_____

Country of Origin as a predecessor in forming perception towards Brand Equity for automobiles: Testing the mediating effects of brand loyalty and perceived quality.

Shivani Aggarwal[1], Vipul Jain[2*]

[1]*Research Scholar, Department of Management, School of Management and Commerce Studies, Shri Guru Ram Rai University, Dehradun, Uttarakhand -248001 India*

[2*]*Professor, Department of Management, School of Management and Commerce Studies, Shri Guru Ram Rai University, Dehradun, Uttarakhand -248001 India*

[*]**Corresponding Author: Vipul Jain[2*]**

Abstract: - This study inspects the multifaceted drivers of brand equity for passenger cars and describes conceptual underpinnings and real-world usability for global companies. A unique conceptual framework is established focusing on conceptual and practical fundamentals in the research pertaining to branding and consumer behaviour. The constructs used in the study are researched well already. The well researched Aaker's Model of Brand Equity is adopted for this study. The model has five dimensions but this study has considered only two dimensions named perceived quality and brand loyalty as mediators to test the impact of Country of Origin (COO) on brand equity for passenger cars. The empirical findings are portrayed through the lens of a comprehensive survey conducted using a convenience sampling within the Indian context. Data was collected from 504 respondents and its analysis was done using structural equation modelling. In SPSS, Model 4 of PROCESS Macro was used in determining the mediating effects as suggested by (Hayes, 2013). The results indicate the relevance of COO in determining brand loyalty and perceived quality for passenger cars. Additionally, country of origin, brand loyalty and perceived quality are important determiners of brand equity. The study also highlights that COO and brand equity are positively mediated by brand loyalty and perceived quality.

Keywords: *Country of Origin, COO, Brand equity, Passenger Cars, Perceived Quality, Brand Loyalty*

1.   Introduction

Since the 1990s, brands have evolved beyond being mere measures or simple attribute. They have transformed into powerful instruments for generating increased revenue by selling products in large quantities (Oh *et al.*, 2020). In today's times of globalization and high competitiveness the brands are the most valuable asset for any organization (Keller & Lehmann, 2006; Veloutsou & Guzmán, 2017). Branding is a phenomenon which has evolved over a period of time and is considered to be a concept of dynamic nature in today's world (Luciano *et al.,* 2018). Ever since (Aaker, 1991) that recognized brand loyalty and (Keller, 1993) that endorsed brand image as brand equity dimensions– the brand's additional value (Oh *et al.*, 2020) – researchers as well as the specialists have tried their best to explain, quantify and influence these concepts.

In this globalized world, the country-of-origin concept is playing a pivotal role for the firms all around. The brand equity and country and origin have become a key area of interest for the business houses as strong brands drives competitive advantage. The organisations are being able to get financial benefits in the form of huge profits due to customer's strong association, awareness and loyalty for the brands. The firms perform detailed research before entering global markets and carefully craft their marketing strategies. There have been various marketing

_____

strategies the firms have employed over a period of time and COO is one such strategy. COO denotes the country from where the brand originated.

Every individual in this world is very much excited about purchasing things. The involvement level of an individual in the purchase process depends on the nature of the product being purchased. Some products are low involvement whereas some are high involvement. There are a lot of factors which concerns the consumers while purchasing any product like product quality, price and also country of origin. The home country's image is always a concern for international marketers (Koschate-Fischer et al., 2012). Different countries are associated with the excellence for specific product categories for example Germany for automobiles and engineering, Switzerland for knives and chocolates, Canada for timber, Scotland for Whisky etc. The acceptance level for a specific product category from such countries is higher as compared to others (Yasin et al., 2007).

COO can play a significant role in highlighting the quality of the product which is an important factor impacting the purchase intention of the consumer (Lin & Chen, 2006) and in turn affecting the perception of the consumer towards the brand equity (Rezvani et al., 2012). The prime objective of the research is to analyze the impact of COO on brand equity for passenger cars where the focal point for the analysis will be the Indian market.

As per the analysts the creation of passenger cars in the 20th century has drastically reformed the way of commuting and have also impacted the economies and societies around the world. In today's time private car is a primary means of personal mobility in societies, providing freedom and independence of movement to the people. The 50% of global revenue in the passenger car segment is held by China and United States where Japan, Germany and United Kingdom is following the lead. The 2017 was the year when passenger cars were sold highest and faced a decline due to COVID-19 pandemic. The sales of passenger cars currently are stagnant and the trend is predictable to be continued for the future. (Statista, 2023)

The automotive industry has faced significant challenges over the past two years, with the pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war having a major impact on global supply chains. This disruption has led to a slowdown in passenger car production, and many manufacturers had to temporarily shut down their production lines. Alongside these external factors, economic difficulties like inflation have also affected consumer demand, causing people to postpone significant purchases, including cars. Despite the challenges, there is optimism that the market will gradually recover in the upcoming years. It is expected that the recovery will be slow but steady, as the industry adapts to the changing circumstances and works to stabilize supply chains. Governments and businesses are also likely to implement strategies to boost consumer confidence and stimulate demand. (Statista, 2023)

The product category that has been chosen for the study is automobile (passenger cars). For many people cars have become a tool to express their status symbol. India is one of the most competitive markets for automobiles in the world and with 2.5 million vehicles by 2025 it is predicable to become the third largest market for electric vehicles, 5th largest vehicle market and largest manufacturer of two-wheeler and three-wheeler.

According to ASSOCHAM, the Indian automobile industry is one of the largest growing markets in the world and contributes highly to the nation's manufacturing. The contribution of the sector has been 7.1% in nations' GDP, 49% in manufacturing GDP and 7-8% i.e., 37 million to the total employment of India. India's automobile industry is one of the flares of the nation's industrial performance.

2. Literature Review

The proposed model for the present study has been shown below in Fig 1. The figure includes independent variable country of origin, mediators as perceived quality & brand loyalty and brand equity as the dependent variable.
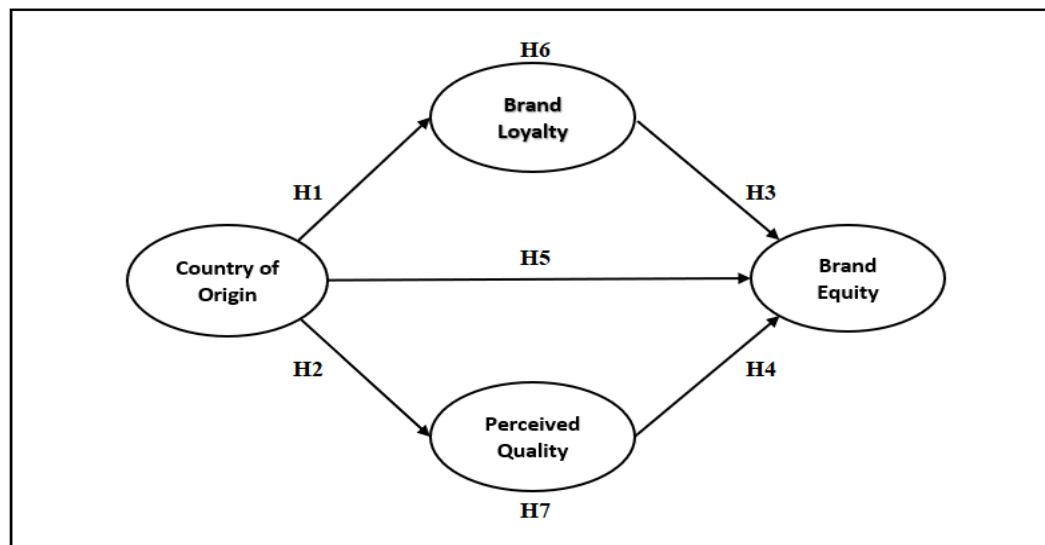
_____

Figure 1: Proposed Research Model

2.1 Country of Origin (COO)

The very first research study of county-of-origin is considered to be of Schooler (1965). He conducted an experiment on four groups of students in Guatemala with the products tagged with supposed COO of that product. El Salvador, Mexico, Costa Rica, and Guatemala were considered for the study purpose. The respondents appraised the products tagged with El Salvador and Costa Rica more negatively as compared to Guatemala and Mexico. The findings concluded that the country-of-origin effects exists but there was no indication of the reasons of such an effect.

Nagashima (1970;1977), a very highly cited research work which included a longitudinal method to examine the made-in product's image amongst Japanese and American Entrepreneurs. His study compared the attitudes of these entrepreneurs towards foreign and domestic products in 1970 and then in 1977 for Japanese Businessmen for products made in Japan, Germany, France, USA and Britain. It was found that the overall image of the products which are made in USA declined whereas improved for other countries. Therefore, it was concluded that the COO image is dynamic in nature which changes with time.

"Country of Origin" is the native country or the country that people believe a certain brand originated in (Herz & Diamantopoulos, 2013). Several authors have mentioned the COO's effect (Sauer et al., 1991; Suh et al., 2015) as the impact exercised on customer's assessment of any service and product, depending on COOs stereotypes formed.

According to (Cordell, 1992; Hong et al., 1989) one of the product's features is COO. Products from a specific country and their features often are subjected to development of stereotypes from consumers. (Yasin et al., 2007). The more the level of consumer's contact and awareness of a country and its products more is the practical and unbiased perception of the COO. (Lee & Lee, 2009). COO can possibly function in gauging the quality of a product (Insch & Floreck, 2009). Subsequently, the country's constructive image can be utilized to showcase the association between the product and its COO. Additionally, COO of the corporate brands can impact the goodwill of the brand's performance (Cowan & Guzman, 2020).

Rashid et al. (2016) concluded that the perceived significance of a particular COO constructs differs as per the industry. Country of design might be important for a fashion industry but for manufacturers' brands, material and process of manufacturing is important. The COO is very useful for marketing activity and is very influential in creating brand image in the fashion industry. Hien et al. (2020) through their research work concluded that COO image has a positive impact on brand evaluation, image and purchase intention. Brand evaluation and image positively effects the purchase intentions and also mediates the relationship between the two.

_____

Khair et al. (2021) investigated on the topic "Foreign brands of course!" The study explores the preference of Jordanian women for overseas over domestic fashion brands. The outcome of the research highlights the factors such as self, social and consumption symbolism, status and noticeable consumption and COO's image. Islam and Hussain (2022) discovered that COO has a direct and indirect negative impact on consumer's purchase intentions through consumer's uncertainty.

The COO image considerably affects the dimensions of brand equity defined by Aaker and additionally these dimensions significantly affect customer's purchase intention (Shirvani et al., 2020). The COO effects customer's confidentiality, trust and purchase intention. Purchase intention is also mediated by the trust factor (Bhattacharya et al., 2023).

2.2 Brand Equity

Brand equity is defined as "a set of brand assets and liabilities linked to a brand, its name and symbol that add to or subtract from the value provided by a product or service to a firm and/or to that firm's customers" (Aaker, 1991, p. 27). The notion of brand equity arose in the 1980s, piquing the attention of academics and experts in the field of marketing (Cobb et al., 1995). For various reasons "brand equity" is well-defined in various ways (Keller, 2002). Farquhar (1989) was one of the pioneers to commence conversation and research on brand equity, defining brand equity as "additional value" that any brand bestows on a product. Significant studies on brand equity and related concerns have been conducted (Christodoulides et al., 2015; Aaker 1991, 1996, 2000; Kapferer, 2004; Shocker & Weitz, 1988; Keller,1993,2006; & Shocker & Srivastava ,1994). However, no globally agreed brand equity substance, meaning, or measurement has been provided (Christodoulides et al., 2015; Vazquez et al., 2002; Keller 2003, Washburn,2002). Yoo et al. (2000) launched operational investigations, namely Aaker's suggested model (1991). Almost every definition of brand equity now approves that this phenomenon encompasses the value given to a product by consumers' influences and impressions of a certain brand name (Winters, 1991; Christodoulides et al., 2015; Chaudhuri, 1995). Brand equity is a hot topic in current times also (Christodoulides et al., 2015; Moore et al., 2002; Keller, 2001; Dillon et al., 2001; Yoo & Donthu, 2001; Van Osselaer & Alba, 2000)

The resources and accountabilities which create brand equity can be banded together in the resulting dimensions as brand loyalty, perceived quality, brand associations, brand awareness, and other proprietary brand assets (Aaker,1991). These brand dimensions have been of essential attention to the corporates, sales & marketing and the individuals researching in consumer behaviour (Chen et al., 2011; Kim et al., 2018). The brand equity is critically importance as the outcomes which the businesses receive financially and the customer's value conditioning depends on it largely (Heitmann et al., 2020).

Tasci (2021) found that there are only five important dimensions which are at consensus i.e., brand awareness or brand familiarity, brand image and brand associations, perceived quality, consumer value and brand loyalty which collectively defines value of a brand from the perspective of the consumer. The evolution of brand equity is an outcome of brand development but due to technological advancements like social media playing a significant role in facilitating enhanced engagement and involvement with the brand emotionally (Dwivedi *et al.*, 2019).

According to Parris, D. L., & Guzmán, F. (2023) "Brand equity is the added or subtracted value of a brand that is created by the brand itself or co-created with stakeholders from the perceptual associations, symbolic meaning, relationships, and social impact of a product, service, idea, place, organization, person, or community, and/or the brand's financial assets and liabilities."

2.3 Perceived Quality

Perceived quality is characterized as the shopper's individual evaluation of distinct or basic advantage of a product (Zeithaml, 1988). As consumers engage with a brand over time, they become more familiar with its products, services, and overall brand image. Through this extended interaction, consumers develop a deeper understanding of the brand's unique features, value proposition, and consistency in delivering satisfactory experiences. As the brand relationship strengthens, consumers tend to recognize the brand's differentiation from its competitors and perceive it as superior in meeting their needs and expectations. This perception is often rooted in positive experiences, reliability, and a consistent track record of delivering high-quality goods and services. The perception and judgment of a consumer makes the perceived quality a subjective issue.

_____

Saleem et al. (2015) described it as an emotional evaluation of a product on the basis of perception of a consumer. The extrinsic and intrinsic attributes of a product are taken into consideration while assessing the perceived quality. The features like aroma which directly relates to a product are intrinsic whereas the attributes or the features that are not a part of the product physically are considered to be the extrinsic ones for example COO or the product package (Sáenz-Navajas et al.,2016). When referring to the creation of the brand value for wine the intrinsic cues are the most important and very challenging to control. Therefore, both characteristics are of dominance when considering the combined evaluation (Danneret al., 2016).

Aaker (1991) has defined perceived quality as "consumer perception of the overall quality or superiority or inferiority of a product or service with respect to its intended purpose, relative to alternatives." When the quality is defined from the customer's perspective it is called as the perceived quality. The previous experience of a consumer with reference to a specific brand affects the evaluation of brand quality, and therefore the perceived quality. The perceived quality adds value to a brand as it gives good reasons to the consumers to buy that brand and also helps the brand in differentiating itself in the market from its competitors. Differentiated brand have the power to charge premium pricing and helps in brand extension.

Rao and Monroe (1989), highlights that perceived quality of a brand plays an eminent role in brand extension. It is investigated and concluded that the brands with high perceived quality have a high probability of success than a weak brand. Brands with high perceived quality bears a significant relationship with the product's price and its brand name.

Tong and Hawley (2009) investigated that relationship between perceived quality and brand equity are mediated by brand association and brand loyalty. Gladden and Milne (2004), explored that according to the consumers recognition, it can be grouped into intrinsic and extrinsic attributes which further helps consumers in evaluating the brands. The product's physical attributes such as (color, flavor, fragrance, form, outer appearance) are intrinsic whereas price, name, packaging, warranty, product information is considered as extrinsic (Bernue´s et al., 2003). Perceived quality positively mediates the brand image and brand equity (Gallart-Camahort, V., Fiol, L. C., & García, J. S. (2023).

2.4 Brand Loyalty

Brand loyalty is usually of fundamental importance to the brand equity (Aaker,1991). Consumer's loyalty is a reinforcement for a brand over the brand of the competitors. The brand loyalty acts as an entry barrier for new entrants in the market, as the cost incurred by organizations in creating additional customers is way greater than retaining the current consumers.

Brand loyalty is considered to be one of the key objectives for brand equity (Gil et al., 2007; Travis, 2000). It is an expression of oneness any customer has with a specific brand and has a preference to purchase it as his/her first choice (Aaker,1991). This dimension also depicts that the consumer prefers to purchase a precise brand even if its competitor's brand is superior in attributes, price and quality. The brand loyalty dimension is a central construct in an organization's marketing (Brown, 1952). Brand loyalty is a unique construct in creating brand equity as it is developed over a period of time and over the years gradually.

Brand loyalty is positively influenced by a multitude of antecedents, as evidenced by several studies. Notable factors contributing to brand loyalty include brand trust (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001), customer's emotional connection with the brand (van der Westhuizen, 2018), self-concept and relationship with the brand (Kressmann et al., 2006; Liu et al., 2012; Sirgy et al., 2008), brand personality and identity (He et al., 2012), customer-brand identity and perceived price (Popp & Woratschek, 2017), customer's brand experience (Iglesias et al., 2011; Jiang et al., 2018; Ramaseshan & Stein, 2014), brand personality (Lin, 2010), product category involvement and purchase satisfaction (Russell-Bennett et al., 2007), product involvement (Quester & Lim, 2003), customer risk aversion (Matzler et al., 2008), risk and knowledge (Bennett et al., 2005), brand and product connection (Pedeliento et al., 2016), brand attachment and relationship (Japutra et al., 2019), customer brand engagement (Fernandes & Moreira, 2019), previous behavioural loyalty and brand associations (Romaniuk & Nenycz-Thiel, 2013), brand communities (Coelho et al., 2019), perceived innovation (Pappu & Quester, 2016), as well as various perceptual elements of the corporate brand (Ozdemir et al., 2020).

_____

The brand's image and awareness are positively and significantly associated. Additionally, the brand's image and the loyalty for it contributes in creating brand equity where brand recognition mediates the relationship between brand image and brand equity (Zia et al., 2021). Brand loyalty positively mediates brand association and brand equity and brand image acts as a mediator between brand loyalty and brand equity (Severi & Ling,2013). According to Parris, D. L., & Guzmán, F. (2023)

"Brand loyalty is a relationship stakeholder(s) develop with a brand that is exhibited by repurchasing, engaging, promoting/advocating, and/or co-creating/co-owning the brand."

The research study by Akoglu and Özbek (2022) demonstrates the relevance of quality and trust in creating customer loyalty. It concluded that there is a significant mediating impact of brand trust and perceived quality on brand loyalty and brand experience.

Based on literature review the following hypothesis have been developed:

H1 Country of Origin (COO) positively impacts Brand Loyalty.
H2 Country of Origin (COO) positively impacts Perceived Quality.
H3 Brand Loyalty positively impacts Brand Equity.
H4 Perceived Quality positively impacts Brand Equity.
H5 Country of Origin (COO) positively impacts Brand Equity.
H6 Brand Loyalty positively mediates the association between Country of Origin (COO) and Brand Equity.
H7 Perceived Quality positively mediates the association between Country of Origin (COO) and Brand Equity.

3.   Objectives

Every research conducted is done with an obejective. Following are the objectives of the research study.

(i)   To study the concept of Country of Origin, Brand Equity and Brand Equity Dimensions (Brand Loyalty and Perceived Quality).
(ii)   To empirically test the impact of Country of Origin on Brand Equity Dimensions.
(iii)   To empirically test the impact of Country of Origin on Brand Equity.
(iv)   To empirically test the impact of Brand Equity Dimensions on Brand Equity.
(v)   To study the mediating effect of Brand Loyalty and Perceived Quality on Country of Origin and Brand Equity.

4.   Methods

4.1 Participants and Sampling Design

The aim of collecting data was to comprehend the impact of COO and its influence on brand equity for automobiles (passenger car). The sample population was the user or the owner of the automobile (passenger cars) in Garhwal region of Uttarakhand. The cities with the highest population in Garhwal region were identified to collect the data namely Dehradun, Haridwar, Roorkee, Halwani, Rudrapur, Kashipur and Rishikesh (2011 Census). These cities constitute 75% of the population of Garhwal region of Uttarakhand.

This study used an online structured questionnaire which was prepared in English made on Google Forms. Before releasing the questionnaire, a pre-testing was done to identify possible improvements in the questions. The data from 116 respondents was collected during the pre-testing phase. The data collection employed convenience sampling technique which refers to choosing a sample at your convenience, and the selection process persists until the desired sample size is attained. In total ,504 responses were received and were employed in the study for analysis. No data was incomplete. The information showed that 34.3 % of the respondents were females ,64.7% were males and only 5 preferred not to say. The respondents within the age range of 18-25 were 74.2%. Kim et al. (2013) stated that when the respondents are from this age group it has two benefits. Firstly, this age group comprises of the future consumers, and subsequently will be making a significant difference over the next decades. 17.9% were the respondents in the age bracket of 26-35 followed by 6% in 36-45, 1.8% in 46-55 and only .2 % were the ones above 56 years of age. 48% of the respondents are graduates, 34.3% post-graduates, 11.7% have studied high-school, 3.6% doctorate and only 2.4% were professionals. The maximum number of responses were registered by student (66.9%), private employment (25%), self-employed (6.9%) and only 1.2 % were the

_____

government employees. 24.2% respondent's annual household income was registered in the slab of up to 3 Lacs, 21.8% in 3-6 Lacs, 19.6% in 6-9 Lacs, 16.7% in 9-12 Lacs and 17.7% are the ones whose household income is above 12 Lacs.

4.2   Measures of Constructs

Deciding a variable or a construct can either be developed by the researcher or can be taken from the earlier research done (Hair et al., 2006). The study has employed four constructs: Brand Equity, Perceived Quality, COO and Brand Loyalty for the purpose of hypothesis testing. The items have been developed with an objective of effectively portraying the constructs undertaken for the research study. The items taken in the study have already been researched by other scholars. The items for measuring COO construct have been derived from Anselmmson et al. (2007). Brand Loyalty was evaluated by using the scale items of Aaker (1991). Perceived Quality and Brand Equity were assessed by using scale items derived from Aaker (2004). Each item in the research study was answered using five-point Likert Scale using response anchors where 1 indicates "Strongly Disagree," and 5 corresponds to "Strongly Agree."

5.   Results

Data was analyzed by using SPSS which is used heavily in behavioral sciences.

5.1 Reliability and Validity analysis

To evaluation of the individual items was done for examining the measurement model. The internal consistency of all the constructs has been measured using Cronbach's α in the study. The Cronbach's α for each of the constructs used in the study was found to be more than 0.70 (0.77-0.89) which highlights that our survey instrument has high reliability (Nunnally, 1978). As the Table 1 depicts, all the factor loadings for every construct exceeds 0.5 and confirms the reliability test of the items being used (Hair et al., 1995). Our results in addition also portrays that the composite reliabilities of all the constructs were found to surpass the threshold of 0.7. As suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981) the statistical values between 0.81-0.89 are considered as the cut-off values. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for all constructs were above 0.5, confirming convergent validity (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). The adequacy of the constructs' proposed for the research model have been tested via convergent validity.

The study has also used discriminant validity in measuring the multi collinearity amongst the constructs proposed in the research model. Precisely, if the items of a specific construct exhibit strong loadings under that particular construct and not under others, we consider it to have discriminant validity. Table 2 below exhibits the shared variance's value amongst the different variables to be smaller than the square root of the AVE. This confirms the presence of discriminant validity in this study.

For evaluating the SEM an assessment of R^2 is recommended. The degree of the variance explained for each dependent variable should be greater than 10% (Falk & Miller, 1992). As it is clearly evident from Table 1, the condition is fulfilled for each dependent variable.

Table 1: Measurement items and validity assessment

Constructs and indicators	Factor Loadings	Cronbach Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE	R^2
Country of Origin					
COO1	0.72	0.87	-	0.56	-
COO2	0.78				
COO3	0.72				
COO4	0.76				
COO5	0.79				
COO6	0.73				

_____

Brand Loyalty					
BL1	0.78	0.811	0	0.53	0.17
BL2	0.76				
BL3	0.66				
BL4	0.69				
BL5	0.74				
Perceived Quality					
PQ1	0.74	0.765	0	0.55	0.27
PQ2	0.75				
PQ3	0.79				
PQ4	0.70				
Brand Equity					
BE1	0.76	0.866	0	0.54	0.15
BE2	0.80				
BE3	0.77				
BE4	0.69				
BE5	0.62				

Table 2: Construct Means, Standard Deviations, Correlations, and AVE.

Constructs	M	S.D.	Basic Model			
			1	2	3	4
1 Country of Origin -COO	3.96	0.88	**0.75**			
2 Brand Loyalty -BL	3.54	1.02	.407**	**0.73**		
3 Perceived Quality-PQ	3.89	0.84	.520**	.473**	**0.74**	
4 Brand Equity -BE	3.78	0.90	.393**	.614**	.531**	**0.73**

Note: **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). M- Mean; S.D.-Standard Deviation

The bold values on the diagonal represents the square root of AVE.

5.2 Testing Effects

The results shown in the Table 3 below that the first Hypothesis i.e., H1 is supported as depicted through the values: (β= 0.407; $p<0.05$, t-value = 9.969, F=99.378). Therefore, the COO portrays a positive impact on brand loyalty. The results confirm that COO positively related to perceived quality supporting the second hypothesis i.e., H2 as (β= 0.520; $p<0.05$, t-value = 13.598, F=184.906). Moreover, brand equity is positively impacted by brand loyalty supporting the third Hypothesis i.e., H3 with (β = 0.614; $p<0.05$, t-value = 17.374, F=301.857) values. The research study also shows that brand equity is positively impacted by perceived quality with values (β= 0.531; $p<0.05$, t-value = 13.996, F=195.897) stating to prove the fourth Hypothesis i.e., H4. The COO has a positive association with brand equity which is the fifth Hypothesis i.e., H5 is also supported with values (β = 0.393; $p<0.05$, t-value = 9.554, F=91.276).

_____

Table 3: Regression Coefficients

Direct Relation	β values	Sig
COO and Brand Loyalty	0.407	0.05
COO and Perceived Quality	0.52	0.05
Brand Loyalty and Brand Equity	0.614	0.05
Perceived Quality and Brand Equity	0.531	0.05
COO and Brand Equity.	0.393	0.05

5.3 Test of Mediation

This research also investigates the mediating role of brand loyalty and perceived quality between COO and brand equity for passenger cars. In SPSS, Model 4 of Process Macro was used to test the mediating effects proposed by (Hayes, 2013). In the model we have one predictor i.e., COO and outcome variable i.e., brand equity.

5.3.1 Brand Loyalty as a Mediator

Hypotheses 6 suggests that brand loyalty is one factor that mediates the COO's impact on brand equity for passenger car brands. Table 4, describes the results for Hypotheses 6, which shows that brand loyalty positively mediates COO and brand equity. The total effect of COO on brand equity proves to be significant and positive as we can derive it from the values ($\beta = 0.4192$, SE= .0439, t = 9.5538, $p < 0.05$, LLCI= .333, ULCI= .5054). In addition to this, direct effect of path coefficient of COO on brand equity resulted into noteworthy and positive value ($\beta = 0.1830$, SE= .0405, t = 1.5084, $p < 0.05$, LLCI= .1035, ULCI= .2625). As we can infer from the table below that direct effect is smaller in magnitude than the indirect effects of COO on Brand Equity, this is the case of partial mediation.

Table 4: Brand Loyalty as Mediator

Total, Direct and Indirect Effects of COO on Brand Equity					
Total effect of COO on BE					
Effect	se	t	P	LLCI	ULCI
0.4192	0.439	9.5538	0	0.333	0.5054
Direct Effect of COO on BE					
Effect	se	t	P	LLCI	ULCI
0.183	0.0405	4.5211	0	0.1035	0.2625
Indirect Effect(s) of COO on BE					
	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	Boot ULCI	
BL	0.2362	0.033	0.1701	0.3014	

The path coefficient's findings for total impact COO onto brand equity was ($\beta = 0.2362$, SE= .0330, $p < 0.05$, LLCI= .1701, ULCI= .3014). The findings mentioned below detects that the total effect is equal to the sum of direct and indirect effect. Sobel test also indicates that the magnitude of the mediating effect is 0.2362 having 0.0330 as the standard error and Z value to be 7.8993, which is significant at 5 % (Hayes, 2013). Table 4, illustrates the findings of Model 4 which shows that Brand Loyalty mediates the relationship between COO and Brand Equity for passenger cars.

_____

5.3.2 Perceived Quality as a Mediator

Hypotheses 7 suggests that perceived quality is another factor that mediates the impact of COO of passenger cars brands on brand equity. Table 5, describes the results for Hypotheses 7, which shows that perceived quality positively impacts COO and brand equity. The total effect COO has on brand equity was significant and positive as we can derive it from the values ($\beta = 0.4192$, SE= .0439, t = 9.5538, p < 0.05, LLCI= .333, ULCI= .5054). In addition to this the direct effect of path coefficient of COO on brand equity resulted into noteworthy and positive value ($\beta = 0.1713$, SE= .04068, t = 3.6639, p < 0.05, LLCI= .0794, ULCI= .2632).

Table 5: Perceived Quality as Mediator

Total, Direct and Indirect Effects of COO on Brand Equity					
Total effect of COO on BE					
Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
0.4192	0.0439	9.5538	0	0.333	0.5054
Direct Effect of COO on BE					
Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
0.1713	0.0468	3.6639	0	0.0794	0.2632
Indirect Effect(s) of COO on BE					
	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	Boot ULCI	
PQ	0.2479	0.0431	0.1694	0.3396	

The path coefficient's findings for total impact COO onto brand equity was ($\beta = 0.2479$, SE= .0431, p < 0.05, LLCI= .1694, ULCI= .3396). The findings mentioned below detects that the total effect is equal to the sum of direct and indirect effect. Sobel test also indicates that the magnitude of the mediating effect is 0.2479 having 0.0431as the standard error and Z value to be 8.1494, which is significant at 5 % (Hayes, 2013). Table 5, illustrates the findings of Model 4. Which shows that perceived quality mediates the relationship between COO and Brand Equity for passenger cars. As we can infer from the table above that direct effect is less than the indirect effect of COO on Brand Equity, this is the case of partial mediation.

Table 6: Summary of the Research Study Findings

Hypotheses	Direct Relation	β values	Sig	Results
H1	COO and Brand Loyalty	0.407	P<0.05	Supported
H2	COO and Perceived Quality	0.52	P<0.05	Supported
H3	Brand Loyalty and Brand Equity	0.614	P<0.05	Supported
H4	Perceived Quality and Brand Equity	0.531	P<0.05	Supported
H5	COO and Brand Equity.	0.393	P<0.05	Supported

_____

Hypotheses	Mediation	β values	Sig	Results
H6	COO --> Brand Loyalty-->Brand Equity	0.236	P<0.05	Supported
H7	COO --> Perceived Quality-->Brand Equity	0.248	P<0.05	Supported

The above section demonstrates the outcomes of the data analysis conducted. The opening section summaries the profiles of the research study survey respondents. The next section discusses the descriptive statistics and constructs employed in the research study. The section further briefed the conclusions of the scale reliability and validity grounded on Principle Component Analysis and Confirmatory Factor Analysis. The statistical analysis was the next section which comprised of the correlation Matrix, Regression analysis and Mediation analysis employed to study the relationships developed in the research model. Further section covers the results and findings of the research hypotheses. The concluding section presents a remark on the testing of the research hypotheses which states that all the hypotheses proposed under the research study have been supported by the relevant data.

Table 7: Analysis of Influence Effects.

Independent Variable	Mediator Variables	Dependent Variable	Direct Effect	Indirect Effects
COO	Brand Loyalty	Brand Equity	0.393	0.4232*.5581 =0.236
COO	Perceived Quality	Brand Equity	0.393	0.5009*.4948 =0.248

Consistent with the findings discussed above, table 7 given above shows that the perceived quality, mediating the relationship between COO and brand equity has more indirect effect coefficient value of .248 than the indirect effect coefficient value of brand loyalty i.e., 0.236. The research model demonstrates the partial mediation as the value of the direct relationship between COO and Brand equity is 0.393 and through mediators it is .236 and 0.248 respectively for each of mediators.

6. Discussion

The research findings disclose the justification of COO and brand equity for passenger cars. This factual study helps in clearly understanding the attributes through which brand equity is created (Shocker et al., 1994; Thakor & Katsanis, 1997). The outcomes of the study present valuable connotations for academicians and also for the automobile industry for passenger cars. The outcomes of the research will vastly made a contribution to the literature (Ahmed & d'Astous's, 1996)

The model proposed for the research study highlights the practical implication of COO in affecting the brand equity for passenger cars. In addition to investigating the effects of COO in developing brand equity of passenger cars, the research study also explores the mediating effects of brand loyalty and perceived quality on the relationship between COO of passenger cars products and its brand equity (Hong & Wyer, 1990; Johansson et al., 1985). The basic research model for our study found that COO have a significant and positive relationship with brand loyalty and also with perceived quality (Ulgado & Lee, 1993)

This research has helped us in understanding the drivers that create brand equity for the passenger cars. The study contributes in understanding the relevance of COO on creating brand equity (Chao, 1998; Heslop et al., 1987). There have been numerous research studies conducted worldwide which measures the direct impact of COO on brand equity, indirect relationships are still rare. It is evident of the comprehensive explanation of the research model shown in table 6 that all the hypothesized relations were significant. The significant relationships between the independent variable COO and mediators brand loyalty and perceived quality provides empirical evidence that COO is positively related with brand loyalty and perceived price. This is consistent with the research findings of the past studies which indicated the relevance of country-of-origin cues related to brand loyalty and high perception of quality which helps in elevating the brand equity (Milad et al., 2020). The results of the study provide

_____

relevant insights to the brand managers (Lim & Darley ,1997). The brand managers operating globally need to leverage on the statistics that brands from strong countries helps in deriving brand loyalty and create high perception of quality for their brands for automobiles. It also helps in understanding why customers buy automobiles of brands from specific countries portraying the relevance of COO effect. It helps in creating competitive edge in the market and also to differentiate and position their brands accordingly. It's imperative for organizations to comprehend that foremost importance lies in fulfilling the customers' expectations. Brand familiarity will be of great relevance in entering foreign markets and developing brand extensions (Johansson et al., 1985; Ettenson et al., 1988).)

The significant relationship is demonstrated to exist between COO of automobile brand and brand loyalty and perceived quality. This is consistent with research findings of the past studies which indicated that the level of development of the country provides robust information relevant to the quality of the brands (Magnusson et al. 2015, Sharma 2011; Allman et al. (2016). This further provides relevant evidence that COO or "made in" products labels hold significant influence on customers association with the product. Thus, COO's knowledge extends an indication to the customer of the quality expectations.

On the basis of previous literature and theories, the study developed a thorough conceptual framework and validated it with the reliable primary data. However, like other past studies conducted, limitations are present in this research also. Due to the limitations present, numerous future research aims & plans lie in awe for academic attention.

7. Managerial Implications

The research on the country of origin's effect on brand equity with the intervening effects of brand loyalty and perceived quality has several practical implications for businesses. Understanding these implications can help businesses in the following ways:

1. Make informed decisions and strategies to enhance their brand equity in the global market.
2. Asian businesses should strategically position their brands based on positive associations with the country of origin.
3. If the country is perceived favorably, businesses can leverage this in their branding to build a positive image and enhance brand equity.
4. To improve brand equity, businesses should focus on consistently delivering high-quality products and services.
5. Investments in research, development, and quality control are essential to enhance perceived quality, which, in turn, positively influences brand equity.
6. Cultural factors play a significant role in shaping perceptions of brands. Asian businesses should be culturally sensitive and adapt their marketing strategies to align with the cultural preferences of target markets. This can enhance brand loyalty and contribute to positive brand associations. Cultivating brand loyalty is crucial for sustaining and increasing brand equity.
7. Asian businesses can invest in customer relationship management, loyalty programs, and personalized marketing strategies to enhance brand loyalty. This can be achieved by delivering consistent quality, value, and positive brand experiences.
8. Businesses need to communicate the positive aspects of the COO in their marketing materials. This could include highlighting the rich cultural heritage, technological advancements, or other positive attributes associated with the country. Clear and consistent communication can reinforce positive perceptions and enhance brand equity.
9. Obtaining and highlighting international quality certifications can positively impact perceived quality. Asian businesses should adhere to global standards and obtain certifications that are recognized and valued in their target markets. This can instill confidence in consumers and contribute to positive brand perceptions.
10. Educating consumers about the unique features and qualities associated with products from a particular country can be beneficial. Asian businesses can invest in marketing campaigns that inform consumers about the positive attributes related to the country of origin, fostering positive perceptions and brand loyalty.
11. Therefore, it is crucial for businesses to continuously monitor consumer perceptions, market trends, and the competitive landscape. This information can help in adapting strategies to align with changing consumer preferences and maintaining a positive brand image over time.
12. With the rise of e-commerce, having a strong digital presence is essential. Asian businesses can leverage digital marketing channels to reach a global audience and convey positive brand messages. E-commerce

_____

platforms also provide opportunities for direct consumer interaction and feedback. Collaborations with reputable international partners or endorsements from influential figures can enhance the perceived quality and credibility of Asian brands. Such partnerships can contribute to positive brand associations and elevate brand equity on a global scale.

Thus, the research findings provide a roadmap for Asian businesses to strategically manage their brand equity by considering the interplay of country of origin, perceived quality, and brand loyalty. By implementing these practical implications, businesses can enhance their global competitiveness and build stronger connections with consumers.

8.   Limitations and Future Scope

The constraint of this research study is that it is concentrated to one state of India and studies only passenger cars. For the purpose of enhancing the understanding of the findings the research model can be extended to different industries and countries with different samples, respondents, research design, geographical regions and contexts. Extending the model to the services would be noteworthy as the services are expanding at an exponential rate globally. The study has only two mediators from the Aaker's Brand Equity Dimensions, where other two brand awareness and brand association can also be added to the model to understand the impact of COO on brand equity through all four dimensions. Experimental and longitudinal design can be implemented to examine the model and focus on the fundamental relationships in the long run. For further understanding of the established relationships, qualitative research design can also be conducted. In conclusion, the research model examined in this study makes significant conceptual and empirical contributions, enhancing our comprehension of the factors that trigger brand equity. However, there remains ample room for presenting additional insights in this domain through the exploration of future research ideas discussed herein.

References

[1]   Aaker, D. A. (1991). Managing Brand Equity New York. *NY: Free Pres.*

[2]   Aaker, D. A. (1996). Measuring brand equity across products and markets. *California management review*, *38*(3).

[3]   Aaker, D. A., & Joachimsthaler, E. (2000). The brand relationship spectrum: The key to the brand architecture challenge. *California management review*, *42*(4), 8-23.

[4]   Aaker, J., Fournier, S., & Brasel, S. A. (2004). When good brands do bad. *Journal of Consumer research*, *31*(1), 1-16.

[5]   Aguinis, H. (1995). Statistical power problems with moderated multiple regression in management research. *Journal of management*, *21*(6), 1141-1158.

[6]   Ahmed, S. A., & d'Astous, A. (1996). Country-of-origin and brand effects: a multi-dimensional and multi-attribute study. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, *9*(2), 93-115.

[7]   Akoglu, H. E., & Özbek, O. (2022). The effect of brand experiences on brand loyalty through perceived quality and brand trust: a study on sports consumers. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, *34*(10), 2130-2148.

[8]   Allman, H. F., Fenik, A. P., Hewett, K., & Morgan, F. N. (2016). Brand image evaluations: The interactive roles of country of manufacture, brand concept, and vertical line extension type. *Journal of International Marketing*, *24*(2), 40-61.

[9]   Anselmsson, J., Johansson, U., & Persson, N. (2007). Understanding price premium for grocery products: a conceptual model of customer-based brand equity. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, *16*(6), 401-414.

[10]   Bennett, R., Härtel, C.E. and McColl-Kennedy, J.R. (2005). Experience as a moderator of involvement and satisfaction on brand loyalty in a business-to-business setting 02-314R. *Industrial marketing management*, *34*(1), pp.97-107.

[11]   Bernués, A., Olaizola, A., & Corcoran, K. (2003). Extrinsic attributes of red meat as indicators of quality in Europe: an application for market segmentation. *Food quality and preference*, *14*(4), 265-276.

[12]   Bhattacharya, S., Sharma, R. P., & Gupta, A. (2023). Does e-retailer's country of origin influence consumer privacy, trust and purchase intention?. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, *40*(2), 248-259.

[13]   Bravo Gil, R., Fraj Andrés, E., & Martinez Salinas, E. (2007). Family as a source of consumer-based brand equity. *Journal of product & brand management*, *16*(3), 188-199.

[14]   Brown, G. H. (1953). Brand Loyalty-fact of fiction. *Trademark Rep.*, *43*, 251.

[15]   Chao, P. (1998). Impact of country-of-origin dimensions on product quality and design quality

_____

perceptions. *Journal of Business research*, *42*(1), 1-6.

[16] Chaudhuri, A., & Holbrook, M. B. (2001). The chain of effects from brand trust and brand affect to brand performance: the role of brand loyalty. *Journal of marketing*, *65*(2), 81-93.

[17] Chen, Y. M., Su, Y. F., & Lin, F. J. (2011). Country-of-origin effects and antecedents of industrial brand equity. *Journal of Business Research*, *64*(11), 1234-1238.

[18] Christodoulides, G., Cadogan, J. W., & Veloutsou, C. (2015). Consumer-based brand equity measurement: lessons learned from an international study. *International Marketing Review*, *32*(3/4), 307-328.

[19] Cobb-Walgren, C. J., Ruble, C. A., & Donthu, N. (1995). Brand equity, brand preference, and purchase intent. *Journal of advertising*, *24*(3), 25-40.

[20] Coelho, A., Bairrada, C., & Peres, F. (2019). Brand communities' relational outcomes, through brand love. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, *28*(2), 154-165.

[21] Cordell, V. V. (1992). Effects of consumer preferences for foreign sourced products. *Journal of international business studies*, *23*, 251-269.

[22] Cowan, K., & Guzman, F. (2020). How CSR reputation, sustainability signals, and country-of-origin sustainability reputation contribute to corporate brand performance: An exploratory study. *Journal of business research*, *117*, 683-693.

[23] Dillon, W. R., Madden, T. J., Kirmani, A., & Mukherjee, S. (2001). Understanding what's in a brand rating: A model for assessing brand and attribute effects and their relationship to brand equity. *Journal of Marketing Research*, *38*(4), 415-429.

[24] Dwivedi, A., Johnson, L. W., Wilkie, D. C., & De Araujo-Gil, L. (2019). Consumer emotional brand attachment with social media brands and social media brand equity. *European Journal of Marketing*, *53*(6), 1176-1204.

[25] Ettenson, R., Wagner, J., & Gaeth, G. (1988). Evaluating the effect of country of origin and The'Made in. *Journal of retailing*, *64*(1), 85.

[26] Falk, R. F., & Miller, N. B. (1992). *A primer for soft modeling*. University of Akron Press.

[27] Fernandes, T., & Moreira, M. (2019). Consumer brand engagement, satisfaction and brand loyalty: a comparative study between functional and emotional brand relationships. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, *28*(2), 274-286.

[28] Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F. (1981). Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error. *Journal of marketing research*, *18*(1), 39-50.

[29] Gallart-Camahort, V., Fiol, L. C., & García, J. S. (2023). Influence of the internet on retailer's perceived quality in the generation of retailer's brand equity. *Vision*, *27*(1), 33-47.

[30] Gladden, J. M., & Milne, G. R. (1999). Examining the importance of brand equity in professional sports. *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, *8*, 21-30.

[31] Hair, J. F., Anderson, R. E., Tahtam, R. L., & Balck, V. C. (1995). Multivarite data analysis with reading" prentice hall. *International Inc, A Viacorn Company, New Jersey*.

[32] He, H., Li, Y., & Harris, L. (2012). Social identity perspective on brand loyalty. *Journal of business research*, *65*(5), 648-657.

[33] Heitmann, M., Landwehr, J. R., Schreiner, T. F., & van Heerde, H. J. (2020). Leveraging brand equity for effective visual product design. *Journal of Marketing Research*, *57*(2), 257-277.

[34] Herz, M. F., & Diamantopoulos, A. (2013). Country-specific associations made by consumers: A dual-coding theory perspective. *Journal of International Marketing*, *21*(3), 95-121.

[35] Heslop, L. A., Liefeld, J. P., & Wall, M. (1987). An experimental study of the impact of country-of-origin information. *Marketing*, *8*, 179-185.

[36] Hien, N., Phuong, N., Tran, T. V., & Thang, L. (2020). The effect of country-of-origin image on purchase intention: The mediating role of brand image and brand evaluation. *Management science letters*, *10*(6), 1205-1212.

[37] Hong, S. T., & Wyer Jr, R. S. (1989). Effects of country-of-origin and product-attribute information on product evaluation: An information processing perspective. *Journal of consumer research*, *16*(2), 175-187.

[38] Hong, S. T., & Wyer Jr, R. S. (1990). Determinants of product evaluation: Effects of the time interval between knowledge of a product's country of origin and information about its specific attributes. *Journal of Consumer research*, *17*(3), 277-288.

[39] Honkanen, P., Olsen, S. O., Verplanken, B., & Tuu, H. H. (2012). Reflective and impulsive influences on unhealthy snacking. The moderating effects of food related self-control. *Appetite*, *58*(2), 616-622.

[40] Iglesias, O., Singh, J. J., & Batista-Foguet, J. M. (2011). The role of brand experience and affective commitment in determining brand loyalty. *Journal of brand Management*, *18*, 570-582.

[41] Islam, T., & Hussain, M. (2022). How consumer uncertainty intervene country of origin image and consumer purchase intention? The moderating role of brand image. *International Journal of Emerging Markets*,

_____

(ahead-of-print).

[42] Japutra, A., Ekinci, Y., & Simkin, L. (2018). Positive and negative behaviours resulting from brand attachment: The moderating effects of attachment styles. *European Journal of Marketing*, *52*(5/6), 1185-1202.

[43] Jiang, K., Luk, S. T. K., & Cardinali, S. (2018). The role of pre-consumption experience in perceived value of retailer brands: Consumers' experience from emerging markets. *Journal of Business Research*, *86*, 374-385.

[44] Johansson, J. K., Douglas, S. P., & Nonaka, I. (1985). Assessing the impact of country of origin on product evaluations: a new methodological perspective. *Journal of Marketing Research*, *22*(4), 388-396.

[45] Kapferer, J. N. (2004). *The new strategic brand management,* Kogan Page Publishers.

[46] Keller, K. L. (1993). Conceptualizing, measuring, and managing customer-based brand equity. *Journal of marketing*, *57*(1), 1-22.

[47] Keller, K. L. (2001). Building customer-based brand equity: A blueprint for creating strong brands.

[48] Keller, K. L., & Lehmann, D. R. (2006). Brands and branding: Research findings and future priorities. *Marketing science*, *25*(6), 740-759.

[49] Keller, K. L., Parameswaran, M. G., & Jacob, I. (2011). *Strategic brand management: Building, measuring, and managing brand equity*. Pearson Education India.

[50] Khair, N., Lloyd-Parkes, E., & Deacon, J. (2021). "Foreign brands of course!" An ethnographic study exploring COO image perceptions and its influence on the preference of foreign clothing brands. *Journal of Global Fashion Marketing*, *12*(3), 274-290.

[51] Koschate-Fischer, N., Diamantopoulos, A., & Oldenkotte, K. (2012). Are consumers really willing to pay more for a favorable country image? A study of country-of-origin effects on willingness to pay. *Journal of International Marketing*, *20*(1), 19-41.

[52] Lee, J. K., & Lee, W. N. (2009). Country-of-origin effects on consumer product evaluation and purchase intention: The role of objective versus subjective knowledge. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, *21*(2), 137-151.

[53] Lin, L. Y., & Chen, C. S. (2006). The influence of the country-of-origin image, product knowledge and product involvement on consumer purchase decisions: an empirical study of insurance and catering services in Taiwan. *Journal of consumer Marketing*, *23*(5), 248-265

[54] Lin, L. Y. (2010). The relationship of consumer personality trait, brand personality and brand loyalty: an empirical study of toys and video games buyers. *Journal of product & brand management*, *19*(1), 4-17.

[55] Liu, F., Li, J., Mizerski, D., & Soh, H. (2012). Self-congruity, brand attitude, and brand loyalty: a study on luxury brands. *European Journal of Marketing*, *46*(7/8), 922-937.

[56] Lim, J. S., & Darley, W. K. (1997). An assessment of demand artefacts in country-of-origin studies using three alternative approaches. *International Marketing Review*, *14*(4), 201-217.

[57] Luciano, M. M., Mathieu, J. E., Park, S., & Tannenbaum, S. I. (2018). A fitting approach to construct and measurement alignment: The role of big data in advancing dynamic theories. *Organizational Research Methods*, *21*(3), 592-632.

[58] Magnusson, P., Haas, S. M., & Zhao, H. (2008). A branding strategy for emerging market firms entering developed markets. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, *20*(3-4), 95-107.

[59] Matzler, K., Grabner-Kräuter, S., & Bidmon, S. (2008). Risk aversion and brand loyalty: the mediating role of brand trust and brand affect. *Journal of product & brand management*, *17*(3), 154-162.

[60] Moore, E. S., Wilkie, W. L., & Lutz, R. J. (2002). Passing the torch: Intergenerational influences as a source of brand equity. *Journal of Marketing*, *66*(2), 17-37.

[61] Nagashima, A. (1970). A comparison of Japanese and US attitudes toward foreign products. *Journal of marketing*, *34*(1), 68-74.

[62] Nagashima, A. (1977). A comparative" made in" product image survey among Japanese businessmen. *The Journal of Marketing*, 95-100.

[63] Oliver, R. L., & DeSarbo, W. S. (1988). Response determinants in satisfaction judgments. *Journal of consumer research*, *14*(4), 495-507.

[64] Oh, T. T., Keller, K. L., Neslin, S. A., Reibstein, D. J., & Lehmann, D. R. (2020). The past, present, and future of brand research. *Marketing Letters*, *31*, 151-162.

[65] Ozdemir, S., Zhang, S., Gupta, S., & Bebek, G. (2020). The effects of trust and peer influence on corporate brand—Consumer relationships and consumer loyalty. *Journal of Business Research*, *117*, 791-805.

[66] Pappu, R., & Quester, P. G. (2016). How does brand innovativeness affect brand loyalty?. *European Journal of Marketing*, *50*(1/2), 2-28.

[67] Parris, D. L., & Guzmán, F. (2023). Evolving brand boundaries and expectations: looking back on brand equity, brand loyalty, and brand image research to move forward. *Journal of Product & Brand*

_____

Management, *32*(2), 191-234.

[68] Pedeliento, G., Andreini, D., Bergamaschi, M., & Salo, J. (2016). Brand and product attachment in an industrial context: The effects on brand loyalty. *Industrial Marketing Management*, *53*, 194-206.

[69] Popp, B., & Woratschek, H. (2017). Consumer–brand identification revisited: An integrative framework of brand identification, customer satisfaction, and price image and their role for brand loyalty and word of mouth. *Journal of Brand Management*, *24*, 250-270.

[70] Prachaseree, K., Ahmad, N., & Isa, N. M. (2023). The influence of online retail/service brand equity and effect of country of origin on e-marketplace patronage intention. *International Journal of Electronic Business*, *18*(1), 1-29.

[71] Quester, P., & Lin Lim, A. (2003). Product involvement/brand loyalty: is there a link?. *Journal of product & brand management*, *12*(1), 22-38.

[72] Ramaseshan, B., & Stein, A. (2014). Connecting the dots between brand experience and brand loyalty: The mediating role of brand personality and brand relationships. *Journal of Brand Management*, *21*, 664-683.

[73] Rao, A. R., & Monroe, K. B. (1989). The effect of price, brand name, and store name on buyers' perceptions of product quality: An integrative review. *Journal of marketing Research*, *26*(3), 351-357.

[74] Rashid, A., Barnes, L., & Warnaby, G. (2016). Management perspectives on country of origin. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, *20*(2), 230-244.

[75] Rezvani, S., Dehkordi, G. J., Rahman, M. S., Fouladivanda, F., Habibi, M., & Eghtebasi, S. (2012). A conceptual study on the country of origin effect on consumer purchase intention. *Asian Social Science*, *8*(12), 205-215.

[76] Romaniuk, J., & Nenycz-Thiel, M. (2013). Behavioral brand loyalty and consumer brand associations. *Journal of Business Research*, *66*(1), 67-72.

[77] Russell-Bennett, R., McColl-Kennedy, J. R., & Coote, L. V. (2007). Involvement, satisfaction, and brand loyalty in a small business services setting. *Journal of business research*, *60*(12), 1253-1260.

[78] Sáenz-Navajas, M. P., Avizcuri, J. M., Echávarri, J. F., Ferreira, V., Fernández-Zurbano, P., & Valentin, D. (2016). Understanding quality judgements of red wines by experts: Effect of evaluation condition. *Food Quality and Preference*, *48*, 216-227.

[79] Saleem, S., & Omar, R. M. (2015). Measuring customer based beverage brand equity: Investigating the relationship between perceived quality, brand awareness, brand image, and brand loyalty.

[80] Sauer, P. L., Young, M. A., & Unnava, H. R. (1991). An experimental investigation of the processes behind the country of origin effect. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, *3*(2), 29-60.

[81] Schooler, R. D. (1965). Product bias in the Central American common market. *Journal of marketing research*, *2*(4), 394-397.

[82] Sharma, P. (2011). Country of origin effects in developed and emerging markets: Exploring the contrasting roles of materialism and value consciousness. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *42*, 285-306.

[83] Shirvani, S. M., Motamedi, N., & Mohtaram, R. (2020). The effect of country-of-origin on the consumer purchase intention considering the mediating role of the brand equity dimensions. *International Journal of Business Information Systems*, *35*(3), 363-377.

[84] Shocker, A. D., & Weitz, B. (1988). A perspective on brand equity principles and issues (Report No. 91-124). *Cambridge, MA Mark. Sci. Inst*.

[85] Shocker, A. D., Srivastava, R. K., & Ruekert, R. W. (1994). Challenges and opportunities facing brand management: An introduction to the special issue. *Journal of marketing research*, *31*(2), 149-158.

[86] Sirgy, M. J., Lee, D. J., Johar, J. Y., & Tidwell, J. (2008). Effect of self-congruity with sponsorship on brand loyalty. *Journal of Business Research*, *61*(10), 1091-1097.

[87] https://www.statista.com/ (Accessed 10 March 2023).

[88] Suh, Y., Hur, J., & Davies, G. (2016). Cultural appropriation and the country of origin effect. *Journal of Business Research*, *69*(8), 2721-2730.