

Experimental Research in Branding: A Tale of Two Issues

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The Two Issues

- Control



Alternative
Explanations

- Realism



Procedure

Alternative Explanations: Choice of Target Brands and Stimuli

- Factors to consider:
 - Can the characteristics of your stimuli partly or fully account for your results?
 - Brand extensions feedback effects
 - What else (other than your focal variables) varies with your stimuli?
 - Brand commitment
- Pretest and pretest some more!

Alternative Explanations: Procedure

- **Cover story** (mindset of the subject)
- **Order of presentation**
 - information
 - dependent variables

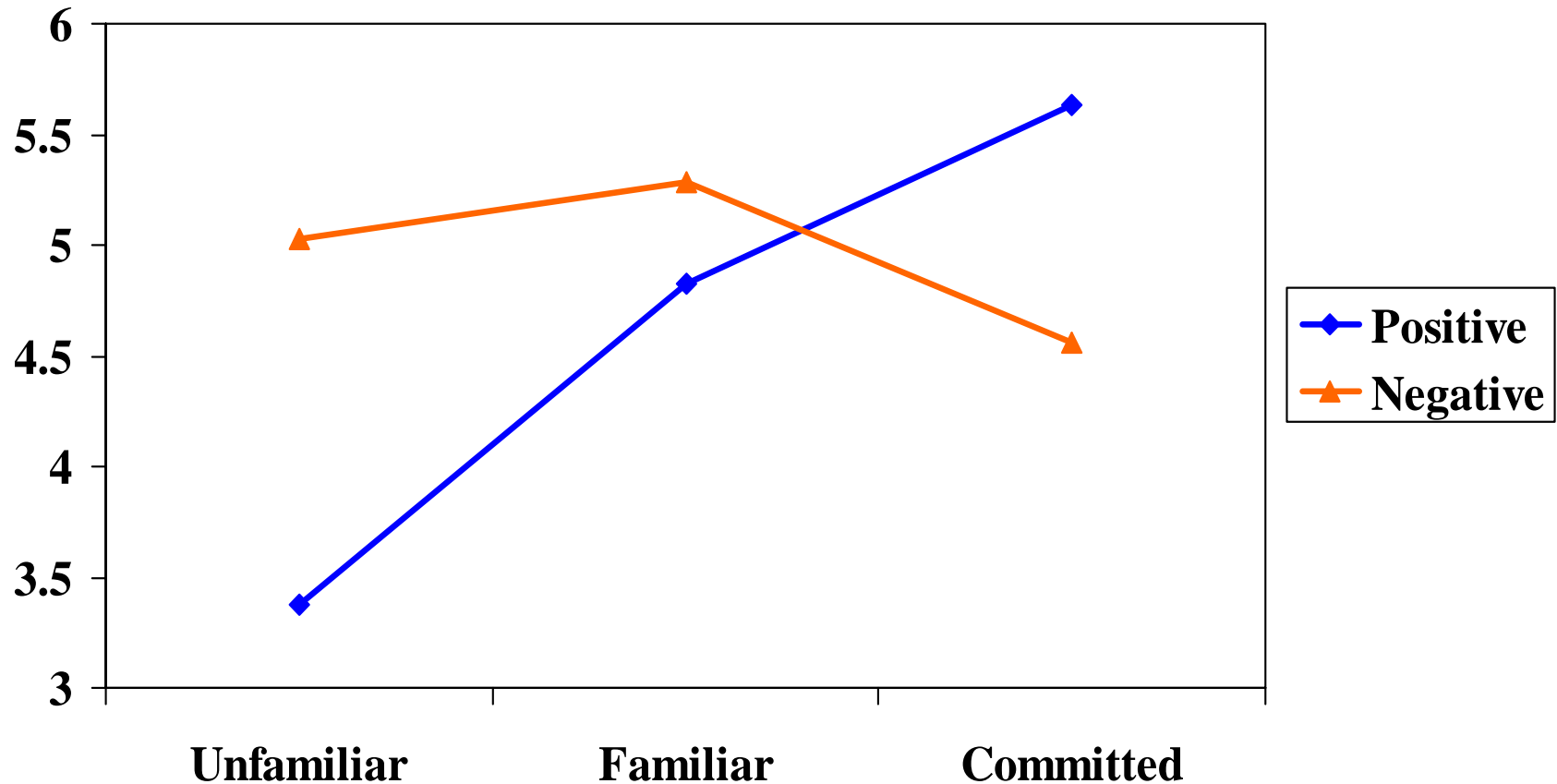
Alternative Explanations: Measures to Assess

- Manipulation checks and confounding checks
- Process variables
- Control groups

The Issue of Realism

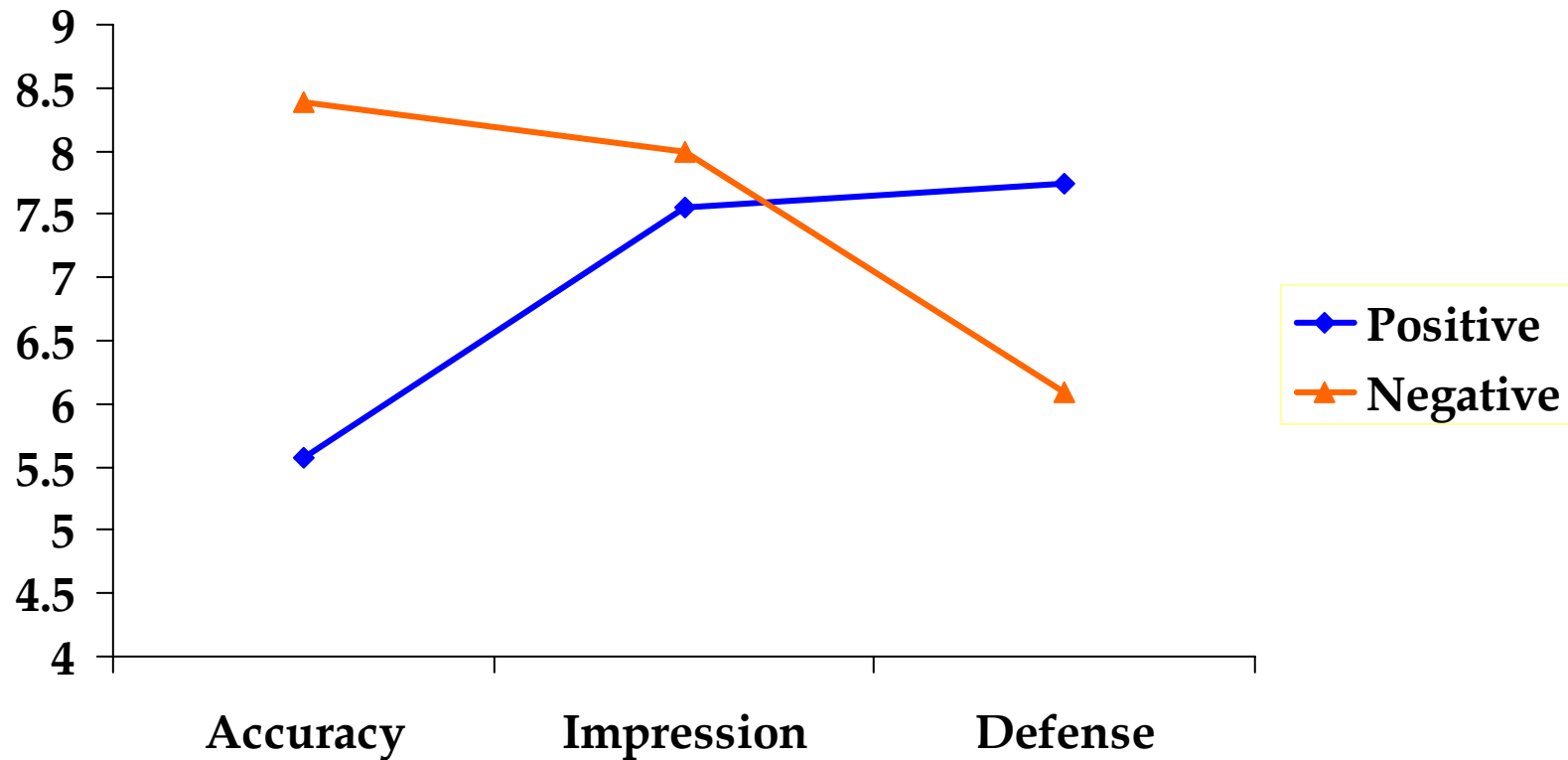
- Which background variables are being controlled in this research? (Lynch 1982)
- How realistic is it to control these background variables?
- Do they alter the relationship between the independent and dependent variable?
- How realistic are the stimuli?

Perceived Diagnosticity of Brand-Related Negative and Positive Information



Source: Ahluwalia 2002, JCR

Perceived Diagnosticity of Brand-Related Negative and Positive Information Under Different Processing Motivations



Source: Ahluwalia 2002, JCR

In Sum

- The level of control comes with costs and expectations
- Be cognizant of them when you plan and design your experiments
- Good luck with your research!