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# The Psychology and Behavior of Consumers in the Fashion Industry

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# The Psychology and Behavior of Consumers in the Fashion Industry

Jessica DeLace

Sponsor: Dr. Yvette Harps-Logan

# Project Layout

- Background Research
- Question
- Hypothesis
- Experiment
- Data Analysis
- Conclusion

# Background

- Retailers such as Bergdorf Goodman, Bloomingdales and Saks Fifth Avenue offer designer goods at higher price points, while companies such as Forever 21, Steve Madden, and Arden B. offer similar designs at lower price points.
- A status level, which is known as positioning, is determined by retail stores and is used to maximize their performance.
- Stores with higher price points are able to appeal to their consumers on a psychological level after the traditional metrics were seen as inadequate.

# Background

- Psychographics, the study of consumer attitudes, opinions, and values, is becoming the standard for marketing research and marketing for high end companies.
- People are motivated to satisfy their individual self concept, their desire to belong to a specific social group, and their esteem needs.
- Lifestyle choices include materialism, ambition, orientation towards power and status, and the desire to be popular.

# Background

- Marketers, fashion researchers, and retailers continue to have an interest in the social values and influences of groups, especially organized groups whose degree of individual influence is high.
- Clothing is worn in a public space, therefore, we dress for others.
- Retail stores are exponents of status marketing, and can create status and fashion symbolism by adhering to its competitive position.
- “College students are one of the few groups that are pressured, required, or influenced to wear particular types of fashion.”

# Background

- There are ways to achieve a designer look without paying the high price.
- How much does a designer name influence the consumer, even if there is a product that is offered that looks almost identical to the original?

# Question

If apparel products are almost identical in appearance, will college-age females prefer the high end product due to psychological forces?



# Hypothesis

Female college consumers will be more inclined to prefer brand name merchandise over generic products.

# Methodology

- Two surveys were developed that compared high end merchandise with lower end merchandise.
- The survey was distributed to one hundred TMD students at two different times in the semester.

# Experiment

# Survey 1



# Survey 2



**Fendi**

\$655

**Miss Me**

\$55.95



**Herve Leger**

\$1150

**Arden B.**

\$69



**Alexander Wang**

\$575

**Forever 21**

\$29.80



**Pierre Hardy**

\$1000

**Chinese Laundry**

\$119



**Stuart Weitzman**

\$395

**Steve Madden**

\$69



**Chloe**

\$690

**BCBGeneration**

\$110

# Results

- The first survey's results show that consumers were split down the middle for most of the products.
- The second survey's results had an increase in some brand name products, while others stayed almost the same.

# Data

## Products

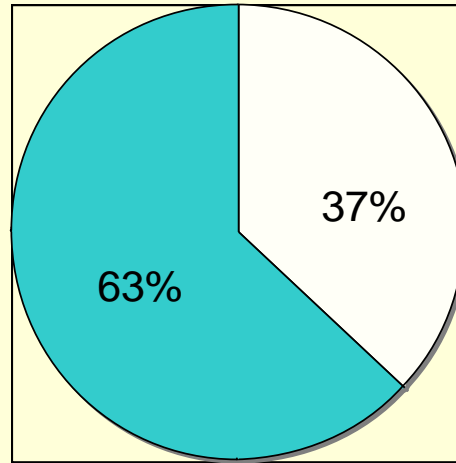


\$655  
\$55.95

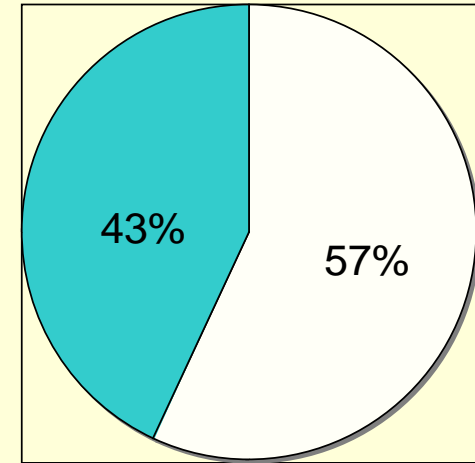


\$1000  
\$119

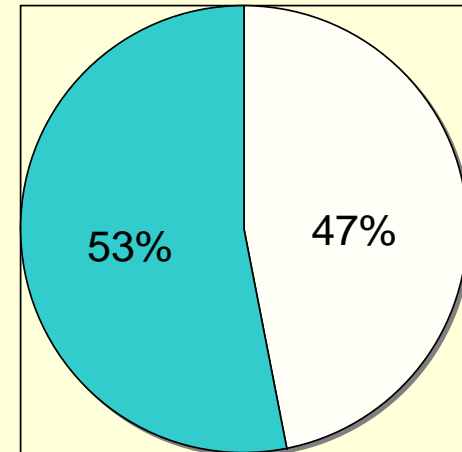
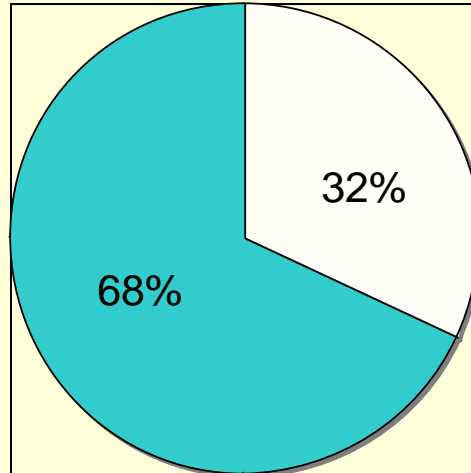
## Survey 1 Without brands/prices



## Survey 2 With brands/prices



□ Fendi  
■ Miss Me



□ Pierre Hardy  
■ Chinese Laundry

# Data

## Products



**Herve Leger**

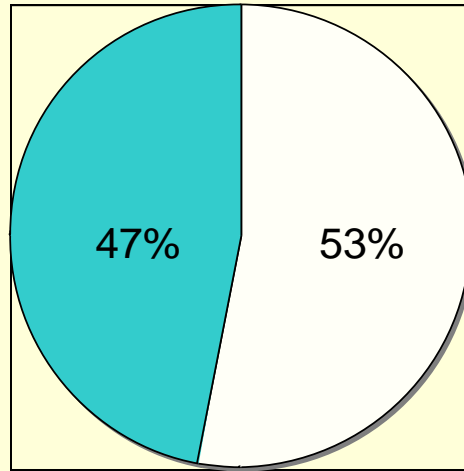
\$1150

**Arden B.**

\$69

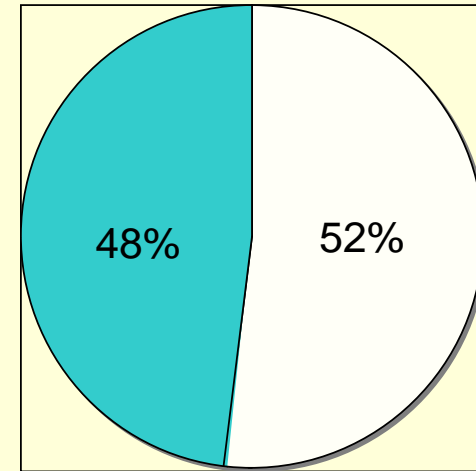
## Survey 1

Without brands/prices



## Survey 2

With brands/prices



□ Herve Leger  
■ Arden B.

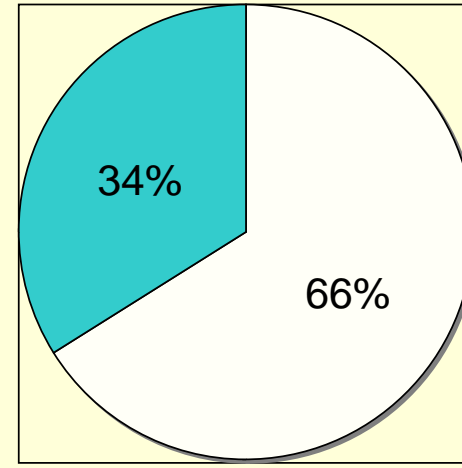
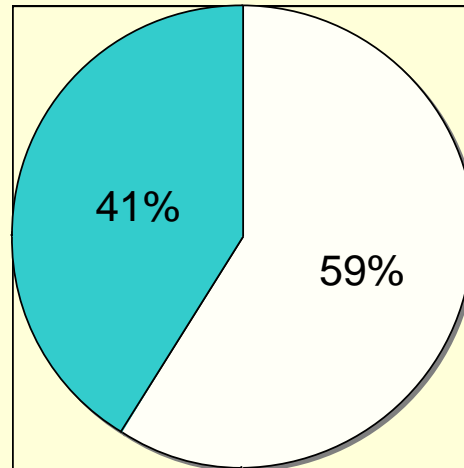


**Stuart Weitzman**

\$395

**Steve Madden**

\$69



□ Stuart Weitzman  
■ Steve Madden



# Data

## Products



Alexander Wang

Forever 21

\$575

\$29.80



Chloe

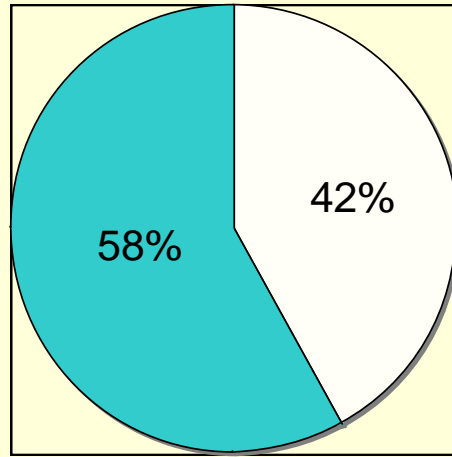
BCBGeneration

\$690

\$110

## Survey 1

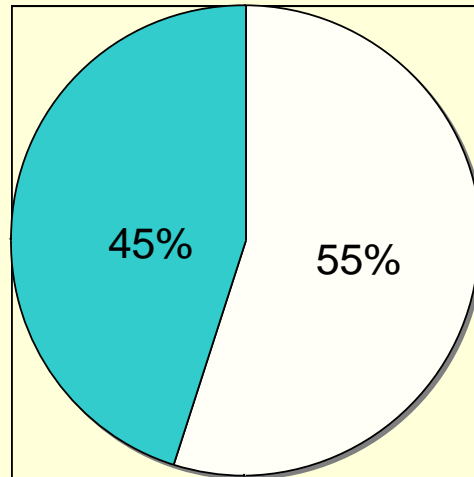
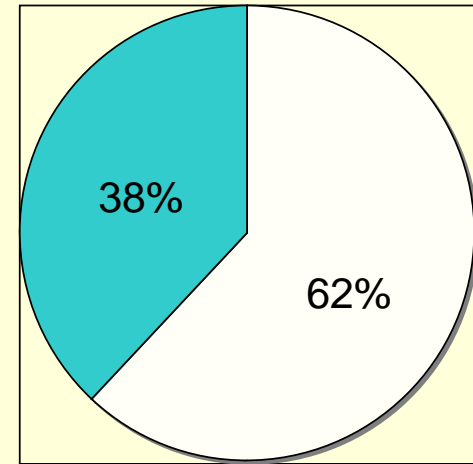
Without brands/prices



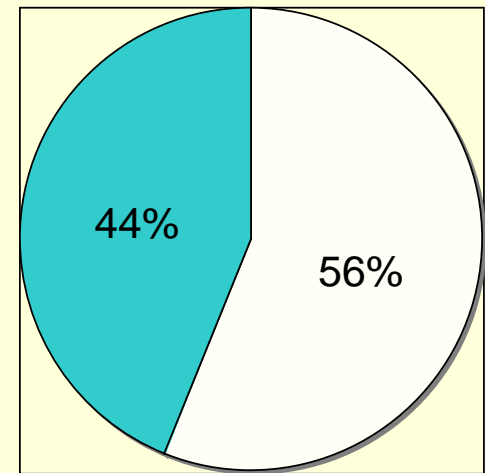
□ Alexander Wang  
■ Forever 21

## Survey 2

With brands/prices

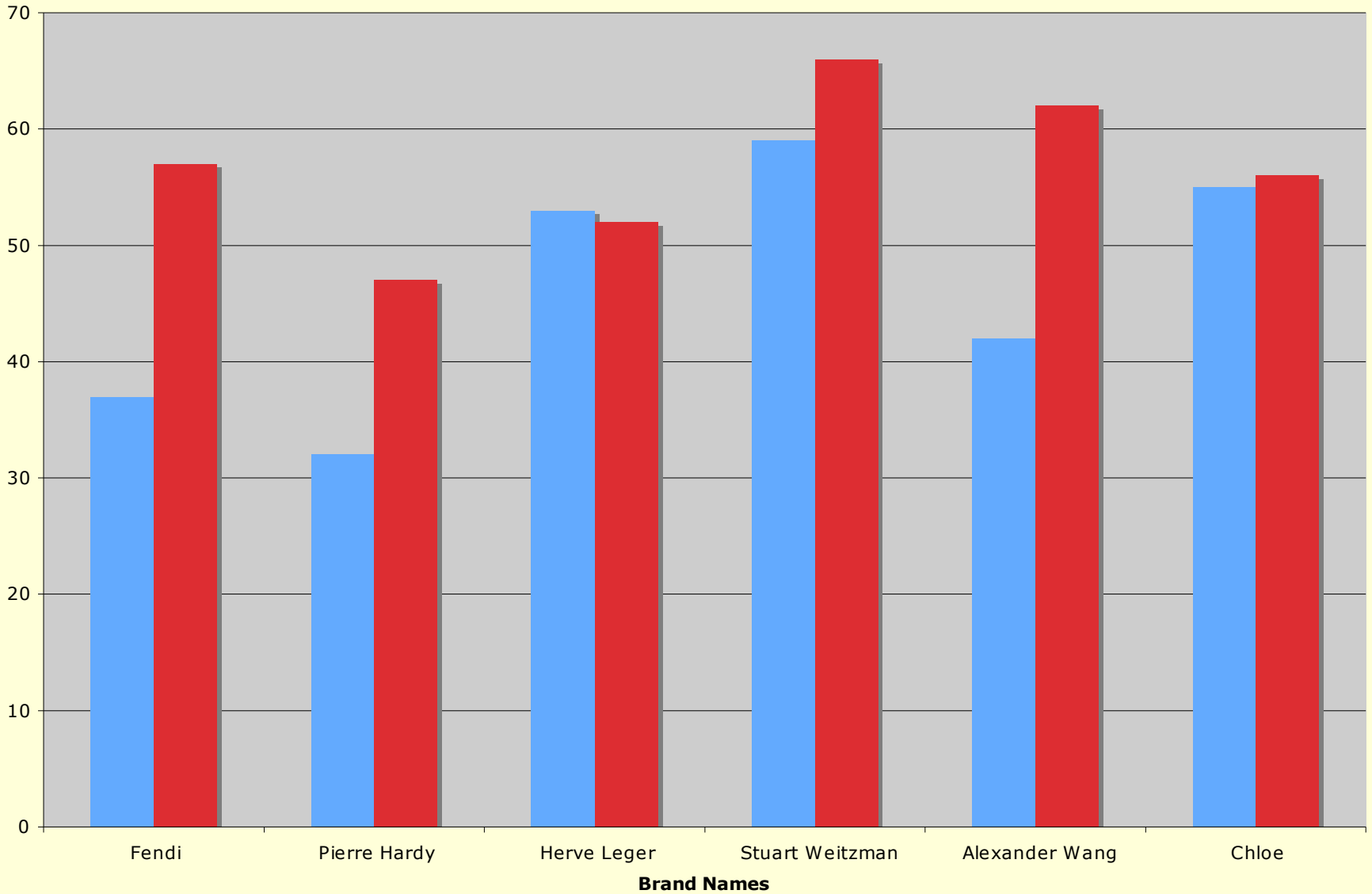


□ Chloe  
■ BCBGeneration



# Data Conclusion

Survey 1 Survey 2



# Results

- Although there were mixed results after the distribution of the second survey, some expensive products were chosen more when the brand or designer name, and prices were shown.
- Some factors that worked against the hypothesis include individual preferences, and the fact that it is a theoretical survey.

# Summary

- After analyzing the results, it is obvious that psychographics plays a role in consumer preferences.
- If retailers spend more time and effort researching this method, it can be used to their advantage.

# References

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