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B2B Buying Decision-Making and Social Media:

Examining the role of emotions and social media in organizational buying decisions.

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Abstract

Social media has increased in its usage and opportunities during the past decade and gained significance for B2B companies. The purchasing decision-making process can be shaped by using social media to trigger essential emotions of the buyers. However, the current literature landscape does not embody the same scope as it occurs in the economy. This study aims to understand the emotional states in the B2B buying decision-making process and the correlating impact of social media on buying behavior. A total of 12 in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted and analyzed. The analysis reveals emotions such as expectation, joy, fear, excitement, interest, hope, and trust as the most commonly encountered ones in the B2B buying decision-making process. Further, it emphasizes the buyers' social media usage behavior and discloses social media as a tool to evoke emotions. The study contributes to an improved understanding of the emotional appeals and social media effect in the organizational purchasing decision. Hence, managerial implications consist, for instance, of an efficient resource allocation in terms of B2B social media campaigns.

Keywords

Emotions, B2B, Decision-making, B2B buying behavior, Organizational buying process, Social Media

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1. Introduction

In today's digital economy, business-to-business (B2B) buying processes are heavily data and information-based procedures (Zahay et al., 2015). Information sourcing tools have evolved from search engines, websites as digital marketplaces to social media as communication tools. The latter is especially depicted by various studies indicating that 83 percent of B2B decision-makers use social media and are affected by social media information (Schimel, 2018). One underlying reason is the increase of millennials in B2B buying decisions (Shea et al., 2017). Supplementary to the socio-economical shift, academia commenced allocating time to research (Weinberg & Pehlivan, 2011). However, recent studies by Iankova et al. (2019) elaborate that many B2B companies evaluated social media as irrelevant and comparably less critical due to the perception of rational decision-making (Michaelidou et al., 2011). Contrarily, current studies refute this approach, emphasizing B2B buyers' connection on a personal and emotional meta-level (Corporate Executive Board Company, 2013). Thus, social media offers an opportunity to trigger and evoke relevant emotions through marketing messages.

To date, the literature indicates scarcity regarding social media usage in B2B organizations and the emotional impact on buyers' buying behaviors (Diba et al., 2019). The main focus of past research was twofold, being the content strategies for B2B marketing communication (Swani et al., 2017; Swani et al., 2020) and social media's integration, application, and use (e.g., Huotari et al., 2015; Järvinen & Taiminen, 2016; Mehmet & Clarke, 2016; Wang et al., 2016). Studies related to the role of emotions in B2B purchases, the types of emotions appealed, and the correlating impact of social media commonly explore the process from a marketer's perspective instead of a buyer's point of view, leaving a research and literature gap. Therefore, the buyer's perspective on social media usage and the impact of emotions during organizational decision-making are uncharted avenues implicating a lack of literature. To develop effective marketing strategies, it must first be examined whether social media plays a role in the B2B buying process,

which social media channels are used, for what and how it influences the respective stage of the process in an emotional context.

The following study is dedicated to find answers for this literary void and contribute to an improved understanding of the subconscious emotions and the effect of social media. Therefore, this study deals with the following research question: "*What emotions are involved in the B2B purchasing decision-making process, and how does social media contribute to it?*". Achieving the answer will enable marketers to become efficacious in establishing frameworks and dedicating capabilities to social media endeavors in the B2B context. Moreover, this study addresses marketing scientists' request to examine the necessity of more theoretical treatment and in-depth exploration (Diba et al., 2019; Kemp et al., 2018; Kemp et al., 2020). It contributes to recent literature by providing in-depth insights regarding distinct emotions encountered in B2B buying decisions at each step of the purchasing process from a buyer's perspective.

The approach of this research can be categorized into two main parts. In the first section, a profound analysis of the existing literature landscape regarding social media impact in B2B buying decisions as well as the B2B buying process and emotional influences is described. The second part empirically analyzes the actual state through in-depth interviews with B2B decision-makers in practice. Finally, the results are discussed, as well as limitations and recommendations for future research are demonstrated.

2. Literature Review

To understand the fundamental components of this research, the following sections expose the literature of the two main parts. Firstly, the impact of social media on the B2B purchasing procedure is analyzed. Following, emotional leverages within the various stages of B2B buying are depicted.

2.1 Social media in B2B purchasing decision-making

In order to receive a thorough comprehension of the following section, one has to understand B2B firms in a broader perception. B2B companies are defined by the American Marketing Association (2015) as organizations that distribute their products and services to other businesses instead of business-to-consumer (B2C) organizations that sell directly to individual consumers. B2B products often equate with the synonym "industrial goods", for instance, being software-as-a-service (SaaS) subscriptions, safety solutions, machinery, and equipment, as well as office materials. In the B2B environment, fewer companies are involved in business operations than the number of consumers involved in B2C interactions. Further, the nature of business transactions between B2B business partners appear more intensely and directly. (Jussila et al., 2014) For this study, the upcoming section serves as an overview and explains the term B2B marketing with an emphasis on social media. Furthermore, it elaborates on social media's usefulness for corporate buying and how social media might contribute to emotions within the buyer's decision-making.

2.1.1 B2B marketing and social media

As the name indicates, B2B marketing comprises the design and promotion of products and services to organizations who use them for their services or sell them unchanged to other organizations (Masciadri & Zupancic, 2013). Comparable to consumer goods marketing, B2B marketing aims to create competitive advantages to offer better performance than the competition in consumers' minds. B2B advertisement takes place in traditional media and non-traditional digital media (Swani et al., 2020). Today's B2B industry recognizes the necessity of building brands on a digital basis, meeting the same expectations as all major B2C brands. They need to: (1) be always accessible, (2) provide usefulness and added value, (3) stay open to participation. However, due to the B2B buying process's complexity and characteristics, B2B marketing communications tend to be more information-oriented and straightforward than B2C.

Nowadays, these three aspects are mainly represented by online branding, interactive marketing, and social media. (Gustafson et al., 2019) As demonstrated by recent research, social media increasingly appeals to B2B academics (Salo, 2017; Wang et al., 2016).

The literature offers several definitions for the term social media. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) define social media as "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web. 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content" (p.61). Social networks, content communities, virtual environments or collaborative projects are embraced through digital social media platforms (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Companies can use a multitude of social media channels simultaneously to engage with their target group (Andersson & Wikström, 2017). Further, the companies' leverage of social media is influenced by distinct features, cultures and norms as well as the means of communication embedded in the social media channels (Kietzmann et al., 2011; Swani et al., 2017; Holliman & Rowley, 2014; Salo, 2017). Within the B2B context, multiple potential participants such as customers, vendors, and partners are involved. The purpose of this research focused specifically on the customer perspective, to understand the actual usage of social media by potential B2B customers and the relevance of social media for business purposes. The following section elaborates on social media's usefulness for corporate purchasing as a critical B2B function.

2.1.2 Social media usage in a B2B purchasing context

Diba et al. (2019) demonstrated in their study that social media occupy an integral part in B2B companies in general and organizations' buying behavior in particular, as it can be a valuable tool for the buying group across all stages of the buying decision process. Corporate executives are engaged in various social networks and increasingly use social media to get inspired or collect knowledge about the market and products offered (Mora Cortez et al., 2020; Grewal et al., 2015). These results are consistent with a Forbes-commissioned survey of more than 500 buyers in

medium and large organizations (Diba et al., 2019). Results indicated that 83 percent of managers are using social media in their selection of a provider. Additionally, 92 percent of this customer segment stated social media's influence on a purchasing decision (Schimel, 2018). Social media comprises platforms including knowledge resources and interactions between individuals and organizations (Kietzmann et al., 2011), creating a circumstance in which "we are all connected" (Hanna et al., 2011, p. 265). Thus, social media marketing capabilities encompass four dimensions: the capability to interact, engage, coordinate, and collaborate with business partners. This accelerates B2B products' buying process by enabling faster access to decision-relevant information (Drummond et al., 2020). Additionally, it enables companies to target individuals within a specific organization by their function and purchase authority (Diba et al., 2019). With the establishment of social buying, two distinct groups of B2B buyers have emerged: "traditional buyers and social buyers who rely extensively on social media and online communities during the purchase process" (Grewal et al., 2015, p.201). As buyers use social media to acquire new partners, collect information, and develop insights, it enables individuals to perform most of their pre-purchase evaluation regardless of the vendor. Nearly 90 percent of the purchasing process is accomplished by the stage a seller's representative is approached, supplementing, or replacing conventional sales activities. (Zahay et al., 2015; Gustafson et al., 2019)

Previous research emphasizes social media's key purpose for data and lore management to assist B2B purchase decisions by providing customers immediate access to information about different providers' offerings and other customers' experiences (Gustafson et al., 2019; Diba et al., 2019). Additionally, social media information is highly beneficial as social platforms provide decision-makers with 24/7 access to multiple types of information and enable them to share information within the buying unit (Gustafson et al., 2019). The information available on social media can answer questions about how the industry perceives potential partners and the quality of the products being considered (Brown et al., 2012). Empowered customers can make well-informed

choices, optimizing the selection of products and suppliers and simultaneously increase their purchasing power (Diba et al.,2019). Moreover, the firm-relevant and sector-specific topics can brief entities among the buying stages, embedding problem identification, problem formulation, and seller screening (Gustafson et al., 2019).

The social purchasing cycle can support adequate information in terms of uncertain and ambiguous information flows in the current business context (Daft & Lengel, 1986). Social media enhances interaction and knowledge exchange due to a diverse degree of available information and different user touchpoints. Therefore, social media facilitates the organizational purchasing department to differentiate between necessities and solutions by simultaneously providing several information cues. (Diba et al., 2019) Moreover, social media gives validation from colleagues inside the firm and verifies social proof from individuals of comparable businesses. Whereas significant knowledge, containing business statements, contextual company investigations, or straight correspondence with suppliers, provides valuable information for the B2B buyer in asynchronous communication. (Gustafson et al., 2019) Several existing social media platforms incorporate simultaneous or instant messaging functionalities authorizing customers to simply include peers' queries and insights in the particular industry or business area. Consequently, information on social media can empower a greater understanding of the problem-solution fit inside the organizational purchase measure (Gustafson et al., 2019).

2.1.3 Social media and its impact on emotions

Considering the inherently risky buying process of companies due to the high expenses and firms' technical nature, information published on social media can deliver the messages and brand information needed to minimize risk (Mudambi, 2002). It is assumed that customers' selection of a B2B brand reflects the buyer's aversion towards risk instead of their own emotional added value. Hence, the purchase of a familiar brand represents a risk mitigation policy (Lambkin & Muzellec, 2010; Mudambi, 2002). On the contrary, Kemp et al. (2020) emphasize the

significance of emotions in decision making and deduce that marketing communication may be a variable tool to promote a connection between purchasers and suppliers. Academic research states that specific social media marketing messages can manage, influence, and regulate emotions in the buying process (Kemp et al., 2018). Regulation of emotions incorporates the mitigation, amplification, or maintenance of an established emotion (Gross et al., 2006).

Through targeted communication on social media, negative emotions, such as frustration or fear, could be ameliorated, for instance (Kemp et al., 2018). The quantity and personalization of answers enabled by social media might reduce uncertainty concerning several issues about the buying center related to purchasing (Paul et al., 2011). Furthermore, product offerings on social media could create emotions such as excitement and expectation. By improving and sustaining customer relationships and creating trust between business collaborators, social media has the potential to contribute to B2B brands. (Brennan & Croft, 2012) Additionally, buyer satisfaction is highly correlated to clear and accurate communication of knowledge via social media (Wang et al., 2016).

To summarize, marketers can support buyers in managing their emotions during the buying process by evoking positive emotions or reducing negative emotions. Therefore, it can be beneficial for the organization to understand emotional appeals during the buying decision-making, as emotions positively correlate with engagement and advocacy (Kemp et al., 2018). Dedicated potential buyers are more probable to develop rational connections with a brand (Bowden, 2009; Vivek et al., 2012).

2.2 B2B buying decision-making process and the role of emotions

As illustrated above, social media has various benefits and possible functions in the B2B purchasing context. However, marketers need to comprehend the appeals encouraging organizational purchases and engagement decisions (Kemp et al. 2020). To enhance the understanding of how social media can contribute to the organizational buying decision-making

process in an emotional context, the existing literature based on the B2B environment's decision process is analyzed. The underlying emotional aspects that influence the decision-maker during each stage of the process are examined.

The B2B buying process is underlying the decision-making process where entities within a buying organization interact with stakeholders. Individual, social, organizational, and environmental factors determine organizational decision-making (Webster & Wind, 1972). The organization's objectives, restrained to economics, human capital, and technology, motivate and guide organizational buyer behavior (OBB) (Dida et al., 2019). Hence, the B2B buying process and the incorporated steps are influenced in multifarious ways. Three primary components shape the decision-making process: (1) explicit assignments at each phase of the process, (2) functions of the individuals within the buying unit, and (3) modes of decision making undertaken by these individuals (Dida et al. 2019). The whole process takes place over a specific time frame. It goes through multiple stages, including various stakeholders, targets, and contradictory decision-factors, to make the final purchase decision (Webster & Wind, 1972). During the buying process, the average number of participants, taking into account the different stages, is 3.95. However, this number is dependent on company size and decision-making complexity. (McWilliams et al., 1992; Lilien, 2016)

Usually, several qualified employees from separate business divisions participate in a buying process: procurement, finance, production, or sales. In this way, professional competencies are bundled, and decisions are made more objective (Gerth, 2015). The buying unit or buying center comprises all involved individuals within the company participating in the purchasing process. Based on Webster and Wind's (1972) model, an individual can be assigned to a distinct role within the buying center; one distinguishes between the following six: user, influencer, decider, buyer, and gatekeeper.

2.2.1 The B2B purchasing process

Over the past 50 years, various frameworks have emerged to explain the procedure of the organizational purchasing process and represent a significant conceptual foundation for ongoing scientific research (Lewin & Donthu, 2005; Verville & Haltingen, 2003). Whereas each framework determines a diverse number of stages within the buying process, they all illustrate the same overall procedure, including internal and external variables of the buying group, affecting the OBB (Chandler & Johnston, 2012; Johnston & Lewin, 1996). In the following study, Webster and Wind's (1972) model is applied to analyze the emotions and social media usage in the overall organizational buying process because of conciseness and broad acceptance. Moreover, it contains overlapping steps incorporating other frameworks. The model encompasses five stages: identification of need, establishment of specifications, identification of alternatives, evaluation of alternatives, and suppliers' selection. However, it is essential to mention that although the description represents an idealistic purchase process, its elements may vary in sequence, interfere with each other, connect, and even be omitted in business practice (Homburg, 2017). In the following, each stage of the buying process using the model of Webster and Wind (1972) is explained:

The purchasing process begins internally by identifying a particular need, defining a specific product or service required, and recognizing that an organizational problem may be solved by acquiring a product or service (Diba et al., 2019). Moreover, dissatisfaction concerning the quality or the service of achievement can lead to new providers being searched. A stimulus can be triggered both internally and externally. An external stimulus might, for example, be created by advertising measures that point out a specific problem and, at the same time, demonstrate how their products or services can be used to address the issue. (Kemp et al., 2020)

Once the need has been identified and determined that a purchase is needed, the buyer engages with applicants and, if required, with professionals to establish appropriate aspects and

necessities that may solve the problem. In the establishment of specification stage, all significant conditions and technical features of the product or service to be purchased are established. Usually, this procedure is an internal operation, as the discussions occur within the firm's purchasing unit. (Grewal et al., 2015; Diba et al., 2019)

The identification of alternatives refers to gathering information and knowledge from the buyer's perspective about the product or service one wants to purchase. The objective is to identify a suitable supplier to overcome the problem. The outcome of this step provides a bundle of information and proposals from suppliers that are sent into the evaluation process. (Diba et al., 2019)

The most appropriate supplier is appraised in the evaluation of alternatives. Suppliers have to meet specific requirements defined by the buying center in the specification stage in this context (Homburg, 2017). The conclusive stage is choosing the proficient seller across all providers. It is essential for the selection of the supplier to have the required knowledge about vendors and their offers (Homburg, 2017; Diba et al., 2019).

2.2.2 The role of emotions in the buying decision-making process

Compared to individual purchases in the B2C market, organizational buying is usually a more complex and heterogeneous process, including higher expense ratios, intensive negotiations, contractual complexity, and more involved stakeholders fulfilling various buying centers' roles (Lilien, 2016). B2B buying is described as a data-based and rational process due to its complexity and range, giving credence to the traditional perception (Pfister & Bohm, 2008; Kemp et al., 2018). Historically, researchers have contended that the sophistication associated with the characteristics of such purchases requires rational decision-makers to develop, implement, and elaborate heuristic strategies that provide functional value to the company (Kemp et al., 2018). However, recent research has focused on organizational buying psychology and challenged this

approach. Several arguments concerning the role of emotions in inter-company relations are provided (Kemp et al., 2018).

Research scientists state emotions as "complex, fitness-enhancing responses to adaptive problems, leading to different outcomes through various mechanisms" (Ekman, 1992; Plutchik, 1980). Emotions are characterized by unique, individual traits such as signal, physiology, and previous experience (Bechara & Damasio, 2005). According to Bechara and Damasio (2005), emotions have the ability to effectively drive decision-making in various situations. Personal benefits and emotional risks are entailed in B2B purchase decisions, as both are recognized as more impactful than those embedded in B2C decision-making (CEB Marketing Leadership Council, 2013). The dynamics of buying groups may be affected by such risks across the entire buying chain (Casidy & Nyadzayo, 2019). This may include apprehension of causing a mistake, remaining competitive, being unable to be innovative, or failure to solve a particular issue. If a purchase is made below optimum, credibility and trust may be lost. B2B buyers fear to lose time, effort, or even their job if they are responsible for wrongful purchasing decisions. Additionally, people obtain both individual and corporate value from their choices. (Kemp et al., 2020) Furthermore, it is assumed that emotions support the buyer's decision-making by generating evaluative information, stimulating instant avoidance reactions or action inclinations, amalgamate the attention, and compels individuals to comply with decisions (Pfister & Bohm, 2008).

Several researchers confirmed that emotional appeals, emerging at multiple levels of the buyer-seller relationship, drive organizational decision-makers at each stage of the buying decision-making processes (Kemp et al., 2018; Andersen & Kumar, 2006). Since individuals undergo multiple moods through the purchasing cycle, particular motivations and behaviors can emerge. For instance, the emotion fear might evoke a behavioral response to a threatening situation (Kemp et al., 2020). Fear can be a crucial emotional driver in searching for vendors that alleviate a possible problem. Further, in selecting a supplier, the conclusion is mostly dependent on trust

in the buyer-seller relation (Doney et al., 2007; Pappas, 2018). This emotional state strengthens a commitment to the provider, empowers buyers to be confident in their ability to perform well, and ensures that they are purchasing the most appropriate solution for their business. Kemp et al. (2018) discovered specific emotions during the buying process (Appendix 1). Additionally, as depicted in appendix 2, these emotions have been allocated to the buying process's respective phase utilizing qualitative interviews with marketing specialists (Kemp et al., 2018). A multifarious range of emotions might be encountered within the B2B buying process. Hereby, emotions can be classified as positive, for instance, excitement, pride or hope, as well as negative, being fear, anxiety, or frustration (Kemp. et al., 2018). Personal and emotional connections with B2B buyers lead to a higher engagement rate and grow sales, profitability, and advocacy (Kemp et al., 2020). Therefore, according to Kemp et al. (2018), establishing a thorough understanding of action proclivities and measures that elicit emotions within the buying process could support the knowledge of B2B decision-making dynamics.

3. Methodology

Before the procedure and techniques of this study are explained, it should be emphasized that the literature landscape has developed strongly towards emotional appeals in organizational buying decisions and the importance of social media in B2B. Scientific research discovered different purchase drivers being rational, emotional, and motivational (Lavidge & Steiner, 1961). However, during the research, one became conscious that previous analysis is purely based on in-depth qualitative insights from marketing experts from the selling organization (e.g., Kemp et al., 2018; Kemp et al., 2020). Although quantitative research methods were undertaken from the buyers' perspective, quantitative data fails to provide an in-depth description. The underlying reason for the lack of quality is the missing incorporation of scrutiny and understanding of the actual beliefs and perceptions of emotions subject to the individual (Dudwick et al. 2006).

Hence, to establish a representative portfolio of emotions that occur at each stage of the buying decision-making process, in-depth interviews with individuals from the buying organizations, in terms of considerations, emotions, and concepts exposed in the decision-making process, would provide additional insights (Diba et al., 2019; Kemp et al., 2018; Kemp et al., 2020). The underlying emotions within the B2B purchasing process from the buyer's perspective are investigated and subject to this study. Furthermore, the relevance and usage behavior of social media within the buying decision process is examined, and the correlating impact of social media on the emotional state of the decision-maker is highlighted. In the following section, a description of the sample of the accomplished study and the procedure of data analysis are described.

3.1 Procedure and Sample

To provide an in-depth understanding of emotions within each stage of the organizational purchasing decision-making and point out the effect of social media on those respective emotions, this study undertakes an interpretive approach, utilizing a qualitative research method. The research method is based on semi-structured in-depth interviews with actual buyers. This methodology was selected to deeply understand the occurring emotions and reasons during the B2B purchase decision-making process, the social media usage behavior, and the perception about social media impact on the decision-making in an emotional context. Further, semi-structured interviews enabled overall flexibility during the conversations and the interviewee's possibility to mention consequences that were not initially targeted.

The data collection took place in November and December 2020. The selection criteria to find the most suitable interview partners is that individuals have made B2B purchase decisions or have been involved in a decision-making process. Further, efforts were made to ensure that individuals came from various industries to avoid industry bias from the outset. The following participants were reached via social networks, and the interviews were conducted via video

conference using google meets. Overall, twelve (n=12) in-depth semi-structured interviews are conducted. An overview of the participants and their demographic characteristics is shown in appendix 3. All participants were German, consisting of two females and ten males with an average age range of 25 to 34. The majority assumes the role of both decider and buyer. Further, different industries and company sizes were covered through the interview sample. Ten participants work in SMEs and two in big corporations. Due to the small sample size, this research does not claim to generalize its findings as representative for all purchasing decision-makers. However, it has the potential to provide additional insights into existing literature findings. With the interviewees' permission, all interviews were audio-recorded, and each interview accounted for approximately 30 minutes, depending on the participant's knowledge and experiences made. The data and insights were then transcribed literally for subsequent in-depth analysis. Each participant has been asked an identical set of questions developed by the researcher and divided into two sections: first, emotions in the organizational decision making and second, social media's use and its effects on emotions. Questions embedded in every interview are listed in appendix 4. The aim was to collect the participant's truthful opinions and provide transparent communication without correct or incorrect answers. Additional information was provided on the research project and an overview of the topics at the beginning of each interview. The interview started with more general questions for each part and then moved to more specific questions. For the fifth question, the decision-making process of Webster and Wind (1972) was shown, and each stage was explained in detail. As emotions can occur subconsciously (Cortez et al., 2020) after asking for specific emotions, a list of emotions (Appendix 1) according to Kemp et al. (2018) was exemplified in addition to the emotions named by the interview partner. This was undertaken to make it easier for the participant to put himself in the situation and demonstrating emotions that might occur. Moreover, before moving on to social media, the definition of social media was provided to the interviewee.

3.2 Data Analysis

First of all, the data evaluation process is initially performed in two distinct steps, while keeping in mind the purposes of this study. The first part of the responses regarding emotional appeals involved in the B2B purchase decision process was analyzed based on qualitative benchmarking, incorporating previous theories and research findings. Second, the data obtained from the interviews, concerning buyers' social media usage behavior and the impact of social media on the buying decision-making process in an emotional context, were evaluated under the principles of grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This coherent approach facilitates an underlying, inductive, and interactive procedure of data gathering, simultaneous analysis, and enhanced interpretation (Goulding, 2005). Overall, the data analysis followed a theoretical approach to facilitate and identify patterns and themes. The investigation started with a continuous comparison of the data utilizing an iterative back-and-forth reading procedure of the interview transcripts and simultaneously encoding the data at a micro-level. Accordingly, a manual word by word and sentence by sentence analysis was performed, combining related semantics, synthesizing patterns, and subsequently benchmarking them against each other. Moreover, the mentioned emotions, the underlying reasons, and the relevance of social media could be detected. Microsoft Excel was used to weigh and evaluate the statements of the participants.

4. Results

After the reflection of the literature, the following part will, on the one hand, describe and reproduce the results of the interviews and, on the other hand, propose a discussion and comparison with the reviewed literature. As this study aimed to determine the emotional appearance during the B2B buying decision-making procedure, participants were asked about their emotional senses in these proceedings.

The majority of participants, 83 percent, contributed to the consensus that emotions play a role in B2B products or services' purchase decision process (Appendix 5). However, two respondents

emphasized that emotions tend to play a subordinate role in organizational buying decisions and frequently appear subconsciously. Further, several buyers stated that organizational buying requires a sense of rationalization because of its complex nature and might be less emotionally intense than personal purchases. Nevertheless, all participants were consistent regarding their thoughts that rational, logical facts and emotions occur in B2B decision-making. Further, they suggested that this interaction – the impact of rationality and emotions - is affected by individual factors, such as self-interest, motivation, and role within the decision-making process, as well as the size of the company and the product or service to be purchased: "I think it depends a little bit on the case what kind of product it is exactly" (Interviewee X). During this part of the interview, different topics were examined: First, the respondents discussed specific emotions in B2B decisions. The interviewees' answers supported impressions about the importance of the various emotions in the different buying stages and the underlying reasons. Further, they discussed if specific emotions could cause a particular action to be taken and the impact on purchase engagement. Finally, the decision-makers examined whether emotions' intensity is constant in all the purchase decision process stages.

Moreover, to gain a more precise comprehension of social media's role throughout this process, buyers' social media usage behavior in B2B buying decisions and the impact on emotional senses are investigated. Respondents discussed the following themes: First, social media presence within the B2B buying decision-making process. The respondents provide insights into whether and how social media influence their purchase procedure. Second, participants debated the influence social media might have on specific emotions. In the end, the buyers' perception of social media's necessity in the B2B industry is emphasized.

4.1 Emotions in the B2B buying decision-making process

First of all, participants cite a couple of specific emotions influencing their purchase behavior, commitment, and engagement, as represented in appendix 6. Negative emotions such as pressure

and frustration, accelerating the decision-making process, reinforcing a need, and increasing purchase engagement. Nevertheless, interviewees highlighted, as organizations predetermine structured processes and tasks, individuals within the buying center are restricted to be guided by emotions in their actions. Moreover, even though respondents agreed on emotions in the decision process, most felt unsure when asking specifically about emotions as they often arise subconsciously.

Despite all interviews, 36 different emotions were mentioned that could appear during the purchasing process (Appendix 7). However, throughout the interviews, all participants mentioned the following primary emotions: expectation, joy, fear, excitement, interest, hope, and trust (Appendix 7,8). As illustrated in appendix 9, these emotions can be classified as negative, neutral, or positive emotions. Considering the percentage distribution, it can be deduced that decision-makers' positive and negative emotions are relatively balanced. However, 45 percent of the cited emotions are positive, and 37 percent are negative. Further, the table indicates that trust, hope, excitement, and joy were the most widely encountered of all positive emotions. Of all negative emotions, fear and frustration are the emotions referred to mostly. In the following, the respective emotions emphasized in each stage of the purchase decision process are highlighted. An overview of the ten most frequently mentioned emotions for each buying decision-making stage as well as a profound insight into each stage, is displayed in appendix 10.

In the first stage, the "identification of need," respondents underline interest, hope, expectation, and excitement about an explicit product proposal or demand exists. 75 percent of the interviewees stated interest: "You see the opportunity to make something better than you are interested. This interest leads you to look for products that can fulfill this" (Interviewee XII). Besides the already mentioned emotions, negative emotions such as frustration and stress are firmly anchored in this context. These negative emotions function as a motivator to initiate change and the necessity of a purchase: "as a trigger, I would definitely take it in: I am kind of

frustrated that I have to do everything manually and I am looking for a software that automates the whole thing" (Interviewee IX).

Second, for the "establishment of specification," the most frequent emotion, with 67 percent, cited is expectation: "Develop a kind of expectation towards the product. And what it is should be able to do later on, on which problems are solved. So, you have certain expectations" (Interviewee XII). Furthermore, participants mention interest, hope, and excitement as primary emotions. As the specification's determination can be accompanied by the first stage, especially for small to medium-sized companies, these emotions correspond very closely to the aforementioned ones. However, compared to the "identification of need," only 25 percent of the respondents indicated frustration in this stage.

In the "identification of alternatives," the search for a supplier may evoke both positive and negative emotions. Nevertheless, 75 percent express frustration during this stage, justified by the overwhelming amount of information or the lack of information and offerings for the specific need. Thus, respondents mention the emergence of anxiety in not finding a suitable supplier.

According to the participants, the evaluation of alternatives represents an intensely rational phase without much emotion. Decision-makers highlighted that vendors are often compared primarily in terms of price and performance. Only two emotions, trust and expectations are mentioned by more than half of the interviewees. By the time the supplier is selected, all decision-makers highlighted the importance of trust. Purchasers experience a sense of positive emotions, for instance, joy, hope, and excitement about the purchase decision. Nevertheless, fear can also appear in the sense of having made the wrong decision.

To conclude, this study's findings indicate that emotions are implicated in all B2B buying decision-making stages, evoke specific actions, and strengthen purchase engagement. However, decision-makers emphasized that the intensity of emotions varies depending on the different

buying process stages. Some emotions occur more strongly in the initial phase and become weaker throughout the process and reversed (Appendix 11). Based on the testimony of the participants, it can be deduced that two different scenarios, equally mentioned by the respondents, could appear (Appendix 12): First, emotions are strong at the initial stage, the "identification of need", and the final stage, "the selection of supplier", of the decision-making. Once purchasers undergo the procedure whereby the product specification is defined, alternatives identified and evaluated, decision-making primary based on more rational and cognitive factors. In the second scenario, the intensity of emotions can be represented as a sinus curve. In the stages "establishment of specification" and "evaluation of alternatives", the intensity of emotions or the influence of emotions on decision-making is deficient.

4.2 B2B buyers' social media usage behavior

67 percent of participants stated that they use social media during their purchase decision, which might directly or indirectly influence their resolutions (Appendix 13). However, 90 percent believe that B2B companies do not need to be active on social media. The majority tend to attach great importance to a well-managed website with relevant and precise information. Besides that, the influence factor depends on the product or service purchased: "it also depends a bit on it, if I now buy raw materials for a large corporate, social media will probably have less influence" (Interviewee IX). Nevertheless, respondents agreed that well-managed social media marketing could create advantages for the company and brand by providing appropriate stimuli and establishing brand awareness. The participants' most common social media channels are blogs and forums, followed by social networking sites such as Instagram, LinkedIn, and Facebook (Appendix 14).

Through the study, two themes emerged about social media's impact and usage by decision-makers: social media serves as a source of inspiration and information (Appendix 15). Interviewees gain insights about vendors and possible solutions from external sources such as

customer reviews, blogs and internal information provided by the company's social media profile. In addition, they emphasized the impact of sponsored advertising on social media, leading to inspiration and awareness of a specific product or provider: "you see something on social media that could be valuable to your business, bring it up in the next meeting, and then maybe this can influence the start of a buying decision process" (Interviewee XII). Conclusively, the data analysis highlights that social media primarily have an impact in the initial phases of the process: "So, I think it is mainly in the first stage because if I proceed in the buying process, it gets more to details, [...]. So, I think the key part where social media is in the first part of the whole cycle, and then I guess it declines, [...]" (Interviewee II).

4.3 Social media impact on emotions

All participants shared a consensus that social media impacts emotions and might evoke positive and negative emotions. Social media could create awareness and establish a strong brand. Respondents highlighted that trust could be built through customer reviews, additional information, and insights into the company itself, fears reduced, and interest aroused. Further, expectation and excitement about the product or service might increase: "I think generally social media can highly influence your emotions on decisions [...] if everyone tells me how great it is, my expectations will increase, [...] I will be more proud, happier or more excited. And the other way around, it works too" (Interviewee VI). Conclusively, decision-makers integrate products into their purchase decision process because of social media. In contrast, participants stated that negative aspects pointed out through social media have a more decisive influence and lead to avoiding the purchase. Social media could lead to distrust in a particular company and refuse product purchase due to bad reputation or negative references. Further, buyers illustrated that social media usage and its degree of influence depend on the individual buyer's social media user behavior and the respective product.

5. Discussion

This study contributes to the existing literature by providing an in-depth perception of the buyer's perspective. The research is built on previous studies focusing on emotions and social media in B2B purchase decisions. Even though the study's results are mainly compatible with the existing ones, new insights emerged for the emotional appearance and social media impact in organizational buying.

5.1 Theoretical Implications

Emotions emerge at multiple phases of the B2B buying decision-making and guide decision-makers at each step of the procedure (Kemp et al., 2018; Anderson & Kurma, 2006). This could be verified, as participants emphasized emotions in all buying process stages. Furthermore, it can be stated that emotions can cause specific actions and strengthen purchase engagement. However, the study highlighted that the emotional intensity and the influence on purchase decisions vary in the different stages and are partially restricted by organizational settings. All respondents acknowledged that expectations, excitement, fear, joy, interest, hope, and trust emerge and influence the B2B purchase decision-making process. This is consistent with Kemp et al.'s (2018; 2020) findings and marketers' perception. However, additional emotional appeals could be identified, for instance, stress and confidence. Decision-makers must find a vendor within a set timeframe, creating time pressure and stress throughout the decision-making process. Furthermore, the study complements Kemp's findings in the assignment and significance of certain emotions in the respective stages. Although the marketers' view often coincides with the buyers' view, there are minor differences. For instance, Kemp et al. (2018) do not consider frustration and stress in the first stage. Nevertheless, they are firmly anchored and serve as motivators in initiating the need for purchases. Second, Kemp et al. (2018) emphasized anxiety in the last phase, selecting the supplier. This is only partially in line with buyers' view, as they highlight that the purchase decision is not undertaken if they exude anxiety. However, findings

contribute to organizational research emphasizing the importance of establishing and perpetuating trust in the buyer-seller relation (Moorman et al., 1993). Trust can alleviate anxiety and fear and leads to the final purchase decision.

According to the possible usage cases of social media provided by the literature, the study contributes to the literature in the sense of social media as an inspiration and an information tool (Cortez et al., 2020; Grewal et al., 2015, Diba et al., 2019). Social-media is included by decision-makers to improve operations and to skim the acquired information. The most common social media application for B2B decision-makers are blogs and forums, followed by Instagram and LinkedIn. Although based on the study of Diba et al. (2019), social media can be valuable in all decision process stages; this study indicates that respondent's social media usage is subconsciously and mainly in the initial phases. By looking at the different stages of the B2B buying process, especially on the identification of need, social media could create awareness and initiate a particular need buyer was not initially aware of (Diba et al., 2019). This is in line with the study's findings and statements of the respondents. Sponsored advertisements, for instance, inspire decision-makers and raise their awareness of certain products. Furthermore, social media is utilized in the purchase decision process to identify suitable providers. Nevertheless, the purchasing process may be influenced primarily by social media activities not controlled by the company, such as customer reviews. Further, participants place more excellent value on a well-managed website and perceive social media as something additional but not indispensable in the B2B environment. This supports the marketing budget distribution, stated in a survey conducted by B2B marketers as marketing investment is mainly allocated to website development (eMarketer, 2017). Despite an increase in digital advertising investments, face-to-face contact remains significant for B2B markets (Viveiros, 2016).

However, this research reinforces the assumption that social media can evoke and change emotions during purchase decision-making (Kemp et al., 2018). Customer testimonials on social

media, for instance, can reduce fear and build trust in the quality of the product. Aligned with the literature (e.g., Brennan & Croft 2012), advertisement, product offerings, and blog posts serve as inspiration and source of information and create emotions such as excitement and expectation. Although social media is not the only source that leads to a direct purchase, through social media characteristics, vendors are included in the purchase decision process, and the purchase engagement with a particular vendor can be increased.

5.2 Managerial Implications

Several managerial implications emerge from the findings and might be of potential interest to marketing managers to implement effective and well-targeted social media marketing communication in the B2B context. This study provides insights into specific emotions, buyers' social media usage behavior, and social media's contribution to buyers' emotional state in B2B purchase decisions. It is recommended to focus on social media communication strategies during the initial purchase decision-making procedure. B2B companies could capture decision-makers' interest, raise excitement, and generate a need through targeted, customized advertising. Furthermore, trust can be built through a professional and well-managed social media site. Second, as respondents of this study highlighted blogs as mostly used, companies should focus on building up blogger relations, offer valuable information and explanations. To summarize, it becomes clear that the investigation of this study should encourage suppliers to engage emotionally with B2B buyers using social media.

5.3 Limitations and suggestion for future research

Although this study questions existing assumptions and offers more in-depth insights of emotional appeals within the B2B buying decision-making process and social media's impact on the B2B buyer, it is not without limitations. Procedural limitations, characterized by restrictions regarding the research sample, methodology, and data, exist. The small sample size may only be considered representative to a limited extent. Emotional appearance and social media usage

depend on individual characteristics, age, self-interest, role within the organization, social media affinity, and company-specific criteria such as company size, product, or service purchased. Hence, each of the variations presents a valuable future research approach. Further, research participants were mainly from SME's. Future studies examining decision-makers' perceptions across different types focusing on specific industries might offer further insights. Using a qualitative research methodology, the researcher was able to gain a deeper understanding of the respondents' attitudes. However, applying a multilevel approach that combines quantitative and qualitative research could capture buyer's views in more detail, while this study might build a basis for developing future research hypotheses.

6. Conclusion

Summarizing, this study reveals that emotions in B2B buying processes are highly significant and gaining in importance. Moreover, social media's impact can be classified as a communication tool to subconsciously affect buying personas and appeal to their emotions in the initial stages of the buying process. A wide range of emotions, an improved understanding of buyers' emotional state and social media's effect within the organizational decision-making process could be elucidated through qualitative insights. The results indicated are broadening B2B marketing experts' horizon due to a thorough understanding and realistic example from the buying perspective that has not existed before. Therefore, the goal of filling the literature gap of missing realizations from the buying viewpoint was achieved and complements the understanding of emotions and social media's role in B2B buying. Overall, the study provides valuable guidance for the future establishment of social media marketing strategies for the B2B sector and the capitalization of emotions.

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Appendix

Appendix 1 – Emotions and actions (Kemp et al., 2017)

Emotion	Action tendencies
Interest	Urges exploration
Excitement	Inspires approach behaviors
Hope	Encourages goal-directed determination
Expectation	Induces examination
Joy	Urges play and creativity
Pride	Promotes self-achievement
Trust	Fosters confidence and relationship building
Surprise	Increases attention and awareness
Fear	Induces hyper-alert behavior
Anxiety	Promotes caution
Frustration	May incite aggression
Regret	Spurs action to repair or fix
Shame	Encourages withdrawal and self-attachment

Appendix 2 – Emotions in the buying cycle (Kemp et al., 2017)

Step 1: recognition of a need	Step 2: definition of the product type	Step 3: development of detailed specification	Step 4: search for suppliers	Step 5: acquisition and analysis of proposals	Step 6: evaluation of proposal and selection of supplier	Step 7: placing and receiving order	Step 8: evaluation of product
Interest	Interest	Interest	Interest	Interest	Interest	Trust	Trust
Excitement	Expectation	Expectation	Expectation	Expectation	Expectation	Hope	Pride
Hope			Hope	Anxiety	Trust	Expectation	Joy
Expectation			Surprise	Frustration	Anxiety	Pride	Regret
Surprise			Anxiety				Shame
Fear			Frustration				Frustration
Anxiety							

Appendix 3 – Demographic Characteristics of Interview Participants

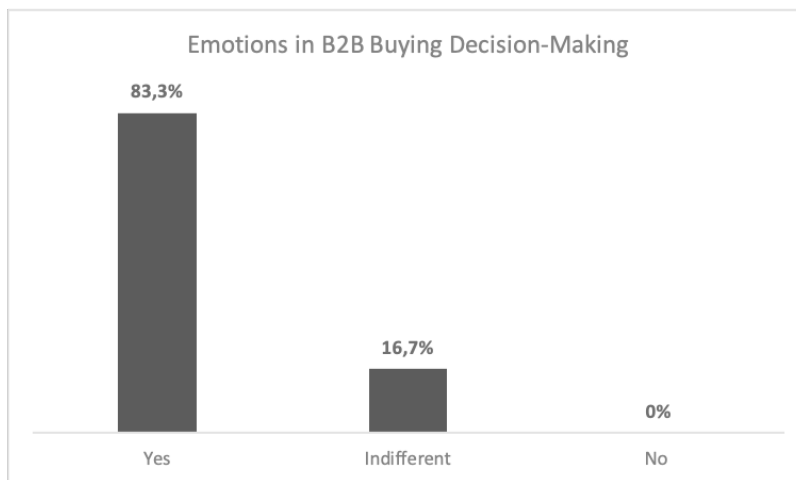
ID	Name	Gender	Age	Education	Employment Status	Field of Industry	Job Position	Years of work experience	City of origin
I	Cathrin	Female	25-34 years	Bachelor Degree	Employed part-time	Consumer Goods	Employee	3-5 years	Frankfurt
II	Devin	Male	18-24 years	Bachelor Degree	Self-employed	E-Learning	Co-Founder & Managing Director	3-5 years	Munich
III	Eugen	Male	over 56 years	Bachelor Degree	Employed full-time	Electrical-/Power-Engineering	Project Buyer	more than 10 years	Mannheim
IV	Ivo	Male	25-34 years	Bachelor Degree	Self-employed	Housing Applications & IT	Co-Founder & Managing Director	1-2 years	Freiburg
V	Konrad	Male	18-24 years	Bachelor Degree	Self-employed	Recruiting	Co-Founder & Managing Director	1-2 years	Berlin
VI	Lena	Female	25-34 years	Bachelor Degree	Employed full-time	Information Technology	Managing Director	3-5 years	Essen
VII	Mark	Male	25-34 years	Bachelor Degree	Self-employed	E-Learning	Co-Founder & Managing Director	1-2 years	Munich
VIII	Max	Male	18-24 years	Undergraduate	Self-employed	IT -& Legal Tech	Founder	5-10 years	Düsseldorf
IX	Moritz	Male	18-24 years	Bachelor Degree	Self-employed	Consumer Goods & Pharma	Co-Founder & Managing Director	1-2 years	Berlin
X	Nico	Male	25-34 years	Bachelor Degree	Self-employed	Logistics	Co-Founder & Managing Director	1-2 years	Berlin
XI	Philipp	Male	25-34 years	Bachelor Degree	Employed full-time	Automotive Industry	Project Buyer	3-5 years	Stuttgart
XII	Tom	Male	25-34 years	Bachelor Degree	Employed part-time	Information Technology	Employee	1-2 years	Mainz

Appendix 4 – Interview Questions

Remember the last time you bought a B2B product or participated in a decision process to buy a B2B Product

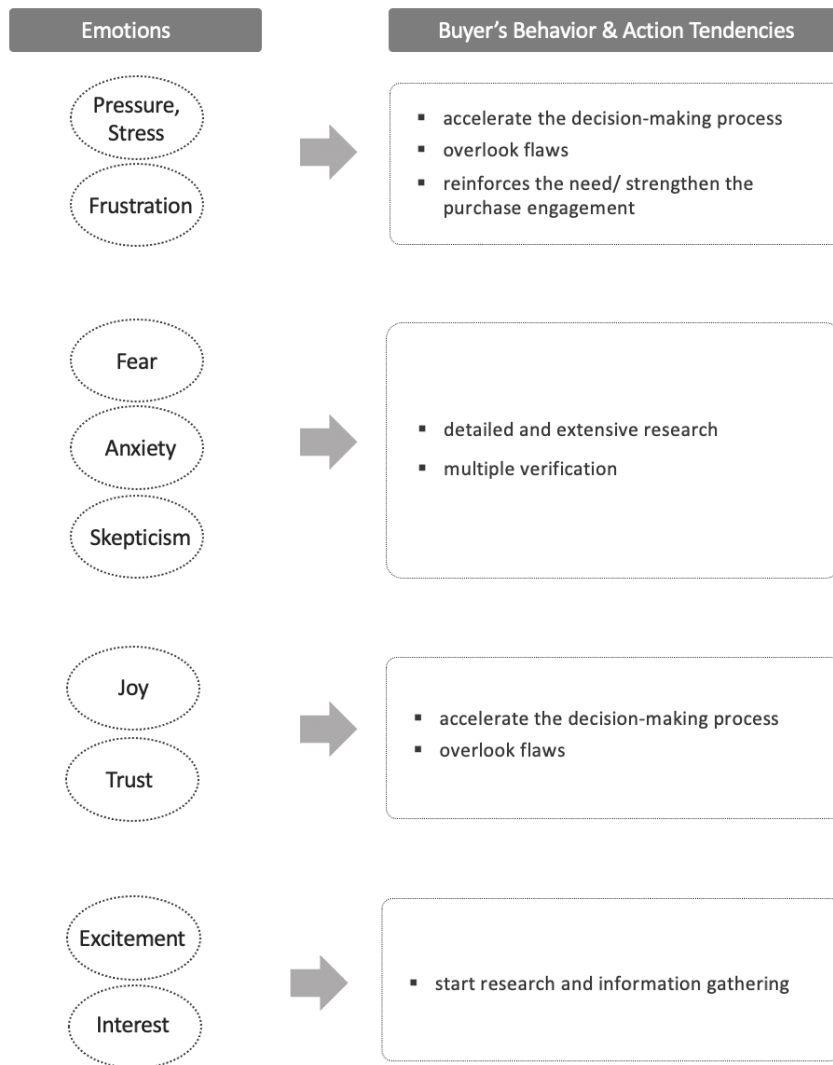
1. Do you think emotions play a role in B2B purchasing (in the decision-making process)?
2. Can you name specific emotions that your experience during the decision-making process?
3. Do these emotions lead to action tendencies?
4. Are there emotions, which elicit stronger purchase engagement than others?
5. Please assign the emotions to the respective stage in the decision-making process of Webster & Wind (1972). Please think loudly when assigning emotions and explain why you are assigning the specific emotion to this step.
6. Do you use social media for organizational purchase decision?
7. If yes: what kind of social media channel do you use during the purchase process?
8. For what do you use this social media channel? Ans at which stage of the buying process?
9. Do you think that social media might evoke or change your emotions during the buying process? If yes: What kind of emotions, why and how?
10. Change of buying decision because of social media: Have you ever not considered a supplier or refused a purchase because of social media? Have you ever bought a product because of social media?

Appendix 5 – Emotional Impact in B2B Buying Decision-Making

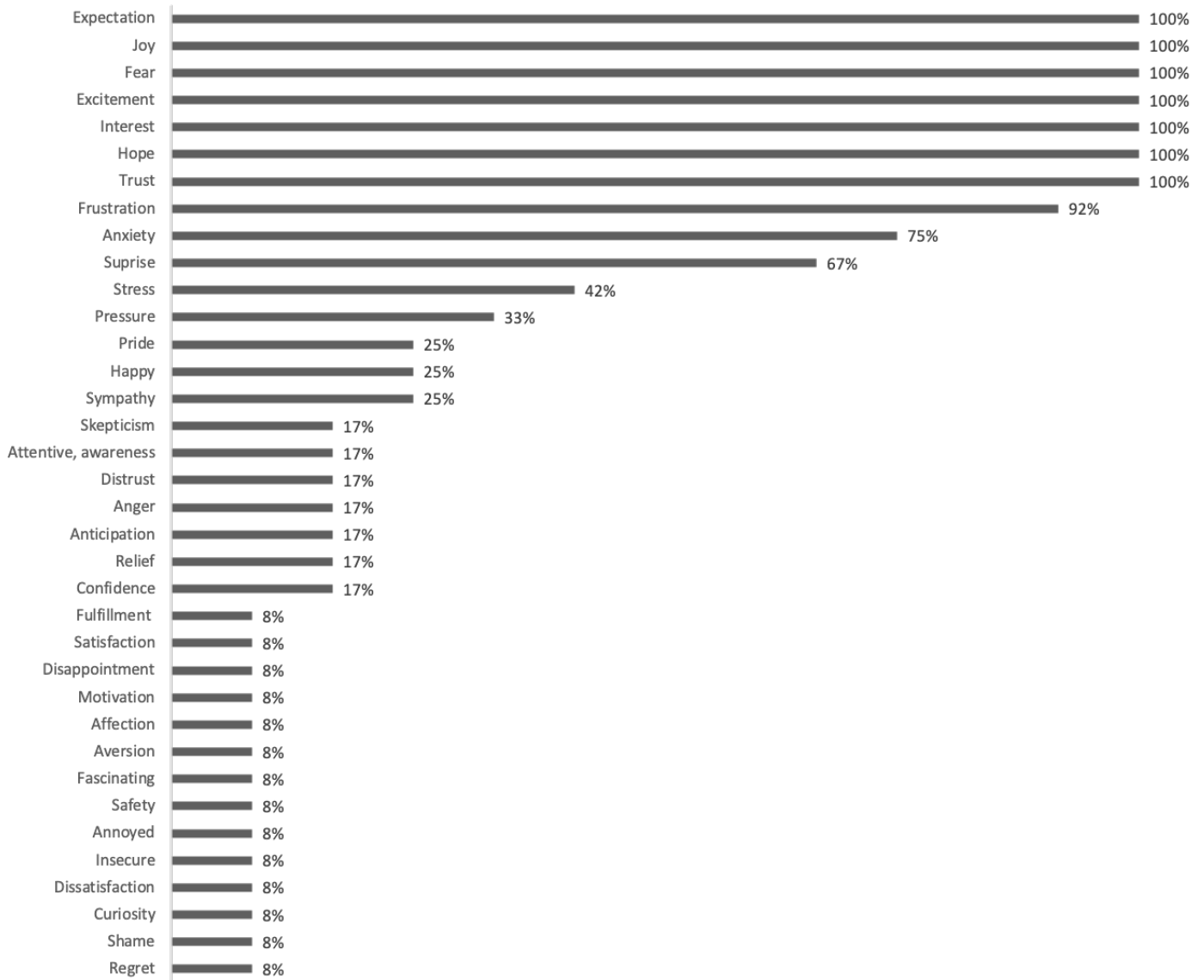


Total	Number	Percentage
Yes	10	83,3%
Indifferent	2	16,7%
No	0	0%

Appendix 6 – Emotions and correlating behavior and actions



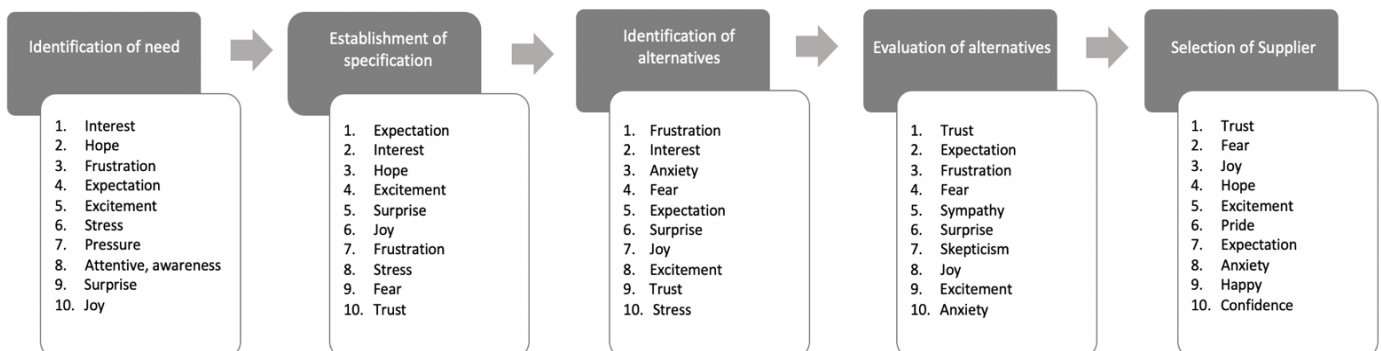
Appendix 8 – Weighted average of the emotions during the B2B buying decision-making process



Appendix 9 –Distribution of positive and negative emotions during the B2B buying decision-making process

	Emotion	Total Number interviewees named ABC as emotions	Of all negative emotions ABC was mentioned x% times	Von allen Emotionen wurde ABC x% mal genannt	x% of the interviewees have named ABC as emotion
Negative Emotions					
Overall	Stress	5	9%	3%	42%
	Frustration	11	20%	8%	92%
	Anxiety	9	17%	6%	75%
	Fear	12	22%	8%	100%
	Regret	1	2%	1%	8%
	Shame	1	2%	1%	8%
	Pressure	4	7%	3%	33%
	Anger	2	4%	1%	17%
	Dissatisfaction	1	2%	1%	8%
	Insecure	1	2%	1%	8%
	Annoyed	1	2%	1%	8%
	Distrust	2	4%	1%	17%
	Aversion	1	2%	1%	8%
	Skepticism	2	4%	1%	17%
	Disappointment	1	2%	1%	8%
	Summe	54			
Neutral Emotions					
Overall	Interest	12	46%	8%	100%
	Expectation	12	46%	8%	100%
	Attentive, awareness	2	8%	1%	17%
	Summe	26			
Poistive Emotions					
Overall	Trust	12	18%	8%	100%
	Sympathy	3	5%	2%	25%
	Hope	12	18%	8%	100%
	Excitement	12	18%	8%	100%
	Joy	12	18%	8%	100%
	Confidence	2	3%	1%	17%
	Happy	3	5%	2%	25%
	Suprise	8	12%	5%	67%
	Relief	2	3%	1%	17%
	Pride	3	5%	2%	25%
	Anticipation	2	3%	1%	17%
	Curiosity	1	2%	1%	8%
	Safety	1	2%	1%	8%
	Fascinating	1	2%	1%	8%
	Affection	1	2%	1%	8%
	Motivation	1	2%	1%	8%
	Satisfaction	1	2%	1%	8%
Fulfillment	1	2%	1%	8%	
	Summe	66			

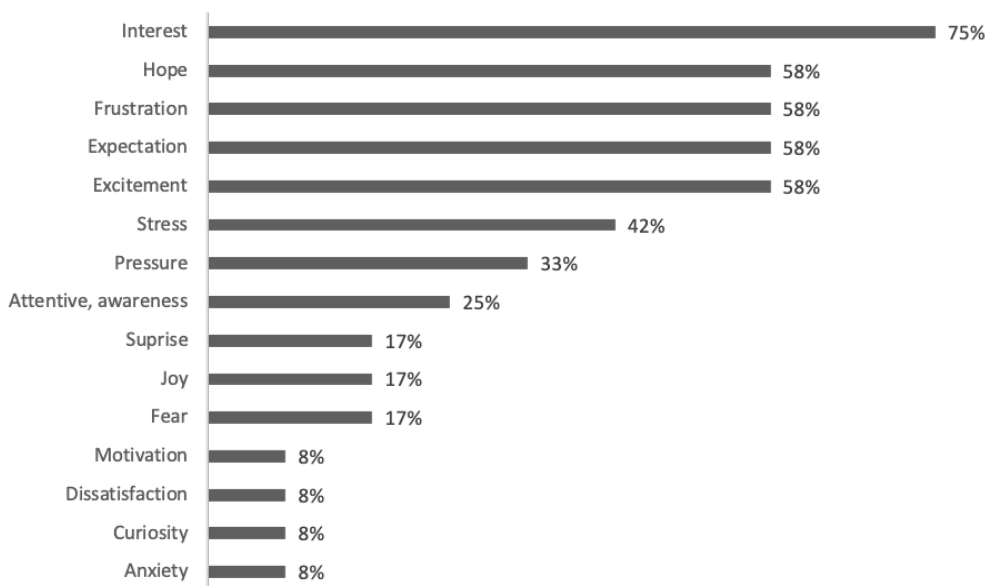
Appendix 10 - Emotional appearance in the respective B2B purchase decision-making stages



1. Identification of Need – Total overview

B2B Buying Process Stages/ Emotions	Identification of Need							Total Number	Percentage
Affection									
Anger									
Annoyed									
Anticipation									
Anxiety			x					1	8%
Attentive, awareness			x		x	x		3	25%
Aversion									
Confidence									
Curiosity		x						1	8%
Disappointment									
Dissatisfaction					x			1	8%
Distrust									
Excitement		x	x	x	x		x	7	58%
Expectation		x	x		x	x	x	7	58%
Fascinating									
Fear		x		x				2	17%
Frustration			x	x	x	x		7	58%
Fulfillment									
Happy									
Hope		x		x	x		x	7	58%
Insecure									
Interest		x	x	x	x	x		9	75%
Joy							x	2	17%
Motivation			x					1	8%
Pressure			x		x			4	33%
Pride									
Regret									
Relief									
Safety									
Satisfaction									
Shame									
Skepticism									
Stress		x	x	x	x			5	42%
Suprise							x	2	17%
Sympathy									
Trust									

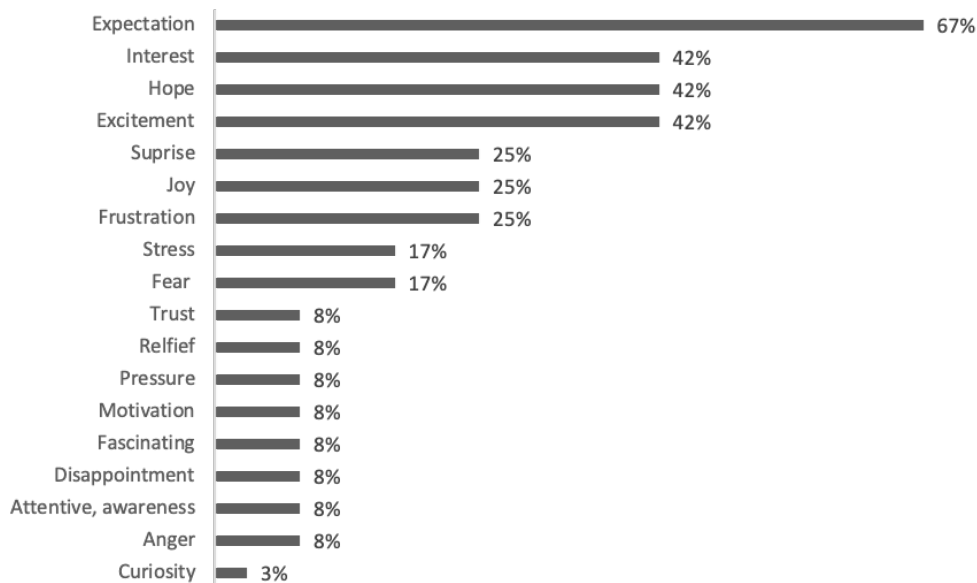
Identification of Need – Emotional appearance



2. Establishment of Specification – Total overview

B2B Buying Process Stages/ Emotions	Establishment of Specification								Total Number	Percentage
Affection										
Anger			x						1	8%
Annoyed										
Anticipation										
Anxiety										
Attentive, awareness						x			1	8%
Aversion										
Confidence										
Curiosity		x							1	8%
Disappointment			x						1	8%
Dissatisfaction										
Distrust										
Excitement		x			x	x	x	x	5	42%
Expectation	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	8	67%
Fascinating							x		1	8%
Fear		x					x		2	17%
Frustration		x	x					x	3	25%
Fulfillment										
Happy										
Hope			x	x	x	x		x	5	42%
Insecure										
Interest		x	x	x				x	5	42%
Joy			x				x	x	3	25%
Motivation			x						1	8%
Pressure			x						1	8%
Pride										
Regret										
Relief						x			1	8%
Safety										
Satisfaction										
Shame										
Skepticism										
Stress		x	x						2	17%
Suprise				x	x	x			3	25%
Sympathy										
Trust		x							1	8%

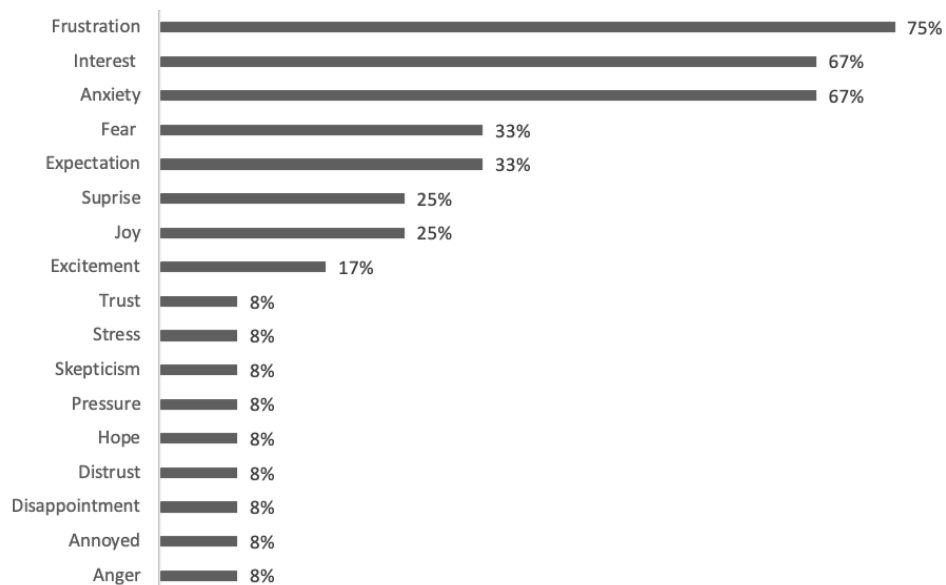
Establishment of Specification – Emotional appearance



3. Identification of Alternatives – Total overview

B2B Buying Process Stages/ Emotions	Identification of Alternatives	Total Number	Percentage
Affection			
Anger	x	1	8%
Annoyed	x	1	8%
Anticipation			
Anxiety	x x x x x x x x	8	67%
Attentive, awareness			
Aversion			
Confidence			
Curiosity			
Disappointment	x	1	8%
Dissatisfaction			
Distrust	x	1	8%
Excitement	x x	2	17%
Expectation	x x x x	4	33%
Fascinating			
Fear	x x x x	4	33%
Frustration	x x x x x x x x x x	9	75%
Fulfillment			
Happy			
Hope	x	1	8%
Insecure			
Interest	x x x x x x x x x	8	67%
Joy	x x x	3	25%
Motivation			
Pressure	x	1	8%
Pride			
Regret			
Relief			
Safety			
Satisfaction			
Shame			
Skepticism	x	1	8%
Stress	x	1	8%
Suprise	x x x	3	25%
Sympathy			
Trust	x	1	8%

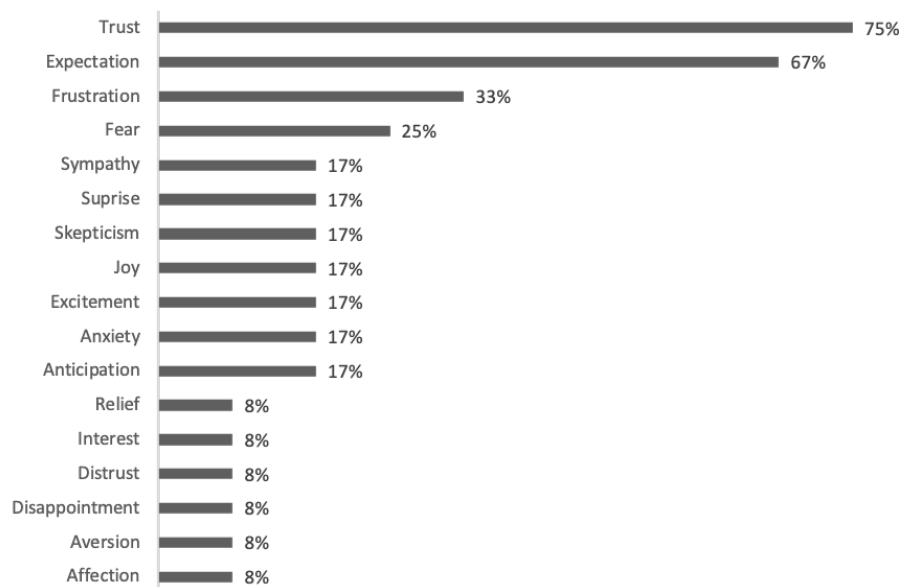
Identification of Alternatives – Emotional appearance



4. Evaluation of Alternatives – Total overview

B2B Buying Process Stages/ Emotions	Evaluation of Alternatives										Total Number	Percentage	
Affection											x	1	8%
Anger													
Annoyed													
Anticipation											x	2	17%
Anxiety											x	2	17%
Attentive, awareness													
Aversion											x	1	8%
Confidence													
Curiosity													
Disappointment											x	1	8%
Dissatisfaction													
Distrust											x	1	8%
Excitement											x	2	17%
Expectation			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	8	67%
Fascinating													
Fear											x	3	25%
Frustration											x	4	33%
Fulfillment													
Happy													
Hope													
Insecure													
Interest											x	1	8%
Joy											x	2	17%
Motivation													
Pressure													
Pride													
Regret													
Relief											x	1	8%
Safety													
Satisfaction													
Shame													
Skepticism											x	2	17%
Stress													
Suprise											x	2	17%
Sympathy											x	2	17%
Trust			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	9	75%

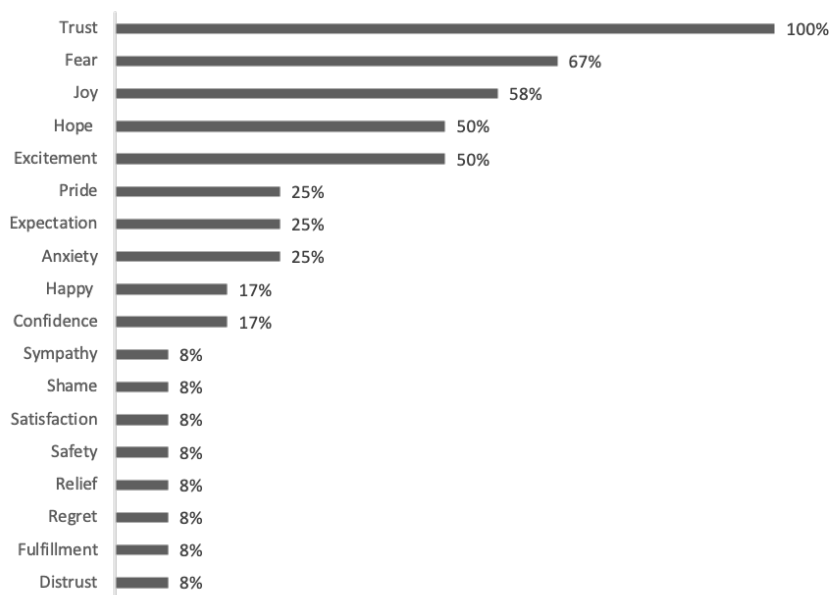
Evaluation of Alternatives – Emotional appearance



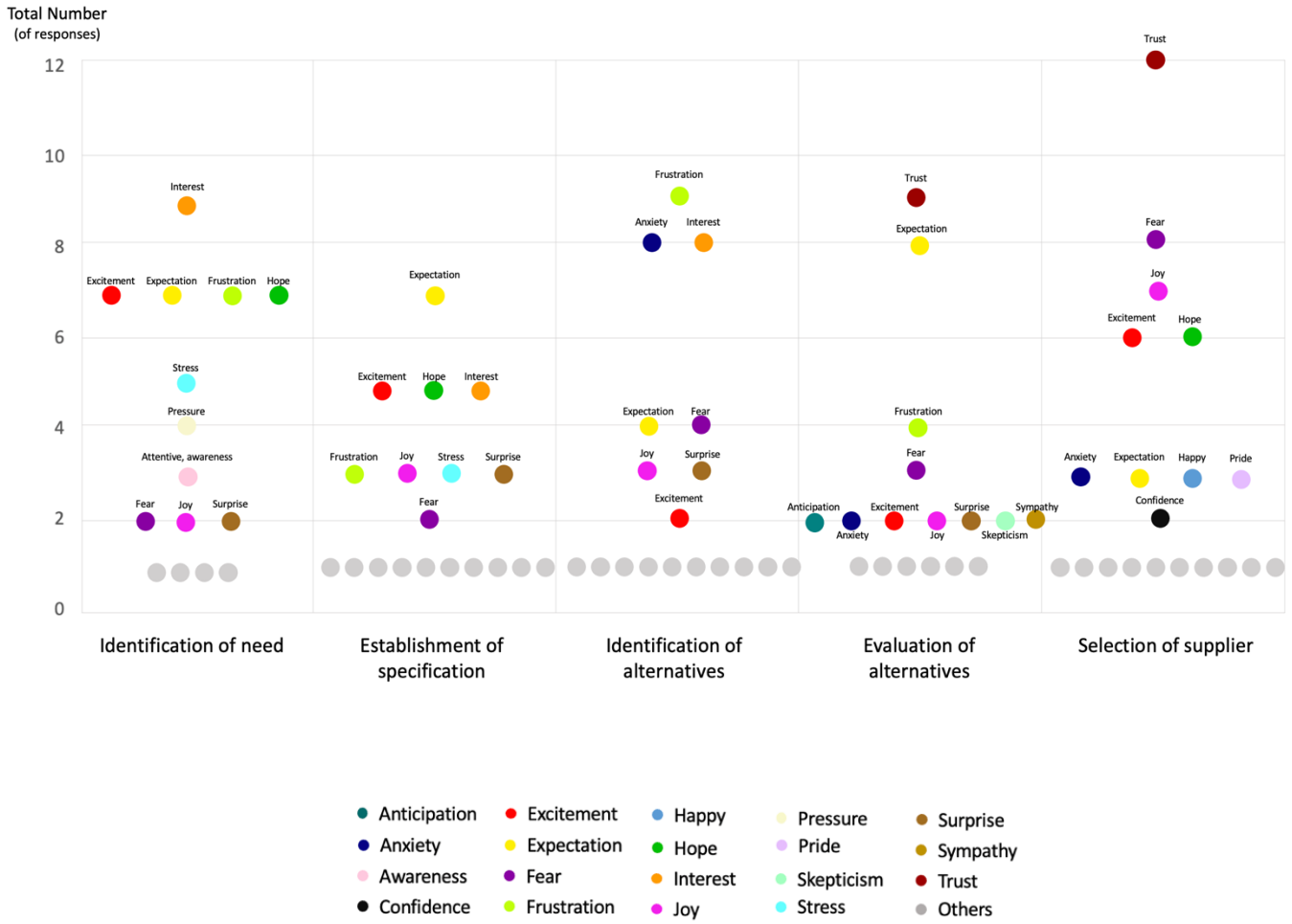
5. Selection of Supplier – Total overview

B2B Buying Process Stages/ Emotions	Selection of Supplier										Total Number	Percentage	
Affection													
Anger													
Annoyed													
Anticipation													
Anxiety				x		x		x				3	25%
Attentive, awareness													
Aversion													
Confidence		x				x						2	17%
Curiosity													
Disappointment													
Dissatisfaction													
Distrust						x						1	8%
Excitement			x	x		x		x	x	x		6	50%
Expectation			x						x		x	3	25%
Fascinating													
Fear		x	x	x		x		x	x	x	x	8	67%
Frustration													
Fulfillment						x						1	8%
Happy			x			x						2	17%
Hope					x	x			x	x	x	6	50%
Insecure											x	1	8%
Interest													
Joy		x		x	x	x		x			x	7	58%
Motivation													
Pressure													
Pride			x	x								3	25%
Regret											x	1	8%
Relief			x									1	8%
Safety											x	1	8%
Satisfaction						x						1	8%
Shame											x	1	8%
Skepticism													
Stress													
Suprise													
Sympathy						x						1	8%
Trust		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	12	100%

Selection of Supplier – Emotional appearance

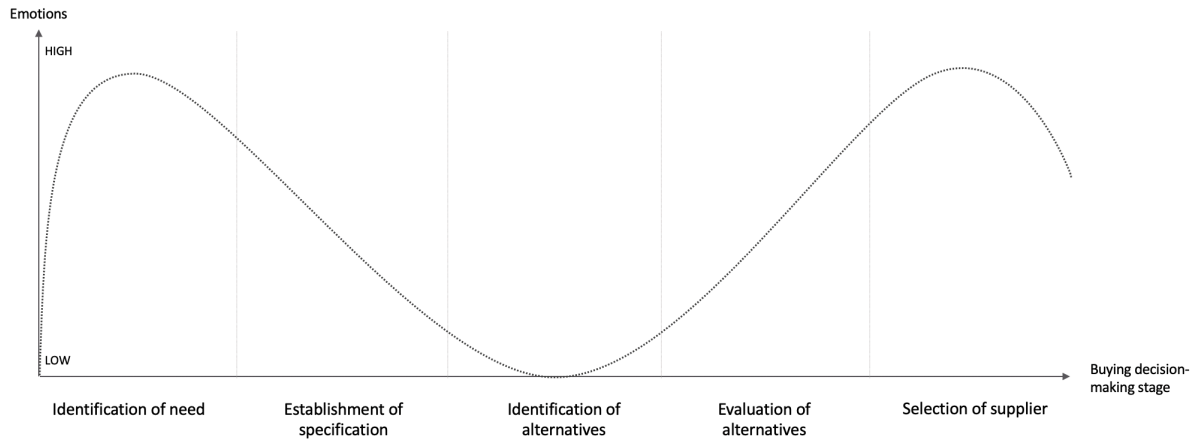


Appendix 11 - Overview of the emotional distribution within each buying process stage

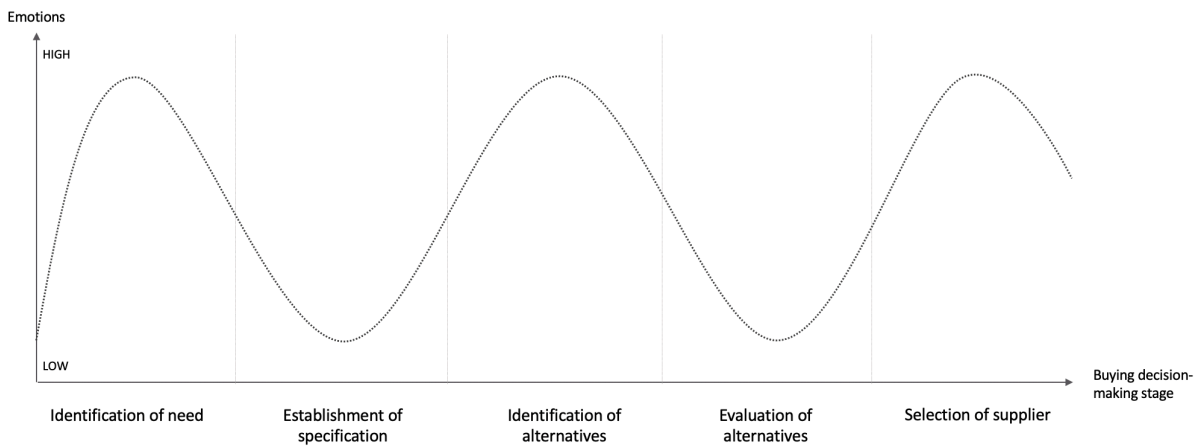


Appendix 12 – Intensity of emotions through the decision-making process

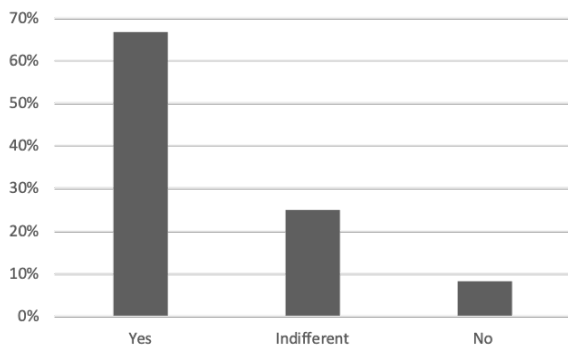
Scenario 1



Scenario 2

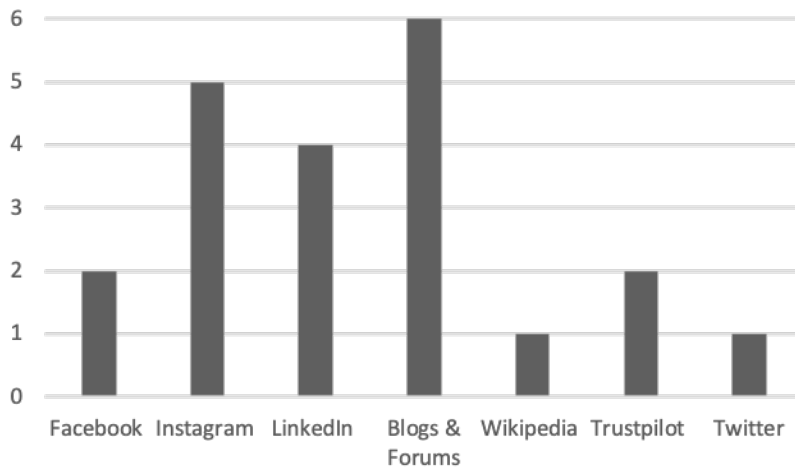


Appendix 13 – Impact and usage of social media during the B2B purchase decision

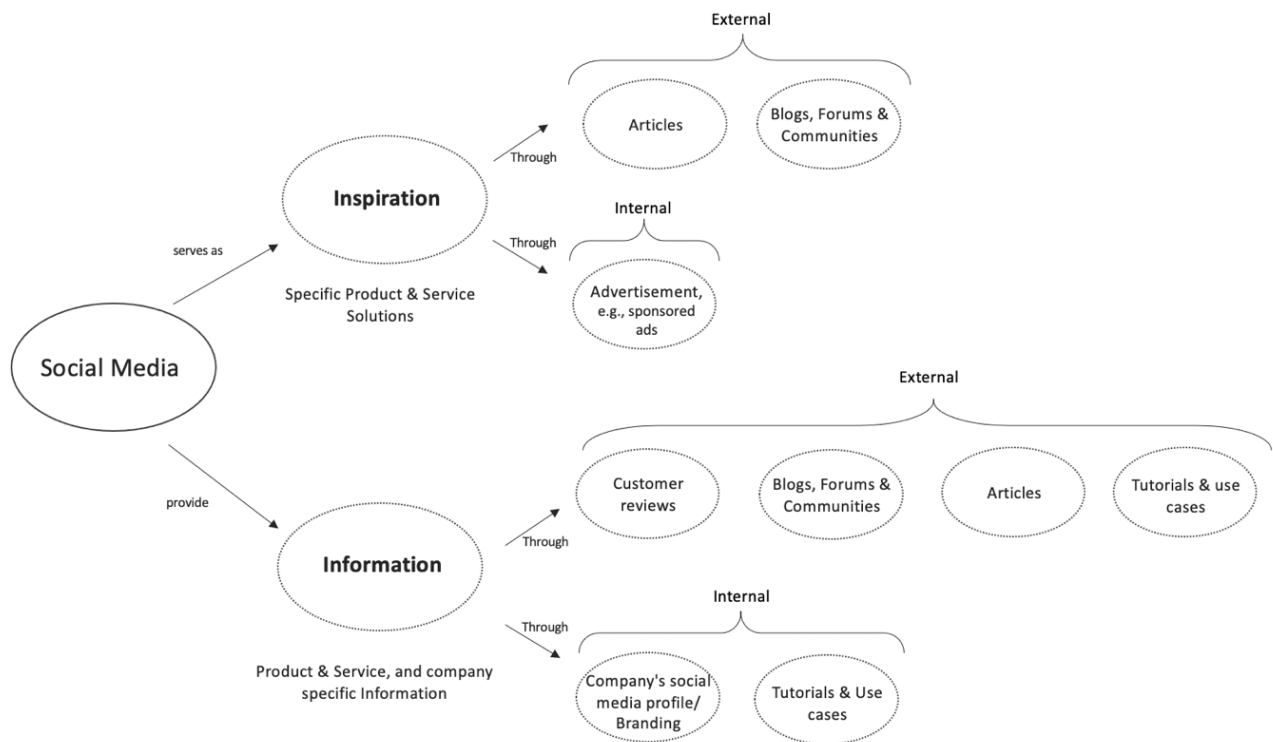


Total	Number	Percentage
Yes	8	67%
Indifferent	3	25%
No	1	8%

Appendix 14 – Social media channels used by Interviewees



Appendix 15 – Social media interview themes



Appendix 16 – Social Media impact on emotions

