

THE MEANING TRANSFER BETWEEN COUNTRY PERSONALITY AND BRAND
PERSONALITY

By

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Abstract of Thesis Presented to the Graduate School
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Brand personality has been regarded as an import source measuring brand image. It is believed by many researchers that brand personality can impact consumers' product evaluation. The formation of brand personality can be derived from many sources such as advertising messages, celebrity endorsers, and retailer's images. Although there exists much research devoted to understanding the antecedents and consequences of brand personality, very few studies deal with the relationship between country personality and brand personality, even though country of origin (COO) has been considered powerful information influencing consumers' evaluation toward the brand. This study examined the meaning transfer process between country personality and brand personality. The country/product match and product involvement were employed as independent variables to examine if they exert influence on the meaning transfer process, brand attitude, and purchase intention.

A total of 210 subjects participated in this study. After reading the product documents with combinations of brand origin and product, subjects were asked to complete the questionnaire regarding country/brand personality, brand attitude, purchase intention.

The results showed that country personality and brand personality were associated. However, the meaning transfer process could be moderated by country/product match and

product involvement. Country/product match and product involvement were also found to influence brand attitude and purchase intention.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

The country-of-origin (COO) effect, which is defined by Roth & Romeo (1992, p. 477) as “how consumers perceive products emanating from a particular country,” has been widely researched during the past several decades, especially amid the growth in global markets and multinational sourcing strategies that are adopted with greater frequency and interest by many international corporations.

The importance of COO effect studies stems from the converging dynamics of global markets, affected by such factors as advances in transportation, communication technology as well as the trend of decreasing tariffs upon manufactured goods. The saturation of domestic markets, which has compelled owners of domestic corporate brands to expand into foreign markets, is also a contributing factor. Starbucks is a classic example of brand expansion. While this megabrand maintained only 281 stores outside of the United States in 1999, today, it maintains more than 1,200 branches overseas, and this number continues to rise (Mueller, 2006).

Regardless of their nationality, mega brands such as McDonalds and Toyota generate more than half of their profits from the global market. In 1970, color televisions made in the United States accounted for nearly 90 percent of the market share, but this figure plummeted dramatically within two decades. Japanese brands such as Sony and Panasonic now dominate the U.S electronics markets (Mueller, 2006). The globalization of the economy is also reflected in world trade, which, in 2007, increased eight percent while gross domestic product increased just 3.5 percent, according to World Trade Organization (WTO), (International Trade Statistics, 2007).

Another consequence of convergence in the global markets has been the importing of many international brands from different regions of the world in which consumers now have

dozens of choices to consider when purchasing simple products as soft drinks, let alone the purchase of high-involvement and technologically advanced products. Most importantly, products within the same category often do not differ from each other in terms of functional attributes. Thus, marketers must tap into the symbolic meanings attached to brands to customize their unique selling point. For example, Starbucks coffee shops are not just coffee suppliers, they also provide locations in which consumers can experience an ambience that fits with their values and needs. Therefore, for consumers, the Starbucks name conjures an image of not only coffee, but also a pleasant and friendly place of experience (Gobe, 2001). Rolex, among other brand names, also derives most of its brand value primarily from image instead of just utilitarian value.

The country of origin (COO) image, along with price, warranty, store name, and other factors, has been regarded as an important extrinsic cue used by consumers to establish and confirm their perceptions of product/service (Ahmed & d'Astous, 2008; Kotler & Gertner, 2002; Verlegh & Steenkamp, 1999a). Researchers also have found that the COO image has important applications in political and marketing issues such as shaping international policy decisions; enhancing perception of a country as a travel destination, and most important of all, determining a country's economic performance, as consumers consistently carry mental representations of national products.

Several examples are discussed below that show how COO image can be used to improve international relationships, enhance national brand association and equity, and attract tourists.

After the 9/11 terrorist attack, Saudi Arabia's image was severely damaged because of suspected ties to the Al Qaeda terrorist group and its resistance to a coalition-supported attack on Iraq. Responding to such widespread skepticism, Saudi Arabia spent more than over \$5 million restoring its damaged image. Government tactics included hiring prominent public relations

firms as consultants who suggested broadcasting and publishing advertisements in electronic and print media in major international media markets. Although this image-repair campaign was not totally successful, this event proves that countries are conscious of the power of the COO image and adopt strategies and tactics to enhance and shape it (Benoit & Zhang, 2003).

National cultural images also serve to influence the COO effect. A French cosmetic manufacturer promoted its products by associating them with France's national cultural; the tagline of its advertisement -“So French So rare”- suggested notions of a distinct French hedonistic spirit that were embodied in these cosmetics, and thereby, helped create a positive brand association (Papadopoulos, 1993).

The “Amazing Thailand” campaign, supported by the Thai government, enjoyed much success in improving Thailand’s image among travelers and attracting more than 12 million visitors to Thailand. This \$65 million campaign effectively overcame negative images that had been created as a result of press reports about suicide bombings, tsunamis, and unrest in the southern part of the country. Likewise, Malaysia launched the successful “Truly Asia” campaign to bolster its national image as a travel destination. On the other hand, as the largest country in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Indonesia suffered from the consequences of the 2004 tsunami and recent terrorist attacks because its government did not have concrete practices in place to mitigate the visibility of such negative image (Windiadana, 2005).

The country image constructs have been interpreted differently in previous marketing literature. For example, country image has been conceptualized differently by many researchers as involving perceptions, associations and impressions, stereotypes, schemas, and beliefs (Roth & Diamantopoulos, 2008). All of these different interpretations are usually measured and related to consumer products (d'Astous & Boujbel, 2007). More generally, Nagashima (1970) defined

country image as “the picture, the reputation, the stereotype that businessmen and consumers attach to products of a specific country”. He explained that country image is mostly derived from and is created by the variables such as “representative products, national characteristics, economic and political background, history, and traditions” (p. 68). A national character stereotype also has been defined as “the shared perception of personality characteristics typical of citizens of a particular nation” (McCrae & Terracciano, 2006, p. 156). Although there has been criticism about the limitations of studies focusing on country image, with some researchers claiming that they are irrational, inaccurate, and over generalized, most researchers believe that a country can be described in terms of personal traits (Peabody, 1985). Although the idea of country branding has been addressed by many researchers (Anholt, 2005b; Kotler & Gertner, 2002; Papadopoulos & Heslop, 2002), few researchers have specifically investigated the correlation between country personality and brand personality.

Brand personality has been defined as “the set of human characteristics associated with a brand” (Aaker, 1997). Generally, brand personality consists of perceived personality traits associated with the brand that are manifested through different promotion and marketing programs. Brand personality has been demonstrated as an important element in forming brand image and furthering brand knowledge and brand equity (Keller, 1993).

The marketing literature has suggested a relationship between country image and brand image. Han (1989) concurred that consumers tend to use country image as a cue to infer product quality in what is known as the country image’s halo effect. On the other hand, when consumers are not familiar with a country, they tend to abstract information from products to form a country image in what is known as a summary construct. It has also been shown that a brand name pronounced or spelled in a foreign language can result in a change of brand attitude. For

example, Leclerc, Schmitt, and Dube (1994) found that using a French brand name leads to higher ratings for hedonic products. Thus, it is supposed that there is a process in which meaning is transferred between country image and brand image, just as there is between a celebrity endorser and brand being endorsed (McCracken, 1989).

This study examines the relationship between country personality and brand personality, assuming that a meaning transfer mechanism exist between country personality and brand personality. Country personality, like country image, affects consumer perception of the brand by leading to the creation of either a halo effect or a summary construct. Country image, as a broad concept, has been conceptualized and operationalized in different ways in prior studies focusing on the COO effect. It is assumed that country personality might be an alternate way measuring country image in a more understandable and consistent way.

The study also analyzes the influence of moderating factors, such as product category and product involvement, on the meaning transfer process between country personality and brand personality. Understanding the relationship between country personality and brand personality could be useful for governments as well as brands that hope to extend their brand lines to foreign markets and strengthen the positioning of messages in their advertising or public relations campaigns.

The following chapter reviews the extant COO and brand image literature and illustrates how country image, country personality, and brand personality constructs have been measured in past studies in order to yield the underlying research concepts for the current study.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Frameworks

Meaning Transfer

An important concept supporting the notion that country personality influences brand image and personality is the theory of *meaning transfer*, which is based on the belief that consumers buy products by considering not only their utilitarian values but also their cultural meanings (McCracken, 1986, 1993). McCracken concluded that a brand serves as an important container of meanings that pertains to such factors as gender, ethnicity, nationality, and social status. As Levy (1959) stated, “modern goods are recognized as essentially psychological things which are symbolic of personal attributes and goals and of social patterns and strivings” (p.119). Cultural meanings can be invested into brands through observation of reference groups (Escalas & Bettman, 2005) and marketing efforts such as advertising (Meenaghan, 1995). Consumers also might borrow these meanings to “help construct, sustain, and reconstruct the social self” (McCracken, 1993, p.127) through engaging in consumption rituals.

The meaning transfer process can be divided into two main steps. In the first step, the symbolic or cultural meanings are invested into brands through advertising and other marketing efforts. Subsequently, consumers become aware of this meaning transference and attempt to act (i.e. purchase) upon the meanings contained in the brands.

Initially, the concept of meaning transfer was primarily used to explain the relationships among celebrity endorsers, brands, and consumers. Celebrity endorsement is believed to have a more subtle, deep, and powerful impact upon consumers’ perceptions of branded products than does anonymous endorsement (McCracken, 1989). However, not all cultural meanings associated with a celebrity endorser can be transferred to a product without any obstacles. The

relevant literature has suggested that the match-up hypothesis should be met first. In other words, a congruency between celebrity endorsers and brands that would make marketing practices more effective initially should be achieved. Generally, the greater of the degree of congruence between a celebrity spokesperson and a brand, the more attractive and believable will be the marketing practice (Kamins & Gupta, 1994). Fowles (1996) argued that this concept applies to all forms of celebrity endorsement, explaining that “endorsements succeed only when consumers feel that meanings can shift along unimpeded paths from performer to product- either because of an inherent affinity between the two or because of the ingenuity of the agency’s creative team, or both” (p. 131). By placing country image in the same context as that of celebrity endorsement, countries, therefore, can be visualized as either brands or endorsers. Examining it from the endorser’s perspective, a country can become the largest endorser (physically) for one product/brand. That is, along with other extrinsic cues as price, quality, and brand name, the COO image acts as an important information node associated with other nodes, including quality, performance, and reputation. Thus, cultural meanings can be transmitted from nationality (country image) to a certain brand.

Social Identity Theory and Self-Categorization Theory

Social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) is an important theoretical foundation for COO studies. Its main concept is the existence of a human tendency to distinguish between in-group and out-group differences. In undertaking a process of comparison, individuals attempt to manifest the positive image of in-group membership and thus develop intergroup bias. The concrete embodiment of in-group bias in COO studies is *consumer ethnocentrism* (Shimp & Sharma, 1987). Shimp and Sharma (1987) developed the CETSCALE to measure the degree of appropriateness, tendency, and favoritism toward foreign-made products. Subsequent studies revealed that consumer ethnocentrism is moderated by demographic variables such as education,

income, additional product information (Ueltschy, 1998), and economic development (Reardon, Miller, Vida, & Kim, 2005). Although social identity theory has suggested that individuals tend to strengthen a positive self-image through the comparison of in-group members and out-group members, previous COO studies have suggested that “out-group favoritism” also exists, especially for “low-esteem” or “low-status” groups (Verlegh, 1999).

Deriving from *social identity theory*, *self categorization theory* further explores the dynamics of group behavior (Turner, 1987). Self categorization theory maintains that the “social categorization of self and others into in-groups and out-groups accentuates the perceived similarity of the target to the relevant in-group or out-group prototype” (Hogg & Terry, 2000, p. 123). Perceived international differences are thereby based on prototypes that “embody all attributes that characterize groups and distinguish them from other groups, including beliefs, feelings, and behaviors” (pp. 123-124).

Brand Equity

The origin of branding can be traced back more than four centuries. The Germanic word “brandr” was first used to retrieve the identity control of inventory from retailers, usually by burning the goods with a hot iron rod. Although it was originally used only for consumer goods (Jevons, 2005), the idea has since been applied to other entities, including services, places, and even business-to-business fields.

The American Marketing Association (2008) defines a brand as “a name, term, sign, design, symbol or any other feature that identifies one seller’s good or service as distinct from those of other sellers” and brand equity as “ the value of a brand”.

Generally, brand equity can be divided into two categories: financial-based brand equity and consumer-based brand equity. Financial-based brand equity, which concerns the financial value the brand possesses, can be accurately assessed through examining the company’s balance

sheet. On the other hand, consumer-based brand equity, which concerns “understanding the nature of consumer decision making and identifying the sources of a brand’s added value to improve the efficiency of marketing activities” (Ming-Huei, 2004, p. 30), also was defined by Keller (1993) as “the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand” (p. 1).

Many concerns have arisen regarding the definition and measurement of consumer-based brand equity. In general, brand equity is considered a multifaceted construct comprising several dimensions, including brand loyalty, brand association, brand awareness, and perceived quality (Keller, 1993). Keller argued that the three most important dimensions of brand equity are “differential effect,” “brand knowledge,” and “consumer response to marketing.” He adopted the “associative network memory model” to explain how consumers retrieve and memorize brands through the reticular semantic network which operates within the human memory structure. In other words, human’s long-term memory is maintained by an inter-connected web of numerous “nodes,” information storage points connected by numerous links, some of which are strong and others weak. Consumers tend to retrieve information through different associations produced by these links in an association process called “spreading of activation” (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2007). In acknowledging the value of brand equity, contemporary marketers designing strategies that attempt to link brands with positive and favorable associations to increase brand knowledge and enhance its equity.

The concept of brand knowledge can be envisioned as a hierarchy upon which brand awareness and brand image are uppermost. Brand awareness consists of two sub-categories, “brand recall” and “brand recognition,” whereas brand image consists of different categories of brand association, among other things, attributes, benefits and attitudes (Keller, 1993). Brand

image is considered a complex concept based on varying personal experiences and associations with hard and soft product attributes, whether they are functional, experiential or symbolic (Biel & Aaker, 1993; Keller, 1993). Brand image also is hard to develop in a short time (Yoo, Donthu, & Lee, 2000).

The Country of origin (COO) effect, according to Keller's definition, belongs to a secondary category of association along with other aspects such as the company itself, distribution channels, celebrity endorsers of the product or service, and promotion events.

Viosca, Bergiel, and Balsmeier (2005) reviewed previous definitions of brand equity and concluded that brand equity is a multi-dimensional cue comprising three elements: *brand value*, *brand loyalty*, and *brand image*. They also explained that consumers tend to use brand equity as an external cue to guide their attitudes toward specific products.

Brand equity and *brand image* are confusing terms that have sometimes been interchanged. Biel (1992) distinguished the concepts by defining brand equity as "the value of a brand beyond the physical assets associated with its manufacturer or provision", and brand image as "a concept originated and owned by marketers and advertising specialists, the idea of a brand having an equity that exceeds its conventional asset value" (p.2).

The brand and advertising literature concludes that brand image is an essential component and is a driving force of brand equity (Biel, 1992; Keller, 1993). Faircloth, Capella and Alford (2001) suggested that brand image has a direct effect on brand equity, while brand attitude has an indirect effect on brand equity. Other studies have found that brand image and brand association are positively related to brand equity (Krishnan, 1996; Kwon, 1990; Lassar, Mittal, & Sharma, 1995).

Biel (1992) argued that brand image consists of three sub-images: corporate image, user image, and product/service image. These sub-images play different roles in contributing to the total brand image, depending on the product/service categories. Although marketers focus more often on utilitarian aspects such as physical attributes rather than emotional aspects, symbolic association and emotional appeal have been found to be more salient in the contemporary marketing environment. This is due to the fact different product categories often share similar physical attributes. Symbolic meaning and emotional appeals have also been found to have a more positive effect on products whose physical attributes are difficult to observe before purchase, such as cigarettes, beers, and services (BBDO, 1988; Mattila, 1999). COO image has also been found to be highly related to brand equity. Yasin, Noor, and Mohamad (2007) indicated that there are direct and indirect relationships between COO image and brand equity. The existence of an indirect relationship means that COO image influences brand equity through different mediators, such as *brand distinctiveness*, *brand loyalty*, and *brand awareness/association*. Brand distinctiveness which consists of indicators such as brand dynamism, technological advancement, innovativeness, sophistication, distinctiveness, excellence, and prestige has been found to account for a significant portion of the relationship between brand equity and COO image. Lin and Kao (2004) reviewed the COO and brand equity relationship using Keller's brand equity dimensions of brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality, and brand loyalty, assuming that COO effect was involved in the formation of brand equity. However, several moderators, including information accessibility, product familiarity, affective prejudice, product importance, and product complexity, also influence consumer perceptions and indirectly change purchase actions and perceptions of brand equity.

Brand Personality

Brand personality has long been regarded an important element of brand image and brand knowledge. Brand personality reflects how consumers tend to endow brands with personalities and try to achieve a particular self image (actual, ideal, or social) through the consumption process (Sirgy, 1982). Such brand anthropomorphism has been investigated by practitioners and academicians since emerging 30 years ago. Fournier (1998) pointed out there exists a tendency for human beings to endow inanimate objects with specific meanings in order to “facilitate the interactions with the non-material world” (p.344). Empirical studies have shown that brand personality has significant effects on product differentiation (Biel & Aaker, 1993; Plummer, 2000), brand loyalty (Fournier, 1998), and brand relationships (Phau & Lau, 2001). Researchers also indicated that brand personality might derive from various types of sources as distributional channel, symbol, nationality, price, and most important of all, advertising messages developed by marketers. According to McCracken (1993), advertising is a useful tool to capture the cultural meanings and to endow to inanimate objects. Take Marlboro for example, the red and white package has been symbolized as an icon of resourcefulness, a yearning for freedom, masculinity, competence, and Americanism. These meanings are imbued into Marlboro through advertising. It should also be noted that not only advertising determines the brand personality, but consumers also take up their roles in molding brand personality. Phau and Lau (2001) concluded that consumers themselves have significant influence on brand personality perception when they prefer a certain brand because they tend to use the preferred brand to project the self-image. Based on this important trait, most of the brand personality studies have been focused on investigating consumers’ self congruence with brand personality and its extended influence on brand loyalty and purchase intention (cf. Birdwell, 1968; Govers & Schoormans, 2005; Phau & Lau, 2000).

Numerous studies over the past several decades have examined the consequences of brand personality. However, no consensus has been reached on an operational scale to measure accurately and precisely the impact of brand personality. Aaker's Brand Personality Scale is the most frequently used tool in relevant studies. Asker (1997) defined brand personality as "the set of human characteristics associated with a brand" (p.347) and used factor analysis to extract five factors and 15 facets from 114 personality traits. The brand personality dimensions include Sincerity, Excitement, Competence, Sophistication, and Ruggedness. Although Aaker's Brand Personality Scale has been demonstrated to have significant reliability, validity, and applicability to different cultures, Azoulay and Kapferer (2003) criticized the scale, arguing that it is conceptually loose, includes irrelevant items, and lacks appropriate definition of brand personality.

Definition of Country Image

Past COO studies mostly concentrated on analyzing how country image influences consumers' perceptions and how consumers infer product quality from extrinsic and intrinsic cues. However, they reached no agreement regarding the operationalization and conceptualization of COO image (Laroche, Papadopoulos, Heslop, & Mourali, 2005; Roth & Diamantopoulos, 2008).

The concepts of *country image* and *country branding* have been promoted in the international marketing domain for decades. Most research has found that COO information does greatly influence a consumers' cognition processes and product judgment (Gaedeke, 1973; Han, 1988; Johansson, Douglas, & Nonaka, 1985; Nagashima, 1970, 1977; Reiersen, 1966; Schooler, 1966). Despite opposing research results, it is believed that consumers generally hold different ideas and attitudes toward different countries and their products.

According to Nagashima (1970), the “made-in” image comprises “the picture, the reputation, and the stereotype that businessman and consumers attach to products of a specific country. This image is created by such variables as representative products, national characteristics, economic and political background, history, and traditions” (p.68). The country image definition, therefore, is highly associated with the images of products coming from a particular country.

Numerous studies have been conducted along the lines of Nagashima’s definition. In one such study, Bilkey and Nes (1982b) found that biases exist among people in different countries and that national stereotypes influence the evaluation of products from certain countries. They found that products from less-developed-countries (LDCs) will change the pattern of the “product life circle” with countercyclical effects. As a result, products from LDCs require additional expenditures to compensate for this negative effect. Roth and Romeo (1992) concurred with Nagashima’s (1970) definition of country image and further defined country image as “the overall perception consumers form of products from a particular country, based on their prior perceptions of the country’s production and marketing strengths and weaknesses” (p. 480). Having found that country image perceptions are highly specific to product categories, Han (1989) defined country image as “consumers’ general perceptions of quality for products made in a given country” (p.222). However, these research definitions more closely resemble the definition of product image than the definition of country image because the measures used concerned mostly product attributes rather than real attributes of country image.

In contrast to the concept of product-related image discussed earlier, another school of thought concludes that country image is not only derived from product image but also from other factors such as economical and technological development, culture, political environment,

industrialization, and history. Verlegh and Steenkamp (1999a) defined country image as “mental representations of a country’s people, products, culture, and national symbols” (p. 525). In the same manner, Martin and Eroglu (1993) defined it as “ the total of all descriptive, inferential and informational beliefs one has about a particular country” (p. 193).

The third category in the country image concept is the *product-country image* which focuses on how country image affects consumers’ reaction to products. Many researchers in this field have proposed that “country image and product image are two distinct (but related) concepts and...country images affect the images of product from that country” (Roth & Diamantopoulos, 2008, p. 2). Nebenzahl, Jaffe, and Usunier (2003) defined product-country image as “consumers’ perceptions about the attributes of products made-in a certain country; emotions toward the country and resulted perceptions about the social desirability of owning products made-in the country” (p. 388).

Dimensions of Country Image

Generally, dimensions of the COO construct have changed over time. Initially, it was regarded as a merely a product label, a single cue that determines consumers’ perception and evaluation. This changed when Gaedeke (1973) found that consumers’ evaluation of product quality differs widely according to the economic development of the country of manufacture. Using student samples from two universities, Reiersen (1966) found that the COO effect does indeed influence the perception of product quality. Nebenzahl and Jaffe (1996) concluded that COO, compared to brand image, has more significant influence on consumers’ evaluation of products. For example, one famous brand made in a developed country will be evaluated better than the same brand which is manufactured by a developing country.

However, as more researchers have focused on this area, they have probed deeper roots regarding how country image influences consumer evaluation and beliefs about product-country image.

Terpstra and Han (1988) found that the traditional COO effect can be divided into four categories in terms of the manufacture country of manufacturer and country of design. Thus, one product can be foreign-made/ foreign- branded, U.S.-branded/ foreign-made, foreign-branded/ U.S.-made, and U.S.-Branded/ U.S.-made. They believed that while the branding and sourcing countries both influence consumers' perceptions toward products, the sourcing country's stimuli are more important than brand name when consumers evaluate binational products.

Samiee (1994) indicated that there is another factor which influences consumers' evaluations and beliefs toward products and the associated country. He proposed that country stereotyping effect (CSE) "denotes any influence or bias resulting from CO and/or COM" (p.583). Consumers might derive their CSE from real experience with the products and country, political propensity, real experience such as study and travel, and specific knowledge about a certain country.

Phau and Predergast (2000) developed the country-of-origin of brand (COB) concept to help clarify the discrete COO constructs. Their research indicated that consumers' perception can't be changed or influenced by location of manufacturer, but by "brand personality, origin cues, country ethnicity and brand names" in products (p.167). They concluded that what consumers are concerned about is if the brand personality and national characteristic of the brand can offer a meaningful accessible link with personal characteristics. In addition, they predicted that negative country of manufacturer (COM) image might be alleviated as more multinational companies adopt international sourcing strategies in their product lines.

With the advent of international sourcing strategy, the traditional single-cue dimension of the COO construct had to be altered accordingly. Chao (1993) responded by expanding the single dimension of COO into a multifaceted concept that not only encompasses the countries that manufacturer the product but also the countries that design the products and supply the parts. This phenomenon is reflected in the trend of some Asian manufacturers asking European designers to incorporate the European outlook into their brands. For example, Sony has promoted its Akiba high-definition television as a combination of Japanese technology and Italian design.

The COB concept can be also found in other studies. Lim and O’Cass (2001) suggested that consumers no longer use COO as an important cue to evaluate products. Instead, consumers tend to consider products or brands from a cultural perspective because of the proliferation of hybrid products. Therefore, consumers are more likely to use COB as an information source rather than traditional COO to infer product quality. Koubaa (2008) agreed, finding that consumers tend to classify brand origin automatically and thereby develop a special brand image perception.

Measurement of Country Image

Nagashima (1970, 1977) used the following five dimensions to represent country image: price and value, service and engineering, advertising and reputation, design and style, and consumer’ profile.

Country Personality

The term *country personality* in this study does not refer to actual differences among cultural groups but rather the “cultural shared beliefs about probabilistic group differences” (Lee, McCauley, & Draguns, 1999, p. 218). It must be noted that the perceived personality differences among cultural or national groups sometimes are based on group stereotypes, not actual

representations of true national characteristics. A stereotype is defined as “ a mental image or generalized set of beliefs that a person holds about most members of a particular social group” (Oskamp & Schultz, 2004, p. 26). Country stereotypes, like other group stereotypes, are “over-generalizations that often adhere even in the face of contradictory evidence” (Lee & Ottati, 1993, p. 298). The out-group stereotype is resistant to change (Kashima, 2000) because people tend to “perceive out-group as more homogeneous and less variable than their own group” (Oskamp & Schultz, 2004, p. 29).

Only recently have researcher addressed and rectified the critical limitations of studies involving stereotypes. As far back as the 1950s, scholars such as Cattell argued that research on national stereotypes and character was deemed as infantile, oversimplified, distorted, and lacking of quantitative and scientific results (Peabody, 1985). With the longitudinal development of trait psychology research and large aggregated sets of personality data, it is now possible to compare the relationship between personality traits and cultures with a satisfactory degree of research rigor especially with concerns about validity and reliability (McCrae, 2001; Terracciano et al., 2005). Examining cultural stereotypes among consumers from a personality perspective is considered to be useful now and necessary to gain an understanding of how a company might prepare to enter a foreign market and customize suitable, culturally-appropriate messages to attract consumers from different cultures. Roth and Diamantopoulos (2008) suggested that using country personality to conceptualize country beliefs might be an attractive option as a consistent, compelling way of measuring country image.

Despite the fact that country personality might be a persuasive means of measuring country image, the idea of incorporating country personality in COO research is relatively new and few researchers have used country personality scales in their studies.

Most country personality scales were developed for place marketing and tourism studies. For example, Ekinci and Hosany (2006) adapted Aaker's Brand Personality Scale to their destination personality study and subsequently developed a destination personality scale, which divides destination image into the three constructs of sincerity, excitement, and conviviality. Michailidis and Chatzitheodoridis (2006) also derived their Destination Image Scale from Aaker's Brand Personality Scale. Both of these two studies showed that a brand personality scale could not reflect and define with statistical rigor the characteristics of a destination, and thus the scale should be adjusted.

d' Astous and Boujbel (2007) were among the first scholars who attempted to measure country image using a personality scale. Their rationalization for using personality traits to examine country image was based on several factors: 1) people usually represent countries in a human form; 2) the meaning derived from personality traits usually provides important ideas for predicting consistent behaviors; and 3) a personality perspective fits well with self-image congruency theory, which implies that people tend to prefer countries that share similar personalities with themselves.

Generally, the concept of culture is so broad and complex that it is nearly impossible to comprehensively define culture, let alone measure it. Still, several types of measures, all based on different dimensions of national/cultural brand equity or character, have been developed.

Hofstede's Cultural Dimension Score

From 1967 to 1973, Hofstede (1980) conducted a large-scale international attitudinal study of IBM employees from 66 countries that included the administration of more than 117,000 questionnaires. Based on his results, Hofstede developed a model to quantify the characteristics of national culture on the basis of four dimensions: *Individualism* (IDV), *Masculinity* (MAS),

Uncertainty Avoidance (UAI), and *Power Distance (PDI)*. He later added a fifth dimension to the original model termed *Confucian dynamism*, or *Long-Term Orientation (LTO)* (Hofstede, 2005).

Despite popular application especially within organizational management circles, Hofstede's cultural dimension scores have been criticized in terms of methodological and conceptual limitations. While Hofstede suggests that individuals think about national culture and individuals might even believe in it, they do not particularly think and act in terms of national culture. In his seminal study, the sample included only IBM employees and, it may necessarily not have been representative of the larger population. Hofstede developed this model based on the assumption of national uniformity or a national central tendency. However, there likely are many subcultures within a country that sustain distinct cultural roots, beliefs, attitudes, and life styles. In addition, a nation is not always a stable political entity. It may fragment into several countries, as with Yugoslavia, or it may coalesce or combine with other countries, as did Hong Kong when it was returned back to mainland China, and then there are the nations which comprise European Union, increasing covering in terms of political, economic, and infrastructure policies. Under such circumstances, it would be difficult to apply this model with any practical relevance to explain and analyze the cultural portfolios of many countries (McSweeney, 2002).

Despite the criticism, Hofstede's cultural dimensions scores have been widely cited and used in international business and organizational cultural studies. Kogut and Singh (1988) applied the cultural dimensions approach to develop a cultural distance formula measuring the relative cultural distance among countries. They found that cultural distance is a statistically significant variable in determining the probability of corporations choosing a joint venture over an acquisition. Insch and Miller (2005) applied the cultural distance formula to measure the

extent and influence of cultural similarity and dissimilarity upon the decision-making processes of multinational enterprises. They found that cultural distance influences the selection of vendors and accentuates discrimination that might be shown toward foreign businesses such as manufacturers which export to the United States but may also have to spend more to offset any compromising perceptions arising from beliefs that individuals carry about the country of origin.

The GMI National Brands Index

In addition to the Hofstede model and other approaches that incorporate measures of cultural distance, The Anholt-Global Market Insite (GMI) National Brand Index is used to quantify the brand asset value of each country brand. Researchers sampled more than 10,000 consumers in 10 countries to measure their perceptions of 25 countries with regard to the six dimensions of tourism, exports, governance, investment, potential, cultural heritage and human assets. The scores of the six dimensions then were summed to generate the total value of an individual national brand. The index scores reflect the appeal and power of country brands and showcase the character and personality of a national brand (Anholt, 2005a, 2005b). While the index incorporates a generally thorough set of dimension factors, the scores are more useful as a baseline tool in business investment projects and tourism studies than they are in trying to situate a precise country personality for the purposes of general consumer research. The limitations are similar to those of Hofstede's model in that it is impossible to realize a central tendency measure of national personality given the variety of subcultures and regional differences within any nation.

The Revised NEO Personality Inventory

Other studies have sought to incorporate Hofstede's cultural dimensions into quantifiable personality measures. The Revised NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI-R) measures five basic factors in terms of 30 specific traits. These include *neuroticism* (N), *extraversion* (E), *openness*

to experience (O), agreeableness (A), and consciousness (C). The survey instrument's reliability has been consistently tested as the inventory has been translated for use in more than 300 languages and has shown strong correlation with Hofstede's cultural dimensions. For example, Hofstede's power distance score is highly correlated with Neuroticism and Introversion. Uncertainty Avoidance score, while it is believed to be inversely related to Openness to experience, was shown to be related to Neuroticism and inversely related to Agreeableness; Individualism is associated with Extroversion and Openness to experience; while his dimension of masculinity was shown not to be related to any of the five NEO-PI-R factors (McCrae, 2001). Given its extensive translation use in so many languages, NEO-PI-R has been shown to be a valid tool for describing a culture and identifying similar personality trait patterns among culturally related and historically related cultures. However, the inventory scores also suggest that national characteristics of one country are perceived differently around the globe, which suggests that a national stereotype is actually derived from social construction of reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Such a stereotype then is transmitted through such channels as media, history, education, hearsay, word of mouth, and jokes rather than exclusively from accumulated observances (Terracciano et al., 2005).

Country Personality Scale

d' Astous and Boujbel (2007) developed a 24-item country personality scale with an exploratory factor analysis measuring country personality according to the six dimensions of Agreeableness, Wickedness, Snobbism, Assiduousness, Conformity, and Unobtrusiveness. They found that all six dimensions have statistically significant influences on general and product-specific country attitude. For the travel destination, only Agreeableness, Wickedness, and Conformity dimensions have statistically significant impact. Among the findings was the regression model for travel destinations which showed a lower determination of coefficient (R^2),

which means that the country personality scale has less influence in determining a consumer's evaluation of countries in terms of their personality match as a travel destination. Nevertheless, the country personality construct, according to Roth and Diamantopoulos (2008), is a stable measurement that can be used to describe different countries across a variety of product categories.

Moderating Factors on the COO Effect

Through past marketing literature, country image has been shown to have a significant influence on consumers' perception and beliefs. However, the consequences of country image are conditional. Early studies indicated that the COO effect is more significant when other informational cues (e.g. such as price, distribution channel, and retailer reputation) are absent. However, these studies regarded country of origin information as the only cognitive cue and asked respondents to make their evaluation based upon the available COO information. The emphasis on single cue operationalization has been criticized as being hardly representative of real decision-making environments and of exaggerating the magnitude of the effect. Researchers also found that the effect size of the country of origin is relatively weaker in multi-cue design than in single cue design (Verlegh & Steenkamp, 1999a). Thus, consequent studies have been devoted to researching the country of origin effect in multi-attribute setting (Usunier, 2006). Generally, the COO effect depends upon several moderating variables including, among other things, product familiarity, country familiarity, product involvement, and product category.

Product Familiarity

In addition to economic factors, product familiarity can affect attitudes and beliefs toward a product or brand of one country. Han (1989) indicated that there are two patterns, the halo effect and the summary effect that can explain how product familiarity mediates between country images and consumer judgments. Han (1989) explained that:

When consumers are not familiar with a country's products, country image may serve as a halo from which consumers infer product attributes and it may indirectly affect their brand attitude through their inferential. In contrast, as consumers become more familiar with a country's products, country image may become a construct that summarizes consumers' beliefs about product attributes and directly affects their brand attitude" (p.228).

The concepts of halo and summary effect also have been supported by other researchers who found that product familiarity does mediate consumers' evaluations of products and country image (Erickson, Johansson, & Chao, 1984). However, some scholars disagree about the moderating effect of product familiarity. For example, country image was found to have great influence on product beliefs and product evaluation under both conditions of high product familiarity and low product familiarity (Laroche et al., 2005).

Country Familiarity

Country familiarity is believed to affect a consumer's evaluation of and intention to buy a product from a specific country in a manner similar to the process by which product familiarity might mediate between product evaluation and country image. Roth and Romeo (1992) manipulated high and low familiarity countries into two groups and tested consumers' attitudes toward and their intention to buy products of certain countries. They found that country familiarity is not significantly correlated with product assessment. Baughn and Yaprak (1993) also found that country familiarity (e.g. using travel experience as the indicator) does not always lead to positive product evaluation. For example, consumers who have not visited Japan tend to have more positive attitudes toward Japanese electronics and automotive products than do those who have been to Japan.

Based on conflicting findings regarding the idea that country familiarity moderates product evaluations and purchase intention, Usunier and Cestre (2007) proposed that country familiarity influences a consumer's way of processing cognitive information instead of purchase intention or product evaluation. They explained, "Because a product category may be associated with

different COOs, a given country with which consumers are familiar may be known to develop, manufacture, design, and/or brand different kinds of products, leading consumers to associate the country with these products” (p. 38).

Product Involvement

Consumer involvement also has been found to exert significant influence upon consumer behaviors, especially when consumers have various ways of being engaged with advertisements and products (Belk & Clarke, 1978; Howard & Sheth, 1969; Hupfer & Gardner, 1971; Krugman, 1962, 1967; Zaichkowsky, 1985). The marketing literature argues that a consumers’ involvement with a product influences the way in which consumers differentiate product attributes, brand importance, brand choice, and their psychological connection to a product (Chattalas, Kramer, & Takada, 2008; Howard & Sheth, 1969; Zaichkowsky, 1985). Chattalas et al. (2008) adapted the elaboration likelihood model (Cacioppo & Petty, 1984) to explain that when involvement is high, consumers tend to evaluate products using analytical information processing rather than decision making short-cuts, such as COO stereotypes.

Hoyer and MacInnis (2007) suggested that involvement – as a psychological state in a consumer’s mind, encompasses the degree of motivation to process information and make decisions. Involvement can be categorized into four types: enduring involvement, situational involvement, cognitive involvement, and affective involvement. Enduring involvement refers to long-term consumer motivation whereas situational involvement refers to short-term consumer motivation. Cognitive involvement is usually related to utilitarian motives while affective involvement mainly focuses on feelings about a product or service (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2007; Park & Young, 1986).

Past COO studies have suggested that the COO effect tends to influence consumers’ evaluation of high-involvement products such as automobiles (Acharya & Elliott, ; Ahmed,

1993). Their results have shown that for high-involvement and complex products, the COO effect and the brand name are more likely to be used as cues to infer product attributes than they are for low-involvement and simple products. However, a few researchers have argued that low-involvement products, such as foods and beverages, are also influenced by similar types of COO information that would influence the purchase of high-involvement products (Ahmed et al., 2004).

Product Category

A variable that has been neglected in country-of-origin studies is the influence of product category. Although product category is regarded as an important moderating variable influencing the COO effect, few researchers have attempted to discover the relationship between product category and the COO effect (Manrai, Lascu, & Manrai, 1998). Product category has been shown to be an influential factor in consumers' perceptions of products. For example, consumers tend to associate France with perfume, Japan with home electronic appliances, Germany with automobiles, and Italy with food and fashion products, and are more likely to positively evaluate products from the appropriate country. This type of country and product-category relationship exists within a taxonomic category in which "even though category members share similar features, not every member is perceived to be an equally good category member (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2007).

Product category also plays an important role in the consumer evaluation process. For example, consumers might have positive images of Japanese home appliances but negative images of Japanese food. Lin and Kao (2004) indicated that a "country may stick to an exclusive reputation or stereotype in specific products in consumer minds. For example, perfume – France, home appliances – Japan, and wristwatch – Swiss" (p. 37). Some scholars have indicated that a

consumer's evaluation varies with different product categories and attributes (Johansson et al., 1985; Samiee, 1994).

Because product category has a dominant influence in moderating country image and other associated beliefs, many commercials try to associate a brand with a favorable cultural or country, even though the brand has no connection to the country or culture (O'Shaughnessy & O'Shaughnessy, 2000). In general, past COO studies has shown that consumers tend to associate a product category with certain countries, and develop specific attitudes toward a product category and its associated countries (Agarwal & Sikri, 1996; Bilkey & Nes, 1982b; Roth & Romeo, 1992).

Brand Attitude

Some literature has suggested that brand attitude has a significant effect on consumers' perceptions on brand attitude, purchase intention and product quality evaluations (Bilkey & Nes, 1982a; Peterson & Jolibert, 1995; Verlegh & Steenkamp, 1999b).

Brand attitude is defined as "consumers' overall evaluations of a brand" (Keller, 1993, p. 4). Along with associated benefits and attributes, brand attitude has been regarded as one of the salient elements of brand image. Han (1989) stated, as mentioned earlier, that brand attitude could be affected by country image through two different models: halo effect and summary construct. Hsieh, Pan and Setiono (2004) also suggested that brand origin might trigger different attitudes toward the brand and further influence a consumer's subsequent behaviors such as purchase intention which is defined as the degree or likelihood consumers want to buy a specified product and brand in the future. Generally, purchase intention was found less susceptible to the COO effect when compared to product quality evaluation. In one study, the findings showed that .30 of the variance of the quality evaluation could be explained by the country of origin effect while only .19 of the variance of purchase intention can be explained by

COO effect (Pharr, 2005). Some researchers believe that price is the main factor influencing purchase intention while brand origin and made-in labels mainly contribute to the perceptions of brand equity. More directly, the country of origin might not have direct effect on purchase intention. That is, “consumers may perceive a product to be of high quality, and like it very much, but they may simply not be able to afford it” (Verlegh & Steenkamp, 1999b, p. 530).

Research Hypotheses

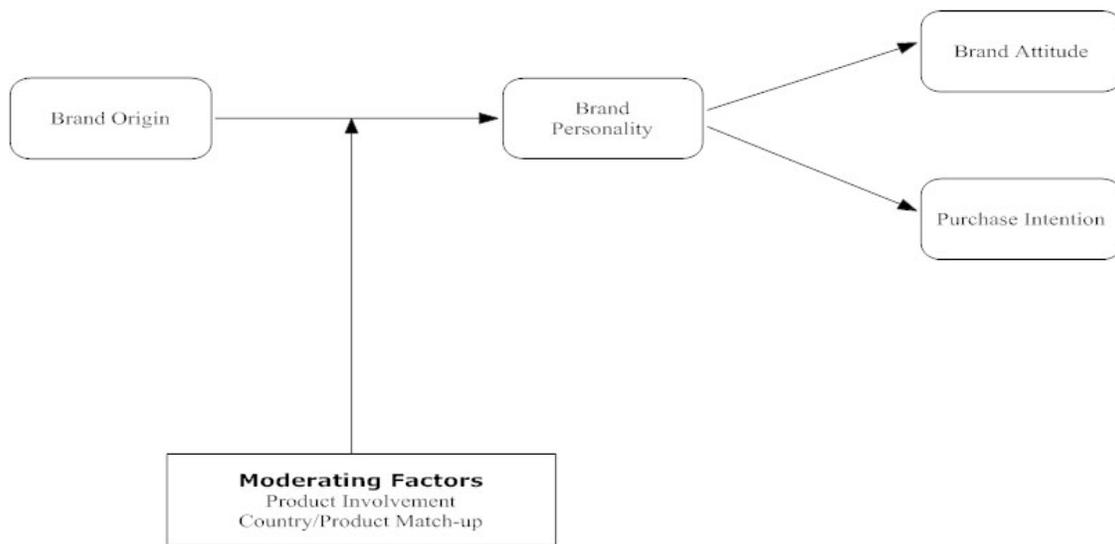


Figure 3-1. Conceptual model of meaning transfer between country and brand personality

The Meaning Transfer between Country Personality and Brand Personality

Though no studies so far examined the correlation between country personality and brand personality, marketing and country-of-origin studies have proved that country image indeed act as an important cue which exert great influence on consumers’ evaluation and attitude toward brand (Balabanis & Diamantopoulos, 2008; Laroche et al., 2005; Lee & Ganesh, 1999; Roth & Diamantopoulos, 2008; Roth & Romeo, 1992; Wang & Yang, 2008; Yasin et al., 2007).

According to McCracken’s meaning transfer process (McCracken, 1989), celebrities contain specific cultural meanings, and these meanings can be transferred by using promotional strategies such as advertising into consumer goods and further into consumer themselves. In this

case, countries act like celebrity endorsers, who instill their cultural meaning into the brand, and finally activate consumers' association network system to link the specific personality to the brand. Or, in terms of country branding concept, a country can be regarded as a gigantic brand. Through the "co-branding process", country brand forms a partnership with the product brand to gain the benefit from association with each other's features and strengths. Thus, it is hypothesized that:

H₁: Country personality is positively associated with brand personality.

Product Category

Several studies have focused on the relationship between product category and country-of-origin image. Roth and Romeo (1992) stated that there exists a fitness relationship between country-of-origin image and product category. The country-of-origin effect is more salient only when the country image matches or is relevant to product characteristics. The other research also showed that product category is an influential factor affecting relationship between country-of-origin image and consumer based brand equity (Pappu, Quester, & Cooksey, 2006). Since brand personality is an important element of consumer-based brand equity, it is hypothesized that:

H₂: The meaning transfer process between country personality and brand personality will be greater when the product category and country match.

Product Involvement

Product involvement and country-of-origin image are deemed as two constructs that influence each other. It is found that product involvement has a positive relationship with COO image. That is, the higher the product involvement, the more influence COO image exert on information search intention (Lin & Chen, 2006). Another study also suggested that when product involvement is low, other extrinsic cues such as price or brand will eclipse the country-

of-origin effect in product evaluation and purchase intention (Ahmed et al., 2004). Therefore, the hypothesis was made,

H₃: The meaning transfer process between country personality and brand personality will be greater for high involvement product than for low involvement product.

Brand Attitude

It is believed that brand personality may evoke consumers' specific feelings and emotions toward a brand (Keller, 1993). The feelings and emotions evoked by the brand, if any, can logically determine consumers' attitude toward the brand. The similar implication and empirical evidence can be found in brand equity relevant studies (Aaker, 1997; Chang & Chieng, 2006; Supphellen & Gronhaug, 2003). Since brand personality can be assumed as an important element molding brand attitude, it is hypothesized that:

H₄: Consumers' brand attitude will be more positive when the country and product match.

H₅: High involvement product will yield a more positive brand attitude than will low involvement product

Purchase Intention

Though many researchers suggested that brand origin has less influence on consumers' purchase intention compared to other non-product related attributes such as price, retailer image, and package, it is believed that country image has significant association with brand attitude and further indirectly influence consumers' purchase intention. Therefore, it is hypothesized that:

H₆: Consumers' purchase intention will be greater when country and product matched.

H₇: Consumers' purchase intention will be greater for a high involvement product than for a low involvement product.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

Introduction

A 2 x2 experimental design with two control groups was employed to test for the meaning transfer and the COO effect. The experimental design tested two factors: product involvement and brand origin. The factor brand origin had two levels: France and Japan. Product involvement included two levels: Laptop and Perfume/Cologne. Subjects were randomly assigned to one of the four cells with different experimental conditions: Japan/laptop, Japan/cologne, France/laptop, and France/cologne. Two control groups were exposed to one laptop and one perfume/cologne brand with no brand origin information revealed.

Prior to answering the questionnaires, subjects were asked to review one product document for one minute. Six versions of product statements were manipulated to be identical except for the differing brand origin and product category. The content of product statements focused on the brand's capacity to indicate the high quality manufacturer of products and how these products could satisfy customer needs.

No brand names, real or fictitious, were used in this experiment. According to Boush (1993), real brand names could invoke the unnecessary attitude and belief links that could compromise the internal validity of the experimental protocol. On the other hand, in order to ensure that participants rated products exclusively upon brand origin information and not other extrinsic cues, brand name was not identified in the product document.

Manipulation Check and Country/Product Selection

Because the experimental design involved two factors, brand origin and country/product matching, the country and product selections were structured to include all possible experimental conditions (e.g. matched/mismatched and high/low involvement products for each country).

Japan and France were selected because of the existing body of product-country image provided solid evidence about these two countries and their respective strong association with electronic and fashion products. For example, consumers are willing to perceive Japanese products as high quality, especially in high-technology related product categories such as electronics, wrist watches, televisions, and automobiles (Agrawal & Kamakura, 1999; Damanpour, 1993). This country stereotype has been found not only to exist in the United States, similar results were also found in Turkey (Kaynak & Kara, 2002), Bulgaria (Apil, 2006), Mexico, Spain, Israel, Australia, Hong Kong, Indonesia (Papadopoulos & Heslop, 2000), Canada, the United Kingdom, France, Greece, Germany, Netherlands, and Hungary (Heslop & Papadopoulos, 1993; Papadopoulos, Heslop, & Bamossy, 1990; Papadopoulos, 1986).

As for France, research literature suggests that the country enjoys a high reputation for perfume, fashion, and wine products, while there are negative associations of reputation with cars, televisions, and other high technology products (Lampert & Jaffe, 1998). Leclerc et al. (1994) also found that brands with names spelled in French were preferred by consumers, especially for those hedonic products.

The laptop and perfume product category were selected for their distinctions in terms of involvement. Laptop is regarded consistently as being representative of high involvement products in many studies (Cochrane & Quester, 2005; Drossos, Giaglis, Lekakos, Kokkinaki, & Stavraki, 2007; Rahman & Rahaman, 2008). On the other hand, while high priced boutique perfumes necessarily would not be significantly different from laptops in terms of involvement, it is believed that more widely available lower-priced perfumes and cologne products, would be considered a low-involvement product. Based on previous justifications, the author concluded

that the experimental conditions would be represented by these two countries (Japan and France) and these two products (laptop and low-priced perfume).

Six different versions of the questionnaire were designed for each of the experimental conditions. Respondents were asked to provide their perceptions of brand personality based upon the experimental conditions to which they were assigned. Other scales in the questionnaire included product involvement, attitude toward the brand, and purchase intention.

Sampling

A convenience sample of students, enrolled in introductory classes in the College of Journalism and Communications during the spring semester of 2009 at the University of Florida, was asked to participate in this study. In order to increase the response rate, participants who completed a valid questionnaire were able to earn extra credits for their pertinent course.

College students were chosen as the sample population because they are believed to be more sensitive to country/brand image than as observed in other consumer segments. A student sample was also found to be more homogeneous in composition (Verlegh & Steenkamp, 1999a). Liefeld (1993) also revealed that student-based samples have statistically similar effect sizes compared to consumer-based-experiments. Moreover, student groups are also easy to reach and relatively inexpensive when used in COO studies.

Student volunteers were assigned randomly with equal chance to any of the six versions of the questionnaire that were available via limited-access links at online survey website (<http://www.surveymonkey.com>). Administering the experiment via online afforded several advantages including savings of labor and time as well as automatic coding which ensured that no data were entered inaccurately and that there were no missing data values in completed surveys (Sansone, Morf, & Panter, 2004).

Table 3-1. Experimental design

Brand Origin Product Category	FIT Brand Origin 1	Non-Fit Brand Origin 2	No Brand Origin (Control Groups)
High Involvement Product Category 1	1	4	5
Low Involvement Product Category 2	2	3	6

Measurement

Subjects were asked to complete a multi-section questionnaire after reviewing the designated product statement. In the first section, subjects were asked to answer questions about their involvement concerning the designated product. Product involvement was defined as “the feelings of interest and enthusiasm consumers hold toward product categories” (Goldsmith & Emmert, 1991). Subjects were asked to indicate their response on a set of five-point Likert scales. The set of scales included: (1) In general I have a strong interest in this product category; (2) This product is very important to me; (3) The product category matters a lot to me; (4) I get bored when other people talk to me about this product category (Bruner, Hensel, & James, 2005).

The second section of the questionnaires was used to measure the perceived brand personality. In consideration of the potential maturation effect, a short version of a personality scale was chosen for this study: Aaker’s Brand Personality Scale (1997) to measure both country and brand personality. Aaker’s Brand Personality Scale (BPS) included six dimensions and 15 facets, comprising a total of 42 items in total (Aaker, 1997). While this scale contained fewer items than other personality measuring instruments, such as the Big Five and the NEO-PI-R, subjects were asked to rate simultaneously country and brand personality in this experiment. Under typical circumstances, subjects should have answered 84 items (e.g. 42 each for country

and brand personality) but there was concern that experimental subjects would be burned out and maturation effects could threaten the desired level of internal validity (Davis, 1997). Therefore, the second section of the questionnaire was based on 15 brand personality facets for which respondents were asked to rate country and brand personality simultaneously.

The third section asked subjects to evaluate the country image as measured by four bipolar semantic differential scales first used by Roth and Romeo (1992). Subjects were asked to provide ratings on four bipolar adjectives (innovative, design, prestige, and workmanship) according to their perception of the designated country.

The fourth section of the questionnaire was designed to measure subject attitudes toward the brand as adopted from Putrevu and Lord's scale (1994). The original scale comprises five statements: (1) The decision to buy this brand is foolish; (2) Buying this brand is a good decision; (3) I think this brand is a satisfactory brand; (4) I think the brand has a lot of beneficial characteristics; (5) I have a favorable opinion of this brand. However, the third statement -I think the brand is a satisfactory brand, was excluded from the questionnaire because of its high degree of homogeneity relative to other items. The scores of the four items were summed to represent subjects' attitudes toward the brand.

The fifth section measured subject willingness to purchase a specific brand product in the future. The purchase intention scale was adapted again from Putrevu and Lord (1994), which comprised three items on a seven-point Likert scale. Subjects were asked to rate their responses on the following statement: (1) It is very likely that I will buy this brand; (2) I will purchase this brand the next time I need a (laptop or perfume); (3) I will definitely try this brand. The scores of the three items were summed to represent subjects' likelihood of trying or buying the brand.

The final section asked subjects to provide their demographic information including their gender, age, ethnicity, and citizenship.

All items in the questionnaire were expressed in Likert-Type Indices and semantic differential scale. The Likert-Type Index, used to measure responses on an agree-and-disagree continuum, involves intervals between the agree and disagree extremes that are most commonly divided into five, seven, or nine points, but also can incorporate any other even or odd number of intervals (Davis, 1997). In this study, subjects were asked to answer each item on a either five- or seven- point Likert scale, with each item being scored along a continuum ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”. The semantic differential scale is used to measure attitudes and opinions by asking “a respondent to rate a object on a number of itemized, seven-point rating scales bounded on each end by one of two bipolar adjectives” (Davis, 1997, p. 285). In this study, semantic differential scales intended to measure respondents on their perception of country image involved four bipolar scales. The total country image score was calculated by summing the scores of the four bipolar scales

Table 3-2. Constructs and indicators of the measurement

Construct	Indicators
Brand & Country Personality (Sincerity- 4 items)	Down-to-Earth Honest Wholesome Cheerful
Brand & Country Personality (Excitement- 4 items)	Daring Spirited Imaginative Up-to-date
Brand & Country Personality (Competence- 3 items)	Reliable Intelligent Successful
Brand & Country Personality (Sophistication- 2 items)	Upper Class Charming
Brand & Country Personality (Ruggedness- 2 items)	Outdoorsy Tough
Product Involvement	Indicators In general I have a strong interest in this product category This product category is very important to me This product category matters a lot to me I get bored when other people talk to me about this product category
Country Image	Indicators Innovative Design Prestige Workmanship
Brand Attitude	Indicators The decision to buy (brand) is foolish Buying (brand) is a good decision I think (brand) has a lot of beneficial characteristics I have a favorable opinion of (brand)
Purchase Intention	Indicators It is very likely that I will buy (brand) I will purchase (brand) the next time I need a (product) I will definitely try (brand)

Data Analysis

To test H_1 , correlation analysis was employed to examine the relationship between country personality and brand personality. The purpose was to examine the degree of association between country personality and brand personality.

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test H₂ and H₃, with the independent variables being country/product fit and product involvement. The purpose of the analysis was to investigate whether the two independent variables have significant effects upon the personality transfer process between country and brand. The country/brand congruity score was computed as follows:

$$\sum_{i=1}^n (CP_i - BP_i)^2$$

CP_i = Score of country personality along dimension i

BP_i = Score of brand personality along dimension i

A similar analysis was employed to test H₄ and H₅ with the dependent variable being substituted with brand attitude. The purpose was to test if there was any difference in brand attitude between fit/ non-fit and high/low involvement groups.

Finally, a two-way ANOVA was used to test H₆ and H₇ with country/product fit and product involvement as the independent variables and purchase intention as the dependent variable. The purpose was to investigate if there was a significant difference on purchase intention between fit/non-fit and high/low product involvement groups.

CHAPTER 4 RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the hypothesis test developed in the previous chapter and discusses these research findings. The first part of this chapter reports on the reliability of the measurement scales. The second part provides the results of the experimental manipulation check. The third part reports the results of the tests of Hypothesis 1. The fourth part provides the results for Hypotheses 2 and 3, and examines the effect of country/product fit and product involvement on the meaning transfer process. The fifth part provides the result for Hypotheses 4 and 5 and analyzes the effect of country/product fit and product involvement on brand attitude. The sixth part presents the result of test for Hypotheses 6 and 7, which concerned with the effect of product/country fit on consumers' purchase intention. The last part of this chapter provides the summary and important findings of this study.

Reliability Test

A reliability test represents the degree of stability of a measurement, which examines if the measures yield consistent results after repeated administration and are free from random error (Davis, 1997). Coefficient alpha was used to check the internal consistency of measures used in this research. According to Churchill (1979, p. 68), "coefficient alpha absolutely should be the first measure one calculates to assess the quality of the instrument". Therefore, the six constructs measured by multiple items, (specifically product involvement, purchase intention, country personality, brand personality, brand attitude, and country image) were examined by Cronbach's (1951) alpha coefficient. Table 4-1 presents the Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the six major constructs in this study. Most of the constructs for this study had alpha coefficients beyond .60, which shows moderate internal consistency and stability. However, it is worth noting that the

“Sophistication” and the “Ruggedness” dimension had very low alpha coefficients. In order to guarantee the complete reliability of this study, these two personality dimensions would be excluded from further analysis.

Manipulation Check

Table 4-2 provides means and standard deviations for the manipulation checks for this study. A t-test was used to determine if the laptop was perceived as a high-involvement product and perfume as a low-involvement product. Mean scores found that laptop had a higher product involvement score than did perfume (M=12.9, laptop; M=10.8, perfume; $p < .05$). Another experimental manipulation check was conducted for country/product fit, which anticipated that Japan/laptop and France/perfume pairs would be considered more matched than Japan/perfume and France/laptop pairs, respectively. The results showed that a higher score for the Japan/laptop pair on country/product fit than did France/laptop pair (M=2.60, Japan/laptop; M=1.57, France/laptop, $p < .05$). Similarly, the France/perfume pair had a higher score than did the Japan/perfume pair (M= 2.51, France/perfume; M=1.60, Japan/perfume, $p < .05$). Finally, to ensure that Japan and France have different country images, a t-test was used to examine the country image score difference between these two countries. The result showed that France and Japan are different from each other on all country image dimensions except “Prestige.” In summary, Japan had higher country image score than did France (M= 22.44, Japan, M=19.16, France, $p < .05$).

Subject Profile

A total of 210 participants participated in the experiment. Approximately 65.6% were female and 34.4% were male. Their age ranged from 18-32, but most was 18-25. For their ethnicity, most of them were White/Caucasian (75.2%); other ethnicities included Latino (9.6%), African American (8.6%), Asian (4.8%), and Others (1.4%).

Meaning Transfer Process between Country Personality and Brand Personality: Test of Hypothesis 1

H₁ proposed that there is a significant measurable process of meaning transfer between country personality and brand personality, where the country personality scores correlate with brand personality scores. The product-moment correlation was employed to test the direction and degree of association between the two variables, country personality and brand personality.

As shown in Table 4-3, the correlation coefficient between country personality and brand personality on the sincerity dimension for the Japan/Japanese laptop pair was .46, which suggests that there exists a moderate positive relationship between these two variables ($p < .01$). The correlation coefficient on the excitement dimension for Japan/Japanese laptop pair was .61, suggesting that country excitement and brand excitement are moderately associated ($p < .01$). The correlation coefficient on the competence dimension for this group was .43, which implies that country competence and brand competence are moderately associated ($p < .05$).

The correlation coefficient between country personality and brand personality on the sincerity dimension for France/French perfume pair was .51, which demonstrates a moderate positive correlation. The result showed that country sincerity is moderately associated with brand sincerity for this group, and it is statistically significant ($p < .01$). On the other hand, the correlation coefficient on the excitement dimension for France/French perfume pair was .08 and statistically insignificant ($p > .05$). Such result shows that country excitement and brand excitement were weakly associated ($p > .05$). The correlation coefficient on competence dimension for France/French perfume pair was .55, which implies that country competence and brand competence are moderately associated ($p < .01$).

The correlation coefficient between country personality and brand personality on the sincerity dimension for Japan/Japanese perfume pair was .39, which shows a moderate positive

correlation ($p < .05$). The result shows that country sincerity is moderately associated with brand sincerity. The correlation coefficient on the competence dimension for Japan/Japanese perfume pair was .10. Such result shows that there was no association between country excitement and brand excitement for this pair ($p > .05$). The correlation coefficient on the competence dimension for the Japan/Japanese perfume was .12, which implies that country competence and brand competence are also non-correlated ($p > .05$).

Finally, the correlation coefficient between country personality and brand personality on the sincerity dimension for the France/French laptop pair was .27, which shows there is no association between country personality and brand personality ($p > .05$). The correlation coefficient on the excitement dimension for the France/Laptop pair was .30. Such result implies that country excitement and brand excitement were moderately associated; however the result was not statistically significant ($p > .05$). Hence, there is no correlation between country excitement and brand excitement for this country/product combination. The correlation coefficient on the competence dimension for the France/French Laptop was .41, which implies that country competence and brand competence are moderately associated ($p < .05$).

Effect of Country/Product Fit and Product Involvement on Meaning Transfer Process: Test of Hypotheses 2 and 3

H₂ and H₃ proposed that the meaning transfer between country personality and brand personality should be greater when the brand origin and the product match and when consumers are highly involved with the product. Based on H₂, it was expected that the congruity index score between country personality and brand personality should be smaller when the country and the product match. For the H₃, it was expected that the congruity index score between country personality and brand personality should be smaller when consumers are highly involved with the product. A two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed with the country/product

match and product involvement as independent variables to analyze the meaning transfer process between country personality and brand personality.

As shown in Tables 4-4 and 4-5, the mean brand congruity index score on the sincerity dimension between country personality and brand personality of fit and non-fit groups were 2.86 and 4.93, respectively. The non-fit group tended to have a higher congruity index score than did the fit group, which implies that the fit group was more likely to associate brand sincerity with country sincerity than did the non-fit group. The difference was statistically significant ($p < .05$). However, it is worth noting that the significance of the corrected model of this test was insignificant ($p > .05$). For the excitement dimension, the result was very similar with the sincerity dimension. The non-fit group had higher congruity index score than did the fit group, and the difference was significant ($p < .05$). Despite the significant difference between the fit and non-fit group, the corrected model of this test was also insignificant ($p > .05$). The main effect of product involvement and corrected model were found both insignificant for the sincerity and excitement personality dimension ($p > .05$).

For the competence dimension, the mean competence congruity index scores of fit and non-fit groups were 2.21 and 3.81. For high and low involvement product, the competence congruity scores were 2.29 and 3.74 respectively. Both main effects of country/product match and product involvement were statistically significant ($p < .05$). No interaction effect was found between the fit/non-fit and high/low groups ($p > .05$). The corrected model was statistically significant ($p < .05$).

Effect of Country/Product Fit and Product Involvement on Meaning Transfer Process: Test of Hypotheses 4 and 5

H₄ and H₅ proposed that a match between the brand origin and the product and high-involvement products should lead consumers to have a higher brand attitude level than with

mismatched pairs and low-involvement products. Based on H₄, it was expected that consumers would tend to have higher brand attitude levels toward the products with favorable brand origin (e.g. Japan/Laptop, France/Perfume) than toward their counterparts with relatively unfavorable origins (e.g. Japan/Perfume, France/Laptop). For H₅, it was expected that consumers' brand attitudes toward the high-involvement product would be higher than toward the low-involvement product. A two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed with the fit/non-fit and high/low product involvement factors as the independent variables.

Tables 4-6 and 4-7 summarize the ANOVA results including means, standard deviations, degree of freedom, and F-value. As can be seen in Table 4-7, the fit/ non-fit between a product and a country was shown to affect the consumers' brand attitude for the product. The results show that consumers had higher brand attitude toward the product with favorable origins than the one with unfavorable origins. The effect of the fit and non-fit groups was statistically significant ($p < .05$). The effect of product involvement also influenced consumers' brand attitude where consumers tended to have higher brand attitude toward the high-involvement product than toward the low-involvement product. The mean score difference between high and low involvement product was statistically significant ($p < .05$). No interaction effect was found between these two factors ($p > .05$). Thus, H₄ and H₅ were both supported.

Effect of Country/Product Fit and Product Involvement on Purchase Intention: Test of Hypotheses 6 and 7

H₆ and H₇ proposed that a match between the brand origin and the product and high-involvement product should lead consumers to have greater purchase intention than did mismatched pairs and low involvement products. Based on H₆, it was expected that consumers' purchase intention toward the products with favorable brand origin (Japan/Laptop, France/Perfume) would be stronger than toward the counterparts with relatively unfavorable

origin (e.g. Japan/perfume, France/laptop). For H₇, it was expected that consumers' purchase intention toward the high-involvement product would be higher than toward the low-involvement product. A two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed with the country/product match and high/low product involvement factors as the independent variables.

Tables 4-8 and 4-9 summarize the ANOVA results showing means, standard deviations, degree of freedom, and F-value. As can be seen in Table 4-9, the results of the analysis support H₆. Country/product match was shown to affect consumers' purchase intention for the product. The results show that consumers were more likely to buy products with a favorable origin than those with unfavorable origins. The effect of the fit and non-fit group was statistically significant ($p < .05$). While the purchase intention of high-involvement product was found to be higher than the low involvement product, the difference was not statistically significant ($p > .05$), and there was no interaction effect between these two factors ($p > .05$). Thus, H₇ was not supported.

Summary of Results

Chapter 4 presented the results of hypotheses tests. H₁ was supported, indicating that the country personality and brand personality were found to have a significantly positive association. The results showed that all four groups had at least one transferred personality dimension. For H₂, only the congruity score of the competence personality dimension was found to be moderated by country/product match. Other two personality dimensions, sincerity and excitement, though the main effect of country/product match were both significant, the corrected model were both insignificant. Thus, H₂ was only partially supported.

It was shown that the total congruity score and the competence personality dimension were moderated by product involvement. However, for the other two personality dimensions in this study, sincerity and excitement, both corrected models and mean score differences were insignificant. Therefore, H₃ was also partially supported.

H₄ and H₅ were both strongly supported. Consumers tend to have more positive brand attitude when they are more involved with the product and when the product has favorable brand origin. H₆ and H₇ were also supported. The purchase intention was found to be stronger when the product has the right brand origin and is categorized as a high involvement product.

Chapter 5 includes the discussion about the findings, limitations, implications, and the direction of future research of this study

Table 4-1. Reliability of measurement

Scale		Alpha Coefficients
Product Involvement	Laptop	.85
	Perfume	.84
	Total	.86
Country Image	Japan	.85
	France	.80
	Total	.82
Brand Attitude	Laptop	.81
	Perfume	.81
	Total	.81
Purchase Intention	Laptop	.83
	Perfume	.89
	Total	.87
Brand Personality (Sincerity)	Laptop	.66
	Perfume	.68
	Total	.69
Brand Personality (Excitement)	Laptop	.66
	Perfume	.61
	Total	.67
Brand Personality (Competence)	Laptop	.74
	Perfume	.74
	Total	.79
Brand Personality (Sophistication)	Laptop	.37
	Perfume	.40
	Total	.41
Brand Personality (Ruggedness)	Laptop	.59
	Perfume	.39
	Total	.38
Country Personality (Sincerity)	Japan	.69
	France	.78
	Total	.73
Country Personality (Excitement)	Japan	.73
	France	.78
	Total	.72
Country Personality (Competence)	Japan	.77
	France	.80
	Total	.79
Country Personality (Sophistication)	Japan	.23
	France	.73
	Total	.52
Country Personality (Ruggedness)	Japan	.16
	France	.84
	Total	.61

Table 4-2. Experimental manipulation check

		N	Mean	Std.	t-value	d.f	p-value
Product	Laptop	105	12.87	3.24	4.84*	208	.00
Involvement	Perfume	105	10.80	2.97			
Country/Product	Japan_Laptop	35	2.60	1.03	4.79*	61.53	.00
Fit	France_Laptop	35	1.57	.74			
Country/Product	France_Perfume	35	2.51	1.07	3.97*	68	.00
Fit	Japan_Perfume	35	1.60	.85			
Country Image	Japan	70	5.94	1.14	8.41	138	.00
(Innovativeness)	France	70	4.30	1.17			
Country Image	Japan	70	5.77	1.04	3.27*	126.739	.00
(Design)	France	70	5.09	1.41			
Country Image	Japan	70	5.29	1.18	-.26	138	.79
(Prestige)	France	70	5.34	1.38			
Country Image	Japan	70	5.44	1.06	5.40	138	.00
(Workmanship)	France	70	4.43	1.16			
Country Image	Japan	70	22.44	3.65	5.04	138	.00
(Total)	France	70	19.16	4.01			

*p < .05

Table 4-3. Correlation coefficients between country personality and brand personality

Personality Dimensions	Fit		Non-fit	
	Japan/Japanese Laptop	France/French Perfume	Japan/Japanese Perfume	France/French Laptop
Sincerity	.46**	.51**	.39**	.27
Excitement	.61**	.08	.10	.30
Competence	.43*	.55**	.12	.41*

**p ≤ .01 * p ≤ .05

Table 4-4. Effect of fit/nonfit and involvement on congruity

Personality Dimension	Fit/NonFit group	Product Category	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Sincerity	Fit	High Involvement	2.63	3.50	35
		Low Involvement	3.09	2.89	35
		Total	2.86	3.19	70
	Non-Fit	High Involvement	4.54	4.15	35
		Low Involvement	5.31	7.82	35
		Total	4.93	6.23	70
	Total	High Involvement	3.59	3.93	70
		Low Involvement	4.20	5.96	70
		Total	3.89	5.04	140
Excitement	Fit	High Involvement	2.54	2.67	35
		Low Involvement	3.57	4.00	35
		Total	3.06	3.42	70
	Non-Fit	High Involvement	4.71	6.11	35
		Low Involvement	7.00	11.88	35
		Total	5.86	9.45	70
	Total	High Involvement	3.63	4.81	70
		Low Involvement	5.29	8.97	70
		Total	4.46	7.22	140
Competence	Fit	High Involvement	2.03	2.19	35
		Low Involvement	2.40	2.63	35
		Total	2.21	2.41	70
	Non-Fit	High Involvement	2.54	2.95	35
		Low Involvement	5.09	7.37	35
		Total	3.81	5.72	70
	Total	High Involvement	2.29	2.59	70
		Low Involvement	3.74	5.66	70
		Total	3.01	4.44	140

Table 4-5. ANOVA for the effect of fit/non-fit and product involvement on congruity

	Source	Type III Sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F
Sincerity	Fit/Non-Fit	150.18	1	150.18	6.07*
	Product Involvement	13.20	1	13.21	.53
	Fit/Non-Fit * Product Involvement	.86	1	.86	.04
	Error	3367.14	136	24.76	
Excitement	Fit/Non-Fit	274.40	1	274/40	5.44*
	Product Involvement	96.11	1	96.11	1.91
	Fit/Non-Fit * Product Involvement	13.83	1	13.83	.27
	Error	6860.40	136	50.44	
Competence	Fit/Non-Fit	89.60	1	89.60	4.80*
	Product Involvement	74.31	1	74.31	3.98*
	Fit/Non-Fit * Product Involvement	41.26	1	41.26	2.21
	Error	2540.80	136	18.68	
Total	Fit/Non-Fit	5.21	1	5.21	.92
	Product Involvement	40.18	1	40.18	7.11*
	Fit/Non-Fit * Product Involvement	23.21	1	23.21	4.11*
	Error	768.34	136	5.65	

*p \leq .05

Table 4-6. Descriptive statistics of brand attitude

Fit/NonFit group	Product Category	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Fit	High Involvement	14.77	1.50	35
	Low Involvement	13.49	2.64	35
	Total	14.13	2.23	70
Non-Fit	High Involvement	12.51	2.34	35
	Low Involvement	12.17	2.60	35
	Total	12.34	2.46	70
Total	High Involvement	13.64	2.26	70
	Low Involvement	12.83	2.68	70
	Total	13.24	2.50	140

Table 4-7. Effect of fit/nonfit and involvement on brand attitude

Source	Type III Sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F
Fit/Non-Fit	111.61	1	111.61	20.83*
Product Involvement	23.21	1	23.21	4.33*
Fit/Non-Fit_Product Involvement	7.78	1	7.78	1.45
Error	728.63	136	5.36	

* $p \leq .05$

Table 4-8. Effect of fit/non-fit and involvement on purchase Intention

Fit/Non-Fit group	Product Category	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Fit	High Involvement	8.66	1.71	35
	Low Involvement	7.69	2.36	35
	Total	8.17	2.10	70
Non-Fit	High Involvement	7.17	2.42	35
	Low Involvement	6.82	2.47	35
	Total	7.00	2.43	70
Total	High Involvement	7.91	2.21	70
	Low Involvement	7.26	2.44	70
	Total	7.59	2.34	140

Table 4-9. ANOVA for the effect of fit/non-fit and product involvement on purchase intention

Source	Type III Sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F
Fit/Non-Fit	48.03	1	48.03	9.39*
Product Involvement	15.11	1	15.11	2.96
Fit/Non-Fit * Product Involvement	3.46	1	3.46	.68
Error	695.37	136	5.11	

* $p \leq .05$

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

Research Finding and Conclusions

The primary purpose of this research was to examine the meaning transfer process between the country personality and brand personality and its consequences with regard to brand attitude and purchase intention. This study was focused on how the country/product match and product involvement influence the meaning transfer process as well as its further impact on brand attitude and purchase intention.

One major finding of this study was that country personality and brand personality were moderately associated. Generally, it was found that consumers are more likely to associate country personality with brand personality when the origin and product category are matched. For example, the combination of Japan/Japanese laptop had a stronger correlation than did the France/French laptop pair; and the combination of France/ French perfume had a stronger correlation between country personality and brand personality than did Japan/Japanese perfume pair. However, not all personality dimensions were transferred concomitantly. Some personality dimensions might not be transferred to the brand. In this study, it was found that the excitement personality dimension had a very weak correlation between country personality and brand personality, even when subjects were aware of favorable brand origins such as the France/ French perfume pair. One surprising finding was that the combination of France/French laptop, though identified as a product with an unfavorable brand origin, had moderate and positive correlation between country competence and brand competence. This result could be explained by the fact that subjects might still consider France a technologically-advanced country which has enjoyed a visible, public reputation in such industries as transportation, aerospace, nuclear power, and weaponry industry (Rosenthal, 1999). Therefore, even though Japan outscored

France on the country image dimensions of innovativeness, workmanship, and design, the practical differences did not appear large enough to consumers who might be expected to identify France as a country not compatible with laptops.

The results showed that a product with a favorable brand origin led consumers to have more positive brand attitude than with a product from an unfavorable origin. Consumers' brand attitude toward Japanese laptop and French perfume brands was found significantly higher than their attitude toward Japanese perfume and French laptop. On the other hand, product involvement exerts a potential influence upon brand attitude as a laptop was found to have a higher brand attitude than perfume.

The influence of country/product match was also shown to affect consumers' purchase intention as well. The results showed that consumers were more likely to buy the product with favorable origin. However, product involvement was also found not to interfere with consumers' purchase intention as the result showed that there was no significant difference when comparing consumers' purchase intention of the high-involvement product with that of the low-involvement product. This result contrasts with findings in Piron's (2000) and Ahmed's (2004) finding which posited that product involvement moderates the COO effect. In this study, it was found that both product involvement and country/product match can influence brand attitude. Nevertheless, the only country/product match had influence on purchase intention.

Implications

The findings of this study have some useful implications for academic researchers and marketing practitioners. The prior COO literature mostly measured country image using product-related attributes. However, few studies used personality dimensions to measure consumers' country perceptions. Using personality dimensions to measure country image would be an innovative and potentially consistent way toward understanding the complex relationship

between countries and brands. The meaning transfer process was originally intended to assess the relationship between a celebrity endorser or event sponsorship and brands, while the present study shows that national characteristics might be an alternative source forming brand personality. The idea of national characteristics can be applied to congruity theory which was used to examine the association between self-concept and brand personality.

As the present study shows that country personality and brand personality are moderately associated, internationally based corporations that want to expand to foreign markets should acknowledge this association and take advantage of its dynamics. When a new product is introduced to consumers in an international market, personality dimensions of the origin country should be effectively communicated to help consumers develop a sustainable product perception in their recall. In an industry market becoming increasingly saturated with products that often share many attributes with their competitors, making wise use of the meaning transfer process between country personality and brand personality could lead to a critical essential solution for companies seeking to differentiate their brands from others. Furthermore, the present study also showed that country/product match does exert measurable influence upon brand attitude and purchase intention. Marketing practitioners should be aware of these consequences and should try to link their brand with favorable origins and avoid unfavorable ones.

The findings of this study also indicate that not all personality dimensions would be transferrable. For example, counterintuitively, the excitement personality dimension does not seem to be compatible with perfume/cologne products in this study, and the association between country and the product was relatively low. Therefore, marketing practitioners should be careful about embracing the conventional wisdom concerning specific personality dimensions as they

seek to take advantage of the national characteristics that become important in promoting a product being introduced into a new foreign market.

Limitations and Future Research

In spite of the findings in the present study, the idea of meaning transfer between country personality and brand personality is relatively new and involves several limitations. First, some factors other than those examined in the study may also be affecting the meaning transfer process. Due to the time limitation and concerns about the maturation effect, only product involvement and country/product fit were selected as the most relevant variables to examine in the current study. However, other factors such as brand familiarity, country familiarity, and consumers' prior experience with the country and product could influence the antecedents and consequences of the meaning transfer process. Future research should incorporate these variables to see how they moderate the meaning transfer process between country and brand.

Second, both country personality and brand personality are broad concepts comprising different dimensions and items that reflect cultural dimensions uniquely rooted in each nation. Using the same measurement protocol to rate country personality and brand personality may not reflect accurately and comprehensively the personality traits of a country or a brand. Future research should be focused on how to develop a more thorough measurement protocol that can be used to reflect realistically the characteristics of both country personality and brand personality and to do so in a feasibly compact form.

Third, the study was only concerned with two countries and two products, which also may not truly reflect the real-life buying situation. Consumers undoubtedly will confront many products with many different brand origins throughout their life. In this study, both France and Japan were considered technology-advanced countries. Thus, it might be difficult to investigate the effect of meaning transfer for products with real "unfavorable" origins. For future research,

more product categories with different brand origins should be employed to test the meaning transfer process, especially with regard to countries that may be at different levels in their technological and industrial development.

Fourth, the determination of products and countries used in this study was based upon intuition and prior literature. Though the manipulation checks demonstrated that all experimental conditions were under control, the two countries and products employed in this study might not well-represent the two sides of the continuum that can fully reflect matched/mismatched country/product and high/low product involvement in consumers' minds. Therefore, a pretest which includes more countries and products should be conducted prior main experiment to detect the suitable combinations of countries and products for similar studies.

Fifth, the study was administered only in the United States and subjects consisted of Caucasians mostly. The similar studies and questionnaires should be administered in other countries to help establish a baseline for comparing the differences. The perceptions and myths of luxury brands could also exist in East Asian countries and these aspects can contribute to the meaning transfer process between countries and brands. In addition, more diverse, demographically representative samples of consumers should be employed in future studies to get a realistic sense of how consumer markets function and respond to branding and advertising campaign in which the country of origin might be a significant factor to consider. Although student samples were found to be highly similar to real consumers (Verlegh & Steenkamp, 1999b) , it would be ideal, from a point of research validity and reliability, to incorporate more representative samples in examining the COO effect in branding.

APPENDIX A
QUESTIONNAIRES

Questionnaire: Japan/Laptop

Dear Students,

You are being asked to participate in an academic research study. Please read the information below to determine if you wish to complete the survey. Your participation is entirely voluntary. You can refuse to participate without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may print a copy of this consent form for your records.

I am a graduate student in the College of Journalism and Communications at the University of Florida. The research examines how people think about products and where they come from. I would appreciate your participation. While there is no financial compensation for completing the survey, you are contributing to worthwhile research. If you were recruited from an undergraduate class, at the end of the survey you will be asked to complete information to receive extra credit for your participation.

Survey Instructions:

You will be asked to answer each question in this survey to the best of your knowledge. The survey should take you about 10-15 minutes to complete. If you miss answering a question, you will be reminded to answer it before moving on to the next section.

Confidentiality and Privacy Protections:

The data may be made available to other researchers in the future solely for research purposes not detailed within this consent form. In these cases, the data will contain no identifying information that could associate you with it, or your participation in any study. Be assured that you will not be contacted for any sales purposes nor will individual answers be released. Only group or summary data will be reported. The goal is solely to determine how young adults think about products and the countries that they come from.

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact:

Yu-Shiang Bien
Department of Advertising
University of Florida
pantheon@ufl.edu

If you have questions later, want additional information, or wish to withdraw your participation, please call the researchers conducting the study. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, complaints, concerns, or questions about the research please contact IRB02 Office, Box 112250, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611-2250; phone 392-0433.

I have read the procedure described above. I voluntarily to participate in the study and I have received a copy of this description.

Yes

No

Product Document: Please read the document below. After reading it, please click "Next" to proceed to the next page.

A new Japanese laptop brand is launching a wide range of laptop products. With years of experience and expertise in technology field, this new Japanese brand delivers technology and products remarkable for their innovation and artistry, contributing to a safer, more comfortable, more productive life.

As a competitive brand in the pc market, this brand develops, manufactures, and markets cutting-edge, reliable, high-quality laptop products and value-added professional services that provide customers around the world with smarter ways to be productive and competitive.

This new brand brings together the spirit of innovation with the passion and conviction to shape the future. It also fosters close relationships, rooted in trust and respect, with the customers, business partners and communities around the world.



Section 1:

Please indicate your involvement with the following product category. Circle 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) to express your answer for the statements below. There are no right or wrong answers.

1. Regarding the Laptop, please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the statement below.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I get bored when other people talk to me about this product	<input type="radio"/>				
In general I have a strong interest in this product	<input type="radio"/>				
This product is very important to me	<input type="radio"/>				
This product matters a lot to me	<input type="radio"/>				

Section 2:

The following question asks about a product as thought of as a person. What personality traits or human characteristics come to your mind when you think of this foreign product? Please rate each characteristic from 1 (Extremely Disagree) to 5 (extremely Agree).

Generally, would you agree or disagree the characteristics listed below to describe Japan?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Down-to-Earth	<input type="radio"/>				
Honest	<input type="radio"/>				
Wholesome	<input type="radio"/>				
Cheerful	<input type="radio"/>				
Daring	<input type="radio"/>				
Spirited	<input type="radio"/>				
Imaginative	<input type="radio"/>				
Up-to-date	<input type="radio"/>				
Reliable	<input type="radio"/>				
Intelligent	<input type="radio"/>				
Successful	<input type="radio"/>				
Upper Class	<input type="radio"/>				
Charming	<input type="radio"/>				
Outdoorsy	<input type="radio"/>				
Tough	<input type="radio"/>				

Generally, would you agree or disagree the characteristics listed below to describe the Japanese Laptop brand you were exposed to?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Down-to-Earth	<input type="radio"/>				
Honest	<input type="radio"/>				
Wholesome	<input type="radio"/>				
Cheerful	<input type="radio"/>				
Daring	<input type="radio"/>				
Spirited	<input type="radio"/>				
Imaginative	<input type="radio"/>				
Up-to-date	<input type="radio"/>				
Reliable	<input type="radio"/>				
Intelligent	<input type="radio"/>				
Successful	<input type="radio"/>				
Upper Class	<input type="radio"/>				
Charming	<input type="radio"/>				

Outdoorsy	<input type="radio"/>				
Tough	<input type="radio"/>				

Section 3:

For the Japanese products, would you agree or disagree the adjectives used to describe them. Please rate each item on following bipolar scales.

For Japanese products, how do you perceive the innovativeness of their products, where innovativeness means use of new technology and engineering advances?

Not-Innovative						Innovative
<input type="radio"/>						

For Japanese products, how do you perceive the design of their products, where design means appearance, style, colors, and variety?

Not Well-Designed						Well-Designed
<input type="radio"/>						

For Japanese products, how do you perceive the prestige, of their products, where prestige means exclusivity, status, and brand name reputation?

Not Prestigious						Prestigious
<input type="radio"/>						

For Japanese products, how do you perceive the workmanship of their products, where workmanship means reliability, durability, craftsmanship, and manufacturing quality?

Not Good Workmanship						Good Workmanship
<input type="radio"/>						

Section 4:

Please indicate your perception of the association between the referred product and country. Circle 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) to express your answer for the statements below. There are no right or wrong answers.

When I think of Japan, Laptop is one of the first products I think about

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>				

Section 5:

Please indicate your attitude toward the brand. Circle 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) to express your answer for the statements below. There are no right or wrong answers.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The decision to buy the Japanese laptop brand is foolish	<input type="radio"/>				
Buying the Japanese laptop brand is a good decision	<input type="radio"/>				
I think the Japanese laptop brand has a lot of beneficial characteristics	<input type="radio"/>				
I have a favorable opinion of Japanese laptop brand	<input type="radio"/>				

Section 6:

Please indicate your purchase intention for the brand. Circle 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) to express your answer for the statements below. There are no right or wrong answers.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I will purchase it the next time I need this product	<input type="radio"/>				
I will definitely try it	<input type="radio"/>				
It is very likely that I will buy it	<input type="radio"/>				

Section 7:

Finally, to compare your answers with others, please provide the following information

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

What is your age?

- 18 or below
- 19-25
- 26-32
- 33 or above

What is your ethnicity?

- Asian
- Black/African American
- Hispanic/Latino
- Native American

- While/Caucasian
- Other

What is your citizenship?

Do you have any additional comment that you wish to include about the survey?

If you are participating in this survey to receive extra credit, please use the drop down menu to indicate the course and instructor.

	Class Name	Professor Name
Class & Professor		

Please indicate your name to be given to the course instructor as proof of your participation. Your name will be used for no other purpose.

End of Survey! Thank you for the participation

Questionnaire: France/Perfume

Dear Students,

You are being asked to participate in an academic research study. Please read the information below to determine if you wish to complete the survey. Your participation is entirely voluntary. You can refuse to participate without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may print a copy of this consent form for your records.

I am a graduate student in the College of Journalism and Communications at the University of Florida. The research examines how people think about products and where they come from. I would appreciate your participation. While there is no financial compensation for completing the survey, you are contributing to worthwhile research. If you were recruited from an undergraduate class, at the end of the survey you will be asked to complete information to receive extra credit for your participation.

Survey Instructions:

You will be asked to answer each question in this survey to the best of your knowledge. The survey should take you about 10-15 minutes to complete. If you miss answering a question, you will be reminded to answer it before moving on to the next section.

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If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact:

Yu-Shiang Bien
Department of Advertising
University of Florida
pantheon@ufl.edu

If you have questions later, want additional information, or wish to withdraw your participation, please call the researchers conducting the study. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, complaints, concerns, or questions about the research please contact IRB02 Office, Box 112250, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611-2250; phone 392-0433.

I have read the procedure described above. I voluntarily to participate in the study and I have received a copy of this description.

- Yes
 No

Product Document: Please read the document below. After reading it, please click "Next" to proceed to the next page.

A new French cologne/ perfume brand is launching a wide range of discounted perfume and cologne for its valued customers with years of experience and expertise in making enchanting fragrance and perfumes. This new French brand is expanding its product range designer fragrances and perfumes, to enrich overall customer experience and offer them more wide alternatives while buying perfumes and colognes.

This French cologne/perfume brand is proud to enhance the experience of its customers by advancing its vast product line up and providing consumers the best of perfumes and colognes they purchase or adapt. The range of perfume and cologne products provided by this brand can make your surrounding pleasant and mind relaxed. It helps to forget the unwanted memories and keeps cool and fresh. These perfumes help you to stimulate the emotions and attract the opposite sex by offering good smell.

Today Perfume, fragrance, discounted perfume and discounted fragrance were widely used by the customers in different flavors, ingredients since they are made up of essential oils, woods, fruits, vegetables, herbs, and from many other natural products. This is the main reason which intends people to use perfume and fragrance during different occasions.



Section 1:

Please indicate your involvement with the following product category. Circle 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) to express your answer for the statements below. There are no right or wrong answers.

2. Regarding the perfume, please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the statement below.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I get bored when other people talk to me about this product	<input type="radio"/>				
In general I have a strong interest in this product	<input type="radio"/>				
This product is very important to me	<input type="radio"/>				
This product matters a lot to me	<input type="radio"/>				

Section 2:

The following question asks about a product as thought of as a person. What personality traits or human characteristics come to your mind when you think of this foreign product? Please rate each characteristic from 1 (Extremely Disagree) to 5 (extremely Agree).

Generally, would you agree or disagree the characteristics listed below to describe France?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Down-to-Earth	<input type="radio"/>				
Honest	<input type="radio"/>				
Wholesome	<input type="radio"/>				
Cheerful	<input type="radio"/>				
Daring	<input type="radio"/>				
Spirited	<input type="radio"/>				
Imaginative	<input type="radio"/>				
Up-to-date	<input type="radio"/>				
Reliable	<input type="radio"/>				
Intelligent	<input type="radio"/>				
Successful	<input type="radio"/>				
Upper Class	<input type="radio"/>				
Charming	<input type="radio"/>				
Outdoorsy	<input type="radio"/>				
Tough	<input type="radio"/>				

Generally, would you agree or disagree the characteristics listed below to describe the French perfume brand you were exposed to?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Down-to-Earth	<input type="radio"/>				
Honest	<input type="radio"/>				
Wholesome	<input type="radio"/>				
Cheerful	<input type="radio"/>				
Daring	<input type="radio"/>				
Spirited	<input type="radio"/>				
Imaginative	<input type="radio"/>				
Up-to-date	<input type="radio"/>				
Reliable	<input type="radio"/>				
Intelligent	<input type="radio"/>				
Successful	<input type="radio"/>				
Upper Class	<input type="radio"/>				
Charming	<input type="radio"/>				

Outdoorsy	<input type="radio"/>				
Tough	<input type="radio"/>				

Section 3:

For the French products, would you agree or disagree the adjectives used to describe them. Please rate each item on following bipolar scales.

For French products, how do you perceive the innovativeness of their products, where innovativeness means use of new technology and engineering advances?

Not-Innovative						Innovative
<input type="radio"/>						

For French products, how do you perceive the design of their products, where design means appearance, style, colors, and variety?

Not Well-Designed						Well-Designed
<input type="radio"/>						

For French products, how do you perceive the prestige, of their products, where prestige means exclusivity, status, and brand name reputation?

Not Prestigious						Prestigious
<input type="radio"/>						

For French products, how do you perceive the workmanship of their products, where workmanship means reliability, durability, craftsmanship, and manufacturing quality?

Not Good Workmanship						Good Workmanship
<input type="radio"/>						

Section 4:

Please indicate your perception of the association between the referred product and country. Circle 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) to express your answer for the statements below. There are no right or wrong answers.

When I think of France, perfume is one of the first products I think about

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>				

Section 5:

Please indicate your attitude toward the brand. Circle 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) to express your answer for the statements below. There are no right or wrong answers.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The decision to buy the French perfume brand is foolish	<input type="radio"/>				
Buying the French perfume brand is a good decision	<input type="radio"/>				
I think the J French perfume brand has a lot of beneficial characteristics	<input type="radio"/>				
I have a favorable opinion of French perfume brand	<input type="radio"/>				

Section 6:

Please indicate your purchase intention for the French perfume brand. Circle 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) to express your answer for the statements below. There are no right or wrong answers.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I will purchase it the next time I need this product	<input type="radio"/>				
I will definitely try it	<input type="radio"/>				
It is very likely that I will buy it	<input type="radio"/>				

Section 7:

Finally, to compare your answers with others, please provide the following information

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

What is your age?

- 18 or below
- 19-25
- 26-32
- 33 or above

What is your ethnicity?

- Asian
- Black/African American

- Hispanic/Latino
- Native American
- White/Caucasian
- Other

What is your citizenship?

Do you have any additional comment that you wish to include about the survey?

If you are participating in this survey to receive extra credit, please use the drop down menu to indicate the course and instructor.

	Class Name	Professor Name
Class & Professor		

Please indicate your name to be given to the course instructor as proof of your participation. Your name will be used for no other purpose.

End of Survey! Thank you for the participation

Questionnaire: Japan/Perfume

Dear Students,

You are being asked to participate in an academic research study. Please read the information below to determine if you wish to complete the survey. Your participation is entirely voluntary. You can refuse to participate without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may print a copy of this consent form for your records.

I am a graduate student in the College of Journalism and Communications at the University of Florida. The research examines how people think about products and where they come from. I would appreciate your participation. While there is no financial compensation for completing the survey, you are contributing to worthwhile research. If you were recruited from an undergraduate class, at the end of the survey you will be asked to complete information to receive extra credit for your participation.

Survey Instructions:

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If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact:

Yu-Shiang Bien
Department of Advertising
University of Florida
pantheon@ufl.edu

If you have questions later, want additional information, or wish to withdraw your participation, please call the researchers conducting the study. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, complaints, concerns, or questions about the research please contact IRB02 Office, Box 112250, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611-2250; phone 392-0433.

I have read the procedure described above. I voluntarily to participate in the study and I have received a copy of this description.

- Yes
 No

Product Document: Please read the document below. After reading it, please click "Next" to proceed to the next page.

A new Japanese cologne/ perfume brand is launching a wide range of discounted perfume and cologne for its valued customers with years of experience and expertise in making enchanting fragrance and perfumes. This new Japanese brand is expanding its product range designer fragrances and perfumes, to enrich overall customer experience and offer them more wide alternatives while buying perfumes and colognes.

This Japanese cologne/perfume brand is proud to enhance the experience of its customers by advancing its vast product line up and providing consumers the best of perfumes and colognes they purchase or adapt. The range of perfume and cologne products provided by this brand can make your surrounding pleasant and mind relaxed. It helps to forget the unwanted memories and keeps cool and fresh. These perfumes help you to stimulate the emotions and attract the opposite sex by offering good smell.

Today Perfume, fragrance, discounted perfume and discounted fragrance were widely used by the customers in different flavors, ingredients since they are made up of essential oils, woods, fruits, vegetables, herbs, and from many other natural products. This is the main reason which intends people to use perfume and fragrance during different occasions.



Section 1:

Please indicate your involvement with the following product category. Circle 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) to express your answer for the statements below. There are no right or wrong answers.

Regarding perfume, please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the statement below.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I get bored when other people talk to me about this product	<input type="radio"/>				
In general I have a strong interest in this product	<input type="radio"/>				
This product is very important to me	<input type="radio"/>				
This product matters a lot to me	<input type="radio"/>				

Section 2:

The following question asks about a product as thought of as a person. What personality traits or human characteristics come to your mind when you think of this foreign product? Please rate each characteristic from 1 (Extremely Disagree) to 5 (extremely Agree).

Generally, would you agree or disagree the characteristics listed below to describe Japan?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Down-to-Earth	<input type="radio"/>				
Honest	<input type="radio"/>				
Wholesome	<input type="radio"/>				
Cheerful	<input type="radio"/>				
Daring	<input type="radio"/>				
Spirited	<input type="radio"/>				
Imaginative	<input type="radio"/>				
Up-to-date	<input type="radio"/>				
Reliable	<input type="radio"/>				
Intelligent	<input type="radio"/>				
Successful	<input type="radio"/>				
Upper Class	<input type="radio"/>				
Charming	<input type="radio"/>				
Outdoorsy	<input type="radio"/>				
Tough	<input type="radio"/>				

Generally, would you agree or disagree the characteristics listed below to describe the Japanese perfume brand you were exposed to?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Down-to-Earth	<input type="radio"/>				
Honest	<input type="radio"/>				
Wholesome	<input type="radio"/>				
Cheerful	<input type="radio"/>				
Daring	<input type="radio"/>				
Spirited	<input type="radio"/>				
Imaginative	<input type="radio"/>				
Up-to-date	<input type="radio"/>				
Reliable	<input type="radio"/>				
Intelligent	<input type="radio"/>				
Successful	<input type="radio"/>				
Upper Class	<input type="radio"/>				
Charming	<input type="radio"/>				

Outdoorsy	<input type="radio"/>				
Tough	<input type="radio"/>				

Section 3:

For the Japanese products, would you agree or disagree the adjectives used to describe them. Please rate each item on following bipolar scales.

For Japanese products, how do you perceive the innovativeness of their products, where innovativeness means use of new technology and engineering advances?

Not-Innovative						Innovative
<input type="radio"/>						

For Japanese products, how do you perceive the design of their products, where design means appearance, style, colors, and variety?

Not Well-Designed						Well-Designed
<input type="radio"/>						

For Japanese products, how do you perceive the prestige, of their products, where prestige means exclusivity, status, and brand name reputation?

Not Prestigious						Prestigious
<input type="radio"/>						

For Japanese products, how do you perceive the workmanship of their products, where workmanship means reliability, durability, craftsmanship, and manufacturing quality?

Not Good Workmanship						Good Workmanship
<input type="radio"/>						

Section 4:

Please indicate your perception of the association between the referred product and country. Circle 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) to express your answer for the statements below. There are no right or wrong answers.

When I think of Japan, perfume is one of the first products I think about

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>				

Section 5:

Please indicate your attitude toward the brand. Circle 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) to express your answer for the statements below. There are no right or wrong answers.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The decision to buy the Japanese perfume brand is foolish	<input type="radio"/>				
Buying the Japanese perfume brand is a good decision	<input type="radio"/>				
I think the Japanese perfume brand has a lot of beneficial characteristics	<input type="radio"/>				
I have a favorable opinion of Japanese perfume brand	<input type="radio"/>				

Section 6:

Please indicate your purchase intention for the Japanese perfume brand. Circle 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) to express your answer for the statements below. There are no right or wrong answers.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I will purchase it the next time I need this product	<input type="radio"/>				
I will definitely try it	<input type="radio"/>				
It is very likely that I will buy it	<input type="radio"/>				

Section 7:

Finally, to compare your answers with others, please provide the following information

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

What is your age?

- 18 or below
- 19-25
- 26-32
- 33 or above

What is your ethnicity?

- Asian
- Black/African American

- Hispanic/Latino
- Native American
- White/Caucasian
- Other

What is your citizenship?

Do you have any additional comment that you wish to include about the survey?

If you are participating in this survey to receive extra credit, please use the drop down menu to indicate the course and instructor.

	Class Name	Professor Name
Class & Professor		

Please indicate your name to be given to the course instructor as proof of your participation. Your name will be used for no other purpose.

End of Survey! Thank you for the participation

Questionnaire: France/Laptop

Dear Students,

You are being asked to participate in an academic research study. Please read the information below to determine if you wish to complete the survey. Your participation is entirely voluntary. You can refuse to participate without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may print a copy of this consent form for your records.

I am a graduate student in the College of Journalism and Communications at the University of Florida. The research examines how people think about products and where they come from. I would appreciate your participation. While there is no financial compensation for completing the survey, you are contributing to worthwhile research. If you were recruited from an undergraduate class, at the end of the survey you will be asked to complete information to receive extra credit for your participation.

Survey Instructions:

You will be asked to answer each question in this survey to the best of your knowledge. The survey should take you about 10-15 minutes to complete. If you miss answering a question, you will be reminded to answer it before moving on to the next section.

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If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact:

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pantheon@ufl.edu

If you have questions later, want additional information, or wish to withdraw your participation, please call the researchers conducting the study. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, complaints, concerns, or questions about the research please contact IRB02 Office, Box 112250, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611-2250; phone 392-0433.

I have read the procedure described above. I voluntarily to participate in the study and I have received a copy of this description.

- Yes
- No

Product Document: Please read the document below. After reading it, please click "Next" to proceed to the next page.

A new French laptop brand is launching a wide range of laptop products. With years of experience and expertise in technology field, this new French brand delivers technology and products remarkable for their innovation and artistry, contributing to a safer, more comfortable, more productive life.

As a competitive brand in the pc market, this brand develops, manufactures, and markets cutting-edge, reliable, high-quality laptop products and value-added professional services that provide customers around the world with smarter ways to be productive and competitive.

This new brand brings together the spirit of innovation with the passion and conviction to shape the future. It also fosters close relationships, rooted in trust and respect, with the customers, business partners and communities around the world.



Section 1:

Please indicate your involvement with the following product category. Circle 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) to express your answer for the statements below. There are no right or wrong answers.

Regarding perfume, please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the statement below.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I get bored when other people talk to me about this product	<input type="radio"/>				
In general I have a strong interest in this product	<input type="radio"/>				
This product is very important to me	<input type="radio"/>				
This product matters a lot to me	<input type="radio"/>				

Section 2:

The following question asks about a product as thought of as a person. What personality traits or human characteristics come to your mind when you think of this foreign product? Please rate each characteristic from 1 (Extremely Disagree) to 5 (extremely Agree).

Generally, would you agree or disagree the characteristics listed below to describe Japan?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Down-to-Earth	<input type="radio"/>				
Honest	<input type="radio"/>				
Wholesome	<input type="radio"/>				
Cheerful	<input type="radio"/>				
Daring	<input type="radio"/>				
Spirited	<input type="radio"/>				
Imaginative	<input type="radio"/>				
Up-to-date	<input type="radio"/>				
Reliable	<input type="radio"/>				
Intelligent	<input type="radio"/>				
Successful	<input type="radio"/>				
Upper Class	<input type="radio"/>				
Charming	<input type="radio"/>				
Outdoorsy	<input type="radio"/>				
Tough	<input type="radio"/>				

Generally, would you agree or disagree the characteristics listed below to describe the Japanese perfume brand you were exposed to?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Down-to-Earth	<input type="radio"/>				
Honest	<input type="radio"/>				
Wholesome	<input type="radio"/>				
Cheerful	<input type="radio"/>				
Daring	<input type="radio"/>				
Spirited	<input type="radio"/>				
Imaginative	<input type="radio"/>				
Up-to-date	<input type="radio"/>				
Reliable	<input type="radio"/>				
Intelligent	<input type="radio"/>				
Successful	<input type="radio"/>				
Upper Class	<input type="radio"/>				
Charming	<input type="radio"/>				
Outdoorsy	<input type="radio"/>				
Tough	<input type="radio"/>				

Section 3:

For the Japanese products, would you agree or disagree the adjectives used to describe them. Please rate each item on following bipolar scales.

For Japanese products, how do you perceive the innovativeness of their products, where innovativeness means use of new technology and engineering advances?

Not-Innovative						Innovative
<input type="radio"/>						

For Japanese products, how do you perceive the design of their products, where design means appearance, style, colors, and variety?

Not Well-Designed						Well-Designed
<input type="radio"/>						

For Japanese products, how do you perceive the prestige, of their products, where prestige means exclusivity, status, and brand name reputation?

Not Prestigious						Prestigious
<input type="radio"/>						

For Japanese products, how do you perceive the workmanship of their products, where workmanship means reliability, durability, craftsmanship, and manufacturing quality?

Not Good Workmanship						Good Workmanship
<input type="radio"/>						

Section 4:

Please indicate your perception of the association between the referred product and country. Circle 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) to express your answer for the statements below. There are no right or wrong answers.

When I think of Japan, perfume is one of the first products I think about

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>				

Section 5:

Please indicate your attitude toward the brand. Circle 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) to express your answer for the statements below. There are no right or wrong answers.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The decision to buy	<input type="radio"/>				

the Japanese perfume brand is foolish					
Buying the Japanese perfume brand is a good decision	<input type="radio"/>				
I think the Japanese perfume brand has a lot of beneficial characteristics	<input type="radio"/>				
I have a favorable opinion of Japanese perfume brand	<input type="radio"/>				

Section 6:

Please indicate your purchase intention for the Japanese perfume brand. Circle 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) to express your answer for the statements below. There are no right or wrong answers.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I will purchase it the next time I need this product	<input type="radio"/>				
I will definitely try it	<input type="radio"/>				
It is very likely that I will buy it	<input type="radio"/>				

Section 7:

Finally, to compare your answers with others, please provide the following information

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

What is your age?

- 18 or below
- 19-25
- 26-32
- 33 or above

What is your ethnicity?

- Asian
- Black/African American
- Hispanic/Latino
- Native American
- White/Caucasian
- Other

What is your citizenship?

Do you have any additional comment that you wish to include about the survey?

If you are participating in this survey to receive extra credit, please use the drop down menu to indicate the course and instructor.

	Class Name	Professor Name
Class & Professor		

Please indicate your name to be given to the course instructor as proof of your participation. Your name will be used for no other purpose.

End of Survey! Thank you for the participation

Questionnaire: Control Group/Laptop

Dear Students,

You are being asked to participate in an academic research study. Please read the information below to determine if you wish to complete the survey. Your participation is entirely voluntary. You can refuse to participate without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may print a copy of this consent form for your records.

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Survey Instructions:

You will be asked to answer each question in this survey to the best of your knowledge. The survey should take you about 10-15 minutes to complete. If you miss answering a question, you will be reminded to answer it before moving on to the next section.

Confidentiality and Privacy Protections:

The data may be made available to other researchers in the future solely for research purposes not detailed within this consent form. In these cases, the data will contain no identifying information that could associate you with it, or your participation in any study. Be assured that you will not be contacted for any sales purposes nor will individual answers be released. Only group or summary data will be reported. The goal is solely to determine how young adults think about products and the countries that they come from.

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact:

Yu-Shiang Bien
Department of Advertising
University of Florida
pantheon@ufl.edu

If you have questions later, want additional information, or wish to withdraw your participation, please call the researchers conducting the study. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, complaints, concerns, or questions about the research please contact IRB02 Office, Box 112250, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611-2250; phone 392-0433.

I have read the procedure described above. I voluntarily to participate in the study and I have received a copy of this description.

- Yes
 No

Product Document: Please read the document below. After reading it, please click "Next" to proceed to the next page.

A new laptop brand is launching a wide range of laptop products. With years of experience and expertise in technology field, this new brand delivers technology and products remarkable for their innovation and artistry, contributing to a safer, more comfortable, more productive life.

As a competitive brand in the pc market, this brand develops, manufactures, and markets cutting-edge, reliable, high-quality laptop products and value-added professional services that provide customers around the world with smarter ways to be productive and competitive.

This new brand brings together the spirit of innovation with the passion and conviction to shape the future. It also fosters close relationships, rooted in trust and respect, with the customers, business partners and communities around the world.

Section 1:

Please indicate your involvement with the following product category. Circle 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) to express your answer for the statements below. There are no right or wrong answers.

Regarding laptop, please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the statement below.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I get bored when other people talk to me about this product	<input type="radio"/>				
In general I have a strong interest in this product	<input type="radio"/>				
This product is very important to me	<input type="radio"/>				
This product matters a lot to me	<input type="radio"/>				

Section 2:

The following question asks about a product as thought of as a person. What personality traits or human characteristics come to your mind when you think of this foreign product? Please rate each characteristic from 1 (Extremely Disagree) to 5 (extremely Agree).

Generally, would you agree or disagree the characteristics listed below to describe the laptop brand you were exposed to?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Down-to-Earth	<input type="radio"/>				
Honest	<input type="radio"/>				

Wholesome	<input type="radio"/>				
Cheerful	<input type="radio"/>				
Daring	<input type="radio"/>				
Spirited	<input type="radio"/>				
Imaginative	<input type="radio"/>				
Up-to-date	<input type="radio"/>				
Reliable	<input type="radio"/>				
Intelligent	<input type="radio"/>				
Successful	<input type="radio"/>				
Upper Class	<input type="radio"/>				
Charming	<input type="radio"/>				
Outdoorsy	<input type="radio"/>				
Tough	<input type="radio"/>				

Section 3:

Please indicate your attitude toward the brand. Circle 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) to express your answer for the statements below. There are no right or wrong answers.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The decision to buy the laptop brand is foolish	<input type="radio"/>				
Buying the laptop brand is a good decision	<input type="radio"/>				
I think the laptop brand has a lot of beneficial characteristics	<input type="radio"/>				
I have a favorable opinion of this laptop brand	<input type="radio"/>				

Section 4:

Please indicate your purchase intention for the laptop brand. Circle 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) to express your answer for the statements below. There are no right or wrong answers.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I will purchase it the next time I need this product	<input type="radio"/>				
I will definitely try it	<input type="radio"/>				

It is very likely that I will buy it	<input type="radio"/>				
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Section 5:

Finally, to compare your answers with others, please provide the following information

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

What is your age?

- 18 or below
- 19-25
- 26-32
- 33 or above

What is your ethnicity?

- Asian
- Black/African American
- Hispanic/Latino
- Native American
- White/Caucasian
- Other

What is your citizenship?

Do you have any additional comment that you wish to include about the survey?

If you are participating in this survey to receive extra credit, please use the drop down menu to indicate the course and instructor.

	Class Name	Professor Name
Class & Professor		

Please indicate your name to be given to the course instructor as proof of your participation. Your name will be used for no other purpose.

End of Survey! Thank you for the participation

Questionnaire: Control Group/Perfume

Dear Students,

You are being asked to participate in an academic research study. Please read the information below to determine if you wish to complete the survey. Your participation is entirely voluntary. You can refuse to participate without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may print a copy of this consent form for your records.

I am a graduate student in the College of Journalism and Communications at the University of Florida. The research examines how people think about products and where they come from. I would appreciate your participation. While there is no financial compensation for completing the survey, you are contributing to worthwhile research. If you were recruited from an undergraduate class, at the end of the survey you will be asked to complete information to receive extra credit for your participation.

Survey Instructions:

You will be asked to answer each question in this survey to the best of your knowledge. The survey should take you about 10-15 minutes to complete. If you miss answering a question, you will be reminded to answer it before moving on to the next section.

Confidentiality and Privacy Protections:

The data may be made available to other researchers in the future solely for research purposes not detailed within this consent form. In these cases, the data will contain no identifying information that could associate you with it, or your participation in any study. Be assured that you will not be contacted for any sales purposes nor will individual answers be released. Only group or summary data will be reported. The goal is solely to determine how young adults think about products and the countries that they come from.

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact:

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If you have questions later, want additional information, or wish to withdraw your participation, please call the researchers conducting the study. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, complaints, concerns, or questions about the research please contact IRB02 Office, Box 112250, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611-2250; phone 392-0433.

I have read the procedure described above. I voluntarily to participate in the study and I have received a copy of this description.

- Yes
 No

Product Document: Please read the document below. After reading it, please click "Next" to proceed to the next page.

A new cologne/ perfume brand is launching a wide range of discounted perfume and cologne for its valued customers with years of experience and expertise in making enchanting fragrance and perfumes. This new brand is expanding its product range designer fragrances and perfumes, to enrich overall customer experience and offer them more wide alternatives while buying perfumes and colognes.

This cologne/perfume brand is proud to enhance the experience of its customers by advancing its vast product line up and providing consumers the best of perfumes and colognes they purchase or adapt. The range of perfume and cologne products provided by this brand can make your surrounding pleasant and mind relaxed. It helps to forget the unwanted memories and keeps cool and fresh. These perfumes help you to stimulate the emotions and attract the opposite sex by offering good smell.

Today Perfume, fragrance, discounted perfume and discounted fragrance were widely used by the customers in different flavors, ingredients since they are made up of essential oils, woods, fruits, vegetables, herbs, and from many other natural products. This is the main reason which intends people to use perfume and fragrance during different occasions.

Section 1:

Please indicate your involvement with the following product category. Circle 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) to express your answer for the statements below. There are no right or wrong answers.

Regarding perfume, please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the statement below.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I get bored when other people talk to me about this product	<input type="radio"/>				
In general I have a strong interest in this product	<input type="radio"/>				
This product is very important to me	<input type="radio"/>				
This product matters a lot to me	<input type="radio"/>				

Section 2:

The following question asks about a product as thought of as a person. What personality traits or human characteristics come to your mind when you think of this foreign product? Please rate each characteristic from 1 (Extremely Disagree) to 5 (extremely Agree).

Generally, would you agree or disagree the characteristics listed below to describe the perfume brand you were exposed to?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Down-to-Earth	<input type="radio"/>				
Honest	<input type="radio"/>				
Wholesome	<input type="radio"/>				
Cheerful	<input type="radio"/>				
Daring	<input type="radio"/>				
Spirited	<input type="radio"/>				
Imaginative	<input type="radio"/>				
Up-to-date	<input type="radio"/>				
Reliable	<input type="radio"/>				
Intelligent	<input type="radio"/>				
Successful	<input type="radio"/>				
Upper Class	<input type="radio"/>				
Charming	<input type="radio"/>				
Outdoorsy	<input type="radio"/>				
Tough	<input type="radio"/>				

Section 3:

Please indicate your attitude toward the brand. Circle 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) to express your answer for the statements below. There are no right or wrong answers.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The decision to buy the perfume brand is foolish	<input type="radio"/>				
Buying the perfume brand is a good decision	<input type="radio"/>				
I think the perfume brand has a lot of beneficial characteristics	<input type="radio"/>				
I have a favorable opinion of the perfume brand	<input type="radio"/>				

Section 4:

Please indicate your purchase intention for the perfume brand. Circle 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) to express your answer for the statements below. There are no right or wrong answers.

	Strongly	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly
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	Disagree				Agree
I will purchase it the next time I need this product	<input type="radio"/>				
I will definitely try it	<input type="radio"/>				
It is very likely that I will buy it	<input type="radio"/>				

Section 5:

Finally, to compare your answers with others, please provide the following information

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

What is your age?

- 18 or below
- 19-25
- 26-32
- 33 or above

What is your ethnicity?

- Asian
- Black/African American
- Hispanic/Latino
- Native American
- While/Caucasian
- Other

What is your citizenship?

Do you have any additional comment that you wish to include about the survey?

If you are participating in this survey to receive extra credit, please use the drop down menu to indicate the course and instructor.

	Class Name	Professor Name
Class & Professor		

Please indicate your name to be given to the course instructor as proof of your participation. Your name will be used for no other purpose.

End of Survey! Thank you for the participation

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Yu-Shiang Bien was born in Taipei, Republic of China. After graduating from Chinese Culture University in 2002, he served the military service in army, Republic of China. After demobilization, Yu-Shiang Bien attended the Pittsburg State University, where he received a Master of Arts in communication in 2006. In fall 2007, Yu-Shiang Bien enrolled at the University of Florida pursuing for Master of Advertising. He received M. Adv. from the University of Florida in the summer of 2009. After graduation, he will try to gain the practical working experience in advertising or marketing industry.