

International consumer admiration and the persistence of animosity

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Abstract

Purpose – This paper aims to introduce the concept of admiration for members of other countries as an emotion related to people's perceptions of, and preference for, products that originate from the admired country. It also aims to examine the longitudinal effects of animosity.

Design/methodology/approach – Data were collected by asking members of an internet consumer panel in the USA to complete an online questionnaire. A total of 300 questionnaires were received and 20 were eliminated for extremeness. Panel members were aged 18 and above and the average age of the sample was 44; 60 percent of the participants are female.

Findings – The effects of animosity on the preference for foreign products attenuate over time. Admiration is positively related to a preference for a product from an admired country over a product from another country. Admiration was found to be positively related to Japanese product judgments.

Originality/value – The paper extends the work of Klein, and suggests that animosity can be displaced by a positive emotion, namely admiration. Managers therefore need to assess the emotions directed towards their countries to capitalize on such information when marketing their products.

Keywords Country of origin, Consumer behaviour, Ethnocentrism, International marketing

Paper type Research paper

An executive summary for managers and executive readers can be found at the end of this article.

Introduction

Many articles have dealt with the impact of a product's country of origin (COO) on consumers' perceptions of products from that country (e.g., Diamantopoulos and Balabanis, 2004; Peterson and Jolibert, 1995). The evidence indicates that COO impacts consumers' perceptions of, and preferences for, foreign products (e.g., Roth and Romeo, 1992; Verlegh and Steenkamp, 1999; Verlegh, 2007) in three ways: cognitive, normative, and affective. While the cognitive and normative impacts of COO have received considerable attention (Verlegh and Steenkamp, 1999), the affective impact has received little attention (Oberecker *et al.*, 2008; Roth and Diamantopoulos, 2009). The affective impact deals with the emotional value attached to a COO. For example, it has been found that when consumers harbor animosity toward other countries, they are less likely to purchase products from those countries (e.g., Klein *et al.*, 1998; Klein, 2002; Nijssen and Douglas, 2004; Russell and Russell, 2006). However, the international marketing literature has restricted its examination of emotions experienced towards other countries to animosity.

An emerging stream of social psychology literature suggests that individuals experience a variety of different emotional reactions toward other groups (Smith, 1993, 1999; Mackie

et al., 2000). Animosity, therefore, is only one possible emotion individuals might experience towards members of other countries. This study examines the possibility that animosity might not persist forever and that a positive emotion, such as admiration might displace it. This is accomplished by examining the emotions that US consumers experience towards the Japanese, and comparing the results of this study to a previous study (Klein, 2002).

The international animosity model, first introduced by Klein *et al.* (1998), was utilized in incorporating admiration and its relationship to the product judgments of, and preferences for, foreign products. This model has received considerable support in the literature and is credited with its ability to explain how consumers' negative feelings towards a specific country influence their perceptions of, and preferences for, that country's products (e.g., Ettenson and Klein, 2005, Klein, 2002, Nijssen and Douglas, 2004). This model was also used because it takes into account the cognitive, normative, and affective impact of a product's COO.

We begin our discussion with presenting the animosity model. We then describe the research context of study and present the hypotheses. After discussing the findings we then proceed to present suggestions for future research and discuss the managerial implications of the study.

Conceptual background

Consumer animosity is one particular stream of literature that has examined the impact of consumers' negative feelings towards a country on the perceptions of and preferences for products originating from such a country. Animosity is unique in that it measures a consumer's feelings of hatred toward a specific country, which is caused by adverse actions a country's citizens, organizations, or the government commit. Animosity and its effects on consumers' perceptions of products from perpetrators' country of origin has received

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considerable attention in the marketing literature (Ettenson and Klein, 2005; Klein *et al.*, 1998; Klein, 2002; Nijssen and Douglas, 2004).

The majority of the studies examining animosity in the international marketing literature have used the model introduced by Klein *et al.* (1998) as a conceptual foundation. A key aspect of this model is that it examines the impact of animosity on the perceptions and preferences for foreign products while controlling for two constructs: product quality judgments and consumer ethnocentrism.

The first construct, product quality judgments, embodies the cognitive impact of a product's country of origin. This construct captures the extent to which a country's products are usually associated with a certain image (Roth and Romeo, 1992; Verlegh and Steenkamp, 1999). Several studies in the past have presented respondents with a "made in _" cue, and asked a series of questions about their judgments of the product, attitudes toward the product, and their intention to buy the product (e.g., Roth and Romeo, 1992; Teas and Agarwal, 2000; Laroche *et al.*, 2005). The rationale behind these studies is that country of origin will activate an associated country image, which may transfer into opinions about the product's attributes (Roth and Romeo, 1992; Verlegh and Steenkamp, 1999).

The second construct, consumer ethnocentrism, embodies the normative impact of COO. Consumer ethnocentrism is defined as the morality of buying foreign products (Shimp and Sharma, 1987). Several studies have confirmed that consumer ethnocentrism is associated with negative attitudes toward foreign products (Sharma *et al.*, 1995; Zarkada-Fraser and Fraser, 2002) and a positive intention to purchase domestic products (Han, 1989; Herche, 1992).

Previous research has established that the effects of animosity persist while controlling for the effects of product judgments and consumer ethnocentrism (e.g., Ettenson and Klein, 2005; Klein *et al.*, 1998; Shin, 2001). For example, consumers from China have typically shied away from Japanese products due to economic hardship and past wartime atrocities inflicted on the Chinese by Japan (Klein *et al.* 1998). Australians boycotted French products as a result of nuclear bomb tests France conducted in the South Pacific (Ettenson and Klein, 2005). Dutch consumers also experienced collective animosity toward Germans due to economic hardship and past wartime atrocities inflicted on them and were less likely to buy German product (Nijssen and Douglas, 2004).

Research context

This research builds on the work of Klein (2002) who examined the animosity experienced by US consumers towards the Japanese stemming resulting from the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, and the perception that the Japanese deal unfairly with the US economically. Klein (2002) found that the animosity US respondents harbored toward Japan resulted only in a lower preference for a Japanese product over a South Korean product, and not a lower preference for a Japanese product over a US product. Klein (2002) attributes this finding to the fact that the levels of animosity respondents harbored toward Japan were moderate and that consumer ethnocentrism would overpower the effects of any animosity experienced towards the Japanese.

Like Klein (2002), this research examines Japan as a country towards which US consumers might harbor certain emotions. The research departs from Klein (2002) in that admiration is introduced as another emotion that might influence the preference for Japanese products over US or

Korean products. The proposed model is depicted in Figure 1. This context was selected for three reasons. First, previous research has found that US consumers were most likely to identify Japanese products (Samiee *et al.*, 2005). Second, the existence of a previous study (Klein, 2002) in which Japan was the target of animosity and in which the respondents were US citizens, would permit a comparative assessment of the effects of animosity. Third, it is argued below that admiration towards the Japanese is expected to be experienced as a result of the US's perception of Japanese competence.

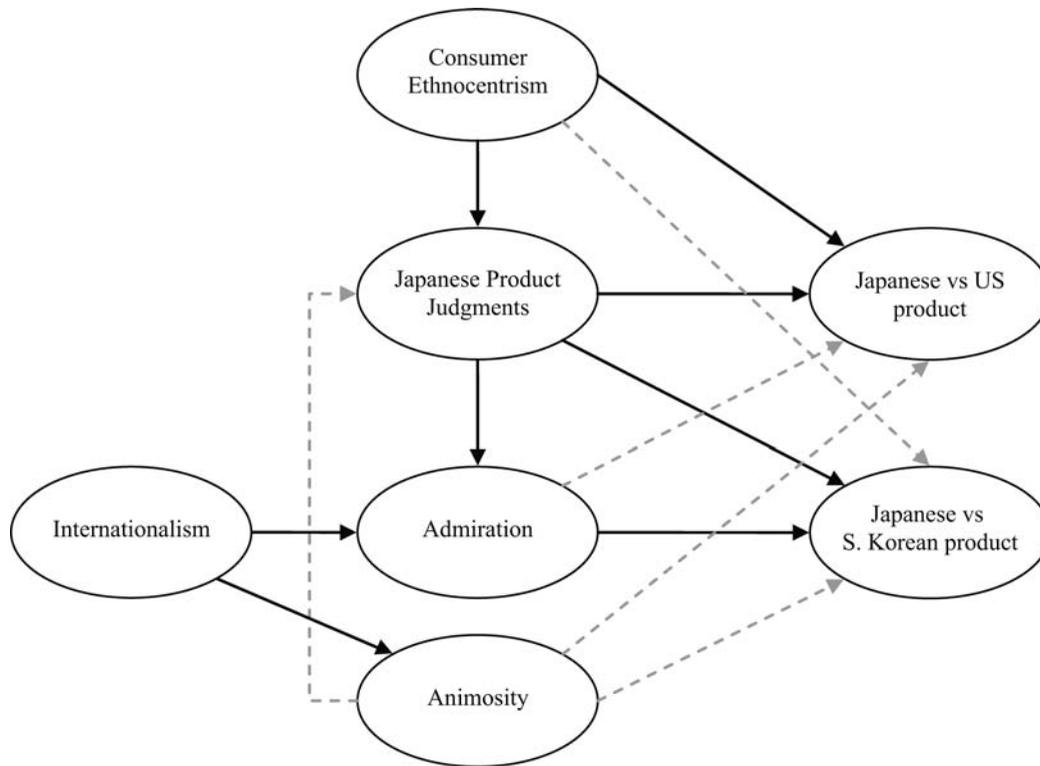
The affective impact of COO: animosity and admiration

Klein (2002) found that consumers who felt animosity toward the Japanese did so due to perceived unfairness in economics being exercised by the Japanese and the Japanese attacks on Pearl Harbor. This research argues that both events are no longer relevant to the average consumer due to other, more important international events that have transpired since then, such as the terror attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. Since the events examined by Klein (2002) are not likely to be relevant to consumers in current times, it is expected that the level of animosity US consumers have toward the Japanese will be very low. Therefore, any animosity they experience will be unlikely to have any effect on their preference for a Japanese product over either a South Korean product or a US product.

This research hypothesizes that admiration will displace animosity. Previous studies have examined admiration in the context of COO, and found it to have an effect on consumers' perceptions of foreign products. For example, Batra *et al.* (2000) find that consumers in developing countries with a high admiration of lifestyles are more positive towards nonlocal brands. This research does not examine admiration of lifestyles but rather admiration of citizens of another country. Admiration in this study's context is defined as "a positive emotion directed outward, when a positively valued, controllable behavior, such as hard work, results in success, the outcome is perceived as deserved" (Weiner, 2007, p. 82). A group's superior performance, therefore, is a condition that may lead toward admiration of such a group.

Admiration directed toward a group, therefore, results from perceptions of a group's competence (Cuddy *et al.*, 2007). Cuddy *et al.* (2007) studied the perceptions of 20 groups within the USA (e.g., women, blue-collar workers, elderly people, homeless people, young people, Black people, and Jews). They found that perceptions of these groups' competence and capability lead to feelings of admiration towards them. Based on this finding, it is expected that perceptions of Japanese competence will result in higher levels of admiration towards the Japanese. It is expected that US consumers perceive the Japanese as a competent group because of their competence in producing several products. This research uses Japanese product judgments as an indicator of Japanese competence. Several Japanese products and brands, such as Honda and Toyota, are known for their high quality and durability (ASCI, 2008). According to the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ASCI, 2008), three of the top four automobile manufacturers in the US are Japanese automobile manufactures. This indicates that US consumers might regard Japanese products highly. Previous research indicates that US consumers are able to correctly identify the brand of origin of Japanese products more frequently than products from other countries (Samiee *et al.*, 2005). This indicates that they are able to correctly judge the quality of Japanese products:

Figure 1 The proposed model



Notes: Dotted lines represent relationships which are tested in the structural model and are not expected to be significant; solid lines represent relationships which are tested in the structural model and expected to be significant

H1. Judgments of Japanese products will be positively associated with admiration directed towards the Japanese.

Previous research indicates that admiration results in positive responses towards others (Cuddy *et al.*, 2007; Weiner, 2007). Cuddy *et al.* (2007) surveyed 571 respondents about the emotional reactions and behavioral tendencies of society towards 20 different groups within the USA. Cuddy *et al.* (2007) find that admiration directed toward groups within society is associated with the intention to associate, cooperate, help, and protect these groups. Therefore, it is expected that admiration for the Japanese will translate into a preference for Japanese products over products that are not of US origin. However, like Klein (2002), it is argued that admiration directed towards the Japanese will not be associated with a preference for Japanese products over US products, due to the dominant effect of consumer ethnocentrism:

H2. Admiration directed towards the Japanese will be positively associated with a preference for a Japanese product over a South Korean product, but will not be associated with a preference for a Japanese product over a US product.

H3. Admiration directed towards the Japanese will be positively associated with a preference for a Japanese product over a South Korean product, holding constant judgments of Japanese products and consumer ethnocentrism.

Internationalism and admiration

A key construct that explains people's attitudes toward other countries and their citizens is internationalism. Kosterman and Feshbach (1989) found that in contrast to nationalism, which reflects a desired dominance of one's country over other countries, internationalism reflects a positive attitude toward other countries. Internationalism focuses on "international sharing and welfare, and reflects an empathy for the peoples of other countries" (Kosterman and Feshbach, 1989, p. 271). People who scored high on internationalism possess "positive feelings for other nations and their people and an open-mindedness and acceptance concerning other nations and cultures" (Balabanis *et al.*, 2001, p. 158). Research has found internationalism to be related to animosity. For example, Shoham *et al.* (2006) found that Jewish Israeli consumers with higher levels of internationalism tended to harbor lower levels of collective animosity toward Arab Israelis. Therefore, it is hypothesized that internationalism will have an effect on admiration and animosity:

H4. Internationalism will be positively associated with admiration directed towards the Japanese.

H5. Internationalism will be negatively associated with animosity directed towards the Japanese.

Method

A marketing research company collected the data for this study from an internet consumer panel in the USA. The

company sent an invitation via e-mail to 2,400 members to complete a questionnaire. The e-mail included information concerning the nature of the study, the time it would take to complete the study, and the reward participants would receive for completing the study. The participants were told the study related to foreign product perceptions; that the questionnaire would take 20 minutes to complete; and that the reward was a chance to participate in a \$25,000 sweepstakes contest. An online questionnaire was forwarded to subjects who elected to participate in the study. Three hundred questionnaires were returned, and 20 were eliminated for extremeness. The demographics of the sample are available in Table I.

Measures

Various measures were then administered in the following order:

- 1 the quality judgments of Japanese products measure;
- 2 the preference measures;

- 3 the admiration and animosity measures;
- 4 the consumer ethnocentrism measure; and
- 5 finally, the internationalism measure.

This order was employed in an attempt to reduce any potential bias in product judgments or preferences if respondents were first primed with the admiration or animosity questions. The measures are available in the Appendix (see Figure A1).

The quality judgments of Japanese products measure, the preference measures, and the consumer ethnocentrism measure were all taken from Klein (2002). For the quality judgments of Japanese products measure, respondents were asked to indicate the extent of their agreement (with 1 = “strongly disagree” to 7 = “strongly agree”) with four statements regarding the quality of Japanese products. The attributes of quality included in this measure are:

- workmanship;
- technological advancement;
- reliability; and
- value for money.

Table I Sample characteristics

Characteristic	Freq.	%
Gender		
Male	104	40
Female	155	60
Age		
18-24	11	4
25-34	66	25
35-44	58	22
45-54	60	22
55-64	34	13
65 +	30	11
Average age *	43.49	
Education		
Less than high school	3	1
High school	68	25
Some college	95	35
Four-year college	53	20
Graduate degree	30	11
Other education	10	4
Annual household income (\$)		
Under 25,000	39	15
25,000-39,000	60	22
40,000-54,999	33	12
55,000-69,000	39	15
70,000-84,999	21	8
85,000-99,999	18	7
More than 100,000	29	11
Refused to answer	20	7
Ethnicity		
White	221	82
Black	13	5
Asian	5	2
Hispanic	8	3
Other	12	4
Marital status		
Married	136	51
Single	60	22
Widowed	6	2
Separated/divorced	40	15
Living with a partner	17	6

Respondents were then asked to indicate their preference for a Japanese product over a South Korean product, and then their preference for a Japanese product over a US product. Admiration and animosity were both assessed using a nine-point scale. Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they felt certain emotions towards the Japanese (with 1 = “not at all” to 9 = “extremely”). Admiration and respect were used to capture admiration felt towards the Japanese. These descriptors were obtained from Cuddy *et al.* (2007). Two emotions dislike and anger were taken from Klein (2002) to capture the animosity experienced towards the Japanese, in addition to hostility which was selected from Shaver *et al.*'s (1987) study on the prototypes of emotion, to overcome possible identification problems in structural equation modeling. Consumer ethnocentrism is usually assessed with a ten-item scale identified by Shimp and Sharma (1987); however, Klein (2002) adapted this scale and used four items. These four items were used in this study to capture consumer ethnocentrism. The internationalism measure was adapted from Kosterman and Feshbach (1989). Four items were used to represent its construct. The use of reduced scales is consistent with previous research that supports the reliability of shortened scales (Steenkamp and Baumgartner, 1995).

Results

Structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to test the hypothesized model. Most estimation procedures commonly employed in SEM, such as maximum likelihood (ML), assume multivariate normality (Hair *et al.* 2006). For the present study, multivariate normality was assessed using Mardia's (1970) multivariate kurtosis statistic. Mardia's statistic is significant (64.25, $p < 0.001$), which means that the data do not exhibit multivariate normality. Byrne (2001) suggested that bootstrapping could be used to deal with non-normal data. The number of bootstraps was set at 250 following Nevitt and Hancock's (2001) conclusions that there is no apparent advantage in using more than 250 bootstrap resamplings. The significance of the path estimates was assessed using the p -value associated with the bias-corrected interval (Byrne, 2001).

The reliability of the measures with more than three items was evaluated using the measure of construct reliability advanced by Fornell and Larcker (1981). The construct

reliability for product judgments (0.90), consumer ethnocentrism (0.93), internationalism (0.85) and animosity (0.88) was acceptable. For measures with two items, correlation was used to assess reliability (see Table II). Correlations between the two preference items were significant for both preference measures ($r = 0.621, p < 0.001$ for the Japan/Korea measure, and $r = 0.688, p < 0.001$ for the Japan/US measure). The correlations between the two admiration items ($r = 0.875, p < .001$) was also significant. Furthermore, the average variance extracted for each construct was 0.66 and 0.70, well above the minimum recommended by Hair *et al.* (2006).

The two-step approach advocated by Anderson and Gerbing (1988) for testing SEM was used. This approach requires estimating and refining the measurement model before testing the structural model. The fit of the model can be evaluated using several fit indices. Among these, the chi-square statistic is the fundamental measure of overall fit (Hair *et al.*, 1998). However, the chi-square is sensitive to moderate and large sample size, so several other fit indices are used (Hair *et al.*, 2006). Hair *et al.* (2006) also assert that the chi-square value and the degrees of freedom, the TLI and RMSEA, would be sufficient to evaluate a model's fit. The cutoff points recommended are 0.92 or greater for the TLI and 0.08 or less for RMSEA.

The measurement model, in which all of the constructs are allowed to correlate with one another, exhibited good fit ($\chi^2 = 302.872, p < 0.001, GFI = 0.91, TLI = 0.95, CFI = 0.96, RMSEA = 0.054$).

The structural model was then tested and also achieved good fit ($\chi^2 = 331.945, p < 0.001, GFI = 0.90, TLI = 0.95, CFI = 0.96, RMSEA = 0.057$). The model accounted for 35 percent of the variance in the preference for a US product over a Japanese product, 28 percent of the variance in the preference for a Japanese product over a South Korean product, and 22 percent of the variance of admiration (see Table III and Figure 2).

Consistent with Klein (2002), product judgments of Japanese products were positively related to a preference for Japanese products over South Korean products ($b = 0.44, p < 0.01$) and a preference for a Japanese product over a US product ($b = 0.199, p < 0.05$). The findings also support that consumer ethnocentrism was negatively related to both product judgments of Japanese products ($b = -0.442,$

$p < 0.01$) and a preference for a Japanese product over a US product ($b = -0.434, p < 0.05$), and was not found to be related to a preference for a Japanese product over a South Korean product ($b = 0.08, p > 0.05$). These confirm the findings of Klein (2002).

Like Klein (2002), animosity directed towards the Japanese was not found to be related to product judgments of Japanese products ($b = -0.148, p > 0.05$), nor was animosity related to the preference for a Japanese product over a US product ($b = -0.013, p > 0.05$). Unlike Klein (2002), animosity was not related to a preference for a Japanese product over a South Korean product ($b = 0.064, p > 0.05$). This supports the contention that the intensity of animosity and its effects on consumers' preferences for Japanese product might have decreased over time.

However, this study's main contribution lies in the introduction of admiration into the animosity model. Admiration is found to be positively related to the product judgments of Japanese products ($b = 0.418, p < 0.01$), which supports *H1*. Admiration is also positively related to a preference for a Japanese product over a South Korean product ($b = 0.214, p < 0.01$), and is not related to a preference for a Japanese product over a US product ($b = 0.095, p > 0.05$), which supports *H2* and *H3*. Internationalism is found to be positively related to admiration ($b = 0.585, p < 0.05$), which supports *H4*, but is not related to animosity ($b = -0.115, p > 0.05$) which does not support *H5*.

Discussion

The contribution of this study lies in proposing that emotions other than animosity might be experienced towards other countries. The study's results suggest several interesting findings. First, animosity was found to be unrelated to preference for a Japanese product over either a product from the USA or South Korea. This is inconsistent with the findings of Klein (2002), who found that animosity had a negative impact on the preference for a Japanese product over a South Korean product. This indicates that the effects of animosity might attenuate over time.

Second, admiration was found to be positively related to a preference for a product from a country that is admired over another, but this effect does not extend to a preference over a

Table II Construct correlations

	Inter	Ethno	Product judgments	Animosity	Admiration	Pref_US	Pref_K
Inter	0.756	0.011	0.000	0.009	0.029	0.007	0.006
Ethno	-0.104	0.705	0.218	0.074	0.114	0.311	0.035
PJ	0.002	-0.467	0.751	0.065	0.181	0.195	0.234
AN	-0.096	0.272	-0.254	0.756	0.068	0.040	0.008
Admiration	0.17	-0.337	0.425	-0.261	0.876	0.104	0.008
Pref_US	0.084	-0.558	0.442	-0.200	0.322	0.688	0.051
Pref_K	-0.078	-0.186	0.484	-0.088	0.366	0.225	0.630
Construct reliability	0.9	0.88	0.90	0.90	0.88	0.82	0.77
Mean	3.57	4.61	4.60	1.83	4.88	2.64	5.06
SD	0.97	1.72	1.37	1.64	2.38	1.55	1.16

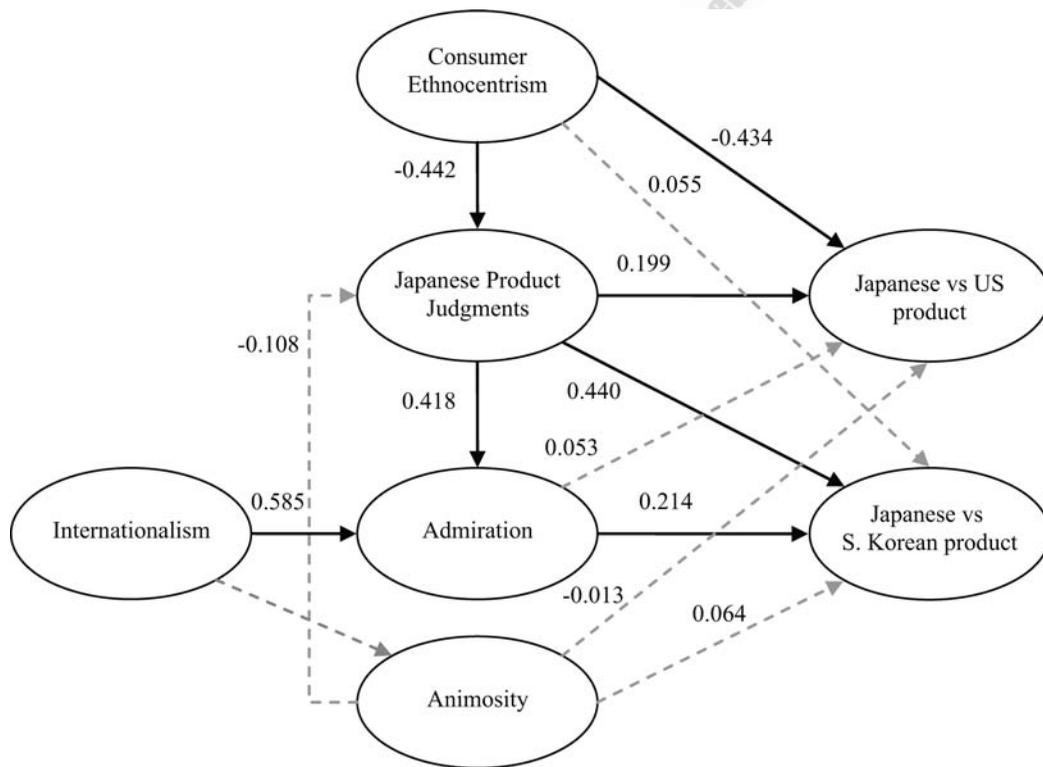
Notes: The AVE for each construct is presented in the diagonal; the numbers below the diagonal are the correlations and the numbers above the diagonal are squared correlations; Inter = Internationalism, Ethno = Ethnocentrism, PJ = Japanese product judgments, AN = animosity, Pref_US = preference for a Japanese product over a US product, Pref_K = preference for a Japanese product over a South Korean product

Table III Results of the structural equation modeling

Estimated parameter	Estimate	p value
Japanese product judgments → Pref_K	0.440	0.009
Japanese product judgments → Pref_US	0.199	0.027
Consumer ethnocentrism → Japanese product judgments	-0.442	0.008
Consumer ethnocentrism → Pref_K	0.080	0.241
Consumer ethnocentrism → Pref_US	-0.434	0.013
Animosity → Japanese product judgments	-0.148	0.061
Animosity → Pref_K	0.064	0.297
Animosity → Pref_US	-0.013	0.731
Japanese product judgments → admiration	0.418	0.003
Admiration → Pref_K	0.214	0.008
Admiration → Pref_US	0.095	0.370
Internationalism → admiration	0.180	0.022
Internationalism → animosity	-0.115	0.246

Notes: Pref_US: the preference for a Japanese product over a US product; Pref_K: the preference for a Japanese product over a South Korean product

Figure 2 Results of the structural equation modeling



Notes: Dotted lines represent relationships that are not significant ($p < 0.05$); solid lines represent relationships that are significant ($p > 0.05$)

product from one's own country. This result suggests that the effect of consumer ethnocentrism on favoritism for local products might be difficult to overcome. Third, admiration was found to be positively related to both the product judgments of Japanese products and internationalism. Future research needs to assess the causal relationship between positive product judgments of, and feelings of admiration toward, the product's country of origin.

Managerial implications and future research

This study has several managerial implications. First, the results confirm that product evaluations have an indirect effect on the preference for foreign products through admiration. It is suggested that managers focus on communicating the quality of the product and not try to downplay the product's country of origin, because such

favorable product evaluations may lead to admiration in the long run. Future research needs to examine other factors that might lead to the elicitation of admiration. This research only examined the perceived competence of foreign products. It is argued that other indicators of competence might exist.

Second, this study finds that admiration directed towards another country leads to a preference for its products over products from other nations. This may be pertinent, especially to a corporation trying to launch a product under a different brand name. For example, the Toyota Corporation might have benefited from the admiration towards Japan if it had been launched recently. This might be particularly important for products from a country that is not known for high quality in certain categories. For example, the Japanese might not be well known in certain product categories such as cosmetics, but admiration towards the Japanese might result in a higher preference for a Japanese cosmetics company. Future research might examine whether the effects of admiration persists across different product categories

Admiration might also be relevant to companies that originate from countries with a poor image. Such companies might try to change the pronunciation of the brand name to the language of the country that is admired. Previous research has shown that changing the wording of the brand name to sound foreign might have a positive impact on the attitude towards the brand (LeClerc *et al.* 1994). For example, Häagen-Dazs, a brand of ice-cream, might sound Scandinavian to a US consumer, even though it is manufactured by Pillsbury, which is a US company.

This research also suggests that admiration might be relevant to products with multiple countries of origin. For example, a product might be manufactured in China and designed in the USA. The company producing such a product might benefit from stressing the country of design and downplaying the country of assembly.

A third important observation is that the effects of animosity directed towards countries might not be permanent and might even disappear over time. For example, Australian consumers were more likely to buy French products as time passed after the French stopped conducting nuclear tests in the Pacific Ocean (Ettenson and Klein, 2005). This suggests that managers may need to assess whether the events that lead to the elicitation of animosity are still salient in consumers' minds. This also suggests that a company needs to determine the extent to which animosity towards its country of origin is likely to harm its sales and image in the long run. If the effect of animosity is short lived, then it might be more pertinent for a company to weather the storm and just live through the crisis. Future research may address how the saliency of such events might be activated in consumers' minds after they are forgotten, and whether such elicitation would lead to any animosity.

Finally, consumer ethnocentrism seems to play a very important role in choosing between a domestic and foreign product. Consumer ethnocentrism in this study nullified the impact of admiration when a consumer was choosing between a US and Japanese product. This suggests that managers downplay a product's COO if a brand's major competitor is of domestic origin.

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Appendix

Figure A1 Operational measures

Japanese Product Judgments

(7 point Likert Scale; Strongly Agree-Strongly Agree; Source: Klein, 2002)

- Products made in Japan are carefully produced and have fine workmanship
- Products made in Japan show a high degree of technological advancement
- Products made in Japan usually show a very clever use of color and design
- Products made in Japan are usually quite reliable and seem to last the desired length of time

Preference Measures

(Source: Klein, 2002)

Now, I would like you to picture the same product manufactured by two different countries. It is important that you are picturing a product where the brands are equal across all aspects of the product, including price, quality and styling. For each statement please indicate the likelihood of buying this product manufactured from the first country compared only to this product from the second country

Definitely buy the South Korean product	<input type="checkbox"/>	Definitely buy the Japanese product						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Definitely buy the U.S. product	<input type="checkbox"/>	Definitely buy the Japanese product						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

For each statement please indicate the likelihood of paying more for this product manufactured from the first country compared only to this product from the second country

Definitely pay more for the U.S. product	<input type="checkbox"/>	Definitely pay more for the Japanese product						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Definitely pay more for the South Korean product	<input type="checkbox"/>	Definitely pay more for the Japanese product						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

Measures of Animosity and Admiration (Adapted from: Cuddy, Fiske and Glick, 2007 and Klein, 2002)

Please indicate the extent to which you feel the following towards the Japanese:

	Not at all			Moderately				Extremely	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1) Admiration									
2) Respect									
3) Angry									
4) Hostility									
5) Dislike									

Consumer Ethnocentrism

(7 point Likert Scale; Strongly Agree-Strongly Agree; adapted from Shimp and Sharma, 1987)

- It is not right to purchase foreign products, because it puts Americans out of jobs
- A real American should always buy American-made products
- We should purchase products manufactured in America instead of letting other countries get rich off of us
- Americans should not buy foreign products, because this hurts American business and causes unemployment

(Continued)

Figure A1

Internationalism**(7 point Likert Scale; Strongly Agree-Strongly Agree; adapted from Kosterman, R. and Feshbach, 1989)**

If necessary, we ought to be willing to lower our standard of living to cooperate with other countries in getting an equal standard for every person in the world

We should teach our children to uphold the welfare of all people everywhere, even though it may be against the best interests of our own country

I would not be willing to decrease my living standard by 10 percent to increase that of persons in poorer countries of the world. (R)

The position a US citizen takes on an international issue should depend on how much good it does for how many people in the world, regardless of their nation

Note: (R) Indicates a reverse-worded item

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Executive summary and implications for managers and executives

This summary has been provided to allow managers and executives a rapid appreciation of the content of the article. Those with a particular interest in the topic covered may then read the article in toto to take advantage of the more comprehensive description of the research undertaken and its results to get the full benefit of the material present.

Country of origin (COO) has received extensive attention from numerous scholars. Plenty evidence exists to show that COO influences consumer evaluation of products from foreign countries. Much research has considered the cognitive and normative effects of the construct, while contemplation of the affective impact has been much lower by comparison.

Key issues

The cognitive dimension of COO involves judgment of product quality and normally reflects how a country becomes associated with a particular image that may subsequently transfer to its products. Consumer ethnocentrism represents the normative dimension of COO and concerns the “morality of buying foreign products”. Different studies have affirmed that highly ethnocentric consumers display contrasting emotions towards foreign and domestic goods. Such

consumers are hold favorable intentions regarding the purchase of their own country’s products but are negative about those originating elsewhere.

How consumers react emotionally to foreign products embodies the affective impact of COO. To date, analysis of the affective impact has been largely confined to animosity. Researchers have discovered that individuals will be less prone to buying products from a nation they feel hostile towards. The negativity or even hatred aimed towards a specific country is typically a response to the commitment of real or perceived adverse actions by the country’s government, organizations or citizens. Examples include Chinese consumers shunning products from Japan and citizens from Holland being reluctant to buy German goods because of past atrocities carried out during wartime.

Earlier research has also examined animosity directed at Japan from American consumers. It discovered that Japanese attacks on Pearl Harbor combined with belief that Japan has been economically biased against the USA triggered these feelings. Because of this animosity, US respondents indicated that they would prefer a South Korean product over one originating in Japan. It was also found that consumer ethnocentrism wielded a more powerful influence than animosity in this context.

Some scholars have noted that people’s emotions towards other groups can vary substantially and that animosity is just one possible emotion that can materialize. Another sentiment to arouse academic interest is admiration. In the previous work, animosity levels directed towards the Japanese were recorded as moderate. One interpretation is that the finding indicates a softening of attitudes over time, largely because the occurrences that triggered such enmity are less relevant in the current era. On the contrary, Americans may now be prepared to acknowledge Japanese competence to the degree that animosity has given way to admiration.

The presence of admiration in relation to COO can also influence how consumers perceive foreign products. In one study of consumers from developing nations it was found that an admiration of other lifestyles inspired a positive attitude towards “nonlocal brands”. The literature notes that consumers can feel positively about someone who works hard to achieve their goals. Success is regarded as deserved and admiration can result. A similar finding is that admiration of a particular group emerges from belief in the group’s proficiency and competence. In the present context, it is speculated that US consumers will perceive the Japanese as highly competent based on the renowned quality and durability of automobile brands like Toyota and Honda.

Research showing that American respondents were able to identify Japanese brands more readily than those from other nations suggests awareness of this quality.

Appreciation of a certain group may also lead to a desire to develop closer associations with the group. On this basis, it is feasible that consumers in the USA may favor Japanese products over offerings from other foreign countries. Such is the impact of ethnocentrism, however, that various scholars do not expect this admiration to inspire a preference for Japanese products over domestic alternatives.

Internationalism is considered important too. The construct is seen as opposed to nationalism, whereby people regard their own country as superior to others. In contrast, those rating high on internationalism are typically more accepting of other nations and cultures. This greater empathy for others also impacts on animosity, as a study of Jewish Israeli consumers showed. Collective hostility towards Arab Israelis was significantly lower among study respondents indicating high internationalism levels.

Study and results

Amro A. Maher, Paul Clark and Ahmed Maher explore these issues in a survey of 280 American respondents serving on an internet consumer panel. They were asked to indicate their agreement with statements relating to the quality of Japanese products and whether they preferred Japanese products over South Korean products and local offerings. Other questions asking about emotions felt towards the Japanese were also included.

The findings revealed:

- admiration of Japanese people was positively linked with judgment of Japanese products;
- no relationship was evident between animosity and preference for a Japanese product over South Korean or US alternatives;
- preference for Japanese products over South Korean products was positively associated with admiration;
- admiration did not inspire preference for a Japanese product over a US product; and
- a positive correlation between internationalism and admiration towards the Japanese.

Contrary to expectation and previous findings, internationalism was not found to impact on animosity.

Marketing implications and further research

According to the authors, the findings concerning animosity suggest that such feelings can diminish over time. The authors

also note the additional support for the impact of ethnocentrism and conclude that it may be difficult to tempt ethnocentric consumers away from domestic products. This has implications for firms whose main rivals are domestic operators. Managers in such circumstances are advised to play down the COO of their product.

Positive association between admiration and both judgments of Japanese products and internationalism was also deemed significant. Admiration appears to create an indirect impact of product evaluation on the preference for foreign products. Marketers should therefore highlight the product's quality but without decrying its COO. An emphasis on quality could help admiration to develop later on.

Findings here might also be relevant for companies using a different brand name for new products. Maher *et al.* imply that strong feelings of admiration might extend into product categories not normally associated with a particular country. They cite a hypothetical example of a Japanese cosmetics company benefiting from the high regard Japan enjoys in other product categories. Changing the pronunciation of a brand name offers another way of exploiting these positive sentiments. Essentially, taking this action allows companies originating from nations perceived negatively to make their brands or products sound like they are from a country boasting a more favorable image.

Products with multiple countries of origin might also benefit from admiration by, for instance, accentuating the country of design and downplaying where it is assembled. Future study may determine other factors that help generate admiration. Another suggestion is to further explore the causal link between admiration toward and positive product judgments of the product's COO.

That animosity might not be a permanent state needs some consideration. Managers should attempt to assess how long the factors that triggered hostile sentiments will remain significant and decide accordingly whether to change strategy or ride out the storm if the crisis seems more short term. Additional study might reveal what might revive such events further down the line and whether animosity might emerge again as a result.

(A précis of the article "International consumer admiration and the persistence of animosity". Supplied by Marketing Consultants for Emerald.)