

RESEARCH PROJECT

Title

Home Country as a Cue for Supplier Competences

Team Members

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Country of Origin Research

Our objective is to explain the country of origin (COO) effect in the business-to-business (B2B) area.

In general, the **COO effect**

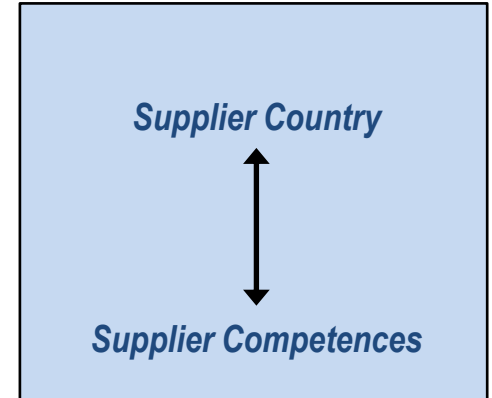
- addresses the influence a country's information has on product evaluation
- describes COO information as a cue in evaluating product quality and other characteristics of a product



Example of COO information on a typical Swiss chocolate product

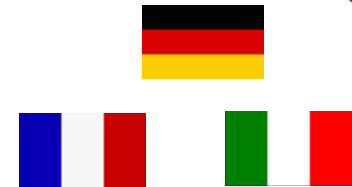
COO in B2B the Context

- In B2B the object of evaluation is not only the product, but whole supplier organizations that are being evaluated by their customers (buyers)
- Therefore we conceptualize the country cue as consisting of two levels: Home country information as an observable characteristic on the surface level, and organizational competences of suppliers on the deep level, inferred from the surface level
- **Research question:** What are typical competence traits that are underlying the COO effect in B2B?



Methodology

- Qualitative study to answer our research question
- Repertory grid method: indirect way of questioning
- Interviews with 17 purchasing agents from car manufacturers in three European countries



Outcome

- The supplier home country serves as a cue for organizational competences of suppliers
- We elicited 9 categories as dimensions of the COO effect:
process orientation and efficiency, innovation orientation, customer orientation, project management orientation, quality orientation, supplier-manufacturer relationship orientation, solution orientation, technological orientation, sustainability orientation
- i.e. a supplier in a certain country as e.g. Germany might be perceived as performing high in process orientation and efficiency and low in project management orientation