

HEC MONTRÉAL

**Les rebrandings sportifs et la trahison : Comment détruire des relations
indestructibles**

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Résumé

Cette recherche étudie l'effet négatif que les rebrandings d'équipes sportives professionnelles ont sur leurs partisans, plus précisément sur leur désir de vengeance, comportements de représailles, comportements déviants et loyauté. En appliquant un modèle basé sur la trahison, j'explique dans cette étude les réactions qu'ont les fans suivant un rebranding de leur équipe. En utilisant deux « between-subject experiments », les résultats démontrent que des changements plus forts dans un rebranding sportif causent de plus fortes réactions négatives chez les partisans. Premièrement, cette recherche fait ressortir le rôle médiateur que joue la trahison, suite à un rebranding sportif, pour expliquer les comportements à l'étude. Un rebranding de plus grande envergure est perçu comme une plus grande transgression relationnelle et entraîne les partisans à se sentir plus fortement trahis par l'organisation sportive. Cette trahison qu'ils perçoivent est une force qui motive les comportements négatifs et déviants et plus ils se sentent trahis, plus ils démontreront un fort niveau de ces comportements négatifs et déviants. Deuxièmement, tout comme l'effet « love becomes hate », les partisans plus fortement identifiés à l'équipe perçoivent une plus grande trahison suite à un rebranding de leur équipe qui modifie son nom. Ainsi, lorsque le nom de l'équipe change, l'effet indirect du rebranding par l'entremise de la trahison sur les comportements néfastes des partisans est plus fort pour ceux qui ont une haute identification que ceux qui ont une faible identification. Les implications théoriques et managériales de ces résultats sont aussi discutées.

Mots clés : Rebranding sportif, identification des fans, relations des fans, trahison des consommateurs, nom d'équipe, changement de nom, changement de logo, représailles des consommateurs, comportements déviants des fans.

Méthodes de recherche : « Between-subject experiment »

Abstract

This research investigates the negative effect professional sports teams rebrandings have on their fans, more precisely on their desire for revenge, retaliatory behaviors, dysfunctional behaviors and loyalty. I apply a betrayal-based model to explain fan reactions following a rebranding of the team they support. By using two between-subjects experiments, the results suggest that stronger changes in a sports rebranding lead to stronger negative reactions from fans. First, this research shows that, following a rebranding, perceived betrayal plays a key mediating role to explain fans' desire for revenge, verbal and physical aggression, complaining, loyalty loss and retaliatory behaviors. A larger rebranding is seen as a larger relational transgression and causes fans to feel more betrayed by the sports organization. In turn, the betrayal they feel acts as a motivational force to fuel negative behaviors in retaliation. The more fans are betrayed, the more they showcase negative and dysfunctional behaviors. Second, as with the "love becomes hate" effect, fans with high identification perceive more betrayal than fans with low identification from a rebranding of their team that changes the name of the club. Accordingly, when the team's name changes, the indirect effect through betrayal on negative fan behavior is stronger for fans with higher identification than fans with lower identification. The theoretical and managerial implications of these findings will also be discussed.

Keywords: Sports rebranding, fan identification, fan relationships, customer betrayal, team name, name change, logo change, customer retaliation, dysfunctional fan behavior

Research methods: Between-subjects experiment

Table des matières

Résumé.....	iv
Abstract.....	v
Table des matières.....	vi
Liste des tableaux et figures.....	viii
Liste des abréviations.....	xii
Remerciements.....	xiii
1. Introduction.....	14
2.Revue de littérature.....	19
2.1 Rebrandings d'équipes sportives et réponses comportementales des partisans.....	19
2.2 Rôle médiateur de la trahison.....	23
2.3 Rôle modérateur de l'identification.....	24
3. Article: Sports rebrandings and betrayal: How to destroy unbreakable relationships.....	29
3.1 Abstract.....	29
3.2 Introduction.....	30
3.3 Conceptual framework and hypotheses.....	35
3.3.1 Sports teams rebrandings and fan behavioral responses.....	35
3.3.2 Mediating role of betrayal.....	38
3.3.3 Moderating role of fan identification.....	40
3.4 Studies and tests of hypotheses.....	45
3.4.1 Overview of studies.....	45
3.4.2 Study 1a.....	46
3.4.2.1 Study design and sample.....	46
3.4.2.2 Measurement.....	48

3.4.2.3	Manipulation checks.....	48
3.4.2.4	Results for study 1a.....	50
3.4.2.5	Discussion of study 1a	53
3.4.3	Study 1b.....	54
3.4.3.1	Study design and sample.....	54
3.4.3.2	Manipulation checks.....	55
3.4.3.3	Discussion of study 1b.....	57
3.4.4	Study 2.....	57
3.4.4.1	Study design and sample.....	57
3.4.4.2	Manipulation checks.....	59
3.4.4.3	Results for study 2.....	60
3.4.4.4	Discussion of study 2.....	90
3.5	General discussion.....	92
3.5.1	Theoretical implications.....	94
3.5.2	Managerial implications.....	97
3.5.3	Limitations and future research.....	99
3.6	Appendix.....	102
3.7	References.....	118
4	Discussion générale et conclusion.....	127
4.1	Implications théoriques.....	129
4.2	Implications managériales.....	132
4.3	Limites et futures opportunités de recherches.....	134
4.4	Conclusion.....	136

5 Bibliographie.....137

Liste des tableaux et figures

Tableaux

Table 1: Characteristics of the different logos tested in study 1a. 50

Table 2: Model variables (desire for revenge and betrayal) as function of rebranding conditions 52

Table 3: Characteristics of both logos tested in study 1b..... 56

Table 4: Means of the model variables as function of rebranding and identification conditions, and significant level of the main and interaction effects. 61

Table 5: Moderated mediations results for desire for revenge between fans with Low-ID and High-ID. 79

Table 6: Moderated mediations results for desire for revenge between fans with Low-ID and in the control condition. 79

Table 7: Moderated mediations results for complaining between fans with Low-ID and High-ID. 81

Table 8: Moderated mediations results for complaining between fans with Low-ID and in the control condition. 82

Table 9: Moderated mediations results for verbal aggression between fans with Low-ID and High-ID. 84

Tableau 10: Moderated mediations results for verbal aggression between fans with Low-ID and in the control condition. 84

Table 11: Moderated mediations results for verbal aggression between fans with Low-ID and High-ID.....	86
Table 12: Moderated mediations results for verbal aggression between fans with Low-ID and in the control condition.	87
Table 13: Moderated mediations results for loyalty between fans with Low-ID and High-ID. ...	89
Table 14: Moderated mediations results for loyalty between fans with Low-ID and in the control condition.	89
Table 15: Summary of supported hypotheses.	94
Table 16: Characteristics of logos, study 1a.	105
Table 17: Characteristics of rebrandings, study 1a.	105
Table 18: Characteristics of rebrandings, study 2.	108
Table 19: Percentage of respondents who answered yes (in the case of SD-SA), all 3 agrees) ..	118
Tableau 20: Résumé des hypothèses supportées.....	129

Figures

Figure 1: Le logo, pré-rebranding, de l'Impact de Montréal (Gauche) et le logo, post-rebranding, de CF Montréal (Droite)	14
Figure 2: Modèle conceptuel.	19
Figure 3: The pre-rebranding logo of Montreal Impact (left) and the post-rebranding logo of CF Montreal (right).....	30
Figure 4: Conceptual model.....	35
Figure 5: Visual representation of the effect of the rebranding type on betrayal and desire for revenge.....	51

Figure 6: Visual representation of the main effect of rebranding type on desire for revenge.....	63
Figure 7: Visual representation of the main effect of rebranding type on complaining intentions.	64
Figure 8: Visual representation of the main effect of rebranding type on verbal aggression.	65
Figure 9: Visual representation of the main effect of rebranding type on physical aggression. ...	66
Figure 10: Visual representation of the main effect of rebranding type on loyalty.....	67
Figure 11: Visual representation of the main effect of rebranding type on the index variable for retaliatory behaviors.....	69
Figure 12: Mediation results when comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding to an evolutionary logo rebranding.	70
Figure 13: Mediation results when comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change to an evolutionary logo rebranding.....	71
Figure 14: Mediation results when comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change to a revolutionary logo rebranding.	72
Figure 15: Visual representation of the interaction between rebranding type and identification level on betrayal.....	73
Figure 16: Logos shown to both participants in study 1a.	103
Figure 17: Logos in the evolutionary condition, study 1a.	103
Figure 18: Logos shown in the revolutionary condition, study 1a.	104
Figure 19: Logos shown in the revolutionary with name condition, study 1a.....	104
Figure 20: Logos used as visual stimuli, study 1b.	106
Figure 21: Logos used in the evolutionary scenario, study 2.	107
Figure 22: Logos used in the revolutionary condition, study 2.	108

Figure 23: Logos used in the revolutionary with name condition, study 2.....	108
Figure 24: Visual representation of the interaction between rebranding type and identification level on desire for revenge.....	109
Figure 25: Visual representation of the interaction between rebranding type and identification level on complaining.....	112
Figure 26: Visual representation of the interaction between rebranding type and identification level on verbal aggression.....	114
Figure 27: Visual representation of the interaction between rebranding type and identification level on loyalty.....	115

Liste des abréviations

MLS: Major League Soccer

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Chapitre 1 : Introduction

CF Montréal, anciennement l'Impact de Montréal, est une équipe de soccer professionnelle qui évolue dans la Major League Soccer (MLS). Malgré qu'elle ait rejoint la MLS en 2012, le club a été fondé en 1993. Le nom de l'équipe était l'Impact de Montréal jusqu'en 2021, lorsque l'organisation a décidé d'apporter des changements à son identité. Ce rebranding majeur impliquait un changement de logo et un changement de nom : c'est ainsi qu'est né CF Montréal.



Figure 1: Le logo, pré-rebranding, de l'Impact de Montréal (Gauche) et le logo, post-rebranding, de CF Montréal (Droite)

Les réactions négatives des fans furent immédiates. Plusieurs comportements déviants ont été observés chez les partisans du club. Un nombre immesurable de partisans a critiqué le rebranding sur les médias sociaux et certains en sont venus à vandaliser le siège social de l'organisation (Lévesque, 2021). Puisque le club ne souhaitait pas revisiter sa décision du rebranding, des groupes d'Ultras (les partisans les plus dévoués et intenses dans leur fanatisme, rassemblés en groupes de supporters autour des clubs de soccer) ont officiellement mis fin à leur relation avec CF Montréal. Un partisan, puisqu'il portait le nouveau maillot du CF Montréal à l'une des parties de l'équipe, s'est même fait attaquer physiquement par des fanatiques mécontents. Dans le stade, plusieurs montraient des bannières insultant le président du club et demandant sa démission (Pratt, 2021). Suite à ces événements, le club a banni les Ultras du stade, et le président du club a éventuellement remis sa démission. Les réactions des partisans étaient si négatives que le club ne voyait nul autre

choix que d'effectuer un nouveau rebranding l'année suivante. Dans ce deuxième rebranding, l'équipe a encore une fois modifié son logo, mais a gardé le nouveau nom de CF Montréal. Cet épisode a été tragique autant du point de vue des partisans que de celui de l'organisation. Malgré que les réactions des partisans étaient extrêmes dans ce cas, les rebrandings d'équipes sportives professionnelles sont très répandus en pratique. Alors que certaines équipes comme CF Montréal ont décidé d'effectuer un rebranding de leur marque « to become a truly international outfit » (Boehm, 2021) et pour atteindre les fans à une échelle mondiale (Massé, 2021), d'autres, comme les Commanders de Washington de la Ligue Nationale de Football, ont passé à travers un rebranding afin de se distancer d'une imagerie racistes suite aux pressions de différentes parties prenantes autour de l'organisation (Jhabvala, 2022).

Ainsi, puisque les rebrandings d'équipes sportives professionnelles sont motivés par plusieurs différentes raisons et ne sont pas exclusifs à un seul sport professionnel particulier, il y a un besoin croissant pour la littérature du marketing sportif de creuser sur le sujet. Dû aux effets négatifs que les rebrandings engendrent, tel que l'impact nocif sur la réputation de marque (Muzellec, Doogan & Lambkin, 2003) les directeurs marketing ont besoin d'information sur la pertinence des changements planifiés et la cohérence de ceux-ci avec leurs objectifs d'affaires ainsi que sur les réactions de leurs fans et ce que ceux-ci sont prêts à tolérer. Cette information permettrait aux responsables marketing des organisations sportives de minimiser les dommages à leur marque et à leur relation avec leurs partisans.

Des études antérieures abordent les effets néfastes des rebrandings sportifs sur les attitudes des fans face à la marque sportive et les comportements comme les intentions d'achats (Ahn et al., 2013; Agha, Goldman & Dixon, 2016; Walsh, Winterich & Mittal, 2010; Williams et al., 2021; Williams & Son, 2022), et les émotions négatives qu'un rebranding peut provoquer, telles que la

tristesse et la colère (Collange & Bonache, 2015). Cependant, au meilleur de ma connaissance, il est surprenant de voir que peu de recherches précédentes ne se sont penchées sur les représailles des fans envers l'équipe suite à un rebranding. Pourtant, la colère a été reliée aux représailles par plusieurs auteurs (Bonifield et al., 2007; Grégoire, Laufer & Tripp, 2010).

Dans cette recherche, je défends que les représailles des partisans envers CF Montréal ont été si sévères à cause de l'amplitude des changements apportés à la marque sportive et de la trahison que ceux-ci ont fait ressentir aux partisans. Je suggère que cette perception de la trahison agit comme une force qui motive les partisans à chercher à se venger contre l'organisation, avec les moyens qu'ils ont à leur disposition. J'avance aussi que plus les fans sont identifiés, plus la trahison qu'ils ressentiront sera grande. Les rebrandings peuvent être qualifiés d'évolutionnaires, si les changements qu'ils apportent à la marque sont mineurs, ou de révolutionnaires, si ces changements sont majeurs (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006).

Afin de mieux comprendre les représailles des partisans suite à un épisode de rebranding, je vais combiner la littérature sur les transgressions en contexte de service à la littérature sur les rebrandings sportifs. Par le prisme d'un paradigme de vengeance et de perception de trahison (e.g. Grégoire & Fisher, 2008), je vais expliquer les représailles des partisans envers le club sportif qui ont été observées par la perception du rebranding comme étant une transgression relationnelle. Les partisans s'identifient aux équipes sportives et modifier l'identité de l'équipe, et alors l'identité du partisan, est une violation des normes relationnelles établies. C'est cette violation qui entraîne un sentiment de trahison. La trahison, par la suite, suscite des comportements de représailles pour restaurer une forme d'équilibre social. Basé sur ce même modèle (Grégoire & Fisher, 2008), plus une relation entre le partisan et son équipe est forte, ou l'identification, dans ce contexte d'équipes sportives professionnelles, plus forte sera la perception de la transgression, et donc plus grande

sera la perception de trahison, tout comme l'effet « love becomes hate ». En tant que représailles, les fans vont désirer se venger contre l'équipe, perdront de la loyauté et démontreront plus de comportements déviants que ce qui est normal. En construisant sur cette logique, cette recherche fait deux contributions en utilisant une approche expérimentale sur un échantillon de partisans de soccer.

Premièrement, cette étude introduit le rôle médiateur de la trahison à la littérature des rebrandings sportifs pour expliquer les comportements extrêmes des partisans suite à un rebranding. Comme l'on démontré Grégoire et Fisher (2008) dans leur modèle, la trahison perçue agit en tant que force motivationnelle qui déclenche un désir de vengeance, des comportements déviants et la perte de loyauté. Plus grands sont les changements apportés à la marque sportive, plus grande est la transgression et plus grande sera la trahison perçue. Ainsi, indirectement, des plus grands changements apportés à la marque sportive suscitent un plus fort désir de vengeance, une plus forte perte de loyauté, plus d'agression physique, plus d'agression verbale, plus d'intentions de se plaindre et plus de comportements de représailles. Ces résultats contribuent à la littérature actuelle sur les conséquences négatives que les rebrandings sportifs engendrent chez les partisans de l'équipe (Ahn et al., 2013; Agha, Goldman & Dixon, 2016; Williams et al., 2021; Williams & Son, 2022).

Deuxièmement, je démontre que les partisans à forte identification sont plus attachés au nom de l'équipe que ceux qui ont une faible identification. Mes résultats montrent que le type de rebranding et l'identification des fans interagissent ensemble pour prédire la trahison perçue lorsque le nom de l'équipe est modifié. Lorsqu'un rebranding révolutionnaire de logo est comparé à un rebranding évolutionnaire de logo, les fans à haute et à faible identification perçoivent un niveau de trahison accru. Cette augmentation de trahison est similaire pour les deux types de fans.

Cependant, lorsqu'on compare un rebranding révolutionnaire de logo avec un changement de nom à un rebranding révolutionnaire de logo, les fans à haute identification se sentent plus fortement trahis, alors que les fans à faible identification ne ressentent pas de différence significative de trahison entre les deux types de rebrandings. Logiquement, suivant un rebranding de logo révolutionnaire avec un changement de nom, comparativement à un rebranding évolutionnaire de logo, les partisans à forte (vs faible) identification sentent une forte (vs légère) augmentation de trahison. Cette interaction a aussi un effet indirect sur les réponses comportementales des partisans. Lorsque l'on compare un rebranding de logo révolutionnaire avec un changement de nom à un rebranding de logo révolutionnaire, pour les fans à forte (vs faible) identification, le type de rebranding, indirectement par la trahison, augmente (vs n'a aucun effet sur) le désir de vengeance, les intentions de se plaindre, l'agression verbale, l'agression physique et la perte de loyauté. Lorsque l'on compare un rebranding de logo révolutionnaire avec un changement de nom à un rebranding évolutionnaire de logo, pour les fans à forte identification (vs faible), le type de rebranding, indirectement par la trahison, augmente fortement (vs légèrement) le désir de vengeance, les intentions de se plaindre, l'agression verbale, l'agression physique et la perte de loyauté. Cette recherche supporte la littérature antérieure qui affirme que les partisans avec la plus forte identification démontrent généralement des comportements plus forts que ceux qui ont une plus faible identification (Ahn et al., 2013; Potter & Keen, 2012; Rocca & Vogl-Bauer, 1999; Simmons, Naraine & Greenwell, 2023; Wann et al., 1999; Wann & Branscombe, 1990 & 1992).

Le chapitre suivant, le chapitre 2, sera consacré à la revue de littérature. Ensuite, le chapitre 3 présentera l'article sur lequel est fondé ce mémoire. Finalement, ce mémoire sera terminé par la conclusion, suivi de la bibliographie.

Chapitre 2 : Revue de littérature

La figure 1 démontre le modèle conceptuel avancé dans cette recherche. Dans ce chapitre, je suis ce modèle pour définir mes concepts et développer mes hypothèses. Je vais tout d'abord élaborer sur les effets des types de rebrandings sur les réponses des consommateurs et des fans. Ensuite, je vais établir le rôle médiateur de la trahison. Finalement, je terminerai en développant mes hypothèses sur le rôle modérateur de l'identification.

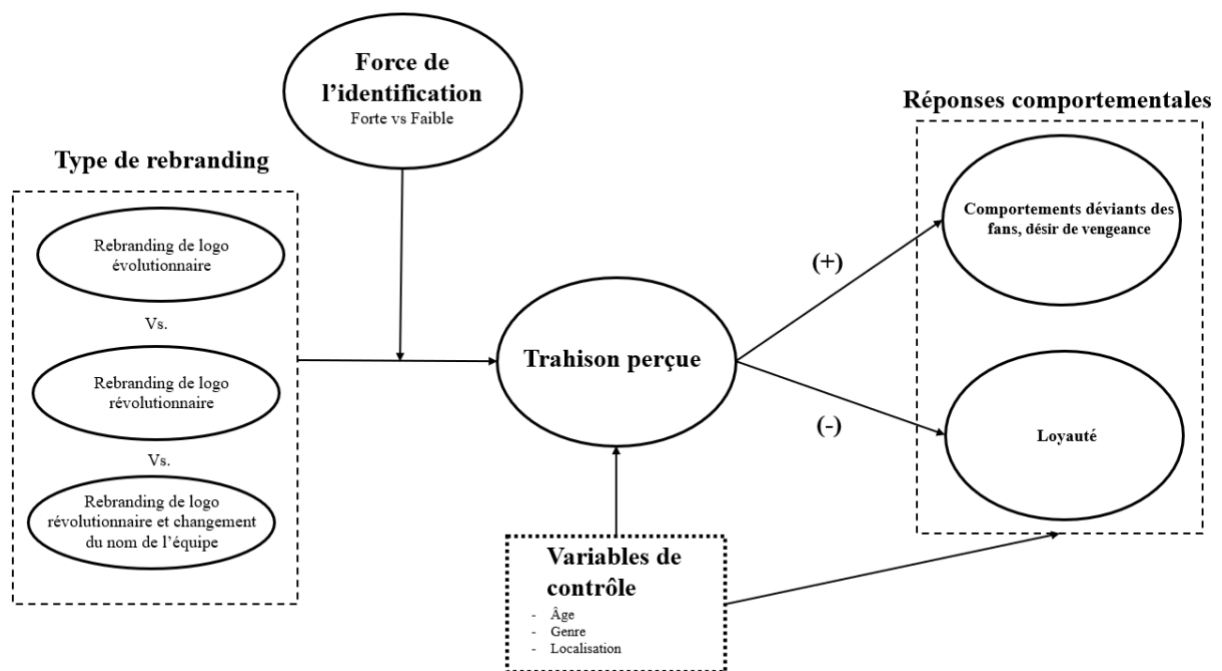


Figure 2: Modèle conceptuel.

2.1 Rebrandings d'équipes sportives et réponses comportementales des partisans

Les rebrandings sont des activités dangereuses (Collange & Bonache, 2015). Ils sont définis comme étant « *the practice of building anew a name representative of a differentiated position in the mind frame of stakeholders and a distinctive identity from competitors.* » (Muzellec, Doogan

& Lambkin, 2003, p.32). Ainsi, un rebranding peut être un rafraichissement, un repositionnement, un renouvellement ou une réinvention de marque qui modifie principalement le nom, le logo, les couleurs ou les valeurs de la marque (Joseph et al., 2021 ; Merrilees & Miller, 2008). Les rebrandings peuvent être qualifiés d'évolutionnaire ou de révolutionnaire en fonction de l'amplitude des changements qu'ils apportent à la marque. Muzellec et Lambkin (2006) définissent un rebranding évolutionnaire comme « *a fairly minor development in the company's positioning and aesthetics that is so gradual that it is hardly perceptible to outside observers.* » (p.805). À son opposé sur le spectre des rebrandings, les auteurs définissent un rebranding révolutionnaire comme « *a major, identifiable change in positioning and aesthetics that fundamentally redefines the company.* » (p.806). Dans le contexte de cette étude, sur la base de l'amplitude des changements apportés à la marque, j'utiliserai trois conditions de rebranding, allant des changements les plus mineurs aux plus majeurs. Chaque condition ajoutera des changements à ceux déjà établis à la condition antérieure. La première condition, celle avec les plus petits changements, sera un rebranding évolutionnaire de logo. La deuxième sera un rebranding révolutionnaire de logo. La troisième et dernière sera un rebranding révolutionnaire de logo avec l'addition du changement du nom de l'équipe.

Le type de rebranding, soit évolutionnaire ou révolutionnaire, peut avoir un effet négatif sur plusieurs réactions des consommateurs de la marque. Plus les changements sont forts, plus forte sera la réaction des consommateurs (Williams et al., 2021). Un rebranding évolutionnaire de logo n'aurait aucun effet sur les attitudes des partisans envers une marque sportive, alors qu'un rebranding révolutionnaire aurait un effet négatif sur ces dernières (Williams & Son, 2022). Les rebrandings peuvent aussi avoir un impact négatif sur la réputation de la marque (Muzellec, Doogan et Lambkin, 2003). Suite à un rebranding, la moitié des consommateurs de la marque

auront des attitudes négatives envers le rebranding et la marque qui l'a effectué. Ces attitudes négatives peuvent même mener les consommateurs à ressentir des émotions comme la colère et la tristesse (Collange & Bonache, 2015). Des études antérieures ont déjà établi un lien entre la colère et le désir de vengeance (Bonifield et al., 2007 ; Grégoire, Laufer & Tripp, 2010). Je m'attends donc à ce que les partisans aient un plus fort désir de vengeance suivant un rebranding majeur de leur équipe comparativement à un rebranding plus mineur.

La loyauté des partisans envers leur équipe est aussi négativement impactée par les rebrandings, de sorte que seul un rebranding évolutionnaire du logo n'a aucun effet sur cette dernière (Williams et al., 2021). Dans cette même direction, moins de partisans assisteront aux matchs en présentiel suivant un rebranding révolutionnaire (Agha, Goldman et Dixon, 2016). Cependant, les intentions d'achat de marchandise de l'équipe ont certains résultats contradictoires dans la littérature. Alors que certains auteurs ont trouvé que les intentions d'achats augmentaient suite à un rebranding sportif (Ahn et al., 2013), d'autres ont trouvé qu'elles baissaient (Williams & Son, 2022). La présence des partisans aux matchs et les intentions d'achats de marchandise de l'équipe sont toutes deux des dimensions de la loyauté (Tachis & Tzetzis, 2015). Je m'attends donc à ce que, suite à un rebranding majeur, la loyauté des partisans de l'équipe baisse, lorsque comparée à un rebranding plus mineur.

Au meilleur de ma connaissance, les effets des rebrandings sur les comportements déviants (e.g. agression physique, agression verbale et intentions de se plaindre) tels que ceux adoptés par certains partisans lors du rebranding de CF Montréal, n'ont pas encore été explorés dans la littérature. Cependant, des preuves soutiennent que les fans d'équipes sportives démontrent, dans l'exercice de leur partisanerie, de plus hauts niveaux de comportements déviants que normal (Branscombe & Wann, 1991, 1992 & 1994 ; Rocca & Vogl-Bauer, 1999 ; Toder-Alon, Icekson &

Shuv-Ami, 2019 ; Wann, 2006 ; Wann et al., 1999). Dans cette étude, les comportements déviants seront séparés en trois sous-catégories : l'agression verbale, l'agression physique et les intentions de se plaindre. Sur la base de ce qui a été observé avec les partisans du CF Montréal suite à son rebranding et rapporté dans les médias et les effets des rebrandings évolutionnaires vs révolutionnaires décrits précédemment, je m'attends à ce qu'un rebranding avec de plus grands changements entraîne de plus forts comportements déviants chez les partisans qu'un rebranding avec de plus petits changements.

Afin de se venger de l'équipe, je m'attends à ce que les partisans dépensent moins d'argent en lien avec l'équipe en question. Ainsi, je m'attends à ce qu'ils boycottent les matchs et la marchandise de l'équipe, qu'ils continuent de s'afficher avec l'ancienne imagerie de l'équipe au lieu de la nouvelle, qu'ils suivent une autre équipe plus assidument, qu'ils refusent d'acheter des billets de saison et qu'ils regardent plus de matchs illégalement. Je m'attends aussi à ce qu'ils essaient de se venger des personnes en position de pouvoir quant au rebranding. Alors, les partisans devraient appeler à la démission du président du club, au propriétaire de vendre l'équipe et de supporter les manifestations contre le rebranding. Pour tester ces comportements, je créerai une variable d'index nommée « comportements de représailles » dans laquelle j'inclurai cinq de ces comportements (Joireman et al., 2013).

H1 : Un rebranding avec des changements plus forts mène à un plus fort a) désir de vengeance, b) intentions de se plaindre, c) agression verbale, d) agression physique, f) comportements de représailles, et moins de e) loyauté envers l'équipe comparativement à un rebranding avec des plus petits changements. Je m'attends aux comparaisons suivantes : « rebranding révolutionnaire de logo avec un changement du nom de l'équipe »

> « *rebranding révolutionnaire de logo* » > « *rebranding évolutionnaire de logo* » pour les réponses négatives (H1a-d et f), et le contraire pour la réponse positive (H1e).

2.2 Rôle médiateur de la trahison

Suite à une transgression d'une firme, ses consommateurs peuvent se sentir trahis (Grégoire & Fisher, 2008 ; Reimann et al., 2018). La trahison est définie comme « *a customer's belief that a firm has intentionally violated what is normative in the context of their relationship.* » (Grégoire & Fisher, 2008, p.250). La trahison a été suggérée comme étant une force motivationnelle qui pousse les consommateurs à chercher à punir l'organisation qui a violé les normes établies entre elle-même et ses consommateurs (Grégoire & Fisher, 2008; Joireman et al., 2020). Même si les consommateurs qui se sentent trahis perçoivent généralement les actions qui ont causé la transgression comme étant intentionnelles, la trahison peut émerger même lorsque ces actions ne sont pas mal intentionnées. D'autres motifs négatifs peuvent causer la trahison, telles le manque de transparence, l'insouciance ou encore la quête d'intérêts personnels (Joireman et al., 2020).

En construisant leur relation avec l'équipe, les partisans s'y identifient, et considèrent l'équipe comme une part de leur propre identité (End et al., 2002; Harris & Ogbonna, 2008; Hunt, Bristol et Bashaw, 1999); Wann & Branscombe, 1990 & 1993; Wann et al., 2001). Lorsque les fans ont une identification forte, ils sont opposés aux changements de logo, peu importe la taille de ceux-ci, et ne les accepteront pas (Ahn et al., 2013). L'imagerie de l'équipe est une façon pour ces partisans « *To identify to their favorite teams and connect fan's memories of the teams* » (Ahn et al., 2013, p.14). Puisque les partisans des équipes sportives, de manière générale, ont une identification et un attachement émotionnel fort à leur équipe préférée (Kunkel & Biscaia, 2020;

Sutton et al., 1997), un rebranding à l'identité de l'équipe, et donc un changement de l'identité même du partisan, est un changement que les fans ne souhaitent pas et auxquels ils ne s'attendent pas. Ce serait une violation significative de ce qui est normatif dans la relation entre le partisan et son équipe puisque le rebranding détruit un point d'ancrage auquel l'attachement émotionnel et les souvenirs positifs du fan envers son équipe sont rattachés. Cette violation du contrat implicite entre les deux partis serait la cause, pour les partisans, de cette perception de trahison par leur équipe. En d'autres mots, le rebranding devient une transgression relationnelle. Cette trahison qu'ils ressentent agirait ensuite comme une force motivationnelle (Grégoire & Fisher, 2008; Joireman et al., 2020) pour pousser les fans à exercer des représailles contre leur club. Les partisans feraient tout ce qui est en leur pouvoir pour corriger le mal qui leur a été fait par l'organisation, et chercheraient donc à se venger, perdraient de la loyauté, et voudraient blesser l'organisation avec l'adoption de comportements déviants.

Je m'attends donc à ce que la trahison ait un rôle médiateur entre le type de rebranding et les comportements décrit ci-haut. De plus, je m'attends à ce que des changements de plus forte amplitude soient perçus comme une plus forte transgression. Plus forts sont les changements apportés à la marque sportive, plus forte sera la trahison perçue par les fans.

H2 : Les effets du type de rebranding sur a) le désir de vengeance, b) les intentions de plaintes, c) l'agression verbale, d) l'agression physique, e) la loyauté et f) les comportements de représailles – comme prédit dans H1 – sont médiés par la trahison perçue.

2.3 Rôle modérateur de l'identification

Lorsque les partisans sont identifiés à une équipe, ils la considèrent comme une partie de leur propre identité (End et al., 2002; Harris & Ogbonna, 2008; Hunt, Bristol et Bashaw, 1999; Wann & Branscombe, 1990 & 1993; Wann et al., 2001). Ceci est particulièrement vrai pour les individus fortement identifiés, qui se considèrent eux-mêmes comme une partie de l'entité à laquelle ils sont identifiés (Bergami & Bagozzi, 2000; Potter & Keen, 2012). L'identification, dans le contexte de l'étude, est définie comme étant l'engagement émotionnel et comportemental d'un fan envers son équipe (Milne & McDonald, 1999; Stevens & Rosenberg, 2012; Sutton et al., 1997). En d'autres mots, l'identification à l'équipe est définie comme « The extent to which a fan feels psychologically connected to a team. » (Wann, Melnick, Russel & Pease, 2001, p. 3). Les fans à forte identification sont hautement investis et engagés à l'équipe et ils dépensent de grandes sommes en temps et en argent avec elle, alors que les fans à faible identification ont une relation passive avec l'équipe, un faible engagement émotionnel et dépensent peu (Sutton et al., 1997). Pour les partisans hautement identifié, leur rôle de fan occupe une grande part dans leur vie et a de plus fortes implications pour eux (Wann & Branscombe, 1990).

L'effet « love becomes hate » démontre que les consommateurs d'une organisation qui ont la relation la plus forte avec celle-ci sont ceux qui perçoivent la plus forte trahison suivant une violation de ce qui est normatif dans leur relation (Grégoire & Fisher, 2008; Joireman, Grégoire et Tripp, 2016). Dans le contexte d'une équipe sportive professionnelle, cette qualité de relation avec l'organisation (l'équipe sportive) peut être comparée à l'identification du partisan à l'équipe. La trahison qu'ils ressentent suivant la transgression engendrée par le rebranding serait plus forte pour les fans fortement identifiés que ceux plus faiblement identifiés puisque l'aspect touché par le rebranding est d'autant plus important pour le partisan hautement identifié, étant un aspect intégral de son identité (Bergami & Bagozzi, 2000; End et al., 2002; Harris & Ogbonna, 2008; Hunt, Bristol

& Bashaw, 1999; Potter & Keen, 2012; Wann & Branscombe, 1993; Wann et al., 2001), et donc la transgression serait plus forte. L'effet de la trahison sur les comportements engendrés serait alors plus fort.

Plusieurs facteurs influencent les réactions des consommateurs à la suite d'un rebranding (Collange, 2015). L'engagement des consommateurs est un de ces facteurs. Alors que les consommateurs fortement engagés auront des attitudes négatives face à la marque suite à son rebranding, les consommateurs moins engagés auront une réaction plus positive (Walsh, Winterich & Mittal, 2010). Dans l'industrie sportive, cet engagement est similaire à l'identification des fans. Les fans qui s'identifient plus fortement à une équipe sportive professionnelle ont des réactions émotionnelles extrêmes (Wann & Branscombe, 1992). Ces partisans sont plus propices à avoir une réponse négative (Simmons, Naraine & Greenwell, 2023) et ont des attitudes négatives plus forte envers la marque sportive (Ahn et al., 2013) suite à un rebranding révolutionnaire que les fans faiblement identifiés. Ahn et al. (2013) ont aussi trouvé que les attitudes des fans moins identifiés ne changent pas suivant un rebranding révolutionnaire alors que celles des fans modérément identifiés baissent.

Les fans à forte identification, comparativement aux fans à faible identification, perçoivent l'agression verbale envers les joueurs et les arbitres comme étant plus adéquate (Rocca & Vogl-Bauer, 1999). L'agression physique, cependant, démontre des contradictions dans la littérature. Alors que certains auteurs ont trouvé que la violence physique était inacceptable pour les fans hautement identifiés (Donahue & Wann, 2009; Rocca & Vogl-Bauer, 1999), d'autres ont conclu que les fans les plus identifiés avaient une plus forte tendance à souhaiter blesser des joueurs ou des entraîneurs rivaux (Wann et al., 1999). Plusieurs de ces fans seraient prêts à faire des efforts considérables, potentiellement illégaux, pour aider leur équipe à gagner (Wann et al., 1999).

Néanmoins, l'identification cause une hausse de plusieurs comportements déviants et agressifs chez les partisans (Branscombe & Wann, 1994; Rocca & Vogl-Bauer, 1999; Toder-Alon et al., 2019; Wann, 2006; Wann et al., 1999). Les comportements agressifs permettent aux partisans de protéger leur propre identité lorsqu'ils la perçoivent comme étant attaquée (Branscombe & Wann, 1992). Puisque les fans hautement identifiés perçoivent leur équipe comme faisant partie de leur propre identité, tel qu'élaboré plus haut, suivant un rebranding qui change cette identité et qui est perçu comme une transgression, je m'attends à ce qu'ils réagissent agressivement pour protéger ces facettes de leur identité, contrairement à ceux qui sont moins identifiés.

L'attachement à la marque, concept qui est à proximité de l'engagement et l'identification, est un spectre sur lequel les consommateurs qui étaient antérieurement attachés à une marque peuvent développer de l'aversion envers celle-ci (Park, Eisingerich & Park, 2013). Certains auteurs ont déjà eu des résultats démontrant que la loyauté des partisans peut diminuer suite à un rebranding (Agha, Goldman & Dixon, 2016 ; Williams et al., 2021 ; Williams & Son, 2022). Dans la même logique déjà élaborée, je m'attends à ce que les fans avec la plus forte identification perdent plus de loyauté que les fans à faible identification à la suite d'un rebranding majeur.

Ainsi, d'une façon similaire à l'effet « love becomes hate », puisqu'il y a des preuves dans la littérature que les fans avec la plus forte identification démontrent des comportements négatifs plus forts suite à un rebranding, je m'attends à ce que l'identification modère la relation entre le type de rebranding et la trahison perçue. Ainsi, plus l'identification est forte, plus la trahison perçue sera forte, et donc plus l'effet indirect sur le désir de vengeance, les comportements déviants et la perte de loyauté augmentera.

Puisque les équipes sportives professionnelles changent plus rarement leur nom lorsqu'elles effectuent un rebranding, les changements de ce type seraient perçus comme les plus sévères, et les plus importants qu'une équipe pourrait effectuer dans un rebranding. Des auteurs ont démontré que, lorsqu'une équipe effectue un rebranding, les fans les plus passionnés portent plus d'importance à ce que le nom de l'équipe reste le plus inchangé possible au travers des deux itérations de la marque (Simmons, Naraine & Greenwell, 2023). Ainsi, je m'attends à ce que les fans à faible identification soient moins sensibles aux changements et le voient comme étant grand ou petit, révolutionnaire ou évolutionnaire, que le nom change ou non. Les fans à haute identification seraient plus sensibles au changement, puisque l'imagerie du club est plus importante pour eux, et percevraient alors différents niveaux entre les deux conditions révolutionnaires. En bref, je m'attends à ce que les fans à forte identification perçoivent une augmentation de la trahison entre chacun des trois types de rebranding, alors que les fans à faible identification atteindront un plateau et ressentiront tout autant de trahison entre les deux conditions révolutionnaires, puisqu'ils porteraient peu d'importance au nom de l'équipe selon les résultats de Simmons, Naraine & Greenwell (2023).

H3 : Le type de rebranding interagit avec l'identification des fans pour prédire la trahison, de sorte que lorsque les fans ont une forte identification, un rebranding révolutionnaire de logo avec un changement de nom (vs révolutionnaire de logo vs évolutionnaire de logo) mène à un plus fort sentiment de trahison comparativement à un fan avec une faible identification.

H4 : L'effet indirect d'un rebranding révolutionnaire de logo avec un changement de nom (vs révolutionnaire de logo vs évolutionnaire de logo) par la trahison sur a) le désir de vengeance, b) les intentions de plainte, c) l'agression verbale, d) l'agression physique et

e) la perte de loyauté est plus fort (en termes absolus) lorsque les fans ont une forte identification que lorsqu'ils ont une faible identification.

Chapitre 3: Article: Sports rebrandings and betrayal: How to destroy unbreakable relationships

3.1 Abstract

This research investigates the negative effect professional sports teams rebrandings have on their fans, more precisely on their desire for revenge, retaliatory behaviors, dysfunctional behaviors and loyalty. I apply a betrayal-based model to explain fan reactions following a rebranding of the team they support. By using two between-subjects experiments, the results suggest that stronger changes in a sports rebranding lead to stronger negative reactions from fans. First, this research shows that, following a rebranding, perceived betrayal plays a key mediating role to explain fans' desire for revenge, verbal and physical aggression, complaining, loyalty loss and retaliatory behaviors. A larger rebranding is seen as a larger relational transgression and causes fans to feel more betrayed by the sports organization. In turn, the betrayal they feel acts as a motivational force to fuel negative behaviors in retaliation. The more fans are betrayed, the more they showcase negative and dysfunctional behaviors. Second, as with the "love becomes hate" effect, fans with high identification perceive more betrayal than fans with low identification from a rebranding of their team that changes the name of the club. Accordingly, when the team's name changes, the indirect effect through betrayal on negative fan behavior is stronger for fans with higher identification than fans with lower identification. The theoretical and managerial implications of these findings will also be discussed.

Keywords: Sports rebranding, fan identification, fan relationships, customer betrayal, team name, name change, logo change, customer retaliation, dysfunctional fan behavior

Research methods: Between-subjects experiment

3.2 Introduction

CF Montreal, formerly known as Montreal Impact, is a professional soccer team playing in the North American top-flight, the Major League Soccer (MLS). Even though it only joined the MLS in 2012, the club was founded in 1993. The team's name was Montreal Impact until 2021, when the organization brought changes to its identity. This major rebranding had the team change its logo and its name to CF Montreal.



Figure 3: The pre-rebranding logo of Montreal Impact (left) and the post-rebranding logo of CF Montreal (right)

The negative reactions from fans were immediate. The rebranding brought out plenty of dysfunctional behaviors from the fans of the team. Countless fans criticized the rebranding on social media and some fans vandalized the club's headquarters (Lévesque, 2021). Because the club would not revisit its decision, groups of Ultras (the most hardcore fans, forming together in groups to support sports clubs) officially cut ties with the team. Some fans allegedly went as far as to physically hit another fan of CF Montréal wearing the new team merchandise at a game (Pratt, 2021). In the stadium, multiple fans held banners insulting the club president and asking for his

resignation (Pratt, 2021). This resulted in the club banning the Ultras from the stadium and the club president eventually resigned. The reactions from fans were so negative that the organization saw no other choice but to rebrand again the following year, changing the logo again but keeping the new name, CF Montreal.

This episode was tragic from both the fans' and the business' perspectives. Even though fan reactions in this case were extreme, professional sports teams rebrandings are common and justified by many different reasons. While some teams like CF Montreal rebranded to “become a truly international outfit” (Boehm, 2021) and to reach their fans on a global scale (Massé, 2021), others like the Washington Commanders of the National Football League went through a rebranding to distance themselves from racist imagery following pressure from different stakeholders (Jhabvala, 2022). Sometimes, it is as simple as the Arizona Coyotes franchise of the National Hockey League moving to Utah and new owners changing the name as they always do when a franchise relocates to a new city, or Seattle Sounders of the MLS wishing to modernize their aging brand (Seattle Sounders, 2024).

As sports teams rebrandings are motivated by many different causes and are not exclusive to one particular professional sport, there is growing need for sports marketing literature to expand on this topic. With the negative effects they have on brands, such as the negative impact they can have on brand reputation (Muzellec, Doogan & Lambkin, 2003) or the loss of fan loyalty towards the sports team (Agha, Goldman & Dixon, 2016; Williams et al., 2021), marketing managers need to be careful when deciding to go through a rebranding. They need information about whether or not the changes they plan to do are appropriate and in line with their business objectives, as well as

the effect they will have on fans' reactions and what fans are willing to tolerate. This information would enable sports marketing managers to minimize harm to their brand and to their relationship with their fans. Is the rebranding worth the potential trouble? Should they rely on a smaller scale rebranding for their brand?

Previous research already covers the effect of sports rebrandings on fans' attitudes towards the sports brand and behaviors such as purchase intentions (Ahn et al., 2013; Agha, Goldman & Dixon, 2016; Walsh, Winterich & Mittal, 2010; Williams et al., 2021; Williams & Son, 2022), and the negative emotions rebrandings cause such as sadness and anger (Collange & Bonache, 2015). However, to the best of my knowledge, it is surprising to see that little prior research has focused on fan retaliation towards the team following a rebranding. Yet, anger was shown to be linked to retaliation in previous work (Bonifield et al., 2007; Grégoire, Laufer & Tripp, 2010).

In this research, I argue that fan retaliation was this severe towards CF Montreal because of the strength of the changes the club did to its brand and the betrayal fans felt following it. I suggest that this same betrayal acts as a motivational force for fans seeking revenge against the club, with the means they have at their disposal. I also argue that the more fans are identified with the team, the more betrayal they will perceive from the rebranding. Rebrandings can be described as evolutionary or revolutionary, depending on whether the changes were minor, for the former, or major, for the latter (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006).

To gain insights on fan retaliation following rebranding initiatives, I will combine already established service failure and transgression literature to sports rebranding literature. Through the

lens of a revenge and betrayal paradigm (e.g., Grégoire & Fisher 2008), I will explain the occurrence of sport fans' retaliation against the club when its rebranding is perceived as a relational transgression. Fans identify with a sports team and changing the team identity, and therefore fan identity, is a violation of a relational norm, which triggers a sense of betrayal. This betrayal will, in turn, incur retaliatory behaviors to restore a form of social balance. Based on this same model, the stronger is the relationship between the fan and the team, or identification in the case of sports teams' fans, the stronger the violation will be perceived, and thus the more the fan will feel betrayed, as seen in the "love becomes hate" effect. As retaliation, the fans will desire to take revenge against the team, lose loyalty and show more dysfunctional behaviors than normal. Building on this logic, this research makes two contributions by using an experimental approach on a sample of soccer fans.

First, it introduces to the sports rebranding literature the mediating role of betrayal, which explains extreme fan behaviors following rebranding initiatives. Just as Grégoire and Fisher (2008) showed in their model, perceived betrayal acts as a motivational force to triggering a desire for revenge, dysfunctional behaviors, a loss of loyalty and retaliatory behaviors. The bigger are the changes done to the sports team's identity, the higher the perceived betrayal will be. This also means that, indirectly, stronger changes to the sports brand bring forward higher desire for revenge from fans, a bigger loss in loyalty, more verbal and physical aggression, more complaining and more retaliatory behaviors from fans. These results add on the current literature of the negative consequences sports rebrandings have on fans of the team (Ahn et al., 2013; Agha, Goldman & Dixon, 2016; Williams et al., 2021; Williams & Son, 2022).

Second, I show that higher identification fans are more attached to and care more for the team's name than lower identification fans. My results show that rebranding type and fan identification interact together to predict perceived betrayal when the name of the team changes. When comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding to an evolutionary logo rebranding, both high and low identification fans feel stronger betrayal. This increase in betrayal is similar for both sets of fans. However, when comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change to a revolutionary logo rebranding, while fans with high identification feel increased betrayal, fans with low identification see no significant difference in betrayal between the two rebranding types. This also means that following a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change, rather than an evolutionary logo rebranding, fans with high (vs low) identification feel greatly (vs slightly) increased betrayal. This interaction also has an indirect effect on fan behavioral responses. When comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change to a revolutionary logo rebranding, for fans with high (vs low) identification, the rebranding type, indirectly through betrayal, increases (vs has no indirect effect) desire for revenge, complaining, verbal aggression, physical aggression and loyalty loss. When comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name change to an evolutionary logo rebranding, for fans with high (vs low) identification, the rebranding type, indirectly through betrayal, greatly (vs slightly) increases desire for revenge, complaining, verbal aggression, physical aggression and loyalty loss. This current research supports previous literature which states that higher identification fans generally show stronger behaviors than their lower identified counterpart (Ahn et al., 2013; Potter & Keen, 2012; Rocca & Vogl-Bauer, 1999; Simmons, Naraine & Greenwell, 2023; Wann et al., 1999; Wann & Branscombe, 1990 & 1992).

3.3 Conceptual framework and Hypotheses

Figure 1 shows the conceptual model advanced in this research. I follow this model to define my concepts and develop my hypotheses. I will first develop the effect of the rebranding type on fan behavioral responses. Then, I will go in detail on the mediating role of betrayal. I will end by developing my hypotheses around the moderating role of fan identification.

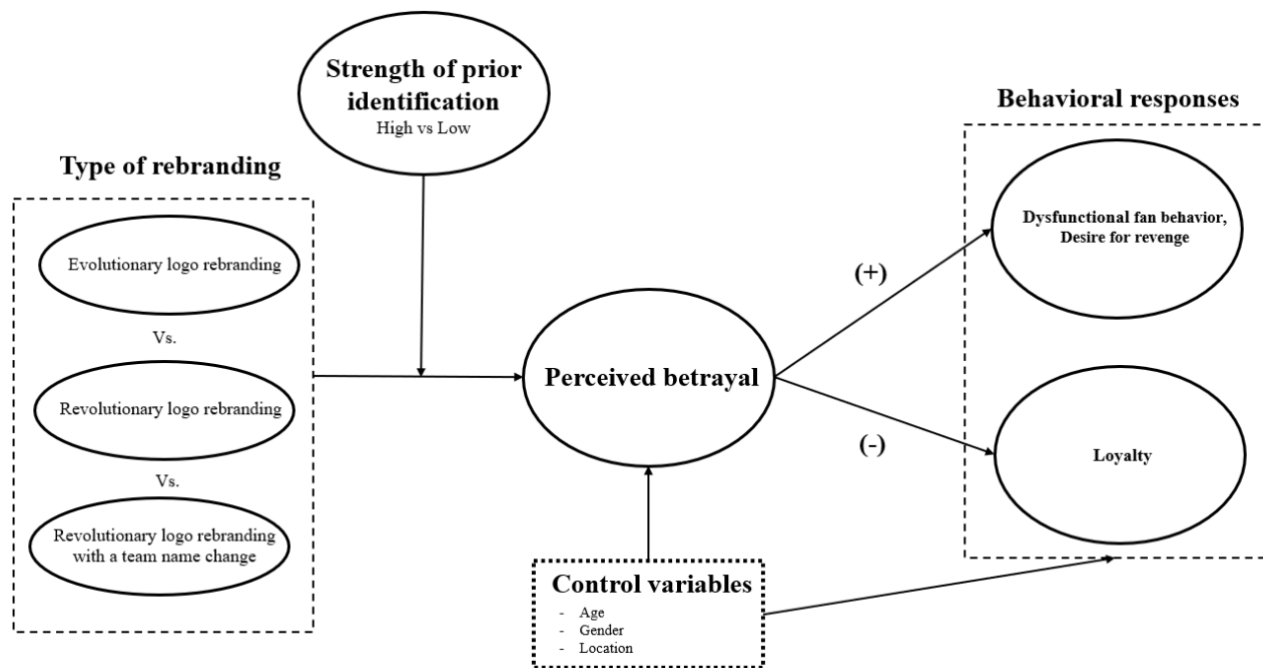


Figure 4: Conceptual model.

3.3.1 Sports teams rebrandings and fan behavioral responses

Rebrandings are dangerous activities (Collange & Bonache, 2015). They are defined as "the practice of building anew a name representative of a differentiated position in the mind frame of stakeholders and a distinctive identity from competitors." (Muzellec, Doogan & Lambkin, 2003, p.32). As such, a rebranding can be a brand refreshment, repositioning, renewal or reinvention that

primarily changes the brand name, logo, colors or values (Joseph et al., 2021; Merrilees & Miller, 2008). Rebrandings can be described as either evolutionary or revolutionary according to the strength of the changes made to the brand. Muzellec and Lambkin (2006) define an evolutionary rebranding as "a fairly minor development in the company's positioning and aesthetics that is so gradual that it is hardly perceptible to outside observers." (p. 805). On the other hand, a revolutionary rebranding is "a major, identifiable change in positioning and aesthetics that fundamentally redefines the company." (p.806). In the context of this study, based on the strength of the changes, I will use three rebranding conditions, from the one with the most minor changes to the one with the most major changes, each building on the changes done to the previous, lesser condition. The first one, the one with the most minor changes, will be an evolutionary logo change, while the second one will be a revolutionary logo change and the last one will be a revolutionary logo change with the addition of a team name change.

The rebranding type, either evolutionary or revolutionary, is shown to have a negative impact on multiple consumer reactions. The stronger are the changes made to the brand, the stronger the fan reactions will be (Williams et al., 2021). An evolutionary logo rebranding was found to have no effect on brand attitudes, while a revolutionary logo rebranding affected them negatively (Williams & Son, 2022). Rebrandings also have a negative impact on brand reputation (Muzellec, Doogan & Lambkin, 2003). Following a rebranding, half of the brand's consumers will have negative attitudes towards the rebranding and the brand. These negative attitudes following a rebranding can lead to negative emotions such as anger and sadness from consumers (Collange & Bonache, 2015). Previous research has established anger and desire for revenge as related emotions

(Bonifield et al., 2007; Grégoire, Laufer & Tripp, 2010). Therefore, I expect fans to have stronger desire for revenge following a major sports team rebranding than a more minor one.

Fan loyalty towards the team was also found to be negatively affected by rebrandings, such that only an evolutionary logo change would have no effect on loyalty for fans (Williams et al., 2021). Accordingly, fewer fans will attend matches following a revolutionary rebranding (Agha, Goldman & Dixon, 2016). Purchase intentions of team merchandise, on the other hand, have some contradictory results in previous literature. While some authors found fan purchase intentions to increase following a sports team (Ahn et al., 2013), others found them to decrease (Williams & Son, 2022). Both fan attendance in the stadium and purchase intentions of team merchandise are dimensions of fan loyalty (Tachis & Tzetzis, 2015). Therefore, I expect a major rebranding to cause a stronger negative decrease on fans' loyalty than a smaller scale one would.

To the best of my knowledge, the effect of rebrandings on dysfunctional behaviors (e.g. physical aggression, verbal aggression, complaining) such as the ones seen in the CF Montreal rebranding has yet to be explored in the literature. However, there is evidence of sports fans showing higher levels of dysfunctional behaviors than normal (Branscombe & Wann, 1991, 1992 & 1994; Rocca & Vogl-Bauer, 1999; Toder-Alon, Icekson & Shuv-Ami, 2019; Wann, 2006; Wann et al., 1999). In this study, the dysfunctional behaviors will be split in three categories: Verbal aggression, physical aggression and complaining. Based on what happened with the rebranding of CF Montreal and the following dysfunctional fan behaviors reported in the media and the previously described effects of evolutionary vs revolutionary rebrandings on consumer reactions, I expect that the bigger the

changes to the brand are in a sports team rebranding, the stronger the dysfunctional behaviors following it will be.

As ways to seek revenge against the team, I expect fans to retaliate by spending less of their time and money towards the team. As such, I would expect fans to boycott matches and team merchandise, display the old imagery instead of the new one, follow another team more closely, refuse to buy season's tickets and watch more games illegally. I also expect them to try and get even towards the people who had decisional power towards the rebranding. As such, I would expect fans to call for the team's owner to sell the team, for the club's president to give his resignation and for fans to support protests against the rebranding. To further test these behaviors, I will merge five of those behaviors together into an index variable called retaliatory behaviors (Joireman et al. 2013).

***H1:** A rebranding with stronger changes leads to greater a) desire for revenge, b) complaining intentions, c) verbal aggression, d) physical aggression, f) retaliatory behaviors, and less e) loyalty towards the team compared to a rebranding with lesser changes. I expect the comparisons “revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name change” > “revolutionary logo rebranding” > “evolutionary logo rebranding” for the negative responses (H1a-d and f), and the reverse for the positive response (H1e).*

3.3.2 Mediating role of betrayal

Following a transgression from a firm, its consumers can come to feel betrayal (Grégoire and Fisher, 2008; Reimann et al., 2018). Betrayal is defined as "a customer's belief that a firm has

intentionally violated what is normative in the context of their relationship" (Grégoire and Fisher, 2008, p. 250). Betrayal was suggested as being a motivational force that leads consumers to seek punishment against the organization when it violated the established norm between itself and its consumers (Grégoire and Fisher, 2008; Joireman et al., 2020). Even though consumers who feel betrayed perceive the actions that caused the transgression as intentional, betrayal can emerge even when these acts have no particular ill-intent from the organization. Other negative motives can result in betrayal, such as lack of transparency, carelessness, or self-interest (Joireman et al., 2020).

By building their relationship with a team, fans start to identify with it, and consider the team's identity as part of their own identity (End et al., 2002; Harris & Ogbonna, 2008; Hunt, Bristol & Bashaw, 1999; Wann and Branscombe, 1990; Wann & Branscombe, 1993; Wann et al., 2001). When fans have high identification, they are averse to team logo changes and will not accept them however big or small they are (Ahn et al., 2013). The team's imagery is a way for those fans to "identify to their favorite teams and connect fans' memories of the teams" (Ahn et al., 2013, p.14). As sports fans, generally speaking, have high identification and emotional attachment to their favorite team (Kunkel & Bascaia, 2020; Sutton et al., 1997), a rebranding to the team's identity, and therefore a change to the fan's very own identity, is a change that fans of a team would not want or expect. It would be a significant violation of what is normative between the fans and the team's relationship as it destroys an anchor point to which the fan's emotional attachment and positive memories with the team are linked to. This violation of the implicit contract between them is what would incur fans to feel betrayed by their club. In other words, the rebranding becomes a relational transgression. The betrayal they would then feel would act as a motivational force (Grégoire and Fisher, 2008; Joireman et al., 2020) for fans to seek retaliation against the sports

club. The fans would do whatever is in their power to get even with the organization, and thus would wish to take revenge against the team, lose their loyalty to it, and hurt the organization with dysfunctional behavior and retaliatory behaviors.

Therefore, I expect betrayal to have a mediating role between the rebranding type and the aforementioned behaviors. In addition, I expect bigger changes to be perceived as a stronger violation. I expect that the more major are the changes done to the brand, the stronger the perceived betrayal for fans will be.

H2: The effects of the rebranding type on a) desire for revenge, b) complaining intentions, c) verbal aggression, d) physical aggression, e) loyalty and f) retaliatory behaviors —as predicted in H1—are mediated through perceived betrayal.

3.3.3 Moderating role of identification

When fans are identified with a team, they consider it as part of their identity (End et al., 2002; Harris & Ogbonna, 2008; Hunt, Bristol & Bashaw, 1999; Wann & Branscombe, 1990; Wann & Branscombe, 1993; Wann et al., 2001), which is especially true for highly identified individuals who consider themselves as a part of the entity to which they are identified (Bergami & Bagozzi, 2000; Potter & Keen, 2012). Identification is defined as the behavioral and emotional engagement of the fan towards his team (Milne & McDonald, 1999; Stevens & Rosenberg, 2012; Sutton et al., 1997). In other words, team identification is defined as "The extent to which a fan feels psychologically connected to a team" (Wann, Melnick, Russel and Pease, 2001; p.3). Sutton et al. (1997) divided fan identification into three levels: Social fans, focused fans and vested fans. The three levels represent fans with low, moderate and high identification. Low identification fans have

a passive relationship with their team, have low emotional engagement and spend less money on the team. These fans follow the team for the entertainment they get from it (Carlson, Donava & Cumiskey, 2009; Hu & Tang, 2010; Sutton et al., 1997) and the social interactions around it (Sutton et al., 1997). On the other hand, fans with high identification are heavily invested and committed to the team and they spend a lot of time and money on it. This type of fan has long term loyalty towards the team and the community around it (Sutton et al., 1997). For fans with high identification, their role as a fan plays a big part in their life and has stronger implications for them (Wann & Branscombe, 1990).

The “love becomes hate” effect (Grégoire & Fisher, 2008) shows that consumers of a brand who have the strongest relationship with it are the ones who feel the most betrayal following a violation of what is normative in their relationship (Grégoire & Fisher, 2008; Joireman, Grégoire & Tripp, 2016). In a professional sports team context, this high-quality relationship with the organization (the sports team) can be compared to the identification a fan has with the team. The betrayal they feel from the violation triggered by the rebranding would be stronger for high identification fans than low identification fans because the modified aspect was of much more importance for the highly identified fan, as it was an integral part of his identity (Bergami & Bagozzi, 2000; End et al., 2002; Harris & Ogbonna, 2008; Hunt, Bristol and Bashaw, 1999; Potter & Keen, 2012; Wann & Branscombe, 1993; Wann et al., 2001), and thus the violation would be bigger. The effects of the betrayal on incurred behaviors would then be stronger.

Several factors influence consumer reaction following a rebranding (Collange, 2015). Consumer engagement is one of them. Whereas highly engaged consumers will have negative attitudes towards the brand following its rebranding, less engaged consumers will have a more positive reaction (Walsh, Winterich & Mittal, 2010). In the sports industry, this engagement is similar to fan identification. Fans who identify strongly to a professional sports team have extreme emotional reactions (Wann & Branscombe, 1992). They are more likely to have a negative response (Simmons, Naraine & Greenwell, 2023) and have stronger negative attitudes towards the sports brand (Ahn et al., 2013) following a revolutionary rebranding than their lower identified counterparts. Ahn et al. (2013) also found that lesser identified fans' attitudes do not change following a revolutionary rebranding while these of moderately identified fans also decreased. More identified fans will also react more strongly towards negative media content about their team (Potter & Keen, 2012).

Highly identified fans perceive verbal aggression towards players and match officials to be more adequate than lower identified ones (Rocca & Vogl-Bauer, 1999). Physical aggression, however, shows contradictions in the literature. While some authors found physical violence to be unacceptable for highly identified fans (Donahue & Wann, 2009; Rocca & Vogl-Bauer, 1999), others concluded that highly identified fans had higher tendencies to wish to hurt rival players or coaches. Many of these fans would be willing to go to great lengths, potentially illegally, to help their team win (Wann et al., 1999). Nonetheless, identification causes the rise of many aggressive behaviors in fans (Branscombe & Wann, 1994; Rocca & Vogl-Bauer, 1999; Toder-Alon et al., 2019; Wann, 2006; Wann et al., 1999). Aggressive behaviors would be a response enabling fans to protect their identity after they perceive it as attacked (Branscombe & Wann, 1992). Since highly

identified fans' favorite team is a part of their identity, as mentioned above, following a rebranding changing this same identity and seen as a transgression, we should expect them to react aggressively to protect those aspects of themselves. However, these tendencies soften with age. The older a fan is, the less likely he is to show aggressive behaviors (Toder-Alom et al., 2019). This would be evidence of fans with high identification showing stronger dysfunctional behaviors and I would therefore expect them to express stronger dysfunctional behaviors than fans with low identification following a rebranding which is perceived as a transgression.

Loyalty and identification are closely linked in the literature. The stronger a fan will be identified to a team, the strongest his loyalty will be (Karjaluoto, Munnukka, & Salmi, 2016; Ozgen and Argan, 2017; Stevens & Rosenberg, 2012; Wann & Branscombe, 1993; Wu, Tsai & Hung, 2012). Brand attachment is a spectrum on which consumers who were previously attached to a brand can develop aversion to it (Park, Eisingerich & Park, 2013). Since authors already found rebrandings to be able to decrease fan loyalty (Agha, Goldman & Dixon, 2016; Williams et al., 2021; Williams & Son, 2022) and with the close proximity engagement and identification share, fans of sports team could therefore lose loyalty in the same sense. I expect higher identification fans to lose more loyalty following a major rebranding, since it changes their identity so much and they would have less loyalty towards the team as a way to protect their identity following the betrayal. The entity to which they express their loyalty was changed and therefore they do not owe as much loyalty to the new one.

In a similar effect as the “love becomes hate” effect, and since there is evidence in the literature of higher identification fans showing stronger negative behavior following a rebranding, and they are shown to have higher emotional reactions, I expect identification to moderate the relationship between the rebranding type and the perceived betrayal. As such, the higher the identification, the stronger the perceived betrayal will be, and therefore the stronger the desire for revenge and dysfunctional behaviors will increase and the stronger loyalty will decrease.

Because sports team rarely change their name while rebranding, the changes done in this type of rebranding would be seen as the most severe and would be one of the biggest change a team could go through in a revolutionary rebranding. As the team is a huge part of the high identification fan’s identity, the change of the team’s name should have a strong impact on the betrayal they feel, whereas it should not be of much importance for a fan whose team is not a big part of its identity. In this logic, authors already established that when a sports team rebrands, the most passionate fans, compared to more casual fans, put more importance on the team’s name staying as unchanged as possible through both iterations of the brand (Simmons, Naraine & Greenwell, 2023). As such, I expect low identification fans to be less sensitive to the change and see it as either big or small, evolutionary or revolutionary, whether the name changes or not. Meanwhile, high identification fans would be more sensitive to the change, as it is much closer to their identity, and perceive different levels inside the revolutionary condition. High identification fans would see a difference when comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change to a revolutionary logo rebranding, whereas low identification fans would not see any. In brief, I expect high identification fans to perceive an increase in betrayal with every level of rebranding, whereas I expect low identification fans to hit a plateau and feel just as betrayed for both revolutionary conditions, as they attach little importance to the team’s name according to Simmons, Naraine and Greenwell’s

(2023) results. Therefore, when comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change to an evolutionary rebranding, I expect high (vs low) identification fans to perceive greatly (vs slightly) increased betrayal and thus, indirectly, the behaviors linked to it. When comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change to a revolutionary logo rebranding, I expect high (vs low) identification fans to perceive greatly increased (vs similar) betrayal, and thus, indirectly, the behaviors linked with it.

H3: The rebranding type interacts with fan identification to predict betrayal, such that when fans have high identification, a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change (vs revolutionary vs evolutionary) leads to a greater sense of betrayal compared to fans with low identification.

H4: The indirect effect of a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change (vs revolutionary vs evolutionary) through betrayal on a) desire for revenge, b) complaining intention, c) verbal aggression, d) physical aggression and e) loyalty is stronger (in absolute terms) when fans have high identification rather than low identification.

3.4 Studies and tests of hypotheses

3.4.1 Overview of studies

To test my hypotheses, I conducted two studies. Study 1a was done to pretest the visual stimuli that would be used further in the experiment in study 2. It also served as a way to pretest the relationship between the rebranding type, betrayal and desire for revenge. Study 1 was split in two

parts, 1a and 1b. Study 1b was done to make upgrades to the visual stimuli with another iteration of logos. Study 1b tested the perception and differences of this second upgraded version of visual stimuli. The logos could then be as adequate as possible for study 2. Study 2 was conducted to formally test the conceptual model. By using an experimental approach, it tested the main effect of the rebranding type on the dependent variables. It also tested the role of betrayal as a mediator between the rebranding type and the dependent variables. Finally, study 2 tested the moderating role of fan identification on the relationship between the rebranding type and betrayal, and the indirect effect of the rebranding type on the dependent variables constructing the conceptual model. With the use of this experimental setting, it was possible to remove the outside influence of external variables associated to known sports brands (e.g. experimental confounds).

3.4.2 Study 1a

3.4.2.1 Study design and sample

Study 1a is a preliminary test to validate the visual stimuli used further in study 1b. Study 1a was used to partially pretest the relationship between rebranding type, betrayal and desire for revenge. Two logos (Appendix A) were presented to participants to measure their perceptions and opinions about them. Afterwards, they were asked to imagine a scenario in which they were a fan of a fictive soccer team; the participants learned, through a report on the news, that the soccer team had rebranded. This part of the present study involves a one factor between-subject design with three rebranding conditions: Evolutionary logo rebranding, revolutionary logo rebranding, and revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name change. The conditions were manipulated through

the fictive *pre* and *post* rebranding logos shown as well as the according scenario for each condition (Appendix B).

In the evolutionary logo rebranding condition, the logo's colors were lightened, the font chosen for the team's name was changed and the banner with the year of the team's creation was removed. In the revolutionary logo rebranding condition, the logo was completely changed. As well as the changes done in the evolutionary condition, I added a change in the shape of the logo and a change of the symbol at the center of the logo. In the revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name change, the same logo as in the revolutionary logo rebranding condition was used, and the name was also changed on the logo. Through the text in the scenario, the rebranding was either pointed out as being minor (evolutionary) or major (revolutionary). In the revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name change condition, the name change was also mentioned in the text of the scenario.

The participants were recruited through the crowdsourcing platform Prolific. I applied two screening factors. Participants had to reside in either the United Kingdom, the United States or Canada. They also had to be fans of soccer by self-reporting that they regularly watch the sport. I included an attention check in the questionnaire by asking participants to answer strongly agree. Participants who did not answer correctly were eliminated from the final sample. Two participants were therefore removed, and remaining participants formed a sample of 167 respondents (84,6% UK; 68,6% male; $M_{age} = 43.26$, $SD = 14,49$). After giving their perception of both logos, participants were randomly assigned to one of the three conditions.

3.4.2.2 Measurement

This study also aimed to pretest the new desire for revenge scale adapted from Grégoire, Tripp and Legoux (2009). The initial scale was built from 8 items, and they all had loadings superior to .50 on the construct, thus proving its convergent validity. The items were: Following the rebranding, I want to... 1) Punish the organization in some way, 2) Display the old logo instead of the new one, 3) Cause inconvenience to the organization, 4) Protest against the rebranding in public or on social media, 5) Give backlash against the rebranding, 6) Boycott matches, 7) Boycott team merchandise and 8) Call for the team's owner or president's resignation. However, the cross-loadings with perceived betrayal were not adequate and some items loaded more on perceived betrayal than desire for revenge. Five items were removed, leaving the new scale for desire for revenge with 3 final items: the first, third and eighth initial items. All cross-loadings for this new scale were small enough, thus proving its discriminant validity. The new scale had a Cronbach's Alpha of .91, making it reliable.

Therefore, the dependent variable pretested was desire for revenge (3 items, $M = 2.62$, $SD = 1.63$, $\alpha = .91$; adapted from Grégoire, Tripp & Legoux, 2009) and the mediator in the study was perceived betrayal (3 items, $M = 3.46$, $SD = 1.98$, $\alpha = .96$; Grégoire & Fisher, 2008).

3.4.2.3 Manipulation checks

After being shown each logo, the participants responded to a set of 21 questions about their perception of it. All questions were measured using seven-point Likert scales (1 = “Strongly disagree”, and 7 = “Strongly agree”). The participants liked both logos ($M_{\text{logo-shield}} = 4.71$, $SD_{\text{logo-shield}} = 1.45$; $M_{\text{logo-circular}} = 4.49$, $SD_{\text{logo-circular}} = 1.45$; $p = .143$) and both symbols ($M_{\text{logo-shield}} = 5.08$, $SD_{\text{logo-shield}} = 1.53$; $M_{\text{logo-circular}} = 4.57$, $SD_{\text{logo-circular}} = 1.60$; $p = .004$). Also, the logos were credible ($M_{\text{logo-shield}} = 4.99$, $SD_{\text{logo-shield}} = 1.17$; $M_{\text{logo-circular}} = 4.64$, $SD_{\text{logo-circular}} = 1.24$; $p = .001$) and participants could imagine a professional soccer team displaying them ($M_{\text{logo-shield}} = 5.12$, $SD_{\text{logo-shield}} = 1.48$; $M_{\text{logo-circular}} = 4.53$, $SD_{\text{logo-circular}} = 1.66$; $p < .001$). Finally, they had not seen any of the logos before ($M_{\text{logo-shield}} = 2.57$, $SD_{\text{logo-shield}} = 1.63$; $M_{\text{logo-circular}} = 2.67$, $SD_{\text{logo-circular}} = 1.61$; $p = .401$). The full table is available in appendix C.

Then, participants were randomly shown one of the three rebranding scenarios and answered questions about their perception of the rebranding. Participants in the revolutionary conditions (with or without change of name) reported the logos were more significantly changed than in the evolutionary condition ($M_{\text{evolutionary}} = 3.40$ vs. $M_{\text{revolutionary}} = 6.33$ vs. $M_{\text{revolutionary + name}} = 6.59$; $F(2, 165) = 129.67$, $p < .001$) and that the change was more radical ($M_{\text{evolutionary}} = 3.07$ vs. $M_{\text{revolutionary}} = 6.22$ vs. $M_{\text{revolutionary + name}} = 6.44$; $F(2, 165) = 122.65$, $p < .001$). In all conditions, participants can notice the changes between the two logos shown to them ($M_{\text{evolutionary}} = 6.19$ vs. $M_{\text{revolutionary}} = 6.66$ vs. $M_{\text{revolutionary + name}} = 6.69$; $F(2, 165) = 6.32$, $p < .01$). Although the perception of change is inferior in the evolutionary condition than in the two revolutionary conditions, this perception remains strong and well beyond the scale midpoint of 4 ($p < .001$). Also, the name change was well understood such that only participants in the revolutionary with name condition agreed the name was completely changed ($M_{\text{evolutionary}} = 2.05$ vs. $M_{\text{revolutionary}} = 2.34$ vs. $M_{\text{revolutionary + name}} = 5.80$; $F(2,$

166) = 140.25, $p < .001$). Finally, participants in the three conditions had no preference in logo characteristics, whether they liked the new logo, the new symbol, the new shape more than the previous one or if they thought the new logo was overall better than the first one. The full table is available in appendix D.

Table 1. Characteristics of the different logos tested in study 1a.

	Rebranding condition				Rev		One-way ANOVA		
	Evolutionary		Revolutionary		(w/ name)		F	η^2	p
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD			
Like	3.98	2.13	3.98	2.34	3.76	2.41	0.16	0.00	0.85
Symbol	3.80	1.50	4.00	2.12	3.75	2.35	0.25	0.00	0.78
Shape	4.00	1.57	4.02	2.12	3.96	2.25	0.01	0.00	0.99
Better	4.03	1.91	3.83	2.17	3.63	2.33	0.50	0.01	0.61

Table 1: Characteristics of the different logos tested in study 1a.

3.4.2.4 Results for study 1a

Test of H_{1a}. Main effect of rebranding type on desire for revenge. The results of an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) found a significant main effect of the rebranding type on desire for revenge ($F = 1.96$ (18, 146), $p = .02$). Neither control variables used in study 1a, whether age ($F = .005$ (1, 146), $p = .94$) or gender, had a significant effect ($F = 2.40$ (1, 146), $p = .12$).

Desire for revenge is stronger in the revolutionary condition than in the evolutionary condition ($M_{\text{revolutionary}} = 2.55$ vs $M_{\text{evolutionary}} = 2.14$, $t = -1.58$, $p = .06$). It is also stronger in the revolutionary with a name change condition than in the evolutionary condition ($M_{\text{revolutionary w/ name}} = 3.29$ vs $M_{\text{evolutionary}} = 2.14$, $t = -3.76$, $p < .001$). Finally, desire for revenge is stronger following a revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name change than a revolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{revolutionary w/ name}} = 3.29$ vs $M_{\text{revolutionary}} = 2.55$, $t = -2.27$, $p = .01$). These results support H_{1a}.

Test of H2. Mediation through betrayal. I found a significant main effect of the rebranding type ($F(18, 146) = 2.11, p < .01$) on betrayal. Neither control variables, whether age ($F(1, 146) = .47, p = .49$) or gender, had a significant effect ($F(1, 146) = 2.7, p = .10$).

The revolutionary condition leads to more perceived betrayal than the evolutionary condition ($M_{\text{revolutionary}} = 3.56$ vs $M_{\text{evolutionary}} = 2.71, t = -2.48, p < .01$). Following a revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name change, fans feel more betrayal than following an evolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{revolutionary w/ name}} = 4.23$ vs $M_{\text{evolutionary}} = 2.71, t = -4.25, p < .001$). There is also a significant difference in perceived betrayal between the revolutionary condition and the revolutionary with a name change condition. Following a revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name change, fans feel more betrayed than following a revolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{revolutionary w/ name}} = 4.23$ vs $M_{\text{revolutionary}} = 3.56, t = -1.80, p < .05$).

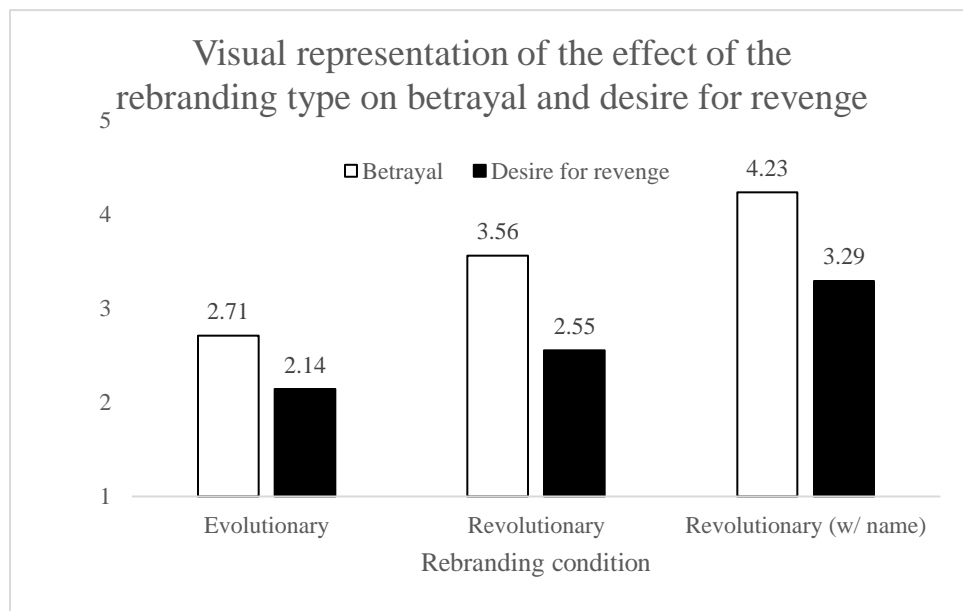


Figure 5: Visual representation of the effect of the rebranding type on betrayal and desire for revenge.

Table 2. Model variables (desire for revenge and betrayal) as function of rebranding conditions

	Rebranding condition				Rev		ANOVA	
	Evolutionary		Revolutionary		(w/ name)		F	η^2
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD		
Betrayal	2.71	1.78	3.56	1.92	4.23	1.98	2.11**	0.15
Desire for revenge	2.14	1.31	2.55	1.50	3.29	1.89	1.96*	0.14

Table 2: Model variables (desire for revenge and betrayal) as function of rebranding conditions

To test the mediation model in H2, I used the PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2017; Model 4; 5,000 resamples). For each possible comparison of two rebranding conditions, I start by showing the main effect of the rebranding type on betrayal. Then, I show the main effect of betrayal on desire for revenge for this same comparison. Finally, I show the indirect effect of the rebranding type on desire for revenge.

When comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding to an evolutionary logo rebranding, my results indicate that the main effect on betrayal of the rebranding type was significant (Standardized Coefficient = .44, $p < .05$). The effect of betrayal on desire for revenge was also significant (Standardized Coefficient = .81, $p < .001$). Finally, the total indirect effect of the rebranding type on desire for revenge is significant (Coefficient = .51, 95% confidence interval (CI): (.10, .93)).

When comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name change to an evolutionary rebranding, my results indicate that the main effect on betrayal of the rebranding type was significant (Standardized Coefficient = .77, $p < .001$). Likewise, the effect of betrayal on desire for revenge is significant (Standardized Coefficient = .79, $p < .001$). Finally, the total indirect effect of the rebranding type on desire for revenge is significant (Coefficient = 1.03, CI: (.56, 1.56))

Finally, when comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name change to a revolutionary logo rebranding, my results indicate that the main effect on betrayal of the rebranding type was significant (Standardized Coefficient = .37, $p = .05$). The effect of betrayal on desire for revenge was also significant (Standardized Coefficient = .73, $p < .001$). Overall, the indirect effect of the rebranding type was significant (Coefficient = .46, CI: (.01, .93)). Overall, these results support H2a.

3.4.2.5 Discussion of study1a

This study first and foremost aimed to pre-test the effectiveness of both logos used as visual stimuli. The logos worked as intended for the rebranding condition they each represented, but they still had some significant differences. Study 1b will be needed to try and further reduce the significant differences in-between logos.

Study 1a was also designed to test if the rebranding type had an effect on desire for revenge. Consistent with H1a, my results show that following a revolutionary logo rebranding or a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change (vs evolutionary logo rebranding), fans will have a stronger (weaker) desire for revenge towards the organization. The desire for revenge towards the club is also stronger (weaker) in the revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change (vs revolutionary logo rebranding) condition.

In addition, and supporting H2a, perceived betrayal plays a key mediating role to predict desire for revenge. Following a revolutionary logo rebranding (vs evolutionary logo rebranding), fans will feel more (less) betrayed by the organization. After a revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name change (vs evolutionary logo rebranding vs revolutionary logo rebranding), fans will also perceive more (less) betrayal. This stronger betrayal then induces stronger desire for revenge

towards the sports team. With every stronger level of change (compared to a lesser level of change), fans will feel more (less) betrayed, and thus indirectly through the mediation of this betrayal feel a stronger (weaker) desire for revenge towards the organization.

3.4.3 Study 1b

3.4.3.1 Study design and sample

This study was a post-test following the pre-tests done in study 1a. Even though, according to my results, both logos used as visual stimuli were adequate, they still had some significant differences between them that could be ironed out. This post-test was done to further reduce the possibility of outside explanations due to logo characteristics in the main model tested in study 2. The two logos (Appendix E) were presented to each participant to measure their perceptions and opinions of them. The order in which the logos were presented was randomized.

I hypothesized that the root of all those differences was the style used for the symbol at the center of the second logo, the rose. As such, for this second test, I slightly modified the second logo and used a different rose in another style as the symbol. This new style of rose is more classic in English culture and as such in soccer culture in England. The first logo was left untouched from the one used in study 1a.

The participants were recruited through the crowdsourcing platform Prolific. I applied two screening factors. Participants had to reside in either the United Kingdom, the United States or Canada. They also had to be fans of soccer by self reporting that they regularly watch the sport. I included an attention check in the questionnaire by asking participants to answer a question with strongly agree. Participants who would not answer correctly would be removed from the final

sample. All but one of them passed it successfully. The only participant who did not answer strongly agree answered agree. He was kept in the final sample as it could be attributed to a miss click. No participants were therefore excluded from the final sample of 97 respondents (82.5% UK; 68.0% male; $M_{\text{age}} = 41.69$, $SD = 13.79$).

3.4.3.2 Manipulation checks

After being shown each logo, participants responded the same set of 21 questions as in study 1a about their perception of said logo. All questions were measured using seven-point Likert scales (1 = “Strongly disagree”, and 7 = “Strongly agree”). My results indicate that the most important dimensions, the same ones as in study 1a, are still adequate. The participants liked both logos ($M_{\text{logo-shield}} = 4.66$, $SD_{\text{logo-shield}} = 1.50$; $M_{\text{logo-circular}} = 4.49$, $SD_{\text{logo-circular}} = 1.36$; $p = .40$) and both symbols ($M_{\text{logo-shield}} = 4.78$, $SD_{\text{logo-shield}} = 1.54$; $M_{\text{logo-circular}} = 4.60$, $SD_{\text{logo-circular}} = 1.61$; $p = .41$). Also, the logos were credible ($M_{\text{logo-shield}} = 4.88$, $SD_{\text{logo-shield}} = 1.10$; $M_{\text{logo-circular}} = 4.84$, $SD_{\text{logo-circular}} = 1.08$; $p = .74$) and participants could imagine a professional soccer team displaying them ($M_{\text{logo-shield}} = 5.11$, $SD_{\text{logo-shield}} = 1.33$; $M_{\text{logo-circular}} = 4.74$, $SD_{\text{logo-circular}} = 1.41$; $p < .05$). Finally, they had not seen any of the logos before ($M_{\text{logo-shield}} = 3.18$, $SD_{\text{logo-shield}} = 1.71$; $M_{\text{logo-circular}} = 2.98$, $SD_{\text{logo-circular}} = 1.63$; $p = .28$).

The significant differences between both logos practically disappeared. The only remaining ones were “I like the color scheme of this logo” ($M_{\text{logo-shield}} = 4.37$, $SD_{\text{logo-shield}} = 1.52$; $M_{\text{logo-circular}} = 4.80$, $SD_{\text{logo-circular}} = 1.36$; $p < .05$) and “I can imagine a professional soccer team displaying this logo” ($M_{\text{logo-shield}} = 5.11$, $SD_{\text{logo-shield}} = 1.33$; $M_{\text{logo-circular}} = 4.74$, $SD_{\text{logo-circular}} = 1.41$; $p < .05$). Although these two questions had significant differences, they were still higher than the scale

midpoint of 4 for the “color scheme” ($p_{\text{logo-shield}} < .01$, $p_{\text{logo-circular}} < .001$) and the “imagine a professional team” ($p_{\text{logo-shield}} < .001$, $p_{\text{logo-circular}} < .001$).

Table 3. Characteristics of both logos tested in study 1b.

	Logo type				Paired sample t-test	
	Logo 1 (Shield)		Logo 2 (Circular)			
	M	SD	M	SD	T	two-sided p
I like this logo	4.66	1.50	4.49	1.36	0.85	0.40
I like the shape of this logo	4.85	1.47	4.98	1.28	-0.66	0.51
I like the symbol at the center of this logo	4.78	1.54	4.60	1.61	0.84	0.41
I like the color scheme of this logo	4.37	1.52	4.80	1.36	-2.25*	0.03
This logo represents the team well	4.54	1.31	4.22	1.24	1.75	0.08
It is easy to identify to this logo	4.88	1.33	5.06	1.27	-1.11	0.27
This logo is classic	5.05	1.50	4.77	1.38	1.64	0.10
This logo is aesthetic	4.32	1.46	4.48	1.39	-0.85	0.40
This is an excellent logo	<u>4.12</u>	1.52	<u>4.05</u>	1.45	0.37	0.71
I have seen this logo before	3.18	1.71	2.98	1.63	1.08	0.28
This logo is credible	4.88	1.10	4.84	1.08	0.34	0.74
I can imagine a professional soccer team displaying this logo	5.11	1.33	4.74	1.41	2.11*	0.04
This logo conveys the values of the team	4.36	1.25	<u>4.04</u>	1.40	1.91	0.06
This logo is easy to recognize	5.08	1.18	5.04	1.22	0.29	0.78
This logo is simple	4.77	1.30	5.00	1.27	-1.38	0.17
This logo is easy to digest	5.07	1.28	4.94	1.34	0.81	0.42
This logo makes me feel good	<u>3.85</u>	1.53	<u>3.88</u>	1.47	-0.10	0.92
This logo is better than the average logo	<u>4.01</u>	1.54	<u>3.90</u>	1.55	0.53	0.59
This logo is soulless	3.39	1.52	3.43	1.55	-0.20	0.84
This logo has character	4.57	1.30	4.31	1.35	1.47	0.15
This logo has charm	<u>4.23</u>	1.42	4.36	1.29	-0.75	0.46

Means differ from the scale midpoint of 4 ($p < .05$) unless underlined.

Table 3: Characteristics of both logos tested in study 1b.

For study 2, the two logos tested in study 1b will be used for their respect of the main dimensions tested and the lowest significant differences in characteristics between the two of them.

3.4.3.3 Discussion of study 1b

Study 1b was done to reduce significant differences in the logos used for this research. This was important as it reduced to a minimum outside explanation (e.g. experimental confounds) not taken into account in the model presented. Both logos now have very little significant differences in terms of participants' perceptions and opinions of them. The only two remaining significant differences were in "I like the color scheme of this logo" and "I can imagine a professional soccer team displaying this logo". These differences should not influence the results as participants still had a positive perception of those two characteristics; they were well above the scale midpoint.

The logos are adequate for the study as participants like them, like the symbols used, find them credible and can imagine a professional team having them as their official logo. Participants also had not seen the logos before and thus the logos can represent a fictive brand safely.

3.4.4 Study 2

3.4.4.1 Study design and sample

Study 2 is a 3 (Identification: Low identification vs high identification vs control) x 3 (Rebranding type: Evolutionary logo rebranding vs revolutionary logo rebranding vs revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name change) between-subjects experiment. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the three possible manipulations: control group (Control), low identification (Low-ID) or high identification (High-ID). Participants were asked to imagine they were a fan of a fictive soccer team named Royals FC. In the low identification condition, the scenario the participants had to imagine was one of a fan who was not very engaged with the team and whose

fandom did not play a big part in his identity. On the contrary, in the high identification condition, the fan they had to imagine themselves as was very engaged with the team and his fandom played a huge part in his identity. In the third condition, the control group, the participants had no forced identification. In this condition, the scenario only specified they were a fan of the team shown in the study, there was no text specifying any sort of identification to the team (See appendix F for the complete identification scenarios). Then, they were shown a rebranding scenario. They learned through a news report that Royals FC went through a rebranding that could be defined as either “an evolutionary logo rebranding”, “a revolutionary logo rebranding” or “a revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name change”. They were exposed to the visual stimuli pretested in study 1b (Appendix G). Only the logo was changed in the first two scenarios, whereas the name was also changed in the revolutionary with a name change condition. In the first condition, the changes done to the logo were minor, whereas they were major in the second and third conditions. Afterwards, they answered sets of questions about their perception and opinion of the rebranding the fictive team they imagined they were a fan of went through.

The participants were recruited through the crowdsourcing platform Prolific. I applied two screening factors. Participants had to reside in either the United Kingdom, the United States or Canada. They also had to be fans of soccer by self-reporting that they regularly watch the sport. I included an attention check in the questionnaire by asking participants to answer “strongly agree” to a specific question. Participants who did not answer correctly were eliminated from the final sample. One participant was therefore removed, and remaining participants formed a sample of 499 respondents (76.8% UK; 73.9% male; $M_{age} = 41.49$, $SD = 13.79$).

3.4.4.2 Manipulation checks

The first manipulation was the identification condition. Participants answered questions about their identification in the fictive scenario to form an identification score (7 items, $M = 5.02$, $SD = 1.93$, $\alpha = .97$; Wann & Branscombe, 1990). The identification manipulation worked as anticipated. The participants had low identification in the Low-ID condition and high identification in the High-ID condition ($M_{\text{Low-ID}} = 2.82$, $SD_{\text{Low-ID}} = 1.25$; $M_{\text{High-ID}} = 6.68$, $SD_{\text{High-ID}} = .66$; $M_{\text{Control}} = 5.82$, $SD_{\text{Control}} = .79$; $p < .001$). I found no significant effect ($p > .10$) of the rebranding manipulation on the identification check. I found a significant effect ($p < .01$) of the interaction between manipulations on the identification check; however, the effect is very weak ($\eta^2 = .03$). Although the mean of the control group was significantly lower than the one of the high identification group ($p < .001$), it is still relatively high. This could be explained by the fact that participant self-reported that they regularly watch the sport, meaning they could already have a higher-than-average identification. When asked to imagine they were a fan of a team, these fans probably referred to their level of identification with their own team. The second manipulation was the rebranding condition. The participants reported that the logos were more significantly changed in the Revolutionary conditions than the Evolutionary condition ($M_{\text{evolutionary}} = 2.94$ vs. $M_{\text{revolutionary}} = 6.43$ vs $M_{\text{revolutionary} + \text{name}} = 6.71$; $F(2, 496) = 727.78$, $p < .001$) and understood the team changed its name in the revolutionary with name condition ($M_{\text{evolutionary}} = 1.85$ vs. $M_{\text{revolutionary}} = 2.61$ vs $M_{\text{revolutionary} + \text{name}} = 6.49$; $F(2, 496) = 589.29$, $p < .001$). The full manipulation checks results can be seen in Appendix H. I found a significant effect of the identification manipulation ($p < .001$) on the rebranding check; however, the effect is very weak ($\eta^2 = .05$). The interaction between manipulations had no significant effect ($p > .10$) on the rebranding manipulation check.

My dependent variables were desire for revenge¹ (3 items, M = 2.52, SD = 1.53, $\alpha=.91$; adapted from Grégoire, Tripp and Legoux, 2009), Loyalty (5 items, M = 4.23, SD = 1.68, $\alpha=.94$; Tachis & Tzetzis, 2015), Complaining (3 items, M = 3.99, SD = 1.85, $\alpha=.95$; Wakefield & Wann, 2006), Verbal aggression (3 items, M = 3.46, SD = 1.93, $\alpha=.94$; Rocca & Vogl-Bauer, 1999) and Physical aggression (3 items, M = 1.40, SD = .85, $\alpha=.94$; Rocca & Vogl-Bauer, 1999). The mediator in the study was perceived betrayal (3 items, M = 3.53, SD = 1.99, $\alpha=.98$; Grégoire & Fisher, 2008). I also controlled for age, gender and location. All the items had a loading on their construct superior to .50, which is evidence of convergent validity. All cross-loadings were also small, demonstrating discriminant validity. All variables had a Cronbach's Alpha superior to .90, making them all reliable.

3.4.4.3 Results for study 2

Table IV shows the overall results of study 2. Each line presents one of the dependent variables studied. The means of those variables is shown under every of the nine possible combinations of rebranding type and identification level. The last three columns of the table show the significance level of the main effect of the rebranding type, the main effect of identification, and the interaction effect on those same variables.

¹ One item of the desire for revenge scale was changed between study 1a and study 2. If I replicate my analysis with the two constant items, the results are the same.

Table 4. Means of the model variables as function of rebranding and identification conditions, and significance level of the main and interaction effects.

	Evolutionary			Revolutionary			Revolutionary w/ name			Significance (<i>p value</i>)		
	Low-ID	Cntrl	High-ID	Low-ID	Cntrl	High-ID	Low-ID	Cntrl	High-ID	Main effect of rebranding type	Main effect of identification	Interaction effect
Betrayal	1.89	2.55	3.35	2.50	3.83	4.15	2.76	5.27	5.41	<.001	<.001	<.001
Desire for revenge	1.75	1.88	2.44	1.82	2.55	2.99	2.18	3.42	3.63	<.001	<.001	0.04
Loyalty	3.22	4.89	6.03	2.77	5.00	5.44	2.74	4.05	4.70	<.001	<.001	0.03
Complaining	2.79	3.97	4.21	2.79	4.45	4.53	2.85	5.31	5.10	<.001	<.001	0.04
Verbal aggression	2.24	3.01	4.61	2.21	3.96	4.82	2.20	3.63	4.92	0.07	<.001	0.14
Physical aggression	1.26	1.22	1.67	1.13	1.43	1.64	1.18	1.37	1.79	0.70	<.001	0.56
Retaliatory behaviors	0.94	1.41	1.18	1.16	1.85	2.11	1.18	2.77	2.69	<.001	<.001	.001

Table 4: Means of the model variables as function of rebranding and identification conditions, and significant level of the main and interaction effects.

Test of H1. Main effect of rebranding type on dependent variables. In the following section, I test the main effect of the rebranding type on all dependent variables (desire for revenge, complaining intentions, verbal aggression, physical aggression, loyalty and retaliatory behaviors) with an analysis of covariance. Afterwards, I tested the significant difference between each pair of rebranding conditions with independent sample t-tests.

Test of H1a. Desire for revenge. Results of an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) found a significant main effect of rebranding category ($F = 25.46 (2, 476), p <.001, \eta^2 = .10$) and a significant main effect of identification level ($F = 29.44 (2, 476), p <.001, \eta^2 = .11$) on desire for revenge. I also found a significant interaction effect between rebranding category and identification level on desire for revenge ($F = 2.60 (4, 476), p <.05, \eta^2 = .02$). For the control variables, gender had a significant effect ($F = 12.54 (1, 476), p <.001, \eta^2 = .03$) and location had a marginally significant effect ($F = 3.64 (1, 476), p = .06, \eta^2 = .01$). The main effect on desire for revenge of identification and its interaction effect with rebranding type are described in the web appendix I.

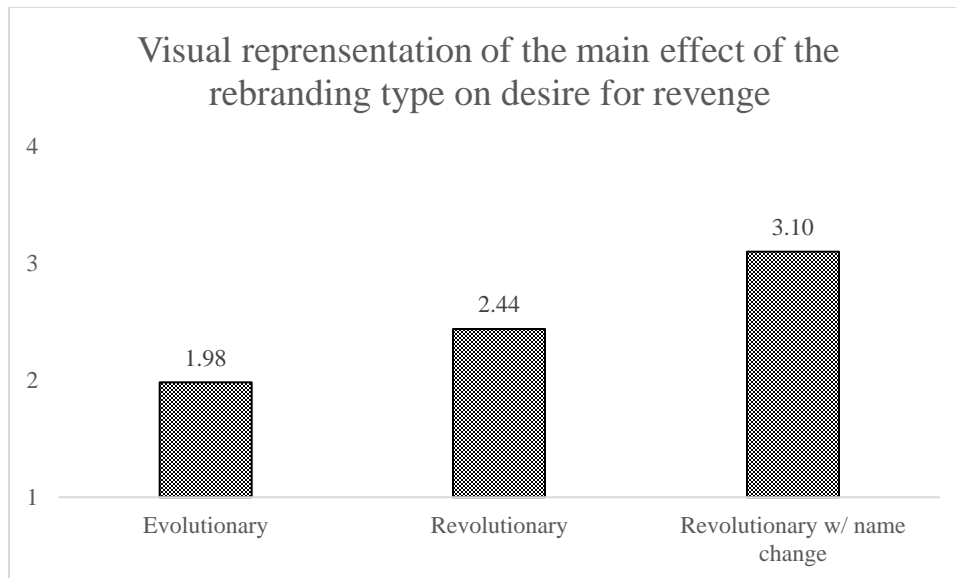


Figure 6: Visual representation of the main effect of rebranding type on desire for revenge.

Following a revolutionary logo rebranding, fans feel stronger desire for revenge than when they go through an evolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{revolutionary}} = 2.44$ vs $M_{\text{evolutionary}} = 1.98$, $t = -3.14$, $p < .001$). Following a revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name change, fans feel stronger desire for revenge than when they go through an evolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{revolutionary w/ name}} = 3.10$ vs $M_{\text{evolutionary}} = 1.98$, $t = -7.01$, $p < .001$). Finally, following a revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name change, fans feel stronger desire for revenge than when the club does a revolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{revolutionary w/ name}} = 3.10$ vs $M_{\text{revolutionary}} = 2.44$, $t = -3.80$, $p < .001$). Overall, H1a is supported.

Test of H1b. Complaining intentions. I replicated the same ANCOVA with complaining intentions as the dependent variable. I found a significant main effect of rebranding type ($F = 10.77$ (2, 476), $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .04$) and a significant main effect of identification level ($F = 71.86$ (2, 476), $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .23$) on complaining intentions. I also found a significant interaction effect between rebranding category and identification level on complain intention ($F = 2.50$ (4, 476), $p = .04$, $\eta^2 = .02$). For

the control variables, gender ($F = 15.48 (1, 476), p < .001, \eta^2 = .03$) was significant and age was marginally significant ($F = 2.88 (1, 476), p = .09, \eta^2 = .01$). The main effect on complaining of identification and its interaction effect with rebranding type are described in the web appendix J.

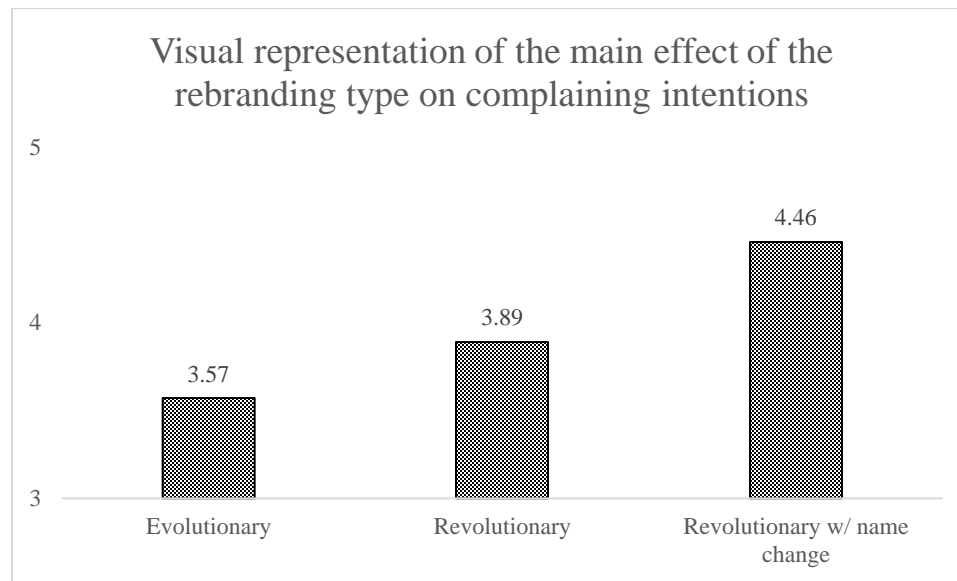


Figure 7: Visual representation of the main effect of rebranding type on complaining intentions.

A revolutionary logo rebranding leads to greater complaining intentions than an evolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{Revolutionary}} = 3.89$ vs $M_{\text{Evolutionary}} = 3.57, t = -1.59, p = .06$). A revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change leads to greater complaining intentions than an evolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{Revolutionary w/ name}} = 4.46$ vs $M_{\text{Evolutionary}} = 3.57, t = -4.48, p < .001$). A revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change leads to greater complaining intentions than a revolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{Revolutionary w/ name}} = 4.46$ vs $M_{\text{Revolutionary}} = 3.89, t = -2.90, p = .002$). Overall, H1b is supported.

Test of H1c. Verbal aggression. I replicated the same ANCOVA with verbal aggression as the dependent variable. I found a marginally significant main effect of the rebranding category on verbal aggression ($F = 2.75 (2, 476), p = .065, \eta^2 = .01$) and a significant main effect of identification level on verbal aggression ($F = 109.08 (2, 476), p < .001, \eta^2 = .31$). The interaction effect between rebranding type and identification level on verbal aggression was not significant ($F = 1.72 (4, 476), p = .14, \eta^2 = .01$). As such, it will be tested further in the moderated mediation analysis with PROCESS. For the control variables, gender ($F = 13.42 (1, 476), p < .001, \eta^2 = .03$) and location ($F = 5.45 (1, 476), p = .02, \eta^2 = .01$) had a significant effect. The main effect on verbal aggression of identification and its interaction effect with rebranding type are described in the web appendix K.

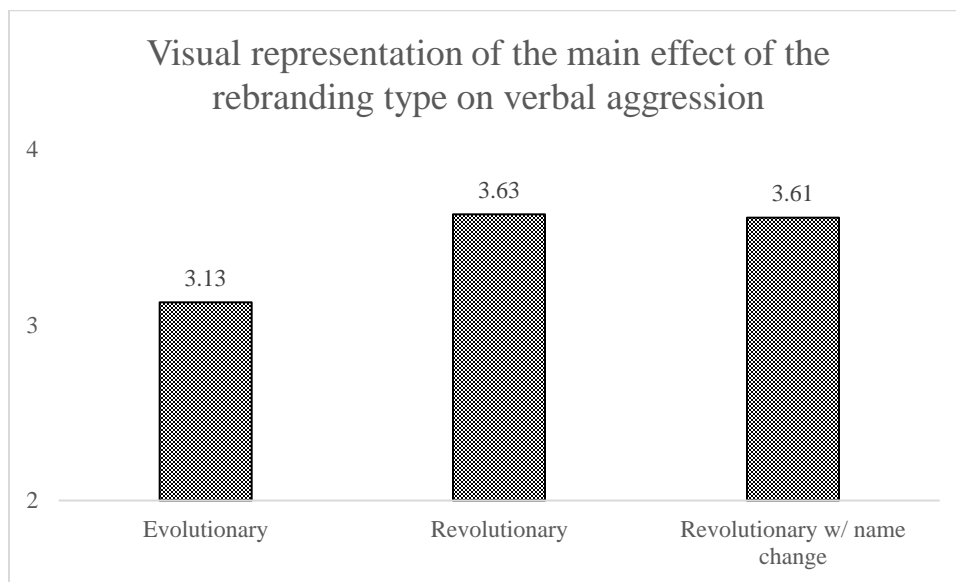


Figure 8: Visual representation of the main effect of rebranding type on verbal aggression.

Following a revolutionary logo rebranding, fans show more verbal aggression than following an evolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{Revolutionary}} = 3.63$ vs $M_{\text{Evolutionary}} = 3.13, t = -2.29, p = .01$). Following a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change, fans show more verbal aggression

than following an evolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{Revolutionary w/ name}} = 3.61$ vs $M_{\text{Evolutionary}} = 3.13$, $t = -2.34$, $p = .01$). There is no significant difference in verbal aggression between a revolutionary logo rebranding and a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change ($M_{\text{Revolutionary}} = 3.63$ vs $M_{\text{Revolutionary w/ name}} = 3.61$, $p = .48$). Overall, H1c is partially supported.

Test of H1d. Physical aggression. I replicated the same ANCOVA with physical aggression as the dependent variable. I found no significant main effect of the rebranding type on physical aggression ($F = .35$ (2, 476), $p = .70$, $\eta^2 = .00$). However, I found a significant main effect of identification level on physical aggression ($F = 17.57$ (2, 476), $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .07$). The main effect of identification on physical aggression is described in the web appendix L. These results do not support H1d.

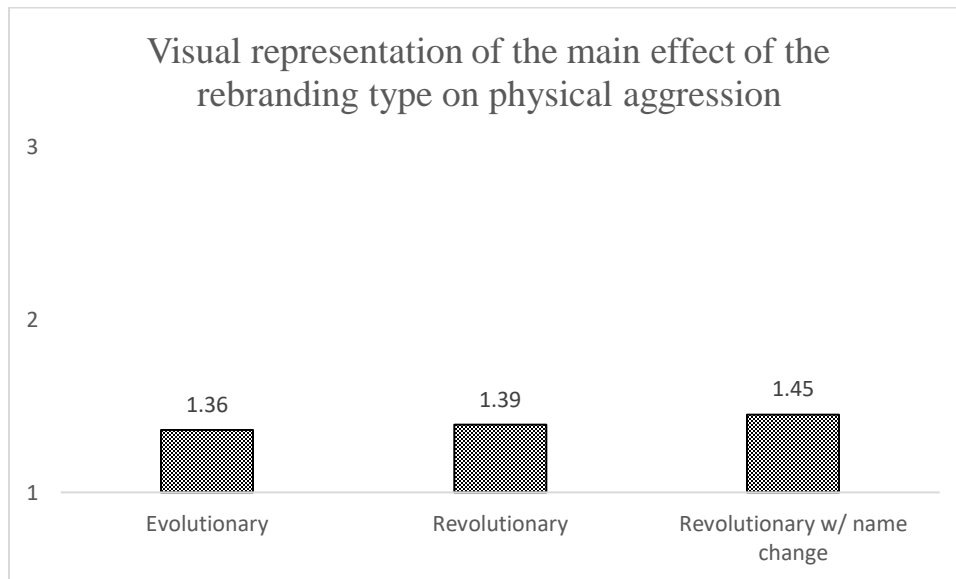


Figure 9: Visual representation of the main effect of rebranding type on physical aggression.

Test of H1e. Loyalty. I replicated the same ANCOVA with loyalty to the team as the dependent variable. I found a significant main effect of rebranding category ($F = 20.11 (2, 476), p < .001, \eta^2 = .08$) and a significant main effect of identification level ($F = 159.80 (2, 476), p < .001, \eta^2 = .40$) on loyalty. I also found a significant interaction effect between rebranding category and identification level on loyalty ($F = 2.73 (4, 476), p = .03, \eta^2 = .02$). For the control variables, only gender was significant ($F = 5.53 (1, 476), p = .02, \eta^2 = .01$). The main effect on loyalty of identification and its interaction effect with rebranding type are described in the web appendix M.

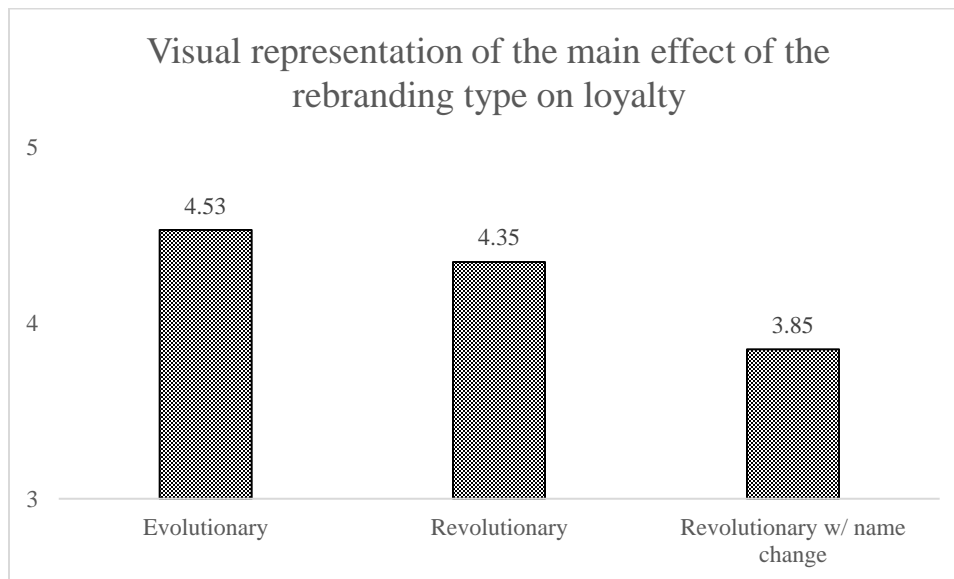


Figure 10: Visual representation of the main effect of rebranding type on loyalty.

There is no significant difference in loyalty for fans after a revolutionary logo rebranding or an evolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{Revolutionary}} 4.35 = \text{vs } M_{\text{Evolutionary}} = 4.53, p = .18$). However, following a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change, fans have less loyalty towards the team than when the club goes through an evolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{Revolutionary w/ name}} = 3.85$ vs $M_{\text{Evolutionary}} = 4.53, t = 3.80, p < .001$). Following a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name

change, fans have a less loyalty than following a revolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{Revolutionary w/ name}} = 3.85$ vs $M_{\text{Revolutionary}} = 4.35$, $t = 2.82$, $p < .001$). Overall, H1e is partially supported.

Test of H1f. Retaliatory behaviors. I also tested the effect of the rebranding type on multiple other retaliatory behaviors. Respondents answered with “yes” or “no” to a series of behavioral questions following the rebrandings. To further test these results, I combined five of the behaviors into one variable representing those behaviors ($M = 1.71$, $SD = 1.42$). The five questions were “*I will boycott team merchandise*”, “*I will display the old logo instead of the new one*”, “*I will watch more games illegally through piracy*”, “*I will follow another team more closely than I used to*” and “*I will support protests against the rebranding*”. With 0 representing “no” and 1 representing “yes”, the minimum score on this index variable was 0 and the maximum was 5. The percentages for each question can be seen in appendix N. I replicated the same ANCOVA with the index variable for retaliatory behaviors as the dependent variable. I found a significant main effect of rebranding category ($F = 27.47$ (2, 476), $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .10$) and a significant main effect of identification level ($F = 28.99$ (2, 476), $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .11$) on the index variable of the retaliatory behaviors. I also found a significant interaction effect between rebranding category and identification level on retaliatory behaviors ($F = 4.60$ (2, 476), $p = .001$, $\eta^2 = .04$). For the control variables, only gender had a significant effect ($F = 5.22$ (2, 476), $p = .02$, $\eta^2 = .01$).

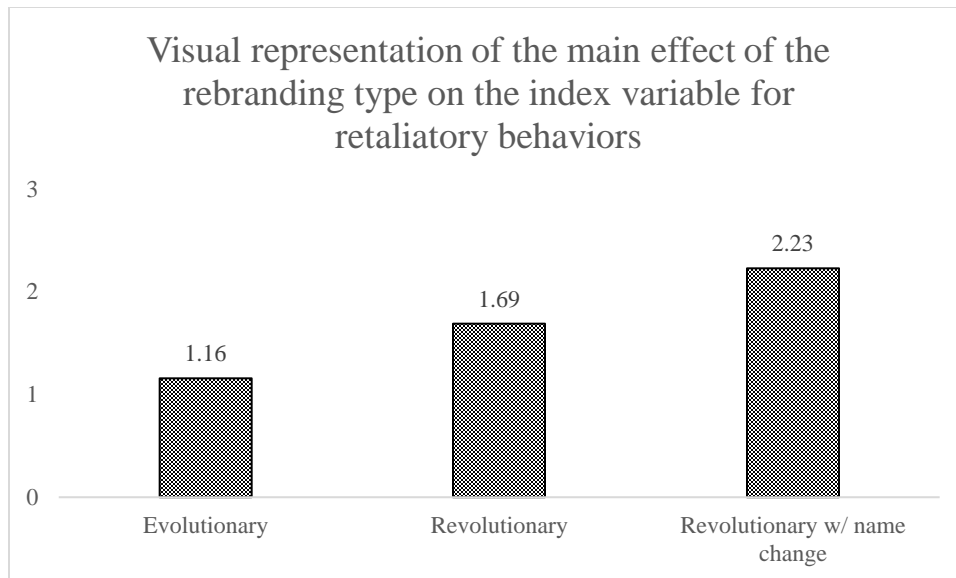


Figure 11: Visual representation of the main effect of rebranding type on the index variable for retaliatory behaviors.

A revolutionary logo rebranding leads to greater retaliatory behaviors from fans than an evolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{revolutionary}} = 1.16$ vs $M_{\text{evolutionary}} = 1.69$, $t = -3.79$, $p < .001$). A revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name change leads to greater retaliatory behaviors from fans than an evolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{revolutionary w/ name}} = 2.23$ vs $M_{\text{evolutionary}} = 1.16$, $t = -7.37$, $p < .001$). Finally, a revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name change, leads to greater retaliatory behaviors from fans than a revolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{revolutionary w/ name}} = 2.23$ vs $M_{\text{revolutionary}} = 1.69$, $t = -3.48$, $p < .001$). Overall, H1f is supported.

Test of H2. Mediation through betrayal. In this section, I tested the relationship between the rebranding type and fan behaviors, mediated by betrayal. To test the mediation model in H2, I used the PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2017; Model 4; 5,000 resamples). For every possible comparison of rebranding types, I show the main effect of the rebranding on betrayal. Then, for this same comparison, I show the effect of betrayal on the dependent variables (desire for revenge,

complaining, verbal aggression, physical aggression, loyalty and retaliatory behaviors). Finally, I show the indirect effect of the rebranding type on those dependent variables.

When comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding to an evolutionary logo rebranding, my results indicate that the main effect on betrayal of the rebranding type was significant (Coefficient = .90, $p < .001$). The effect of betrayal was also significant on desire for revenge (Coefficient = .57, $p < .001$), complaining intentions (Coefficient = .59, $p < .001$), verbal aggression (Coefficient = .47, $p < .001$), physical aggression (Coefficient = .11, $p < .001$), loyalty (Coefficient = .26, $p < .001$) and retaliatory behaviors (Coefficient = .46, $p < .001$). In this comparison, the total indirect effect of the evolutionary logo rebranding vs revolutionary logo rebranding is significant on desire for revenge (Coefficient = .51, CI: (.29, .77)), complaining intentions (Coefficient = .52, CI: (.29, .76)), verbal aggression (Coefficient = .42, CI: (.21, .66)), physical aggression (Coefficient = .10, CI: (.04, .17)), loyalty (Coefficient = .24, CI: (.11, .39)) and retaliatory behaviors (Coefficient = .41, CI: (.23, .61)).

Figure 12. Mediation results when comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding to an evolutionary logo rebranding

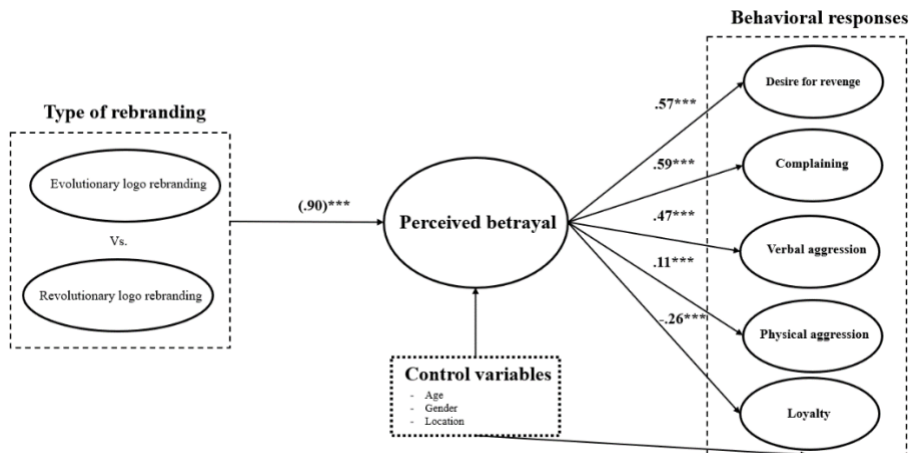


Figure 12: Mediation results when comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding to an evolutionary logo rebranding.

When comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change to an evolutionary logo rebranding, my results indicate that the main effect on betrayal of the rebranding type was significant (Coefficient = 1.99, $p < .001$). The effect of betrayal was also significant on desire for revenge (Coefficient = .59, $p < .001$), complaining intentions (Coefficient = .64, $p < .001$), verbal aggression (Coefficient = .53, $p < .001$), physical aggression (Coefficient = .13, $p < .001$), loyalty (Coefficient = .21, $p < .001$) and retaliatory behaviors (Coefficient = .51, $p < .001$). In this comparison, the total indirect effect of the evolutionary logo rebranding vs revolutionary logo rebranding is significant on desire for revenge (Coefficient = 1.18, CI: (.93, 1.45)), complaining intentions (Coefficient = 1.28, CI: (.99, 1.58)), verbal aggression (Coefficient = 1.06, CI: (.78, 1.36)), physical aggression (Coefficient = .26, CI: (.15, .40)), loyalty (Coefficient = .41, CI: (.21, .63)) and retaliatory behaviors (Coefficient = 1.02, CI: (.80, 1.26)).

Figure 13. Mediation results when comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change to an evolutionary logo rebranding

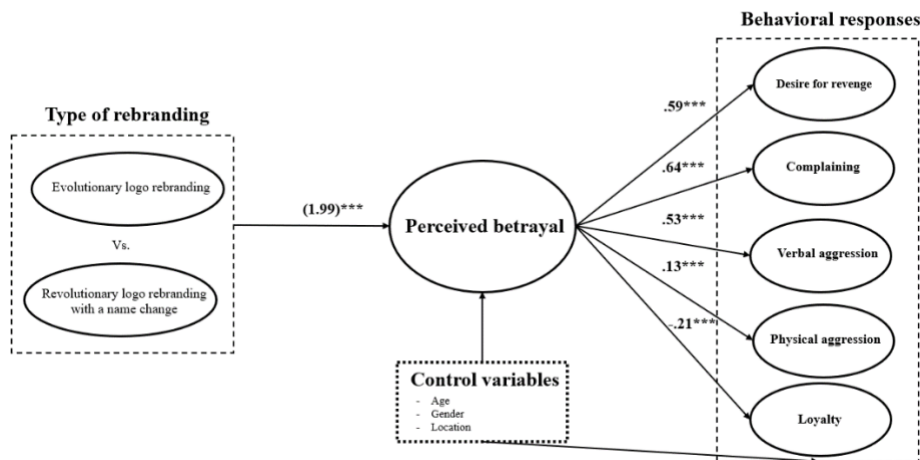


Figure 13: Mediation results when comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change to an evolutionary logo rebranding.

When comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change to a revolutionary logo rebranding, my results indicate that the main effect on betrayal of the rebranding type was significant (Coefficient = 1.08, $p < .001$). The effect of betrayal was also significant on desire for revenge (Coefficient = .58, $p < .001$), complaining (Coefficient = .56, $p < .001$), verbal aggression (Coefficient = .51, $p < .001$), physical aggression (Coefficient = .12, $p < .001$), loyalty (Coefficient = .18, $p < .001$) and retaliatory behaviors (Coefficient = .50, $p < .001$). In this comparison, the total indirect effect of the evolutionary logo rebranding vs revolutionary logo rebranding is significant on desire for revenge (Coefficient = .63, CI: (.36, .89)), complaining (Coefficient = .60, CI: (.35, .87)), verbal aggression (Coefficient = .55, CI: (.32, .81)), physical aggression (Coefficient = .13, CI: (.06, .21)), loyalty (Coefficient = .20, CI: (.08, .33)) and retaliatory behaviors (Coefficient = .54, CI: (.33, .78)). Overall, these results support H2a, H2b, H2c, H2d, H2e and H2f.

Figure 14. Mediation results when comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change to a revolutionary logo rebranding

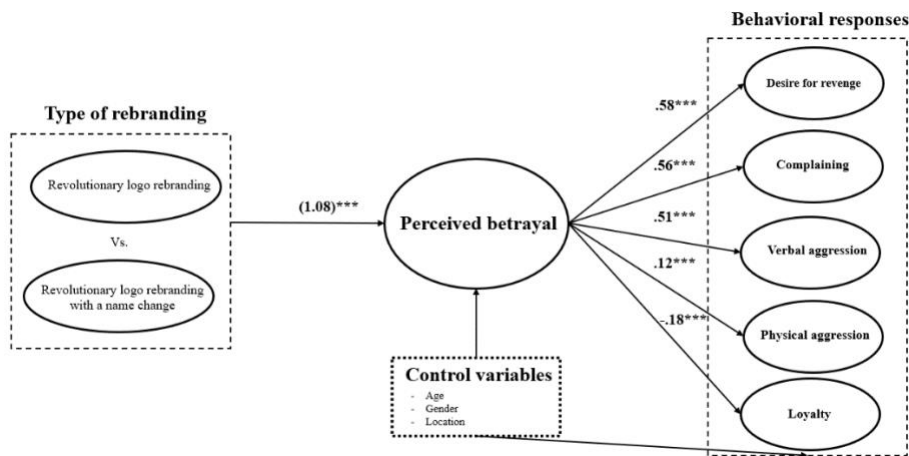


Figure 14: Mediation results when comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change to a revolutionary logo rebranding.

Test of H3. Interaction of rebranding type and fan identification to predict betrayal. In this section, I test the main effect of rebranding type and the interaction effect of rebranding type and fan identification on betrayal using an ANCOVA. Then, I test the significant differences of the means of betrayal in every condition using independent sample t-tests. Finally, to test the strength of the difference in the different comparison scenarios and contrast those differences, I used the effect sizes.

Results of an ANCOVA found a significant main effect of rebranding type on betrayal ($F = 57.79$ (2, 476), $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .20$) and a significant main effect of identification level on betrayal ($F = 71.37$ (2, 476), $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .23$). I found a significant interaction effect between identification level and rebranding type to predict betrayal ($F = 5.03$ (4, 476), $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .04$). Location was the only control variable with significant effect ($F = 4.80$ (1, 476), $p = .03$, $\eta^2 = .01$).

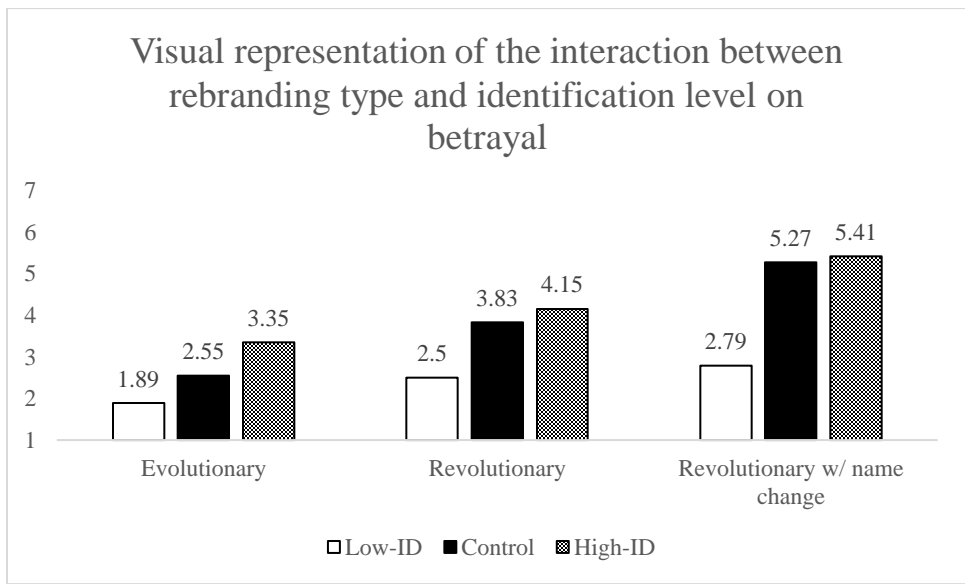


Figure 15: Visual representation of the interaction between rebranding type and identification level on betrayal.

Following a revolutionary logo rebranding, fans feel stronger betrayal by the team than following an evolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{Revolutionary}} = 3.46$ vs $M_{\text{evolutionary}} = 2.50$, $t = -5.13$, $p < .001$). Following a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change, fans feel stronger betrayal than following an evolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{Revolutionary w/ name}} = 4.53$ vs $M_{\text{evolutionary}} = 2.50$, $t = -10.55$, $p < .001$). Following a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change, fans feel stronger betrayal than following a revolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{Revolutionary w/ name}} = 4.53$ vs $M_{\text{Revolutionary}} = 3.46$, $t = -5.01$, $p < .001$)

Fans in the control condition feel stronger betrayal following a rebranding than fans with low identification ($M_{\text{Control}} = 3.94$ vs $M_{\text{Low}} = 2.37$, $t = 8.39$, $p < .001$). Fans who have high identification feel stronger betrayal following a rebranding than ones who have low identification ($M_{\text{High}} = 4.42$ vs $M_{\text{Low}} = 2.37$, $t = -11.28$, $p < .001$). Fans who have high identification feel stronger betrayal following a rebranding than fans in the control condition ($M_{\text{High}} = 4.42$ vs $M_{\text{Control}} = 3.94$, $t = -2.17$, $p = .02$).

When fans have low identification, they feel stronger betrayal following a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change than an evolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{Revolutionary w/ name}} = 2.79$ vs $M_{\text{Evolutionary}} = 1.89$, $t = -3.86$, $p < .001$). They also feel stronger betrayal following a revolutionary logo rebranding rather than an evolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{Revolutionary}} = 2.5$ vs $M_{\text{Evolutionary}} = 1.89$, $t = -2.63$, $p = .005$). Although, there is a difference between these conditions, it is a moderate one (Effect size (ES) $_{\text{Revolutionary vs evolutionary}} = -.48$, 95% CI: (-.74, -.12); ES $_{\text{Revolutionary w/ name vs evolutionary}} = -.70$, 95% CI: (-1.07, -.33). For fans with low identification, there is no significant difference in

perceived betrayal between a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change and a revolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{Revolutionary w/ name}} = 2.79$ vs $M_{\text{Revolutionary}} = 2.5$, $t = -.98$, $p > .10$).

When fans have high identification, they feel stronger betrayal following a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change than following an evolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{Revolutionary w/ name}} = 5.41$ vs $M_{\text{Evolutionary}} = 3.35$, $t = -6.26$, $p < .001$). They also feel stronger betrayal following a revolutionary logo rebranding than an evolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{Revolutionary}} = 4.15$ vs $M_{\text{Evolutionary}} = 3.35$, $t = -3.88$, $p < .001$). The perceived betrayal is also stronger after a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change rather than a revolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{Revolutionary w/ name}} = 5.41$ vs $M_{\text{Revolutionary}} = 4.15$, $t = -3.88$, $p < .001$). In this identification condition, the change is more contrasted than with low identification. The difference between a revolutionary logo rebranding and an evolutionary logo rebranding is moderate ($ES_{\text{Revolutionary vs Evolutionary}} = -.48$, 95% CI: $(-.88, -.07)$), while it is large between a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change and a revolutionary logo rebranding ($ES_{\text{Revolutionary w/ name vs revolutionary}} = -.73$, 95% CI: $(-1.11, -.35)$) and large, close to very large, between the two extremes ($ES_{\text{Revolutionary w/ name vs evolutionary}} = -1.24$, 95% CI: $(-1.66, -.81)$).

To summarize, the difference in betrayal, for fans with high (vs low) identification is moderate (vs moderate) between a revolutionary logo rebranding and an evolutionary logo rebranding, while it is moderate (vs no difference) between a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change and a revolutionary logo rebranding. Consequently, the difference in betrayal is large, close to very large,

(vs moderate) between a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change and an evolutionary logo rebranding.

For fans in the control condition, they feel stronger betrayal in the revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change than following an evolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{Revolutionary w/ name}} = 5.27$ vs $M_{\text{Evolutionary}} = 2.55$, $t = -9.32$, $p < .001$). They also feel stronger betrayal following a revolutionary logo rebranding than an evolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{Revolutionary}} = 3.83$ vs $M_{\text{Evolutionary}} = 2.55$, $t = -3.75$, $p < .001$). A revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change also leads to stronger betrayal than a revolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{Revolutionary w/ name}} = 5.00$ vs $M_{\text{Revolutionary}} = 3.83$, $t = -4.36$, $p < .001$). In this identification condition, the change is contrasted. The difference between a revolutionary logo rebranding and an evolutionary logo rebranding is moderate ($ES_{\text{Revolutionary vs Evolutionary}} = -.74$, 95% CI: (-1.15, -.34)), while it is large between a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change and a revolutionary logo rebranding ($ES_{\text{Revolutionary w/ name vs revolutionary}} = -.84$, 95% CI: (-1.24, -.45)) and very large between the two extremes ($ES_{\text{Revolutionary w/ name vs evolutionary}} = -1.74$, 95% CI: (-2.17, -1.31)). Overall, these results support H3.

Test of H4. In this section, I test the effect of fan identification on the indirect effect between rebranding type and the fan behaviors when mediated by betrayal. To formally test the moderated mediation model of H4, I used PROCESS (Hayes, 2017; Model 7; 5,000 resamples). For every dependent variable in the conceptual model, I test the effect, for fans with high and low identification, of each comparison of rebranding types. I also compare the strength of the indirect effect between fans with high and low identification.

Test of H4a. Desire for revenge. In the condition “revolutionary logo rebranding vs. evolutionary logo rebranding”, when comparing Low-ID to High-ID fans, my results show that the index of moderated mediation is not significant (Coefficient = .11, 95% confidence interval (CI): (-.36, .61)). However, there is a significant indirect effect on desire for revenge, mediated through betrayal, for both fans with low (coefficient = .33, 95% CI: (.06, .62)) and high identification (coefficient = .44, 95% CI: (.04, .86)). In this same comparison of rebranding type, when comparing Low-ID fans to the control condition, my results show that the index of moderated mediation is not significant (coefficient = -.38, 95% CI: (-.86, .09)). However, there is a significant indirect effect on desire for revenge, mediated through betrayal, for both fans with Low-ID (coefficient = .29, 95% CI: (.02, .58)) and in the control condition (coefficient = .67, 95% CI: (.27, 1.11)).

In the condition “revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name change vs evolutionary logo rebranding”, when comparing Low-ID to High-ID fans, my results show that the index of moderated mediation is significant (Coefficient = .68, 95% confidence interval (CI): (.20, 1.17)). Consequently, I find that the indirect effect of the rebranding type through betrayal on desire for revenge is stronger when fan identification is high (coefficient = 1.21, 95% CI: (.81, 1.65)) compared to low (coefficient = .53, 95% CI: (.25, .83)). In this same comparison of rebranding type, when comparing Low-ID fans to the control condition, my results show that the index of moderated mediation is significant (coefficient = -1.05, 95% CI: (-1.54, -.59)). Consequently, I find that the indirect effect of the rebranding type through betrayal on desire for revenge is stronger for fans in the control condition (coefficient = 1.57, 95% CI: (1.17, 2.00)) compared to Low-ID fans (coefficient = .52, 95% CI: (.23, .82)).

In the condition “revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name change vs revolutionary logo rebranding”, when comparing High-ID fans to Low-ID fans, my results show that the index of moderated mediation is significant (Coefficient = .54, 95% confidence interval (CI): (.02, 1.06)). Consequently, I find that the indirect effect of the rebranding type through betrayal on desire for revenge is stronger when fan identification is high (coefficient = .71, 95% CI: (.34, 1.11)) compared to low (coefficient = .18, 95% CI: (-.16, .53)). For fans with low identification, however, there appears to be no significant indirect effect on desire for revenge through betrayal (coefficient = .18, 95% CI: (-.16, .53)) between a revolutionary and a revolutionary with a name change rebranding. In this same rebranding type comparison, when comparing Low-ID fans to the ones in the control condition, my results show that the index of moderated mediation is significant (coefficient = -.59, 95% CI: (-1.12, -.07)). Consequently, I find that the indirect effect of the rebranding type through betrayal on desire for revenge is stronger for fans in the control condition (coefficient = .78, 95% CI: (.39, 1.20)) than fans with low identification (coefficient = .19, 95% CI: (-.12, .53)). Overall, these results support H4a.

Table 5. Moderated mediations results for desire for revenge between fans with Low-ID and High-ID

	Desire for revenge		
	Effect	95% CI	
		LL	UL
<i>Evolutionary vs Revolutionary</i>			
Low identification	0.33	0.06	0.62
High identification	0.44	0.04	0.86
Coefficient of moderated mediation	0.11	-0.36	0.61
<i>Evolutionary vs Revolutionary w/ name</i>			
Low identification	0.53	0.25	0.83
High identification	1.21	0.81	1.65
Coefficient of moderated mediation	0.68	0.20	1.17
<i>Revolutionary vs Revolutionary w/ name</i>			
Low identification	0.18	-0.16	0.53
High identification	0.71	0.34	1.11

Coefficient of moderated mediation	0.54	0.02	1.06
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Table 5: Moderated mediations results for desire for revenge between fans with Low-ID and High-ID.

Table 6. Moderated mediations results for desire for revenge between fans in the control or Low-ID condition

		Desire for revenge		
		Effect	95% CI	
			LL	UL
<i>Evolutionary vs Revolutionary</i>				
	Control	0.67	0.27	1.11
	Low identification	0.29	0.02	0.58
	Coefficient of moderated mediation	-0.38	-0.86	0.09
<i>Evolutionary vs Revolutionary w/ name</i>				
	Control	1.57	1.17	2.00
	Low identification	0.52	0.23	0.82
	Coefficient of moderated mediation	-1.05	-1.54	-0.59
<i>Revolutionary vs Revolutionary w/ name</i>				
	Control	0.78	0.39	1.20
	Low identification	0.19	-0.12	0.53
	Coefficient of moderated mediation	-0.59	-1.12	-0.07

Table 6: Moderated mediations results for desire for revenge between fans with Low-ID and in the control condition.

Test of H4b. Complaining intentions. In the condition “revolutionary logo rebranding vs. evolutionary logo rebranding”, when comparing High-ID to Low-ID fans, my results show that the index of moderated mediation is not significant (Coefficient = .11, 95% CI: (-.38, .60)). However, between an evolutionary and a revolutionary logo rebranding, there is a significant indirect effect on complaining intentions through betrayal for fans with both low (coefficient = .35, 95% CI: (.06, .64)) and high (coefficient = .46, 95% CI: (.05, .88)) identification. In this same rebranding type comparison, when comparing Low-ID fans to the control condition, my results show that the index of moderated mediation is not significant (coefficient = -.42, 95% CI: (-.98, .08)). However, between an evolutionary and a revolutionary rebranding, there is a significant

indirect effect on complaining through betrayal for both fans with Low-ID (coefficient = .31, 95% CI: (.02, .61)) and fans in the control condition (coefficient = .73, 95% CI: (.29, 1.22)).

In the condition “revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name change vs. evolutionary logo rebranding”, when comparing High-ID to Low-ID fans, my results show that the index of moderated mediation is significant (Coefficient = .76, 95% confidence interval (CI): (.22, 1.29)). Consequently, I find that the indirect effect of the rebranding type through betrayal on complaining intentions is stronger when fan identification is high (coefficient = 1.35, 95% CI: (.90, 1.83)) compared to low (coefficient = .60, 95% CI: (.28, .95)). In this same rebranding type comparison, when comparing Low-ID fans to the control condition, my results show that the index of moderated mediation is significant (coefficient = -1.20, 95% CI: (-1.76, -.67)). Consequently, I find that the indirect effect of the rebranding type through betrayal on complaining is stronger for fans in the control condition (coefficient = 1.79, 95% CI: (1.33, 2.27)) compared to Low-ID fans (coefficient = .59, 95% CI: (.26, .94)).

In the condition “revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name change vs revolutionary logo rebranding”, when comparing High-ID to Low-ID fans, my results show that the index of moderated mediation is significant (Coefficient = .50, 95% confidence interval (CI): (.04, .99)). Consequently, I find that the indirect effect of the rebranding type through betrayal on complaining is stronger when fan identification is high (coefficient = .67, 95% CI: (.31, 1.06)) compared to low (coefficient = .17, 95% CI: (-.14, .50)). For fans with low identification, however, there appears to be no significant indirect effect on complaining through betrayal (coefficient = .17, 95% CI: (-.14,

.50)) between a revolutionary and a revolutionary with a name change rebranding. In this same rebranding type comparison, when comparing Low-ID fans to the control condition, my results show that the index of moderated mediation is significant (coefficient = -.66, 95% CI: (-1.23, -.10)). Consequently, I find that the indirect effect of the rebranding type through betrayal on complaining is stronger for fans in the control condition (coefficient = .87, 95% CI: (.45, 1.34)) compared to Low-ID fans (coefficient = .21, 95% CI: (-.15, .60)). Overall, these results support H4b.

Table 7. Moderated mediations results for complaining between fans with Low-ID or High-ID

		Complaining		
		Effect	95% CI	
			LL	UL
<i>Evolutionary vs Revolutionary</i>				
	Low identification	0.35	0.06	0.64
	High identification	0.46	0.05	0.88
	Coefficient of moderated mediation	0.11	-0.38	0.60
<i>Evolutionary vs Revolutionary w/ name</i>				
	Low identification	0.60	0.28	0.95
	High identification	1.35	0.90	1.83
	Coefficient of moderated mediation	0.76	0.22	1.29
<i>Revolutionary vs Revolutionary w/ name</i>				
	Low identification	0.17	-0.14	0.50
	High identification	0.67	0.31	1.06
	Coefficient of moderated mediation	0.50	0.01	0.99

Table 7: Moderated mediations results for complaining between fans with Low-ID and High-ID.

Table 8. Moderated mediations results for complaining between fans in the control or Low-ID condition

		Complaining		
		Effect	95% CI	
			LL	UL
<i>Evolutionary vs Revolutionary</i>				
	Control	0.73	0.29	1.22
	Low identification	0.31	0.02	0.61
	Coefficient of moderated mediation	-0.42	-0.98	0.08
<i>Evolutionary vs Revolutionary w/ name</i>				
	Control	1.79	1.33	2.27

	Low identification	0.59	0.26	0.94
	Coefficient of moderated mediation	-1.20	-1.76	-0.67
<hr/>				
<i>Revolutionary vs Revolutionary w/ name</i>				
	Control	0.87	0.45	1.34
	Low identification	0.21	-0.15	0.60
	Coefficient of moderated mediation	-0.66	-1.23	-0.10

Table 8: Moderated mediations results for complaining between fans with Low-ID and in the control condition.

Test of H4c. Verbal aggression. In the condition “revolutionary logo rebranding vs. evolutionary logo rebranding”, when comparing High-ID to Low-ID fans, my results indicate that the index of moderated mediation is not significant (coefficient = .11, 95% CI: (-.37, .61)). However, between an evolutionary and a revolutionary rebranding, there is a significant indirect effect on verbal aggression through betrayal for fans with both low (coefficient = .34, 95% CI: (.06, .64)) and high identification (coefficient = .45, 95% CI: (.05, .89)). In this same rebranding type comparison, when comparing Low-ID fans to the control condition, my results indicate that the index of moderated mediation is not significant (coefficient = -.26, 95% CI: (-.67, .05)). However, between an evolutionary and a revolutionary rebranding, there is also a significant indirect effect on verbal aggression through betrayal for fans with both low identification (coefficient = .20, 95% CI: (.01, .41)) and in the control condition (coefficient = .46, 95% CI: (.15, .86)).

In the condition “revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name change vs. evolutionary logo rebranding”, when comparing High-ID to Low-ID fans, my results indicate that the index of moderated mediation is significant (Coefficient = .75, 95% CI: (.21, 1.31)). Consequently, I find that the indirect effect of the rebranding type through betrayal on verbal aggression is stronger when fan identification is high (coefficient = 1.34, 95% CI: (.87, 1.84)) compared to low

(coefficient = .59, 95% CI: (.27, .94)). In this same rebranding comparison, when comparing Low-ID fans to the control condition, my results indicate that the index of moderated mediation is significant (coefficient = -.76, 95% CI: (-1.16, -.41)). Consequently, I find that the indirect effect of the rebranding type through betrayal on verbal aggression is stronger for fans in the control condition (coefficient = 1.13, 95% CI: (.76, 1.55)) compared to Low-ID fans (coefficient = .37, 95% CI: (.16, .63)).

In the condition “revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name change vs revolutionary logo rebranding”, when comparing High-ID to Low-ID fans, my results indicate that the index of moderated mediation is significant (Coefficient = .57, 95% CI: (.03, 1.11)). Consequently, I find that the indirect effect of the rebranding type through betrayal on verbal aggression is stronger when fan identification is high (coefficient = .76, 95% CI: (.36, 1.20)) compared to low (coefficient = .19, 95% CI: (-.16, .56)). For fans with low identification, however, there appears to be no significant indirect effect on verbal aggression (coefficient = .19, 95% CI: (-.16, .56)) through betrayal between a revolutionary and a revolutionary with a name change rebranding. In this same comparison of rebranding type, when comparing fans in the control condition to Low-ID fans, my results indicate that the index of moderated mediation is significant (coefficient = -.47, 95% CI: (-.88, -.07)). Consequently, I find that the indirect effect of the rebranding type through betrayal on verbal aggression is stronger for fans in the control condition (coefficient = .61, 95% CI: (.30, .95)) compared to Low-ID fans (coefficient = .15, 95% CI: (-.11, .43)). Overall, these results support H4c.

Table 9. Moderated mediations results for verbal aggression between fans with Low-ID or High-ID

		Verbal aggression		
		Effect	95% CI	
			LL	UL
<i>Evolutionary vs Revolutionary</i>				
	Low identification	0.34	0.06	0.64
	High identification	0.45	0.05	0.89
	Coefficient of moderated mediation	0.11	-0.37	0.61
<i>Evolutionary vs Revolutionary w/ name</i>				
	Low identification	0.59	0.27	0.94
	High identification	1.34	0.87	1.84
	Coefficient of moderated mediation	0.75	0.21	1.31
<i>Revolutionary vs Revolutionary w/ name</i>				
	Low identification	0.19	-0.16	0.56
	High identification	0.76	0.36	1.2
	Coefficient of moderated mediation	0.57	0.03	1.11

*Table 9: Moderated mediations results for verbal aggression between fans with Low-ID and High-ID.***Table 10. Moderated mediations results for verbal aggression between fans in the control or Low-ID condition**

		Verbal aggression		
		Effect	95% CI	
			LL	UL
<i>Evolutionary vs Revolutionary</i>				
	Control	0.46	0.15	0.86
	Low identification	0.20	0.01	0.41
	Coefficient of moderated mediation	-0.26	-0.67	0.05
<i>Evolutionary vs Revolutionary w/ name</i>				
	Control	1.13	0.76	1.55
	Low identification	0.37	0.16	0.63
	Coefficient of moderated mediation	-0.76	-1.16	-0.41
<i>Revolutionary vs Revolutionary w/ name</i>				
	Control	0.61	0.30	0.95
	Low identification	0.15	-0.11	0.43
	Coefficient of moderated mediation	-0.47	-0.88	-0.07

Table 10: Moderated mediations results for verbal aggression between fans with Low-ID and in the control condition.

Test of H4d. Physical aggression. In the condition “revolutionary logo rebranding vs. evolutionary logo rebranding”, when comparing High-ID to Low-ID fans, my results indicate that the index of moderated mediation is not significant (coefficient = .03, 95% CI: (-.09, .15)). However, between an evolutionary and a revolutionary rebranding, there is a significant indirect effect on physical aggression through betrayal for fans with both low (coefficient = .08, 95% CI: (.01, .17)) and high identification (coefficient = .11, 95% CI: (.01, .22)). In this rebranding type comparison, when comparing Low-ID fans to the control condition, my results indicate that the index of moderated mediation is not significant (coefficient = -.05, 95% CI: (-.13, .01)). However, between an evolutionary and a revolutionary rebranding, there is a significant indirect effect on physical aggression through betrayal for fans with both low identification (coefficient = .04, 95% CI: (.01, .08)) and in the control condition (coefficient = .08, 95% CI: (.02, .18)).

In the condition “revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name change vs. evolutionary logo rebranding”, when comparing High-ID to Low-ID fans, my results indicate that the index of moderated mediation is significant (Coefficient = .19, 95% CI: (.05, .36)). Consequently, I find that the indirect effect of the rebranding type through betrayal on physical aggression is stronger when fan identification is high (coefficient = .34, 95% CI: (.18, .54)) compared to low (coefficient = .15, 95% CI: (.06, .27)). In this rebranding type comparison, when comparing Low-ID fans to the control condition, my results indicate that the index of moderated mediation is significant (coefficient = -.12, 95% CI: (-.24, -.03)). Consequently, I find that the indirect effect of the rebranding type through betrayal on physical aggression is stronger for fans in the control condition (coefficient = .18, 95% CI: (.06, .34)) compared to Low-ID fans (coefficient = .06, 95% CI: (.02, .12)).

In the condition “revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name change vs revolutionary logo rebranding”, when comparing High-ID to Low-ID fans, my results indicate that the index of moderated mediation is significant (Coefficient = .13, 95% CI: (.01, .29)). Consequently, I find that the indirect effect of the rebranding type through betrayal on physical aggression is stronger when fan identification is high (coefficient = .18, 95% CI: (.07, .33)) compared to low (coefficient = .05, 95% CI: (-.04, .15)). For fans with low identification, however, there appears to be no significant indirect effect on verbal aggression (coefficient = .05, 95% CI: (-.04, .15)) through betrayal between a revolutionary and a revolutionary with a name change rebranding. In this same rebranding comparison, when comparing fans in the control condition to Low-ID fans, my results indicate that the index of moderated mediation is significant (coefficient = -.07, 95% CI: (-.16, -.01)). Consequently, I find that the indirect effect of the rebranding type through betrayal on physical aggression is stronger for fans in the control condition (coefficient = .09, 95% CI: (.03, .18)) compared to Low-ID fans (coefficient = .02, 95% CI: (-.01, .07)). Overall, these results support H4d.

Table 11. Moderated mediations results for physical aggression between fans with Low-ID or High-ID

		Verbal aggression		
		Effect	95% CI	
			LL	UL
<i>Evolutionary vs Revolutionary</i>				
	Low identification	0.08	0.01	0.17
	High identification	0.11	0.01	0.22
	Coefficient of moderated mediation	0.03	-0.09	0.15
<i>Evolutionary vs Revolutionary w/ name</i>				
	Low identification	0.15	0.06	0.27
	High identification	0.34	0.18	0.54
	Coefficient of moderated mediation	0.19	0.05	0.36
<i>Revolutionary vs Revolutionary w/ name</i>				
	Low identification	0.05	-0.04	0.15
	High identification	0.18	0.07	0.33
	Coefficient of moderated mediation	0.13	0.01	0.29

Table 11: Moderated mediations results for verbal aggression between fans with Low-ID and High-ID.

Table 12. Moderated mediations results for physical aggression between fans in the control or Low-ID condition

		Verbal aggression		
		Effect	95% CI	
			LL	UL
<i>Evolutionary vs Revolutionary</i>				
	Control	0.08	0.02	0.18
	Low identification	0.04	0.01	0.41
	Coefficient of moderated mediation	-0.05	-0.13	0.01
<i>Evolutionary vs Revolutionary w/ name</i>				
	Control	0.18	0.06	1.55
	Low identification	0.06	0.02	0.12
	Coefficient of moderated mediation	-0.12	-0.24	-0.03
<i>Revolutionary vs Revolutionary w/ name</i>				
	Control	0.09	0.03	0.34
	Low identification	0.02	-0.02	0.07
	Coefficient of moderated mediation	-0.07	-0.16	-0.01

Table 12: Moderated mediations results for verbal aggression between fans with Low-ID and in the control condition.

Test of H4e. Loyalty. In the condition “revolutionary logo rebranding vs. evolutionary logo rebranding”, when comparing Low-ID to High-ID fans, my results show that the index of moderated mediation is not significant (Coefficient = .09, 95% CI: (-.31, .51)). However, between an evolutionary and a revolutionary rebranding, there is a significant indirect effect on loyalty through betrayal for fans with both low (coefficient = .28, 95% CI: (.05, .53)) and high (coefficient = .37, 95% CI: (.04, .73)) identification. In this same rebranding type comparison, when comparing Low-ID fans to the control condition, my results show that the index of moderated mediation is not significant (coefficient = -.12, 95% CI: (-.35, .02)). However, between an evolutionary and a revolutionary rebranding, there is a significant indirect effect on loyalty through betrayal for fans with both low (coefficient = .09, 95% CI: (.01, .21)) and the control condition (coefficient = .21, 95% CI: (.04, .46)).

In the condition “revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name change vs. evolutionary logo rebranding”, when comparing Low-ID to High-ID fans, my results show that the index of moderated mediation is significant (Coefficient = .43, 95% confidence interval (CI): (.12, .78)). Consequently, I find that the indirect effect of the rebranding type through betrayal on loyalty is stronger when fan identification is high (coefficient = .76, 95% CI: (.46, 1.12)) compared to low (coefficient = .34, 95% CI: (.15, .57)). In this rebranding type comparison, when comparing Low-ID fans to the control condition, my results show that the index of moderated mediation is significant (coefficient = -.33, 95% CI: (-.62, -.11)). Consequently, I find that the indirect effect of the rebranding type through betrayal on loyalty is stronger for fans in the control condition (coefficient = .49, 95% CI: (.19, .84)) compared to low identification fans (coefficient = .16, 95% CI: (.05, .32)).

In the condition “revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name change vs revolutionary logo rebranding”, when comparing Low-ID to High-ID fans, my results show that the index of moderated mediation is significant (Coefficient = .29, 95% confidence interval (CI): (.02, .60)). Consequently, I find that the indirect effect of the rebranding type through betrayal on desire for revenge is stronger when fan identification is high (coefficient = .39, 95% CI: (.17, .66)) compared to low (coefficient = .10, 95% CI: (-.08, .30)). For fans with low identification, however, there appears to be no significant indirect effect on loyalty (coefficient = .10, 95% CI: (-.08, .30)) through betrayal between a revolutionary and a revolutionary with a name change rebranding. In this same rebranding type comparison, when comparing Low-ID fans to the control condition, my results show that the index of moderated mediation is significant (coefficient = -.18, 95% CI: (-.39, -.02)). Consequently, I find that the indirect effect of the rebranding type through betrayal on

desire for revenge is stronger in the control condition (coefficient = .23, 95% CI: (.07, .45)) compared to Low-ID fans (coefficient = .06, 95% CI: (-.04, .18)). Overall, these results support H4e.

Table 13. Moderated mediations results for loyalty between fans with Low-ID or High-ID

		Loyalty		
		Effect	95% CI	
			LL	UL
<i>Evolutionary vs Revolutionary</i>				
	Low identification	0.28	0.05	0.53
	High identification	0.37	0.04	0.73
	Coefficient of moderated mediation	0.09	-0.31	0.51
<i>Evolutionary vs Revolutionary w/ name</i>				
	Low identification	0.34	0.15	0.57
	High identification	0.76	0.46	1.12
	Coefficient of moderated mediation	0.43	0.12	0.78
<i>Revolutionary vs Revolutionary w/ name</i>				
	Low identification	0.10	-0.08	0.30
	High identification	0.39	0.17	0.66
	Coefficient of moderated mediation	0.29	0.02	0.60

Table 13: Moderated mediations results for loyalty between fans with Low-ID and High-ID.

Table 14. Moderated mediations results for loyalty between fans in the control or Low-ID condition

		Loyalty		
		Effect	95% CI	
			LL	UL
<i>Evolutionary vs Revolutionary</i>				
	Control	0.21	0.04	0.46
	Low identification	0.09	0.01	0.21
	Coefficient of moderated mediation	-0.12	-0.35	0.02
<i>Evolutionary vs Revolutionary w/ name</i>				
	Control	0.49	0.19	0.84
	Low identification	0.16	0.05	0.32
	Coefficient of moderated mediation	-0.33	-0.62	-0.11
<i>Revolutionary vs Revolutionary w/ name</i>				
	Control	0.23	0.07	0.45
	Low identification	0.06	-0.04	0.18
	Coefficient of moderated mediation	-0.18	-0.39	-0.02

Table 14: Moderated mediations results for loyalty between fans with Low-ID and in the control condition.

3.4.4.4 Discussion of study 2.

Study 2 was designed to test the effect of the rebranding type on fans' desire for revenge, loyalty, complaining intentions, verbal aggression, physical aggression, and retaliatory behaviors. The role of betrayal was tested as a mediator between the rebranding type and the aforementioned behaviors. The study also aimed to test the moderating effect of fan identification on the relationship between the rebranding type and perceived betrayal. By merging service transgression and sports fandom literature, I tried to explain the effects sports team rebrandings have on fans through the betrayal they feel following the rebrandings.

Firstly, in this study, my results indicate that the rebranding type has a positive effect on fans' desire for revenge, complaining intentions, verbal aggression and retaliatory behaviors and a negative effect on their loyalty, while having no effect on physical aggression. More precisely, when comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding to an evolutionary logo rebranding, the former causes stronger desire for revenge, stronger complaining, stronger verbal aggression and stronger retaliatory behaviors than the latter. When comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change to a revolutionary logo rebranding, the former causes stronger desire for revenge, complaining intentions and retaliatory behaviors, as well as weaker loyalty than the latter. The most notable changes were apparent when comparing both extreme conditions of rebranding types: the revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change to the evolutionary logo rebranding. In this case, a revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name change causes fans to have stronger desire for revenge, complaining intentions, verbal aggression, and retaliatory behaviors as well as weaker loyalty than an evolutionary rebranding. These results support H1a, H1b and H1f. They also partially support H1c and H1e.

Secondly, my results show that betrayal mediates the relationship between the rebranding type and the negative fan behaviors (desire for revenge, complaining, verbal aggression, physical aggression, retaliatory behaviors and loyalty loss). Fans felt stronger betrayal with every stronger level of change in the team branding. Fans perceive more betrayal following a revolutionary logo rebranding than an evolutionary logo rebranding. This is also true following a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change rather than a revolutionary logo rebranding. Logically, they also felt stronger betrayal when comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change to an evolutionary logo rebranding. Stronger betrayal also leads to stronger desire for revenge, complaining intentions, verbal aggression, physical aggression, retaliatory behaviors and weaker loyalty. This is the mediating role of betrayal. These results support H2a, H2b, H2c, H2d, H2e and H2f.

Thirdly, rebranding type interacts with fan identification to predict perceived betrayal from fans. Highly identified fans felt stronger betrayal following the rebrandings than lesser identified fans. When comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding to an evolutionary logo rebranding, highly (vs lowly) identified fans felt a moderate (vs moderate) increase in betrayal. But, when comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change to a revolutionary logo rebranding, fans with high identification saw a moderate increase in betrayal, while fans with low identification perceived no significant difference in betrayal between the two rebranding types. This also meant that when comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change to an evolutionary logo rebranding, high (vs low) identification fans had a large, close to very large, (vs moderate) increase in perceived betrayal. As such, my results show that fan identification moderates the relationship between the rebranding type and perceived betrayal. These results support H3.

Additionally, the indirect effect of the rebranding type on negative fan behaviors is stronger for fans with high identification, compared to low identification, when the team's name is changed. In this context, when comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change to an evolutionary logo rebranding, while there is an indirect effect of the rebranding type on all five behaviors (desire for revenge, complaining, verbal aggression, physical aggression and loyalty) through betrayal for both fans with high and low identification, the effect of the rebranding type is stronger for fans with high identification than fans with low identification. When comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change to a revolutionary logo rebranding, there is only an indirect effect of the rebranding type on the behaviors through betrayal for fans with high identification. In this comparison of rebranding types, fans with high (vs low) identification perceive stronger (vs similar) betrayal following a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change, rather than a revolutionary logo rebranding. This is the moderating role of fan identification. These results support H4a, H4b, H4c, H4d and H4e.

3.5 General Discussion

Table 15. Summary of supported hypotheses

Hypotheses	Supported
<p>H1: A rebranding with stronger changes leads to greater a) desire for revenge, b) complaining intentions, c) verbal aggression, d) physical aggression, f) retaliatory behaviors, and less e)</p>	<p>H1a, H1b and H1f are supported. H1c and H1e are partially supported. H1d is not supported.</p>

<p>loyalty towards the team compared to a rebranding with lesser changes. I expect the comparisons “revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name change” > “revolutionary logo rebranding” > “evolutionary logo rebranding” for the negative responses (H1a-d and f), and the reverse for the positive response (H1e).</p>	
<p>H2: The effects of rebranding type on a) desire for revenge, b) complaining intentions, c) verbal aggression, d) physical aggression, e) loyalty and f) retaliatory behaviors — as predicted in H1 -- are mediated through perceived betrayal.</p>	<p>H2a, H2b, H2c, H2d, H2e and H2f are supported.</p>
<p>H3: The rebranding type interacts with fan identification to predict betrayal, such as when fans have high identification, a revolutionary logo rebranding with name change (vs. revolutionary vs. evolutionary) leads to a greater sense of betrayal compared to fans with low identification.</p>	<p>H3 is supported.</p>

<p>H4: The indirect effect of a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change (vs revolutionary vs evolutionary) through betrayal on a) desire for revenge, b) complaining intention, c) verbal aggression, d) physical aggression and e) loyalty is stronger (in absolute terms) when fans have high identification rather than low identification.</p>	<p>H4a, H4b, H4c, H4d and H4e are supported.</p>
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Table 15: Summary of supported hypotheses.

3.5.1 Theoretical implications

Firstly, I add on the literature of sports rebrandings and their negative consequences (Ahn et al., 2013; Agha, Goldman & Dixon, 2016; Williams et al., 2021; Williams and Son, 2022). My results suggest that the stronger are the changes done to the sports brand, the stronger the negative consequences will be. More precisely, following a revolutionary logo rebranding, fans of the team will show more desire for revenge, more complaining intentions, more verbal aggression and more retaliatory behaviors than following an evolutionary logo rebranding. After a revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name change, fans will show more desire for revenge, less loyalty, more complaining intentions, more verbal aggression and more retaliatory behaviors than following an evolutionary logo rebranding. Following a revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name

change, fans will have more desire for revenge, less loyalty, more complaining intentions and more retaliatory behaviors than following a revolutionary logo rebranding.

Secondly, I show that Grégoire and Fisher's (2008) model of service transgression can be applied to the sports rebranding literature. Professional sports teams can betray their fans. I showed that sports rebrandings are seen as a relational transgression for fans. It is a violation of what is normative in the context of the fans' and the sports team's relationship and as such makes fans feel betrayed by the sports team. As a way to reestablish a form of social balance, the perceived betrayal triggers retaliatory behaviors. My results show that this betrayal plays a mediating role between all the behaviors in this study (desire for revenge, complaining, verbal aggression, physical aggression, loyalty and retaliatory behaviors) and the rebranding type. More major changes also mean a stronger transgression. As such, fans perceive stronger betrayal with every stronger level of changes in the rebranding. A revolutionary logo rebranding will cause fans to feel stronger betrayal than an evolutionary logo rebranding, and so will a revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name change when compared to a revolutionary logo rebranding. Logically, fans will also perceive stronger betrayal following a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change, rather than an evolutionary logo rebranding. My results show that betrayal acts a motivational force (Grégoire and Fisher, 2008) for fans to seek retaliation following the transgression from the organization. The stronger is the betrayal fans feel, the stronger desire for revenge, complaining intentions, verbal aggression, physical aggression, loyalty loss towards the team and retaliatory behaviors will be.

Thirdly, my results support previous literature on rebrandings and sports rebrandings demonstrating higher identification fans, or more engaged fans, to have stronger reactions (Ahn et al., 2013; Potter and Keen, 2012; Rocca and Vogl-Bauer, 1999; Simmons, Naraine & Greenwell, 2023; Wann and Branscombe, 1992). They also mirror the “love becomes hate” effect (Grégoire and Fisher, 2008), which states that a higher (vs lower) quality relationship leads to stronger (vs weaker) betrayal and retaliation, in the sense that perceived betrayal from the rebranding and its negative consequences are generally stronger (vs weaker) when fans had higher (vs lower) prior identification. More exactly, my results show that identification moderates the relationship between the rebranding type and betrayal, but only when comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change to either of the other two conditions. When comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding to an evolutionary logo rebranding, the relationship between the rebranding type and betrayal is not moderated by the identification level; both low and high identification fans will perceive more betrayal in the former condition than the latter, and indirectly stronger desire for revenge, complaining intentions, verbal aggression, physical aggression and weaker loyalty, but the effect of the rebranding is not significantly different for either group of fans. In this comparison of rebranding type, the rebranding with the stronger changes causes high (vs low) identification fans to feel a moderate (vs moderate) increase in betrayal. However, following a revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name change, when compared to a revolutionary logo rebranding, there is an effect (vs no effect) of the rebranding type on perceived betrayal, and indirectly on desire for revenge, complaining intentions, verbal aggression, physical aggression and loyalty, for fans with high (vs low) identification. In this comparison of rebranding type, the rebranding with the stronger changes causes high (vs low) identification fans to feel a moderate increase in (vs similar) betrayal. Logically, following a revolutionary logo rebranding

with a team name change, when compared to an evolutionary logo rebranding, the effect of the rebranding type on perceived betrayal, and indirectly on desire for revenge, complaining, verbal aggression, physical aggression and loyalty, is stronger (vs weaker) for fans with high (vs low) identification. In this comparison of rebranding type, the rebranding with the stronger changes causes high (vs low) identification fans to feel a large, close to very large, (vs moderate) increase in betrayal. In other words, the mediation is only moderated when the team's name is changed. These results are in accordance with Simmons, Naraine & Greenwell's (2023) results where the authors found passionate fans to give more importance than casual fans to the team's name in the context of a revolutionary rebranding to explain fans' attitudes towards the team. My results suggest that the team's name is of utmost importance to explain fan reactions following a revolutionary rebranding. This research suggests that fans with low identification saw no significant difference in betrayal between both revolutionary conditions, while fans with high identification felt more betrayed following a revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name change rather than a revolutionary logo rebranding. For fans with low identification, the level of felt betrayal hits a plateau following a revolutionary logo rebranding and does not increase anymore with a stronger level of change in a rebranding, whereas it keeps increasing further for fans with high identification. This explains the stronger negative consequences a rebranding that changes the team's name has on high identification fans when compared to their lowly identified counterparts. High identification fans care far more than lower identification fans for their team's name to remain unchanged following a change in brand identity.

3.5.2 Managerial implications

This research shines new light on the dangers of poorly executed rebrandings. It is particularly important for marketing managers of professional sport teams to choose the appropriate level of changes in their rebranding in accordance with their objectives and not go overboard with unjustly strong changes just for the sake of it, as this will likely backfire. Individuals in decisional roles should aim to make the smallest changes possible to the team imagery and identity. Overall, my results show that marketing managers should not change the names of their club, as they have a particularly strong negative impact on the most engaged fans of the team. Therefore, in a sports team rebranding, I suggest only to bring changes to the team logo, as it causes significantly less retaliation from fans. The rebranding should be as close as possible to an evolutionary rebranding, bringing minor changes to the brand. Sometimes, a marketing manager has no other choice than to change the team's name (e.g. a team name with racist associations to which it wishes to cut all ties). In those cases, it is primordial to conduct ample market research beforehand with highly identified fans of the team. They should focus their efforts on interviewing and polling strongly identified fans, as they feel the strongest betrayal from a change of the team's name, whereas less identified fans do not see any significant differences between a revolutionary rebranding whether the team's name changes or not. Marketing managers should also work on the rebranding hand in hand with different supporter groups, as their support of the rebranding could sway fan opinion in the right direction. Hence, they could interview and take the feedback, in addition to regular highly identified fans, of respected members of different fan communities and other key actors around the team, such as the leaders of different Ultra groups, specific known and loved fans attending every home and away game, highly identified fans who have a huge social media following, public personalities known for their strong relationship with the team, sports journalists who have been following the team for a long time, etc. These individuals should be used as ambassadors to support

the rebranding and favor its adoption in different fan communities. This support would be authentic, as the new brand would come from discussion between the organization and these same individuals representing the fan base. These efforts would also legitimize the rebranding such that the implicit contract between the fans and the team would not have been violated by it but renegotiated in due form. With no perceived violation, no betrayal should emerge from the rebranding and the negative impact of it will be minimized. Previous literature already supports the idea that the participation and inclusion in the rebranding process of different key actors around the brand favors the adoption and success of the rebranding (Aspara et al., 2014; Joseph et al., 2021; Simmons, Naraine & Greenwell, 2023; Tarnovskaya and Biedenbach, 2018; Walsh et al., 2018). The cocreation of the new brand in collaboration with the highly identified fans should smooth the transition from the old sports brand to the new and reduce negative opinions and reactions of the rebranding.

3.5.3 Limitations and future research

My research has several limitations. Firstly, while intentions do predict behaviors, it is not always entirely true (Chandon, Morwitz and Reinartz, 2005). To this extent, some authors believe that “to measure the genuine redesigned logo effect in the real world, it is important to use actual redesigned logos rather than fictional ones” (Ahn et al., 2013, p. 15). This research was done in an experimental setting with fictitious sports brands to remove the influence of external variables associated to a known brand (e.g. experimental confounds), but future research should try to achieve the same results with a real rebranding and real fan reactions, adding further credibility to my results.

Secondly, the pretests and different iterations of logos between study 1a and 1b minimized the significant differences between the participants' perception of the many fictive logos used in this research, but a couple of significantly different aspects remained. These two differences were whether participants liked the color scheme of the logo and if they could imagine a professional soccer team displaying the logo. These act as a limitation in this study as it could be possible, even though unlikely, that these two characteristics of the logos acted as confounds variables and thus could have influenced the results. However, these two characteristics should not have had any influence on the results as they were all perceived positively by participants by all being well above the scale midpoint in all conditions, only to a different extent. Nonetheless, future research could aim to recreate the results of this study with logos that have no significant differences on those two characteristics.

Thirdly, the participants were from either the United Kingdom, the United States or Canada. All of these countries have a culture with generally high indulgence, scoring respectively, out of 100 possible points, 69, 68 and 68 (Hofstede Insights, 2024). These countries “exhibit a willingness to realise their impulses and desires with regard to enjoying life and having fun” (Hofstede Insights, 2024). As they are more impulsive, they could have a higher propensity to feel betrayal following a rebranding and seek revenge. This could mean that the results are hard to apply to cultures with lower scores, such as Germany, with a score of 40, or France with 48. This opens up new avenues for future research where one could aim to recreate the results of this study with participants of a different yet still fanatic of soccer culture, such as German or French participants who are less impulsive with their desires. These tendencies could affect desire for revenge following a rebranding. Cultures with low scores of indulgences are more restrained by social norms, and

seeking revenge could be perceived negatively and as such individuals from these societies would not seek it.

Fourthly, with similar logic on culture differences, the current study focuses on soccer fans. However, soccer culture is different from other sports culture as it contains football hooligans. A hooligan is “a usually young man who engages in rowdy or violent behavior especially as part of a group or gang (Merriam-Webster, 2024). While these fans represent a very small number of all fans, they are still a product and a part of this sport’s culture. These hooligans, in extreme cases, went as far as stabbing rival fans, vandalize neighbourhoods, or throw rocks on a rival team’s bus (Frosi, R., 2023). Social comparison theory states that individuals compare themselves to others to evaluate their own opinions (Festinger, 1954). Downward social comparison happens when an individual compares himself to another who is doing worse to justify his own behavior, whether this behavior is acceptable or not. In a similar process, soccer could tend to have fans who react more strongly in certain situations because they would normalize extreme behaviors by justifying them with downward social comparison towards hooligans. Therefore, soccer fans could have a stronger propensity to perceive revenge seeking and retaliation as normal and acceptable behaviors than fans of other sports in which hooligans are inexistant. The results could differ for other sports. This study should be replicated with fans of another sport, such as hockey fans or football fans. Hockey fans tend to be tamer than soccer fans (e.g. In hockey, fans of teams are sitting together in the stadium without problems, whereas in European soccer, fans are separated in different, isolated from each other, sections as to not cause trouble).

Fifthly, the rebrandings in this study were not motivated by any precise reason. As the rebranding was not given sufficient justification, it might cause it to be perceived as a transgression for fans. Would a legitimate motivation reduce the perceived violation and thus the felt betrayal? Future research should focus on the cause given for the rebranding, such as comparing a revolutionary rebranding done for racist imagery, like the Washington Commanders did (Jhabvala, 2022), to a rebranding that wishes to transform the club's image into a more international one, like CF Montreal did (Boehm, 2021; Massé, 2021).

Finally, a last future research option could focus on the aftermath of a rebranding that missed its mark and caused retaliation towards the sports brand. For example, retrobranding is a successful rebranding strategy that consists of rolling back the old brand and rebrand a newer brand to its old identity (Kaikiti and Kaikiti, 2003). Would a team that goes back on its decision and rebirths the initial brand by reestablishing the initial logo or name restore fairness after the violation, and thus would fan intentions to retaliate against the brand stop? Or once the transgression happens, is it too late to restore the relationship with affected fans? Future research should therefore focus on ways to reestablish status quo following perceived betrayal and restore the broken relationship with fans.

3.6 Appendix

Appendix A - Logos used as visual stimuli in study 1a

Both logos shown to participants



Figure 16: Logos shown to both participants in study 1a.

Appendix B - Rebranding conditions in study 1a

Logos in the evolutionary condition

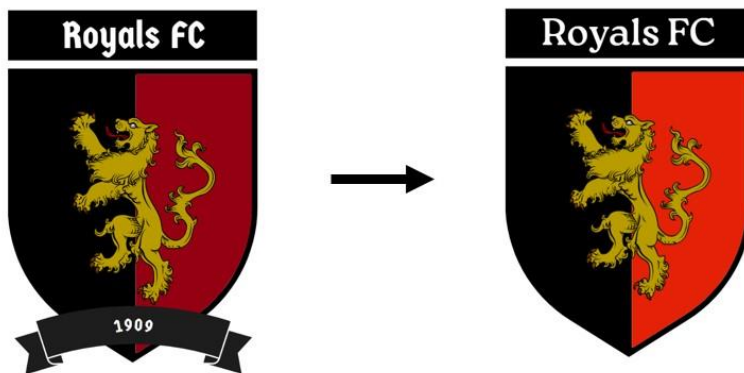


Figure 17: Logos in the evolutionary condition, study 1a.

Logos in the revolutionary condition

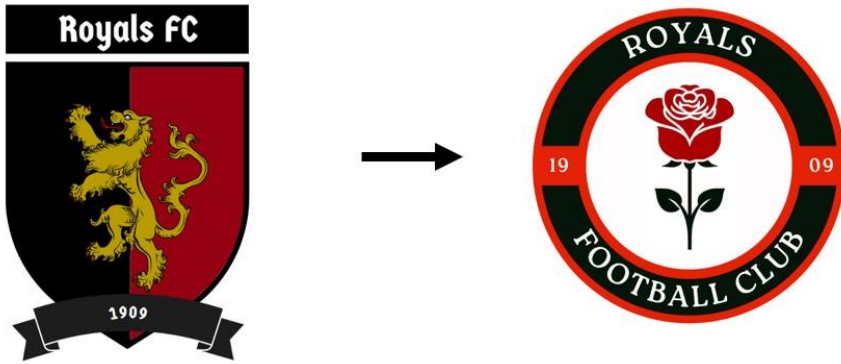


Figure 18: Logos shown in the revolutionary condition, study 1a.

Logos in the revolutionary (with name) condition

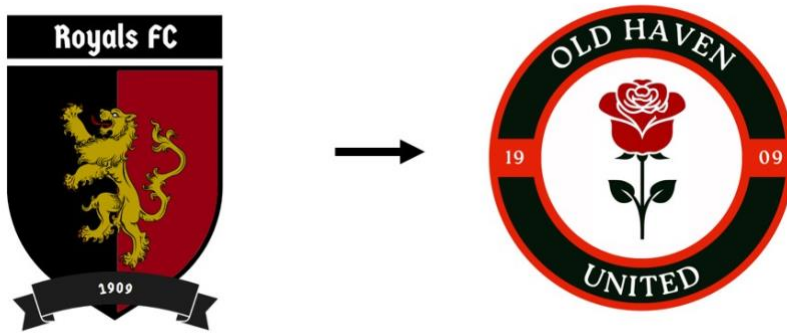


Figure 19: Logos shown in the revolutionary with name condition, study 1a.

Appendix C - Perceptions of both logos

Characteristics of both logos

	Logo type		Logo 2 (Circular)		Paired sample t-test	
	Logo 1 (Shield)		M	SD	T	η^2
	M	SD				
I like this logo	4.71	1.45	4.49	1.45	1.47	xx
I like the shape of this logo	5.29	1.29	4.98	1.31	2.35*	xx
I like the symbol at the center of this logo	5.08	1.53	4.57	1.60	2.94**	
I like the color scheme of this logo	<u>4.24</u>	1.86	4.61	1.54	-2.3*	
This logo represents the team well	4.60	1.31	<u>4.08</u>	1.29	3.75***	
It is easy to identify to this logo	5.08	1.32	5.02	1.34	0.45	
This logo is classic	5.49	1.30	4.41	1.51	6.47***	
This logo is aesthetic	4.52	1.53	4.56	1.38	-0.27	
This is an excellent logo	<u>4.25</u>	1.69	<u>4.01</u>	1.50	1.33	
I have seen this logo before	2.57	1.63	2.67	1.61	-0.84	
This logo is credible	4.99	1.17	4.64	1.24	3.32**	
I can imagine a professional soccer team displaying this logo	5.12	1.48	4.53	1.66	3.46***	
This logo conveys the values of the team	4.31	1.34	<u>3.90</u>	1.28	3.23**	
This logo is easy to recognize	5.25	1.14	5.14	1.22	0.93	
This logo is simple	5.02	1.32	5.57	1.02	-4.88***	
This logo is easy to digest	5.30	1.09	5.26	1.23	0.25	
This logo makes me feel good	<u>3.90</u>	1.45	<u>4.12</u>	1.36	-1.51	
This logo is better than the average logo	<u>3.92</u>	1.56	<u>3.86</u>	1.50	0.46	
This logo is soulless	3.27	1.48	3.50	1.47	-1.45	
This logo has character	4.60	1.51	<u>4.09</u>	1.39	3.20**	
This logo has charm	<u>4.13</u>	1.49	<u>4.19</u>	1.43	-0.44	

Means differ from the scale midpoint of 4 (p < .05) unless underlined.

Table 16: Characteristics of logos, study 1a.

Appendix D - Perceptions of rebranding types

Characteristics of rebrandings

	Rebranding condition						One-way ANOVA	
	Evolutionary		Revolutionary		Revolutionary (w/ name)		F	η^2
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD		
The two logos are completely different	3.45	1.59	6.36	0.81	6.35	0.72	128.17***	0.61
The two logos are not at all similar	2.58	1.27	6.10	1.07	6.31	0.65	232.98***	0.74
The two logos have few characteristics in common	3.40	1.78	5.19	1.59	5.78	1.03	37.85***	0.31
The logo was significantly changed	3.40	1.71	6.33	0.74	6.59	0.75	129.67***	0.61
The colors between both logos were significantly changed	3.30	1.53	4.52	1.74	4.80	1.70	13.30***	0.14
I can notice the changes in the logo	6.19	1.14	6.66	0.61	6.69	0.65	6.32**	0.07
The change in logo was a radical one	3.07	1.58	6.22	1.20	6.44	0.97	122.65***	0.60
In my opinion, the change in logo is a sound decision	4.03	1.74	3.72	2.14	3.63	2.13	0.64	0.01
The team should not have rebranded	3.83	2.04	4.29	2.11	4.88	2.02	3.59*	0.04
The rebranding is unjustified	3.86	1.93	4.33	1.95	4.84	1.89	3.55*	0.04
I can imagine a professional soccer team do these changes	5.35	1.35	4.58	1.91	4.12	1.82	7.52***	0.08
I can recall a team doing a rebranding of similar magnitude	4.97	1.65	3.67	1.91	3.82	2.11	8.23***	0.09
The change surprises me	3.48	1.61	5.07	1.50	5.08	1.62	19.69***	0.19
The team did major changes to its identity	3.00	1.52	5.53	1.22	5.80	1.08	82.23***	0.50
With this change, the team loses its identity	2.87	1.59	4.31	1.80	4.80	1.97	18.12***	0.18
I like the new logo more than the previous one	3.98	2.13	3.98	2.34	3.76	2.41	0.16	0.00
I like the new symbol at the center of the logo more than the previous one	3.80	1.50	4.00	2.12	3.75	2.35	0.25	0.00
I like the new shape more than the previous one	4.00	1.57	4.02	2.12	3.96	2.25	0.01	0.00
The new logo is better than the first one	4.03	1.91	3.83	2.17	3.63	2.33	0.50	0.01
The old logo is more credible than the new one	4.23	1.68	4.36	1.77	4.75	1.96	1.18	0.01
The change in logo is an insult to loyal fans	3.30	1.81	4.17	1.92	4.37	2.11	4.94**	0.06
The name of the team was completely changed	2.05	1.23	2.34	1.24	5.80	1.41	140.25***	0.63
The new name is similar to the previous one	5.39	1.23	5.29	1.49	2.69	1.59	60.66***	0.42
I like the new name more than the previous one	3.81	1.10	3.88	1.27	3.45	1.92	1.34	0.02

Table 17: Characteristics of rebrandings, study 1a.

Appendix E - Logos used as visual stimuli in study 1b

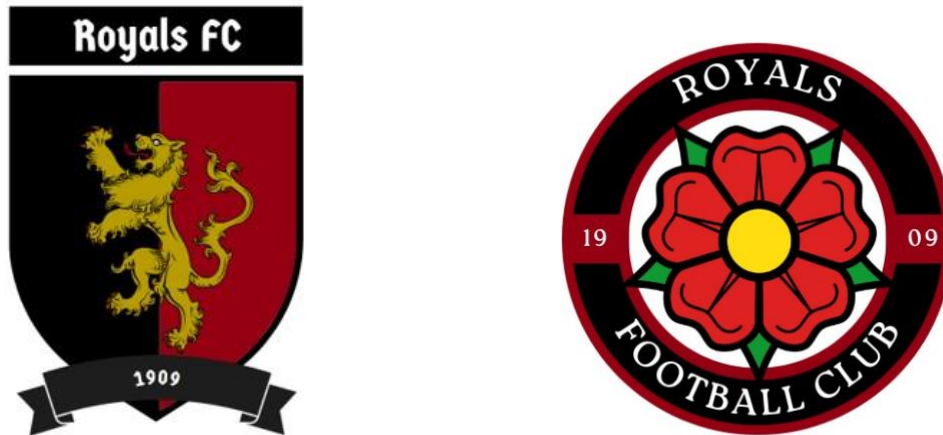


Figure 20: Logos used as visual stimuli, study 1b.

Appendix F – Fan identification scenarios used in study 2

Control

“You are a fan of a famous top-flight soccer team: Royals Football Club.”

Low-ID

“You are a fan of a famous top-flight soccer team: Royals Football Club. You consider yourself as an entry-level fan and as such, you watch a few games per season: being a fan of your team is not one of much importance in your life. Once in a while, you catch up on your team in the news and on social media. None of your friends know you consider yourself a fan: you own a single cap branded to your team’s colors and you barely ever wear it. You do not care if your team wins or not and feel indifferent about your team’s rivals.

Even if you consider yourself a fan, you do not view other fans of the team as special and barely feel bonded with them. You are not willing to pay more than the average fan to see your team play, especially not for more important games where you know the price will be higher. You are not willing to give more time than necessary to your team. Once a superstar player was announced to join your club, you went to the team store to buy his jersey, but left without anything as soon as you saw the short queue to get in the store. Finally, when your team experiences success or failure, you do not try to attribute it to any other causes: the better team simply won.”

High-ID

“You are a fan of a famous top-flight soccer team: Royals Football Club. You consider yourself your team’s number one fan and as such, you never miss a game: being a fan of your team is one of the most important things in your life. Everyday, you catch up on your team in the news and on social media. All of your friends know how much of a fan you are with all the various team paraphernalia you display at work, at home and on your clothing. It is very important to you that your team wins and you hate your team’s rivals with a passion.

As a team fan, you view other fans of the team as special and feel you are bonded together. You are willing to pay more than the average fan to see your team play, especially for more important games where you would pay large sums of money. You are also willing to give your time to your team. Once a superstar player was announced to join your club, you waited in line for hours to be one of the first to buy his official jersey. Finally, you attribute your team’s successes to factors such as the players' performance and the coaches’ decisions. When your team experiences failure, you blame it on causes such as the referees or the kickoff time.”

Appendix G – Rebranding scenarios used in study 2

Evolutionary

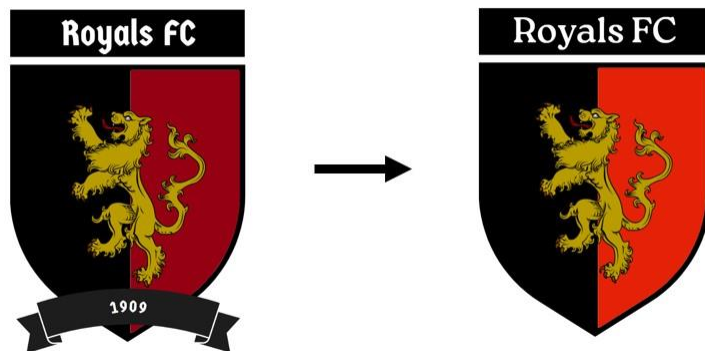


Figure 21: Logos used in the evolutionary scenario, study 2.

Revolutionary

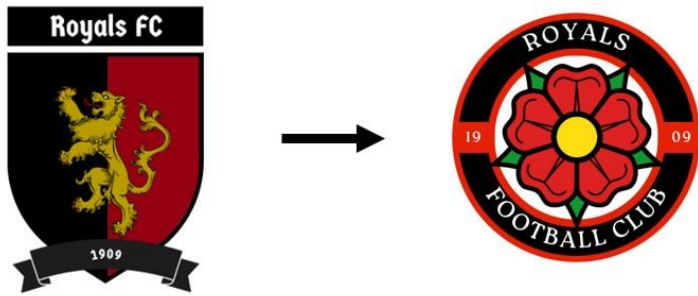


Figure 22: Logos used in the revolutionary condition, study 2.

Revolutionary with a name change

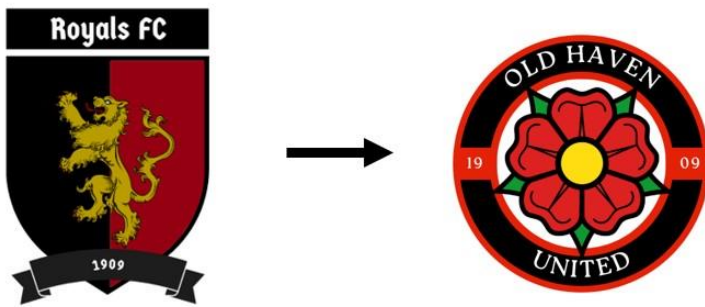


Figure 23: Logos used in the revolutionary with name condition, study 2.

Appendix H - Rebranding manipulation checks

Characteristics of rebrandings

	Rebranding condition						One-way ANOVA	
	Evolutionary		Revolutionary		Revolutionnary (w/ name)			
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	F	η^2
The team did major changes to its identify	3.15	1.57	5.57	1.40	6.41	0.92	281.86***	0.53
The team logo is very different from the previous one	3.00	1.51	6.36	0.94	6.68	0.56	602.11***	0.71
The logo was significantly changed	2.94	1.45	6.43	0.79	6.71	0.57	727.78***	0.75
I can barely notice the changes in the logo	3.63	1.64	1.16	1.14	1.32	0.90	168.53***	0.41
The team did major changes to its name	2.17	1.28	2.85	1.85	6.61	0.83	530.23***	0.68
The team's name is completely different from the prior one	1.85	1.15	2.61	1.75	6.49	1.08	589.29***	0.70
The logo is similar to the prior one	5.37	1.25	1.89	1.08	1.51	1.01	601.78***	0.71

Table 18: Characteristics of rebrandings, study 2.

Appendix I - Main effect of identification and its interaction effect with rebranding type on desire for revenge

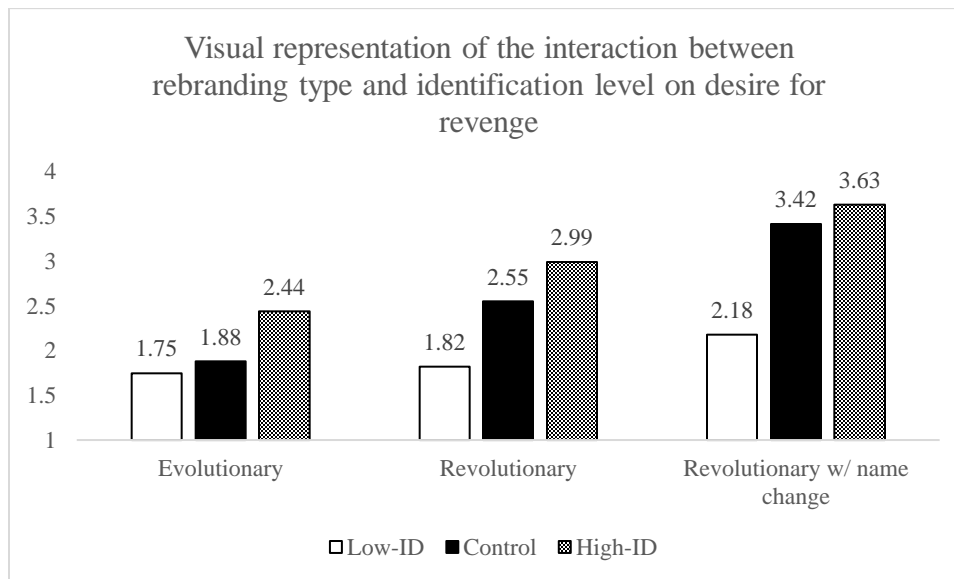


Figure 24: Visual representation of the interaction between rebranding type and identification level on desire for revenge.

Fans with low identification feel less desire for revenge than fans in the control condition ($M_{\text{control}} = 2.65$ vs $M_{\text{Low}} = 1.91$, $t = 4.95$, $p < .001$). Fans with low identification also feel less desire for revenge than fans with high identification ($M_{\text{Low}} = 1.91$ vs $M_{\text{High}} = 3.08$, $t = -7.83$, $p < .001$). Fans in the control condition feel less desire for revenge than fans with high identification ($M_{\text{Control}} = 2.65$ vs $M_{\text{High}} = 3.08$, $t = -2.40$, $p = .008$).

When fans have low identification, they feel more desire for revenge when their team undergoes a revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name change than an evolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{revolutionary w/ name}} = 2.18$ vs $M_{\text{evolutionary}} = 1.75$, $t = -2.15$, $p = .02$). They also feel more desire for revenge following a revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name change than a revolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{revolutionary w/ name}} = 2.18$ vs $M_{\text{revolutionary}} = 1.82$, $t = -1.63$, $p = .05$). Although

there is a difference between conditions, it is small (Effect size (ES)_{revolutionary vs revolutionary w/ name} = -0.31, 95% CI: (-.68, .07); ES_{evolutionary vs revolutionary w/ name} = -0.39, 95% CI: (-.75, -.03)).

When fans have high identification, they feel more desire for revenge following a revolutionary logo rebranding with a team name change than an evolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{revolutionary w/ name}} = 3.63$ vs $M_{\text{evolutionary}} = 2.44$, $t = -3.80$, $p < .001$). They also feel more desire for revenge following a revolutionary logo rebranding than an evolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{revolutionary}} = 2.99$ vs $M_{\text{evolutionary}} = 2.44$, $t = -1.88$, $p = .03$). Between a revolutionary logo rebranding and a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change, fans in this identification condition also feel more desire for revenge in the later rebranding type ($M_{\text{revolutionary w/ name}} = 3.63$ vs $M_{\text{revolutionary}} = 2.99$, $t = -2.13$, $p = .02$). With high identification, the change in desire for revenge between rebranding types is more contrasted. The difference between a revolutionary logo rebranding and an evolutionary logo rebranding or a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change and a revolutionary logo rebranding is small, but the difference in desire for revenge is large between a revolutionary rebranding with a name change and an evolutionary rebranding (ES_{evolutionary vs revolutionary} = -0.38, 95% CI: (-.79, .02); ES_{revolutionary vs revolutionary w/ name} = -0.40, 95% CI: (-.77, .03); ES_{evolutionary vs revolutionary w/ name} = -0.75, 95% CI: (-1.15, -.35)).

To summarize, the difference in desire for revenge, for fans with high identification (vs low identification), is small (vs no difference) between an evolutionary logo rebranding and a revolutionary logo rebranding, small (vs small) between a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change and a revolutionary logo rebranding, and large (vs small) between an evolutionary logo rebranding and a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change.

In the control group, the results are similar to the high identification condition: they also feel more desire for revenge with every level of rebranding. They felt more desire for revenge following a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change than an evolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{revolutionary w/ name}} = 3.42$ vs $M_{\text{evolutionary}} = 1.88$, $t = -5.58$, $p < .001$). They also felt more desire for revenge after a revolutionary logo rebranding than after an evolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{revolutionary}} = 2.55$ vs $M_{\text{evolutionary}} = 1.88$, $t = -2.57$, $p = .006$). Finally, their desire for revenge was stronger following a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change than a revolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{revolutionary w/ name}} = 3.42$ vs $M_{\text{revolutionary}} = 2.55$, $t = -2.74$, $p = .004$). In this condition, the change is also pretty contrasted. The difference in desire for revenge is moderate between every rebranding type, but between an evolutionary and a revolutionary rebranding with a name change, where it is large ($ES_{\text{evolutionary vs revolutionary}} = -.51$, 95% CI: (-.90, -.11); $ES_{\text{revolutionary vs revolutionary w/ name}} = -.53$, 95% CI: (-.91, -.14); $ES_{\text{evolutionary vs revolutionary w/ name}} = -1.04$, 95% CI: (-1.43, -.65).

Appendix J - Main effect of identification and its interaction effect with rebranding type on complaining

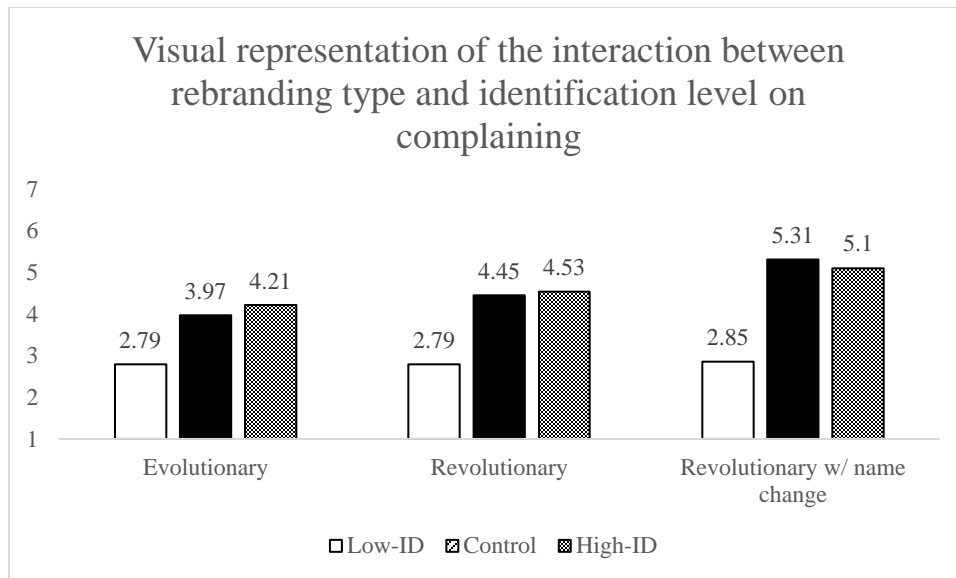


Figure 25: Visual representation of the interaction between rebranding type and identification level on complaining.

Fans in the control condition complain more following a rebranding than fans with low identification ($M_{\text{Control}} = 4.61$ vs $M_{\text{Low}} = 2.81$, $t = 10.57$, $p < .001$). Fans with high identification complain more following a rebranding than fans with low identification ($M_{\text{High}} = 4.66$ vs $M_{\text{Low}} = 2.81$, $t = -10.50$, $p < .001$). There is no significant difference in complaining between fans with high identification and the ones in the control condition ($M_{\text{High}} = 4.66$ vs $M_{\text{Control}} = 4.61$, $p = .40$).

When fans have low identification, there is no difference in complaining between any rebranding type.

When fans have high identification, however, they will complain more following a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change than an evolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{Revolutionary w/ name}} = 5.10$ vs $M_{\text{Evolutionary}} = 4.21$, $t = -2.51$, $p < .001$). Following a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change rather than a revolutionary logo rebranding, these fans will also complain more ($M_{\text{Revolutionary w/ name}} = 5.10$ vs $M_{\text{Revolutionary}} = 4.53$, $t = -1.93$, $p = .03$). There is no significant difference in complaining between an evolutionary logo rebranding and a revolutionary logo

rebranding. In this identification condition, the difference in complaining is small between the two revolutionary conditions and moderate between a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change and an evolutionary logo rebranding ($ES_{\text{Revolutionary w/ name vs revolutionary}} = -.36$, 95% CI: (-.73, .01); $ES_{\text{Revolutionary w/ name vs evolutionary}} = -.50$, 95% CI: (-.89, -.10).

To summarize, when fans have high identification (vs low identification), there is a small difference (vs no difference) in complaining when comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change to a revolutionary logo rebranding and a moderate difference (vs no difference) when comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change to an evolutionary logo rebranding.

For fans in the control group, they have more complaining intentions following a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change than following an evolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{Revolutionary w/ name}} = 5.31$ vs $M_{\text{Evolutionary}} = 3.97$, $t = -4.66$, $p < .001$). They also will complain more following a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change than a revolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{Revolutionary w/ name}} = 5.31$ vs $M_{\text{Revolutionary}} = 4.45$, $t = -2.94$, $p = .002$). This increased complaining is also observed between a revolutionary logo rebranding and an evolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{Revolutionary}} = 4.45$ vs $M_{\text{Evolutionary}} = 3.97$, $t = -1.46$, $p = .07$). In this identification condition, the complaining increases with every rebranding type, showing a small difference between the first two conditions, a moderate difference between both revolutionary conditions and a large difference between the two extremes ($ES_{\text{Evolutionary vs Revolutionary}} = -.29$, 95% CI: (-.68, .10); $ES_{\text{Revolutionary w/ name vs revolutionary}} = -.57$, 95% CI: (-.95, -.18); $ES_{\text{Revolutionary w/ name vs evolutionary}} = -.87$, 95% CI: -1.25, -.49)).

Appendix K - Main effect of identification and its interaction effect with rebranding type on verbal aggression

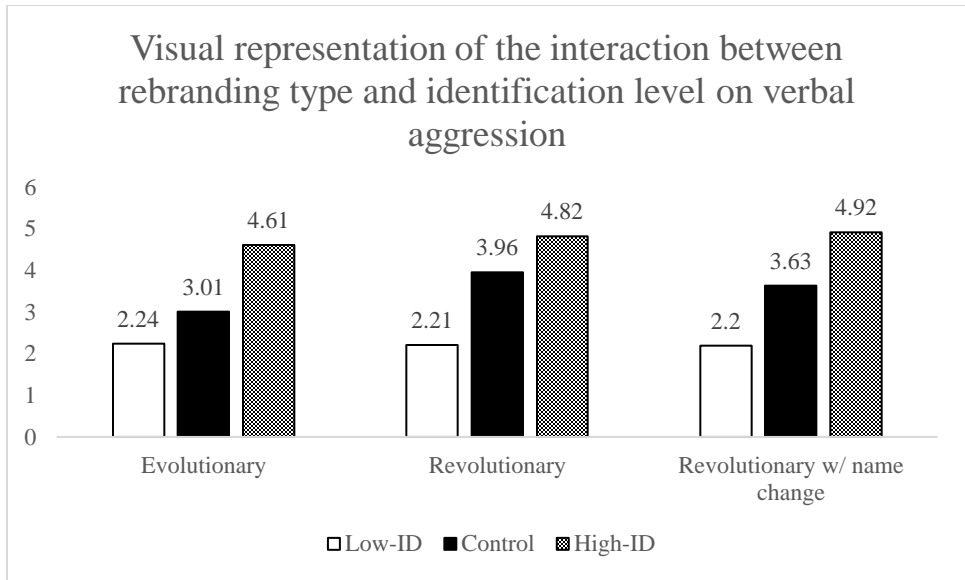


Figure 26: Visual representation of the interaction between rebranding type and identification level on verbal aggression.

Fans in the control condition had more verbal aggression following a rebranding than fans with low identification ($M_{\text{Control}} = 3.52$ vs $M_{\text{Low}} = 2.22$, $t = 7.60$, $p < .001$). When fans have high identification, they have more verbal aggression than fans with low identification ($M_{\text{High}} = 4.80$ vs $M_{\text{Low}} = 2.22$, $t = -15.35$, $p < .001$). When fans have high identification, they have more verbal aggression following a rebranding than fans in the control condition ($M_{\text{High}} = 4.80$ vs $M_{\text{Control}} = 3.52$, $t = -6.55$, $p < .001$).

Appendix L - Main effect of identification on physical aggression

Fans in the control condition show more physical aggression than fans with low identification following a rebranding ($M_{\text{Low}} = 1.19$ vs $M_{\text{Control}} = 1.34$, $t = 2.00$, $p = .02$). When fans have high identification, they have more physical aggression than fans with low identification following a rebranding ($M_{\text{High}} = 1.71$ vs $M_{\text{Low}} = 1.19$, $t = -5.56$, $p < .001$). When fans have high identification,

they have more physical aggression than fans in the control condition following a rebranding ($M_{\text{High}} = 1.71$ vs $M_{\text{Control}} = 1.34$, $t = -3.56$, $p < .001$).

Appendix M - Main effect of identification and its interaction effect with rebranding type on loyalty

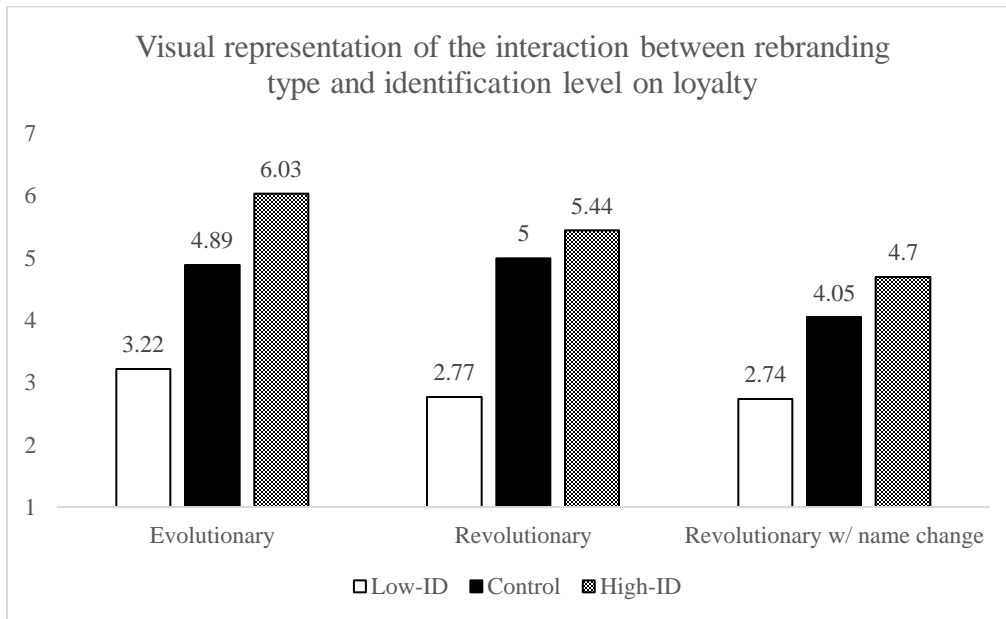


Figure 27: Visual representation of the interaction between rebranding type and identification level on loyalty.

Fans in the control condition have more loyalty following a rebranding than fans with low identification ($M_{\text{Control}} = 4.60$ vs $M_{\text{Low}} = 2.92$, $t = 11.62$, $p < .001$). Fans with high identification have more loyalty following a rebranding than fans with low identification ($M_{\text{High}} = 5.32$ vs $M_{\text{Low}} = 2.92$, $t = -16.13$, $p < .001$). Fans with high identification have more loyalty following a rebranding than fans in the control condition ($M_{\text{High}} = 5.32$ vs $M_{\text{Control}} = 4.60$, $t = -4.87$, $p < .001$).

When fans have low identification, a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change leads towards less loyalty than an evolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{Revolutionary w/ name}} = 2.74$ vs $M_{\text{Evolutionary}}$

= 3.22, $t = 1.91$, $p = .03$). In this same identification condition, a revolutionary logo rebranding leads to less loyalty than an evolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{Revolutionary}} = 2.77$ vs $M_{\text{Evolutionary}} = 3.22$, $t = 1.78$, $p = .04$). There is no significant difference between both revolutionary conditions. Although the revolutionary conditions lead to less loyalty than an evolutionary rebranding, it is only a small difference ($ES_{\text{Evolutionary vs Revolutionary}} = .32$, 95% CI: (-.04, .68); $ES_{\text{Evolutionary vs Revolutionary w/ name}} = .35$, 95% CI: (-.01, .70)).

When fans have high identification, the revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change leads to less loyalty than an evolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{Revolutionary w/ name}} = 4.70$ vs $M_{\text{Evolutionary}} = 6.03$, $t = 5.18$, $p < .001$). A revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change also leads to less loyalty than a revolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{Revolutionary w/ name}} = 4.70$ vs $M_{\text{Revolutionary}} = 5.44$, $t = 3.04$, $p = .001$). Furthermore, a revolutionary logo rebranding leads to less loyalty towards the club than an evolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{Revolutionary}} = 5.44$ vs $M_{\text{Evolutionary}} = 6.03$, $t = 2.61$, $p = .005$). In this identification condition, the difference in loyalty is more contrasted. There is a moderate difference in loyalty when comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding to an evolutionary logo rebranding and a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change to a revolutionary logo rebranding. Between a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change and an evolutionary logo rebranding, the difference becomes large ($ES_{\text{Evolutionary vs Revolutionary}} = .53$, 95% CI: (.12, .94); $ES_{\text{Revolutionary w/ name vs Revolutionary}} = .57$, 95% CI: (.20, .95); $ES_{\text{Revolutionary w/ name vs evolutionary}} = 1.03$, 95% CI: (.61, 1.44)).

To summarize, the difference in loyalty for fans with high identification (vs low identification) is moderate (vs small) when comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding to an evolutionary logo rebranding, moderate (vs no difference) when comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding with a

name change rebranding to a revolutionary logo rebranding, and large (vs small) when comparing a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change to an evolutionary logo rebranding.

For fans in the control group, they also had less loyalty following a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change than an evolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{Revolutionary w/ name}} = 4.05$ vs $M_{\text{Evolutionary}} = 4.89$, $t = 3.58$, $p < .001$). For this set of fans, they also had less loyalty following a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change than a revolutionary logo rebranding ($M_{\text{Revolutionary w/ name}} = 4.05$ vs $M_{\text{Revolutionary}} = 5.00$, $t = 3.89$, $p < .001$). There was no significant difference in loyalty between an evolutionary logo rebranding and a revolutionary logo rebranding. Fans in the control group are between low and high identification fans. The change in loyalty between a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change and an evolutionary logo rebranding is moderate, while it is large between a revolutionary logo rebranding with a name change and a revolutionary logo rebranding ($ES_{\text{Revolutionary w/ name vs evolutionary}} = .67$, 95% CI (.29, 1.04); $ES_{\text{Revolutionary w/ name vs Revolutionary}} = .75$, 95% CI: (.36, 1.14)).

Appendix N – Y/N questions

Percentage of respondents who answered yes (In the case of SD-SA, all 3 agrees)

	Evolutionary		Revolutionary		Revolutionary w/ name change	
	Low-ID	High-ID	Low-ID	High-ID	Low-ID	High-ID
Boycott Matches	6%	11%	14%	11%	30%	39%
Boycott team merchandise	14%	18%	21%	36%	14%	57%
Display the old logo instead of the new one	38%	52%	57%	72%	58%	80%
Follow another team more closely than I used to	9%	2%	4%	8%	7%	18%
Buy season tickets	31%	93%	16%	81%	16%	66%
Support protests against the rebranding	12%	36%	16%	70%	21%	80%
I will watch more games illegally through piracy	20%	9%	18%	26%	18%	33%
Call for the team's owner to sell the team	0%	9%	5%	25%	14%	44%

Call for the club president's resignation 5% 18% 9% 38% 14% 61%

	Low-ID		High-ID	
	Kramer's V	p	Kramer's V	p
Boycott Matches	0.20	0.17	0.30	0.005
Boycott team merchandise	0.09	0.45	0.33	<.001
Display the old logo instead of the new one	0.18	0.05	0.25	0.008
Follow another team more closely than I used to	0.09	0.46	0.22	0.02
Buy season tickets	0.17	0.07	0.27	0.003
Support protests against the rebranding	0.10	0.43	0.38	<.001
I will watch more games illegally through piracy	0.03	0.93	0.23	0.02
Call for the team's owner to sell the team	0.22	0.14	0.30	0.006
Call for the club president's resignation	0.25	0.04	0.39	<.001

Table 19: Percentage of respondents who answered yes (in the case of SD-SA), all 3 agrees)

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Chapitre 4 : Discussion générale et conclusion

Pour conclure, le chapitre 4 présentera un résumé des hypothèses supportées de ce mémoire. Les implications théoriques seront ensuite détaillées, suivi des implications managériales. Puis, les limites de l'étude et les futures opportunités de recherches seront élaborées. Pour terminer, une courte conclusion fera le retour vers la question de recherche.

Table 20. Résumé des hypothèses supportées

Hypothèses	Supportées
<p>H1: Un rebranding avec des changements plus forts mène à un plus fort a) désir de vengeance, b) intention de se plaindre, c) agressions verbales, d) agressions physiques, f) comportements de représailles, et moins de e) loyauté envers l'équipe comparativement à un rebranding avec des plus petits changements. Je m'attends aux comparaisons suivantes : « rebranding révolutionnaire de logo avec un changement du nom de l'équipe » > « rebranding révolutionnaire de logo » > « rebranding évolutionnaire de logo » pour les réponses négatives (H1a-d et f), et le contraire pour la réponse positive (H1e).</p>	<p>H1a, H1b et H1f sont supportées. H1c et H1e sont partiellement supportées. H1d n'est pas supportée.</p>

<p>H2: Les effets du type de rebranding sur a) le désir de vengeance, b) les intentions de plaintes, c) l'agression verbale, d) l'agression physique, e) la loyauté et f) les comportements de représailles – comme prédit dans H1 – sont médiés par la trahison perçue.</p>	<p>H2a, H2b, H2c, H2d, H2e et H2f sont supportées.</p>
<p>H3: Le type de rebranding interagit avec l'identification des fans pour prédire la trahison, de sorte que lorsque les fans ont une forte identification, un rebranding révolutionnaire de logo avec un changement de nom (vs révolutionnaire de logo vs évolutionnaire de logo) mène à un plus fort sentiment de trahison comparativement à un fan avec une faible identification.</p>	<p>H3 est supportée.</p>
<p>H4 : L'effet indirect d'un rebranding révolutionnaire de logo avec un changement de nom (vs révolutionnaire de logo vs évolutionnaire de logo) par l'entremise de la trahison sur a) le désir de vengeance, b) les intentions de plainte, c) l'agression verbale, d) l'agression physique et e) la perte de loyauté</p>	<p>H4a, H4b, H4c, H4d et H4e sont supportées.</p>

<p>est plus fort (en termes absolus) lorsque les fans ont une forte identification que lorsqu'ils ont une faible identification.</p>	
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Tableau 20: Résumé des hypothèses supportées.

4.1 Implications théoriques

Premièrement, je contribue à la littérature des rebrandings sportifs et de leurs conséquences négatives (Ahn et al., 2013; Agha, Goldman et Dixon, 2016; Williams et al., 2021; Williams et Son, 2022). Mes résultats suggèrent que plus les changements apportés à la marque sportive sont de grande amplitude, plus fortes seront les conséquences négatives. Plus précisément, un rebranding révolutionnaire de logo, lorsque comparé à un rebranding évolutionnaire de logo, entraîne les partisans de l'équipe à avoir un plus fort désir de vengeance, d'intentions de se plaindre, d'agression verbale et de comportements de représailles. Un rebranding révolutionnaire de logo avec un changement de nom, lorsque comparé à un rebranding évolutionnaire de logo, entraîne les fans à avoir un plus fort de désir de vengeance, d'intentions de se plaindre, d'agression verbale, de comportements de représailles et moins de loyauté. Finalement, suivant un rebranding de logo révolutionnaire avec un changement de nom, lorsque comparé à un rebranding révolutionnaire de logo, les fans auront un plus fort désir de vengeance, d'intentions de se plaindre, de comportements de représailles et moins de loyauté.

Deuxièmement, je démontre que le modèle des transgressions de service et de trahison de Grégoire et Fisher (2008) peut être appliqué à la littérature des rebrandings sportifs. Les équipes sportives professionnelles peuvent trahir leurs partisans. Je démontre que les rebrandings sportifs sont

perçus, par les partisans de l'équipe, comme une transgression relationnelle. Ils sont une violation de ce qui est normal dans le contexte de la relation entre le fan et son équipe. Ainsi, les fans se sentent trahis par leur équipe suite au rebranding. Afin de rétablir une forme d'équilibre social, la trahison suscite des comportements de représailles chez les partisans de l'équipe. Mes résultats montrent que la trahison médie la relation entre tous les comportements à l'étude (désir de vengeance, intentions de plaintes, agression verbale, agression physique, loyauté et comportements de représailles) et le type de rebranding. Des changements plus majeurs sont aussi synonymes d'une transgression plus forte. Les partisans perçoivent donc un plus fort sentiment de trahison avec chaque changement de plus en plus important lors d'un rebranding. Un rebranding de logo révolutionnaire engendre plus de trahison qu'un rebranding de logo évolutionnaire, tout comme un rebranding de logo révolutionnaire avec un changement de nom engendre plus de trahison qu'un rebranding de logo évolutionnaire. Logiquement, c'est aussi le cas entre les deux conditions de rebranding aux extrêmes l'une de l'autre. Mes résultats montrent aussi que la trahison agit en tant que force motivationnelle (Grégoire et Fisher, 2008) qui pousse les fans à exercer des représailles contre l'organisation suite à cette transgression. Plus forte est la trahison perçue par les fans, plus forts seront le désir de vengeance, les intentions de se plaindre, l'agression verbale, l'agression physique, la perte de loyauté et les comportements de représailles.

Troisièmement, mes résultats supportent la littérature actuelle sur les rebrandings sportifs et l'identification des fans qui démontre que les partisans les plus fortement identifiés, ou plus engagés, sont ceux qui ont les réactions les plus fortes (Ahn et al., 2013; Potter et Keen, 2012; Rocca et Vogl-Bauer, 1999; Simmons, Naraine et Greenwell, 2023; Wann et Branscombe 1992). Ils sont aussi en cohérence avec l'effet « love becomes hate » (Grégoire et Fisher, 2008), qui affirme qu'une relation forte (vs faible) entre une organisation et son consommateur engendre une

plus forte (vs faible) perception de trahison, et indirectement de représailles. Suivant cette logique, mes résultats démontrent que la trahison issue du rebranding et ses conséquences négatives sont généralement plus fortes (vs plus faible) lorsque le partisan a une plus haute (vs faible) identification. Plus précisément, mes résultats montrent que l'identification modère la relation entre le type de rebranding et la trahison, mais seulement lorsqu'un rebranding de logo révolutionnaire avec un changement de nom est comparé à une des deux autres conditions. Lorsqu'un rebranding révolutionnaire de logo est comparé à un rebranding évolutionnaire de logo, l'identification n'a pas d'effet sur la relation entre le rebranding et la trahison : les partisans qui s'identifient fortement ou faiblement se sentent plus trahis par un rebranding de logo révolutionnaire qu'un rebranding de logo évolutionnaire, mais l'effet n'est pas significativement différent entre les deux groupes de fans. Dans cette comparaison de type de rebranding, le rebranding avec les changements de plus grande amplitude fait percevoir une augmentation modérée (vs modérée) de la trahison pour les fans à forte (vs faible) identification. Cependant, lorsque le rebranding révolutionnaire de logo avec un changement de nom est comparé à un rebranding révolutionnaire de logo, il y a un effet (vs aucun effet) du type de rebranding sur la trahison, et indirectement sur tous les comportements à l'étude, pour les fans avec une forte (vs faible) identification. Dans cette comparaison de type de rebranding, celui avec les changements de plus forte amplitude fait ressentir une augmentation modérée (vs similaire) de la trahison pour les fans avec une forte (vs faible) identification. Logiquement, suite à un rebranding révolutionnaire de logo avec un changement de nom, l'effet du rebranding sur la trahison, et indirectement sur les comportements, est plus fort (vs plus faible) pour les partisans avec une forte (vs faible) identification, lorsque comparé à un rebranding évolutionnaire de logo. Dans cette comparaison de type de rebranding, celui avec les changements de plus forte amplitude fait

ressentir une forte, presque très forte, (vs modérée) augmentation du sentiment de trahison pour les partisans à forte (vs faible) identification. En d'autres mots, la médiation n'est modérée que lorsque le nom de l'équipe est modifié. Ces résultats sont conformes à ceux obtenus par Simmons, Naraine et Greenwell (2023) qui ont trouvé que les partisans plus passionnés accordent plus d'importance au nom de l'équipe dans un contexte de rebranding révolutionnaire que les fans moins passionnés pour expliquer les attitudes des fans face à l'équipe. Ainsi, mes résultats suggèrent que le nom de l'équipe est d'une importance capitale pour expliquer les réactions des fans en situation de rebranding : les fans à une faible identification ne ressentent pas de différence significative de trahison entre les deux conditions de rebranding révolutionnaires, alors que ceux à haute identification se sentent plus fortement trahis suite à un rebranding qui modifie le nom. Pour les fans avec une faible identification, le niveau de perception de trahison atteint un plateau suite à un rebranding révolutionnaire de logo et n'augmente pas plus suite à un rebranding de logo révolutionnaire avec un changement de nom, alors qu'en contraste, dans cette comparaison, les fans à forte identification perçoivent une plus forte trahison. Ceci permet d'expliquer les conséquences négatives plus fortes qu'un rebranding qui modifie le nom de l'équipe a sur les fans à haute identification que sur les fans à faible identification.

4.2 Implications managériales

Cette recherche met en lumière les dangers de rebrandings mal exécutés. Il est particulièrement important pour les responsables marketing des équipes sportives professionnelles de choisir l'amplitude appropriée de changements lors de la mise en place d'un rebranding. L'amplitude des changements choisie doit être cohérente avec leurs objectifs et ne doit pas être de plus grande envergure que nécessaire. Si les changements apportés à la marque sportive sont injustement grands, ils entraîneront leur lot de conséquences négatives. Les individus dans des rôles

décisionnels devraient alors toujours viser à faire les plus petits changements possibles à l'image et l'identité de la marque, se rapprochant le plus possible d'un rebranding évolutionnaire. Dans l'ensemble, mes résultats montrent que les directeurs marketing ne devraient pas changer le nom de leur équipe, puisque cette action a un impact négatif particulièrement fort sur les partisans les plus engagés à l'équipe. Ainsi, lors du rebranding d'une équipe sportive professionnelle, je suggère de seulement modifier le logo de l'équipe, puisque cette décision entraîne significativement moins de représailles et autres conséquences négatives. Cependant, dans certains cas, les responsables marketing n'ont pas d'autre choix que de changer le nom de l'équipe. Par exemple, une équipe qui aurait un nom à connotation raciste avec lequel elle souhaite couper toute association n'aurait nul autre choix que de modifier le nom de l'équipe. Dans ces cas de figure, il est primordial d'effectuer des études de marché rigoureuses avec les fans de l'équipe qui ont une forte identification. Les individus en charge du rebranding devraient concentrer leurs efforts sur des entrevues et des sondages avec les partisans les plus fortement identifiés de l'équipe, puisque ce sont ceux qui ressentent la plus forte trahison suite à un changement du nom de l'équipe. Les responsables marketing devraient aussi travailler main dans la main avec différents groupes de fans, puisque leur support pourrait influencer l'opinion générale des fans dans la bonne direction. Ainsi, ils devraient passer en entrevue et prendre les rétroactions, en plus des fans à forte identification *normaux*, des membres respectés et connus issus des communautés de fans et autres acteurs clés autour de l'équipe. Ces individus pourraient être les meneurs de différents groupes d'Ultras, des partisans spécifiques connus et appréciés dans la communauté, des personnalités publiques qui ont une forte relation avec l'équipe, des journalistes sportifs qui suivent l'équipe depuis longtemps, etc. Tous ces individus devraient être utilisés comme des ambassadeurs pour supporter et favoriser l'adoption du rebranding au sein de toute la communauté de fans. Ce support envers le rebranding

serait authentique, puisque la nouvelle marque proviendrait de la discussion entre l'organisation et ces personnes qui représentent les fans de l'équipe. Ces efforts permettront de légitimer le rebranding puisque le contrat implicite entre les partisans et l'équipe n'aura pas été violé, mais plutôt renégocié en bonne et due forme. Sans violation des normes, le rebranding ne devrait pas engendrer de sentiment de trahison, et donc les impacts négatifs de ce dernier seront fortement réduits. La littérature antérieure supporte aussi l'idée que la participation et l'inclusion dans le processus de rebranding de différents acteurs clés autour de la marque favorise son adoption et son succès (Aspara et al., 2014; Joseph et al., 2021; Simmons, Naraine et Greenwell, 2023; Tarnovskaya et Biedenbach, 2018; Walsh et al., 2018).

4.3 Limites et futures opportunités de recherches

Ma recherche possède plusieurs limites. Premièrement, malgré que les intentions prédisent les comportements, ce n'est pas toujours entièrement le cas (Chandon, Morwitz and Reinartz, 2005). Dans cette même ligne de pensée, certains auteurs croient que « to measure the genuine redesigned logo effect in the real world, it is important to use actual logos rather than fictional ones. » (Ahn et al., 2013, p.15). Cette étude a été effectuée dans un cadre expérimental avec des marques sportives fictives pour supprimer l'influence de variables externes associées à une marque connue (e.g. « experimental confounds »), mais des recherches futures devraient essayer de reproduire les mêmes résultats obtenus avec une marque sportive réelle et des réactions de partisans réelles. Ceci ajouterait de la crédibilité additionnelle à mes résultats.

Deuxièmement, malgré que les prétests et les différentes itérations des logos entre les études 1a et 1b aient permis de minimiser les différences significatives dans la perception des logos fictifs utilisés dans cette recherche, il restait néanmoins certaines différences significatives. Ces deux

différences étaient l'appréciation de la palette de couleurs utilisée dans le logo et s'ils pouvaient imaginer une équipe professionnelle afficher le logo. Celles-ci sont des limites de cette étude puisqu'il est possible, quoique peu probable, que ces deux différentes caractéristiques des logos agissent à titre de « confounds variables » et pourraient ainsi influencer les résultats. Cependant, ces caractéristiques ne devraient pas avoir impacté les résultats puisque dans toutes les conditions, elles étaient perçues positivement par les participants en étant bien au-dessus du point médian de l'échelle, seulement à un degré différent. Néanmoins, des recherches futures pourraient recréer les résultats de cette étude avec des logos qui n'ont pas de différences significatives au niveau de ces caractéristiques.

Troisièmement, l'étude actuelle se concentre sur les partisans d'équipes de soccer. Cependant, la culture du soccer se distingue d'autres cultures sportives par la présence des hooligans. Les hooligans sont définis comme étant des « voyous qui se livrent à des actes de violence lors de compétitions sportives » (Larousse, 2024). Malgré que ce type de fans représente un petit pourcentage des partisans totaux, il fait tout de même partie de la culture de ce sport. Les hooligans, dans les cas les plus extrêmes, ont déjà poignardé des fans rivaux, vandalisé des quartiers, ou encore lancé des pierres sur l'autobus d'une équipe rivale (Frosi, 2023). Selon la théorie de la comparaison sociale, les individus se comparent aux autres pour évaluer leur propre opinion (Festinger, 1954). La comparaison sociale descendante se produit lorsqu'un individu se compare à un autre qui est pire que lui-même pour justifier son propre comportement, que ce comportement soit acceptable ou non. Les partisans de soccer pourraient alors être bien plus propices à réagir plus intensément dans certaines situations puisqu'ils justifieraient leur propre comportement, normalement jugé inadéquat, par comparaison sociale descendante aux hooligans. Ainsi, les fans de soccer pourraient être plus sujets à percevoir la vengeance et les représailles comme des

comportements plus appropriés et plus modérés que les fans d'autres sports dans lesquels les hooligans n'existent pas. Les résultats de l'étude pourraient donc différer s'ils étaient reproduits avec les fans d'un autre sport que le soccer. Cette recherche devrait alors être répliquée avec les partisans d'autres sports, comme le hockey. Le hockey a, généralement, des partisans plus modérés que le soccer (e.g. au hockey, les fans des deux équipes sont assis les uns à côté des autres dans les arénas sans problème, alors que les fans des deux équipes qui s'affrontent sont séparés et restent dans leurs propres sections au soccer européen, afin de minimiser les problèmes).

4.4 Conclusion

Dans ce mémoire, je souhaitais comprendre l'apparition de représailles par les partisans d'une équipe sportive professionnelle suite à son rebranding majeur, notamment son changement de nom. Je défendais que l'amplitude des changements apportés à la marque sportive soit la cause de ces réactions extrêmes et déviantes. Aussi, j'avais avancé que les partisans avec la plus forte identification étaient ceux qui auraient la plus forte réaction négative suite au rebranding. En me basant sur un modèle de trahison et de vengeance (e.g. Grégoire & Fisher, 2008), j'ai fait deux expérimentations « between-subject » pour étudier le phénomène. J'y ai démontré que les rebrandings étaient perçus comme des transgressions relationnelles. Par ce fait, les fans, suite au rebranding de leur équipe, se sentent trahis. Cette trahison engendre des comportements néfastes, dont le désir de vengeance, les intentions de se plaindre, l'agression verbale, l'agression physique, des comportements de représailles et la perte de loyauté. La taille des changements apportés est au cœur de la trahison que les partisans ressentent. Un rebranding avec des changements plus majeurs est perçu comme une plus forte transgression qu'un rebranding avec des changements plus mineurs. Une plus grande transgression suscite un plus fort sentiment de trahison, et donc indirectement des plus fortes réactions négatives chez les partisans de l'équipe. Cette recherche a aussi mis de l'avant

l'importance de l'identification des partisans. En parallèle à l'effet « love becomes hate », les fans à forte identification, comparativement aux fans à faible identification, ressentaient une plus forte trahison suite au rebranding de leur équipe. Mon mémoire fait ainsi principalement des contributions à la littérature des rebrandings sportifs et de l'identification des partisans. Pour les responsables marketing des équipes sportives professionnelles, mon mémoire montre aussi l'importance de faire les plus petits changements possibles dans l'exercice d'un rebranding. Dans les cas où le changement important est inévitable, il est très important d'agir avec grande prudence et d'effectuer, avant le rebranding, de nombreuses études de marché rigoureuses auprès de ses partisans les plus fortement identifiés. Finalement, mon mémoire offre plusieurs opportunités de recherche future. Il serait pertinent de reproduire cette étude au sein d'autres cultures ou d'autres sports. Des chercheurs pourraient aussi se pencher sur les effets de la cause justifiant le rebranding ou encore sur la période suivant un rebranding qui a manqué sa cible et les différentes façons de rescaper la relation de l'équipe avec ses fans.

Chapitre 5 : Bibliographie

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