

CHINESE CONSUMERS' BRAND PERCEPTIONS AND PURCHASING INTENTIONS: DOES BRAND OF ORIGIN MATTER?

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the perceptions of different segments of Chinese consumers and their evaluations of skin care products from the U.S. in terms of quality, image and price. A survey was developed using the methodology suggested by Pisharodi and Parameswaran (1992) to investigate Chinese consumers' perceptions of products from other countries. The questionnaire was translated into Chinese and included a scale to measure respondents' general attitudes toward the U.S., the quality, value, and image. 280 usable questionnaires were collected from Guangdong Province. SPSS was utilized for data analysis. Three clusters—"endorsing consumers, price conscious consumers, and indifferent consumers" were identified. The brand image factor is significant in predicting purchase intention for the endorsing consumers and price conscious consumers, while the country image and value factors are important for the indifferent customers. There has been extensive research done on COO and product evaluations, but the COO effect on brand perception has been understudied. This is one of the first studies which evaluated Chinese consumers' perceptions on American skin-care brands and provided a conceptual basis for segmenting this market. The managers of this industry could develop different brand strategies to satisfy Chinese customer segments with differing needs.

Keywords: *Chinese consumers, US brands, Country-of-origin (COO), Skin care product, Cluster analysis, Purchasing intention*