



Beyond country image favorability: How brand positioning via country personality stereotypes enhances brand evaluations

Peter Magnusson,
Stanford A. Westjohn and
Nancy J. Sirianni

Culverhouse College of Business, University of
Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487, USA

Correspondence:

P Magnusson, Culverhouse College of
Business, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa,
AL 35487, USA.

Tel: 205-348-8932;

Fax: 205-348-6695;

e-mail: pmagnusson@cba.ua.edu

Abstract

Across four lab experiments and a field study, we find that brands are evaluated more favorably when the brand is positioned in a manner that is congruent with the brand's home country personality stereotype than when brand positioning is incongruent. Results demonstrate that cultural authenticity mediates this effect. We also uncover a moderating effect whereby brands are viewed more favorably when brand positioning and country personality stereotypes are *incongruent*, rather than *congruent*, under conditions of consumer animosity toward the firm's home country. This study is the first to demonstrate how international firms can leverage country-of-origin personality stereotypes as a brand-building advantage.

Journal of International Business Studies (2019) 50, 318–338.

<https://doi.org/10.1057/s41267-018-0175-3>

Keywords: country personality; country of origin; international consumer behavior; cultural authenticity; consumer animosity

Havaianas of Brazil has emerged as the world's largest casual sandal brand, selling about 200 million pairs of flip flops each year (Baker, 2017). Despite Brazil's generally weak country image (Fetscherin, 2010), Havaianas closely associates its brand with its Brazilian origin and employs common stereotypes about Brazilian people and values in its positioning, including the use of vibrant colors, Carnival, joy, and fun. Such a brand positioning strategy contradicts common guidance in the international marketing literature, which suggests that only brands from countries with a strong country image should emphasize country association; whereas brands from countries with a weak country image should avoid country association (e.g., Herz & Diamantopoulos, 2017; Kumar & Steenkamp, 2013).

Havaianas' success associating itself closely with Brazil highlights a gap in the understanding of country-of-origin (COO) effects. Specifically, the extant literature fails to account for how strategic brand positioning can help firms circumvent a weak COO image or better leverage a favorable image. To remedy this issue, we posit that other COO-related associations beyond country image favorability

Received: 16 May 2017

Revised: 20 June 2018

Accepted: 30 July 2018

Online publication date: 12 September 2018



must be accessed. We suggest that a brand can be effectively positioned to associate with its home country's personality stereotype. Country personality stereotypes, defined as "the mental representation of a country on dimensions that typically capture an individual's personality" (d'Astous & Boujbel, 2007: 233), differ from general country image favorability since they are not typically perceived as inherently good or bad. For example, country personality stereotypes include extroversion versus introversion (Rojas-Méndez, Papadopoulos, & Alwan, 2015) and warmth versus competence (Cuddy et al., 2009).

We posit that a brand's positioning, defined as the use of promotional messaging to establish key associations in customers' minds (Heinberg, Ozkaya, & Taube, 2017), will have positive effects on consumers' brand evaluations when it is congruent with its COO personality stereotype (hereafter referred to as "brand positioning-country personality congruity"). Importantly, we contend that brand positioning-country personality congruity will result in positive effects for brands from countries with both favorable and unfavorable images. Thus, we expect that a brand positioning-country personality congruity strategy can help insulate, or circumvent, problems associated with an unfavorable country image.

Our theory of brand positioning-country personality congruity is founded in schema congruity theory (Heider, 1946; Mandler, 1982). Using this perspective, we offer the following contributions to international marketing practice and theory. First, recent studies highlight consumers' interest in reading product labels and using brand origin as a purchase driver (Gürhan-Canli, Sarial-Abi, & Hayran, 2018). Consequently, it is important for international marketing managers and researchers to understand how and why COO associations—specifically COO personality stereotypes—can be strategically leveraged to enhance brand performance. This study demonstrates how brand positioning-country personality congruity is advantageous—even for brands from countries with unfavorable images. This is a notable theoretical contribution because existing theory suggests that brands associated with countries with unfavorable images should de-emphasize their COO association. However, our findings suggest an alternative strategic path forward through brand positioning-country personality congruity.

Second, we uncover the underlying mechanism that drives the relationship between brand positioning-country personality stereotypes and enhanced brand evaluations. We posit that cultural authenticity, defined as the consumer's perception that the brand is culturally genuine (Southworth & Ha-Brookshire, 2016), helps explain our proposed effects. We predict that when a brand is positioned in a manner congruent (incongruent) with consumers' commonly held country personality stereotypes, consumers will perceive the brand as more (less) culturally authentic, and this process will result in more (less) positive brand evaluations. The identification of this mediating process is an important theoretical contribution because it enhances our understanding of how schema congruity operates in the context of country associations and consumer brand evaluations.

Third, we investigate a condition under which country personality stereotype *incongruity*, rather than *congruity*, is the preferred brand positioning strategy. Specifically, we examine the moderating influence of consumer animosity, defined as "anger [toward a specific country] related to previous or ongoing political, military, economic, or diplomatic events" (Klein, 2002: 346). We posit that when consumers hold feelings of animosity toward the target country, brands may actually benefit from distancing themselves (via incongruity) from their COO personality stereotype. This illustrates an important difference between a merely unfavorable country image and overtly negative animosity toward a country. This is a unique and important contribution as it forges a theoretical and managerially valuable connection between the consumer animosity and brand positioning literature streams.

Finally, experimental research designs, which have been rare in IB research, are now being encouraged because of their ability to isolate causal variables, and when combined with field studies in realistic settings, offer convincing evidence (Zellmer-Bruhn, Caligiuri, & Thomas, 2016). In Study 1, we test the main thesis (H1) with a preliminary field study and investigate the mediating effect of cultural authenticity (H2) across two laboratory experiments. In Study 2, we examine the moderating effect of consumer animosity (H3) across two different country contexts in two separate experiments. Thus, we build evidence to support our hypotheses across a series of five experiments that test our predictions across a variety of country personality stereotypes and across countries with varying levels of overall favorability. Across our

studies, we examine two related brand evaluation constructs, which capture different facets of a brand's operational performance in the consumers' mindset (Katsikeas, Morgan, Leonidou, & Hult, 2016). We examine brand evaluations in the form of quality ratings of a product following a taste test (Veale & Quester, 2009) and we examine customer-based brand equity, defined as "the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand" Keller (1993: 1). By examining two distinct, yet related, outcome measures, we extend the generalizability of the conceptual framework. Given that both are related customer mindset performance constructs (Katsikeas et al., 2016), we expect the effects of brand positioning-country personality congruity will hold in the same pattern for each construct.

We proceed by providing a review and conceptual background on country image and personality, as well as schema congruity theory. Then, we develop and present hypotheses, which are supported with evidence from five experiments. We conclude by discussing the theoretical and managerial implications, and identifying limitations and future research directions.

CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATION

Dichter (1962: 116) first suggested that "the little phrase 'Made in [y]' can have a tremendous influence on the acceptance and success of products." Since then, it has received significant research attention; we summarize influential articles that have advanced the field in Table 1. Following the early realization that country associations can influence brand evaluations, a vast body of literature has found corroborating evidence of a significant link between consumers' perceptions of a country (i.e., country image) and their evaluations of products associated with that country, highlighted by several notable review articles (e.g., Bilkey & Nes, 1982; Verlegh & Steenkamp, 1999). A consistent conclusion across the literature is that COO "has been observed to influence people's attitudes, even when subjects are given a chance to see, touch, feel or taste the very same physical product" (Kotler & Gertner, 2002: 252). Research suggests that these effects are powerful and hold when consumers attribute the brand to the wrong home country (Magnusson, Westjohn, & Zdravkovic, 2011) and when consumers deny relying on COO information (Herz & Diamantopoulos, 2017).

Country Image

Given the role of country associations in influencing consumers' brand evaluations, it is not surprising that significant research efforts have tried to gain a better understanding of country image. A fundamental assumption underlying country image is that consumers form stereotypes about countries (e.g., Shimp, Samiee, & Madden, 1993; Verlegh & Steenkamp, 1999). Country stereotypes reflect a person's perceptions about the features of a country and are developed through socialization processes and exposure to information about countries (Diamantopoulos, Florack, Halkias, & Palcu, 2017). Accordingly, country image is a schema, or a knowledge structure, that synthesizes what we know about a country and it has been defined as "the total of all descriptive, inferential and informational beliefs one has about a particular country" (Martin & Eroglu, 1993: 193). Even though there seems to be agreement in viewing country image associations as a schema of stored knowledge, some researchers have viewed it as a broad, overall construct, based on "representative products, national characteristics, economic and political background, history, and traditions" (Nagashima, 1970: 68). Other researchers have focused on a narrower product country image emphasizing consumers' perceptions about the quality of products made in a particular country (Roth & Romeo, 1992).

However, regardless of the breadth of conceptualizations of country image, researchers have generally viewed this construct from a positive-negative valence perspective. For example, product country innovativeness measures have ranged from very innovative to not innovative, workmanship from high to low quality (Roth & Romeo, 1992), and the macro image of a country has been evaluated as, for example, more or less economically developed and with higher versus lower levels of technological research capacity (Martin & Eroglu, 1993). Whereas the country image favorability perspective has contributed valuable insights into the understanding of COO effects, it fails to account for country stereotype associations that are not always viewed as more or less favorable. Specifically, country personality associations can be positive, negative, or neither, but they are an important part of consumers' country schema.

Country Personality

A growing body of evidence indicates that consumers spontaneously associate countries with

**Table 1** Overview of influential articles in country-of-origin and country personality literatures

Author(s) (year)	Context	Key findings/conceptualizations
<i>Representative studies on how country image favorability influence brand evaluations</i>		
Schooler (1965)	200 Guatemalan part-time students	First empirical assessment illustrating that products from Mexico and Guatemala are preferred over products from El Salvador and Costa Rica
Bilkey and Nes (1982)	Qualitative review of 11 COO articles, published 1965–1974	Review of findings confirm that COO does indeed influence product evaluations
Verlegh and Steenkamp (1999)	Quantitative meta-analytic review of 41 studies (278 effect sizes), published 1980–1996	Findings confirm that COO influences product evaluations. Effects are stronger for, for example, quality judgments over attitude and purchase intentions, and COO effects are stronger when comparing developed with less developed country products
<i>Representative studies defining country associations as a schema</i>		
Shimp et al. (1993: 323)	64 in-depth interviews with American consumers	“Cognitive structure connotes consumers’ encoded representations of information in memory, which, in present usage, refers to what consumers know/believe about products from different countries”
Martin and Eroglu (1993: 193)	200 American students	Country image is defined as “the total of all descriptive, inferential and informational beliefs one has about a particular country”
Pappu et al. (2007: 727)	539 Australian consumers	Country image (similar to brand image) is a set of COO associations organized into groups in a meaningful way
<i>Representative studies focusing on fit between product category and country image</i>		
Roth and Romeo (1992)	368 US, Mexican, and Irish consumers	COO influence varies depending on how well the country’s perceived production and marketing strengths are related to the product category
Pappu et al. (2007)	539 Australian consumers	COO effect depends on match between country’s macro and micro country image and product category
<i>Representative studies identifying country personality dimensions</i>		
d’Astous and Boujbel (2007)	170 French-speaking Canadians evaluated 11 different countries.	First country personality effort. Identified (1) agreeableness, (2) wickedness, (3) snobbism, (4) assiduousness, (5) conformity, and (6) unobtrusiveness
Cuddy et al. (2009)	755 European evaluated 15 EU countries	Warmth and competence are negatively correlated. Stereotypes of countries are either high warmth, low competence, or high competence, low warmth
Kim et al. (2013)	1221 university students from nine countries	Identified country personality dimensions of (1) leadership, (2) excitement, (3) sophistication, (4), tradition, and (5) peacefulness
Rojas-Méndez et al. (2015)	561 Saudi Arabian consumers	Evaluated the US based on the big five personality dimensions
This study	Five experiments in the US	Extends literature by demonstrating how positioning brands via COO personality stereotypes signals cultural authenticity and enhances consumer brand evaluations

human personality traits as part of their mental schema (e.g., Barbarossa, De Pelsmacker, & Moons, 2018; Kim, Shim, & Dinnie, 2013; Rojas-Méndez, Murphy, & Papadopoulos, 2013). Using human traits to stereotype countries is appealing, because “human traits are associated with universal mental representations that are easily activated because they have been used previously to characterize people in our environment and predict their behavior” (d’Astous & Boujbel, 2007: 232).

Furthermore, unlike favorability perceptions, which can often be contained to specific product categories (Pappu, Quester, & Cooksey, 2007; Roth & Romeo, 1992), country personality stereotypes represent broad macro-level associations of a country.

With the realization that country personality stereotypes may be a salient country association, researchers have aimed to identify the dominant country personality dimensions that people use to

stereotype countries. Several broad frameworks with multiple dimensions, akin to the Big Five personality framework (John & Srivastava, 1999), have been proposed. For example, d'Astous and Boujbel (2007) developed a framework based on six dimensions (agreeableness, wickedness, snobbism, assiduousness, conformity, and unobtrusiveness). Kim et al. (2013) found five personality dimensions (leadership, excitement, sophistication, tradition, and peacefulness), and Rojas-Méndez et al. (2013) identified three dimensions (amicableness, resourcefulness, and self-centeredness).

Others have developed frameworks that attempt to identify the most salient stereotype people associate with other countries. For example, JW Thompson conducted a large-scale study to understand how people stereotype other countries by focusing on the (perceived) dominant personality trait for each country (Ayala, Truss, & Montecucollo, 2012). Similarly, the stereotype content model has successfully been used to categorize countries, using two primary dimensions that people use to stereotype outgroups (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Jun, 2002). Warmth reflects friendliness, good-naturedness, and sincerity; whereas competence reflects capability, confidence, and skillfulness (Cuddy et al., 2009).

Whereas multi-dimensional personality frameworks enable the development of a descriptive country personality profile across a number of traits, a more useful approach with respect to brand positioning is focusing on a salient, dominant personality stereotype. We argue that a single-trait focus enables consumers to process country personality imagery more clearly, and thus, create stronger associations in their existing schema for the focal brand and country, and this process should result in more positive brand evaluations. Similarly, Aaker's (1997) brand personality framework is a rich multi-dimensional framework, yet research has shown that brands may only be able to leverage one dominant brand personality dimension to enhance brand equity (Sirianni, Bitner, Brown, & Mandel, 2013).

Although some country personality dimensions that have been identified in the literature (e.g., self-centeredness (Rojas-Méndez, Papadopoulos, & Murphy, 2013) or wickedness (d'Astous & Boujbel, 2007) may fit the more versus less favorable continuum common in the traditional COO literature, several country personality stereotypes are not inherently positive or negative. For example, both warmth and competence are desirable attributes,

yet countries are typically stereotyped as predominantly one or the other (Cuddy et al., 2009). In effect, the stereotype content model suggests that ambivalent stereotypes are the norm and outgroups are generally viewed as either competent, but cold, or warm, but incompetent, and it is unclear if one of these is more favorable than the other. Similarly, countries can be viewed as introverted or extroverted; however, one trait is not necessarily more favorable than the other. Given that firms are unlikely to actively position their brands using obviously negative traits, e.g., wickedness, the focus of this study is on country personality stereotypes that are not inherently valenced, such as warmth (but incompetent) versus competence (but cold), or extroversion versus introversion.

In sum, the current state of knowledge in the COO and country personality literatures suggests that (1) consumers organize their associations about countries into mental schemas, which influence brand evaluations, and (2) beyond general favorability perceptions, consumers develop human personality associations about countries. Such personality stereotypes are often not inherently valenced. This suggests an important research gap and we posit that country personality stereotypes offer a strategic opportunity for brand managers to capitalize on COO associations in ways that prior research based on general favorability perceptions is unable to explain.

HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Schema Congruity

Consumers organize their associations about a country into a schema, defined as a "cognitive structure that represents knowledge about a concept or type of stimulus, including its attributes and the relations among those attributes" (Fiske & Taylor, 1991: 98). The schema provides a frame through which consumers interpret new information and serves as an anchor in forming brand evaluations (Stumpf & Baum, 2016). A family of theories in psychology, including balance theory (Heider, 1946), cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957), the principles of persuasion (Carrwright, 1949), and schema congruity theory (Mandler, 1982) emphasize the benefits of cognitive consistency or schema congruity.

Schema congruity is defined as a match between an object and the schema it invokes. Cognitive consistency theories suggest that consumers are



predisposed to prefer elements cognitively consistent with their existing knowledge (e.g., Festinger, 1957). New information (i.e., brand positioning information) that is consistent with prior knowledge (i.e., country schema) reinforces previous stereotypes and is viewed more favorably. This implies that consumers should value congruity between the personality associations evoked by a brand through its brand positioning and consumers' country personality stereotypes. In contrast, when the new information (i.e., brand positioning information) is inconsistent with a person's prevailing cognitive structure (i.e., country schema), consumers are more likely to reject it (Cartwright, 1949).

Related empirical evidence also supports the benefits of cognitive congruity. For example, corporate social responsibility campaigns are perceived more favorably when there is a stronger alignment between the brand and the social cause (Zdravkovic, Magnusson, & Stanley, 2010). Anthropomorphized products are evaluated more favorably when a human schema has been activated beforehand, creating congruity (Aggarwal & McGill, 2007), and consumers are more likely to refer a brand to others if there is congruity between the referral reward and the brand (Stumpf & Baum, 2016).

Accordingly, we posit that brand evaluations will be more favorable when brand positioning is congruent with consumers' country personality stereotypes. When objects are placed in a predictive conceptual context, this leads to a sense of familiarity that is associated with positive evaluations of the object (Whittlesea, 1993). In sum, brand positioning-country personality congruity fits consumer expectations about brands from that country, "makes sense," and produces cognitive harmony and balance that engenders favorable brand evaluations. In contrast, brand positioning-country personality *incongruity* contradicts expectations, produces cognitive dissonance, and imbalance that engenders *unfavorable* brand evaluations (Mandler, 1982). Thus, on the basis of this discussion, and under the assumption that the country's dominant personality stereotype is not obviously negative, e.g., wickedness or snobbism, we propose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: Consumer brand evaluations are more favorable under conditions of brand positioning-country personality congruity than under brand positioning-country personality incongruity.

The Mediating Effect of Cultural Authenticity

Cultural authenticity is defined as the consumer's perception of whether a brand is culturally genuine or real (Southworth & Ha-Brookshire, 2016). Arguably, some firms have strategically infused country personality stereotypes into their branding efforts to appear more culturally authentic; yet prior research does not explain why this may or may not be a successful branding strategy. Notable examples include Volkswagen's use of German language (Das Auto) and strong German accents in its US advertisements, the incorporation of the kangaroo into the brand symbol for Australia's Qantas airline, and Ricola's herbal lozenge commercials, which have included characters dressed in lederhosen, scenes of the Swiss Alps, and the sound of the iconic Swiss Alpenhorn. While such branding efforts are frequently practiced, there is a lack of empirical evidence explaining any intervening mechanisms between brand positioning-country personality congruity and favorable consumer brand evaluations.

Recent research evidences that cultural authenticity positively affects brand attitudes (Spielmann, 2016) and consumers' willingness to try brands (Southworth & Ha-Brookshire, 2016). We build on these findings and posit that cultural authenticity serves as a key mediating variable that helps explain why brand positioning-country personality stereotype congruity leads to enhanced brand evaluations. A brand's COO acts as a source of cultural meaning (Alden, Steenkamp, & Batra, 1999), and we argue that positioning brands to emphasize COO personality stereotypes will serve to reinforce consumers' previously formed schema for that country. Moreover, we propose this schema reinforcement process permits consumers to credibly link the brand to the home country's culture (Kumar & Steenkamp, 2013) and allows the brand to be perceived as more culturally authentic. Finally, because consumers have shown a preference for more authentic market offerings, we predict that consumer brand evaluations will be more favorable as a result of this brand positioning strategy. In contrast, if a brand's personality expression is inconsistent with consumers' cultural stereotype for that brand's home country, (i.e., brand positioning-country personality incongruity), we argue that the brand will be viewed as less culturally authentic, and consumer brand evaluations will be less favorable as a result.

Hypothesis 2: Cultural authenticity mediates the positive effect of brand positioning-country personality congruity on consumer brand evaluations.

The Moderating Effect of Consumer Animosity

In H1, we offered theoretical arguments suggesting that when a brand's personality-based positioning is congruent with its COO personality stereotype, consumers will evaluate brands more favorably as a result of cognitive congruity. However, a fit between an object (e.g., country-associated brand) and its corresponding schema can also activate affect that transfers to the object to the degree that it fits the schema, a process referred to as schema-triggered affect (Fiske, 1982). Importantly, since affect associated with a schema can be just as often negative as positive, the transferred affect could also be negative or positive. The stronger the fit between the brand positioning and the country schema, the more easily schema-triggered affect will transfer to the brand (Mandler, 1982). This raises the question whether an *incongruent* country-personality brand positioning would be advantageous in instances of schema-triggered *negative* affect.

One instance where the country schema may trigger negative affect is in the case of consumer animosity. Consumer animosity is defined as intense negative affect toward a specific country due to a perceived injustice, based on past or ongoing military, political, or economic events (Klein, 2002). Consumer animosity differs from unfavorable country image in that it is a strong negative emotion (Harmeling, Magnusson, & Singh, 2015). In contrast, an unfavorable country image is generally viewed as a cognitive construct, reflecting perceptions about a country's economic development or the quality of the products it produces (Roth & Diamantopoulos, 2009). Significant examples of consumer animosity include the historical conflict between China and Japan (Gao, Wang, & Che, 2017), Egyptian animosity toward Israel (Papadopoulos, El Banna, & Murphy, 2017), and animosity toward Russia in former Soviet republics, such as Lithuania and Ukraine (Gineikiene & Diamantopoulos, 2017). In sum, consumers can hold temporary or persistent animosity feelings toward countries that otherwise have generally favorable country images (Leong et al., 2008).

This raises questions as to how a brand should best position itself if consumers harbor animosity toward the brand's home country. We posit that

consumer animosity will moderate the effect of brand positioning-country personality congruity such that when animosity is high, *incongruent* brand positioning may lead to more favorable evaluations than congruent brand positioning. In this sense, congruity turns into a disadvantage and incongruent brand positioning may be preferred, because negative associations with the schema interfere with the positive effects of congruity. In effect, even though congruity has generally positive outcomes, we predict that in the case of consumer animosity, congruity can activate negative schema-triggered affect embedded in consumers' mental associations (Fiske, 1982). The intense negative affect caused by consumer animosity will overpower the positive experience of cognitive congruity, and should result in less-favorable brand evaluations (Lee & Labroo, 2004). Thus, in cases where consumer animosity is high, incongruent brand positioning weakens the association between the brand and its COO, and the negative schema-triggered affect will not transfer as easily (Lane & Fastoso, 2016). Conversely, when animosity is low, congruent brand positioning, for the reasons laid out in H1, should lead to more favorable brand evaluations than incongruent brand positioning.

Hypothesis 3: Consumer animosity moderates the brand positioning-country personality congruity effect. When consumer animosity is high (low), brand positioning that is *incongruent* with the brand's country personality leads to more (less)-favorable brand evaluations than when brand positioning is congruent with the brand's country personality.

STUDY 1

Study 1 is comprised of a preliminary field study and two laboratory experiments. The field study measured the effects of brand positioning-country personality congruity on consumer wine taste perceptions at a wine bar during regular operating hours. The field study, which used German and Spanish wines as the study context, provided preliminary support for H1, and served as a platform for the remaining experiments. The full details of the field study are provided in the "Web Appendix".

Study 1-A largely replicated the field study with a few notable differences. First, we included a control condition (neutral country personality stereotype positioning), second, we examined customer-based



brand equity as the outcome variable, and third, we included a test of the mediating effect of cultural authenticity (H2). Study 1-B provides additional evidence in support of H1 and H2, with three important extensions. First, we examined a different product category and international branding context: airlines. We chose this context in order to extend the generalizability of the framework from tangible goods to a more experiential service offering. Second, we expanded our investigation beyond Germany and Spain to two new countries: Italy and India. We investigated (American) consumers' personality stereotypes for the two new countries, which were found to be slightly different from the dimensions used for Germany and Spain in Study 1-A. Third, because India has a significantly less favorable country image (Fetscherin, 2010), Study 1-B allowed us to explore whether the benefits of brand positioning-country personality congruity also holds for countries with less-favorable country images.

Study 1-A: Participants and Procedures

We focused on wine in the preliminary field study and in this study since it is a product closely associated with its home country (Veale & Quester, 2009). Further, we chose Germany and Spain as focal countries because they are both top-ten wine-producing countries of the world (UN Food and Agriculture Division, 2013), relatively similar in terms of economic wealth, generally elicit favorable country images (Fetscherin, 2010), and are in the same geographic region; yet Germany and Spain have different salient country personality stereotypes.

As a first step, we determined the salient country personality stereotypes for Germany and Spain by triangulating evidence from three sources. First, we conducted interviews with ten American consumers (even gender split, ages 23–63) to determine perceptions of the most salient country personality stereotypes. Respondents were asked to describe Germany's and Spain's respective country personalities. Adjectives used to describe Germany were "organized, disciplined, methodical, and focused," whereas adjectives used to describe Spain were "charming, warm, and romantic."

Second, we examined the JW Thompson Personality Atlas (Ayala et al., 2012), which asked 6075 adults from 27 countries how they perceived the personalities of other countries. Germany was labeled as "Uniformany" and described as "hard-working, successful, orderly, and disciplined." In

contrast, Spain was labeled "Funlandia" and described as "charismatic and fun." Third, we reviewed Cuddy et al.'s (2009) analysis of European countries, which found that Germany was perceived as a notably "high-competence, low-warmth" country, whereas Spain was perceived as a "high-warmth, low-competence" country. Accordingly, based on the triangulation of evidence, we deemed competence (Germany) and warmth (Spain) as the two most salient descriptors of those countries.

We recruited 174 non-student participants from the US (see "Appendix" for demographic characteristics) using Amazon's MTurk online consumer panel. We included a control condition to enhance confidence in our findings. Thus, the experiment was a 3 (brand positioning: competent vs. warm vs. neutral-control) \times 2 (country personality stereotype: competent vs. warm) between-subjects design. Participants were randomly assigned to conditions, which meant that some participants were exposed to a brand positioning-country personality stereotype congruity condition, whereas others were exposed to a brand positioning-country personality stereotype incongruity condition, and some received a neutral-control condition. For the competent and warm brand positioning conditions, we used the same brand positioning promotional brochure stimuli as in the preliminary field study (see "Web Appendix 3"). For the control condition, we created a similar-looking description about each of the wines, but it emphasized brand attributes that were intended to be neither competent nor warm. For example, the wine was described as "food-friendly and suitable for pairing with a wide range of foods."

Participants were instructed to imagine that they had just entered a wine shop and were looking to purchase a bottle of white wine, and that they would be presented with information about a specific bottle of wine. On the next page, participants viewed the promotional material for the focal wine brand for at least 30 s. The next page measured the brand evaluation variables of interest. Customer-based brand equity was measured using four items to capture perceptions of quality versus competitors, value for the cost, brand uniqueness, and willingness to pay a premium for the brand (Netemeyer et al., 2004). We created a customer-based brand equity index by averaging the four measures ($\alpha = 0.87$). Cultural authenticity was assessed with a three-item scale measuring perceptions of the cultural authenticity of the brand

positioning. The scale is adapted from Moulard, Garrity, and Rice (2015) and included items such as “the brand... (1) embodies genuinely [country] characteristics, (2) exhibited real [country] behaviors, and (3) is authentically [country].” We averaged the three items to form a cultural authenticity index ($\alpha = 0.92$). For brand positioning competence versus warmth, we used a three-item manipulation check based on (Cuddy et al., 2009). We averaged the three items to form a competence versus warmth index ($\alpha = 0.92$).

Study 1-A: Results

First, we tested the effectiveness of the manipulation in a 3×2 ANOVA with brand positioning competence versus warmth as the dependent variable. It revealed a main effect of brand positioning ($M_{\text{Competent positioning}} = 5.50$ vs. $M_{\text{Neutral positioning}} = 4.53$ vs. $M_{\text{Warm positioning}} = 3.53$, $F(1, 168) = 21.34$, $p < 0.001$). As expected, the main effect of country and the interaction between country and brand positioning were non-significant. Post hoc tests revealed that the neutral-control condition was perceived as significantly less competent than the competent condition and significantly more competent than the warm condition, suggesting that the manipulation was successful.

To examine H1, we conducted a 3×2 ANOVA with customer-based brand equity as the dependent variable. As expected, the main effects of country and brand positioning were not significant ($M_{\text{Competent positioning}} = 4.91$ vs. $M_{\text{Neutral positioning}} = 4.70$ vs. $M_{\text{Warm positioning}} = 4.84$, $F(1, 168) = 0.72$, $p = 0.36$), ($M_{\text{Germany}} = 4.88$ vs. $M_{\text{Spain}} = 4.75$; $F(1, 168) = 0.85$, $p = 0.36$), indicating that neither country nor brand positioning alone influenced the evaluation of the brand. Importantly, in support of H1, the interaction between country and brand positioning was significant ($F(1, 168) = 4.65$, $p = 0.01$). Follow-up planned contrasts indicated that participants gave more favorable customer-based brand equity ratings to the German brand with competent brand positioning ($M = 5.26$) than with neutral brand positioning ($M = 4.73$; $t(63) = 1.91$, $p = 0.03$) or warm positioning ($M = 4.66$; $t(63) = 2.46$, $p = 0.01$)¹. In contrast, the Spanish brand was rated more favorably with warm brand positioning ($M = 5.02$) than with neutral brand positioning ($M = 4.67$; $t(55) = 1.68$, $p = 0.05$) or competent positioning ($M = 4.56$; $t(53) = 1.67$, $p = 0.05$). There were no significant differences between the incongruent and neutral positioning

for both the German and Spanish wine brands. We illustrate this effect in Figure 1a.

To test H2, the mediating effect of cultural authenticity, we first conducted a 3×2 ANOVA with cultural authenticity as the dependent variable. As expected, the main effects of brand positioning and country were not significant, but the interaction between brand positioning and country was significant ($F(1, 168) = 13.79$, $p < 0.001$). For the German brand, the competent positioning ($M = 5.26$) was viewed as more culturally authentic than the neutral positioning ($M = 4.75$; $t(55) = 1.69$, $p = 0.05$) or the warm positioning ($M = 3.85$; $t(63) = 5.58$, $p < 0.001$). In contrast, for the Spanish brand, the warm positioning ($M = 5.31$) was viewed as more culturally authentic than the neutral positioning ($M = 4.71$; $t(55) = 2.29$, $p = 0.01$) or the competent positioning ($M = 4.48$; $t(53) = 2.71$, $p = 0.01$), which is shown in Figure 1b.

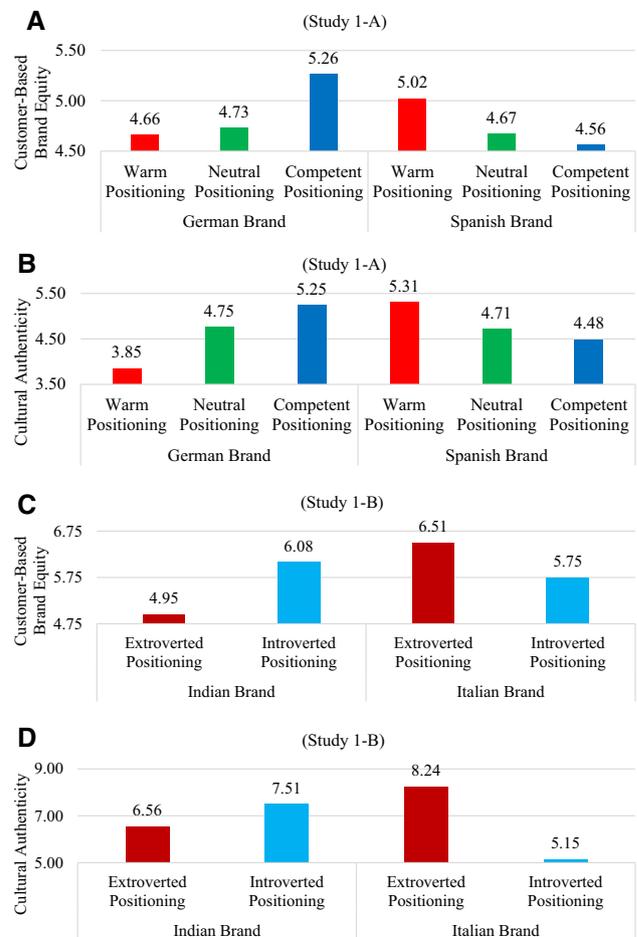


Figure 1 The mediating effect of cultural authenticity.



Next, to establish whether cultural authenticity mediated the interactive effect of brand positioning-country personality congruity on customer-based brand equity (H2), we conducted a mediated moderation analysis using 5000 bootstrap samples and Model 8 of the PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2013). Because they were not significantly different from one another, we collapsed the neutral and incongruent brand positioning conditions into one condition. The interaction between brand positioning and country was significantly related to cultural authenticity ($b = 1.72$, $t(170) = 4.49$, $p < 0.001$) and cultural authenticity was significantly related to customer-based brand equity ($b = 0.38$, $t(169) = 6.95$, $p < 0.001$). A 95% bias-corrected bootstrap confidence interval for the indirect effect of brand positioning-country personality congruity on brand equity was wholly above zero (0.35–1.03). Therefore, consistent with H2, cultural authenticity mediated the moderated effect of brand positioning-country personality congruity on customer-based brand equity evaluations for the German and Spanish wine brands (Table 2).

Study 1-B: Participants and Procedure

The objective for Study 1-B was to extend our investigation to a different branding context and different country personality stereotypes. We selected airlines, an experiential service offering, as the brand context, and chose to focus on Italy and India. Similar to Study 1-A, we first determined which personality characteristics (American) consumers most closely associate with Italy and India, using a triangulating process. Based on qualitative interviews, adjectives used to describe Italy were “passionate, loud, energetic, and outgoing.” In contrast, adjectives used to describe India included “cautious, humble, calm, and refined.” Combined, these descriptions suggest that consumers perceive Italy as more extroverted and India as more introverted.

Following the qualitative interviews, we quantitatively confirmed the dominant personality dimensions for the two countries by adapting the Big Five Inventory (BFI) (John & Srivastava, 1999) and asking respondents to assess the personality of a country rather than that of a person. In a between-subjects design, 150 non-student participants recruited via MTurk were randomly assigned to assess the country personality of either Italy or India. Confirming the qualitative interviews, the ANOVA revealed a significant difference in extroversion/introversion between the two countries

($M_{\text{India}} = 3.23$ vs. $M_{\text{Italy}} = 4.06$; $F(1, 148) = 57.03$, $p < 0.001$). Differences in other personality dimensions were modest in comparison to the differences in extroversion/introversion. There were no significant differences on the agreeableness, openness, or neuroticism dimensions, however; India was rated as slightly more conscientious than Italy. However, the differences in extroversion/introversion were considerably larger than the differences in the conscientiousness dimension, suggesting that extroversion/introversion is the most salient country personality dimension for these countries. Further, we assessed the country images of Italy and India, with a three-item scale ($\alpha = 0.90$) adopted from (Rojas-Méndez et al., 2015). Consistent with prior literature, India’s country image ($M = 4.15$) was significantly less favorable than Italy’s ($M = 5.87$; $F(1, 150) = 82.62$, $p < 0.001$). Having established extroversion/introversion as salient country personality stereotypes for Italy and India, we proceeded to examine whether brand positioning that is congruent with these country personality stereotypes would influence consumer brand evaluations.

We recruited 144 non-student participants (see “Appendix” for demographic characteristics) from the US using MTurk and randomly assigned them to conditions. The experiment was a 2 (brand positioning: extroverted vs. introverted) \times 2 (country personality stereotype: extroverted vs. introverted) between-subjects design. Thus, we fully crossed extroverted and introverted brand positioning with extroverted and introverted country personality stereotypes. We selected the national flagship airline for each country, Alitalia and Air India, to test our predictions. A professional graphic designer produced print advertisements that positioned the airlines as either extroverted or introverted. The extroverted ad emphasized words such as friendly, outgoing, and cheerful, and the introverted ad emphasized words such as quiet, gentle, and soft-spoken (see “Web Appendix 4”).

The advertisements were developed through an iterative process to ensure that the stimuli successfully conveyed the intended personality and were similar in likability. We pre-tested the stimuli with a small sample of non-student MTurk participants ($n = 33$) to examine whether they conveyed the intended position and whether there was a significant difference in the attitude toward the advertisements. Participants were asked to identify the positioning of the advertisement on four semantic differential items: (1) introverted/extroverted, (2)

Table 2 Summary of results for all studies

<i>Preliminary Field Study: Germany–Spain (wine bar customers)</i>			
ANOVA results: DV—wine taste rating		<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Country (Germany/Spain)		(1, 91) = 1.58	0.21
Positioning (competent/warm)		(1, 91) = 0.00	0.99
Country × positioning		(1, 91) = 7.24	0.01
<i>Study 1-A: Germany–Spain (online panel)</i>			
ANOVA results: DV—customer-based brand equity		<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Country (Germany/Spain)		(1, 168) = 0.85	0.36
Positioning (competent/warm/neutral)		(1, 168) = 0.72	0.36
Country × positioning		(1, 168) = 4.65	0.01
PROCESS results	<i>b</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Country × positioning → cultural authenticity	1.72	(170) = 4.49	< 0.001
Cultural authenticity → customer-based brand equity	0.38	(170) = 6.95	< 0.001
		LLCI–ULCI	
		0.35–1.03	
<i>Study 1-B: Italy–India (Online panel)</i>			
ANOVA Results: DV—customer-based brand equity		<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Country (Italy/India)		(1, 140) = 5.42	0.02
Positioning (extroverted/introverted)		(1, 140) = 0.48	0.49
Country × positioning		(1, 140) = 12.93	< 0.001
PROCESS results	<i>b</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Country × positioning → cultural authenticity	4.04	(140) = 7.36	< 0.001
Cultural authenticity → customer-based brand equity	0.34	(139) = 4.52	< 0.001
		LLCI–ULCI	
		0.79–2.16	
Mediation test—95% bootstrap confidence interval			
<i>Study 2-A: Germany Animosity (students—lab)</i>			
ANOVA results: DV—chocolate taste rating		<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Animosity (high/low)		(1, 156) = 0.08	0.78
Positioning (competent/warm)		(1, 156) = 0.00	0.99
Animosity × positioning		(1, 156) = 6.50	0.01
<i>Study 2-B: Colombia Animosity (online panel)</i>			
ANOVA results: DV—customer-based brand equity		<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Animosity (high/low)		(1, 139) = 6.23	0.01
Positioning (extroverted/introverted)		(1, 139) = 0.02	0.89
Animosity × positioning		(1, 139) = 5.82	0.02

DV dependent variable, LLCI–ULCI lower and upper limit confidence interval, PROCESS refers to the SPSS macro by Hayes (2013), *b* unstandardized regression coefficient.

quiet/expressive, (3) reserved/outgoing, and (4) thoughtful/talkative. We averaged the four items to form a perceived extroversion versus introversion advertising positioning index ($\alpha = 0.98$). We also measured attitude toward the advertisement with three items ($\alpha = 0.97$) (MacKenzie & Lutz, 1989). As intended, there was a significant difference in the perceived extroversion versus introversion positioning of the ads ($M_{\text{Extroverted ad}} = 5.79$, $M_{\text{Introverted ad}} = 2.18$, $F(1, 31) = 82.66$, $p < 0.001$). However, there was no difference in the attitude toward the advertisement ($M_{\text{Extroverted ad}} = 5.41$, $M_{\text{Introverted ad}} = 5.50$, $F(1, 31) = 0.03$, $p = 0.87$). Thus, based on the pre-test, we were satisfied that the advertisements conveyed the intended positioning, and that neither advertisement was

significantly more appealing than the other on the basis of design alone.

In the full study, after viewing the advertisement, participants responded to the outcome questions as well as manipulation check questions. Customer-based brand equity ($\alpha = 0.89$) and cultural authenticity ($\alpha = 0.95$) were assessed with the same scales that we used in Study 1-A. To ensure the manipulation was successful, we used the same four-item scale to measure perceived extroversion versus introversion ad positioning as in the pre-test ($\alpha = 0.97$).

Study 1-B: Results

First, we tested the effectiveness of the manipulation in a 2×2 ANOVA with brand positioning extroversion versus introversion as the dependent

variable. It revealed a main effect of brand positioning ($M_{\text{Extroverted positioning}} = 5.44$ vs. $M_{\text{Introverted positioning}} = 2.24$, $F(1, 140) = 177.47$, $p < 0.001$). As expected, the main effect of country and the interaction between country and brand positioning were non-significant. To examine H1, we conducted a 2×2 ANOVA with customer-based brand equity as the dependent variable. As expected, the main effect of brand positioning was not significant ($M_{\text{Extroverted positioning}} = 5.73$ vs. $M_{\text{Introverted positioning}} = 5.92$, $F(1, 140) = 0.48$, $p = 0.49$). However, the main effect of country was significant ($M_{\text{Italy}} = 6.13$ vs. $M_{\text{India}} = 5.52$; $F(1, 140) = 5.42$, $p = 0.02$), which is consistent with traditional COO literature, as Italy generally has a more favorable country image than India (Fetscherin, 2010).

More importantly, in support of H1, the interaction between country and brand positioning was significant ($F(1, 140) = 12.93$, $p < 0.001$). Follow-up planned contrasts indicate that participants gave more favorable customer-based brand equity ratings to the Italian airline brand with extroverted brand positioning ($M = 6.51$) than with introverted brand positioning ($M = 5.75$; $t(74) = 2.15$, $p = 0.02$). In contrast, for the Indian airline brand, they gave more favorable customer-based brand equity ratings with introverted brand positioning ($M = 6.08$) than with extroverted brand positioning ($M = 4.95$; $t(66) = 2.89$, $p = 0.002$). We illustrate this effect in Figure 1c.

To test H2, the mediating effect of cultural authenticity, we conducted a 2×2 ANOVA with cultural authenticity as the dependent variable. The main effects of brand positioning and country were not significant, but as expected, the interaction between brand positioning and country was significant ($F(1, 140) = 54.24$, $p < 0.001$). For the Italian airline brand, the extroverted positioning ($M_{\text{Extroverted positioning}} = 8.24$) was viewed as significantly more culturally authentic than its incongruent counterpart ($M_{\text{Introverted positioning}} = 5.15$; $t(74) = 8.78$, $p < 0.001$). In contrast, for the Indian airline brand, the introverted positioning was viewed as more culturally authentic ($M_{\text{Introverted positioning}} = 7.51$) than its incongruent counterpart ($M_{\text{Extroverted positioning}} = 6.56$; $t(66) = 2.23$, $p = 0.02$), which is illustrated in Figure 1d.

Next, to establish whether cultural authenticity mediated the interactive effect of brand positioning-country personality stereotype congruity on customer-based brand equity (H2), we conducted a mediated moderation analysis using 5000 bootstrap

samples and Model 8 of the PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2013). Consistent with the ANOVA, the interaction between brand positioning and country was significantly related to the mediating variable cultural authenticity ($b = 4.04$, $t(140) = 7.36$, $p < 0.001$) and cultural authenticity was significantly related to customer-based brand equity ($b = 0.34$, $t(139) = 4.52$, $p < 0.001$). A 95% bias-corrected bootstrap confidence interval for the indirect effect of brand positioning-country personality stereotype congruity on customer-based brand equity was wholly above zero (0.79–2.16). Therefore, consistent with H2, cultural authenticity mediated the effect of brand positioning-country personality congruity on customer-based brand equity for brands from both Italy and India.

Study 1: Discussion

The three experiments in Study 1 provide strong support for our theory of brand positioning-country personality stereotype congruity. In the preliminary field study, we provide initial support for H1 by establishing the relationship between brand positioning-country personality congruity and consumer brand evaluations, as customers evaluated the wine as tasting better when brand positioning and country personality stereotypes were congruent. Because it was conducted in a live retail environment, the field study offers external validity to our conceptual framework. While both countries tested (Germany and Spain) have generally a very favorable country image and both countries have built strong reputations for producing certain varietals of wine, results suggest that favorability for a country's brands and products can be improved through alignment of brand positioning and country personality stereotypes. The conclusion is that country personality characteristics reaching beyond typical COO favorability can significantly influence brand evaluations.

Testing the same two countries and country personality stereotypes, Study 1-A provides additional support for H1 in that consumer brand evaluations are more favorable when the brand positioning is congruent with consumers' country personality stereotypes. The evidence is further strengthened by the inclusion of a neutral control condition as the congruent condition leads to more favorable brand evaluations over a neutral non-personality based positioning. Furthermore, Study 1-A sheds initial light on why brand positioning-country personality stereotype congruity leads to more favorable brand evaluations. In support of H2,

we demonstrate the underlying role of cultural authenticity as a mediating factor. That is, when brand positioning is congruent with country personality stereotypes, it fits with the consumers' mental schema about the country. Consistent with our theoretical predictions, congruity in brand positioning satisfies consumers' desire for consistency and harmony. The brand is viewed as more culturally authentic, and it is evaluated more favorably due to enhanced credibility.

Finally, the findings from Study 1-B offer specific contributions beyond what was learned in the field study and Study 1-A. First, we extend the generalizability of our results by examining two additional countries and different salient country personality stereotypes (Italy and India). Importantly, we include a country that has a generally less favorable country image. The main effect findings are consistent with the traditional COO literature in that the Indian brand was rated significantly lower than the Italian brand. However, when the Indian brand is positioned in a way that is congruent with consumers' personality stereotypes of India, the brand's evaluation improves significantly. This is a significant finding, as it suggests a strategic path for brands from countries with overall unfavorable country images to successfully capitalize on their COO. The context of our study, airline brands, also adds to the generalizability of our framework, since the findings have been consistent for both a tangible good (wine) and a more experiential service offering (airlines).

STUDY 2

In this final set of experiments, we turn our attention to H3, which investigates the moderating effect of consumer animosity. We conducted two separate experiments to test the moderating effect of consumer animosity from the perspective of US consumers' animosity reactions toward a country with a generally more favorable country image (Germany: Study 2-A) and toward a country with a less favorable country image (Colombia: Study 2-B). We selected Germany (Study 2-A) because of its potential to be viewed as a threat to US companies and workers. The US runs a large trade deficit with Germany and some accuse Germany of adopting neo-mercantilist policies as evidenced by its large current account surplus (Becker, 2015). Further, German brands compete directly with US alternatives (e.g., Adidas/Nike, Volkswagen/GM), and the country was the enemy of the US in both World

Wars that continue to be popularized in Hollywood movies and TV shows. Thus, there is a potential basis for consumer animosity as a result of past wars, brand rivalries, and current economic policy.

Colombia (Study 2-B) was deemed suitable due to its close proximity and the US-Colombian Trade Promotion Agreement, which makes the US an important market for Colombian companies. Further, although the relationship between the US and Colombia is generally stable, there is a history of conflict surrounding drug cartels and the flow of narcotics to the US. Thus, economic competition from Colombia and the role of Colombian drug cartels in supplying narcotics to the US serves as a potential basis for animosity. Lastly, we selected chocolate as our study context across both experiments to provide an additional test of the generalizability of our findings across a new and previously untested product category. Both Germany and Colombia actively export chocolates to the US, therefore the product context has strong external validity and represents a realistic consumer advertising situation.

Study 2-A: Participants and Procedure

We recruited 160 student participants from a US university student subject pool (see "Appendix" for demographic characteristics). In a 2 (country animosity: high vs. low) \times 2 (brand positioning: competent vs. warm) between-subjects design, we first manipulated consumers' feelings of animosity by adapting the animosity prime developed by Russell and Russell (2006). Participants were randomly assigned to either a high or low-animosity condition, and read a brief story discussing details about US-German trade relations. The high-animosity condition presented US-German relations as turbulent, filled with restrictions against American products, and hurting the US economy. In contrast, the low-animosity condition presented US-German relations as open and friendly, including significant US exports to Germany, which create well-paying jobs in the US and a higher quality of life for Americans.

In a controlled lab setting, participants were subsequently presented a cover story that a German chocolate brand was considering entry into the US market pending a favorable response by US consumers. Participants were randomly assigned to product positioning conditions that emphasized either the competence or the warmth of the focal product. In the competent brand positioning condition, the chocolate was presented as being



meticulously produced by chocolatiers who diligently selected each cocoa bean and who roasted each bean using a pin-point roasting technique, with each morsel engineered to contain exactly 74% cocoa. In contrast, in the warmth brand positioning condition, the chocolate was presented as fun and flirty, with a silky texture and decadent flavor notes, produced by chocolatiers who relied on their playful imaginations (see “Web Appendix 5”).

After reading the product description, participants were asked to sample an actual piece of chocolate handed to them by a lab assistant. The chocolate was identical across all conditions. It was unwrapped and served in a clear, plastic bag so as to conceal its original branding and to fit with our cover story. Immediately following the chocolate tasting, participants completed a brief questionnaire that measured the dependent variable as well as manipulation check questions. Similar to the field study, we operationalized our dependent variable of consumer brand evaluations as the participants’ taste evaluations. The respondents were asked to indicate how much they liked the chocolate on a scale using 1) like-dislike, 2) very appealing-very unappealing, and 3) very desirable-very undesirable as end points. We averaged the three items to form a perceived taste index ($\alpha = 0.97$). To examine the effectiveness of the manipulations, we included a four-item anger toward Germany scale based on Harmeling et al. (2015). We averaged the four items to form a consumer animosity index ($\alpha = 0.90$). For brand positioning competence, we used the same three-item competence versus warmth scale as in Study 1-A ($\alpha = 0.85$).

Study 2-A: Results

First, we tested the manipulations with a series of 2×2 ANOVAs. The ANOVA with the brand positioning competence versus warmth index as the dependent variable revealed a main effect of brand positioning ($M_{\text{Competent}} = 5.26$ vs. $M_{\text{Warm}} = 4.88$, $F(1, 156) = 3.98$, $p = 0.05$). Second, an ANOVA with consumer animosity toward Germany as the dependent variable revealed a significant main effect of the animosity prime ($M_{\text{High animosity}} = 2.68$ vs. $M_{\text{Low animosity}} = 2.10$, $F(1, 156) = 11.31$, $p < 0.001$). As expected, all other main and interaction effects for these ANOVAs were non-significant.

To examine H3, we conducted a 2×2 ANOVA with taste evaluation as the dependent variable. It revealed non-significant main effects of consumer

animosity ($M_{\text{High animosity}} = 5.74$ vs. $M_{\text{Low animosity}} = 5.80$; $F(1, 156) = 0.08$, $p = 0.78$) and brand positioning ($M_{\text{Competent}} = 5.76$ vs. $M_{\text{Warm}} = 5.78$, $F(1, 156) = 0.01$, $p = 0.92$). However, the interaction between consumer animosity and brand positioning was significant ($F(1, 156) = 6.50$, $p = 0.01$). Consistent with the earlier experiments, follow-up planned contrasts showed that participants in the low animosity condition rated the German chocolate more favorably when presented in the congruent competent brand positioning ($M = 6.08$) than when presented in the incongruent warm brand positioning ($M = 5.53$; $t(82) = 1.94$, $p = 0.03$). In contrast, participants in the high animosity condition preferred the incongruent warm positioning ($M = 6.04$) over the congruent competent positioning ($M = 5.44$; $t(74) = 1.69$, $p = 0.05$). The results support H3 and are illustrated in Figure 2a.

Study 2-B: Participants and Procedure

As a first step, we established consumers’ personality stereotypes of Colombia. Based on qualitative interviews, Colombia was described as “flirtatious, enthusiastic, outgoing, and loud,” which was similar to the extroverted adjectives used to describe Italy. Subsequently, we asked a small sample ($n = 36$) of MTurk participants to evaluate Colombia on the Big 5 inventory, the same test used for Italy and India in Study 1-B. The findings confirmed that Colombia was viewed as having a more extroverted personality stereotype ($M = 4.20$), which was significantly more extroverted than India ($M = 3.23$), but the same as Italy ($M = 4.06$). Further, on country image, Colombia ($M = 4.44$) was rated significantly less favorable than Italy ($M = 5.87$), but no better than India ($M = 4.15$).

Having established that Colombia is most closely associated with extroversion, we developed a 2 (consumer animosity: high vs. low) \times 2 (brand positioning: extroverted vs. introverted) between-subjects design. We recruited 143 non-student participants (see “Appendix” for demographic characteristics) from the US via MTurk and randomly assigned them to conditions. First, we manipulated participants’ feelings of consumer animosity, with an adapted version of the animosity prime developed by Russell and Russell (2006). Then, we presented them with a cover story that a Colombian chocolate brand, Santander, was considering entry into the US market. Santander is a real Colombian chocolate brand, but is not well known to the vast majority of American consumers. Participants were randomly assigned to either an

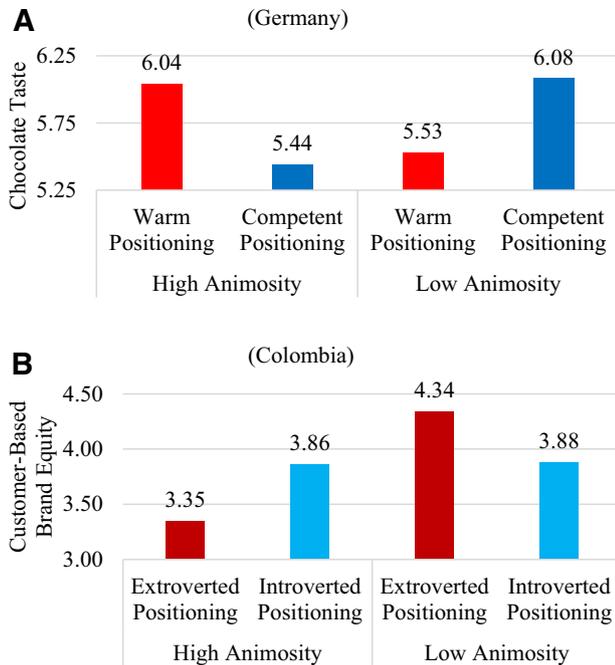


Figure 2 The moderating effect of consumer animosity.

extroverted or introverted brand positioning condition. A professional advertising agency produced the advertisements. Most attributes were held constant across the two advertisements, which used the same image of the chocolate drawn from the brand’s website, and featured the word “happiness.” To manipulate the brand positioning, the extroverted advertisement illustrated a group of people at a party and with supporting text indicating the chocolate would be best enjoyed with friends. The introverted advertisement illustrated a solitary environment, suggesting the chocolate was best enjoyed during a quiet evening at home (see “Web Appendix 5”).

We pre-tested the ads with a small sample of non-student MTurk participants ($n = 38$) to examine whether they conveyed the intended brand position and whether there was a difference in the attitude toward the ads. Participants were asked to rate the ads on the same extroversion versus introversion ad positioning scale ($\alpha = 0.92$) and attitude toward the ad ($\alpha = 0.94$) as we used in Study 1-B. As intended, there was a significant difference in the perceived extroversion versus introversion of the advertisements ($M_{\text{Extroverted ad}} = 6.09$, $M_{\text{Introverted ad}} = 3.32$, $F(1, 36) = 45.68$, $p < 0.001$). However, there was no difference in the attitude toward the ads ($M_{\text{Extroverted ad}} = 5.91$,

$M_{\text{Introverted ad}} = 6.07$, $F(1, 36) = 0.37$, $p = 0.55$). Thus, based on the pre-test, we were satisfied that the stimuli conveyed the intended brand positioning and that neither advertisement was significantly more appealing than the other based on its design alone.

In the full study, after viewing the advertisement, participants immediately responded to the outcome measures as well as manipulation check questions. Given that this was an online study, a taste test was not possible. Thus, we used the same customer-based brand equity measure as in Studies 1-A and 1-B ($\alpha = 0.89$). To examine the effectiveness of the consumer animosity manipulations, we used the same four-item consumer animosity scale as in Study 2-A ($\alpha = 0.97$) and the same four-item scale for perceived brand positioning extroversion versus introversion as in the pre-test ($\alpha = 0.96$).

Study 2-B: Results

We again tested the effectiveness of the manipulations with a series of 2×2 ANOVAs. First, an ANOVA with perceived brand positioning extroversion versus introversion as the dependent variable revealed a main effect of brand positioning ($M_{\text{Extroverted ad}} = 5.87$ vs. $M_{\text{Introverted ad}} = 3.32$, $F(1, 139) = 145.40$, $p < 0.001$). Second, an ANOVA with consumer animosity toward Colombia as the dependent variable revealed a main effect of animosity prime ($M_{\text{High animosity}} = 4.05$ vs. $M_{\text{Low animosity}} = 1.49$, $F(1, 139) = 108.11$, $p < 0.001$). As expected, all other main and interaction effects for these ANOVAs were non-significant.

To examine H3, we conducted a 2×2 ANOVA with customer-based brand equity as the dependent variable. It revealed that the main effect of brand positioning was not significant ($M_{\text{Extroverted positioning}} = 3.85$ vs. $M_{\text{Introverted positioning}} = 3.87$, $F(1, 139) = 0.02$, $p = 0.89$). However, as expected, the main effect of consumer animosity was significant ($M_{\text{High animosity}} = 3.61$ vs. $M_{\text{Low animosity}} = 4.11$, $F(1, 139) = 6.23$, $p = 0.01$). More central to the purpose of this study, the interaction between consumer animosity and brand positioning was significant ($F(1, 139) = 5.82$, $p = 0.02$). Consistent with the German animosity study (and Study 1), the follow-up planned contrasts revealed that in the low animosity condition, the congruent extroverted brand positioning ($M = 4.34$) led to more favorable customer-based brand equity evaluations as compared with the incongruent introverted brand positioning ($M = 3.88$; $t(70) = 1.68$, $p = 0.05$). However, in the high animosity condition,



the incongruent introverted brand positioning ($M = 3.86$) led to more favorable customer-based brand equity evaluations compared with the congruent extroverted brand positioning ($M = 3.35$; $t(69) = 1.73$, $p = 0.04$), in support of H3 and illustrated in Figure 2b.

Study 2: Discussion

Study 1 offers robust support for the effect of brand positioning-country personality stereotype congruity on brand evaluations. Results from Study 2 reveal that in a context where consumers harbor animosity toward the COO, brand positioning-country personality congruity results in a *negative* effect, instead of a positive effect on brand evaluation as previously demonstrated. This highlights a potential risk of country personality stereotype positioning. The positive effect as evidenced by the early experiments is not merely weakened, but reverses valence. Under conditions of animosity, brands are viewed more favorably when brand positioning and country personality are *incongruent*. The theorized predictions were supported in two separate contexts, which lend further generalizability to the findings.

Further, in the Colombian context, we found a main effect of consumer animosity, which is consistent with the general animosity literature. Somewhat surprisingly, this effect did not materialize in the preceding German context. We can only speculate as to why this occurred, but two potential explanations may be that the degree of animosity generated toward Germany was somewhat modest, which may have led to the non-significant main effect for animosity. Alternatively, the outcome variable in that study was taste-related, which may be somewhat less malleable than attitudinal outcomes. Nonetheless, the expected interaction with brand positioning emerged in both the German and Colombian contexts, which provided support for our theorized prediction.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Across five experiments, we built conclusive evidence to support our theory of brand positioning-country personality congruity. We supported our predictions across a variety of country personality stereotypes, countries with varying levels of overall favorability, and different product categories. The field study, conducted in a retail store during operating hours, revealed that customers evaluated brands more favorably when positioned in a manner

that was congruent, rather than incongruent, with the brand's home country personality stereotype. Therefore, this study supported H1 and developed external validity for our research premise. Internal validity was established across the more controlled remaining studies. Studies 1-A and 1-B provided additional tests of H1 and also revealed support for H2, the mediating effect of cultural authenticity. Study 2 demonstrated support for H3 by examining the moderating effect of consumer animosity. In sum, our findings shed light on an understudied aspect of COO brand positioning, which explain how and why brand managers can use COO personality stereotypes to their advantage. Thus, our research has significant implications for international marketing theory and practice.

Theoretical Implications

More than a half century of COO research has provided insight into how country associations affect brand evaluations. However, much of the COO literature conceptualizes country image as a general favorable/unfavorable continuum. This study adds to our knowledge by examining the under-explored dimension of country personality. As an extension of the common usage of overall favorability attitudes in country image research, our investigation recognizes new relevant stereotype associations. Evidence gleaned from our five experiments indicates that country personality influences consumer evaluations of brands associated with a country. Thus, country image effects are more complex than previously thought.

The overarching theoretical explanation for our findings is schema congruity, which is a novel perspective from which to examine the influence of COO on consumer brand evaluations. Cognitive consistency theories suggest that consumers are predisposed to prefer elements that are cognitively consistent with their existing knowledge (e.g., Festinger, 1957). So when presented with new information (i.e., brand positioning information) that is consistent with prior knowledge (i.e., country schema), it reinforces the consumer's previously held stereotypes and is viewed more favorably. The use of schema congruity is novel, because it eschews traditional reliance on country image favorability and attractiveness of specific personality attributes, i.e., generalized attractiveness of extroversion. Instead, it relies on the congruity of brand positioning and country personality, such that when congruent, it facilitates more favorable brand evaluations.

The mediating and moderating variables improve our understanding of *how* and *when* brand positioning-country personality congruity matters. First, the effect of congruity enhances perceptions of cultural authenticity of the brand. Trends of identity-related and authentic experiential consumption are becoming more relevant to consumers as they navigate a landscape of market globalization and subsequent standardized strategies of global brands. This effect offers some understanding of how schema congruity affects consumer brand evaluations through cultural authenticity. Second, the moderating effect of animosity on the relationship between brand positioning-country personality stereotype congruity and consumer brand evaluations underscores the capacity of schema congruity to favorably affect brand evaluations. Whereas Study 1 shows that congruity enhances brand evaluation, Study 2 evidences that congruity under conditions of high animosity toward the country of association results not in a weakened positive effect, but rather a *reversed* effect. This reversal offers evidence that a general favorability spectrum lacks the dexterity to capture other more complex effects of country image.

A common criticism of the broad COO literature is that research findings have been artificially inflated due to ecologically unrealistic research designs and it has even been suggested that “under externally valid, real-life conditions most consumer do not consider the COO of the products they purchase” (Samiee & Leonidou, 2011: 75). This study adds to the body of literature (e.g., Herz & Diamantopoulos, 2013, 2017), which has illustrated the significant effect of country associations in realistic settings. For example, in the field study, we worked with the wine shop owner to ensure that presentation of the wines mirrored how wines are typically presented during normal wine samplings. The chocolate advertisements in Study 2 employed images of Santander chocolate from the brand’s website. Further, participants were never informed of the country’s salient personality being investigated. Thus, we conclude that focal participants held the same country personality stereotypes as the participants in the qualitative and quantitative pre-tests. In effect, this study combined externally valid, real-life conditions with more controlled lab environments to find evidence of significant brand positioning-country personality congruity.

Furthermore, across multiple experiments, we utilize different samples (wine shop customers,

Mturk participants, and student subject pool participants), and we use two related, but distinct, outcome variables to operationalize consumer brand evaluations (taste quality and customer-based brand equity). We also find consistent results with brands from both countries with and without favorable country images. Finally, we manipulate the brands’ positioning with tangible goods (wine and chocolate), and with an intangible service offering (airlines). Combined, this suggests that the conceptual framework is relatively generalizable and not confined to a specific context or measurement.

Managerial Implications

The traditional COO literature has mostly been descriptive and advice for managers has been limited to “emphasize” or “hide” country associations depending on the country’s degree of favorability. With this study, we offer a clearer managerial lever for managers as our findings suggest that *how* the brand emphasizes the country association is of great importance. Particularly, the findings offer a strategic path for brands from countries with unfavorable country images to not only *circumvent* the challenge of an unfavorable home country image, but *capitalize on* congruity for strategic gain. Consistent with the traditional COO literature, in Study 1-B, the Italian brand is significantly preferred over the Indian brand. However, by positioning the brand in a schema-congruent manner consistent with the country personality stereotype, brands from countries with a weak country image can “close the gap” compared with brands from advanced economies. Thus, it becomes critically important for managers to be aware of and track consumers’ perceptions about its home country’s personality.

Further, merely relying on a favorable country image may be sub-optimal when positioning is not congruent with the dominant country personality. For example, in our follow-up conversations with the wine shop owner and his wine distributors, they shared an anecdote that German wine makers regularly emphasize the “passion and enthusiasm” involved in the production process, perhaps in an effort to match the passion and love typically expressed by Spanish and French wine makers. Despite the seemingly beneficial assumption that “passion and enthusiasm” connote positive associations for wine (i.e., engagement and love of craft), such a positioning is incongruent with Germany’s country personality and, somewhat



counterintuitively, German brands would appear to benefit more by emphasizing competence. The opposite perception may be prevalent in other industries. For some industries, it may be easy to assume that competence is a favorable brand attribute that all brands should tout. However, based on our results, there is no evidence of a significant main effect for either competence or warmth, it appears that it is only schema congruity with country personality stereotypes that drives enhanced brand evaluations.

We caution managers that it is highly likely that consumers from different countries will perceive certain target countries differently. Research on cultural values (e.g., Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010) has found that our perceptions of other countries are influenced by our own cultural values, and we suspect this will also influence country personality stereotypes. Thus, firms which attempt to align brand positioning with consumers' country personality stereotypes must verify the most salient country personality stereotypes in each given market and it is likely that cultural adaptations are necessary.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

The literature provides significant evidence that country associations are a powerful brand association for many brands competing in international markets (e.g., Diamantopoulos et al., 2017; Herz & Diamantopoulos, 2017). Accordingly, it should be imperative for brand managers to understand and try to leverage such country associations, as shown in this study. However, we can, of course, not claim that brand positioning based on country associations is the only way to be successful. There may be other brand positioning strategies that also have positive effects.

To combat COO research criticism of overly artificial research designs, we employed a mix of stimuli, including "real" wine tasting notes in the field study, simple product descriptions, and more elaborate professionally-designed advertisements. Combined, the consistent results across all the studies with the "clean, but less realistic" simple stimuli to the "more realistic, but less clean" elaborate stimuli gives us confidence in the

robustness of the results, but additional research can examine consequential outcome variables. Potential extensions also include investigating whether the effects hold for other country contexts with different country personality stereotypes. Further, we adopt the common perspective that brand origin refers to the country which a consumer associates with a brand as being its source, regardless of where the product is made or parts are sourced from (Diamantopoulos et al., 2017). A potential confounding effect of a diversified global value chain is probably also less of a concern given that brand origin and country of manufacture tend to be one and the same for the product categories (e.g., wine and chocolate) examined in this study. However, a potential issue would arise if consumers view a brand as bicultural and particularly if the two home countries have different country personality stereotypes. For example, Royal Dutch Shell is a British-Dutch company with bicultural identities. The number of bicultural companies, however, is relatively limited and it was thus beyond the scope of this study, but it may be a source for future research.

Finally, this research has identified one significant mediator, cultural authenticity, and one significant moderator, consumer animosity, that help us understand the main thesis of this study. However, we cannot rule out that there may be other significant mediators or moderators that influence the brand positioning-country personality congruity relationship, which can be uncovered in future research. Limitations notwithstanding, by examining brand positioning-country personality stereotype congruity, this research advances our understanding of the role of country image associations in a more complex and precise way that moves beyond a general favorability continuum to offer a deeper understanding of the role of COO on consumer brand evaluations.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors gratefully acknowledge Nicolas Papadopoulos, Colleen Harmeling, and participants at the AMA Global Marketing Conference in Havana, Cuba for feedback on early versions of this manuscript and



the valuable guidance provided by Editor Costas Katsikeas and the three anonymous JIBS reviewers.

REFERENCES

- Aaker, J. L. 1997. Dimensions of brand personality. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 34(3): 347–356.
- Aggarwal, P., & McGill, A. L. 2007. Is that car smiling at me? Schema congruity as a basis for evaluating anthropomorphized products. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 34(4): 468–479.
- Alden, D. L., Steenkamp, J.-B. E. M., & Batra, R. 1999. Brand positioning through advertising in Asia, N America, and Europe: The role of global consumer culture. *Journal of Marketing*, 63(1): 75–87.
- Ayala, N., Truss, M., & Montecucollo, K. 2012. *JWT personality atlas*. <http://personalityatlas.com/>. Accessed 27 March 2018.
- Baker, V. 2017. Havaianas: How a Brazilian flip-flop took over the world. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-40610739>. Accessed 27 March 2018.
- Barbarossa, C., De Pelsmacker, P., & Moons, I. 2018. Effects of country-of-origin stereotypes on consumer responses to product-harm crises. *International Marketing Review*, 35(3): 362–389.
- Becker, J. 2015. German neo-mercantilism: Contradictions of a (non-)model. In B. Unger (Ed.), *The German model: Seen by its neighbours*. London: SE Publishing.
- Bilkey, W. J., & Nes, E. 1982. Country-of-origin effects on product evaluations. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 13(1): 89–99.
- Cartwright, D. 1949. Some principles of mass persuasion. *Human Relations*, 2(3): 253–267.
- Cuddy, A. J. C., Fiske, S. T., Kwan, V. S. Y., Glick, P., Demoulin, S., Leyens, J.-P., et al. 2009. Stereotype content model across cultures: Towards universal similarities and some differences. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 48(1): 1–33.
- d’Astous, A., & Boujbel, L. 2007. Positioning countries on personality dimensions: Scale development and implications for country marketing. *Journal of Business Research*, 60(3): 231–239.
- Diamantopoulos, A., Florack, A., Halkias, G., & Palcu, J. 2017. Explicit versus implicit country stereotypes as predictors of product preferences: Insights from the stereotype content model. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 48(8): 1023–1036.
- Dichter, E. 1962. The world customer. *Harvard Business Review*, 40(4): 113–122.
- Festinger, L. 1957. *A theory of cognitive dissonance*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Fetscherin, M. 2010. The determinants and measurement of a country brand: The country brand strength index. *International Marketing Review*, 27(4): 466–479.
- Fiske, S. T. 1982. Schema-triggered affect: Applications to social perception. In M. S. Clark & S. T. Fiske (Eds.), *Affect and cognition, 17th annual Carnegie Symposium on Cognition* (pp. 55–78). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Fiske, S. T., Cuddy, A. J. C., Glick, P., & Jun, X. 2002. A model of (often mixed) stereotype content: Competence and warmth respectively follow from perceived status and competition. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 82(6): 878–902.
- Fiske, S. T., & Taylor, S. E. 1991. *Social cognition*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Gao, G. Y., Wang, D. T., & Che, Y. 2017. Impact of historical conflict on FDI location and performance: Japanese investment in China. *Journal of International Business Studies*, advance online publication.. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41267-016-0048-6>.
- Gineikiene, J., & Diamantopoulos, A. 2017. I hate where it comes from but I still buy it: Countervailing influences of animosity and nostalgia. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 48(8): 992–1008.
- Gürhan-Canli, Z., Saral-Abi, G., & Hayran, C. 2018. Consumers and brands across the globe: Research synthesis and new directions. *Journal of International Marketing*, 26(1): 96–117.
- Harmeling, C., Magnusson, P., & Singh, N. 2015. Beyond anger: A deeper look at consumer animosity. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 46(6): 676–693.
- Hayes, A. F. 2013. *Introduction to mediation, moderation, and conditional process analysis: A regression-based approach*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Heider, F. 1946. Attitudes and cognitive organization. *Journal of Psychology*, 21(1): 107–112.
- Heinberg, M., Ozkaya, H. E., & Taube, M. 2017. The influence of global and local iconic brand positioning on advertising persuasion in an emerging market setting. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 48(8): 1009–1022.
- Herz, M. F., & Diamantopoulos, A. 2013. Activation of country stereotypes: Automaticity, consonance, and impact. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 41(4): 400–417.
- Herz, M., & Diamantopoulos, A. 2017. I use it but will tell you that I don’t: Consumers’ country-of-origin cue usage denial. *Journal of International Marketing*, 25(2): 52–71.
- Hofstede, G., Hofstede, G. J., & Minkov, M. 2010. *Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind* (3rd ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.
- John, O. P., & Srivastava, S. 1999. The big-five trait taxonomy: History, measurement, and theoretical perspectives. In L. A. Pervin & O. P. John (Eds.), *Handbook of personality: Theory and research* (pp. 102–138). New York: Guilford Press.
- Katsikeas, C. S., Morgan, N. A., Leonidou, L. C., & Hult, G. T. M. 2016. Assessing performance outcomes in marketing. *Journal of Marketing*, 80(2): 1–20.
- Keller, K. L. 1993. Conceptualizing, measuring, managing customer-based brand equity. *Journal of Marketing*, 57(1): 1–22.
- Kim, Y. K., Shim, S. W., & Dinnie, K. 2013. The dimensions of nation brand personality: A study of nine countries. *Corporate Reputation Review*, 16(1): 34–47.
- Klein, J. G. 2002. Us versus them, or us versus everyone? Delineating consumer aversion to foreign goods. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 33(2): 345–363.

NOTES

¹One-tailed tests were performed on all planned contrasts.



- Kotler, P., & Gertner, D. 2002. Country as brand, products, and beyond: A place marketing and brand management perspective. *Journal of Brand Management*, 9(4): 249–261.
- Kumar, N., & Steenkamp, J.-B. E. M. 2013. *Brand breakout: How emerging market brands will go global*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Lane, V. R., & Fastoso, F. 2016. The impact of repeated ad exposure on spillover from low fit extensions to a global brand. *International Marketing Review*, 33(2): 298–318.
- Lee, A. Y., & Labroo, A. A. 2004. The effect of conceptual and perceptual fluency on brand evaluation. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 41(2): 151–165.
- Leong, S. M., Cote, J. A., Ang, S. H., Tan, S. J., Jung, K., Kau, A. K., et al. 2008. Understanding consumer animosity in an international crisis: Nature, antecedents, and consequences. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 39(6): 996–1009.
- MacKenzie, S., & Lutz, R. J. 1989. An empirical examination of the structural antecedents of attitude toward the ad in an advertising pretesting context. *Journal of Marketing*, 53(2): 48–65.
- Magnusson, P., Westjohn, S. A., & Zdravkovic, S. 2011. "What? I thought Samsung was Japanese": Accurate or not, perceived country of origin matters. *International Marketing Review*, 28(5): 454–472.
- Mandler, G. 1982. The structure of value: Accounting for taste. In M. S. Clark & S. T. Fiske (Eds.), *Affect and cognition: The 17th annual carnegie symposium* (pp. 3–36). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Martin, I. M., & Eroglu, S. 1993. Measuring a multi-dimensional construct: Country image. *Journal of Business Research*, 28(3): 191–210.
- Moulard, J. G., Garrity, C. P., & Rice, D. H. 2015. What makes a human brand authentic? Identifying the antecedents of celebrity authenticity. *Psychology & Marketing*, 32(2): 173–186.
- Nagashima, A. 1970. A comparison of Japanese and U.S. Attitudes toward foreign products. *Journal of Marketing*, 34(1): 68–74.
- Netemeyer, R. G., Krishnan, B., Pullig, C., Wang, G., Yagci, M., Dean, D., et al. 2004. Developing and validating measures of facets of customer-based brand equity. *Journal of Business Research*, 57(2): 209–224.
- Papadopoulos, N., El Banna, A., & Murphy, S. A. 2017. Old country passions: An international examination of country image, animosity, and affinity among ethnic consumers. *Journal of International Marketing*, 25(3): 61–82.
- Pappu, R., Quester, P. G., & Cooksey, R. W. 2007. Country image and consumer-based brand equity: Relationships and implications for international marketing. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 38(5): 726–745.
- Rojas-Méndez, J. I., Murphy, S. A., & Papadopoulos, N. 2013a. The U.S. Brand personality: A Sino perspective. *Journal of Business Research*, 66(8): 1028–1034.
- Rojas-Méndez, J. I., Papadopoulos, N., & Alwan, M. 2015. Testing self-congruity theory in the context of nation brand personality. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 24(1): 18–27.
- Rojas-Méndez, J. I., Papadopoulos, N., & Murphy, S. A. 2013b. Measuring and positioning nation brands: A comparative brand personality approach. *Corporate Reputation Review*, 16(1): 48–65.
- Roth, K. P., & Diamantopoulos, A. 2009. Advancing the country image construct. *Journal of Business Research*, 62(7): 726–740.
- Roth, M. S., & Romeo, J. B. 1992. Matching product category and country image perceptions: A framework for managing country-of-origin effects. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 23(3): 477–497.
- Russell, D. W., & Russell, C. A. 2006. Explicit and implicit catalysts of consumer resistance: The effects of animosity, cultural salience and country-of-origin on subsequent choice. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 23(3): 321–331.
- Samiee, S., & Leonidou, L. C. 2011. Relevance and rigor in international marketing research: Developments in product and brand origin line of inquiry. In S. C. Jain & D. A. Griffith (Eds.), *Handbook of research in international marketing* (2nd ed., pp. 68–87). Cheltenham, UK: Edgar Elgar.
- Schooler, R. D. 1965. Product bias in the Central American common market. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 2(4): 394–397.
- Shimp, T. A., Samiee, S., & Madden, T. J. 1993. Countries and their products: A cognitive structure perspective. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 21(4): 323–330.
- Sirianni, N. J., Bitner, M. J., Brown, S. W., & Mandel, N. 2013. Branded service encounters: Strategically aligning employee behavior with the brand positioning. *Journal of Marketing*, 77(4): 108–123.
- Southworth, S. S., & Ha-Brookshire, J. 2016. The impact of cultural authenticity on brand uniqueness and willingness to try. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 28(4): 724–742.
- Spielmann, N. 2016. Is it all or nothing? Testing schema congruity and typicality for products with country origin. *Journal of Business Research*, 69(3): 1130–1137.
- Stumpf, C., & Baum, M. 2016. Customer referral reward-brand-fit: A schema congruity perspective. *Psychology & Marketing*, 33(7): 542–558.
- UN Food and Agriculture Division. 2013. Global wine production. http://faostat3.fao.org/download/Q/*E. Accessed 27 March, 2018.
- Veale, R., & Quester, P. 2009. Do consumer expectations match experience? Predicting the influence of price and country of origin on perceptions of product quality. *International Business Review*, 18(2): 134–144.
- Verlegh, P. W. J., & Steenkamp, J.-B. E. M. 1999. A review and meta-analysis of country-of-origin research. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 20(5): 521–546.
- Whittlesea, B. W. A. 1993. Illusions of familiarity. *Journal of Experimental Psychology. Learning, Memory, and Cognition*, 19(6): 1235–1253.
- Zdravkovic, S., Magnusson, P., & Stanley, S. M. 2010. Dimensions of fit between a brand and a social cause and their influence on attitudes. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 27(2): 151–160.
- Zellmer-Bruhn, M., Caligiuri, P., & Thomas, D. C. 2016. From the editors: Experimental designs in international business research. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 47(4): 399–407.

APPENDIX

See Table 3.

Table 3 Demographic characteristics

	Field study	Study 1-A	Study 1-B	Study 2-A	Study 2-B
N	95	174	144	160	143
Gender					
Males (%)	30.5	58.6	55.6	58.1	69.2
Females (%)	69.5	41.4	44.4	41.9	30.8
Age					
18 (21)–29	69.5	36.2	25.7	100	43.4
30–39 (%)	12.6	35.0	37.5	0	30.8
40–49 (%)	7.3	14.9	22.9	0	14.7
50–59 (%)	8.4	8.0	10.4	0	7.0
60 or older (%)	3.2	5.7	3.5	0	4.2
Education					
High school graduate (%)	NA	13.2	11.1	NA	13.4
Some college (%)		25.9	27.1		25.2
2-year degree (%)		10.3%	10.4%		13.3%
4-year degree (%)		44.8	43.8		38.5
Graduate degree (%)		5.2	7.7		9.8

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Peter Magnusson (Ph.D., Saint Louis University) is an Associate Professor of International Marketing in the Culverhouse College of Business at the University of Alabama. His recent research topics include consumer animosity, country of origin marketing, and export marketing strategy. Peter has published in, for example, *Journal of International Business Studies*, *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, and *Journal of International Marketing*.

Stanford A. Westjohn (Ph.D., Saint Louis University) is an Assistant Professor in the Culverhouse College of Business at the University of Alabama. His research interests include international marketing strategy and consumer behavior particularly

as it relates to global branding and positioning. Stan has published in, for example, *Journal of International Business Studies*, *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, and *Journal of International Marketing*.

Nancy J. Sirianni (Ph.D., Arizona State University) is an Associate Professor of Marketing and holds the Jones Endowed Chair in the Culverhouse College of Business at the University of Alabama. Her research interests include consumer behavior, branding, and building customer-brand relationships and has been published in *Journal of Marketing*, *Journal of Marketing Research*, and *Journal of Consumer Research*, among others.

Supplementary information accompanies this article on the Journal of International Business Studies website (www.palgrave.com/journals).

Accepted by Constantine Katsikeas, Area Editor, 30 July 2018. This article has been with the authors for three revisions.