefiting society (see Tables 5.1 and 5.2). Thus, the degree to which participants considered organic food consumption as a pro-social act was moderate. Another one-way ANOVA revealed that there was no significant difference in both indications across the three conditions either ($F_{\text{society}}(2,194) = 0.24, p = 0.79$; $F_{\text{individual}}(2,194) = 1.16, p = 0.32$). The implications of these results will be explained in the final discussion chapter:

Table 5.1: Organic consumption motivation across all conditions (beneficial for society) (on a scale of 1-7)

Condition	'I consume organic because it is good for society'
Control	M = 3.76; SD = 1.93
Rejected	M = 3.77; SD = 1.88
Ignored	M = 3.97; SD = 2.04

Table 5.2: Organic consumption motivation across all conditions (beneficial for the individual) (on a scale of 1-7)

Condition	'I consume organic because it is good for myself'
Control	M = 5.30; SD = 1.43
Rejected	M = 4.95; SD = 1.70
Ignored	M = 4.92; SD = 1.70

4.5 Main Effects of Being Rejected and Being Ignored on Organic Food Consumption and Interaction Effects with Need to Belong

In order to test the study's remaining hypotheses, another MANOVA was conducted. The independent variables were condition and need to belong (low versus high) and as dependent variables, willingness to pay for, attitude towards and intention to buy organic food were used.

Effects on Willingness to Pay for Organic Food

The results of the MANOVA showed that there was no significant main effect of experimental condition on the willingness to pay for organic food ($F(2,191) = 2.13$, $p = 0.12$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.02$). Also, the effect of NTB on the willingness to pay was not significant ($F(1,191) = 1.56$, $p = 0.21$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.01$). Hence, Hypothesis 2a was rejected (see Figure 3.1):

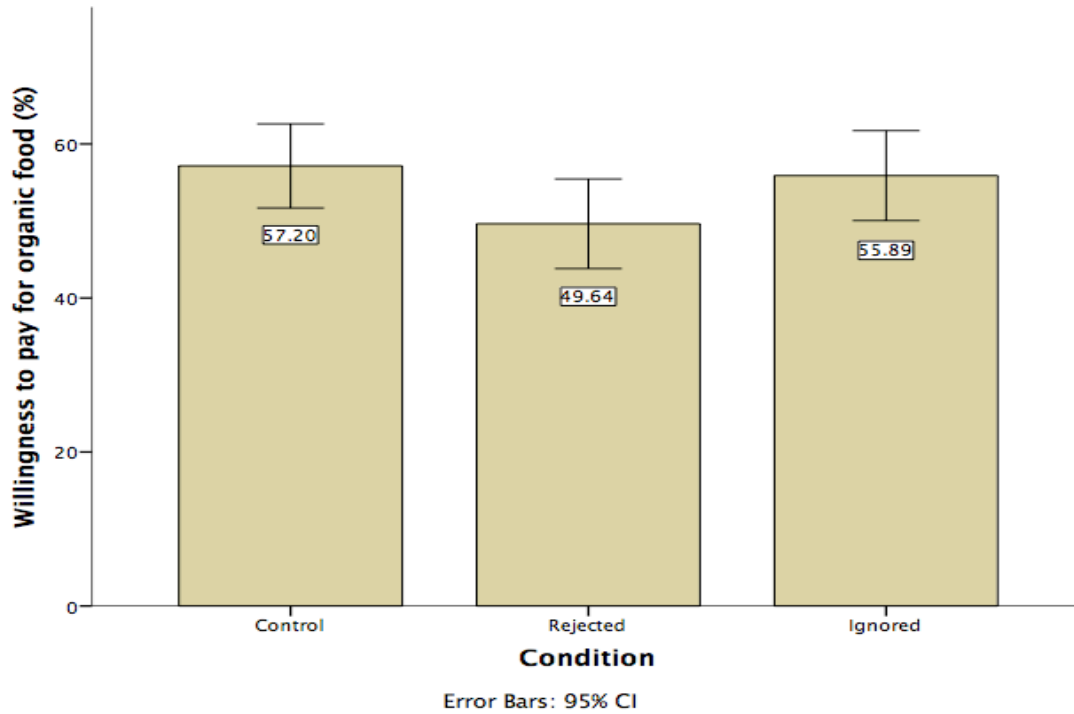


Fig. 3.1: WTP for organic food across all conditions without interaction effect of NTB (on a scale of 0-100%)

The expected interaction effect of social exclusion and the participants' need to belong was also not found ($F(2,191) = 0.39$, $p = 0.68$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.00$). Although the difference in WTP for organic food was bigger in the rejected condition than in the remaining conditions between participants with a high and low NTB (Figure 3.2), it was not significant. Therefore, Hypothesis 3a was rejected as well:

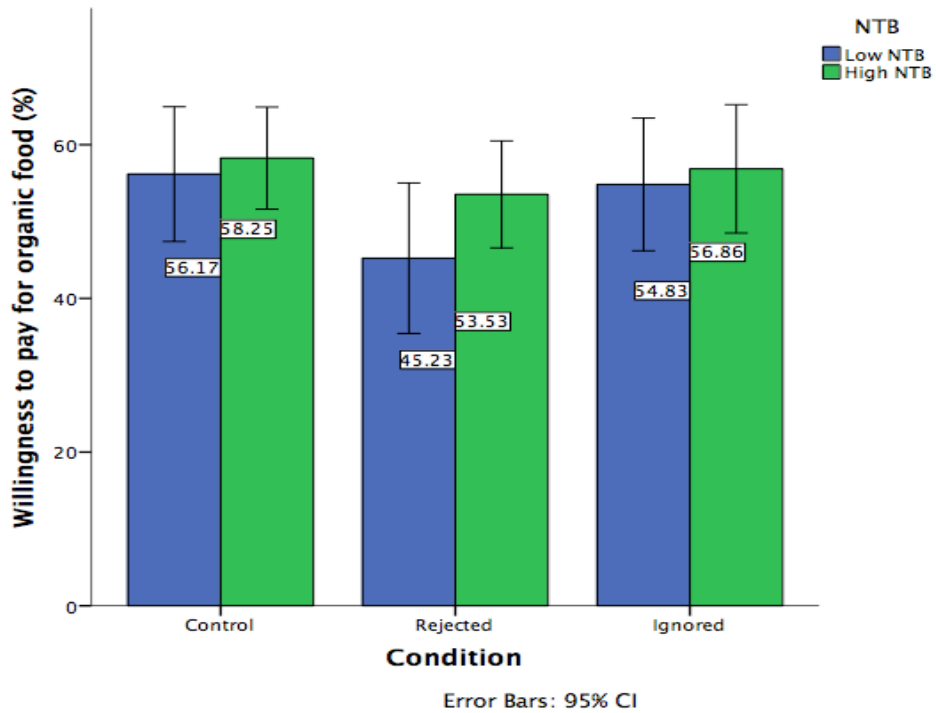


Fig. 3.2: WTP for organic food across all conditions with interaction effect of NTB (on a scale of 0-100%)

Effects on Attitude towards Organic Food

Also, the results of the MANOVA showed that there was no significant main effect of experimental condition on the attitude towards organic food ($F(2,191) = 2.61$, $p = 0.08$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.03$). Neither was there any significant effect of NTB on the attitude towards organic food ($F(1,191) = 0.27$, $p = 0.61$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.00$). Thus, Hypothesis 2b was rejected (see Figure 4.1):

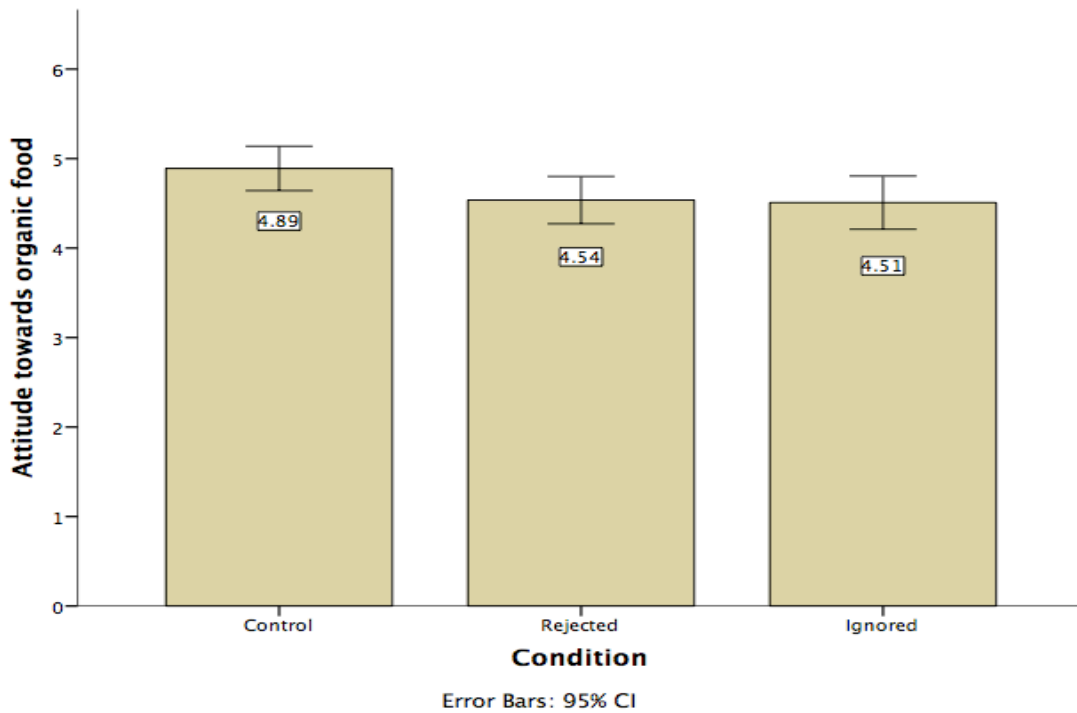


Fig. 4.1: Attitude towards organic food across all conditions without interaction effect of NTB (on a scale of 1-7)

The interaction of NTB level and experimental condition also did not provide any significant results ($F(2,191) = 0.90$, $p = 0.41$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.01$). Although the difference in attitude towards organic food was bigger in the rejected condition than in the remaining conditions between participants with a high and low NTB (Figure 4.2), it was not significant. Consequently, Hypothesis 3b was rejected as well:

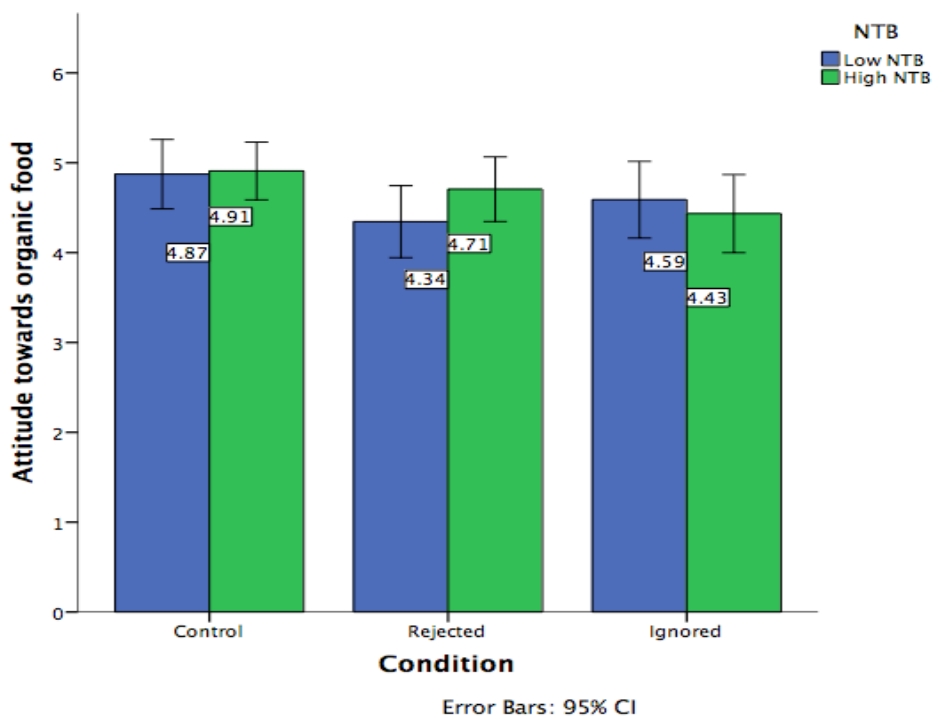


Fig. 4.2: Attitude towards organic food across all conditions with interaction effect of NTB (on a scale of 1-7)

Effects on Intention to Buy Organic Food

Furthermore, from the MANOVA it can be proven that there was no significant main effect of experimental condition on the intention to buy organic food ($F(2,191) = 0.07, p = 0.93, \eta_p^2 = 0.00$). Likewise, no significant effect of the level of NTB could be found on the intention to buy ($F(1,191) = 1.90, p = 0.17, \eta_p^2 = 0.01$). As a result, Hypothesis 2c was rejected (Figure 5.1):

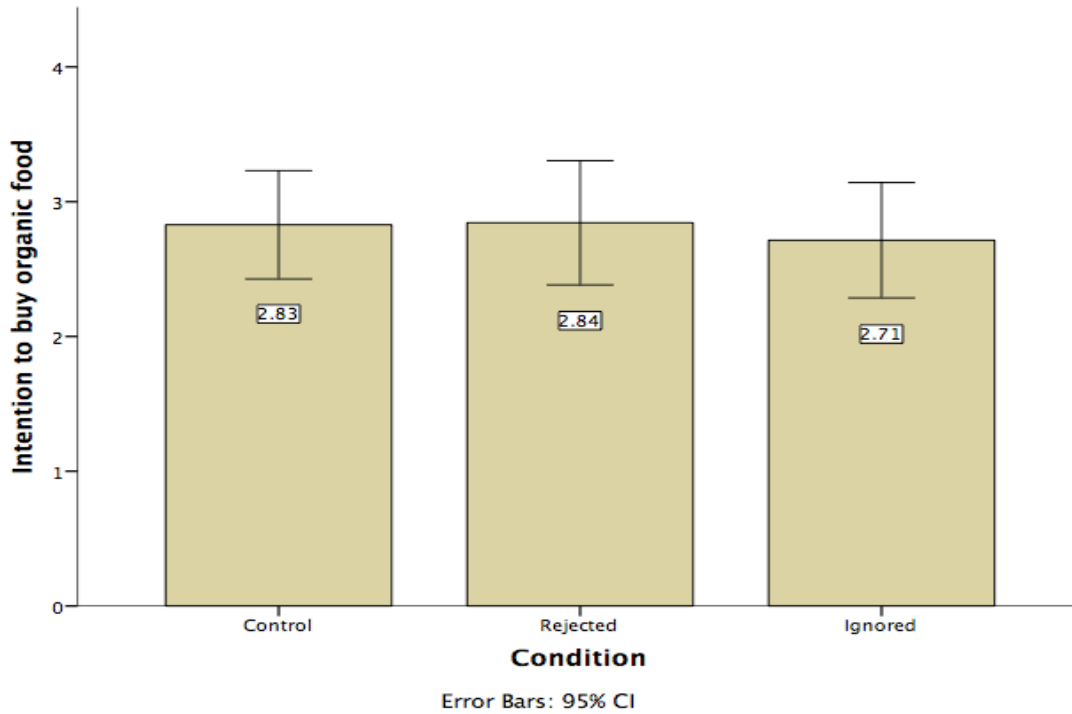


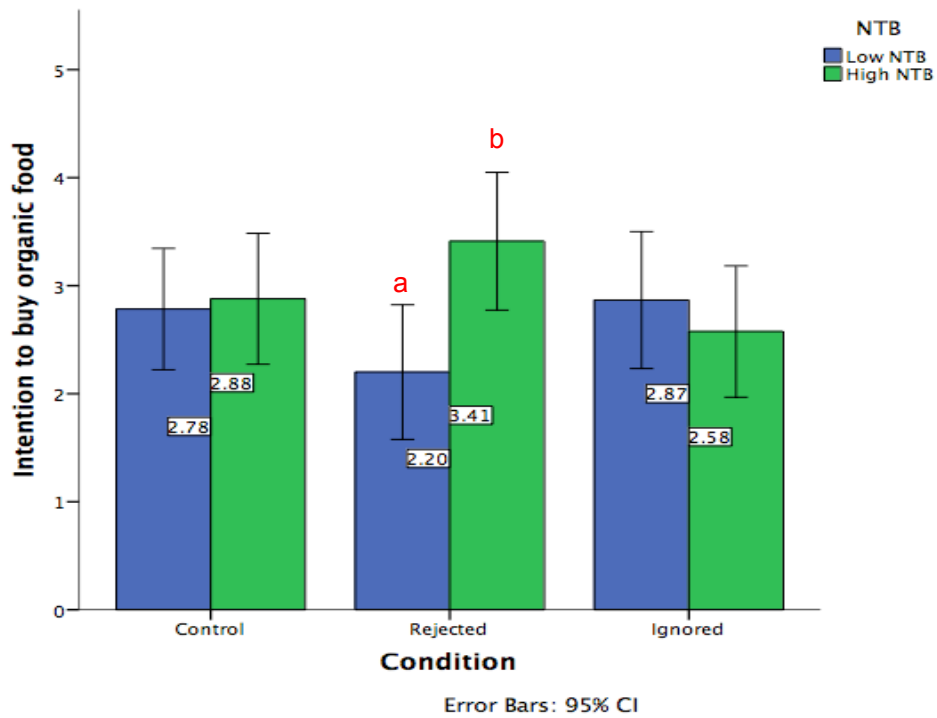
Fig. 5.1: Intention to buy organic food across all conditions without interaction effect of NTB (on a scale of 1-7)

However, the interaction effect of NTB and experimental condition on the intention to buy organic food was indeed significant ($F(2,191) = 3.29, p = 0.04, \eta_p^2 = 0.03$). In the rejected condition, people with a high NTB indicated a higher desire to purchase organic food products than participants low in NTB (Table 6 & Figure 5.2). Therefore, Hypothesis 3c was accepted:

Table 6: Intention to buy organic food across all conditions with interaction effect of NTB (on a scale of 1-7)

Condition	Low NTB	High NTB
Control	M = 2.78; SD = 1.69	M = 2.88; SD = 1.71
Rejected	M = 2.20; SD = 1.67	M = 3.41; SD = 1.83
Ignored	M = 2.87; SD = 1.70	M = 2.58; SD = 1.71

Significant difference between participants with high and low NTB



[a-b]: Significant difference between participants with high and low NTB

Fig. 5.2: Intention to buy organic food across all conditions with interaction effect of NTB (on a scale of 1-7)

Concerning the effect of being ignored on participants' willingness to pay for, attitude towards and intention to buy organic food, no valid claims can be made since the manipulation was not effective. As a result, the Hypotheses 4a-c were rejected.

5 Discussion

5.1 Summary of the Main Study Results

In this study, the main effects of being rejected and being ignored were investigated on the willingness to pay for, attitude towards and intention to buy organic food. To sum up, no main effect on these three factors could be found in the experiment. Concerning the feeling of being ignored, no claims can be made since the manipulation for this condition was not effective. In the rejected condition, the manipulation worked but the feeling of being rejected alone did not increase participants' willingness to pay for, intention to buy and attitude towards organic food in comparison to non-excluded participants.

Additionally, the interaction effects between being rejected and the need to belong were tested. In this case, the outcomes were quite diverse. There was no interaction effect on the willingness to pay for and attitude towards organic food. Whether participants felt rejected or not or had a low or high need to belong did not affect the way they evaluated organic food. Also, their indicated purchase probabilities for organic produce did not differ. However, a significant interaction effect of being rejected and the need to belong on participants' intention to buy organic food was found. Rejected participants with a high need to belong revealed a higher intention to buy these products than rejected participants low in their NTB. This effect corresponded with this study's assumptions and validated one of the nine research hypotheses about organic food consumption. Moreover, the same significant interaction effect was found in a previous study on social exclusion and the consumption of organic food (Tasso, 2013).

The theoretical framework on which the above named assumptions are based is the differential needs hypothesis by Lee and Shrum (2012): The feeling of being rejected is supposed to mainly threaten people's relational needs (Belongingness & Self-esteem), which leads to pro-social behaviour, in this case organic food consumption. Contrarily, the feeling of being ignored should primarily thwart an individual's efficacy needs (Meaningful existence & Control/Power), which evokes anti-social, self-oriented responses. As this is a crucial requirement to this research, it was checked whether it held true for this study's participants. The fact that it could not be confirmed will be taken into consideration while reflecting on the results mentioned in the beginning of this chapter.

5.2 Reflection on Results

Concerning the fact that no significant main effects of being rejected on the willingness to pay for, attitude towards and intention to buy organic food could be found, several explanations are conceivable. According to Maner et al. (2007), there are three main factors impeding a pro-social response to social exclusion: 1. The target individual for the

pro-social act was the initiator of the social rejection; 2. The suggested behaviour is not considered an effective tool for a successful (re-)affiliation and 3. The suggested response could lead to public discontent although being of pro-social nature. As stated in the introduction, organic food consumption can be framed as a pro-social act since it promotes sustainability and thus aims to protect the environment, which is crucial for each individual living in it. As it is highly unlikely that an individual feels rejected by the entire society that would benefit from a sustained ecosystem, the first factor does not seem to apply in this context. However, responses to social exclusion can also be regarded as pro-social due to their affiliative function. Possibly, some participants described a situation in which they felt rejected and were actually rejected by a person or group holding a negative attitude towards organic consumption. In order to affiliate with this person or group, rejected participants would rather express a negative attitude as well. This also applies to every other individual with whom rejected people seek to affiliate and accounts for the second factor impeding pro-social responses as well. In this case, the rejected individual does not consider organic food consumption as an effective tool for successful (re-)affiliation with a person or group that dislikes organic production. Moreover, this factor can also be applied to the greater public. There is an on-going debate among scientists as well as citizens whether organic food production should fully replace conventional methods of agriculture. Some studies suggest that organic methods will not be able to provide the world's population with food (Kirchmann, Bergström, Kätterer, Andrén & Andersson, 2008), some advocate hybrid methods combining organic and conventional approaches (Seufert, Ramankutty & Foley, 2012) and yet others are convinced that the best way to feed the world is organic farming (Badgley & Perfecto, 2007; Vasilikiotis, 2000). Additionally, some people see the concept of organic food merely as a marketing strategy of companies to achieve higher gains for food products (Janssen & Hamm, 2011). Depending on which information individuals are able to access or tend to trust, they do not even consider organic food consumption as a pro-social act. As a result, their reaction towards being rejected should only affect their preference for organic food in a positive manner if they are fully convinced of its benefits for society. However, in the current study, the extent to which participants regard organic food consumption as a pro-social act was merely moderate. This aspect can also be applied to the third factor mentioned above that the suggested response to social rejection evokes public disapproval. Thus, it is highly important in which social environment the rejected individual lives and again which information it believes and has access to. Only if an act is considered a tool for successful (re-)affiliation, it will be triggered by social rejection as affirmed by other researchers as well (De Wall et al., 2008). Taking a look at the results from the experiment, the participants in this study were merely moderate consumers of organic food. Moreover, they also indicated that their motivation to

consume organic products because it is beneficial for themselves was higher than their motivation due to benefits for the society/community. Consequently, as mentioned above, the extent to which participants considered organic food consumption as a pro-social act was moderate, which probably limited their preference for organic food.

The findings of Warburton and Williams (2005) serve as another explanation why no main effect of being rejected could be found on people's preference for organic food. In line with their research, relational or efficacy needs were neither exclusively nor mainly threatened by one specific type of social exclusion in this study. All needs were almost equally thwarted by the feeling of rejection. Based on the assumption by Williams (2007) that relational needs have to be thwarted the most in order to produce pro-social outcomes, this explains the lack of a main effect of being rejected on organic food consumption. Since the differential needs hypothesis (Lee and Shrum, 2012) and the evidence for it have only been established quite recently and could not be confirmed in the present research, the fact that being rejected necessarily threatens people's belongingness and self-esteem and being ignored their meaningful existence and control/power has not yet been tested sufficiently. Also, the reaction to threatening people's belongingness is not necessarily pro-social. For instance, a study conducted in an organisational environment in 2007 (Thau, Poortvliet & Aquino) showed that there is a different outcome when there is a discrepancy between an individual's actual and desired level of belongingness, provided that the desired level is higher. Participants whose belongingness was thus threatened tended towards taking on self-defeating and interpersonally harmful behaviour. As a result, Thau et al. (2007) delivered an explanation why a thwarted feeling of belongingness possibly leads people to withholding helping behaviour. In the context of the present study, where it was implied that participants' belongingness is threatened in the rejected condition, this means that rejected individuals do not react to this threat in a pro-social manner, even if their belongingness would have been threatened the most. Of course, the study by Thau et al. (2007) was conducted in an organisational environment but should definitely be taken into consideration in a consumer context as well. Especially because the differential needs hypothesis could not be confirmed for the participants in this study and Lee and Shrum (2012) did also not check specifically for the satisfaction of their participants' needs. Consequently, being rejected alone did not increase the willingness to pay for, attitude towards and intention to buy organic food among participants of the present study.

Although no main effects between social exclusion, more precisely being rejected, and organic food consumption could be found, there was an interaction effect between the two with the human need to belong. Rejected participants with a high need to belong showed a higher intention to buy organic products than participants in the same group

whose NTB was low. A study by Kern (2011) suggests that people with a low need to belong are not sensitive to social exclusion and are less motivated to establish or restore social ties. Taking into account that the state of belongingness is threatened by rejection, individuals who have a generally low need to belong should experience less harm from specifically this type of social exclusion. As a result, they are also not likely to detect affiliation cues as people with a high NTB are and thus to increase their preference for organic food (Gardner, Pickett & Brewer, 2000). Apparently, rejected participants high in NTB in this study were indeed more affected by the rejection manipulation and considered organic consumption as effective tool for affiliation and/or a pro-social act in general. At least, it had an influence on their intention to buy organic food products. However, their attitude towards and willingness to pay for organic food were not affected at all. This might be because participants' attitude and WTP are not observable to potential affiliation partners whereas going to a store and actually buying organic products would be. For instance, in the experiments of Mead et al. (2011), excluded participants only revealed an affiliative response if they were told that their interaction partners would be informed about their behaviour. This aspect will be considered in the upcoming limitations section as well.

5.3 Study Limitations

The fact that no main effect of both types of social exclusion could be detected on participants' willingness to pay for, attitude towards and intention to buy organic food can also be accounted for by the experimental design used for this study. This accounts for finding no evidence for the differential needs hypothesis as well.

First of all, the feelings of being ignored and rejected were manipulated by having participants describe situations in which they felt either ignored or rejected. However, the manipulation did not produce a significant effect in the ignored condition and a yet significant but not very strong effect in the rejected condition, so it was not powerful enough. Lee and Shrum (2012) mostly used the same type of manipulation, merely one involved a fake interaction task. Although all manipulations achieved significant effects whereby the interactive was not stronger than the writing task manipulation, the manipulation in the present study can be considered too weak. Of course, the difference between being rejected and being ignored is very subtle and manipulating either of these feelings will probably always evoke both emotions. This is supported by the positive high correlation between the two as well as by the fact that all needs were threatened equally. To the researcher's best knowledge, there are no further studies in which the two different types of social exclusion were manipulated but merely social exclusion in general. The latter largely involved actual exclusion simulations in the course of the experiment (Twenge et al., 2001; De Wall et al., 2008). Thomas and Diener (1990)

suggest that recalling negative events usually affects people's emotions stronger than the actual experience since they tend to overestimate their feelings' intensity in the former case. Nevertheless, actual rejection techniques such as the 'Cyberball' game introduced by Williams and Jarvis (2006) give researchers the possibility to include several consecutive manipulations in their experimental design. Being confronted repeatedly with such manipulations should produce a stronger exclusion effect than experiencing or recalling a relevant situation in that sense. Certainly, the question which manipulation is most effective is a recent scientific point of discussion (Blackhart, Nelson, Knowles & Baumeister, 2009). A final remark to the manipulation used in the present study's experiment is that the situations described by the participants were possibly not the most negative ones due to personal inhibition. Furthermore, suitable situations did perhaps not come to participants' minds very easily and these two circumstances might explain why this manipulation of social exclusion did not have a main effect on their preference for organic food. Likewise, they could account for the fact that the differential needs hypothesis could not be validated.

Second, as this study involved an online experiment, the participants were free to attend it at a desirable time and place. It is highly conceivable that the time of the day when participants completed the experiment had an influence on their general preference for food items. For instance, if attended after a meal, the feeling of satiation might have decreased the preference for both conventional and organic food and the opposite effect would have been achieved in participants who felt hungry. Concerning the intention to buy, participants might just have returned from grocery shopping and did not feel inclined to go and buy organic food at the moment of completion. Another factor resulting from the nature of an online experiment is the fact that the participants and especially their answers were probably not visible to any interaction partners. Even if they felt excluded and the urge to reduce emotions of being rejected and ignored, they were aware that theoretical indications of their organic consumption pattern would probably not have any effect on their feelings. Only if their preference for or aversion towards organic food would have been observable for other individuals the participants sought to connect with or separate themselves from, their behaviour would have changed. This effect should be even stronger for rejected participants with a high need to belong who dispose of a more intense urge to (re-)affiliate with others. It is possible that the rejected participants did not show a positive attitude towards or increased willingness to pay for organic food during the experiment because nobody else would have found out about it. Of course, the fact that participants' indications deviate from their actual behaviour is a downside to online experiments and questionnaires in general and works in the opposite direction as well. The participants either reveal their true intentions because they know their interaction partners would not find out about it or they are afraid to indicate how they behave in

reality. However, concerning participants' intention to buy organic food, which was indeed higher for people with a high need to belong in the rejection condition, going to the store and purchasing organic produce would possibly have been observable to potential affiliation partners. Here, it has to be noted that these affiliation partners are not exclusively the ones having initiated the feeling of rejection.

Third, why neither a main nor interaction effect could be observed in participants' willingness to pay for organic food can possibly be accounted for by their assumed economic status. The two most frequent indications for the participants' highest education level were 'advanced technical college entrance qualification respectively university entrance diploma' (41%) and 'Bachelor' (26%). Consequently, most participants were students or at least at the beginning of their professional careers, thus lacking a certain degree of affluence to indicate higher purchase probabilities. Furthermore, this possibly explains why there were mostly moderate consumers among the sample since income has proven to play a certain role when considering buying organic food (Dettmann, 2008; Dimitri & Dettmann, 2012). Despite the fact that the participants indeed consume organic products every now and then, the question of cost might have affected their willingness to pay more in such a theoretical experiment than with the actual purchase experience. Of course, this also applies to the purchase probabilities for conventional food but since organic products are more expensive on average, the effect is stronger in this case. Moreover, measuring the willingness to pay with surveying techniques, whether they are direct or indirect, is quite inaccurate in comparison to a market data analysis or simulated purchase experiments (Breidert et al., 2006). However, the lack of budget and time did not make it possible to measure the effect of social exclusion on participants' WTP in a more reliable manner. A final remark to the measurement of WTP is that some participants communicated after the experiment that they do not consume some of the products open for evaluation, for instance chocolate. Of course, this lowered their indicated purchase probabilities for both, organic and conventional food products. However, this would also have been the case if other products had been chosen, regardless of them being functional or hedonic.

5.4 Implications of Study Findings

As stated in the introduction, this study did not only seek to reveal the extent to which social exclusion influences people's organic food consumption behaviour and the underlying mechanisms to it. In addition to that, one goal was to promote the consumption of organic food among the public to enhance sustainability so the findings of this research are especially of interest for marketers, psychologists and communication specialists. As these three professions are all useful for the area of marketing, the implications presented in this section will focus on this purpose.

The interaction effect of being rejected and an individual's high need to belong on the intention to buy organic food suggests that rejected people who are more sensitive to detecting social cues indeed consider buying organic food as a pro-social, affiliative behaviour. Consequently, this type of social exclusion could be used as a persuasive technique in marketing and related campaigns.

However, the manipulation applied in this experiment was not strong enough to produce neither a main nor interaction effect in the desired direction for participants' attitude towards and willingness to pay for organic food. For their intention to buy these products, no main effect could be detected either. So in a marketing effort or persuasive campaign, the target individuals would have to be manipulated in a stronger fashion in order to evoke the desired effect since it is difficult to merely concentrate on people high in their need to belong. Moreover, the manipulated feeling of rejection would have to be persistent enough to influence these people at a desired point in time or even permanently. Here, ethics come into play since exposing humans to such a strong feeling of rejection or to several consecutive rejection manipulations to achieve a durable effect can have severe and undesirable ramifications for them. Moreover, it is hard to imagine a way of actually manipulating rejection through advertisements, sales techniques and marketing efforts, not only because the recipients would probably attempt to avoid such approaches. Thus, communication specialists, psychologists and marketers face a difficult decision if and how to implement a rejection component into their marketing efforts and related campaigns. One opportunity could be emphasising and communicating the pro-social and affiliative nature of organic food consumption to attract customers who already feel socially rejected.

Another important implication is that the pro-social nature of organic food consumption has to be underlined in such a way so that not only people with a high need to belong and thus more sensitive to social cues are reached. Marketers have to make it clear that animal friendliness and reduced environmental pollution are important components of organic production and consumption if they aim to employ social rejection as a sales strategy. In order to really contribute to the reduction of environmental harm, organic products have to be locally produced as well since they do not have to be imported from other distant countries. In addition to that, other countries might also have different terms and requirements to qualify for organic production, which would not satisfy the local standard. An interesting finding by van Beest, van Dijk, de Dreu and Wilke (2005) in that sense is that people rather tend to engage in pro-social behaviour if the benefits are shared among a small group of individuals than with many cooperators. As this is the case with locally produced goods, this aspect has to be focussed on in organic food marketing and sales as well.

5.5 Recommendations for Further Research

Coming to the recommendations for further research, it is highly important that a more thorough investigation of techniques for the manipulation of social exclusion takes place, especially with regard to the difference between being rejected and being ignored. Thus, it will be possible to not only extend the knowledge on the reactions towards rejection in a consumer context but also towards being ignored, which had to be neglected in this study's analysis. Stronger feelings of rejection might lead to any positive effect on people's willingness to pay for and attitude towards organic food and/or to more than an interaction effect on their intention to buy it. In the same manner, being ignored possibly causes the opposite effects on participants' preferences for organic food. If this is the case, the differential needs hypothesis will be supported in a consumer context, more specifically with regard to the consumption of organic food as pro-social behaviour. To complement this, further experiments should be conducted to specifically investigate Lee and Shrum's (2012) assumption that being rejected mainly threatens relational and being ignored efficacy needs. Additionally, the three remaining needs other than the human need to belong should also be investigated. By measuring participants' levels of all four fundamental needs prior to future experiments, further interaction effects and the importance of individual differences can be researched as well.

Another important requirement for such claims is verifying whether organic food consumption is indeed considered pro-social and an effective tool for successful (re-)affiliation by the participants. Moreover, it can be also be tested if organic products might serve as status symbols of (financial) well-being and health, which would increase the preference for them among ignored participants who seek individual benefits. In this case, ignored individuals would try to show off to and exert control/power over others, thus using organic products as a tool of conspicuous consumption (Rucker & Galinsky, 2008 & 2009; Lee & Shrum, 2012). Representing health and (financial) well-being could in turn also have an affiliative function, which makes this aspect applicable to the feeling of rejection as well. These considerations would lead to even more useful insights on how to successfully promote organic food consumption, showing that there are numerous as well as diverse motivations to it.

In order to increase the validity of participants' responses and thus to achieve more relevant results for practice, conducting a realistic experiment including simulated purchase and consumption experiences might be useful. Although participants' willingness to pay for, attitude towards and intention to buy organic food will probably still deviate from their everyday behaviour, such an approach will definitely bring more reliable results than an online experiment.

Finally, it might be interesting to conduct an experiment, postulating that the participants are the ones responsible for grocery shopping in their households. Although, derived

from the participants' average age in the current study, it is likely that all of them do indeed have experience with purchasing food products, it could be useful to require that they do this regularly. Due to their experience, these participants probably have a better grasp of appropriate prices for and the wider implications of food products in general. This would lead to more reliable results for their willingness to pay for organic food and the investigation of their purchase motivations. In order to complement this, a comparison between different income groups should be conducted since affluent consumers are more likely to buy organic.

5.6 Conclusion

The current study did not manage to find any effects of being ignored and no direct effects of being rejected on people's organic food preferences. For participants' intention to buy organic food, a positive interaction effect between being rejected and a high need to belong could be verified, which was not the case for their willingness to pay for and attitude towards these products. In a previous study, an interaction effect between social exclusion in general and an individual's high need to belong on the intention to buy organic food was found. The current study managed to extend this insight by distinguishing between the two types of social exclusion. Consequently, evidence was provided that being rejected specifically can be a motivator for organic consumption, provided the rejected individual has a high need to belong. Apart from the fundamental need to belong, the human desires for self-esteem, a meaningful existence and control/power are among the main underlying mechanisms for this behaviour. Further research on these remaining needs is still deemed necessary in order to validate the differential needs hypothesis, which was not achieved in this study. Future attempts to verify this theory should lead to clearer insights about the consequences of social exclusion, especially with regard to the different effects of being rejected and being ignored on organic food consumption.

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Appendices

Appendix I: Need Threat Scale

Belonging

- I felt “disconnected” (R)
- I felt rejected (R)
- I felt like an outsider (R)
- I felt I belonged to the group
- I felt the other players interacted with me a lot

Self-esteem

- I felt good about myself
- My self-esteem was high
- I felt liked
- I felt insecure (R)
- I felt satisfied

Meaningful existence

- I felt invisible (R)
- I felt meaningless (R)
- I felt nonexistent (R)
- I felt important
- I felt useful

Control

- I felt powerful
 - I felt I had control over the course of the game
 - I felt I had the ability to significantly alter events
 - I felt I was unable to influence the action of others (R)
 - I felt the other players decided everything (R)
-

Fig. 6: Need Threat Scale by Jamieson et al. (2010)

Appendix II: Need to Belong Scale

The Need to Belong Scale

1. If other people don't seem to accept me, I don't let it bother me. (R)
2. I try hard not to do things that will make other people avoid or reject me.
3. I seldom worry about whether other people care about me. (R)
4. I need to feel that there are people I can turn to in times of need.
5. I want other people to accept me.
6. I do not like being alone.
7. Being apart from my friends for long periods of time does not bother me. (R)
8. I have a strong "need to belong."
9. It bothers me a great deal when I am not included in other people's plans.
10. My feelings are easily hurt when I feel that others do not accept me.

Note. Respondents indicate the degree to which each statement is true or characteristic of them on a 5-point scale (1 = *not at all*, 2 = *slightly*, 3 = *moderately*, 4 = *very*, 5 = *extremely*).

(R) indicates that the item is reverse-scored.

Fig. 7: Need to Belong Scale by Leary et al. (2013)

Appendix III: Online Survey/Experiment (Translated from German into English with Explanatory Notes)

1. Welcome!

First of all, I would like to thank you for having followed the link to my online survey. This survey will be carried out completely anonymously and your indications will exclusively serve for research purposes and will not be distributed to third parties.

What can you expect for the upcoming 20 minutes (approximately)?

You are going to participate in two separate, unrelated surveys. The first one will measure your memory capacity and the second survey your consumption behaviour with regard to organic food. The results of both surveys serve for the completion of my research project in the course of my Master thesis at 'Wageningen University' in the Netherlands.

First of all, I kindly ask you to give a personal evaluation of your consumption behaviour, amongst others with regard to organic food. This makes it easier for me to describe the sample used for this study. If you are interested in receiving the results of this study, you will have the opportunity to indicate your name and e-mail address at the end of the survey. This will happen on a voluntary basis.

I hope you enjoy filling out this survey!

2. Organic consumption

How do you evaluate your consumption behaviour with regard to organic food?

1. I exclusively consume organic food
2. I mainly consume organic food
3. I consume organic and conventional food equally
4. I sometimes consume organic food
5. I rarely consume organic food
6. I never consume organic food

Please mark with a cross where appropriate:

(Explanatory note: Items measuring NTB are marked with an asterisk here)

1. If other people do not seem to accept me, I do not let it bother me*:

1 (*strongly disagree*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*strongly agree*)

2. I try hard not to do things that will make other people avoid or reject me*:

1 (*strongly disagree*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*strongly agree*)

3. I eat healthy:

1 (*strongly disagree*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*strongly agree*)

4. I seldom worry about whether other people care about me*:

1 (*strongly disagree*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*strongly agree*)

5. I need to feel that there are people I can turn to in times of need*:

1 (*strongly disagree*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*strongly agree*)

6. In food products, quality is more important to me than quantity:

1 (*strongly disagree*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*strongly agree*)

7. I want other people to accept me*:

1 (*strongly disagree*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*strongly agree*)

8. I do not like being alone*:

1 (*strongly disagree*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*strongly agree*)

9. I like to eat in company:

1 (*strongly disagree*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*strongly agree*)

10. Being apart from my friends for long periods of time does not bother me*:

1 (*strongly disagree*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*strongly agree*)

11. When being in company, I eat differently than alone:

1 (*strongly disagree*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*strongly agree*)

12. I have a strong need to belong*:

1 (*strongly disagree*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*strongly agree*)

13. It bothers me a great deal when I am not included in other people's plans*:

1 (*strongly disagree*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*strongly agree*)

14. I try to influence my friends' eating habits:

1 (*strongly disagree*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*strongly agree*)

15. My feelings are easily hurt when I feel that others do not accept me*:

1 (*strongly disagree*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*strongly agree*)

Please mark with a cross where appropriate:

1. I consume organic food because it is good for society:

1 (*strongly disagree*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*strongly agree*)

2. I consume organic food because it is good for myself:

1 (*strongly disagree*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*strongly agree*)

3. Memory Capacity 1

(Explanatory note: One of the three following tasks was randomly shown to the participants)

3.1 (Rejected condition)

Please remember an event where you felt rejected. Please try to remember as many details as possible and describe this event in the text entry field below.

Hint: For instance, this can be a situation in which you were actively shown that your presence at a certain activity is not desired; in which you were actively rejected; in which you were denied help etc. The more detailed your description the better! Due to anonymity reasons, you can omit names, places and the like.

3.2 (Ignored condition)

Please remember an event where you felt ignored. Please try to remember as many details as possible and describe this event in the text entry field below.

Hint: For instance, this can be a situation where no reactions were shown to your presence; in which your opinion was not included in a conversation or similar etc. The more detailed your description the better! Due to anonymity reasons, you can omit names, places and the like.

3.3 (Control condition)

Please remember a collective activity you have undertaken in the past two weeks which has left you with a positive memory. Please try to remember as many details as possible and describe this event in the text entry field below.

Due to anonymity reasons, you can omit names, places and the like.

4. Memory Capacity 2

Please indicate to what extent you felt the following during the previously described event:

1. I felt disconnected:

1 (*not at all*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*very strongly*)

2. I felt rejected:

1 (*not at all*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*very strongly*)

3. I felt like an outsider:

1 (*not at all*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*very strongly*)

4. I felt I belonged to the group:

1 (*not at all*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*very strongly*)

5. I felt the others interacted with me a lot:

1 (*not at all*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*very strongly*)

6. I felt good about myself:

1 (*not at all*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*very strongly*)

7. My self-esteem was high:

1 (*not at all*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*very strongly*)

8. I felt liked:

1 (*not at all*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*very strongly*)

9. I felt insecure:

1 (*not at all*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*very strongly*)

10. I felt satisfied:

1 (*not at all*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*very strongly*)

11. I felt invisible:

1 (*not at all*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*very strongly*)

12. I felt meaningless:

1 (*not at all*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*very strongly*)

13. I felt non-existent:

1 (*not at all*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*very strongly*)

14. I felt important:

1 (*not at all*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*very strongly*)

15. I felt useful:

1 (*not at all*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*very strongly*)

16. I felt ignored:

1 (*not at all*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*very strongly*)

17. I felt powerful:

1 (*not at all*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*very strongly*)

18. I felt I had control over the situation:

1 (*not at all*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*very strongly*)

19. I felt I had the ability to significantly alter events:

1 (*not at all*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*very strongly*)

20. I felt I was unable to influence the actions of others:

1 (*not at all*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*very strongly*)

21. I felt the others decided everything:

1 (*not at all*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*very strongly*)

5. Consumption of organic food 1

Please indicate how probable it is (in per cent) that you would buy each of the following products for its specified price:

(Explanatory note: In the online experiment, participants could drag percentage bars under the food items to their desired position)

1. One apple, 0,30€



2. 100g of chocolate, 1,00€



3. Bundle of organic bananas, 1,80€



4. One organic apple, 0,45€



5. 150g organic cookies, 1,90€



6. 100g organic chocolate, 1,25€



7. 150g cookies, 0,80€



8. Bundle of bananas, 1,30€



6. Consumption of organic food 2

Please mark with a cross where appropriate:

1. How much do you like organic food right now?

1 (*not at all*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*very strongly*)

2. Organic food is tastier than conventional food:

1 (*strongly disagree*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*strongly agree*)

3. Organic food has a better quality than conventional food:

1 (*strongly disagree*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*strongly agree*)

4. Do you feel the urge to go and buy organic food right now?

1 (*not at all*) – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 (*very strongly*)

1. Please remember the number of products whose purchase probability you indicated on the previous page:

2. Please remember for which product you indicated the highest probability:

7. Demographic Data

Finally, I kindly ask you to indicate your demographic data. This serves for a more detailed description of the sample used for this study as well.

1. How old are you?

- Younger than 18 years
- 18-20 years
- 21-29 years
- 30-39 years
- 40-49 years
- 50-59 years
- Older than 60 years

2. What is the highest degree of education you have accomplished so far?

- Elementary school
- Secondary modern school
- Secondary school
- Advanced technical college entrance qualification respectively university entrance diploma
- Bachelor
- Master
- German diploma
- Doctorate/PhD
- State doctorate

3. In which country do you live?

4. Are you male or female?

- Male
- Female

8. Debriefing

Herewith, the second and last survey is completed. Now I would like to reveal the true purpose of this study to you.

The aim of this study is investigating the connection between social exclusion and the consumption of organic food. More precisely, I would like to find out if participants who remembered an event of social rejection possess a higher preference for organic food than those who remembered an event where they felt ignored; this also applies to participants who remembered a positive event of the past two weeks. The latter is just a completely random task not connected to organic consumption. The declaration that you would be participating in two separate, unrelated surveys and that the first one would be measuring your memory capacity was merely a camouflage tactic. The theoretical framework that this experiment is based on says that rejected individuals tend to perform pro-social and ignored people anti-social behaviour. Since organic consumption can be interpreted as pro-social act, the feeling of rejection should thus increase it.

If you have any further questions regarding the experiment, you can reach me under the following e-mail address: julian.risthaus@wur.nl

I kindly ask you to share the link to this survey in your social network, though to withhold the true purpose of this study. Thus, I will be able to receive reliable data of further participants.

If you are interested in the results of this study, in the following you have the opportunity to leave your name and e-mail address behind.

Thank you very much for your participation!

Please indicate your personal data (optional):

First name:

Surname:

E-Mail: