



## Advancing the country image construct<sup>☆</sup>

Katharina P. Roth<sup>1</sup>, Adamantios Diamantopoulos<sup>\*</sup>

Department of Business Administration, University of Vienna, Bruenner Strasse 72, A-1210 Vienna, Austria

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### ABSTRACT

In today's globalized markets a favorable country-of-origin image (CoI) has a considerable impact on consumers' evaluation of products originating from different countries and therefore influences their subsequent buying decisions. The current paper seeks to extend our conceptual understanding of the nature and functioning of the CoI construct. The aim is threefold, namely to provide a succinct state-of-the-art picture of country image research in international marketing, to contribute to a better measurement of the country image construct, and, finally, to develop an agenda for future research.

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### 1. Introduction

Literature on national stereotypes as well as the perception of nations traces back to the 1930s (e.g., Child and Doob, 1943; Katz and Braly, 1933; Klingberg, 1941) but it was not until the early 1960s that the concept of country-of-origin (CoO) gained the attention of marketing scholars. Ernest Dichter (1962) argues that the successful marketing manager of the future has to pay attention to the basic differences and similarities among consumers in different parts of the world. Schooler's (1965) study is the first to empirically demonstrate that consumers rate products that are identical in every respect except for their CoO differently.

Recent literature reviews estimate the number of publications on topics relating to CoO at well over 1000 with at least 400 of them being published in academic (peer-reviewed) journals (Usunier, 2006). This body of research shows that a product's national origin acts as a signal of product quality (e.g., Han, 1989; Li and Wyer, 1994) and also affects perceived risk and value as well as likelihood of purchase (see Liefeld, 1993 for a review). Numerous articles published in the business press underline the importance of this effect. For example, following the publication of a series of controversial cartoons picturing the Prophet Mohammed, Danish products were yanked off the shelves of many stores in the Middle East, finally costing Denmark's companies millions and raising fears of irreparable damage to trade ties (Fattah, 2006). After a number of recalls and disasters of products made overseas, American consumers are very sensible with respect to the origin of the product and

actively search for products "made in the USA" (Martin, 2007). In this respect, Scott Piergrossi, creative director at Brand Institute Inc. points out that "[c]onsumers are yearning now for reliable, high-quality goods. It need to be once again communicated to the public that quality craftsmanship is associated with the USA" (Vence, 2007, p. 12). These examples show that CoO is an important informational cue that is of interest not only for businesses that need to enhance their competitiveness abroad, but also for public policy makers with similar concerns but at the national or industry level (Papadopoulos et al., 2000).

In conceptual terms, the focus of CoO research has gradually shifted from evaluating differences in product evaluations and preferences based on the mere notion of the national origin of a product (e.g., Italy, Japan, USA) to a more complex construct, namely the *image* of the countries under consideration. While conventional CoO studies allow researchers to analyze *if* consumers prefer products or brands from one country in comparison to another, emphasis on the perceived images of the countries involved enables scholars to analyze *why* this is the case. For example, the technological superiority or economic strength of a particular country could explain the latter. Hence, more and more CoO studies explicitly measure the image of a country as product origin, that is, the so-called country-of-origin image (CoI).

Despite the acknowledged importance of the CoI construct, literature has reached no consensus on how to conceptualize and operationalize CoI (Laroche et al., 2005). Indeed, no systematic analysis of extant conceptualizations and associated measurement scales of the CoI construct exists, leaving researchers with little guidance on how to best operationalize the construct in empirical efforts. The present study addresses this gap by (1) undertaking a state-of-the-art review of current conceptualizations and operationalizations of the CoI construct, (2) identifying critical issues inherent in these, (3) proposing an integrated CoI framework based on attitude theory, and (4) highlighting important areas for future research.

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<sup>\*</sup> Corresponding author. Tel.: +43 1 4277 38031.

E-mail addresses: [katharina.roth@univie.ac.at](mailto:katharina.roth@univie.ac.at) (K.P. Roth), [adamantios.diamantopoulos@univie.ac.at](mailto:adamantios.diamantopoulos@univie.ac.at) (A. Diamantopoulos).

<sup>1</sup> Tel.: +43 1 4277 38040.

## 2. Theoretical background

### 2.1. Definitional domains

The domain of a construct delineates what is included in its definition and what is excluded (Churchill, 1979). A review of the definitional domains in extant Col research reveals three distinct groups that differ in their focal image object (Table 1), namely (1) definitions of the (general) image of countries (i.e., country image), (2) definitions of the image of countries and their products (also referred to as product-country images), and (3) definitions of the images of products from a country (i.e., product image).

The first group of definitions views country image as a generic construct consisting of generalized images created not only by representative products but also by the degree of economic and political maturity, historical events and relationships, culture and traditions, and the degree of technological virtuosity and industrialization (Allred et al., 1999; Bannister and Saunders, 1978; Desborde, 1990). While all of these factors refer to *cognitive* beliefs about a particular country, Askegaard and Ger (1998) and Verlegh (2001) are among the few researchers who explicitly also mention an *affective* component of country image, the latter capturing emotions and feelings about a particular country. While, already in its origins, image theory assumes that national images have both a cognitive and an affective structure (e.g., Boulding, 1956, 1959), most definitions of Col rather neglect the latter. For example, Martin and Eroglu (1993, p. 193, *emphasis added*) define country image as “the total of all descriptive, inferential and informational *beliefs* one has about a particular

country”, while Kotler et al. (1993, p. 141) refer to it as “the sum of beliefs and impressions people hold about places”.

The next category of definitions focuses on the image of countries in their role as origins of products. For example, Li et al. (1997, p. 166) define country image as “consumers’ images of different countries and of products made in these countries.” This definition implies that, first, country image and product image are two distinct (but related) concepts, and, second, that country images affect the images of products from that country. Indeed, several studies show that there is a relationship between consumers’ preference for a country’s products and consumers’ image of a country (e.g., Ittersum et al., 2003; Roth and Romeo, 1992). However, although the term product-country image (PCI) is “felt to be broader and represent more accurately [...] the phenomenon under study” (Papadopoulos, 1993, p. 8), it offers a rather restrictive view of the conceptual domain of Col. This is because the image of a country might not only affect the evaluation of that country’s products, but also other important outcomes such as investments, visits and ties with a country (e.g., Heslop et al., 2004). For example, Mattel recently recalled 19 million toys from China due to product safety concerns which will definitely affect its future investment behavior as well as the current ties it has with China (Story and Barboza, 2007).

The last group of definitions focuses exclusively on the images of the products of a country and dates back to Nagashima (1970). However, although using the term *country* to specify the image object, Nagashima’s (1970) definition actually refers to the *products* of a particular country (e.g., Martin and Eroglu, 1993; Papadopoulos and Heslop, 2003). Thus, it is *product image* rather than *country image* that

**Table 1**  
Review of key definitions of country image.

Definitions on (overall) country image (Col)	
Bannister and Saunders (1978, p. 562)	“Generalized images, created by variables such as representative products, economic and political maturity, historical events and relationships, traditions, industrialization and the degree of technological virtuosity.”
Desborde (1990, p. 44)	“Country-of-origin image refers to the overall impression of a country present in a consumer’s mind as conveyed by its culture, political system and level of economic and technological development.”
Martin and Eroglu (1993, p. 193)	“Accordingly, country image was defined as the total of all descriptive, inferential and informational beliefs one has about a particular country.”
Kotler et al. (1993, p. 141)	“The sum of beliefs and impressions people hold about places. Images represent a simplification of a large number of associations and pieces of information connected with a place. They are a product of the mind trying to process and pick out essential information from huge amounts of data about a place.”
Askegaard and Ger (1998, p. 52)	“Schema, or a network of interrelated elements that define the country, a knowledge structure that synthesises what we know of a country, together with its evaluative significance or schema-triggered affect.”
Allred et al. (1999, p. 36)	“The perception or impression that organizations and consumers have about a country. This impression or perception of a country is based on the country’s economic condition, political structure, culture, conflict with other countries, labor conditions, and stand on environmental issues.”
Verlegh and Steenkamp (1999, p. 525)	“Mental representations of a country’s people, products, culture and national symbols. Product-country images contain widely shared cultural stereotypes.”
Verlegh (2001, p. 25)	“A mental network of affective and cognitive associations connected to the country.”
Definitions on product-country image (PCI)	
Hooley et al. (1988, p. 67)	“Stereotype images of countries and/or their outputs [...] that [...] impact on behaviour.”
Li et al. (1997, p. 116)	“Consumers’ images of different countries and of products made in these countries.”
Knight and Calantone (2000, p. 127)	“Country-of-origin image (COI) reflects a consumer’s perceptions about the quality of products made in a particular country and the nature of people from that country.”
Jaffe and Nebenzahl (2001, p. 13)	“Brand and country images are similarly defined as the mental pictures of brands and countries, respectively.”
Nebenzahl et al. (2003, p. 388)	“Consumers’ perceptions about the attributes of products made in a certain country; emotions toward the country and resulted perceptions about the social desirability of owning products made in the country.”
Papadopoulos and Heslop (2003, p. 404)	“Product-country images (PCIs), or the place-related images with which buyers and/or sellers may associate a product.”
Definitions on (country-related) product image (PI)	
Nagashima (1970, p. 68)	“‘Image’ means ideas, emotional background, and connotation associated with a concept. Thus, the ‘made in’ image is the picture, the reputation, the stereotype that businessmen and consumers attach to products of a specific country.”
Narayana (1981, p. 32)	“The aggregate image for any particular country’s product refers to the entire connotative field associated with that country’s product offerings, as perceived by consumers.”
Han (1989, p. 222)	“Consumers’ general perceptions of quality for products made in a given country.”
Roth and Romeo (1992, p. 480)	“Country image is the overall perception consumers’ form of products from a particular country, based on their prior perceptions of the country’s production and marketing strengths and weaknesses.”
Bilkey (1993, p. xix)	“Buyers’ opinions regarding the relative qualities of goods and services produced in various countries”
Strutton et al. (1995, p. 79)	“Composite ‘made in’ image consisting of the mental facsimiles, reputations and stereotypes associated with goods originating from each country of interest.”

is actually captured by the definitional domain of the construct. Following Nagashima's (1970) example, many other researchers (e.g., Han, 1989; Roth and Romeo, 1992; Strutton et al., 1995) propose similar conceptualizations concentrating on product image rather than CoI as actually claimed. According to Papadopoulos and Heslop's (2003, p. 425) review, the vast majority of extant CoO studies focuses on product images and "the number of studies who have in fact included country measures is extremely small".

## 2.2. Conceptual specification

The inconsistency in the definitional domains of the CoI construct noted above results in considerable confusion regarding its conceptual specification. As Table 1 illustrates, many researchers define CoI as "perceptions" (e.g., Allred et al., 1999; Han, 1989; Nebenzahl et al., 2003), others use related terms such as "impressions" or "associations" (e.g., Ittersum et al., 2003), still others refer to "stereotypes" (e.g., Hooley et al., 1988; Strutton et al., 1995; Verlegh and Steenkamp, 1999) or "schemas" (Askegaard and Ger, 1998; Ger, 1991) and, finally, a few authors specify CoI as "beliefs" (e.g., Kotler et al., 1993; Martin and Eroglu, 1993), which represent one component of attitudes (Zanna and Rempel, 1988). While, in principle, none of these terms is wrong as such, a closer look at the nature of the underlying concepts (i.e., perceptions, stereotypes, schemas and beliefs) reveals that most of them are not comprehensive enough to fully capture the domain of the country image construct for the following reasons.

Perceptions usually refer to the process consumers select, organize, and interpret intrinsic (e.g., sights, sounds, smells, tastes) or extrinsic stimuli (e.g., brand, price, CoO) (Solomon et al., 2006). In the context of CoO research, the perceptual process could thus help to explain how consumers select, organize and interpret the CoO cue compared to other cues such as brand, warranties or price (Brijs, 2006). In this respect, CoO represents a synonym for a verbal or textual stimulus, that is, the "made in" label printed on the product. Thus, the concept of perceptions offers a good theoretical framework for analyzing, say, the importance of CoO compared to other extrinsic or intrinsic cues or the relative importance of one CoO compared to another. However, strictly speaking, the concept of perception does not contain a subsequent evaluation, and, hence, consumers' reaction to this interpretation is not included (Brijs, 2006; Moeller, 1997).

Two other concepts usually cited in the context of CoI are stereotypes and schemas (e.g., Askegaard and Ger, 1997; Ger et al., 1999; Kochunny et al., 1993). Bar-Tal (1997, p. 491) defines stereotypes as "stored beliefs about characteristics of a group of people." Schemas, on the other hand, refer to "cognitive structures of organized prior knowledge, abstracted from experience with specific instances" (Fiske and Linville, 1980, p. 543). According to social psychology literature, stereotypes and schemas belong to the cognitive facet of attitudes. For example, Esses et al. (1993, p. 138) split the belief component of attitude into (1) stereotypes (i.e., "beliefs about the specific characteristics possessed by members of a social group"), and (2) "more general beliefs about the social group, including symbolic beliefs". In a similar vein, Fiske et al. (1980, p. 551) suggest that the "cognitive component of attitudes, of course, most closely relates to schemas, in several respects." Thus, both stereotypes and schemas are valuable concepts for describing the cognitive part of CoI. However, as mentioned above, images (e.g., Boulding, 1959; Poesz, 1989) comprise a cognitive as well as an affective component, and various studies in other disciplines such as advertising or service recovery encounters show that emotions can lead to much stronger reactions than pure cognitions (e.g., Aylesworth and MacKenzie, 1998; Schoefer and Diamantopoulos, 2008; Zajonc and Markus, 1982). It is thus important to consider also country emotions as part of CoI (see also Nebenzahl et al., 2003; Verlegh et al., 1999). Hence, also stereotypes and schemas do not fully capture the (country) image construct.

The only concept in the CoO literature (e.g., Heslop and Papadopoulos, 1993; Laroche et al., 2005; Parameswaran and Pisharodi, 1994) that

does not suffer from the above limitations is attitude theory. Fishbein and Ajzen (1975, p. 6) define attitudes as "a learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favorable or unfavorable manner with respect to a given object". Hence, this concept has the ability to explain favorable or unfavorable country evaluations. Furthermore, attitudes do not consist of cognitive aspects only, but also include affective (i.e., specific feelings or emotions) and conative (i.e., intended behavior) facets (e.g., Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975; Zanna and Rempel, 1988). Attitude theory is thus a powerful tool because (1) it can explain how countries are seen in the mind of the consumers, that is, what beliefs (including stereotypes and schemas) and emotions towards a country they have, (2) how this information affects their reactions towards a country, that is, consumers' country conations, and (3) how CoI differs from and interacts with other constructs typically mentioned in CoO research, such as, consumer ethnocentrism (Shimp and Sharma, 1987), consumer animosity (Klein et al., 1998) or consumer cosmopolitanism (Yoon et al., 1995).

The next section reviews extant CoI measurement instruments and evaluates them based on the conceptual underpinnings of attitude theory. Based on this analysis, the focus is then on elaborating an integrative framework that outlines how CoI impacts consumer behavior.

## 3. Review of CoI scales

The previous section shows that several notions of CoI exist in the literature with different specifications of the conceptual domain. The operational implication of these differences is a plethora of measurement instruments, as the following review shows.

A thorough review of the CoO literature reveals 30 studies with a concrete measure of country image and another 40 containing a measure for product image. Since the focus of the present paper is on the former, the subsequent discussion considers only the 30 CoI scales (see Table 2); the list of product image scales is available from the authors upon request. Studies employing an existing scale without significant modifications (e.g., Knight and Calantone, 2000; Parameswaran and Yaprak, 1987; Yaprak and Parameswaran, 1986) are clustered together. On the other hand, scales that are based on an existing instrument but result in a different factor structure (e.g., Lee and Ganesh, 1999; Pereira et al., 2005) are counted separately. Note that early studies on national stereotypes also include a list of adjectives describing (people of) various nations (e.g., Buchanan and Cantril, 1953; Katz and Braly, 1933) or some sort of dimensions to cluster countries (e.g., Jones and Ashmore, 1973; Robinson and Hefner, 1967). However, since such measures are (at least partly) incorporated in extant CoI scales (e.g., Heslop and Papadopoulos, 1993; Papadopoulos, 1986; Verlegh, 2001) and given that reviews on national stereotypes and perceptions of nations already exist (e.g., Askegaard and Ger, 1998; Bar-Tal, 1997; Mossberg and Kleppe, 2005), a detailed evaluation of these measures is beyond the scope of the present paper.

### 3.1. Study settings

In the first comprehensive review of CoO research, Bilkey and Nes (1982) criticize the heavy reliance on US samples. As Table 2 shows, this is still an issue. Research includes developing a total of 21 scales in a single country only from the 30 studies under consideration. From these, more than half pertain to the USA (ten studies), followed by Germany (three studies), The Netherlands, Canada and Australia (two studies) and Belgium and France (one study each). Having said that, five studies (Kühn, 1993; Nebenzahl et al., 2003; Papadopoulos, 1986; Papadopoulos et al., 2000; Schweiger, 1988) validate their scales in a variety of countries using samples from North and South America, Europe, Middle East, Africa, Asia and Australia. The remaining four studies (Häubl, 1996; Knight et al., 2003; Pereira et al., 2005; Yaprak and Parameswaran, 1986) use samples stemming from at least two different countries.

Regarding the sourcing countries, that is, the target CoOs under consideration, Germany, the USA, and Japan dominate. Out of the 30 studies in Table 2, 21 selected at least one of these three as a focal CoO.

**Table 2**

Overview of key conceptualizations of country image.

Author(s)	Country(ies) of survey	CoO	Product category(ies)	Product dimension(s)	Country dimension(s)	Attitude towards country	Methodology	Reliability test (s) reported	Validity test(s) reported	Sample	Items origin
Wang and Lamb, 1980	USA	France, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Rumania, Spain, Sweden, USSR, W. Germany	Products in general	n.a.	Foreign environmental influence • Economic environment • Political environment	Cognitive	Descriptive analysis, ANOVA	n.a.	n.a.	N = 273, households, random sample	Literature review
Wang and Lamb, 1983	USA	36 countries	Products in general	n.a.	Foreign environmental influence • Political environment • Cultural environment • Economic environment	Cognitive	ANOVA	Spearman -Brown split-half coefficients	n.a.	Pretest: N = 94 students; main: N = 305, households, random sample	Literature review
Papadopoulos, 1986 (validated: Papadopoulos et al., 1990; Heslop and Papadopoulos, 1993, and others)	Canada, UK, USA, France, Greece, Germany, Netherlands, Hungary	USA, Canada, Japan, Sweden, UK, home	Products in general	Product dimensions • Product integrity (7 items) • Price-value (2 items) • Market presence (4 items) • Response (4 items)	Country-people dimensions • Belief (3 items) • Affect (4 items) • Link (2 items)	Cognitive, affective?, conative	PCA	Internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha$ )	n.a.	Grand total N = 2247, consumers, systematic cluster sample or quota sample	Nagashima (1970, 1977), Darling and Kraft (1977), Kelman (1965), literature on nation images
Yaprak et al., 1986 (Y&P); Parameswaran and Yaprak, 1987 (validated: Knight and Calantone, 2000; K&C)	Y & P: USA, Turkey K & C: Japan	Y & P: W. Germany, Japan, Italy K & C: USA, Germany, Japan	Y & P: Products in general, cars, cameras, calculators K & C: cars	General product attitudes, GPA (14 items) Specific product attributes, SPA (cars, 9 items) Specific product attributes (cameras, 8 items) Specific product attributes (calculators, 7 items)	Y & P: general country attitudes, GCA (10 items) K & C: people (9 items)	Cognitive, affective?	Y & P: Mean scores, ANOVA K & C: CFA	Internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha$ )	K & C: Construct (convergent, discriminant)	Y & P: N = 158 (USA), 202 (Turkey), business executives, random sample; K & C: Grand total N = 914, households & students, convenience sample	Literature review
Schweiger, 1988 (also: Schweiger, 1990, 1992; Schweiger and Kurz, 1997, and others)	31 countries from (Western & Eastern) Europe, Asia, North & South America, Africa	Austria, Germany, Switzerland	n.a.	n.a.	8 Image dimensions 6 emotional attributes 4 objective attributes	Cognitive, affective	Descriptive Analysis	n.a.	n.a.	Grand total N = 14000, consumers, convenience sample	Consumers' free associations to pictures from a country
Desborde, 1990	USA	Canada, Japan, USA	n.a.	n.a.	CoO Scale Cultural & political affinity and similarity (8 items) Level of economic development, technological & product superiority (5 items) Affective "Col Scale" (10 item)	Cognitive, affective	EFA (PCA), CFA	Internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha$ )	Content, Construct (convergent, discriminant)	N = 709, households, random sample	Deductive approach, expert judges

Table 2 (continued)

Author(s)	Country(ies) of survey	CoO	Product category(ies)	Product dimension(s)	Country dimension(s)	Attitude towards country	Methodology	Reliability test (s) reported	Validity test(s) reported	Sample	Items origin
Ger (1991)	France (including students from France, UK, Germany, other European States)	Israel, Morocco, Algeria, Egypt, Yugoslavia, Greece, Turkey, France, Italy, Spain, Portugal	n.a.	n.a.	Similarity perceptions (7 dimensions) Thoughts about country (4 dimensions) Attitude towards countries (4 items)	Cognitive, affective, conative	Hierarchical cluster analysis, Mean scores	n.a.	n.a.	N = 119, graduate students, convenience sample	Questionnaires
Weber and Grundhöfer, 1991	Germany	Germany, UK, USA, France, Italy, Spain, Sweden, Austria, Poland, Switzerland, Yugoslavia, Russia, Hungary, Romania	n.a.	n.a.	Country image dimensions • Politics • Appearance • Culture • People • Economy	Cognitive	Repertory test method	n.a.	n.a.	N = 30, consumers, convenience sample	Exploratory tests
Pisharodi and Parameswaran, 1992 (validated: Parameswaran and Pisharodi, 1994, 2002)	USA	USA	Products in general, Cars, blenders	German brands • GPA 1 (5 items) • GPA 2 (4 items) • GPA 3 (3 items) • SPA (car, 4 items) • SPA 1 (blender, 8 items) • SPA 2 (blender, 3 items)	German brands • GCA 1 (5 items) • GCA 2 (3 items) Korean brands • GCA 1 (6 items) • GCA 2 (3 items)	Cognitive, affective?, conative?	CFA	Internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha$ )	Construct (convergent, discriminant)	N = 678, adult consumers, systematic sample	Parameswaran and Yaprak, (1987), Yaprak and Parameswaran (1986)
Chao and Rajendran, 1993	USA	Japan, Germany	14 consumer products	This person... 10 dimensions (25 items)		Cognitive, affective (?)	Correlations, ANOVA	n.a.	n.a.	N = 499, students, convenience sample	Pilot study, pretest
Kühn, 1993	Switzerland, UK, Italy, USA, Japan, France, Germany	Switzerland, UK, Italy, USA, Japan, France, Germany	Products in general	Made-in-image • Product attributes (6 items)	Live-in-image • People • Culture/society • Economic policy/politics • Economic situation	Cognitive	Mean scores	n.a.	n.a.	N = 3347, managers, judgement sample	n.a.
Martin and Eroglu, 1993 (validated: Li et al., 1997)	USA	Japan (pretest), India, W. Germany, USA (revised)	n.a.	n.a.	Country image	Cognitive	PCA, CFA	Internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha$ ), split-halves reliability	Content, Construct (convergent, discriminant)	Initial: N = 200; revised: N = 230 (USA), 80 (Germany), 80 (India), students, convenience sample	Questionnaire, focus groups, expert judgement, pretest
Häubl, 1996	Germany, France	Germany, Czech Republic	Cars	Evaluation of model's appearance (3 items) Evaluation of the model's features (4 items) Attitude towards the model (4 items) Evaluation of cars made in country (4 items)	Affective evaluation of country (4 items) Cognitive evaluation of country (4 items) Evaluation of country's car industry (4 items)	Cognitive, affective	Multigroup CFA	Internal consistency reliability, cross-national invariance	Construct (discriminant)	N = 309 (Germany), 313 (France), car owners, quota sample	Parameswaran and Yaprak, (1987), McGee and Spiro (1991), Pisharodi and Parameswaran (1992), Martin and Eroglu (1993), Jaffe and Nebenzahl (1993)
Lebreuz, 1996	Germany (including some students from other countries)	Korea, Japan, Germany	Cars, TV	Special made-in-image (5 items)	• Country knowledge • Affective component (3 items) • Cognitive component (12 item)	Cognitive, affective, conative	PCA	n.a.	n.a.	N = 465, students, convenience sample	n.a.
Moeller, 1997	Germany	Germany, China, France, Japan, South Africa	Products in general, cars, fashion	Products in general (3 items) cars (5 items) fashion (2 items)	Country image • Factor 1 (cognitive, 6 items) • Factor 2 ("affective", 2 items)	Cognitive	PCA	n.a.	Content, Construct (convergent, discriminant, nomological)	Pretest: N = 60, students; main: N = 415, tourists, judgement sample	Col literature (38 studies); Spiegel Verlag (1993) (cars, fashion)



Allred et al., 1999	USA	China, Scotland, Mexico, South Africa, Russia, Singapore	n.a.	n.a.	Country image • Environment (5 items) • Labor (6 items) • Economy (5 items) • Conflict (5 items) • Politics (4 items) • Vocational training (4 items) • Work culture (2 items)	Cognitive	EFA (PCA), CFA	Internal consistency reliability	n.a.	N = 214, students, convenience sample	Marketing and non-marketing literature, focus groups
Lee and Ganesh, 1999	USA	USA, Japan	TV, VCR	Product image, brand image, brand evaluation (15 items)	Overall image: country (4 items) Overall image: people (7 items) Overall image: country & people	Cognitive, affective?	CFA	Internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha$ )	n.a.	N = 233, households, random sample	Parameswaran and Yaprak, (1987)
Papadopoulos et al., 2000	8 original countries + Mexico, Spain, Israel, Australia, Hong Kong, Indonesia	USA, Japan, Sweden, Canada, home country	Products in general	Product image • Product integrity (9 items) • Price (1 item) • Market presence (5 items) • Buyer response (5 items)	Country image • Advancement (7 items) • People affect (5 items) • Desired links (4 items)	Cognitive, affective?, conative	PCA, mean scores, MANOVA	Internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha$ )	n.a.	Grand total N = 6094, consumers, systematic area sample	Papadopoulos et al. (1990), Heslop and Papadopoulos (1993)
Verlegh, 2001	The Netherlands	The Netherlands, Germany, Spain, Italy	Tomatoes, Washing Machines	Product beliefs • Hedonic beliefs (3 items) • Utilitarian beliefs (3 items)	Country image • Natural landscape (2 items) • Climate (2 items) • Competence (3 items) • Creativity (3 items) • Positive feelings (3 items) • Negative feelings (3 items)	Cognitive, affective	Multigroup CFA	Internal consistency reliability (composite reliability), measurement invariance	n.a.	N = 202 (tomatoes), N = 204 (washing machines), consumers, convenience sample	Literature on national stereotypes and perception of nations, group discussions, pretests
Ittersum et al., 2003	The Netherlands	The Netherlands	Beer, potatoes	Product attributes (beer) • Quality (4 items) • Health (5 items) • Exclusivity (4 items)	Product specific regional image • Human (4 items) • Nature (2 items) • Climate (2 items)	Cognitive	EFA, CFA, ANOVA	Internal consistency reliability (composite reliability)	Construct (convergent, discriminant)	N = 130, households, convenience sample	Focus groups, personal interviews, expert interviews
Knight et al., 2003	USA, Japan, Turkey	Germany	Cars and wristwatches	COISCALE • neg. offering (2 items) • Positive offering (2 items) • Advertising (1 item) • Distribution (1 item) • Price (1 item)	COISCALE • people (2 items) • Political situationZ	Cognitive, affective?	Multigroup CFA	Internal consistency reliability, cross-national invariance	Construct (nomological, convergent, discriminant)	N = 488, students, convenience sample; N = 631, households, random sample	Parameswaran and Yaprak (1987)
Nebenzahl et al., 2003	Israel, France, USA, Mexico, Canada	Germany, Japan, South Korea	Home electronic products	A person who buys products made in (country) is... • Quality and satisfaction seeker (11 items) • Underdog (11 items) • Economic value seeker (5 items) • Chauvinist (3 items)	Products made in (country) are... (14 items)	Cognitive, affective (?), conative	PCA, CFA	Internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha$ ), cross-national invariance	n.a.	Grand total N = 4200, households, area and quota samples	Jaffe and Nebenzahl (1991); open-ended questions
Puaschunder et al., 2004	Australia	Austria	n.a.	n.a.	729 associations about Austria	Cognitive, affective	Central and peripheral analysis	n.a.	n.a.	N = 130, consumers, convenience sample	Face-to-face interviews

(continued on next page)

Table 2 (continued)

Author(s)	Country(ies) of survey	CoO	Product category(ies)	Product dimension(s)	Country dimension(s)	Attitude towards country	Methodology	Reliability test (s) reported	Validity test(s) reported	Sample	Items origin
Heslop et al., 2004	Canada	USA, Canada, Mexico, Chile, Argentina	Products in general	Product beliefs (8 items) Product evaluation (4 items)	Country description (5 items) People description (3 items) Country competence (3 items) people competence (3 items) Country evaluation (2 items) Relationship (5 items)	Cognitive, affective?, conative	CFA, MANOVA	n.a.	Construct (discriminant)	N = 312, consumers, area sample; N = 204, retailers, random sample	Papadopoulos (1993), Bennett (1991), D'Souza (1993)
Mittelstaedt et al., 2004	USA	Canada, China, Cuba, France, Germany, Iraq, Mexico, Russia	n.a.	n.a.	Perceived differences among countries (PEDAC, 8 items)	Cognitive	Multiple comparison tests, regression, CFA	Internal consistency reliability	Content, construct (convergent, discriminant, nomological)	N = 264 (pretest); N = 338 (main), students, convenience sample N = 436, households, area sample	Exploratory research, qualitative judgement
Laroche et al., 2005	USA	Japan, Sweden	Products in general	Product beliefs (3 items) Product evaluation (3 items)	Country image • Country beliefs (3 items) • People affect (3 items) • Desired interaction (3 items)	Cognitive, affective?, conative	CFA	Internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha$ )	Construct (convergent, discriminant)		Papadopoulos (1986), Papadopoulos and Heslop (2000), Li et al. (1997), Nagashima (1977)
Pereira et al., 2005	Taiwan, China, India	USA, Germany	Products in general, cars	GPA 1 (2 items) GPA 2 (2 items) SPA (cars, 5 items)	GCA 1 (4 items) GCA 2 (3 items)	Cognitive	PCA, CFA	Internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha$ )	n.a.	N = 135 (Taiwan), 129 (China), 111 (India), graduate students, convenience sample	Parameswaran and Pisharodi (1994)
Brijs, 2006	Belgium	Spain, Denmark	Beer, DVD players	Attitude towards beer/DVD players • Cognitive (4 items) • Affective (3 items) • Conative (3 items)	CI's cognitive component • Geo-Cultural (3 items) • Socio-economy (3 items) • CI's positive feelings component (6 items) • CI's conative comp. (3 items)	Cognitive, affective, conative	EFA, multigroup CFA	Internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha$ , composite rel.), measurement invariance	Construct (convergent, discriminant)	Pretest: N = 113; main: N = 616 (Spain), 609 (Denmark), students, convenience sample	Exploratory interviews, literature review
d'Astous and Boujbel, 2007	Canada	Australia, Canada, China, France, Mexico, Morocco, Israel	Products in general	Attitude towards products	Personality dimensions • Agreeableness (4 items) • Wickedness (4 items) • Snobbism (4 items) • Assiduousness (4 items) • Conformity (4 items) • Unobtrusiveness (4 items) evaluation as a travel destination Country familiarity	Cognitive, conative	PCA	Internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha$ ), alternative form reliability	Construct (nomological)	Pretest: N = 174, consumers, convenience sample; main: N = 170, households, random + snow ball sample	Exploratory interviews, personality scales
Pappu, Quester, and Cooksey, 2007	Australia	Japan, Malaysia, China	Televisions, Cars	Micro country image • Innovation (2 items) • Prestige (3 items) • Design (3 items)	Macro country image • Technological (3 items) • Economic (3 items) • Political (3 items)	Cognitive	CFA, canonical regressions	Internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha$ ), measurement invariance	Construct (convergent, discriminant)	Convenience sample, N = 539	Martin and Eroglu (1993), Nagashima (1970, 1977)

Abbreviations: EFA = exploratory factor analysis; CFA = confirmatory factor analysis; PCA = principal components analysis.

On the other hand, about one third of the studies also used developing and/or emerging (i.e., non-OECD) countries as CoOs. Usunier (2006) calls this the “besieged fortress scenario”, because products manufactured in Western industrial nations are increasingly being challenged by newly industrialized nations offering more competitive prices and “an implicit issue for CoO researchers is to reassure primarily Western readers about a favorable image differential compensating for an unfavorable price differential” (Usunier, 2006, p. 67).

### 3.2. Samples and product categories

Empirical data on CoI measures stem from a variety of sources including student samples (e.g., Allred et al., 1999; Martin and Eroglu, 1993; Pereira et al., 2005;), households (e.g., Ittersum et al., 2003; Nebenzahl et al., 2003; Wang and Lamb, 1980), consumers (e.g., Heslop et al., 2004; Papadopoulos, 1986; Pappu et al., 2007), business executives (e.g., Kühn, 1993; Yaprak and Parameswaran, 1986), and tourists (i.e., Moeller, 1997). However, while some studies use student samples in combination with other sample types such as households (e.g., d’Astous and Boujbel, 2007; Knight et al., 2003; Moeller, 1997), others develop their scale employing student samples only (e.g., Martin and Eroglu, 1993; Mittelstaedt et al., 2004; Pereira et al., 2005), thus limiting the external validity of these scales.

With respect to the sampling method, the majority of studies use convenience samples (14), followed by random (8), area (3), systematic (2) and judgmental samples (2); one study employs a quota sample. Thus, non-probability sampling techniques prevail. Although non-probability samples are acceptable for theory testing purposes when the focus of the study is on investigating relationships among constructs and not differences in absolute magnitudes (e.g., mean score comparisons), “the legitimacy of generalizing the research results to the national populations is generally unknown. Moreover, unknown distributions of subpopulations within countries (e.g., urban vs. rural populations or different cultural groups within a single country) further limit the external validity generated from non-probability samples” (Reynolds et al., 2003, p. 84). Thus, if the main emphasis is on generalizations (external validity) on the population of interest, researchers have to employ a sample that is representative for the survey country in terms of consumer demographics such as age and gender.

Regarding sample sizes, the average size computed from the studies in Table 2 is quite high ( $N = 1,347$ ), with the smallest sample being 30 (Weber and Grundhöfer, 1991) and the largest being more than 14,000 (Schweiger, 1988). However, such figures have to be interpreted with some caution, because sample sizes higher than 1000 usually pertain to studies that have been conducted at several different points in time collecting data from a variety of countries (e.g., Nebenzahl et al., 2003; Papadopoulos et al., 2000; Schweiger, 1988). When using adjusted sample sizes for these studies (i.e., average sample size per survey country), the average sample size is 338 (with a median of 291) which is consistent with the sort of sample sizes typically found in cross-sectional research.

In addition to measuring CoI, about two thirds of the studies in Table 2 also include measures of product image. The majority of these studies employ “global” rather than product category-specific measures. The reason for this fact is probably that “product-specific images cannot be generalized to the origin country overall, and thus the value of such research is limited” (Papadopoulos et al., 1997, p. 998). Thus, if the main objective is to explore the general image of countries and their products, global evaluations are more appropriate measures of product images. If, on the other hand, the aim is to evaluate the impact of country image on purchase intentions and evaluations of a particular brand or product, researchers should ask for specific products or brands.

### 3.3. Scale characteristics and psychometric properties

The widespread use of copied scales is a major issue in extant CoI research (see also Martin and Eroglu, 1993 on this issue). From the 30

CoI scales under consideration, two do not quote the items’ origin (i.e., Kühn, 1993; Lebrez, 1996). A further ten studies are based on the scales of Yaprak and Parameswaran (1986), Parameswaran and Yaprak (1987), Heslop and Papadopoulos (1993) and Martin and Eroglu (1993) and contain only few modifications. All in all, only 18 CoI scales out of the 30 are thus really different from one another. From these scales, about one third derive the initial item pool mainly from literature in related fields such as national image and national stereotypes and only twelve (e.g., Ittersum et al., 2003; Martin and Eroglu, 1993; Nebenzahl et al., 2003) also conduct exploratory research such as focus groups or depth interviews.

Another distinction between extant CoI scales derives from their purpose. In this respect, the studies in Table 2 fall into two categories. Studies belonging to the first group (e.g., Kühn, 1993; Puschunder et al., 2004; Wang and Lamb, 1983) have a rather exploratory focus and try to identify basic dimensions of CoI, without, however, providing a concrete CoI measure. The second group (e.g., Heslop and Papadopoulos, 1993; Martin and Eroglu, 1993; Pappu et al., 2007) concentrates on the development of a concrete CoI scale based on current guidelines of measurement theory (e.g., DeVellis, 2003). At least for the latter group of studies, sound psychometric properties of the derived CoI scale are essential for its subsequent adoption in substantive research.

This issue leads to the next critical problem in CoI research, namely the general lack of validity and reliability assessments. All in all, 20 studies out of 30 report on some sort of reliability and only 14 on validity assessment. From these studies, 19 assess internal consistency reliability (typically Cronbach’s alpha), two compute split-sample reliability and one study alternative-forms reliability; no study in Table 2 evaluates test–retest reliability. Regarding validity, 14 studies report on construct (i.e., convergent, discriminant and/or nomological) validity and four on content validity. Although none of the studies in Table 2 explicitly mentions criterion (i.e., predictive and/or concurrent) validity, most papers evaluate the subsequent impact of CoI on outcome variables such as product evaluations and purchase intentions, thus implicitly testing the criterion validity of their CoI measures.

Finally, an essential issue in multi-country research is to test for cross-national invariance (see Steenkamp and Baumgartner, 1998; Vandenberg and Lance, 2000). However, as Table 2 indicates, only three studies formally test the cross-national measurement invariance of their CoI measures based on independent samples (i.e., Häubl, 1996; Knight et al., 2003; Nebenzahl et al., 2003). This issue is a major deficiency, not least because several of the studies in Table 2 are of a cross-national nature, involving comparisons between several country samples (e.g., Heslop and Papadopoulos, 1993; Papadopoulos et al., 2000; Pereira et al., 2005). Whether the conclusions drawn in these studies regarding similarities and differences of CoI are actually warranted is open to question given the lack of measure invariance assessments. Finally, Brijs (2006), Pappu, et al. (2007) and Verlegh (2001) also test the invariance of their CoI scales but across different target origins rather than different country samples. However, this procedure infringes one basic assumption of measurement invariance testing, namely the principle of independence of observations (Steenkamp and Baumgartner, 1998). Thus, future research should be more careful in following correct procedures for purposes of measure invariance testing.

### 3.4. Operationalization of country image

Attitude–theory perspective is the best way to conceptualize the CoI construct. As such, “country-of-origin is not merely a cognitive cue for product quality, but also relates to emotions, identity, pride and autobiographical memories” (Verlegh and Steenkamp, 1999, p. 523). A number of authors (e.g., Laroche et al., 2005; Papadopoulos et al., 1990; Parameswaran and Pisharodi, 1994) suggest that the CoI construct should comprise (1) a cognitive component, which includes consumers’ beliefs about a particular country, (2) an affective



component that describes the country's emotional value to the consumer, and (3) a *conative* component, capturing consumers' behavioral intentions with regard to the sourcing country.

However, a closer look at Table 2 reveals that about one third of the Col scales available focuses on cognitive facets only. Moreover, most of the studies that do conceptually distinguish between cognitive, affective and conative facets of Col (e.g., Heslop and Papadopoulos, 1993; Laroche et al., 2005; Parameswaran and Pisharodi, 1994) fail to sufficiently implement this distinction at the operationalization stage. For example, items such as “people are friendly and likeable” or “people are trustworthy”, which are typical statements used to measure the so-called “affective” component of country image (e.g., Laroche et al., 2005; Papadopoulos et al., 2000; Yaprak and Parameswaran, 1986) do not directly evoke respondents' emotions because a person might *think* that the people of a country are friendly and likeable but still not *like* that country. In addition, several items used in the affective dimension of Col clearly represent cognitive beliefs rather than emotions and their inclusion under an “affect” scale compromises the content validity of the latter. For instance, Papadopoulos et al. (1990) include “refined taste” and “industrious” in their “affect for the US” dimension while Laroche et al. (2005) add “hard working” in their “people affect” dimension.

Chao and Rajendran (1993) and Nebenzahl et al. (2003) suggest a novel approach to capture the affective dimension of Col by personifying the Col construct as a product source. They do this by asking respondents to characterize *people* who buy products made in a specific country. According to Nebenzahl et al. (2003, p. 400), the resulting scale “captures not only normative, but also emotional and social dimensions that consumers attribute to these products. For example, [...] if a respondent agrees with the negative trait statements, it means that she has strong negative emotions towards the country and/or its products”. However, it is debatable whether such a personified Col scale (1) actually describes the image of the *country* in question, and (2) really comprises normative and affective aspects. Regarding the first point, Nebenzahl et al. (2003, p. 400, *emphasis added*) themselves state that their “scale describes a *person* buying products made in a certain country, and since the country is the only cue provided to respondents, all attributes reflect back to products made in that country”. So, does this scale capture country image or product image (or perhaps product-country image)?

Regarding the second point, while a consumer who thinks that a person buying products from this country is, say, a snob or stingy may indeed not like this country, the latter is clearly an outcome of the former and, thus, is not directly captured by the scale as such. The same applies to consumers' normative and social reactions to their beliefs measured by this scale. Indeed, in a recent empirical study, d'Astous and Boujbel (2007) show that various country personality dimensions do have a significant impact on consumers' affective and conative reactions toward this country. However, these reactions exist separately (i.e., as outcomes) and are not part of their country personality scale.

A similar problem exists in the measurement of the conative component of Col. For example, Pisharodi and Parameswaran (1992) as well as Parameswaran and Pisharodi (1994) use similarity perceptions (i.e., similar political views, economically similar, culturally similar) to capture the so-called conative facet of country image. However, similarity perceptions are something different than conative attributes, which refer to *behavioral* intentions with regard to the sourcing countries. Indeed, Mittelstaedt et al. (2004, p. 7) point out that similarity perceptions can help researchers to understand “the nature of country evaluations in a comparative context”, however, they do not represent consumers' actions (or intended actions) inherent in these. Examples for correct specifications of country conations are the “relationship” dimension of Heslop et al. (2004) or the “link” dimension of Laroche et al. (2005).

Finally, in some studies a normative facet replaces the conative component of Col (e.g., Obermiller and Spangenberg, 1989; Obermiller et al., 1999; Verlegh and Steenkamp, 1999). However, this approach appears to be conceptually questionable because country conations

capture consumers' behavioral tendencies with respect to the sourcing country and not social or personal norms that might potentially precede such intentions. Indeed, Brijs (2006, p. 23) argues that “social and personal values should rather be situated at the deepest centre of the individual's personal identity, while conations toward a *coo* pertain to the (more ephemere) construct we refer to as the country image.” This is in line with the theory of reasoned action (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975; Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980), according to which both norms and (cognitive and affective) attitudes influence behavioral intentions, but their impact is fairly distinct from each other. For example, as Herche (1992) points out, a consumer can have a very favorable attitude towards French wine but still not decide to buy it due to normative reasons such as the feeling that buying French products hurts the domestic economy. In this context, Shankarmahesh (2006, p. 148) laments that normative constructs such as consumer ethnocentrism are “often confused with ‘country-of-origin bias’ although the two topics are distinct and independent of each other.” Thus, it seems inappropriate to conceptualize country norms as an integral part of Col themselves; rather they should represent distinct constructs such as, for example, consumer ethnocentrism (Shimp and Sharma, 1987), patriotism (Schatz et al., 1999) or nationalism (Kosterman and Feshbach, 1989).

After the critical overview of extant Col literature the next section now presents an integrative framework for conceptualizing and operationalizing the Col construct and for identifying issues for future research.

#### 4. Integrative framework and future research directions

##### 4.1. Theoretical underpinnings

Recent advances in the field of attitude theory provide the basis for the theoretical development of the proposed framework. The original conceptualization of attitudes follows the “tripartite” or “three-component” view according to which, by definition, attitudes consist of three dimensions, namely cognitive, affective, and conative (e.g., Katz and Stotland, 1959; Rosenberg and Hovland, 1960; Smith, 1947). As already discussed and as Table 2 shows, the majority of extant conceptualizations of Col follow this view (e.g., Heslop and Papadopoulos, 1993; Laroche et al., 2005; Parameswaran and Pisharodi, 1994). However, the three-component view of attitudes has one important shortcoming because cognitive, affective and conative facets of attitudes are not independent of each other but rather *causally* related (e.g., Mackie and Hamilton, 1993; Verlegh and Steenkamp, 1999). For example, an individual could like a particular person (affect) *because* (s)he believes that that person is trustworthy (cognition) and *therefore* has the intention to work together with that person (conation). Newer studies, therefore, describe attitudes either along a two-component view (e.g., Engel et al., 1995; Schlegel and DiTecco, 1982; Zajonc and Markus, 1982) or a hierarchy-of-effects (or ABC) sequence (e.g., Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980; Liska, 1984; Zinkhan and Fornell, 1989), which assume “that self-reported behavior and stated intentions to respond [...] [are] treated as dependent effects of affective and/or cognitive variables. Intentions seem to be at a lower level of abstraction (i.e., closer to observable behavior) than cognitions or affect.” (Bagozzi and Burnkrant, 1979, p. 914).

Fig. 1 shows four different types of models which – depending on the situational context – explain how cognitive and affective Col facets impact country conations. Model A reflects the two-component view of attitudes, according to which “attitudes are represented as two conceptually independent, yet empirically related, constructs: (a) an affective component [...] and (b) a cognitive or belief dimension” (Bagozzi and Burnkrant, 1979, p. 916). In this model, country images comprise both country beliefs and country affect which “may vary independently and may independently affect intentions and behavior” (Liska, 1984, p. 66-7). In a recent review, Ajzen (2001) mentions several conditions under which separate or joint effects of affect and/or cognition on conation occur. First, when beliefs and feelings towards

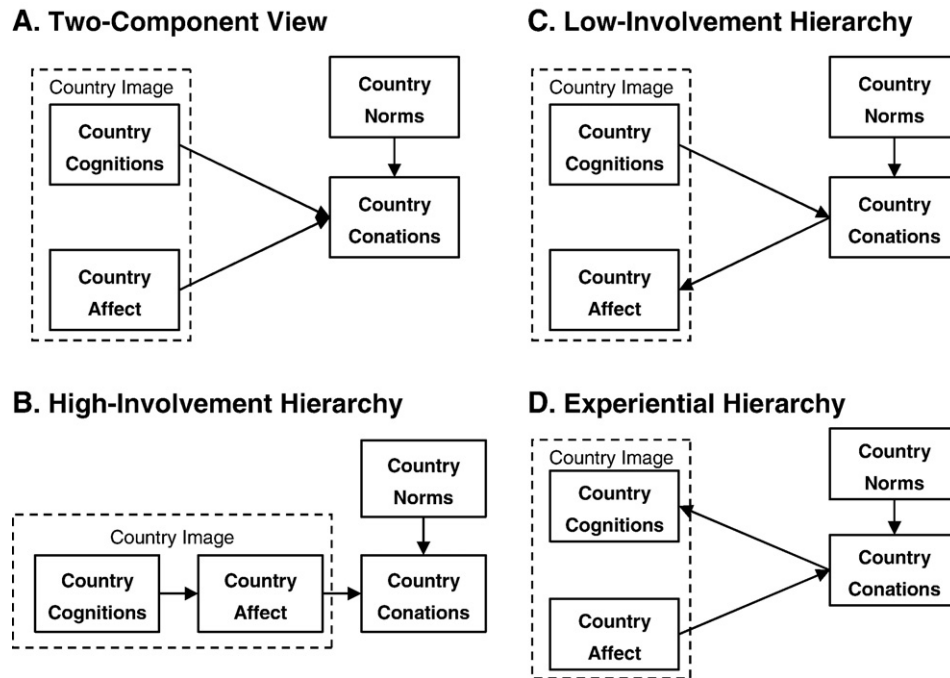


Fig. 1. Conceptual models of country image.

an object are of opposite character, feelings tend to dominate (Lavine et al., 1998). If, on the other hand, cognitions and emotions are consistent with each other, both are expected to contribute strongly and about equally to behavioral intentions (Simons and Carey, 1998). Second, the tendency to base one's conations on cognition or affect also depends on the particular person. For example, individuals identified as thinkers mainly rely on their beliefs towards the object whereas for feelers the opposite is true (Haddock and Zanna, 1998). Finally, conations towards hedonic objects rely more on affect than cognition, whereas conations toward functional objects rely more on cognitions than emotions (Batra and Ahtola, 1990; Kempf, 1999; Verlegh, 2001).

A hierarchy-of-effects sequence which "emphasizes the interrelationships among knowing, feeling, and doing" and assumes that "a fixed sequence of steps occurs en route to an attitude" (Solomon et al., 2006, p. 237) provides the basis for the three remaining models (i.e., Models B to D in Fig. 1). In contrast to the two-component view of attitudes where the attitude equation does not contain a behavioral component, the hierarchy-of-effects model follows the unidimensional view of attitudes "consisting of only one component, affect, which represents the degree of favorability or unfavorability with respect to the attitude object" (Lutz, 1981, p. 235). The other two components, that is, beliefs and conations, are not seen as part of attitudes per se but rather as antecedents and consequences, respectively. In general, literature identifies three different types of hierarchy-of-effects models (e.g., Lutz, 1981; Solomon et al., 2006; Zanna and Rempel, 1988), namely, (1) the standard learning hierarchy (Model B), (2) the low-involvement hierarchy (Model C), and (3) the experiential hierarchy (Model D).

All three types of hierarchy-of-effect models are useful in a Col context (e.g., Obermiller and Spangenberg, 1989; Obermiller et al., 1999). The standard learning hierarchy (Model B) follows the theory of reasoned action (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975; Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980) which assumes that an individual first forms beliefs about a certain country by accumulating knowledge regarding relevant attributes such as the country's political system or climate. The consumer then relies on these beliefs to develop feelings about that country. For example, (s)he could like the country or that country's people. Finally, the person engages in relevant behavior, such as visiting the country or buying products from that country. The standard learning hierarchy assumes that a consumer is highly involved in making his decision, that is, (s)he is

motivated to seek out a lot of information, considers several alternatives and carefully comes to a thoughtful decision (Solomon et al., 2006). As Obermiller and Spangenberg, (1989) observe, the standard learning hierarchy is perhaps the most frequent way consumers process Col information because (1) this resembles the process by which most attitudes are constructed (De Pelsmacker et al., 2001; Lutz, 1981; Solomon et al., 2006), and (2) most of the outcomes variables relevant for Col research (e.g., ties with a country, future visits, purchase of products etc.) are high-involvement decisions.

Concerning the low-involvement hierarchy (Model C), in this sequence, an individual does not initially have a strong preference, that is, affect for one object or another, but instead acts on the basis of limited knowledge (beliefs) and then forms an evaluation following her/his actual behavior (Solomon et al., 2006). An example would be a week-end trip to, say, Berlin versus Prague, where a consumer does not know much about these two destinations and has no clear a-priori preference for one city versus the other but forms her/his feelings towards these cities after having been there. In addition, and similar to the conditions applying under the two-component view, a cognitive → conative → affective sequence could also occur in the case of functional objects whereby consumers act purely based on their beliefs and form their feelings after their factual behavior (Kempf, 1999; Verlegh, 2001). For example, an individual choosing between tomatoes from, say, Spain versus the UK may prefer the Spanish ones because (s)he thinks that the climate for growing tomatoes is better there.

Finally, the experiential hierarchy is based on hedonic consumption whereby consumers are assumed to act purely on the basis of their emotional reactions (Solomon et al., 2006). For instance, a person might simply prefer Italian wine to a French one without having a clear reason (i.e., belief) behind his or her decision. However, such a belief might arise after having consumed the product. For example, the consumer might think that Italian wine tastes well, so Italy seems to be a superb country for cultivating wine in terms of landscape, climate, etc.

Applying these models to the studies in Table 2 reveals that several authors (e.g., Ittersum et al., 2003; Knight and Calantone, 2000; Parameswaran and Pisharodi, 1994) investigate the sole impact of country beliefs on outcome variables such as product evaluations and purchase intentions. These studies test either a special constellation of the two-component view (with the affective component being

completely neglected) or a low-involvement hierarchy without the last sequence (i.e., the impact of conations on affect). There are, however, four studies (i.e., Brijis, 2006; Häubl, 1996; Heslop et al., 2004; Verlegh, 2001) that model country beliefs and affect separately and assess their individual and/or joint impact on conations; these studies represent a first step in the direction of the four models illustrated in Fig. 1.

#### 4.2. Measurement issues

Following consideration of alternative theoretical models of Col information processing, the question now arises how to operationalize the Col construct in empirical efforts adopting these models. Table 3 summarizes the various aspects of consumers' processing of Col information and provides concrete examples of extant scales measuring each aspect.

In line with the two-component view of attitudes (e.g., Schlegel and DiTecco, 1982; Zajonc, 2000), the Col construct contains here only a cognitive (belief) and an affective (emotions) component. The conative facet (intended/actual behavior) represents an outcome of these two and, hence, is a separate construct. This view is consistent with the tourism literature, where consensus exists with respect to the conceptualization of destination image as consisting of an affective and a cognitive component only (e.g., Ekinci and Hosany, 2006; Hosany et al., 2006). Country-related norms also do not belong to the Col construct itself but represent a distinct source potentially impacting on behavioral intentions/actual behavior. Indeed, according to the psychology literature, “[i]n addition to measuring the person's attitude toward the behavior, [...] it is also necessary to assess his subjective norm in order to predict and understand intention” (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980: 57).

##### 4.2.1. Country cognitions

Regarding the operationalization of the cognitive component, country beliefs could be modeled based on the dimensions usually mentioned in the literature, which include a country facet (i.e., economy,

politics, culture, technology, landscape/environment and climate) and a people facet (usually based on factors/items such as competence, creativity, standard of living, training and labor). In this respect, as factors such as politics or climate are fairly distinct from each other, country beliefs could be modeled as a multidimensional formative construct, with the first-order dimension themselves either being formatively or reflectively measured, depending on the items used to describe each dimension (see the taxonomy of Jarvis et al., 2003). For example, the political dimension of Martin and Eroglu (1993) contains items such as “democratic system”, “capitalist system”, “civilian system” or “free market”. In this case, a formative specification would be appropriate, as a system that is democratic need not necessarily be also a free market. On the other hand, taking Martin's and Eroglu's (1993) technological factor as example, items such as “industrialized” and “mass production” usually go hand in hand with each other, thus requiring a reflective specification.

Instead of conceptualizing country beliefs as a higher-order formative construct, it is also possible to model it as a set of interrelated dimensions. Indeed, according to Edwards (2001), the choice of measurement model specification is highly dependent on the study objective. For example, if the main emphasis is on identifying the major factors that make up a construct such as country beliefs, a multidimensional formative construct would be appropriate. If, on the other hand, the study focus is on finding the major antecedents of, say, the evaluation of a country as a holiday destination, then a set of interrelated dimensions is more informative as the dimensions could be positively, negatively, or not correlated at all with the focal outcome variable.

A promising alternative to the traditional conceptualization of country beliefs is the “country personality” construct of d'Astous and Boujbel (2007). In contrast to the country beliefs construct which, depending on the number of items used, tends to produce different factor structures across applications (e.g., Allred et al., 1999; Knight et al., 2003; Martin and Eroglu, 1993), the country personality construct is supposed to be stable across countries and product categories employed. Thus, researchers can use the six dimensions (i.e., agreeableness, wickedness, snobbism, assiduousness, conformity and unobtrusiveness) to describe a

**Table 3**  
Operationalization of the Col construct.

Construct	Part of Col construct?	Possible operationalizations
Country cognition	Yes	Country beliefs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People facet (e.g., Parameswaran and Yaprak, 1987; Parameswaran and Pisharodi, 1994; Papadopoulos et al., 2000; Heslop et al., 2004): for example, competence, creativity, vocational training, labor</li> <li>• Economy (e.g., Wang and Lamb 1980, 1983; Martin and Eroglu, 1993)</li> <li>• Politics (e.g., Weber and Grundhöfer, 1991; Martin and Eroglu, 1993; Knight et al., 2003)</li> <li>• (Work) culture (e.g., Wang and Lamb, 1983; Desborde, 1990; Allred et al., 1999; Brijis, 2006)</li> <li>• Technology (e.g., Desborde, 1990; Martin and Eroglu, 1993; Heslop and Papadopoulos, 1993; Kühn, 1993)</li> <li>• Landscape/environment (e.g., Allred et al., 1999; Ittersum et al., 2003)</li> <li>• Climate (e.g., Verlegh, 2001; Ittersum et al., 2003)</li> <li>• Country personality (e.g., Chao and Rajendran, 1993; Nebenzahl et al., 2003; d'Astous and Boujbel, 2007)</li> </ul>
Country Affect	Yes	Country emotions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive and negative country affect (e.g., Verlegh, 2001; Brijis, 2006)</li> <li>• Scales from the emotions literature: Pleasure–Arousal–Dominance (PAD) Scale (Russell and Mehrabian, 1974), Eight Basic Emotions (Plutchik, 1980), Pleasant–Unpleasant Scale (Diener and Emmons, 1984; Diener et al., 1995), Positive Affect Negative Affect (PANAS) Scale (Watson et al., 1988), Differential Emotions Scale (DES) (Izard et al., 1993), Affective Response to Consumption-Related Experiences (Mano and Oliver, 1993), Consumption Emotions Set (CES) (Richins, 1997)</li> <li>• Scales from the attitude literature (e.g., Crites et al., 1994; Eagly et al., 1994; Derbaix, 1995)</li> </ul>
Country Conations	No	Behavioural intentions towards a country <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourism (e.g., Um and Crompton, 1990; Javalgi et al., 1992; d'Astous and Boujbel, 2007)</li> <li>• Ties (e.g., Papadopoulos et al., 2000; Heslop et al., 2004; Brijis, 2006)</li> <li>• Product Evaluations and Purchase Intentions (e.g., Papadopoulos et al., 1990; Roth and Romeo, 1992; Hsieh et al., 2004; Laroche et al., 2005)</li> </ul>
Country-related norms	No	Social and/or subjective norm concerning a (foreign or home) country <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consumer ethnocentrism (Shimp and Sharma, 1987)</li> <li>• Nationalism (e.g., Kosterman and Feshbach, 1989; Dekker et al., 2003; Spencer and Wollman, 2003)</li> <li>• Patriotism (e.g., Kosterman and Feshbach, 1989; Schatz et al., 1999)</li> <li>• National identity (e.g., Doosje et al., 1995; Keillor et al., 1996)</li> <li>• Consumer animosity (e.g., Klein and Ettenson, 1999; Klein et al., 1998)</li> <li>• Consumer cosmopolitanism (e.g., Yoon et al., 1995; Cannon and Yaprak, 2002; Yoon et al., 1996)</li> <li>• World mindedness (e.g., Rawwas et al., 1996)</li> <li>• Internationalism (e.g., Kosterman and Feshbach, 1989)</li> </ul>



variety of countries around the world without having to adapt them to a specific study setting. At the same time, the relative importance of each dimension for predicting a particular outcome may well vary depending on the countries and/or product categories employed. Country personality is a profile construct (Law et al., 1998), and, therefore, a country that scores high on, say, agreeableness does not necessarily score high on unobtrusiveness. Furthermore, whereas assiduousness could be a good predictor of, say, the production of industrial products, conformity could be the most relevant dimension for consumers' evaluation of that country as a tourism destination (d'Astous and Boujbel, 2007).

Depending on the study context, different cognitive factors could be critical for analysis. For example, while climate and landscape might be important antecedents for the evaluation of food products (e.g., Ittersum et al., 2003; Verlegh, 2001) or future visits to a country (e.g., Javalgi et al., 1992; Um and Crompton, 1990), they are likely to be irrelevant for the evaluation of, say, industrial products from that country. In the latter case, factors such as people competence or political development could be more important (Verlegh, 2001). This context-specificity is probably one reason why different studies do not find a consistent effect of country cognitions on outcome variables such as product evaluations and preferences (e.g., Ittersum et al., 2003; Li et al., 1997). Future research should thus analyze which cognitive factors are particularly relevant for different outcome variables (e.g., visits to the country, evaluations of products of that country), and also investigate their influence on the affective component of the CoI construct.

#### 4.2.2. Country affect

In contrast to the cognitive component of CoI, as already noted, only few studies exist that employ a proper measure for country affect (e.g., Brijs, 2006; Desborde, 1990; Verlegh, 2001; d'Astous and Boujbel, 2007). Moreover, given the range emotions can take (see Cacioppo and Gardner, 1999 for a review), it is questionable whether the affective facet of CoI really comprises only positive and negative affect, as currently modeled (e.g., Verlegh, 2001; Brijs, 2006), or whether a broader conceptualization is necessary. On the measurement front, extant emotions scales that have been originally developed in a completely different setting (e.g., clinical psychology) cannot be used in a country setting on a one-to-one basis as they contain items that are not relevant in this context and/or not fully capture consumers' emotions towards a country (Richins, 1997). Thus efforts towards developing a tailor-made scale for capturing country-related emotions would be most welcome. Scales that measure emotions in a consumption context (e.g., Mano and Oliver, 1993; Richins, 1997) and/or the literature on (affective) attitudes (e.g., Crites, Fabrigar, and Petty, 1994; Derbaix, 1995) provide useful starting points in such efforts.

#### 4.2.3. Country conations

Regarding the behavioral consequences of CoI (conation), researchers should not limit them to product evaluations and/or preferences. Other potential consequences could be visits to the country, ties with the country, or personal investments in the country (see, for example, Heslop et al., 2004; Laroche et al., 2005). Furthermore, future studies should not combine such consequences in a single conative factor but model them as distinct constructs, thereby allowing for differential effects of CoI on behavioral outcomes. Insights on which outcomes could be included in the study are readily available from related fields such as the literature on destination image (see Mossberg and Kleppe, 2005 for a review) or country branding (e.g., Kotler and Gertner, 2002; O'Shaughnessy and O'Shaughnessy, 2000; Papadopoulos, 2004).

#### 4.2.4. Country-related norms

The psychology literature stresses that "for some behaviors, normative considerations (the perceived prescriptions of important others) are more important in determining behavioral intentions than

are attitudinal considerations [...]. For other behaviors the reverse may be true" (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980, p. 58). A promising avenue for future CoI research is therefore to relate country beliefs and affect to normative constructs such as, for example, consumer ethnocentrism (Shimp and Sharma, 1987), consumer cosmopolitanism (Yoon et al., 1995) or consumer animosity (Klein et al., 1998) and evaluate the joint versus separate impact of these constructs on consumers' behavioral intentions. Such a simultaneous examination should help to reveal the extent to which (perceived) characteristics of countries rather than characteristics of consumers are a stronger driver of behavioral outcomes. For example, would a favorable evaluation of a foreign country (i.e., positive country beliefs and affect) by consumers with a strong sense of consumer ethnocentrism outweigh domestic country bias expected to be exhibited by such consumers in terms of product evaluation and/or choice?

Furthermore, while the relationship between normative influences and consumers' product judgments and purchase intentions has already been intensively researched so far (e.g., Granzin and Painter, 2001; Klein et al., 1998; Verlegh, 2007), with a single exception, "[t]here has been no research, however, that examines whether these constructs [...] impact on COI" (Balabanis et al., 2007, p. 333). Indeed, several studies in the CoO literature find that consumers who are, for example, highly patriotic or nationalistic perceive products differently, and, hence, it is likely that these people also perceive the countries producing these products differently.

## 5. Conclusions

This paper provides a state-of-the-art review of extant CoI conceptualizations and operationalizations and contributes to a better measurement of the CoI construct in future studies. Although almost fifty years of country-of-origin research have gone by, there still seem to be important conceptual and operational problems associated with a central construct (CoI) used in such research. Attention to overcoming these problems appear to be necessary for achieving further progress in the field and the framework will assist researchers in such efforts.

From a theoretical point of view, the paper advances CoO research by highlighting how consumers evaluate countries and how this information is processed compared to normative influences such as consumer ethnocentrism or similar constructs usually studied in CoO research. In this respect, a limitation of Models A–D in Fig. 1 is the focus on the functioning of cognitive and affective country attitudes and their impact on behavioral intentions. In a real-world scenario, however, CoI is not the only cue present and many other intrinsic (e.g., quality), extrinsic (e.g., price, warranty) and contextual (e.g., store layout) factors would influence consumer decision making and choice. Although these factors are beyond the scope of this paper, future research could extend Models A–D by introducing additional (i.e., non-country related) cognitive and affective factors.

From a methodological point of view, the main concern is not on developing a new CoI scale but – given the large number of extant CoI scales available – on setting concrete guidelines on how to evaluate these scales and how to approach the CoI construct in future empirical efforts. In this context, the widespread use of copied scales in CoI research may be the main reason why so many CoI scales exist that compete with each other, with no specific scale prevailing. Several scales (e.g., Heslop and Papadopoulos, 1993; Parameswaran and Yaprak, 1987) have been replicated quite often in (sometimes only slightly) modified versions (e.g., Lee and Ganesh, 1999; Parameswaran and Pisharodi, 1994; Pereira et al., 2005), often without extensive validity and reliability assessments. Studies employing these scales therefore make the same mistakes as the initial authors (e.g., reliance on cognitive cues only). Future studies should therefore be much more attentive to testing the measurement properties of any instrument purporting to CoI. This should involve not only comprehensive dimensionality, reliability and validity assessments but, in the case of cross-national research, invariance testing as well.

Extant Col scales usually aim at predicting consumer attitudes towards products from specific countries. With respect to the prediction of the other outcomes of Col suggested in this paper, future studies should try to approach the Col construct from the perspective of other research streams, such as, for instance, research on foreign direct investment or tourism. Finally, Models A–D are in need of further empirical validation. Future studies could employ an experimental study setting to gain more control over the manipulation of the variables that compose these models and use a step-by-step procedure to test country beliefs and affect first and then gradually also incorporate normative influences.

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