COUNTRY OF ORIGIN, PRODUCTS FROM DIFFERENT COUNTRIES AND CULTURAL BACKGROUNDS IN THE COSMETIC INDUSTRY: A LITERATURE REVIEW

Raffaele Cecere
University of Campania Luigi Vanvitelli, Italy

Francesco Izzo
University of Campania Luigi Vanvitelli, Italy

Michele Terraferma
University of Naples Parthenope, Italy

Abstract

This article explores the research domain of the impact of Country of Origin (COO) in the cosmetics industry in relation to products from different countries and cultural backgrounds. This study aims to provide a relevant and comprehensive organization of the research around this topic, offering an original, reliable and practically useful resource. In this way, a systematic literature review was conducted. Twenty documents published between 1997 and 2020 were analyzed and classified into three research themes. Specifically, the three themes are: COO and purchase behaviour related to cosmetic products (Theme A), COO and country perception in relation to cosmetic products (Theme B), COO and marketing strategies for cosmetics companies (Theme C). For each of the themes, emerging content and the potential for future research was highlighted. The findings of this paper have value not only for Cross-Cultural Management and Marketing scholars, but also for managers of cosmetics companies who plan to use the Country of Origin and the Country Image to communicate the company brand. The analysis is original and shows that this is an under-researched topic that offers important insights for future research and implications for managers who intend to consider the COO in business and marketing strategies.

1. Introduction

The Country of origin (COO) has its roots at the end of the First World War, with a different meaning than the one that today is part of our common imagination: the "Made in" label was in fact compulsorily placed on products coming from defeated countries, such as Germany, to mark them as products to be avoided (Munjal, 2014). The concept of COO was studies for the first time in economic terms since 1965, when Schooler (1965) empirically demonstrated that identical products were perceived differently in relation to their country of origin. Nowadays, in an increasingly connected and globalized world where consumers can purchase products from all over the globe, the COO has significant importance. In particular, it represents not only the image, reputation and stereotypes that businessmen and consumers attribute to the products of a given country (Nagashima, 1970), but also the set of beliefs that consumers have about the countries themselves (Strutton et al., 1995; Roth & Romeo, 1992; Kotler & Gertner, 2002). In addition, the COO is considered as an extrinsic feature along with the brand and therefore can act as an additional assurance during the purchase process of a product with which one is unfamiliar (Josiassen & Harzing, 2008).

This phenomenon, which is triggered by the importance of the COO, is also classified as the halo effect (Han, 1989). On the other hand, as consumers become more familiar with a country's products, the country image may become a construct that summarizes consumers' beliefs about product attributes, which inevitably affects their attitudes towards the brands associated with those products (Han, 1989). However, the phenomenon related to COO involves very often some categories of products and not all products from the same country. For example, Japanese wine producers have a harder time gaining credibility in the market than camera and television manufacturers from the same country. Similarly, German cars, sporting goods and computers designed in the United States (Hamzaoui & Merunka, 2006) are perceived positively by consumers compared to others from other countries. In this vein, the purchasing process of consumers turns out to be influenced by country-product associations that are in turn the result of the information that consumers have about the country of origin, as in the case of shoes made in Italy and perfumes made in France (Kalicharan, 2014).

Moreover, with regard to Italian products, those related to the agri-food, clothing and home furnishings industries are perceived worldwide as synonymous with quality linked to the high creative content of the industrial process, which validates the term "Italian style". In this regard, De Nisco and Mainolfi (2016) showed that foreign perception of Italy and Italian products is linked to the image of the cultural heritage of the Italian country brand and has a significant interaction with some cultural attributes (such as culinary tradition, aesthetics and art) and with the main product categories of the so-called Italian 'Bello e Ben Fatto' (such as food, leather goods, design and home furnishings). In addition, Italian excellence in some industries has generated the phenomenon of 'Italian Sounding' (Francioni & Albanesi, 2017), which consists in the use of words (i.e. recipe names and person's names and surnames) and images (i.e. the flag or geographical references such as Italian locations or monuments) evocative of Italy, in order to promote and market products that are actually not Made in Italy. Francioni and Albanesi (2017) demonstrated with a sample of German consumers, that Italian sounding damages the perception of 'Made in Italy', since very often consumers do not pay much attention to the label during purchase.

Some scholars (Maheswaran, 1994; Gürhan-Canli & Maheswaran, 2000) have examined the COO phenomenon according to its cognitive aspect, evaluating the

conditions under which consumers are more likely to use COO in their decision-making process. In these cases, it was found that when consumers are faced with choosing a product, they very often tend to minimize the effort to process information (Maheswaran, 1994) and for this reason they use COO as a heuristic to quickly make a judgment and evaluate a product based on the degree of certainty (or uncertainty) they have regarding the quality of the product (Maheswaran, 1994; Gürhan-Canli & Maheswaran, 2000). On the other hand, other scholars (Klein et al., 1998; Chen et al., 2014; Septianto et al., 2020) have analysed COO according to the emotional aspect. For example, Klein and colleagues (1998) showed that Chinese consumers are unlikely to purchase Japanese products because of the memory of Japanese occupation on their territory. From an emotional perspective, it follows that the positive emotions an individual has about a country will affect a product from that country in a positive way, and conversely, negative emotions will affect a product from that country in a negative way (Chen et al., 2014). However, contrary to this claim, Septianto and colleagues (2020) showed that in cases where the COO has a less favourable image, emotions have a greater influence on consumer purchase behaviour, highlighting the moderating effect of the COO in matching country and product-related emotions.

In light of these elements, this paper aims to study the importance of the concept of COO related to cosmetic products and understand how its perception changes not only depending on the cultural context in which the study takes place, but also in relation to the COO of the products under consideration. Therefore, a review of all existing literature related to studies that have linked the concept of COOs to cosmetic products and have addressed the topic from an economic and cross-cultural perspective was conducted. Moreover, in the literature there was no review of the literature related to COO dedicated to the cosmetics sector, therefore the originality of this study goes to fill this gap by analysing the phenomenon from a cross-cultural point of view. The literature review follows a fully systematic and replicable process involving research, inductive analysis, and organization of previous studies based on recurring findings and cultural contexts of reference.

Thus, the following research question guides the study:

RQ. *How has the impact of COO in the cosmetics industry been studied in relation to products from different countries and cultural backgrounds?*

Since COO is often considered a synonym for Country Image (CI) (Yagci, 2001), they are also considered in this review in this way, although they are actually mean different things. Effectively, CI represents the set of descriptive, inferential, and informational beliefs that people have about a particular country (Martin & Eroglu, 1993) and this occurs in relation to mental representations of people, products, culture, and national symbols (Verlegh & Steenkamp, 1999), combined with other factors such as economic and political maturity, historical events and relationships, technological virtuosity (Bannister & Saunders, 1978), and environmental issues (Allred et al., 2000). This paper inventories the entire domain of COO related to cosmetics to provide comprehensive, relevant, and organized research support. Several studies were reviewed, inductively synthesized, and classified in relation to their findings and cultural reference contexts, while also attempting to identify major research themes. Finally, this study adopts a cross cultural approach in order to open a discussion regarding the phenomena, issues, inconsistencies and intermediate debates on which new research can be conducted, facilitating the sharing and

reusing of meaningful information in relation to different cultural contexts. The next part of the study presents the research method including its scope and analytical procedures. This is followed by our findings, including observations of the literature and areas for future investigation. This leads to a more general discussion and conclusions of the work combined with a future research agenda.

2. Methodology

To ensure a comprehensive state of the art about the concept of country of origin in the cosmetics industry and to ensure replicability for future research, the process of systematic literature review was followed. In fact, systematic literature reviews aim to provide a reliable and scientific overview of ongoing research on a specific topic and provide guidance for future research (Petticrew & Roberts, 2008). Furthermore, the purpose of systematic literature reviews is to identify, evaluate, and synthesize all relevant studies using a transparent and replicable process to answer a particular research question (Tranfield et al., 2003). To comply with principles such as transparency, clarity, focus, accessibility, and synthesis, a search protocol was followed and based on it, the criteria for searching, including, and excluding papers were established.

The first step of the review was to define a search protocol compliant with the research aim to review articles dealing with the impact of COO in the cosmetics industry in relation to products from different countries and cultural contexts. Eligible studies for this review could refer to both the concept of COO and CI related to cosmetic products in different cultural contexts from both an economic and cross-cultural perspective. During the search, the terminology Country of origin image (COI) also emerged: it too was considered suitable for our review. Thus, the first inclusion criterion was to find and analyze studies in the literature that linked the concept of COO (or CI and equivalent terminologies) to cosmetic products in different cultural contexts from both an economic and cross-cultural perspective. In addition, the second inclusion criterion required that the research had been open to collect both empirical studies, conceptual studies, and reviews. In addition, a third inclusion criterion was that articles published in peer-reviewed journals were included in a priority way because these articles are considered more reliable due to the double-blind review process they undergo before being published (Podsakoff et al. 2005). Moreover, a fourth inclusion criterion, stated that both high-impact and low-impact journals were considered, as long as the articles belonging to them met the other inclusion criteria. Finally, under the fifth inclusion criterion, books, book chapters, and working papers were considered and allowed as exceptions if they were strongly in line with the other inclusion criteria. In contrast, papers that did not deal with the concept of COO, or CI, related to cosmetic products in different cultural contexts according to perspectives other than economic and cross-cultural were excluded. Furthermore, papers that did not consider COO and CI as the central topic of the work were also excluded. Finally, periodicals, conference proceedings were also excluded. Inclusion and exclusion criteria are also provided in the table below (Table 1). Subsequently, the research took place in the second step. Specifically, the search for papers was done by first entering the keywords (Table 1) into the EBSCO, Scopus and Google Scholar search engines without limiting the search to a specific time period and by searching through the titles and abstracts of the content. In addition, a manual search for relevant articles was conducted through the reference lists of relevant articles found in previous steps. Moreover, the same keywords were manually

entered on the journal search engines in order to identify additional studies that might have escaped the automatic search of the previously mentioned databases. Finally, 20 papers (19 from peer-reviewed journals and one book chapter) were identified for inclusion in the final database for our analysis.

Table 1 – Methodological procedures for search, selection, inclusion and exclusion

Inclusion criteria	1. Papers that linked the concept of COO (or CI and equivalent terminologies) to cosmetic products in different cultural contexts from both an economic and cross-cultural perspective; 2. Empirical AND conceptual AND review; 3. Peer-reviewed journal articles preferentially; 4. Both high-impact journals and lower-impact journals; 5. Exceptions for books, book chapters and working papers if they were strongly in line with the other inclusion criteria.
Exclusion Criteria	1. Papers that did not consider COO as a central topic of the paper; 2. Periodicals and conference proceedings.

Research Method - Stage I	1. Admission criteria for general keyword search using Scopus, EBSCO, and Google Scholar;
	2. Initial focus on: a) citation and abstract, and b) title.
	3. Key words:
	  • Country of Origin and cosmetic
	  • Country Image and cosmetic
	  • Country of Origin and perfume
	  • Country Image and perfume
	  • Country of Origin and skincare
	  • Country Image and skincare

Search method - Stage II	1. Manual search of relevant articles through the reference lists of relevant articles found in the previous stages; 2. Manual search in search engines of the journals of the studies previously identified; 1. Include and evaluate articles deemed suitable for the search criteria.
Final sample for analysis	n= 20 (nineteen papers from peer-reviewed journals and one book chapter)

Source: Author's elaboration

3. Results

Subsequently, a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet was used for content coding and comparison. In addition, the methodology of the studies, the samples used for the research, and the countries in which the studies were conducted, the country of origin, or the reference image country were identified. Next, the various contributions were analyzed by identifying not only the value of culture in the various reference contexts in which they take place, but also the main research themes.

An initial analysis of the existing literature shows that the scope of the research ranges from 1997 to 2020. In terms of the methodology adopted, eighteen of them are quantitative studies and only three are qualitative. Finally, three research themes were identified and are reported below. They are: COO and purchasing behavior related to cosmetic products, COO and country perception related to cosmetic products, COO and marketing strategies for cosmetics companies. This information is summarized in Table 2.

Table 2 – Summary table of studies clustered by theme

		Theme A: COO, CI and purchase of cosmetic products		
Study	*Country of study*	*Country of origin*	*Sample*	*Methodology*
Zbib *et al.*, 2021	Lebanon	France and China	300 Lebanese female consumers	Quantitative. Structured questionnaires. One-way ANOVA, multinomial logistic regression, single and multiple regression analysis and chi-square tests
Ishak *et al.*, 2019	Bangi Selangor (Malaysia)	Not specified	150 female consumers from four higher education institutions	Quantitative. Self-administered questionnaire, descriptive, t-test and correlation analyses
Moslehpour *et al.*, 2017	Taiwan	Korea	437 Taiwanese people	Quantitative. Mean, median, standard deviation and other Descriptive statistics. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), Cronbach's Alpha, Kaiser-Meyet-Olkin (KMO), Bartlett"s test measure, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)
Tjoe and Kim, 2016	Indonesia	Korea	227 Indonesian consumers	Quantitative. Online surveys. Principal component analysis (PCA), multiple regression and process analysis
Zbib *et al.*, 2010	Lebanon	Pantene (KSA, France and USA), Sunsilk (Egypt, Turkey and France), Palmolive (Lebanon, USA and France)	332 consumers of shampoo	Quantitative. Demographic variables; one-way ANOVA tests
Marcoux *et al.*, 1997	Poland	Poland and Western Countries	265 Polish university students	Quantitative. Univariate analysis of the scores of preference and stepwise multiple regression analysis.
Azuizkulov, 2013	Malaysia	Not specified	227 students from Universiti Utara Malaysia	Quantitative. Exploratory Factor Analysis, Correlation Analysis, Regression Analysis
Montanari *et al.*, 2018	Brazil	Ralph Lauren (USA), Chanel (France), Hugo Boss (Germany)	329 students	Quantitative. Questionnaire. 1-5 Likert scale, Descriptive analysis, Kruskal-Wallis tests, non-parametric tests (Mann-Whitney test)
Hsu *et al.*, 2017	Taiwan	Not specified	300 respondents	Quantitative. Paper-based questionnaire, Structural equation modelling, hierarchical moderated regression

Jin *et al.*, 2020	USA and China	Korea	491 consumers ages 20 and older	Quantitative. Structural equation modeling
Jin *et al.*, 2019	USA, France, China, Vietnam	Korea	900 consumers aged 20 or older	Quantitative. Multiple regression analyses.
Jin *et al.*, 2019	USA and China	Korea	250 consumers ages 20 and older	Quantitative. Structural equation modeling
Xiao *et al.*, 2016	Beijing and Shanghai (China)	Korea	255 customers	Quantitative. Survey, Descriptive statistics, Hierarchical regression analysis
Rezvani *et al.*, 2013	Malaysia	Malaysia	196 customers	Quantitative. Survey, Descriptive data analysis

Theme B: COO, CI and country perceptions

Study	*Country of study*	*Country of origin*	*Sample*	*Methodology*
Baran, 2018	Poland	Finland, France, Germany, Israel, Italy, Norway, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States	Web Panel of 1012 respondents	Quantitative. Descriptive statistics.
Pilelienèa and Šontaitè-Petkevičien èb, 2014	Lithuania	Lithuania, Italy, France, Germany, Poland, Russia, China	1262 respondents	Quantitative. Questionnaire, 1-7 Likert scale, Mean, N, Standard deviation
Cheah *et al.*, 2020	Australia	Italy, Australia, South Korea and China	200 undergraduate business students	Quantitative. Survey, ANOVA tests

Theme C: COO, CI and marketing strategies for cosmetic companies

Study	*Country of study*	*Country of origin*	*Sample*	*Methodology*
Suter et al, 2018	Brazil	Brazil and Brazil production with France origin	Two companies: Natura Cosméticos (Brazil domestic company) vs L'Occitane au Brésil (France-owned)	Qualitative. Multiple case study method, semi-structured interviews
Sutter *et al.*, 2015	Brazil	Brazil	Natura Cosméticos S.A.	Qualitative. Case study analysis, semi-structured interviews
Rebufet *et al.*, 2015	Not specified	France, Usa, China, Panama, Spain	7 professionals from French cosmetics companiesoperating internationally	Qualitative. Multiple case study method, semi-structured interviews

Source: Authors' elaboration

3.1 Theme A: COO and purchase behaviour related to cosmetic products

The first theme includes studies that have used COO (or CI) to explain consumer purchase behaviour. In particular, Zbib and colleagues (2021), with a sample of 300 Lebanese women, showed that taking into account cosmetic products from France and China, the level of involvement that female consumers have towards a given product constitutes an exogenous variable that influences the level of importance of COO in the purchase of cosmetics and in particular skin care products.

They also showed that for products from France, COO information search and change in the perception after trying the product are correlated due to the presence of a halo effect related to French products. Furthermore, they found that COO information search and change in the perception are not correlated when it comes to Chinese products since Lebanese consumers did not change their perception towards the products after discovering their Chinese origin (Zbib et al., 2021).

However, for low involvement product categories such as shampoo, it has been shown that country of origin is not one of the key attributes influencing Lebanese consumer choice (Zbib et al., 2021). This was demonstrated in Lebanon with a sample of 332 shampoo consumers from brands and countries of origin such as Pantene (KSA, France and USA), Sunsilk (Egypt, Turkey and France) and Palmolive (Lebanon, USA and France) (Zbib et al., 2010). Furthermore, taking as reference companies and their countries of origin such as Chanel and France, Hugo Boss and Germany and Ralph Lauren and USA, it was shown that, for a sample of 329 Brazilian students, country of origin has little importance in the purchase of luxury branded perfumes. In this case, price and brand had been considered the factors that most influence the choice (Montanari et al., 2018). In particular, the study showed that only for Chanel the value of country of origin was higher, probably because the brand name communicates the country of origin (Montanari et al., 2018). Furthermore, Hsu and colleagues (2017) demonstrated with a sample of 300 respondents in Taiwan, that perceptions of COO moderate the links between attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioural control and purchase intention of green skincare products.

Specifically, the relationship between the variables appears to be stronger at high levels of COO perception and weaker at low levels of COO perception (Hsu et al., 2017). In addition, Ishak and colleagues (2019), on a sample of 150 Malaysian high school women, showed that purchasing cosmetic products is part of the 'limited decision-making process' and specifically, in the purchasing process, country of origin obtained a mean value of 3.91 on a Likert scale 1-7 (Ishak et al., 2019).

Moreover, also in Malaysia, with a sample of 227 university students, it was shown that not only country of origin is strongly correlated with both purchase behaviour and brand reputation, but also has a positive influence on brand loyalty when referring to cosmetic products (Azuizkulov, 2013). Moreover, Tjoe and Kim (2016), in their study made a distinction between Country of Origin Image and Country Image, considering the former as the country of manufacturer's products or brand is associated with its home country (Samiee, 1994) and the latter as the set of people's beliefs, images, ideas and impressions about a certain country (Kotler et al., 2002). In particular, they demonstrated, with a sample of 227 respondents, that Country of Origin Image (and not Country Image) significantly influenced consumers' purchase intention towards Korean products in Indonesia.

Moreover, this study also juxtaposes the concept of COO with that of ethnocentrism, as did Marcoux and colleagues (1997) who, with a sample of 265 Polish university

students, showed that patriotism is a dimension of ethnocentrism that leads consumers to prefer Polish products, while preference toward Western products is related to the demonstration of social status.

In addition, another study conducted in Malaysia with a sample of 196 consumers showed that patriotism has a strong influence on Malaysian consumers' intention to purchase cosmetic products made in Malaysia (Rezvani et al., 2013). Moreover, Moslehpour and colleagues (2017), by analyzing the key factors influencing the repurchase intention of Korean cosmetic products by 437 Taiwanese consumers, showed that COO significantly influences both word-of-mouth and product repurchase behaviour. In addition, also regarding Korean products, using a sample of 491 American and Chinese consumers aged 20 and older, Jin and colleagues (2020) showed that product-specific country image, also referred to as micro country image had a positive influence on quality ratings of Korean cosmetics in contrast to overall country image (macro country image) and prototypical brand image (e.g. Samsung). However, the same authors (Jin et al., 2019) examined the impact of Korea's macro and micro image and the level of materialism of global consumers on the quality evaluation of Korean cosmetics, a sample of 900 consumers aged 20 or older from the USA, France, China, and Vietnam.

They showed that only in the USA and France was the effect of macro and micro country image on quality evaluation significant, while the impact of micro country image was strong in all four countries. Furthermore, the same authors (Jin et al., 2019) showed with a sample of 250 consumers ages 20 and older, that for the evaluation of the quality of cosmetic products, the positive impact of the macro country image is not valuable, while the pathway related to the cultural phenomenon of the Korean Wave is significant.

Also related to knowledge spillovers, Xiao and colleagues (2016), with a sample of 255 Chinese consumers, stated that cinema, theater and the internet represent sources that have increased knowledge regarding Korean cosmetics. They also verified that the general CI and general product CI of Korea have a positive influence on the Electronic Word-of-Mouth (e-WOM) and purchase intention of Korean cosmetics (Xiao et al., 2016). From these studies, we can see that the COO in some cultural contexts and for some product categories is particularly important in relation to consumer purchasing behaviour, while in others its influence is less. In particular, we notice that cosmetics made in France and Korea are those which have the greatest influence on the purchasing process of consumers in Lebanon, China and Taiwan.

From a cultural point of view, this phenomenon can be traced back to the concept of Mianzi (literally, face) which represents one of the main personality characteristics of the Chinese people and other East Asian peoples (Yang, 1994; Wong & Ahuvia, 1998). According to this cultural characteristic, East Asians tend to own and purchase goods that allow them to achieve a certain social status on which they base their prestige (Yang, 1994), build their reputation (Wong & Ahuvia, 1998), and the way they are accepted by others (Hwang, 1987) by publicly displaying their wealth and willingness to be fashionable. Moreover, particularly for China, these reasons meet explanations in its cultural evolution that started after the death of Mao Tse Tung and the historic entry into the global economy in 1978, which had consequences on the consumption of products and emulation of foreign lifestyles by the Chinese people.

Foreign brands carry a symbolic meaning of modernity and prestige associated with modern and worldly lifestyles (Zhou & Hui, 2003) that meet the desire, particularly of Chinese women, to give birth to the long-suppressed desire to wear fashionable clothes and

cosmetics (Barnes, 2009; Hopkins, 2007). Moreover, the phenomenon of ethnocentrism pushes consumers to prefer products from their own country as in the case of Poland, where, from a cultural perspective, national pride and entity influence people's attitudes and consumer purchasing behaviour (Huddleston et al., 2001; Kubacki & Skinner, 2006; Siemieniako et al., 2011).

However, for both product categories with less involvement, such as shampoo, and some perfumes, country of origin is not one of the key attributes that influence consumer choice in some cultural contexts such as Lebanon and Brazil, confirming that from a cultural perspective, country of origin takes on different meanings in relation to the product, cultural context, and country appeal. Finally, related to this result, in this theme we can see that culture plays an important role in consumer preferences and purchase process in different countries.

3.2 Theme B: COO and country perception in relation to cosmetic products

The second theme encompasses studies that have linked COO concepts to consumers' perceptions of a given country. A study by Baran (2018) conducted in Poland and based on a web panel of 1012 Polish internet users, showed that more than 30% respondents when thinking about features such as safety of using and low price of a cosmetic product refer to Poland. When they refer to the naturalness of cosmetic products, they refer not only to Poland, but also to Finland. When instead they think of prestige, they associate this characteristic with cosmetic products from France. They also associate France with high prices, along with the United Kingdom, Switzerland and the USA. However, with smaller percentages, high quality of ingredients (24.5%) and effectiveness (24.9%) are associated with Germany, pleasure of using (18.6%) with France, mediocrity (27.7%) with Israel and innovativeness (18.0%) with United States of America (Baran, 2018). In addition, another study conducted in Lithuania with a sample of 1262 cosmetic consumers identified three groups of country-of-origin based on their attractiveness. Specifically, France and Germany were classified as attractive country-of-origin, Italy and Lithuania as neutral country-of-origin and finally Russia, Poland and China as unattractive country-of-origin (Pilelienèa et al, 2014).

Finally, Cheah and colleagues (2020), with a sample of 200 undergraduate business students in a large university in Australia, showed that regarding Australian, Italian, Korean, and Chinese-branded perfumes, no country-of-origin of these perfumes is a means of achieving status. However, among the various perfumes, Australian perfumes have been considered reliable and belonging to the emerging markets of their industry (Cheah et al., 2020).

Regarding this second theme, we can note that with regard to the perceptions of the various countries, French origin has its attractiveness in the cosmetic industry. Moreover, a form of patriotism also emerges in studies belonging to this second theme when we consider that Polish consumers perceive cosmetics from Poland as safe to use and when Australian consumers consider perfumes made in Australia as reliable and up-to-date.

From a cultural point of view, regarding the ethnocentrism of Polish consumers the same reflections indicated in the previous theme are valid, while that found in Australian consumers confirms the results of previous studies in which it is shown that they tend to purchase local products with high frequency, especially if they belong to categories of high symbolic impact, as cosmetics are (Strizhakova & Coulter, 2015).

3.3 Theme C: COO and marketing strategies for cosmetic companies

The third theme refers to the marketing strategies adopted across firms to show the COO. In particular, a study conducted in Brazil with a sample of two companies, a Brazil domestic company (Natura Cosméticos) and a France-owned company (L'Occitane au Brésil) identified six tools that companies can use to communicate brand values using the concept of country image associated with the country of origin (Suter et al., 2018). Specifically, the six tools refer to the country's natural resource properties, cultural resources (e.g., related to lifestyles), employee training on the importance of the Country Image for the brand, textual elements referring to the country (such as language and typical expressions), visual elements (e.g., images of the country, flag, landscapes and typical symbols, use of the country's name on staff uniforms) and sensory experiences (e.g. listening to country music on the website and in stores, in-store scents and essences, and packaging that evokes the country by touch).

Another study refers to the country-of-origin image using the Brazilian company Natura Cosméticos as a sample as well (Sutter et al., 2015). The study shows that the company leverages the country-of-origin image when implementing its international differentiation strategy.

Population, economy and politics, sports and arts, nature and lifestyle are the five elements that represent Brazil's image and Natura makes use of different nuances. In particular, the company chooses to base its strategy on themes related to nature, relationships and the friendliness of the country and the Brazilian people while avoiding stereotypes such as soccer, sensuality, samba and the beach (Sutter et al., 2015). Finally, a further study with a sample of seven professionals representing French cosmetics companies that operate internationally (France, USA, China, Panama and Spain), showed that the country of origin is communicated through labels, symbols, commercial discourse and strategies that emphasize the French origin of the products, which represents a real added value (Rebufet et al., 2015).

In addition, the study points out that communication based on these elements is more widely used by small and medium-sized businesses than larger ones. This is because small and medium-sized companies use logos that contain graphic elements evoking France (for example, a stylized Eiffel Tower) more freely than larger companies with an international character, which are often limited to displaying only a few elements such as the name of the city under the brand name (Rebufet et al., 2015). From this third theme it emerges that COO communication represents a valid item in the marketing strategies not only of large multinational companies, but also of small companies that want to open up paths in international markets.

4. Conclusions

This study aims to provide a comprehensive view regarding the impact of COO in the cosmetics industry in relation to products from different countries and cultural contexts through a systematic literature review. We can see that it is a topic not very studied, but for our analysis twenty studies were collected and classified into three themes: COO and purchase behavior related to cosmetic products (Theme A), COO and country perception in relation to cosmetic products (Theme B), COO and marketing strategies for cosmetics companies(Theme C).

Among the main results, it emerges that COO has a higher value when attributed to cosmetic products with higher emotional value, such as perfumes (Kalicharan, 2014; Montanari et al., 2018; Cheah et al., 2020), and a lower value for cosmetic products with lower emotional value, such as shampoo (Zbib et al., 2010). Furthermore, we can see that cosmetic products from France and Korea have great appeal in many cultural contexts and that in some cultures patriotism often leads consumers to prefer products from their own country (as in Poland).

This means that the COO is linked to the culture of a people, its history and its traditions that affect the purchasing behaviour of consumers. As a matter of fact, consumers choose the products they want both on the basis of the product's characteristics, such as quality and price, and on the basis of its symbolic value. The former is the case of Polish consumers who base their purchases more on the perceived quality than on the origin of the product. However, the strong ethnocentrism belonging to their culture pushes them towards quality products made in their country (Huddleston et al., 2001).

The second is the case of Chinese and other East Asian consumers, who tend to prefer foreign products with a strong symbolic value, such as French brand cosmetics, in order to feel more integrated into society (Wong & Ahuvia, 1998). It also emerges that COO communication is a viable marketing strategy for companies from countries with strong cosmetic traditions.

Since the results of this study show how culture influences consumption choices in relation to the origin of products, they are of value not only to scholars of Cross-Cultural Management and Marketing, but also to managers of cosmetics companieswho intend to use the country of origin and the image of the country to communicate the company brand. However, our review also has limitations. First, this study is limited to analyzing peer-reviewed journal articles in a preferential manner, with the exception of only one book chapter that is strongly aligned with other research criteria. In addition, all selected studies were in English.

Therefore, it would be interesting for other authors to conduct a review including other studies, for example submitted to conferences and written in languages other than English. However, although our study is based on a replicable research protocol it is appropriate for other researchers to evaluate a random sample of the coded articles to verify their validity (Ryan & Bernard, 2003).

Despite these limitations, the originality of this study fills a gap in the literature related to COO and the cosmetics industry by also analyzing the phenomenon integrating a cross cultural perspective. In addition, our study points to multiple opportunities for future research without claiming to be exhaustive. Regarding theme A, for further future studies it would be interesting to study the influence of patriotism in other cultural contexts such as Italy (or other Western European countries) and also how the 'Made in' influences the purchasing process of foreign consumers in relation to cosmetic products.

Further quantitative studies could consider the frequency and willingness to purchase products from one's home country by measuring patriotism through specific variables and questionnaires (Schatz et al., 1999; Davidov, 2009). In this way, patriotism could be used as a mediator between the perception of COO and the actual purchase of products by the end consumer.

On the other hand, with regard to theme B, it would be interesting to discover how, contrary to the studies examined, French consumers perceive cosmetic products from other countries. In this case, both qualitative studies could help to explore the phenomenon more,

and quantitative studies could confirm hypotheses by using the COO of cosmetic products as a moderator or mediator for some psychological variables, such as materialism (Richins & Dawson, 1992; Griffin et al., 2004; Kilbourne et al., 2005) and face (Ho, 1976; Hwang, 1987; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Liao & Wang, 2009). Studies of this kind could play on the role of the perception of a given country (such as France for its elegance and Italy for its 'Italian style') plays when considering a given product category, cosmetics in our case, and purchase choices.

Moreover, regarding theme C, it would be interesting to conduct a qualitative study both for a Korean company and for SMEs in other countries where small entrepreneurship is strongly present, such as Italy. Furthermore, it would be interesting to conduct quantitative studies on samples of multiple companies to build theoretical models related to COO communication in different countries. These theoretical models could contain objective variables to explain different marketing strategies related to COO, such as storytelling and sales staff expertise in the process of communicating and selling products within stores.

Finally, further studies could investigate the misuse of the COO, as in the case of 'Italian Sounding' (Francioni & Albanesi, 2017) associated with cosmetic products. In this way, the negative effect it might have in the long term with respect to the perception of certain products in both richer and poorer countries or, simply in different cultural contexts could be assessed. In fact, studies of this kind could not only give further explanations to the ethical problems related to this unfair phenomenon, but also shed light on the cultural differences in different countries.

In addition, further studies could address the emotional component related to COO (Septianto et al., 2020) by analyzing the moderating effect of COO in situations where consumer purchasing behaviour is analyzed with reference to cosmetics from high and low appeal countries. Finally, from a practical point of view, this study also offers important insights for managers of cosmetics companieswho want to develop international trade by using the COO as a tool on which to base a communication strategy, both on the side of promotion and sales in their physical stores. In this vein, an integrated marketing strategy could be useful to effectively communicate the COO through symbols that remind the culture of the specific country. Nevertheless, it is advisable to communicate the elements of the COO in a dynamic and proactive way, in line with the demands of new markets.

Very often, companies tend to use COO-related artifacts in a passive manner, for example by using 'made in' lettering and images such as the flag. Although these elements have the ability to inform about the origin of the product, they have low informational power towards customers in young and dynamic markets (Checchinato et al., 2013). For companies engaged in selling products in new foreign markets that want to leverage the COO, it is important to actively explain the value and characteristics of their country. In this sense, when basing communication on the COO, brand image should not be neglected, but a type of communication capable of integrating both aspects should be implemented. In addition, the tool of storytelling could help to proactively communicate the value of the COO by linking it to products and the brand.

Furthermore, it would be important to leverage the store windows, the internal environment of the stores and the sales staff, which play an important role in attracting consumers to come in and be accompanied in their shopping experience. In this sense, greater involvement of sales staff in telling the product story based on the COO's assurances and, at the same time, the brand would help to entertain the customer and positively

influence the buying behaviour. Moreover, the tool of storytelling could help to proactively communicate the value of the COO by linking it to products and the brand. Furthermore, it would be important to leverage the store windows, the internal environment of the stores and the sales staff, which play an important role in attracting consumers to come in and be accompanied in their shopping experience. In this sense, greater involvement of sales staff in telling the product story based on the COO's assurances and, at the same time, the brand would help to entertain the customer and positively influence his or her buying behaviour.

In light of the above and further linking practice with theory, future studies could use high-appeal cosmetic stores, such as those selling French products, in various cultural contexts (e.g., Asian or European) as a research sample. In doing so, they could further confirm the best practices discussed in this paper and enrich the literature with new evidence.

References

1. Allred, A., Chakraborty, G., & Miller, S. J. (2000). Measuring images of developing countries: a scale development study. *Journal of Euromarketing, 8(3),* 29-49.
2. Azuizkulov, D. (2013). Country of origin and brand loyalty on cosmetic products among Universiti Utara Malaysia students. *Atlantic Review of Economics, 2.*
3. Bannister, J. P., & Saunders, J. A. (1978). UK consumers' attitudes towards imports: the measurement of national stereotype image. *European Journal of marketing.*
4. Baran, R. (2018). Characteristics of cosmetic brands by country of origin according to the opinion of polish consumers. *Central European Management Journal, 26(3),* 2-13.
5. Barnes, B.R., Siu, N.Y.L., Chan, S.S.Y., (2009). "Exploring cosmetics advertising in southern China", *International Journal of Advertising, 28 (2),* 369-393.
6. Checchinato, F., Hu, L., & Vescovi, T., (2013). The communication of foreign products in China through the store: an empirical analysis. *International Journal of Economic Behavior (IJEB), 3(1),* 41-57.
7. Cheah, I., Shimul, A.S. and Ming Man, M.H., (2020). Young consumer's attitude toward local versus foreign luxury brands. *Journal of Global Fashion Marketing, 11(4),* 397-412.
8. Chen, C.Y., Mathur, P. and Maheswaran, D., (2014). The effects of country-related affect on product evaluations. *Journal of Consumer research, 41(4),* 1033-1046.
9. Davidov, E., (2009). Measurement equivalence of nationalism and constructive patriotism in the ISSP: 34 countries in a comparative perspective. *Political Analysis, 17(1),* 64-82.
10. De Nisco, A., & Mainolfi, G. (2016). Competitiveness and foreign perception of Italy and made in Italy on the emerging markets. *Rivista Italiana di Economia, Demografia e Statistica-Italian Review of Economics, Demography and Statistics*, *70*(3), 15-28.
11. Francioni, B., & Albanesi, G., (2017). The Italian Sounding Phenomenon: The Case Of Germany. *International Journal of Economic Behavior (IJEB), 7(1),* 39-50.
12. Griffin, M., Babin, B. J., & Christensen, F., (2004). A cross-cultural investigation of the materialism construct: Assessing the Richins and Dawson's materialism scale in Denmark, France and Russia. *Journal of Business Research, 57(8),* 893-900.

13. Gürhan-Canli, Z. and Maheswaran, D., (2000). Determinants of country-of-origin evaluations. *Journal of Consumer Research, 27(1),* 96-108.

14. Hamzaoui, L. and Merunka, D., (2006). The impact of country of design and country of manufacture on consumer perceptions of bi-national products' quality: an empirical model based on the concept of fit. Journal of consumer marketing.

15. Han, C.M., (1989). Country image: halo or summary construct?. *Journal of marketing research, 26(2),* 222-229.

16. Ho, D.Y.F., (1976). On the concept of face. American journal of sociology, 81(4), 867-884.

17. Hopkins, B.E., (2007). Western cosmetics in the gendered development of consumer culture in China. *Feminist Economics, 13(3-4),* 287-306.

18. Hsu, C.L., Chang, C.Y. and Yansritakul, C., (2017). Exploring purchase intention of green skincare products using the theory of planned behavior: Testing the moderating effects of country of origin and price sensitivity. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 34,* 145-152.

19. Huddleston, P., Good, L.K. and Stoel, L., (2001). Consumer ethnocentrism, product necessity and Polish consumers' perceptions of quality. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management.*

20. Hwang, K.K., (1987). Face and favor: The Chinese power game. *American journal of Sociology, 92(4)*, 944-974.

21. Ishak, S., Omar, A.R.C., Khalid, K., Ghafar, I.S.A. and Hussain, M.Y., (2019). Cosmetics purchase behavior of educated millennial Muslim females. *Journal of Islamic Marketing.*

22. Jin, B., Yang, H. and Kim, N., (2019). Prototypical brands and cultural influences: Enhancing a country's image via the marketing of its products. *Management Decision.*

23. Jin, B.E., Kim, N.L., Yang, H. and Jung, M., (2019). Effect of country image and materialism on the quality evaluation of Korean products: empirical findings from four countries with varying economic development status. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*.

24. Jin, B.E., Yang, H. and Kim, N.L., (2020). The role of Korean prototypical brand image in shaping country image and quality evaluations: a cross-cultural examination. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal*.

25. Josiassen, A. and Harzing, A.W., (2008). Comment: Descending from the ivory tower: reflections on the relevance and future of country-of-origin research. *European Management Review, 5(4)*, 264-270.

26. Kalicharan, H.D. (2014). The effect and influence of country-of-origin on consumers perception of product quality and purchasing intentions. *International Business & Economics Research Journal (IBER), 13(5),* 897-902.

27. Kilbourne, W., Grünhagen, M., & Foley, J. (2005). A cross-cultural examination of the relationship between materialism and individual values. *Journal of Economic Psychology, 26(5),* 624-641.

28. Klein, J.G., Ettenson, R. and Morris, M.D. (1998). The animosity model of foreign product purchase: An empirical test in the People's Republic of China. *Journal of marketing, 62(1),* 89-100.

29. Kotler, P. and Gertner, D. (2002). Country as brand, product, and beyond: A place marketing and brand management perspective. *Journal of brand management, 9(4),* 249-261.

30. Kubacki, K. and Skinner, H. (2006). Poland: Exploring the relationship between national brand and national culture. *Journal of Brand Management, 13(4),* 284-299.

31. Liao, J. and Wang, L. (2009). Face as a mediator of the relationship between material value and brand consciousness. *Psychology & marketing, 26(11),* 987-1001.

32. Maheswaran, D. (1994). Country of origin as a stereotype: Effects of consumer expertise and attribute strength on product evaluations. *Journal of consumer research, 21(2),* 354-365.

33. Marcoux, J.S., Filiatrault, P. and Cheron, E. (1997). The attitudes underlying preferences of young urban educated Polish consumers towards products made in western countries. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing, 9(4),* 5-29.

34. Markus, H. R., & Kitayama, S. (1991). Culture and the self: Implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation. *Psychological review, 98(2),* 224.

35. Martin, I.M. and Eroglu, S. (1993). Measuring a multi-dimensional construct: Country image. *Journal of business research, 28(3),* 191-210.

36. Montanari, M.G., Rodrigues, J.M., Giraldi, J.D.M.E. and Neves, M.F. (2018). Country of origin effect: a study with Brazilian consumers in the luxury market. BBR. *Brazilian Business Review, 15*, 348-362.

37. Moslehpour, M., Wong, W.K., Van Pham, K. and Aulia, C.K. (2017). Repurchase intention of Korean beauty products among Taiwanese consumers. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*.

38. Munjal, V. (2014). Country of origin effects on consumer behavior. *Available at SSRN 2429131*.

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

40. Petticrew, M. and Roberts, H. (2008). Systematic reviews in the social sciences: A practical guide. *John Wiley & Sons*.

41. Pilelienė, L. and Šontaitė-Petkevičienė, M. (2014). The effect of country-of-origin on beauty products choice in Lithuania. *Procedia-social and behavioral sciences, 156*, 458-462.

42. Podsakoff, P.M., MacKenzie, S.B., Bachrach, D.G. and Podsakoff, N.P. (2005). The influence of management journals in the 1980s and 1990s. *Strategic Management Journal, 26(5),* 473-488.

43. Rebufet, M., Loussaief, L. and Bacouël-Jentjens, S. (2015). Does the Country of Origin Matter for Cosmetics? The "Made in France" Argument. In *Advertising Confluence: Transitioning Marketing Communications into Social Movements* (pp. 45-60). Palgrave Pivot, New York.

44. Rezvani, S., Rahman, M.S., Dehkordi, G.J. and Salehi, M. (2013). Consumers' perceptual differences in buying cosmetic products: Malaysian perspective. *World Applied Sciences Journal, 26(6)*, 808-816.

45. Richins, M. L., & Dawson, S. (1992). A consumer values orientation for materialism and its measurement: Scale development and validation. *Journal of consumer research, 19(3)*, 303-316.

46. Roth, M.S. and Romeo, J.B. (1992). Matching product catgeory and country image perceptions: A framework for managing country-of-origin effects. *Journal of international business studies, 23(3),* 477-497.

47. Ryan, G.W. and Bernard, H.R. (2003). Techniques to identify themes. *Field methods, 15(1)*, 85-109.

48. Samiee, S. (1994). Customer evaluation of products in a global market. *Journal of international business studies, 25(3),* 579-604.

49. Schatz, R. T., Staub, E., & Lavine, H. (1999). On the varieties of national attachment: Blind versus constructive patriotism. *Political psychology, 20(1),* 151-174.

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

51. Septianto, F., Chiew, T.M. and Thai, N.T. (2020). The congruence effect between product emotional appeal and country-based emotion: The moderating role of country-of-origin. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 52,* 101916.

52. Siemieniako, D., Kubacki, K., Glińska, E. and Krot, K. (2011). National and regional ethnocentrism: a case study of beer consumers in Poland. *British Food Journal.*

53. Strizhakova, Y. and Coulter, R.A. (2015). Drivers of local relative to global brand purchases: A contingency approach. *Journal of International Marketing, 23(1),* 1-22.

54. Strutton, D., True, S.L. and Rody, R.C. (1995). Russian consumer perceptions of foreign and domestic consumer goods: An analysis of country-of-origin stereotypes with implications for promotions and positioning. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice, 3(3),* 76-87.

55. Suter, M.B., Giraldi, J.D.M.E., Borini, F.M., MacLennan, M.L.F., Crescitelli, E. and Polo, E.F. (2018). In search of tools for the use of country image (CI) in the brand. *Journal of Brand Management, 25(2),* 119-132.

56. Sutter, M., MacLennan, M.L., Fernandes, C. and Oliveira Jr, M. (2015). Country of origin image and foreign markets strategy: Analysis of the Brazilian cosmetics company Natura. *Revista Brasileira de Marketing, 4(3).*

57. Tjoe, F.Z. and Kim, K.T. (2016). The effect of Korean Wave on consumer's purchase intention of Korean cosmetic products in Indonesia. *The Journal of Distribution Science, 14(9)*, 65-72.

58. Tranfield, D., Denyer, D. and Smart, P. (2003). Towards a methodology for developing evidence-informed management knowledge by means of systematic review. *British journal of management, 14(3),* 207-222.

59. Verlegh, P.W. and Steenkamp, J.B.E. (1999). A review and meta-analysis of country-of-origin research. *Journal of economic psychology, 20(5),* 521-546.

60. Wong, N.Y. and Ahuvia, A.C. (1998). Personal taste and family face: Luxury consumption in Confucian and Western societies. *Psychology & Marketing, 15(5),* 423-441.

61. Xiao, Z., Zhang, J., Li, D. and Samutachak, B. (2016). The effect of e-WOM on country image and purchase intention: an empirical study on Korean cosmetic products in China. *International Journal of Services Technology and Management, 22(1-2)*, 18-30.

62. Yagci, M.I. (2001). Evaluating the effects of country-of-origin and consumer ethnocentrism: A case of a transplant product. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing, 13(3)*, 63-85.

63. Yang, M.M.H. (1994). Gifts, favors, and banquets: The art of social relationships in China. *Cornell University Press.*

64. Zbib, I., Ghaddar, R., Samarji, A. and Wahbi, M. (2021). Examining Country of Origin Effect among Lebanese Consumers: A Study in the Cosmetic Industry. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing, 33(2),* 194-208.

65. Zbib, I.J., Wooldridge, B.R., Ahmed, Z.U. and Benlian, Y. (2010). Purchase of global shampoo brands and the impact of country of origin on Lebanese consumers. *Journal of Product & Brand Management.*

66. Zhou, L. and Hui, M.K. (2003). Symbolic value of foreign products in the People's Republic of China. *Journal of international marketing, 11(2),* 36-58.